Entangled Histories

The Transcultural Past of Northeast China

Dan Ben-Canaan · Frank Grüner
Ines Prodöhl *Editors*

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The meeting in Harbin was the second of three events on cross-cultural encounters and processes of exchange in Manchuria. Preceding this conference was an April 2008 workshop at the University of Heidelberg that had aimed to generate new research perspectives on transcultural processes in the city of Harbin. A third international conference exploring daily life and urban spaces in Northeast Asian border towns from 1900 to 1950 followed in November 2010 at the University of Heidelberg in Germany. We wish to recognise the special contribution made by Dean Yin Tiechao of Heilongjiang University, School of Western Studies, and by Dean Heinz-Dietrich Löwe of the University of Heidelberg, Faculty of Philosophy, who were instrumental in establishing the cooperation between the two institutions.

The 2009 Harbin conference sought to analyse political, economic, social and cultural interdependencies in Manchuria during the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. The editors would like to thank the many participants who made the Harbin conference an intellectually stimulating event. We would also like to express our gratitude to the University of Heidelberg, Germany, Heilongjiang University in Harbin, China and the German Historical Institute in Washington, DC, USA, which jointly organised and sponsored the event. Our heartfelt thanks go to the many faculty members and student volunteers at Heilongjiang University, School of Western Studies and the research assistants at its Sino-Israel Research and Study Centre in Harbin who helped make the exchange between East and West meaningful.

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The articles in this book are more than just the conference proceedings. The authors widened their focus by reflecting on ongoing global discussions about contemporary scholarly concepts and methods. Very special thanks are due to the following persons who supported us in releasing this book: Helen Stringer and Patricia Sutcliffe diligently and professionally copyedited the contributions of this volume; Susanne Hohler and Rudolph Ng supported us substantially in formatting the manuscript and Andrea Hacker, managing director of the publication department of the Cluster "Asia and Europe in a Global Context" at the University of Heidelberg, accompanied the process of making this book with professional commitment and enthusiasm.

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Harbin — Dan Ben-Canaan
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Entangled Histories: The Transcultural Past of Northeast China

Dan Ben-Canaan, Frank Grüner, and Ines Prodöhl

Abstract During the first half of the twentieth century Manchuria, as Western historiography commonly designates the three northeastern provinces of China, was politically, culturally and economically a contested region. In the late nineteenth century, the region became the centre of competing Russian, Chinese and Japanese interests, thereby also gaining global attention. The coexistence of people of different nationalities, ethnicities and cultures in Manchuria was rarely if ever harmoniously balanced or static. On the contrary, interactions were both dynamic and complex. Semi-colonial experiences affected the people's living conditions, status and power relations. The transcultural negotiations and processes between all population groups across all kinds of borders are the theme of this book. The introduction argues that the past of Northeast China was significantly shaped by various entangled histories in areas such as administration, economy, ideas, ideologies, culture, media and daily life.

Studies on imperialism, colonialism and post-colonialism have shown that the worldwide economic and social situation at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century was typified by asymmetries between industrialised states and colonised regions. But studies with a postcolonial sensibility have also proved that the simple analytical distinction between powerful colonisers and weak colonised does not do justice to the manifold transcultural experiences of the people involved

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in these asymmetrical relationships. Recently, entangled, connected and intertwined histories of entities formerly thought to be separate, such as geography, ethnicity, and class, have gained scholarly attention, thereby pushing both methodological questions and empirical research on all kinds of border crossing.[1] Viewed in this scholarly context, the chapters in this book shed light on the diverse processes of exchange among the different nationalities, ethnicities and cultures living in Northeast China in the first half of the twentieth century. With this, Northeast China is seen as a contact zone, which Mary Louise Pratt defines as a "social space where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in the context of highly asymmetrical relations of power."[2] We are keen to analyse exactly those relationships and furthermore the various and often intertwined interactions between local and global processes.

Politically, culturally, and economically, Northeast China was a contested region. In the late nineteenth century, the Chinese government had long been reluctant to allow political and social changes, and it began to crack under the pressure of various imperial powers. Northeast China became the centre of competing Russian, Chinese, and Japanese interests, and also the focus of global attention. In the early twentieth century, Japanese and Russian imperialism made it the crossroads of expanding commerce between Asia, Europe, and North America. Affected by its powerful neighbours, this peripheral area was transformed by the construction of major railways as well as the opening of its mineral and agricultural resources. Northeast China illustrates a worldwide process that historians have defined as railway imperialism, a term that refers to all the ways the railway shaped an informal empire and contributed to an emerging, semi-colonised region.[3] Here, the railway systems existed primarily to expedite the transfer of domestic resources to seaports for worldwide export, and to create a new market for goods and products manufactured elsewhere. However, the development of an infrastructure and the concomitant expansion of trade also implied significant migration. Migration occurred rapidly in Northeast China, and chiefly involved Han-Chinese settlers. Between 1890 and 1942, a population transfer occurred of approximately

[1] See as one of the most recent studies that both reflects on methodological questions and explores empirical research: Emily S. Rosenberg, "Transnational Currents in a Shrinking World," in *A world connecting, 1870–1945*, ed. Emily S. Rosenberg (Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press, 2012), 813–996, 1077–1095; see also: Madeleine Herren, Martin Rüesch, and Christiane Sibille, eds., *Transcultural History: Theory, Methods, Sources* (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Verlag, 2012).

[2] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 2nd ed., 2008).

[3] Ronald E. Robinson, "Introduction," in *Railway Imperialism*, ed. Clarence B. Davis, Kenneth E. Wilburn and Ronald E. Robinson (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1991), 1–6; Bruce A. Elleman and Stephen Kotkin, eds., *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China: An International History* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2010); Rosemary K. I. Quested, *"Matey" imperialists?: the tsarist Russians in Manchuria, 1895–1917* (Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, 1982); Hyun Ok Park, "Korean Manchuria: the racial politics of territorial osmosis," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 99, 1 (2000): 193–215.

eight million Han-Chinese, principally from the northern provinces of Hebei and Shandong, to the three northeastern provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin (Kirin), and Liaoning (Fengtian); this resettlement was one of the largest human migrations of the early twentieth century.[4] In 1920, Japanese authorities estimated the population at 20 million, including all nationalities and ethnic groups.[5]

The interactions of people from different nationalities, ethnicities and cultures were both dynamic and complex, and semi-colonial experiences affected the people's living conditions, their status and power relations. Transcultural negotiations between all the different population groups and across all kinds of borders are the topic of this book. In pursuing this, we understand "transculturality" first of all as a research paradigm and a methodological approach that focuses on border crossings, processes of exchange, and entanglements between different population groups and various cultural spaces. Furthermore, we believe that the people's daily life experiences within the specific setting of a (multi-)cultural contact zone transcend geographical, political, national, ethnic and cultural borders. These processes and phenomena—placed in a globalised cosmopolitan setting and characterised by the amalgamation of cultural values, norms and mentalities—should be labelled here "transcultural". In this sense, the present volume deals with various entangled histories in areas covering for instance administration, economy, ideas, ideologies, culture, media and daily life. The complexity of these entangled histories and their density form our understanding of a "transcultural past". We are particularly keen to analyse the region's history in the first half of the twentieth century. We do not believe that transcultural processes ended immediately with the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949; however, their characteristics shifted enormously. And again, these changes were also the expression and result of worldwide entanglements generally known as the Cold War, and they have to be interpreted in that context.

The Shaping of a Region

In western historiography, the term Manchuria commonly refers to the three northeastern provinces of China, Heilongjiang, Jilin (Kirin), and Liaoning (Fengtian), as well as parts of Inner Mongolia (Fig. 1).[6] With the rise of the Manchu and the Qing dynasty in the seventeenth century, this region formed a unified

[4] Thomas R. Gottschang, "Economic Change, Disasters, and Migration: The Historical Case of Manchuria," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 35, 3 (1987): 461–90. See also Gottschang and Diana Lary, *Swallows and Settlers. The Great Migration from North China to Manchuria* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 2000).

[5] Bank of Chosen, ed., *Economic History of Manchuria* (Seoul, 1920).

[6] Mark C. Elliott, "The Limits of Tartary: Manchuria in Imperial and National Geographies," *Journal of Asian Studies* 59, 3 (2000): 603–46.

Fig. 1 Map of Manchuria, ca. 1930. This map demonstrates the character of Manchuria as a border region in Northeast Asia among the three empires China, Russia, and Japan. Courtesy of the *Manchuria Year Book 1931*, edited and published by the Toa-Keizai Chosakyoku (East-Asiatic Economic Investigation Bureau), Tokyo 1931

whole, which in political, cultural and economic terms can be sensibly identified as one territory. However, the name "Manchuria" is controversial, because it was primarily used in a certain imperial context. Thus the region is now collectively referred to in relation to other parts of China as the "Eastern Three Provinces" (Dongsansheng), "Northeast China," or simply "The Northeast" (Dongbei).[7]

In the first half of the twentieth century, Northeast China was unified purely with regard to its territory. Since the late seventeenth century, Russia and China tried to fix their boundaries in this widely unexploited area, but it was not until 1858 that they came to an agreement. The Treaty of Aigun and its supplementary treaties stipulated that the boundaries between Russia and China's northeast were the Argun River (Eergunahe) to the west, the Amur (Heilong Jiang) and the Ussuri (Wusuli Jiang) to the north, and a line from the mouth of the Ussuri to the mouth of the Tumen (Tu Men Jiang) to the east.[8] Since then, the region has included an area of nearly 100,000 km^2, a territory as large as the western US states of California, Nevada and Arizona, or the three European states of the United Kingdom, Ireland and France put together.

Up to the late nineteenth century, Northeast China was widely unsettled and unexploited. The Qing dynasty had curtailed and systematically discouraged the migration of Han Chinese to the Three Eastern Provinces because the area was to be reserved as an ancestral homeland and imperial hunting ground. The Chinese government only relaxed its restrictions in 1868 and again in 1878, when Han Chinese were officially allowed to settle there.[9] Sources on the living conditions in the region suggest that its winters were harsh and that there was a sparse but rapidly growing population of different origin.[10]

By the end of the nineteenth century, internal wars and foreign invasion had weakened the Qing dynasty. Japan's growing desire to expand its territory, and in particular to gain a foothold on the Asian continent, was generating great tensions. This finally culminated in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, in which Japan surprised most observers by winning a decisive victory over the Chinese troops due to the technological superiority and more efficient organisation of its military forces. Russia, on the other side, had been planning and building its Trans-Siberian Railway across Siberia and the Russian Far East to Vladivostok since 1891, and was thinking of an alternative route through the two provinces of Heilongjiang and Jilin (Kirin) that would shorten the distance by 550 km and, even more importantly, strengthen its strategic and economic position in Northeast Asia. In the aftermath of

[7] For the Chinese discomfort with the term, see Mariko Tamanoi, *Memory Maps: The State and Manchuria in Postwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009).

[8] For this and the former treaties, see Alexander Hosie, *Manchuria. Its people, resources and recent history* (London: Methuen & Co., 2nd ed., 1904), 135–42.

[9] Adachi Kinnosuké, *Manchuria. A survey* (New York: R. M. McBride & Company, 1925), 46–7; James Reardon-Anderson, *Reluctant Pioneers. China's Expansion Northward, 1644–1937* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), especially 71–84.

[10] E. g. Arthur Adams, *Travels of a Naturalist in Japan and Manchuria* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1870). See also: Hosie, *Manchuria*, 155.

the Sino-Japanese war, Russia took advantage of China's weakness and offered a Sino-Russian alliance against Japan in exchange for a railroad concession in Northeast China. The alliance was sealed in June 1896, and the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER) was built between 1897 and 1903. The project was successful, even though the work proved rather hard and frustrating for both the colonisers and the colonised.[11]

The construction and administration of the Russian settlements along the railway tracks was directed from the headquarters of the CER in Harbin, where mainly Russians did the skilled work of planning and engineering. The CER further stimulated the dynamic development of the region and its rise in strategic and economic importance in numerous ways. The railway, including a certain stretch of land along either side of the tracks, was an exterritorial area of Russia, fully controlled by Russian institutions. The company was thus involved in many accompanying activities, such as lumbering and mining. The CER and its side activities brought thousands of Russian workers and their families to the area, where they established housing, schools, medical services and social institutions, in particular in settlements like Harbin. But the railway, of course, also attracted Chinese labour migration as the construction was primarily done by unskilled Chinese workers. Furthermore, the CER enabled the transport of people and goods, spurred on industrial and agricultural development, and boosted economic growth, which in turn attracted even more Han Chinese migrants to the region.

After Japan's victory over China in 1895, Japan astounded the world again in 1905 with its victory over Russia. The outcome of this war provided Japan with a strong foothold in Northeast China, particularly in its southern part. Russia lost control over the South-Manchurian Railway (SMR), which had been built running south from the CER towards Port Arthur, an ice-free port on the Pacific coast located at the southernmost point of Liaodong Peninsula. Once the Japanese began administering the SMR, one of their first activities was to change gauge so as to standardise the rising imperial infrastructure. Japan was in severe need of coal, which was initially a principal cause of its interest in the Asian mainland. Japan's encounters in China proved however profitable in many ways. The railway was a powerful stimulus to mining, manufacturing and agriculture, and it enabled Japan to engage in various economic enterprises outside Asia.[12]

[11] Ralph E. Glatfelter, "Russia, the Soviet Union, and the Chinese Eastern Railway," in *Railway Imperialism*, ed. Davis, Wilburn and Robinson, 137–54, here 140–1.

[12] Ramon H. Myers, "Japanese imperialism in Manchuria: The South Manchuria Railway Company, 1906–1933," in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937*, ed. Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, Mark Peattie (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 101–32.

Entangled Histories

Thanks to some excellent research done in the last few years, it is now known that China's northeast followed the pattern of a semi-colonised region. The history of the CER and the resulting tensions between China, Russia, and Japan are well documented.[13] However, the story of how the people living in the three provinces developed a daily routine and tried to maintain their standard of living remains relatively unknown and untold. Furthermore, it remains uncertain at this point how their local experiences fit into global patterns or how the two levels interacted with one another. The contributors to this book therefore ask what the semi-colonised status of Northeast China meant for its inhabitants and how their experiences in turn affected power relations. The Chinese Eastern and the South Manchurian Railways forced processes of exchange not only regarding the transported goods, but also concerning the various ethnic groups trying to make a living. Most people came to Northeast China to work on the railway, in the coalmines, or as farm peasants. Others who found jobs as traders or employees, or who started their own businesses, then followed. They brought differing cultural identities and social practices, such as traditional ideas about weddings and funerals, eating habits and consumer behaviour, social activities and family roles, languages and literacy. In this multicultural setting, their respective cultural and national self-conceptions mingled to a certain degree with one another. The authors of this book focus on these complex interrelations. They ask to what extent the different histories are entangled, connected and intertwined to form a colourful transcultural past. All of the authors show that the connections between the different ethnicities, cultures and nations living in Northeast China in the first half of the twentieth century were neither harmonious nor balanced. However, in most cases the different population groups worked out a daily routine for living and working alongside each other with interactions of greater or lesser intensity.

Four of the papers presented in this book deal with the question of how people transgressed cultural and/or national borders by negotiating their daily living conditions. Sören Urbansky explores the lives of smugglers in the Sino-Soviet borderland in the late 1920s and early 1930s. He focuses on their transcultural competencies and identities, which they utilised strategically for economic

[13] Among others, see Olga M. Bakich, "Origins of the Russian Community on the Chinese Eastern Railway," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 27, 1 (1985): 12–4; Bakich, "A Russian City in China: Harbin before 1917," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 28, 1 (1986): 129–48, here 146–7; Blaine R. Chiasson, *Administering the Colonizer. Manchuria's Russians under Chinese Rule, 1918–29* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010); Shun-Hsin Chou, "Railway Development and Economic Growth in Manchuria," *The China Quarterly* 45 (1971): 57–84; Glatfelter, "Russia, the Soviet Union, and the Chinese Eastern Railway," 137–54; Sarah C. M. Paine, "The Chinese Eastern Railway from the First Sino-Japanese War until the Russo-Japanese War," in *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*, ed. Bruce A. Elleman and Stephan Kotkin (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2010), 15–17; David Wolff, *To the Harbin Station. The Liberal Alternative in Russian Manchuria, 1898–1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

purposes. In a linguistic approach, Xin Yuan asks how Chinese and Russian inhabitants communicated with one another. In particular she analyses the Sino-Russian pidgin spoken in Harbin in the 1920s. Mark Gamsa concentrates on mixed marriages and the adoption of mutual lifestyles by the Russians and Chinese. He points out that the intermarriage pattern in the region was atypical of global colonial situations: while intermarriage normally amounted to Western men taking native wives, intermarriage in this case was principally between Russian women and Chinese men. Madeleine Herren likewise focuses on civil statuses, but in her case on death and the way cemeteries shape narratives for migrants. In addition, she discusses methodological difficulties in writing history beyond national narratives.

Many contributors focus on the city of Harbin as an example of the massive presence and density of transcultural processes in urban life. Indeed, the city of Harbin reflects locally what Northeast China experienced on a regional level: the imperial struggle and its consequences for the various ethnic groups. The CER and the SMR met in Harbin, whose sizeable multinational population then grew even larger. Harbin became a city of various cultural encounters and, in the course of globalisation, a city of transcultural processes. Western historians date Harbin's founding to 1898, when the Chinese Eastern Railway Company designated the former small village on the river Sungari (Songhua Jiang) as its on site headquarters.[14] Right from its foundation, Harbin was a hub for the exchange of people, goods, information, ideas and cultural practices. Being a centre for the construction of the railway, Harbin attracted non-Chinese migration from Russia and other European countries. Therefore, the city was often seen as the informal capital of Manchuria.[15] Harbin is also an example of particularities reflected globally, because it served as an information centre for foreigners. The pneumonic plague epidemic in Northeast China with Harbin at its centre, for instance, brought global attention to the city in 1910/1911.[16] Experts and international organisations vividly pictured the danger of the plague in this setting, because Harbin was seen as a place close to Europe.[17]

After 1917, the municipal administration of the multinational city gradually shifted towards the Chinese because Russia's internal struggles were reflected in the CER zone. For Harbin, the years following the Russian Revolution were a period of manifold change, because authorities and administration alternated between Russians/Soviets and the Chinese. In 1920, the Soviet Union lost its

[14] Chinese historians usually dispute 1898 as the city's foundation date by pointing to the century-long settlement of the region. For the debate see Søren Clausen and Stig Thøgersen, *The Making of a Chinese City. History and Historiography in Harbin* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1995).

[15] "Russians in Harbin: Capital of Manchuria Today Has 60,000 Population. Rapid Growth of the City," *The Washington Post*, March 20, 1904, A12.

[16] Mark Gamsa, "The Epidemic of Pneumonic Plague in Manchuria 1910–1911," *Past and Present* 190 (Feb. 2006): 147–83; Carl F. Nathan, *Plague Prevention and Politics in Manchuria 1910–1931* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1967).

[17] Cornelia Knab, "Plague Times. Scientific Internationalism and the Manchurian Plague of 1910/1911," *Itinerario* 35 (2011): 87–105.

exterritorial areas surrounding the railway, leading to a change in the legal status of the Russians in Northeast China—and, of course, Harbin.[18] For the Russians, Harbin had served as a strategic centre, but even after 1920 the city remained a hub for people and goods moving between the Soviet Union, Japan, China, and the world. The ever-shifting power relations and responsibilities during these years created various social and cultural frictions.[19] But at least until the establishment of the Japanese puppet-state Manchukuo, the different ethnic and national groups generally practiced mutual tolerance.

The worldwide attention Harbin gained right from its founding is documented in press reports, travel guides, and encyclopaedias. They provide evidence that a place once virtually unknown had managed to bring itself rapidly into contemporary Western perception. The 1929 entry "*Charbin*" [Kharbin][20] in the famous German encyclopaedia *Brockhaus* is remarkable, because it clearly points to the city's transcultural character. It characterised Harbin as "peculiar" because eastern European and Asian characteristics stood side by side and penetrated one another. For Russia, it continued, Harbin constituted a door to China.[21] Interestingly, the entry pictured Harbin as a frontier town, although the border between China and Russia was some 500 km away.[22]

With its many people from different ethnic groups, Harbin was a place where a migrant's legal status could quickly change and was difficult to determine. Thus, the history of Harbin demonstrates the challenges of constructing identities—topics that four contributors address. Olga Bakich focuses on the census as a governmental tool for shaping nationalities. She explores the emigration of former Russian subjects after 1917 to China's Three Eastern Provinces and its consequences for their legal status and thus their identity. It is tricky to disentangle the contemporary correlation between nationalities as an administrative tool and the self-concept of the people. Rudolph Ng analyses the ambivalent role of the Russo-Chinese newspaper *Yuandongbao*, which was published between 1906 and 1916 in Harbin. He

[18] For details see: Glatfelter, "Russia, the Soviet Union, and the Chinese Eastern Railway," 137–54; Quested, *"Matey" Imperialists?*; Bakich, "Charbin: Russland jenseits der Grenzen in Fernost," 304–28; Bakich, "Origins of the Russian Community on the CER," 1–14.

[19] James H. Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916–1932* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002); Carter, "Struggle for the soul of a city. Nationalism, imperialism, and racial tensions in 1920s Harbin," *Modern China* 27 (2001): 91–106; Chiasson, *Administering the Colonizer*.

[20] The Russian word for Harbin, харбин, was formerly transliterated as Charbin (German) or Kharbin (English).

[21] "Charbin ist eine eigenartige Stadt, in der osteuropäische und asiatische Wesen nebeneinanderstehen und einander durchdringen. Das Tor nach China auf dem sibirischen Überlandweg." See: "Charbin," in *Der Große Brockhaus* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 15th ed., 1929), vol. 3, 734.

[22] In fact, with regard to many aspects/areas like politics and administration, religion and nationality, ideologies and education, mass media and daily social practices, Harbin could justifiably be interpreted as a border town in Northeast Asia beyond the traditional understanding of geographical or state borders. See, for this, Frank Grüner, Susanne Hohler and Sören Urbansky, "Borders in Imperial Times: Daily Life and Urban Spaces in Northest Asia," *Comparativ* 22, 5 (2012): 7–13.

demonstrates that the newspaper, though Russian-sponsored, evolved by means of a delicate balancing act. It was not an exclusively Chinese or Russian paper but, in essence, always an amalgamation. Susanne Hohler looks at what Harbin's history offers for questions of global-local interaction by examining the anti-German protest of the Jewish community in Harbin under the Manchukuo government. She demonstrates how particularities shaped a global event. Institutions and ideologies also had some strong impact on Harbin. Heinz-Dietrich Löwe discusses the global-local correlations and the transcultural character of fascism by focusing on Russian Far Eastern fascism in Harbin, which was the most important of all Russian émigré fascist groups in the city.

In his famous book on Manchukuo, Prasenjit Duara describes the Japanese puppet state as a "place of paradoxes, where it becomes difficult to disentangle imperialism from nationalism, modernity from tradition, frontier from heartland, and ideas of transcendence from ideologies of boundedness."[23] This view could actually be extended beyond the Manchukuo timeframe concerning the region. In the first half of the twentieth century, Northeast China presented a space for converting and transforming global discourses into discourses of ethnic, national, or cultural authenticity. In point of fact, although imperial powers like Russia and Japan certainly did set the legal frameworks, the imperial agenda went beyond defining the economic and political conditions. With the help of soft power, Russians and Japanese alike tried to expand their influence into any kind of cultural exchange, thereby pursuing a variety of interests. In this book, another four contributors focus on the dynamic interplay of soft power and the role of experts in imperial ambitions.

In his contribution, Blaine Chiasson sheds light on the various administrative reforms in Manchuria initiated by the late Qing government. Chiasson ascertains that the Chinese administrative project in Northeast China largely reflected the entangled histories of the Qing government, tsarist Russia, and imperial Japan, each of which was trying to establish its own Manchuria through economic, military, and administrative means. Victor Zatsepine analyses how Russian military topographers collected knowledge about Northeast China. He describes the topographers' sentiments, frustrations and the true challenges of surveying territories beyond Russia's borders to China. Yoshia Makita focuses on the Russo-Japanese War and, in particular, on the ambivalent role of the Red Cross Society of Japan. He investigates their public health programmes for indigenous communities and examines the ways medical activities in the Three Eastern Provinces of China complemented, and in practice created, the foundation for Japanese semi-colonial rule under the banner of humanitarianism. For the period of the Japanese occupation of the three provinces, Tomoko Akami identifies the Manzhouguo News Agency as a key institution which Japanese imperial authorities utilized for propaganda operations both within and outside the occupied territory.

[23] Prasenjit Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 1.

From the late nineteenth century and continuing into the first half of the twentieth, Northeast China became a centre of competing political and economic interests for Japan, China, Russia, and other global powers. The history of Northeast China and Harbin presents an arena for the study of entangled political discourses and the challenges of constructing identities, as well as the dynamic interplay of soft power and imperialism. These transcultural negotiations and processes are the theme of this book.

Part I
Transgressing Cultural and National Borders

"Vasily" of China and his Russian Friends: Smugglers and their Transcultural Identities

Sören Urbansky

Abstract This article explores lives of smugglers in the Sino-Soviet borderlands during the late 1920s and early 1930s. While studying phenomena of smuggling, historians can—besides its economic dimension—also learn about identities of smugglers, which go beyond the notions of "nation" or homogenous concepts of "culture." How was the transfer of commodities connected with smugglers' identities, which, in turn, shaped their strategies and networks? To answer this key question, the text focuses on smugglers' transcultural identities in the Sino-Soviet borderlands. The studied cases show how Sino-Soviet contraband networks were established through long-term social and economic contacts. Traffickers had often spent years in contact zones meeting Russians and Chinese before they came to be involved in complex activities of illicit trade. The studied cases suggest that smugglers as a social group working in a complex context can be defined as people who need to have special skills that develop from transcultural biographies.

Introduction

Something about the man was suspicious. In the spring of 1930, Li Zhaozhi could be seen almost every day at the main railway station in Chita. The city on the Trans-Siberian Railway, some 400 miles east of Lake Baikal by train, is the administrative centre of Eastern Transbaikalia. At Chita station, Mr Li would either board a train or meet people at the platform. However, Li was not a conductor or any other ordinary railwayman. As his name suggests, his face had Asian, not Caucasian features. Police officers, railway officials and ordinary people in Chita noticed Mr Li there at the station. But what was he doing there by the tracks?

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This article explores the lives of smugglers in the Sino-Soviet borderlands during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Although contraband trade almost always originates from economic incentives, it is not my intention to write an economic history of smuggling. While studying the phenomena of smuggling, historians can also learn about the identities of smugglers, which go beyond the notions of "nation" or homogenous concepts of "culture."[1] How was the transfer of commodities connected with smugglers' identities, which shaped, in turn, their strategies and networks? To answer this key question, the text will focus on smugglers' transcultural identities in the Sino-Soviet borderlands. By applying Dirk Hoerder's definition of the term "transculturalism," I am identifying people with transcultural identities as those who have the capacity to live and act in different cultural spaces (i.e. the imperial entities of China and the Soviet Union) and to create mixed or overlapping ways of life.[2] According to Hoerder, "[s]trategic transcultural competence involves conceptualizations of life projects in multiple contexts and informed choice between cultural options."[3] As a working hypothesis, I would suggest that smugglers often utilise their transcultural competences strategically for economic purposes. A major difference from Hoerder's adoption of this concept for migrants is that this article will deal with smugglers of whom just *some* had a migration background. So does smuggling create transcultural identities, or is transculturality a precondition for a person to become a successful smuggler?

To understand smugglers' lives in the Sino-Soviet borderlands I will be using Mary Louise Pratt's notion of "contact zones." Closely related to Hoerder's definition of "transculturalism," Pratt understands "[t]ransculturation [as] a phenomenon of the contact zone." Looking at what she calls a "contact zone"—an area that allows the intermingling of two or more cultures—Pratt explores phenomena of "transculturation" in spaces of colonial encounter. The colonial context is negligible in the setting of this article inasmuch as there was no radical inequality among colonising and colonised subjects during the period under study. However, the

[1] Various concepts, such as "transnationality," "hybridity," "third space," "cultures in between" and "entangled histories"—to mention just a few—advocate a shift from nation-state approaches to the study of people's agency, mentality or cultural creation and could certainly also be adapted to enable smugglers' personalities to be examined.

[2] Since the 1990s, anthropologists, historians and scholars of several other disciplines have used the concept "transculturality" in varying ways. As early as the 1940s, the Cuban sociologist Fernando Ortiz coined the term "transculturation" in a pioneering description of Afro-Cuban Culture. Among present scholars, the German philosopher Wolfgang Welsch is widely quoted but remains too normative for the case of smugglers' identities. Wolfgang Welsch, "Transkulturalität. Zwischen Globalisierung und Partikularisierung," in *Jahrbuch Deutsch als Fremdsprache. Intercultural German Studies*, ed. A. Wierlacher et al., vol. 26 (Munich: Iudicum 2006), 327–51. Dirk Hoerder's approach seems more appropriate for the analysis of smugglers' identities. Most important: Dirk Hoerder, "Transculturalism(s): From Nation-State to Human Agency in Social Spaces and Cultural Regions," *Zeitschrift für Kanada-Studien* 45 (2005): 7–20.

[3] Although quite similar to a sentence in Hoerder's 2005 article, this passage was quoted in Dirk Hoerder, "Historians and Their Data: The Complex Shift from Nation-State Approaches to the Study of People's Transcultural Lives," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 25,4 (Summer 2006): 85–96, quotation on 91.

"contact zones" concept still remains highly productive and applicable, since it offers conclusive interpretations of the life patterns and strategies of smugglers and other border-crossing agents.[4]

As a second hypothesis, I will argue that smugglers had often lived and worked in contact zones for many years before they became involved in complex contraband activities.

Before attempting to analyse smugglers' identities, one has to understand the extent to which people's lives in the border region were entangled and in what kind of contact zones they interacted. Therefore, this text will address three aspects: First, it will very briefly touch upon the borderland's multiethnic milieu and the relatively slow emergence of modern state-border controls. Second, it will sketch out how smuggling was carried out in the region by focusing on gold as a major contraband product. By examining two case studies of gold contraband networks it will, in a third section, attempt to analyse smuggler's transcultural identities.

Porous Borders, Multiethnic Borderlands

According to Hoerder, people with transcultural backgrounds also create "transcultural spaces."[5] By the turn of the twentieth century, the Sino-Russian borderlands were in many respects "transcultural spaces"—or "zones of contact"—in which people with transcultural biographies did not care much about concepts of the nation-state. In general, the role of the nation-state, a nineteenth century construct institutionalised in the twentieth century, was of subordinate importance. This was true on both sides of the border.

Between the early 1900s and the mid 1950s, Manchuria, the Chinese borderland, was home to thousands of Russian colonists who settled along the semi-colonial Chinese Eastern Railway (CER), soon followed by even higher numbers of Russian émigrés fleeing from the Bolsheviks. Subjects of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union dwelled in the city of Harbin and the villages along the railway's right of way zone. For the most part, these people preserved their pre-revolutionary lifestyle, spoke Russian, and maintained their religious beliefs. They were representatives of a Russian "culture abroad," and were in many ways isolated from the Chinese culture by which they were surrounded.[6]

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[4] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), quotation on 6.

[5] See: Hoerder, "Transculturalism(s)," 8.

[6] See the introduction of this volume. For further reading see Olga Bakich, "Charbin, 'Rußland jenseits der Grenzen' in Fernost," in *Der große Exodus: Die russische Emigration und ihre Zentren 1917 bis 1941*, ed. Karl Schlögel (Munich: Beck, 1994), 304–28, in particular 327. For a brief history of the CER: Sören Urbansky, *Kolonialer Wettstreit. Rußland, China, Japan und die Ostchinesische Eisenbahn* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2008).

The case of East Asian settlers in the Russian borderlands shows some similarities: just as China's three northeastern provinces were not an ethnically homogenous entity, the Russian Far East and Eastern Siberia were areas populated by people from many different places. By the late nineteenth century, Russians as well as ethnic minorities of the tsarist empire lived next to migrants from East Asia in these territories. Since the Qing government in Beijing had loosened restrictions on access to its provinces in the northeast, migrants of the Han ethnic majority made their way to Russia's eastern periphery by the thousands each year. In fact, long before the Russians erected their first shacks, some parts of the Russian Far East were already inhabited by the Chinese. The influx of Koreans and Japanese was also significant.[7] By the turn of the twentieth century, thousands of East Asians had settled in rural areas and in the emerging Far Eastern and Siberian urban centres Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, and Blagoveshensk. For instance, in 1912 Russians accounted for just 58 % of Vladivostok's population.[8]

Compared to the influx of Russian subjects to Manchuria, the proportion of East Asians in the eastern territories of Russia and the USSR was significantly higher and more stable. In contrast to the Russian émigrés in China's northeast, many of the Chinese settlers of Russia could often hardly be described as "purely" Chinese. The readiness of the Chinese to acculturate in an alien society was higher than that of Russians in China. Nationality in late Tsarist Russia was defined by Orthodoxy, the adoption of Russian culture, submission to state autocracy, and much less by ethnicity or race. Chinese in Russia converted to Orthodoxy, had names such as "Vasily" or "Alexei," and some—male migrants outnumbering females—were married to Russians.[9] The situation only significantly changed with the consolidation of Soviet rule. In the late 1930s, the vast majority of the Chinese were expelled from the USSR or deported to Central Asia.[10]

Why then, with so many Chinese living in the Russian borderlands, did Li Zhaozhi attract the attention of the people of Chita whenever he waited at the train station? Before the expulsion of East Asians began in Russia, the situation in Chita already differed from that of other cities on the eastern periphery. Eastern Transbaikalia was not as multiethnic as other parts of the Russian East. Although factories, construction sites and, most importantly, gold mines in Transbaikalia employed a total of approximately 20,000 "yellow workers" (*zheltie rabochie*)—as

[7] For the specifics of each of the different East Asian communities in Russia's Far East, see John Stephan, *The Russian Far East: A History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 71–9.

[8] David Wolff, "Russia Finds Its Limits. Crossing Borders into Manchuria," in *Rediscovering Russia in Asia. Siberia and the Russian Far East*, ed. Stephen Kotkin and David Wolff (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), 40–54, 42.

[9] On the issue of interracial marriages see Mark Gamsa, "Mixed Marriages in Russian-Chinese Manchuria" in this volume.

[10] The migrant's share was unstable from the beginning, but declined significantly after the region came under full control of the Soviet authorities. V. Larin, "'Yellow Peril' Again? The Chinese and the Russian Far East," in *Rediscovering Russia*, ed. Kotkin, 290–301, 297. See also: Stephan, *Far East*, 212–13.

East Asians were labelled in the polemical Russian press—their share in the region was much lower than in the Amur and Ussuri regions.[11] The same was true of Chita. With a population of some 70,000 people in the 1910s,[12] the urban centre had only a few hundred Chinese inhabitants. The Chinese of Chita mostly ran petty businesses at the city's old bazaar, the *barakholka* (rag fair), in the early 1920s before new obstacles led to a further decline.[13] The appearance of Chinese or other people from East Asia was less "normal" to the people of Chita than to those of other cities. Inevitably, many Chita citizens knew Li Zhaozhi's face. Only by removing the national tag will historians begin to see that many of the Asian migrants, although noticed by the inhabitants, still found ways to camouflage their lives and to live successfully in two different cultures. The section that follows will explore the extent of the permeability of the state border between Russia, later the Soviet Union, and China during the period under study.

What and who was crossing the border at this time? The parts of the eastern section of the Sino-Russian border under consideration, namely the region of Eastern Transbaikalia, were demarcated about 300 years ago.[14] Nevertheless, up until the end of the nineteenth century the borderland remained a relatively open space in terms of trade and travel. People could cross the state border virtually without restriction. Russian Cossack posts lay dozens of miles apart from each other. The same was true of the *kalun*, the sentry posts on the Chinese side. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the people living in the borderland still depended heavily on border trade and migrant labour. Russian Cossacks lumbered wood and grazed their cattle on the left bank of the River Argun. Chinese farmers tilled Russian soil. They supplied the cities in Russia's Far East with fruit, vegetables and grain. Subjects of the Qing Empire also worked in Russian gold mines, and traded their goods with Russians. The free port (*porto franco*) system in parts of Eastern Siberia and the Russian Far East fostered a dynamic cross-border trade and placed parts of Eastern Russia outside the customs boundaries of the tsarist empire. Only certain trade restrictions on individual products such as alcohol, opium, tea and gold were implemented during that early stage. But even these limitations were very difficult to impose due to a lack of efficient border controls.

[11] A polemic series of articles entitled "Regarding the question of yellow labor in Transbaikalia" (*K voprosu o zheltom trude v Zabaikal'e*) estimated the number of Chinese as of 1915 as high as 19,800 in Transbaikalia. The majority was employed in the gold mines. Chinese made up between 75 and 90 % of all miners in the goldfields. *Zabaikal'skoe Obozrenie*, 25 January 1916 and 8 February 1916.

[12] With the construction of the railway, Chita's population multiplied within a decade from 11,522 in 1897 to 74,325 in 1910. *Aziatskaia Rossiia. Izdanie Pereselencheskago Upravleniia Glavnago Upravleniia Zemleustroistva i Zemledeliia*, vol. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1914), 293.

[13] The United Association of Chinese (*huaqiao lianhe zonghui)* complained as early as 1922 to the municipal authorities, who tried to impede their manufacturing business by forcing them to move. *Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Chitinskoi Oblasti* (GAChO), f. R-15, op. 1, d. 50, ll. 13–14.

[14] Other segments of the Sino-Russian border section had been demarcated in the mid nineteenth century. S.C.M. Paine, *Imperial rivals. China, Russia, and Their Disputed Frontier* (Armonk, NY: Sharpe, 1996), chapter 1.

It was not until the mid-1890s that a commission of the Russian Ministry of Finance worked on a customs control system project for the Russian border section east of Kiakhta. In the early 1900s, these efforts resulted in the elimination of the *porto franco* regime and the establishment of a customs service like that on Russia's European borders. But the creation of a modern control system did not disrupt cross-border trade. Quite the opposite: Although customs illegalised much of the border commerce beyond the checkpoints, they often made its business more attractive. Further efforts to strengthen control, such as the elimination of the borderland's 50-verst free trade zone in 1913, did not significantly reduce the economic cross-border activities of the local population.[15]

The turmoil of civil war delayed economic control mechanisms on the eastern state borders of Soviet Russia. After 1922 the "Unified State Political Directorate" (*Ob'edinennoe gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie*, OGPU)[16], the Soviet secret police agency, took charge of border control, while the importance of the customs service declined nationwide and its staff was reduced. In fact, the 1920s became the heyday of smuggling. It was not until the end of the decade that state policy regarding smuggling switched from a "soft-" to a "hard-line" approach. Cleansing campaigns and severe punishments directed to members of professional contraband networks resulted in a decrease in smuggling.[17]

However, it was not the state policy against contrabandists, but relations at the international level that terminated smuggling. The deteriorating Soviet-Chinese relationship in the late 1920s, which culminated in the conflict over the CER in 1929, resulted in an increasing military presence along the border.[18] By 1930, border control along the border to China was tighter than ever before—yet still very weak. During the 1930s, smuggling became a political act. Stalinist terror made illegal border-crossing, smuggling, and spying common—if often alleged—causes of arrests. However, the most significant reason for combating economic contraband was not the Great Terror but the Japanese establishment of Manchukuo—a Japanese puppet state in China's Northeast—that triggered a hysterical war scare in the Soviet Union's eastern borderlands which lasted throughout the 1930s and eventually brought the smuggling to an end.[19] In terms of the success in establishing a working customs control on the border with China, the first three decades of the twentieth century were a time of continuity, a time when economic border controls remained weak.

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[15] For a comprehensive overview from the *porto franco* to the establishment of Russian customs in the Far Eastern provinces: N. Beliaeva, *Ot porto-franko k tamozhne. Ocherk regional'noi istorii Rossiiskogo protektsionizma* (Vladivostok: Dal'nauka, 2003).

[16] From 1922 to 1923 called GPU (*Gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie*). It was absorbed into the NKVD in 1934.

[17] For the state policy against contraband trade in the Soviet Far East during the 1920s, see A. Popenko, *Opyt bor'by s kontrabandoi na Dal'nem Vostoke Rossii (1884 – konets 20-kh gg. XX v.)* (Khabarovsk: Khabarovskii pogranichnyi institut FSB Rossii, 2009), 72–118.

[18] See, for instance, Urbansky, *Kolonialer Wettstreit*, 136–43.

[19] Stephan, *Far East*, 233–5.

Gold Fever on Both Riverbanks

The second section will explore how smuggling was carried out in the border regions. As we have seen, smuggling, as well as the fight against it, was a persistent phenomenon in the Sino-Russian borderlands. The volume and composition of export and import contraband varied over time. Both depended on many factors, such as smuggling for personal consumption or for resale, supply and demand on both sides of the border, the price and convertibility of the rouble, the harshness of punishment meted out to smugglers, the success of agitprop campaigns among the borderland population, etc.

Two products were especially popular at all times among contrabandists: gold and alcohol. Reasons for the illegal import of alcohol were similar to those for the illegal export of gold, with the most important being a substantial difference in market prices between China and Russia. The illegal trade of both was often interrelated. There was a quite important difference though between gold and alcohol, because the gold was traded globally, and alcohol remained a local or regional trade item with a shorter supply chain. Alcohol (*spirit*) and alcoholic products (such as *vodka* and *baijiu*) were the key import good smuggled into Russia, mainly produced on the Chinese side of the border and predominantly consumed by Russians.[20] The Chinese soon became the chief vodka suppliers for the Russian border population, catalysing in return the smuggling of gold, since the precious metal was also a major medium of exchange for Russian import contraband. In the following, I will focus on gold as a major smuggling ware, since it was a globally traded and smuggled item, with obvious links between trans-local collaborations in networks and world markets. It involved many different people in a highly complex supply chain of diggers, smugglers and traffickers.

Long before the tsarist government in St Petersburg considered implementing effective economic supervision along its Asian state border, the illegal gold trade had become an important factor in the borderland economy. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the discovery of gold triggered a rush to the Amur. The thousands of middle-class fortune seekers, "predators" (*khishchiniki*), peasants and drifters who went to try their luck came from neighbouring regions and other areas of Russia, China, and some even from abroad. Gold seekers dug along the border river's two banks, regardless of their nationality. In the 1880s, the "California on Amur" in the northernmost part of Manchuria attracted several hundred Russians from the broader Amur region. They had crossed the river to

[20] For the illegal production of alcohol and its contraband networks in the Sino-Russian borderlands, as well as its impact on morals, health, and security, see Sören Urbansky, "Der betrunkene Kosake: Schmuggel im sino-russischen Grenzland (circa 1860–1930)" in Globalisierung imperial und sozialistisch. *Russland und die Sowjetunion* in der Gobalgeschichte 1851–1991, ed. Martin Aust (Frankurt/Main: Campus 2013), 301–329.

engage in illegal gold mining on the Chinese bank in close proximity to Chinese miners, and they founded the short-lived *Zheltuga Republic*. Years later, similar "transnational endeavours" emerged on the Russian side.[21]

The gold mining industry became a significant economic sector on both sides of the border rivers. By the turn of the century, dozens of gold mines existed in Northern Heilongjiang Province in the vicinity of Heihe and Nenjiang (Mergen) as well as in northern Hulunbei'er, owned mainly by Chinese, Russian, British and American entrepreneurs.[22] Gold mining was an even more important industry on the Russian side. In Transbaikalia alone, not to mention the Amur or other regions of eastern Russia, there were 149 gold mines, almost half of which were in the Eastern Transbaikalia borderlands next to China. The annual average yield lay above 200 *pud* (3.28 t), compared to 110 *pud* (1.8 t) in the Heilongjiang mines.[23] Although the gold mining declined after 1901 in private and state-owned mines, the number of gold-diggers increased sharply. 17,210 workers, most of them Chinese subjects, were employed in the mines of Transbaikalia in 1909.[24] In the Amur goldfields, the situation was similar. The proportion of Chinese menial labourers rose from 15 % in 1900 to 76 % in 1915.[25] Not until the late 1920s did the share of Chinese workers decline appreciably.

When does cross-border trade become smuggling? Often people at the border did not regard their trade activities as a criminal act. For generations they had been accustomed to buying everyday necessities on the other side of the border without being controlled. Therefore, smuggling was not the concept that these people held. Many saw themselves as traders, because the borderline between the two empires had for decades, in Transbaikalia even for centuries, only been a border by definition, but not by substantial enforcement. An exception consisted however of entrepreneurs involved in gold, opium and alcohol smuggling. These goods had been banned from the export and import trade since the 1860s, long before custom posts were established.

Although gold was traded globally, the ways in which it reached the world market often depended on local networks. Through which channels was it smuggled, then? Who received the precious metal on the Chinese side? And how much of it was smuggled? If measured in lost customs revenue, the smuggling of Russian and later Soviet gold was the most significant contraband item. The annual outflow

[21] For the history of *Zheltuga Republic* and its mythological afterlife, see Mark Gamsa, "California on the Amur, or the *Zheltuga Republic* in Manchuria (1883–86)," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 81,2 (April 2003): 236–66.

[22] Concerning gold mining in Manchuria, see, for example, B. Torgashev, "Zoloto v Man'chzhurii," *Vestnik Man'chzhurii* 8 (1928): 47–52; V. Kormazov, "Zolotopromyshlennost' v Kheiluntszianskoi provintsii," *Vestnik Man'chzhurii* 3 (1927): 41–4.

[23] *Obzor Zabaikal'skoi oblasti za 1910 god*, [Chita, 1911], 63–9; Kormazov, "Zolotopromyshlennost'," 41.

[24] Compared to 4,686 workers in 1897 and 7,710 in 1901. *Obzor*, 69–70. A similar number worked in the mines and goldfields on the Chinese side. Ibid., 41.

[25] Stephan, *Far East*, 73.

of smuggled gold from Russia to China was an estimated 150 *pud* (2.46 t) up to and during World War I, and declined to approximately 80 *pud* (1.31 t) per annum in the mid-1920s. In other words: 20–60 % of the annual gold production was smuggled out of the Russian Far East by Chinese men and women during the last three decades of tsarist Russia.[26] As already mentioned, another major reason for gold smuggling was the difference in market price. While in 1927 the Soviet government price was 1.29 roubles per gram, the price on the Chinese market was almost 2 roubles.[27]

Up until the October Revolution, attempts by the central and regional governments to stop the illegal sale of gold abroad were often challenged by Russian mining companies, which heavily relied on the cheap labour force.[28] Chinese seasonal workers formed a major group of gold smugglers when they returned home for the winter months. High numbers of migrant gold miners and the insufficient border controls made this smuggling channel the most rewarding.[29] But various alternative contact zones existed between Russians and Chinese through which smuggling activities were carried out, such as grocery stores in the border villages where Cossacks purchased daily necessities and vodka, often in exchange for gold. Almost every day, custom officers arrested train passengers at the border train station of Manzhouli, the majority being Chinese merchants who were frequently caught with thousands of Russian roubles and gold, the weight of which was specified in the protocols in *funt* and not *zolotnik*.[30] It had been purchased in Irkutsk, Chita, or the gold mines and, as rumour had it, was sold in one or other of the first major train stations on Chinese soil: Manzhouli, Zhalainuo'er and Haila'er.[31] But the searched passengers and the customers that frequented the shops in the borderlands were only the tip of the iceberg. Contrabandists knew that they could by-pass customs guards easily. If they travelled by train, they disembarked at Matsievskaia, Dauriia, or Sharasun, the last stations on Russian territory. On their arrival in the dusty steppe villages, they consigned the smuggled goods to mounted accomplices, many of whom were Russians. The border beyond the few control posts remained almost uncontrolled and the gold passed the border smoothly on horseback.[32] If an unlikely eventuality

[26] Kormazov, "Zolotopromyshlennost'," 46. In 1923, one third of the excavated gold in the Soviet East disappeared into the Chinese market. According to official data in 1925, 250 *pud* (4.1 t) of Soviet gold, or five million roubles, were smuggled to China. See Popenko, *Opyt*, 114.

[27] The illegal export of gold declined significantly in the late 1920s. Ibid., 114.

[28] The wage difference was not significant. In low-paid employment—the only sector in which people of both nations competed—the wages for Russian workers in Transbaikalia in 1916 were 10–20 % higher than those of their Chinese colleagues. *Zabaikal'skoe Obozrenie*, February 8, 1916.

[29] GAChO f. 107, op. 1, d. 125, l. 365.

[30] Old Russian units of measurement. One *funt* equals 409.5 g and one *zolotnik* is 4.26 g.

[31] GAChO f. 13, op. 2, d. 55, l. 2–2 obl. For further examples, see ll. 31–7 of the same file. Reports written by Russian customs officers at Manzhouli station reveal that almost every day in the winter of 1916 train passengers were caught with contraband gold. See: GAChO f. 78, op. 3, d. 77, ll. 2, 12–3, 15.

[32] GAChO f. 13, op. 2, d. 56, ll. 142, 144.

occurred and a contrabandist was caught somewhere, there were ways to negotiate with the authorities. Cossacks and customs officers were themselves often corrupt. Many were addicted to contraband vodka that was illegally imported from Manchuria. Instead of guarding the frontiers against smugglers, they became smugglers themselves.

By 1930, international confrontations had led to a considerable tightening of controls on the border. Crossing the Sino-Soviet border became increasingly difficult. Although the smuggling trade had attracted members of virtually every ethnicity and social group, it was no longer the ordinary gold miner or train passenger who smuggled the contraband. As opposed to the low risks of smuggling alcohol on the regional level, gold smuggling had become increasingly hazardous. Consequently, different smuggling networks emerged and new strategies of contraband trade had to be implemented.

Vasily's "Russian Connection" and Ianechek's Old Friend

In the third and final section, we shall return to Li Zhaozhi. We will learn that the Chita-based Chinaman was not just some ordinary train-spotter. But was he a typical gold smuggler of his time? Did gold smugglers around 1930 differ from other contrabandists? Li's career may exemplify how customs offenders utilised their transcultural identities for economic purposes. Smugglers' mentalities, however, are hard to detect in historical sources. As is the case with other "subaltern groups," there is little archival evidence on the life of this marginalised group. The best way to explore smugglers' transcultural identities (and analyse the sophistication of contraband networks as well as the striking "openness" of the Sino-Soviet border around the year 1930) is to examine transcripts of arrested smugglers, in which the detainees were asked about their illegal careers and contacts with the "other side." Many of these transcripts are now accessible to historians.[33] I will focus on two representative cases of Chinese and Russians in the Soviet borderlands

[33] The regional archives in Chita (GAChO) alone have several thousand protocols of arrested smugglers on file. The earliest files date back to the years shortly after the Russo-Japanese War. Most of the cases were filed in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The first *opis'* of *fond* R-1243 "Zabaikal'skaia tamozhnia" alone has 1,703 files with "information on confiscated goods [*svedeniia o tovarakh zaderzhanykh*]," i.e. smuggling cases from 1930–37 (but mainly 1930–32). Soviet and Chinese subjects accounted for approximately the same numbers. Most of the questionnaires contain a list of confiscated items, the circumstances of the arrest (how far away from the state border the smuggler was when caught, whether the detained person offered resistance, etc.), interrogation protocols (including the smuggler's full name, age, place of birth, nationality, religion, education, legal and financial status, number of children, military service, party membership, political past), testimonies of eyewitnesses and family members, and, sometimes, the sentence. From the early 1930s on, questionnaires become unusable sources, because the authorities creating them were driven by political incentives.

neighbouring China.[34] Both examples of Soviet-Chinese contrabandist networks operating in Transbaikalia and beyond in the years 1929–1931 will help exemplify how transnational networks functioned during that time, and to what extent their members had transcultural identities.

The first case: the reader has already made the acquaintance of Mr Li at Chita Station. There are, however, more Chinese nationals involved in this story. The most prominent among them is "Vasily." "Vasily" (the source only reveals his nickname) was a tall man of around 30 years of age. Fluent in Russian and dressed in a "Russian-Transbaikalian style"[35] with a short black fur coat and a hat of the same material down to his ears, he was well assimilated. "Vasily," like many other Chinese in the Soviet borderlands, had been a migrant worker and lived in Chita since the beginning of the Russian Civil War. "Vasily" worked his way up to become a marketer. Until the mid-1920s he ran a vegetable stall at the *barakholka*, the city's central market and a major contact zone between the Chinese and Russians of Chita (Fig. 1). It was not the last step of his career ladder. He and his companion, who the people of Chita called "Farmer" (*Krest'ianin*), did not simply sell cucumbers and onions at the main bazaar, but had a more remunerative side-line. They secretly bought nuggets and gold-bearing sand from Soviet and Chinese miners working in gold camps in Eastern Transbaikalia, and smuggled the metal to Manchuria. What awakened the suspicions of the Soviet authorities was the fact that they—like Mr Li—were frequently seen at Chita railway station whenever a train was leaving for Vladivostok. As it turned out, they employed a housewife, Maria Zemliakova, as a courier to bring the gold from Chita to Vladivostok, where it was handed over to other Chinese men who smuggled it into China.

How did it all work? Zemliakova successfully travelled three times from Chita to Vladivostok as a secret messenger between winter 1929 and spring 1930. "Vasily" and "Farmer" provided Zemliakova with gold and money in Chita. Ms Zemliakova, with a degree from an agricultural school, carried the goods during her train rides in her luggage, covered in bed linen or other harmless belongings. On her first journey, still anxious, she only took the 4,400 roubles and refused to smuggle the gold. After this first successful trip she grew bolder and accepted both gold and money. She then travelled once a month, each time carrying at least one *funt* of gold and hundreds, sometimes thousands of roubles. Upon her first arrival in Vladivostok, she waited for "Vasily" to arrive from Chita in Semenov Street, near the bazaar, as agreed. They met in house number 7 together with another Chinese man, who spoke good Russian but lived with two Chinese women. Zemliakova learned from "Vasily" that this corpulent gentleman had owned a company during the *New Economic Policy* of the 1920s, but after losing his

[34] The two examined examples are not one-off cases. Both reflect a typical pattern of smuggling at a time when border controls were becoming increasingly tight. See, for instance, the interrogations of the Chinese gold seeker Chu Jian, arrested in December 1930, as one among hundreds of filed cases with similar smuggling patterns. GAChO f. R-1243, op. 1, d. 980, ll. 1–11 obl.

[35] GAChO f. R-1243, op. 1, d. 1360, l. 4.

Fig. 1 The *barakholka*—the principal marketplace in Chita in 1922 (*Source*: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington)

business he had not sunken into poverty. She was to meet him only once. Soon afterwards, the wealthy Chinese man left Vladivostok for Manchuria. On her second and third trip to the Golden Horn, Maria Zemliakova's liaison man was a "Chinese doctor" [*doktor-kitaiets*]. Her services were well paid. For the first trip, Ms Zemliakova was rewarded with 175 roubles, later with 200 roubles each time.[36] The source does not disclose why the gold was taken on a detour via Vladivostok, or how the gold eventually made its way to China. It is likely that the smuggling ring operated from Vladivostok. The Chinese most likely channelled the gold from Vladivostok onwards to Manchuria, or traded the gold in Vladivostok for foreign money if the exchange rate was in their favour, and then smuggled the hard currency further to China. The network seems to have functioned well, but by 1930 vigilant state authorities had also begun to focus on contraband networks in the hinterland.

Zemliakova's successful travels ended on her fourth trip on 27 March 1930 at Karymskaia station, 35 miles east of Chita, when train no. 62 was searched. She threw her belongings into the vestibule of the carriage. But this did not save her. OGPU officers found in Maria Zemliakova's luggage 1,342 g of gold and 1,755 roubles, of which only 55 roubles belonged to her. The police did not get hold of "Farmer," though, who was on the same train. He was sitting in another carriage and most likely disappeared in the nick of time. The whereabouts of "Vasily" remained unknown.[37] Why did the police not arrest him or "Farmer," the second "Russian Chinese" [*russkii kitaets*]?[38] The OGPU was clearly interested in catching the two Chinese red-handed. The house of "Vasily" in Chita, where Zemliakova was seen several times, had been searched beforehand by the OGPU. "Farmer" shared the apartment with "Vasily," who had already been arrested in the past. The authorities certainly knew who the backers were.

The police's determined search of two other Chinese passengers in the same carriage came to Zemliakova's surprise. She did not know that "Vasily" and

[36] GAChO f. R-1243, op. 1, d. 1360, ll. 6–7.
[37] GAChO f. R-1243, op. 1, d. 1360, ll. 20–1.
[38] GAChO f. R-1243, op. 1, d. 1360, l. 18.

"Farmer" had installed a tight surveillance net around her: Li Zhaozhi, whom the reader knows from Chita's main railway station, and Kang Xintian.[39] Like Ms Zemliakova, both men were searched on the spot. Li, an officially unemployed man, had 101 roubles in his pockets, the factory worker Kang only 40 roubles.[40] A large amount of money for poorly paid men, but certainly not enough for smugglers. Nevertheless, the OGPU patrol arrested all three of them. The officers knew that Li and Kang shared a flat on Shirokaia Street in Chita. Both were close friends with "Vasily" and "Farmer." According to the testimony of a Chinese witness in Chita, also interrogated by the OGPU, the four Chinese men acted as a team with Maria Zemliakova as their Russian "face:"

> This "Vasily" often travelled around, but always left Chita eastbound in the direction of Vladivostok and the two Chinese men Li Zhaozhi and Kang Xintian [...] met him at the station. I concluded that "Vasily" purchased gold and Li Zhaozhi was his aide. Once when seeking work I left Chita for the village of Tsalungui. I did not find a job and on my way back Li Zhaozhi approached me, asking whether I had brought some gold by chance. He assumed I was a gold miner. I told him that I didn't have any gold and when I asked him what his inquiry was about he did not say a word and left.
>
> There was gossip among the Chinese [in town]. They all knew "Vasily" was involved in the gold business, buying it somewhere and distributing it through this Russian woman. [...] She [Maria Zemliakova—S. U.] always came to the train station on her own, but was followed by Li Zhaozhi. Once she had entered the carriage Li shadowed her. On her last trip, when she was arrested, [...] she was given the gold either by "Vasily" or his companion "Farmer." One of the two boarded the same train but travelled in another coach, but the two Chinese Li Zhaozhi and Kang Xintian sat in the woman's coach to observe her.[41]

Interestingly, the young interrogated Chinese person refers to "Vasily" without mentioning any Chinese name. Why did the Chinese witness use the nickname, although he recalled that he had seen "Vasily" at his house and thus might have known his real name? The most likely answer is that interrogated people won't mention the names of the men behind the scenes to the police—not at any price. Only the two arrested Chinese were unable to hide behind Russian pseudonyms—if they ever had any. The authorities called them by their proper Chinese names. It is no secret that smugglers use different pseudonyms. Whether the two detained Chinese were, like Zemliakova, scapegoats for "Vasily" and "Farmer," who controlled the group, remains unclear.

Maria Zemliakova seemed to fit the needs of the Chinese smugglers perfectly: a typical Russian lady did not attract as much attention as a Chinese passenger on a Soviet train, and was less likely to be searched by the police. Moreover, she had never lived in China, did not speak any Chinese, nor was she acquainted with Chinese culture. If Ms Zemliakova had had a similar transcultural background to "Vasily" and "Farmer," then the Chinese "Vasily" and "Farmer" wouldn't have

[39] We only know the Cyrillic transcriptions of their names: "Li Chzhao-chzhi" and "Kyn Syn-tian."

[40] GAChO f. R-1243, op. 1, d. 1360, l. 20.

[41] GAChO f. R-1243, op. 1, d. 1360, l. 18–18 obl.

chosen her for the job. Zemliakova might then have figured out why the two Chinese men were travelling in her carriage, might have contacted other Chinese people in Vladivostok, etc. As it was, she remained a harmless outsider within a Chinese smuggling network.

There was something else that made Zemliakova cooperate with the Chinese men and made her invaluable to them: confidence.[42] Ms Zemliakova had known "Vasily" and "Farmer" for many years. She did not know their real names, but called them "Vasily" and "Farmer" like every other Russian. Ms Zemliakova first met them in 1920 or 1921 at the old central marketplace of Chita where she and her husband, Kuz'ma, used to buy vegetables from the grocery stalls of "Vasily" and "Farmer"—years before the authorities began to crush their and other Chinese businesses.[43] In late 1929, "Vasily" offered Zemliakova the risky courier job. According to the protocols, her husband Kuz'ma, a mid-rank official in the Transbaikal railway administration, might initially have helped them to purchase train tickets, but became increasingly worried and urged his wife to stay away from the risky business. But Zemliakova did not hesitate and accepted the offer. The prospect of easy money might have assuaged her doubts. Confidence in the Chinese seems to be no less important here: she had sometimes bought vegetables on credit from "Farmer" at the bazaar in the early 1920s. From then on, it seems that she trusted the two "almost Russian" men. People like "Vasily" and "Farmer," who lived and acted in different cultural spaces and commanded a strategic transcultural competence, could choose between cultural options. Not only did they speak Russian and dress like Russians. They also had a deep knowledge of Russian culture that enabled them to make friends with Russians who trusted them—a crucial precondition for creating a sophisticated transnational smuggling network. Many years of social confidence building and face-to-face relations certainly facilitated Zemliakova's cooperation with "Vasily" and "Farmer." Someone who called you "friend" ('*dluga*' [sic!]), let you pay another day, and appeared "almost as Russian" seemed safe to trust.[44]

Confidence in the two Chinese men did not save her from her own greed for money. The archival files to some extent dispel any ideas of Zemliakova's quest for

[42] There is surprisingly little research on confidence as an analytical category in history. Ute Frevert compiled a comprehensive overview on confidence in different contexts from medieval times to the present, ranging from politics over economy, civil society, military, family and friendship: Ute Frevert ed., *Vertrauen. Historische Annäherungen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003).

[43] GAChO f. R-1243, op. 1, d. 1360, l. 6.

[44] There are no explicit remarks about confidence as a precondition for smuggler networks in Frevert's book. Nevertheless, several factors that might influence degrees of reliance are mentioned in Frevert's valuable introduction to that volume: friendship, social confidence building, face-to-face relations, and renunciation of force. Ute Frevert, "Vertrauen. Eine historische Spurensuche," in *Vertrauen*, 7–66. Stefan Gorißen has analysed pre-industrial long-distance trade and identifies three dimensions that are crucial for confidence building among economic agents: first systematic confidence (*Systemvertrauen*), i.e. all agents involved agree on generally accepted norms, values and rules; second the social reputation of the economic agents,

an elite lifestyle. They simply provide information about a police search of Maria Zemliakova's flat, where OGPU officers found a golden ring, one golden brooch and some gold for a tooth filling worth 18 roubles.[45] She was not completely reckless or ignorant of the consequences. "Before she left [Chita] for the last time she promised it would be her last trip to make enough money for treatment at a health resort," her husband later recalled.[46] The documents remain silent about the legal outcome of the case, which for the purposes of this article is negligible.

What else does this particular case tell the historian? "Vasily" and "Farmer" were just one part of the chain, with many other people involved: a Chinese doctor and a businessman in Vladivostok, about whom the files provide very little information, Mr Li and Mr Kang of Chita, and probably others who remain unknown. But "Vasily" and "Farmer" were the key links in this chain, connecting Chinese and Russians who lacked the transcultural identities that were necessary for this border-crossing endeavour.

Scene change: the central figure of the second case study is the 36-year-old Arkadii Ianechek. The OGPU started investigations into this case one year after Zemliakova was arrested at Karymskaia station. Again it is about gold smuggling, and again there are Russians and Chinese involved. Once more, enduring contacts between subjects of the two countries seem to have helped to overcome boundaries of nationhood and ethnicity. The story's stage is Borzia, a sleepy place on the Transbaikal branch railway line, which connects Chita and the CER, one hour's train ride from the border.

OGPU investigators raided Ianechek's house on 17 June 1931. Neither Ianechek, nor his wife or their children were at home. Instead, the OGPU officers encountered four Chinese men at Ianechek's kitchen table. During their search, inspectors found various articles of silver and gold, and a gold wristwatch. Furthermore, they discovered two dresses, several suits, several metres of white silk, woollen pullovers, towels and plenty of tea—all of foreign origin. Ianechek assured them that the silver coins and the tsarist gold coinage were part of his private collection of old money, and that the children played with the Soviet silver money. According to Ianechek's claims, all of the valuables had been legally purchased. The clothes and fabric had all been used before, "some of them tens of times, others just once or twice."[47] The police priced the confiscated articles at over 2,000 roubles, and the investigating commission was in no doubt about Ianechek's contrabandist career. The inspectors accused him of the illicit importation of foreign fabrics and tea from Manzhouli, designated for the Russian consumer. In return, he purchased gold and

i.e. trustworthiness (*Vertrauenswürdigkeit*), and third personal confidence in the commercial partner. At least the latter two are applicable to Vasily's "Russian connection." See Stefan Gorißen, "Der Preis des Vertrauens. Unsicherheit, Institutionen und Rationalität im vorindustriellen Fernhandel," in *Vertrauen*, 90–118, particularly 112–5.

[45] GAChO f. R-1243, op. 1, d. 1360, ll. 7, 21.

[46] GAChO f. R-1243, op. 1, d. 1360, l. 4–4 obl., quotation on l. 4 obl.

[47] GAChO f. R-1243, op. 2, d. 8, ll. 7, 30–31, quotation on l. 30.

silver items in the USSR to sell abroad illegally.[48] Disappointed by the charges, Ianechek said:

> It is very sad that under these circumstances, Soviet citizens, whether they had returned home from abroad or lived on USSR territory for centuries, must fear confiscation of their belongings and have to keep every single customs receipt or cooperative book as long as they possess them, just to be on the safe side.[49]

His pleas did not convince the authorities. The documents with which he hoped to prove his ownership "could easily have been issued by a friend in exchange for a cup of tea."[50] Two Borzia citizens, the Chinese worker Wan Lichen and the cleaning lady Marfa Burtsova, acted as prosecution witnesses. Both incontrovertibly identified Ianechek as a smuggler. Ms Burtsova had recently observed how "some Chinese" took clothes stored at Ianechek's house in Borzia to transport them to the Belukha mine, where they exchanged the fabrics for gold and silver. Whenever the Chinese turned up at Ianechek's house, he chatted with them. According to Burtsova, the business had been going on for a year. The lady was sure that Ianechek was about to sell the gold abroad to speculators in Manzhouli.[51] Wan, married to a Russian, supported Burtsova's version in his statement. He added further allegations, claiming that Ianechek himself frequently sold contraband goods to people in the Borzia region. He received the imported fabrics from Chinese smugglers, who on their return smuggled out the gold and silver.[52]

How did it come about that Arkadii Ianechek had so many Chinese friends? Again, the biography is illuminating: Ianechek was not an ordinary Soviet citizen. Born in 1895 in Volynsk governorate (today's north-western Ukraine), father of four children, at the time of investigations he was working as an accounts clerk at Borzia's state bank branch office. But he had taken up this profession only shortly before. From 1907 to 1928 he served with the Russian and Soviet customs at different places in various positions. His longest post was at the customs office in Manzhouli, on Chinese territory, where he had worked for nine years.[53] This was plenty of time to make friends, as Ianechek himself inadvertently divulged:

> Of the Manzhouli merchants who were at my house I know only Xin Fanbin, I had neither seen the others before, nor do I have any contact with them. I met [Mr Xin] first when I lived in Manzhouli. In Manzhouli I always did business with him. But I've never sold silver and gold articles abroad and I never had the intention to sell the silver and gold items found during the search at my house.[54]

[48] For the investigation results, see ibid., ll. 51–53.

[49] Ibid., l. 31–31 obl.

[50] Ibid., l. 52.

[51] Ibid., l. 6.

[52] Ibid., l. 5.

[53] Ibid., ll. 7, 21.

[54] Xin Fanbin is transliterated as "Shin-Fon-Bin" in the file. Ibid., l. 7.

Xin also confessed under interrogation that he had close ties with Ianechek, and recalled that they had done business since 1922. His background also provides some insights. Like the majority of Chinese migrants in Manchuria, the 34-year-old Xin had his roots in a village of China's Shandong province.[55] After Ianechek had left Manzhouli for Borzia in July 1928, his ties to Xin Fanbin did not cease. In 1929, Ianechek hosted Xin's brother when the latter was on his way to Moscow.[56] It was also not Xin Fanbin's first journey abroad. Between 1928 and 1930 he had travelled to Moscow, Ekaterinoslavl, Kamenets-Podol'sk, and other cities in the USSR, where he sold various articles on the streets. When asked by the Soviet officials what he and the three other Chinese men were doing in Ianechek's house in Borzia, Mr Xin said, in fluent Russian, that they were on their way to the west of China to seek work. They intended to reach Xinjiang on transit through the USSR. Travelling on a shoestring budget, they decided to first only buy tickets to Borzia and stop for a flying visit to their "good friend" [*khoroshii znakomy*] Arkadii Ianechek. Mr Xin and his friends could not afford to buy a ticket for the whole trip to the west of China.[57]

The smuggling file leaves many questions unanswered. It does not disclose what business Xin and Ianechek were involved in during the "golden twenties" in Manzhouli—we must bear in mind that Ianechek was officially employed by the USSR customs service. It further seems impossible to assess whether the contemporary charges were true or false. Ianechek's and Xin's alibis both sound plausible, as do the charges and testimonies. For the purpose of this article, any legal ascertainment of the truth is once again secondary. The essential matter is that the documents reveal close contacts between Chinese and Russians, in which cultural barriers and national feelings are not evident. Reading these files, one could almost forget that in the year of 1929, China and the Soviet Union were at war—with Manzhouli as the main battlefield.

Compared to the first case and with regard to the concept of "transculturalism," both Ianechek and Xin had lived in different cultural spaces. Ianechek had worked for almost a decade as a customs officer in Manzhouli, a border city that was on Chinese territory but that had an equal share of Chinese and Russians. His job as customs inspector exposed him to Chinese people every day. The archives do not reveal whether he spoke any Chinese or had a Chinese nickname. Nevertheless, Arkadii Ianechek, in contrast to Maria Zemliakova, certainly had some strategic transcultural competence that he could summon for his smuggling trade. Xin Fanbin's ties with Russian culture were similarly close. For several years he had travelled the USSR to trade on Soviet black markets. Both Xin and Ianechek had overlapping ways of life and a profound knowledge of the "other" culture that enabled them, whenever needed, to make informed choices between cultural options.

[55] Ibid., l. 21.
[56] Ibid., l. 7.
[57] Ibid., l. 21.

Conclusion

The studied cases offer a new perspective on the significance of smuggling along the Sino-Soviet border. Contraband trade can be of not only economic interest to historians. From smuggling networks, and from smuggler's careers and biographies, historians can also explore transcultural identities and interethnic contacts in border regions.

Smuggling along the border to China was certainly not a new phenomenon. What had changed in the late 1920s was the nature of smuggling when, due to international confrontations, the control of the border had become relatively tight. By 1930, it was no longer the ordinary train passenger or gold mine worker who smuggled. More sophisticated smuggling networks emerged and new strategies of contraband trade were implemented. By that time, it becomes apparent how the transfer of commodities was connected with smugglers' transcultural identities.

What is the significance of these two particular case studies? Did "Farmer" and "Vasily" have transcultural identities? Did they just use their transcultural identities to conduct illegal trade? What about Arkadii Ianechek, the former customs officer? Did he develop a transcultural identity, just because he traded with the Chinese? Historians must speculate to a certain extent, because the sources do not reveal how people like "Vasily" from China and Mr Ianechek defined *themselves*. Is it, then, appropriate to make generalisations based on the "Vasily" case in Chita and the "Ianechek" case in Borzia? Of course, Transbaikalian gold was not always smuggled via Vladivostok into China. The shortest route by train via Manzhouli or by boat across the Argun border river—as in the "Ianechek" case—seems to have been more common. Much of the gold, which disappeared over time, might also have ended up hidden under pillows or in hatboxes in Soviet homes. However, transcultural characters such as "Farmer" or "Vasily" can often be found in archival documents dating from around 1930. For this reason the two sources are illuminating.

The case studies of both Ianechek and "Vasily" reveal several things: First, they show how Sino-Soviet smuggling networks were established through long-term social and economic contacts. As this text has shown, smugglers had often spent years in contact zones meeting Russians and Chinese before they came to be involved in complex contraband activities. Arkadii Ianechek had worked for the Soviet customs in a Chinese city. Xin Fanbin as well as the two Chinese men, "Farmer" and "Vasily," had done business in bazaars in the Soviet Union before they set up smuggling operations. Their major co-conspirators were old friends and customers. Ianechek as well as "Farmer" and "Vasily" had known their collaborators for several years before they engaged in smuggling. These ties transformed into contraband networks in which all of the agents benefited from a transnational symbiosis. Furthermore, the "Vasily" case exemplifies how Russians such as Maria Zemliakova were utilised as "front men" coming from the Soviet hinterland. It demonstrates how ordinary Russians cooperated with Chinese smugglers, who often acted behind the scenes. Another crucial skill that

occasionally enabled people to become involved in smuggling, illustrated by the "Ianechek" case, is that of a certain professional connection, such as a career as customs officer.

Certain other patterns are obvious: Both examples suggest that smugglers as a social group working in a complex context can be defined as people who need to have special skills that develop from transcultural biographies. A striking similarity in the studied cases is that Chinese people who had lived for a long time in Russia and the Soviet Union were involved in smuggling. These people spoke Russian well and were acquainted with Russian culture. The case studies illustrate the integration of Chinese migrants into Russian, later Soviet society. What makes the two cases different is the fact that Arkadii Ianechek, although he had spent 9 years in a multicultural city on Chinese soil, had most likely not learned to speak Chinese beyond a basic pidgin vocabulary. Not all of the people participating in these networks had a migrant past. Nevertheless, because of continuing contacts to Chinese he seems to have had a certain understanding of the Chinese mentality, and got along well with Chinese people. One might similarly call "Farmer," "Vasily" *and* Ianechek "experts" with transcultural identities. Studying these biographies, it becomes clear that smugglers used their transcultural competences strategically for economic purposes. Whether smuggling created transcultural identities, or transculturality was a precondition to becoming a successful smuggler remains open to debate. A transcultural background was certainly a precondition for successful smuggling. On the other hand, interactions in contraband networks in return reinforced transcultural skills.

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Intercultural Speakers in Harbin: The Sociolinguistic Profile of Chinese Pidgin Russian

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Abstract In the previous studies, Chinese Pidgin Russian (CPR) receives little focus in pidgin studies. In addition, few studies have looked into the different cultural connotations displayed by the formation of vocabularies. This study aims to reveal the social contact between the Chinese and Russian speaking residents of Harbin through the analysis of language contact and hence present new perspectives on the communication settings of CPR using, the CPR users' hierarchy and social status, as well as the motivations for mutual communication through CPR using. This study contributes the collection of CPR language materials by compiling the major CPR studies. Furthermore, this study presents that pidgin users' intercultural competence should not be measured in terms of linguistic competence. It is proposed by this study to look at the communicational competence of CPR, as a *lingua franca* in Harbin, from the viewpoint of intercultural strategy. This study attempts to change the focus of pidgin studies from looking for what they do not have to what they do have that works.

Between its establishment as a railway hub in 1898 and the 1960s, Harbin was a city of different national, ethnic and cultural communities, a city of immigrants, of Chinese from southern Manchuria as well as Russian speakers from across Siberia. During this period, Harbin was highly heterogeneous in its ethnic composition and frequently underwent changes in its political regimes. It was a city on the frontier of the clashes and turmoils of international powers in East and North Asia. According to Olga Bakich, in 1913, a total of 68,549 subjects of the Russian or Chinese Empire, consisting of 53 nationalities, resided in Harbin.[1]

[1] See Olga M. Bakich's article in this volume, p 145.

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Chinese Pidgin Russian (CPR) was the *lingua franca* between speech communities in Harbin. This language was not born in Harbin, but originated rather from the contact zones around Kiakhta in Central Siberia as early as the eighteenth century. This was due to the establishment of a trading port in the border city of Kiakhta according to the treaty between the Chinese and Russian governments. In the late nineteenth century, the usage of CPR spread to Harbin when the center stage for Chinese-Russian contact migrated from Kiakhta to Harbin with the Chinese Eastern Railway. It was used very extensively in a large variety of contact situations between Russian and Chinese speakers, and also between other non-Russians who had no language in common. According to Stephen Wurm, Chinese Pidgin Russian was spoken in Harbin from around 1898 until, presumably the 1940s.[2]

Previous studies of Chinese Pidgin Russian are extremely scarce. The method for studying CPR used in the Chinese literature has been quite cursory and mainly introductive. Many Chinese scholars have mentioned the existence of such a language briefly and given scattered examples. Luchen Zhao presented the historical issues that lead to the disappearance of Chinese Pidgin Russian in Harbin.[3] Laidi Xu analyzed general contact on the levels of official contact and natural contact between Chinese and Russians in different historical stages from the mid-nineteenth to the twenty-first century, as well as the influence of social contact on foreign language education, translation, literature and language. Studies turning a linguistic focus onto this language have not appeared in abundance, but there are a few.[4] Enyu Wang studied and collected the Russian loan words in modern Harbin dialect.[5] In a more circumscribed study, Peiying Wang made a CPR vocabulary list.[6] The most detailed study to be found in the Chinese literature is by Jie Rong, who divided her collection of Chinese Pidgin Russian words into eight categories and analyzed their syntactical features.[7] Her study is the only systematic approach to CPR that may be found in the Chinese literature. However, the work failed to make a proper connection between the linguistic profiles with the social profile of Harbin.

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[2] Stephen A. Wurm, "Some lingue franche and pidgins in North Siberian and North Pacific areas at the beginning of the 20th Century," in *Atlas of Languages of International Communication in the Pacific, Asia, and the Americas* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996), 984.

[3] Luchen Zhao, Haerbin zhonge bianyuanyu xiaowang tanyin· [哈尔滨中俄边缘语消亡探因/The disappearance of Chinese Russian marginal language in Harbin], *Journal of the Commercial University of Harbin* 77 (2004): 123–24.

[4] Laidi Xu, Hane yuyan jiechu chutan· [汉俄语言接触初探/Chinese Russian Language Contact], *Jiangsu Foreign Language Research* 1 (2007): 76–81.

[5] Enyu, Wang, Yuanyu eyu de hanyu wailaici· [源于俄语的汉语外来词/Loan Words from Russian], *Jounal of Northeast Normal University* 5 (1987): 88–93.

[6] Peiying, Wang, Lun eluosi wenhua dui haerbin de yingxiang· [论俄罗斯文化对哈尔滨的影响/The Cultural Influence of Russia in Harbin], *Journal of Heilongjiang Teachers' College* 21,3 (2002): 90–96.

[7] Jie, Rong, Zhonge kuawenhua jiaojizhong de bianyuanyu· [中俄跨文化交际中的边缘语/Marginal Language in Russian-Chinese Intercultural Communication], *Journal of PLA Foreign Language Institute* 21,1 (1998): 39–44.

Among the non-Chinese studies of CPR, Alina Jabłónska focused on describing Chinese-Russian Pidgin as spoken along the Chinese Eastern Railway and in the city of Harbin.[8] She interviewed CPR speakers of Polish origin who used to work on the railroad and who had left China in the late 1940s, and discussed European and Chinese ethnolects as well as their phonetic and lexical peculiarities. Bakich is currently compiling a dictionary of CPR of Harbin, using sources ranging from periodicals, travel accounts, memoirs and literary works to interviews with various former Harbin Russians, dating from the late 1890s to the present.[9] The dictionary has continued to expand up till the present through the addition of various Russian and, importantly, Chinese sources. The number of entries now consists of well over 200 words. According to her study, Chinese Pidgin Russian has two different forms, one spoken by Europeans and one spoken by the Chinese. Apart from marked differences on the phonetic and phonological levels, there were also differences in the choice of lexical items. When conveying their ideas, the Russian and Chinese speakers tended to choose pidgin words derived from the respective opposite language, with the aim of making themselves better understood by the other party.[10] However, if this is a general pattern in CPR, usage and the cognitive mechanism of this behavior is not analyzed.

Questions such as who actually used this language in Harbin, what was talked about in the language, and under what circumstances the language was used, have not been answered by previous studies. This study has scrutinized the abovementioned questions by categorizing the language materials and sociolinguistic profiles of their users. The sociolinguistic profile of CPR is analyzed in terms of the perceived intercultural competence of the CPR users in light of the theories of second language acquisition, communication strategies and acculturation factors.

CPR Outline

The existing Harbin CPR material mostly comes in the forms of words and short phrases, as well as fragments of sentences, extremely rarely complete sentences, recorded conversations, and paragraphs. This means it is impossible to carry out a discourse analysis of the material to identify the communication settings. The question of when and where can only be deduced through a semantic map of the vocabulary. The author has collected 184 entries for CPR words, of which 43 are names of locations such as church names and street names. The remaining 141 entries can be placed into six categories: food and supplies, entertainment,

[8] Alina Jablonska, "Jezyk mieszany chinsko-rosyjski w Mandzurii" [Mixed Chinese-Russian Language in Manchuria], *Przeglad Orientalistyczny* 21 (1957): 157–68.

[9] Olga M. Bakich, "Did You Speak Sino-Russian Pidgin?" *Itinerario* 35,3 (2012): 23–36.

[10] James H. Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916–1932* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

Table 1 The distribution of CPR words

Category	Number of words
Food and supplies	38
Entertainment	9
Trade and daily communication	45
Factory jargon	26
Curses	8
Personal address	15
Total	141

trade and daily communication, factory jargon, curses, and personal address. These entries are collected from the previous studies mentioned above. Table 1 gives the distribution of these words in numerical terms.

The categories with the largest number of entries are food and supplies, trade and daily communication and factory jargon. This is indicative of where CPR was most frequently used. It is visible from this chart that CPR is a language of trade and mainly used for basic communications in daily life and factory work. Factory jargon is prominent because CPR was originally brought to Harbin through the building of the Chinese Eastern Railway. Anyone who needed to find a job on the railway needed to acquire a certain level of CPR vocabulary.

Secondly, we see that both Russians and Chinese contributed to the vocabulary. The numbers of Chinese and Russian words in each category may be seen in Table 2. The numbers in this table are not, however, absolutely exact. This is due to the fact that some items come in both Russian and Chinese versions, so that the interlocutors could choose to fit the occasion. As Bakich noted in her study, when talking with each other, Chinese tend to use more Russian words and vice versa, so as to ease understanding. For example, the word for *vodka* is also *huojiu*.[11]

The first category "food and supplies" consists mainly of varieties of bread (*lieba–хлеб* [*khleb*; Engl. bread]), drinks (*gewasi–квас* [*kvas*; Engl. kvass] and *водка* [*vodka*; Engl. vodka][12]), cigarettes of Russian provenance, and western medicine (*ампула* [*ampula*; Engl. ampoule]). The Chinese words are mainly for local specialties such as *jiucai–цчуцай* [*tschutsai*; Engl. chive],[13] and *fentiaozi–фэнтёзы* [*fentezy* Engl. noodles made of bean or sweet potato starch].[14] The entertainment category consists of musical instruments from the Russian and *majiang–мачжан* [*machzhan*; Engl. mahjong].[15] Trade and communication is the biggest group consisting of 45 words. It contains measurements (*jin–динь* [*din'*; Engl. a unit of weight = 1/2 kg][16]), common goods and locations (*fangzi–фанза*

[11] 火酒: fire liquor.

[12] Wang, Yuanyu eyu de hanyu wailaici, 92.

[13] Rong, Zhonge kuawenhua jiaojizhong de bianyuanyu, 43.

[14] Bakich, "Did you speak SPR," 30.

[15] Rong, "Zhonge kuawenhua jiaojizhong de bianyuanyu, 43.

[16] Ibid., 42.

Table 2 The numbers of words respectively in Russian and Chinese

Category	Russian	Chinese
Food and supplies	30	8
Entertainment	8	1
Trade and daily communication	22	23
Factory jargon	26	0
Curses	8	0
Personal address	4	11
Total	98	43

[*fanza*; Engl. house],[17] *magazina* [shop][18]),[19] simple adjectives, simple verbs (*davai* [give],[20] *pili* [see][21]) and short phrases (*piliuli davai!* [give pills!],[22] *poguli* [take a walk][23]). Factory jargon mainly comprises words that workers use on a day-to-day basis in an industrial working environment such as the Chinese Eastern Railway. They needed to address people appropriately using *начальник* [*nachal'nik*; Engl. boss; chief; principal][24] or *компания* [*kompaniia*; Engl. company; colleague][25] and needed to know where the *газ* [*gaz*; Engl. gas][26] is. Curses and threats also appear among CPR users, as everywhere else in the world. One might wish to *kan'trami* [kill][27] one's conversation partner, or consider, not so seriously, that one's boss at the factory is a *чушка* [*chushka*; Engl. piglet].[28] Personal address is a direct indicator of who actually used CPR. As is shown in Table 2, forms of address are less frequent in Russian than in Chinese. In addition, these forms are very general, apart from those used in factories; *капитана* [*kapitana*; Engl. captain] and *мадама* [*madama*; Engl. madam][29] were normally used to address Russian men and women. The Chinese forms of address display

[17] Perekhvalskaya, Elena, 適vantifikatsiia v Russko-Kitaiskom Pidzhine· [Quantification in the Russian-Chinese Pidgin], accessed October 18, 2010, http://www.genlingnw.ru/Staff/Perehvalskaya/quant_eng.pdf, 95.

[18] Kapitolina Fedorova, "Language Contacts on the Russian-Chinese Border: the Second Birth of Russian-Chinese Trade Pidgin," *University College London Discovery* 1 (2011): 72–84, accessed October 15, 2012, http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/1322974/1/Fedorova_Chapter_Six.pdf

[19] Since CPR is a spoken language, it does not have a fixed writing system. Thus some words are recorded in the literature in Latin letters and some in Cyrillic.

[20] Bakich, "Did you speak SPR," 31.

[21] Perekhvalskaya, Quantification in the Russian-Chinese Pidgin,· 96.

[22] Bakich, "Did you speak SPR," 31.

[23] Roman Shapiro, Chinese Pidgin Russian, *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 25,1 (2009): 62–5.

[24] Rong, Zhonge kuawenhua jiaojizhong de bianyuanyu, 42

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Shapiro, Chinese Pidgin Russian, 5.

[28] Xu, Hane yuyan jiechu chutan, 78.

[29] Ibid.

more diversity, because we find that *фудутун* [*fudutun*; Engl. major general], and *цзянь-цзюнь* [*czan´-czun*; Engl. councilor[30] also appear in the collection.

How do these words come together to become CPR? According to Relexification Theory, which is used to explain the genesis of pidgins and creoles,[31] pidgin formation takes place through language contacts that involve more than one language. With the specific case of pidgin, Relexification Theory is based on the perception that there is a substrate and a superstrate language. According to Weinreich, substrate language is used to refer to the local language (also known as the source language), while superstrate language means the target language that the native speakers of substrate language try to acquire and incorporate.[32] The deictic of language flow indicated by this theory is one-way rather than demonstrating equal contributions from different language sources. This theory, however, cannot explain the fact indicated in Table 2 that the Chinese words in the category "Trade and Daily Communication" is higher than the contribution made by Russian. Therefore, it is necessary to zoom in on the sociolinguistic profiles of CPR in Harbin in search of the factors that foster CPR formation and usage in Harbin.

Social Factors

James Carter argues that in 1910, fewer than 20 Russians in Harbin could speak Chinese well. He quotes a contemporary source, saying that if the "Chinese wished to do business with the Russians, it was they who had to learn to speak Russian, or rather ... amusing Russio-Chinese pidgin."[33] The Chinese Eastern Railway and WWI brought waves of Russian émigrés. In the analysis of the previous section it could be seen that the Chinese and Russians shared a living space. With regard to the adoption of a contact language that is different from both of its parent languages (Chinese and Russian), the question of why people didn't acquire either standard Chinese or Russian reflects on the level of social contact between the two groups. This section will scrutinise this question from the perspective of language education in Harbin and other social factors, including the intended length of residence and the perceived intercultural competence among language communities.

Foreign language education in Harbin was closely related to the educational strategy of the Chinese Eastern Railway Company (CER) and the Harbin Municipal Council. A number of language education institutes began to appear in Harbin from

[30] Bakich, "Did you speak SPR," 29.

[31] Mufwene Salikoko, *Africanisms in Afro-American Language Varieties.* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993).

[32] Uriel Weinreich, *Languages in Contact, Findings and Problems* (New York: Linguistic Circle of New York, 1953).

[33] Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin*, 17.

the start of the construction of the CER. Both Russian speakers and Chinese speakers were exposed to a variety of courses and institutes, either public or private. Private schools, church schools as well as public schools all offered Russian language courses to the Chinese.

The private schools, including night schools, offered various courses from professional education to language education. Among them, the most famous language school was the Jijiang Translation School, which specialised in English, Russian, French and Japanese. Some Russian émigré schools also organised Russian language night classes for Chinese speakers.[34] In addition, the church schools assumed the role of language institutes. They had comparatively little influence in Harbin, as education was mostly monopolised by the CER administration system, and the attendance rate was low. Moreover, although church schools offered free education, very few local Chinese people attended them due to religious differences.[35]

The government's public encouragement of language education also made it possible for the Chinese to study Russian. In August 1911, Zhao Erxun, the governor of the Tri-Province of Manchuria[36] and General Khorvat, the director and governor of the Chinese Eastern Railway, reached an agreement to send 20 boys and 10 girls to Harbin Business School to learn Russian, business and economy. It was arranged that they would stay with Russian families for their study period of 8 years.[37] It seems that Chinese students also attended the schools established for Russian émigrés. A. M. Slavutskaia,[38] a former resident of Harbin, mentions in her memoirs an exchange of well-wishes in alumni notes with local classmates. The higher educational institute of Harbin Polytechnic College also offered a 1-year prep course in Russian for Chinese students who were about to start studying at the college.[39] A total of 123 Chinese students graduated from this prep course during the 10 years of its existence.

The question of how many Chinese residents in Harbin really benefited from the educational system is unknown, but the percentage is presumably small. There are no records of governmental education opportunities that were open to the general Chinese inhabitants of Harbin. Private training schools and night schools offering Russian emerged with the settlement of the Russian population, but the number of

[34] Shuqin Jiang, *Heilongjiang jiaoyushi* [黑龙江教育史/An Educational History of Heilongjiang] (Harbin: Heilongjiang People's Press, 2002), 121.

[35] Fang Shi, *Heilongjiang quyu shehuishi yanjiu1644–1911* [黑龙江区域社会史研究1644-1911/A Research on the Regional Social History of Heilongjiang Province (1644–1911)] (Harbin: Heilongjiang People's Press, 2002), 64.

[36] Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning.

[37] Fenghui Ji, *Haerbin xungen* [哈尔滨寻根/Seeking Roots in Harbin] (Harbin: Harbin Press, 1996), 36.

[38] A. M. Slavutskaia, *Harbin-Tokyo-Moscow* (Harbin: Heilongjiang People's Press, 2008), 28.

[39] R. Li, "Haerbin eqiao jiaoyushi" [哈尔滨俄侨教育史/The Education of Russian Émigrés in China (1920–1940)], *Sybirian Research* 23 (1996): 53–9.

registered students in these courses was no more than a dozen.[40] Moreover, considering the low level of literacy among the Chinese residents in Harbin city,[41] one should be cautious about viewing the learning of Russian in Harbin as a common experience. Deng Jiemin, an educator who was devoted to establishing language schools in Harbin, once stated: "Till the autumn of 1917, when I returned from Japan, I saw that [foreign] language instruction here was not active."[42] It may thus be deduced that the educational resources in Harbin were far from sufficient to enable a substantial percentage of Chinese residents to learn standard Russian.

In comparison to the Chinese efforts to learn Russian, language courses for Russian émigrés have been given far less attention and the documentation is slim. A Sino-Russian language school was founded in 1926 with 23 students and 3 teachers in Nangang District; it was a private vocational school established by Russian émigrés, yet there is no further detailed evidence showing whether it offered Chinese or Russian, or even both.[43] In 1936, the Manchukuo Government in Harbin recorded in the *Harbin Monthly* another private school of "Manchurian language"[44] for Russians, without giving the number of students and teachers. Slavutskaia remembers that she and her friends learnt very few Chinese words; the house servants were their only source. This is also confirmed by the description of her shopping experience with her friends on China Street, where she haggled with a fan seller by repeating numbers in Chinese.[45]

Official efforts to promote the learning of Chinese were also not very substantial. According to Bakich, inadequate attempts to teach a little Chinese were made at the Harbin commercial schools and there were also occasional evening courses for the CER employees. Governmental institutions such as the Law Faculty of the Institute of Oriental Studies offered Chinese for translators and interpreters for the CER and companies; but enrolment was low and the dropout rate high. Membership of the Society of Russian Orientalists and the Society for the Study of the Manchurian Region required little or no knowledge of Chinese.[46]

Records show that the people who had legitimate Russian language education became official translators, governmental functionaries, governors, "New school" founders and educators. Many of them were hired by the Russian companies in

[40] Fang Shi et al, *Haerbin eqiaoshi* [哈尔滨俄侨史/The History of Russian Émigrés in Harbin], 292.

[41] According to a survey (*Haerbin wenhua lishi shuju* [哈尔滨文化历史数据/Cultural and Historical Data of Harbin], 23–30) in 1934 concerning the illiteracy rate of Chinese and foreigners in Harbin, Russian illiteracy was 11.83 per cent, while that of the Chinese was as high as 54.26 %, whereby illiteracy among women (68.91 %) was significantly higher than among men (47.48 %).

[42] Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin*, 41.

[43] *Harbin Education* (Harbin: Heilongjiang People's Press, 1995).

[44] "Manchurian" was the version of Mandarin adopted by the Japanese during the Manchukuo reign.

[45] Slavutskaia, *Harbin-Tokyo-Moscow*, 56.

[46] Olga M. Bakich, "Russian Education in Harbin, 1898–1962," *Transactions of the Association of Russian-American Scholars in the USA* 26 (1994): 269–94.

Harbin.[47] These people represent the elite of the society and no literature has been found or referred to which suggests that they used pidgin Russian. If it is assumed that those who were properly educated in Russian were able to speak the language well and did not have to resort to Chinese Pidgin Russian when communicating with the Russian population, may we then infer that those who were not exposed, or only exposed to a limited extent, to language education constituted the main group of pidgin users? The literature about the users of Chinese Pidgin Russian consists of no more than scattered mentions in various memoirs. The question of who these CPE users were may, however, be deduced from the pidgin language material we have.

As indicated in Table 1, the structure of the vocabulary displays one very important feature: the absence of a great many possible topics linking members of society, as for instance politics, science, art and literature. Thus, the scope of the vocabulary becomes not only an indication of the scope of communication, but also of the users: it is reasonable to include people with the following occupations as possible pidgin speakers[48]: drivers, factory workers (especially those who worked with the Chinese Eastern Railway company), house servants, grocery shop owners, shop assistants, small traders and peddlers, musicians and restaurant waiters/waitresses with either Chinese or Russian as their native language. Plus, people of other professions and those able to speak Chinese and Russian on an advanced level would also have had to use CPR for related topics when the other interlocutors were CPR users.

Acculturation Strategies

The perceived intercultural communication competence between the two groups of communicators guaranteed the existence of CPR and defined its range of use. According to John Schumann, a pidgin as a fossilised interlanguage results from a form of economic dominance that increases intergroup social distance.[49] This further impedes the acceptance of target languages.[50] Thus the choice of a *lingua franca* between two groups is restricted by the extent to which the language learners acculturate themselves. Both sides acculturate themselves to a level on which the needs for a certain degree of referential intercultural communication can be

[47] Shi, *Heilongjiang quyu shehuishi yanjiu*, 430.

[48] This list is not necessarily complete, but it attempts to avoid unsubstantiated guesses.

[49] According to Selinker, "Interlanguage fossilisation is a stage during second language acquisition. When mastering a target language (TL), second language (L2) learners develop a linguistic system that is self-contained and different from both the learner's first language (L1) and the TL." See L. Selinker, "Interlanguage," *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 10 (1972): 209–41.

[50] John. H. Schumann, Research on the acculturation model for second language acquisition, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 7 (1986): 381.

fulfilled. In the process, a common choice of "lingua franca" is fossilised socially as a social contract.

Spitzberg defines intercultural communication competence in general terms as follows: "competent communication is interaction that is perceived as effective in fulfilling certain rewarding objectives in a way that is also appropriate to the context in which the interaction occurs."[51] Thus, a language proficiency level that enables effective and appropriate intergroup communication for certain purposes could be viewed as competent language proficiency.

In the field of applied linguistics, research describing communication competence tends to link the model for judging appropriateness with the linguistic standards of native speakers. This notion has been challenged in many recent studies. Second language acquisition (SLA) research into communication competence mostly focuses on foreign language pedagogy and instructional setting, and seldom on a natural contact setting. In a natural contact setting, using the native speaker as a model not only provides an impossible target for learners, but may also be socio-psychologically undesirable.[52] Thus, in place of the native speaker model, this study proposes that the characteristic of a "competent language user" is not "the ability to speak and write according to the rules of the academy and the social etiquette of one social group, but the adaptability to select those forms of accuracy and those forms of appropriateness that are called for in a given social context of use."[53]

Therefore, in the case of CPR, a crucial distinction must be made between linguistic competence and intercultural competence. The users of CPR need to "manage dysfunctions which arise in the course of interaction, drawing upon knowledge and skills, to establish a relationship between their own social identities and those of their interlocutor; some of them also act as mediator between people of different origins."[54] It is this function of establishing relationships, managing dysfunctions and mediating which distinguishes them as an "intercultural speaker" and which does not require people to be bilingual. The intercultural speakers need to negotiate their own modes of interaction and their own kinds of text to accommodate the specific nature of intercultural communication. As discussed in the previous section with the analysis of the educational situation and results in Harbin, it becomes evident that the Chinese residents' acquisition of Russian took place over a wide spectrum, ranging from those who did not have the least idea of a foreign language to those who were well versed and acquired advanced or near-native language proficiency.

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[51] Brian H. Spitzberg, "Communication Competence: Measures of perceived effectiveness," in *A Handbook for the Study of Human Communication*, ed. C.H. Tardy (Westport: Ablex, 1988), 67–105.

[52] Micheal Byram, *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1997), 11.

[53] Claire Kramsch, *Language and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 27.

[54] Byram, *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*, 38.

Conclusion

In this study, CPR vocabulary has been analysed in conjunction with socio-historical data in order to answer which social aspects influenced the usage and functions of CPR. After an outline and semantic categorization of CPR vocabulary, the sociolinguistic aspect of CPR was analysed in the light of foreign language education in Harbin and perceived intercultural competence of the CPR users. In the area of education, it was pointed out that Russian education in Harbin was segregated and hierarchical. Institutional Russian education was not made available to the general public. Despite the small number of Russian learners, many of these attended private training courses and night schools, where the quality of foreign language education was not guaranteed. On the other hand, the learning of Chinese was generally rejected by the Russians on account of their planned length of stay and their cultural alienation from the Chinese. This led to a communicational gap in Harbin where neither side had sufficient access or motivation to acquire the other's language. In order to fill the gap, CPR, as a *lingua franca,* satisfied the referential scenarios of inter-lingua communication between the Chinese and Russians.

In addition, this study argued that pidgin users' intercultural competence should not be measured in terms of linguistic competence. This study also analysed the communicational competence of CPR from the viewpoint of intercultural strategy and attempts to change the focus of pidgin studies from looking for what they do not have to what they do have that works. CPR as a lingua franca, served its purpose well as a language for certain limited scenarios, simply because outside of these scenarios, there was no need for CPR in the first place. Thus, CPR, or any other pidgin languages, should not be viewed by linguistics, historians or sociologists who focus on the history of Harbin as a corrupt, ineffectual or funny form of communication. Instead, it may be viewed as a fully competent inter-lingua channel that met the needs of both the users and communication goals in the early development of Harbin. Last but not least, this study has opened a pathway for many other possible approaches to CPR. First, the phenomenon noticed by Bakich that Chinese and Russians tend to use words from each other's language in CPR conversation has indicated a certain tendency towards cooperation between the two parties. This phenomenon is not peculiar to CPR. Does it somehow hint at the principle governing the genesis of pidgin languages? Furthermore, both the vocabulary system of CPR—which consists of both Chinese and Russian lexical contributions and the universal usage of CPR across hierarchies in Harbin—were inconsistent with the Relexification Theory mentioned in this study. Relexification Theory proposes a stratum outlook to pidgin and the usage of pidgin was presumably mono-deictic. The examples in this study are not in accordance with either claim. The reasons for such a discrepancy are worth looking at further in the light of cognitive principles and second language acquisition theories, as well as case studies on other pidgins.

Mixed Marriages in Russian-Chinese Manchuria

Mark Gamsa

Abstract This chapter pursues two aims: those of fact-finding and of understanding the image of mixed marriages in the eyes of Chinese and Russian observers. We begin with the fact-finding: how widespread was "mixed" marriage between Russian and Chinese nationals in Manchuria, from the beginning of Russian presence there in the 1890s to its near end by the late 1950s? What were the typical backgrounds of such marriages and of which locations in the Northeast were they especially characteristic? Can the phenomenon be tied to a particular period, or a set of political or social circumstances?

Moving on to the image of mixed marriages, the chapter looks at reactions to them from both the Russian and the Chinese sides. The purpose is to trace, on the one hand, specific reasons for the almost unanimous opposition to mixed marriage within both communities, and, on the other hand, to situate sensitivity to this form of inter-ethnic contact within the larger concerns of race, nationalism and imperialism.

In a recently published reference work, *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, the phenomenon to be discussed in this chapter is covered in an entry entitled "race-mixing."[1] Mentioned in it are mixed-race communities in different parts of the world, most notably the *mestizo* nations of Latin America. The Asian examples that are given are the product of British rule in India and Burma: the Anglo-Indians and the Anglo-Burmans. When the British left, the hostility of the

[1] Research leading to this article was supported by The Israel Science Foundation (grant no. 341/06). I am grateful to Prof. Olga Bakich for discussing my subject with me and bringing a number of important sources to my attention, and to Prof. Paul Werth for advice on legal and religious issues. See Tony Ballantyne, "Race-mixing," in *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, ed. Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 864–70.

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new independent regimes towards these mixed communities, collectively known as Eurasians, caused most of their members to relocate to the United Kingdom and other countries of the British Commonwealth.

In northeastern China, the region that until the mid-twentieth century was known as Manchuria, a large population of Russians arrived as colonists or settlers between 1898 and 1917 and as émigrés thereafter. As late as 1930, a British anthropologist was still able to predict the emergence of a new "Eurasian type" of (Sino-Russian) Manchurian colonizer at the geographical margins of this region.[2] We know now that this did not happen, but the limited extent to which this imagined possibility was realized makes it all the more important to try to map out the occurrence of interpersonal unions between Russians and Chinese, and ask what prevented their expansion.

Let us begin with a summary of the available information. Evidence of "mixed" Russian-Chinese couples can be found almost from the beginning of Russian colonization in Manchuria in the 1890s.[3] The phenomenon was most widespread in the frontier areas and involved women of the lower orders of Russian society, who in these areas were Cossacks and peasant settlers.[4] Similar readiness for "nativization" with the indigenous population has been described with regard to the same social strata of the Russian population in Siberia and the Far East. As in Manchuria, it was expressed not only in "race-mixing," but in the adoption by Russians of native dress, food and daily customs.[5] Atypically for the global colonial situation, where intermarriage normally meant Western men taking native wives, the main characteristic of intermarriage in Manchuria, both in the periphery and in the cities, was that Russian women married Chinese men. The opposite combination, while not unknown, was much rarer.[6] One reason for this was the scarcity of Chinese women in the remote areas, to which labour migration from rural

[2] Ethel John Lindgren, "North-Western Manchuria and the Reindeer-Tungus," *The Geographical Journal* 75 (1930): 518–36, at 523.

[3] For instance, S. Runich, "V Man'chzhurii" [In Manchuria], 1, *Istoricheskii vestnik,* 95 (1904): 608–32, at 621–22. The Russian railway technician in Mukden, identified here by his name and patronymic as Anton Lukich, is said to have married his local wife in a Chinese ceremony as no other legal method was available. The reader is also told that the husband, although a Russian subject, was "Catholic or Protestant" rather than Russian Orthodox, and the author presents his rare case as proof for the peaceful assimilation of the Chinese populace under Russian influence.

[4] An eye-witness report from the Russian side of the Argun and Amur river borders is V. V. Grave, "Kitaitsy, koreitsy i iapontsy v Priamur'e" [Chinese, Koreans and Japanese in the Priamur], *Trudy Amurskoi ekspeditsii* 11 (1912): 115–16.

[5] On the "nativization" of Russian settlers through intermarriage with the indigenous peoples of Siberia cf. Willard Sunderland, "Russians into Iakuts? 'Going Native' and Problems of Russian National Identity in the Siberian North, 1870s–1914," *Slavic Review* 55 (1996): 806–25.

[6] One such example can be found in a much-read travel report: see Peter Fleming, *One's Company: A Journey to China in 1933* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1956) (originally published 1934), 116–17, 123–24, about the author's encounter with Davidoff, a White Russian officer formerly in the army of Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin. By 1933, Davidoff was a horsemaster in the service of the Japanese military and lived with his Chinese wife in Fushun, east of Shenyang.

north China had brought an overwhelmingly male population. Another was that many "émigré" Russian women in China found themselves in straitened circumstances, and some would consent to enter into an inter-ethnic relationship or marriage as a means of improving their situation. There may also be some truth to the oft-repeated piece of folk wisdom, according to which Russian women found Chinese men attractive by virtue of their being (in contradistinction to many Russian men) non-drinkers and non-violent.

Mention must be made here of the Russians settled since the mid-nineteenth century in the northwestern province (now autonomous region) of Xinjiang, whom we cannot discuss further in this chapter.[7] In Manchuria, the largest concentration of Russian-Chinese families was along the Argun (Chinese: *Ergun* 額爾古納) River border, the Chinese side of which passed under the jurisdiction of the autonomous region of Inner Mongolia after the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC). People declaring themselves to be ethnically Russian, the descendants of mixed marriages, today inhabit towns and villages in Hulunbuir 呼倫貝爾 Prefecture of Inner Mongolia, a region formerly known in Russian as Barga. The only Russian "ethnic township" in the PRC, Enhe 恩和 in the Three Rivers area of the Argun River basin, was created there in 1994. Although evidence is sparse, it appears that in these rural areas Russians also married or cohabited with members of other ethnic groups apart from Han Chinese: Evenki in the Three Rivers area (where the "Russians" in question were often Cossacks), Mongols around Hailar 海拉爾, now the administrative seat of Hulunbuir, and Manchus near the town of Heihe 黑河 on the Amur River border.

There were far fewer mixed marriages in Harbin. Whereas in the periphery of Manchuria couples might form with little or no paperwork involved, marriages in the city had to be officially processed. In tsarist Russian law, a woman's citizenship depended on her husband's; a Russian woman marrying a Chinese accordingly lost her nationality, becoming a subject of the Qing Empire.[8] Despite the introduction of civil marriage in European countries, imperial Russia continued even in the early twentieth century to only consider marriages legal if they were contracted by religious ceremony.[9] A Russian subject of Baltic German descent, who in 1907 became the first to marry a young Chinese woman in Harbin, was told that for this union to be legalized his wife would need to be baptised into Christianity. As the physician Baron Roger Budberg (1867–1926) refused to comply with this

[7] A recent survey is included in N. N. Ablazhei, *S vostoka na vostok: Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Kitae* [From East to East: The Russian Emigration in China] (Novosibirsk: SO RAN, 2007).

[8] D. A. Vladimirova, "Smeshannye braki rossiian i grazhdan KNR v Primorskom krae" [Mixed Marriages between Russian Nationals and PRC Citizens in the Maritime Region], *Vestnik DVO RAN* 2, 2005, 111–17, at 112. On the larger problem, see Eric Lohr, *Russian Citizenship: From Empire to Soviet Union* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

[9] Paul W. Werth, "Empire, Religious Freedom, and the Legal Regulation of 'Mixed' Marriages in Russia," *Journal of Modern History* 80 (2008): 296–331, at 300–303.

condition, his marriage was not recognized by Russian law even after the birth of the couple's daughter in 1909.[10]

Another reason for the rarity of mixed marriages in Harbin was the negative bias against them in both the Russian and Chinese communities. This bias was much stronger in the city than in the countryside. Typically, both urban communities were prepared to tolerate the exotic newcomer in their midst, but they mistrusted the member of their own group who, in their eyes, had crossed the line. When, as was normally the case, the person marrying out of the fold was a Russian woman, she was readily accused of sexual promiscuity. Fears that Russian racial superiority stood to be tarnished, along with the threat of assimilation into the surrounding Chinese world, were at the root of such charges. The oldest Russian-language paper in Harbin, the *Harbin Herald*, ran a column in 1911 under the ironic title "The Rapprochement of Nations": cases of Chinese-Russian cohabitation were discussed in it as curious, anomalous incidents taking place among the lowest ranks of both populations.[11] Inside Russian society, racially conditioned views of the Chinese manifested themselves in daily life in issues of far lesser magnitude than intermarriage, arguably the ultimate form of social acculturation.

In Chinese society, which even in the republican period still only reluctantly allowed women the freedom to choose their partners, the taboo on sexual proximity with foreigners was especially strong. Men taking foreign wives, however, were not censured in the way that women marrying foreign men were; among high officials, such as diplomats in the late Qing and the republic, marrying Europeans was not uncommon and could be perceived as a symbol of status and proof of worldliness.[12] Some of the labour migrants from villages in northern and northeastern China, who crossed the border into Russia from the second half of the nineteenth century to the 1920s, formed relationships with peasant and working-class women there. If they did not settle in Russia, they later brought the women back as they returned to Manchuria. Marriages with Russians were also known among male Chinese students and political activists: thus the Communist leader Li Lisan 李立三 (1899–1967), who lived in the Soviet Union from 1931 to 1945, married Elizaveta Kishkina in 1936.[13] The eldest son of Chiang Kai-shek and later the president of

[10] Publisher's Introduction to *Memuary Doktora-Meditsiny R. A. Barona Beningsgauzen-Budberg* (Harbin: Amerikanskaia tipografiia, 1925), iii–iv.

[11] "Sblizhenie natsii," *Kharbinskii vestnik*, 14 September 1911, 3; 5 October 1911, 4. Traces of such sentiments can still be found in Russian memoirs: one example is the description of a mixed marriage in Harbin of the mid-1940s, included in Liudmila Dzemeshkevich, *Kharbintsy* [Harbinites] (Omsk: author's edition, 1998), 109.

[12] Examples are the diplomat and writer Chen Jitong 陳季同 (Tcheng-ki-tong, 1851–1907), a key cultural intermediary between China and France in the late Qing, whose wife was French. A diplomat in the Chinese legation in St Petersburg, Lu Zhengxiang 陸徵祥 (Lou Tseng-Tsiang, 1871–1949), married a Belgian woman there in 1899. Lu, who was China's foreign minister and prime minister several times in the 1910s, spent the last two decades of his life as a Benedictine monk in Belgium.

[13] My student Diana Danieli conducted interviews with Elizaveta P. Kishkina (born 1914; adopted Chinese name Li Sha 李莎), her daughters Inna (Li Yingnan 李英男, born 1943) and Alla

Taiwan, Chiang Ching-kuo (Jiang Jingguo 蔣經國, by his Russian name: Nikolai Elizarov, 1910–1988), lived in the Soviet Union from 1925 to 1937; in 1935 he married Faina Vakhreva (1916–2004), who would become known in Chinese as Jiang Fangliang 蔣方良.[14] As the next and larger wave of Chinese students reached the Soviet Union in the decade after the creation of the People's Republic, they were warned against forming intimate relationships with Soviet citizens. Indeed, Soviet law banned marriages with foreigners from 1947 until January 1954; a parallel ban was only removed from PRC law in 1956.[15]

Even more than the partners in mixed marriages, it was the descendants of Chinese-Russian couples who suffered from discrimination. In Manchuria, animosity against them increased once the Russians had left. Branded *er maozi* 二毛子 ("second hairy ones"), a term dating back to the anti-foreignism of the Boxer uprising in 1900, the offspring of Russian women and Chinese men who grew up to spend their adult lives in China became the target of attacks which, joining traditional mistrust with political suspicion, reached their violent peak in the Cultural Revolution.

Both in the republican period and in the 1950s, children born to married and unmarried Chinese-Russian couples on Soviet soil (to be distinguished here from the early unions formed by Chinese migrant workers in the Soviet Far East) were liable to be left by their parents in Soviet institutions or in the care of Russian relatives when the Chinese fathers returned to China on their own.[16] After the Sino-Soviet rift of 1960, and especially once the Cultural Revolution erupted in 1966, many of the mixed families that did live together in China broke apart: the Russian

(Li Yalan 李雅蘭, born 1947) in Beijing in autumn 2007. These materials were incorporated into Danieli, "Between the Soviet Union and China: A Pioneer of Mixed Families—The Story of the Li Family" (in Hebrew), seminar paper submitted to the Department of East Asian Studies, Tel Aviv University, in September 2008. See also Patrick Lescot, trans. Steven Randall, *Before Mao: The Untold Story of Li Lisan and the Creation of Communist China* (New York: Harper Collins, 2004).

[14] See A. G. Larin, "Tszian Tszingo v Rossii" [Chiang Ching-kuo in Russia], in *Sovremennyi Taivan* [Contemporary Taiwan], ed. P. M. Ivanov (Irkutsk: Uliss, 1994), 127–44. In English, see references to Faina Chiang in Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo's Son: Chiang Ching-kuo and the Revolutions in China and Taiwan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

[15] The change in Chinese legislation enabled Liudmila A. Babaskina (born 1931) to marry the student Guo Ning in Leningrad in 1957. She followed him to Beijing in 1959, moving on in 1966 to Shanghai, where the couple has lived since. Their son Aleksei, born in 1958, remained with his grandmother in Leningrad. See interview with Babaskina in L. Chernikova, "*Piter – Shankhai. Nit' odnoi sud'by*" [St Petersburg – Shanghai: The Thread of a Single Fate], posted on http://www.russianshanghai.com

[16] This was the typical pattern, according to E. P. Kishkina (interview with Diana Danieli, 25 September 2007), speaking here of her own, untypical decision to move to China with her daughter soon after Li Lisan's return there in 1946. Until 1949, the family lived in Harbin, where their second daughter was born. Asked about other mixed families in Harbin at that time, Kishkina could not recall any, but explained that she was supposed to avoid contacts with Harbin's "White" Russians. She did describe a circle of about ten Russian wives of Chinese Communists recently returned from the Soviet Union, to which she belonged in Beijing in the 1950s. From 1949, Kishkina worked as a Russian teacher at the Beijing Institute of Foreign Languages, a capacity in which she became well known.

wives divorced their husbands and repatriated to the Soviet Union, taking their children with them.[17] In China's periphery, the diminution and break-up of mixed communities had already begun in the 1950s. Mixed households in Manchuria, as in Xinjiang, were radically reduced in number between 1954 and 1958, as the Soviet Union had Russians from China "repatriated" to the virgin lands of Kazakhstan. This policy was carried out by means of concerted agitation in Harbin and by forceful population transfer in the Argun border area. Once the Russians were gone, the PRC government moved Han and Muslim settlers to this area from Shandong province.[18]

A bilingual Chinese-Russian pamphlet on the "Sino-Russians," self-published by members of this community in Sydney in 2004,[19] stated that their total number in China had declined from about 20,000 at the time of the establishment of the PRC to only 13,504 in the Fourth national population census of 1990. The latter figure in the census referred to all members of the "Russian nationality" (*Eluosizu* 俄羅斯族) in the PRC,[20] but the pamphlet's authors rightly considered this official category on the list of China's "national minorities" to correspond "to the most

[17] In Babaskina's recollections, most Russian-Chinese families in Shanghai broke up in this way during the Cultural Revolution. Chernikova, "*Piter – Shankhai*". Similarly, E. P. Kishkina (interview with Danieli, 4 October 2007) said that only two of the Russian wives she knew decided like her to remain in China after 1964. At the time, she had to comply with the requirement to give up her Soviet citizenship and accept that of the PRC. After Li Lisan's arrest and death under unclear circumstances in June 1967, Kishkina, who was not told of her husband's death, was arrested as an alleged Soviet spy, then to spend eight years in prison followed by three more in a village in Shanxi province. Her daughters were imprisoned for two years. One of the Russian women who left China in 1966 was Kishkina's close friend, Nadezhda A. Rudenko (1907–1998; lived in Harbin between 1918 and 1931): in Moscow in 1936, she married Li Lisan's associate, the Communist Zhang Bao 張報 (originally Mo Guoshi 莫國史, 1903–1996). Zhang was arrested by the NKVD in 1938, and not released until 1955. His wife followed him to China in 1956, but repatriated to Soviet Russia in 1966. In 1987 their son Valerii Rudenko (born 1937) moved from Moscow to Beijing, having married Li Lisan's daughter Alla; their son Denis (Li Zhanglu 李張魯) was born in 1989 (V. Rudenko's typescripts on family history, received through Diana Danieli and gratefully acknowledged; cf. Lescot, *Before Mao*).

[18] Ablazhei, *S vostoka na vostok*, chap. 4; Qi Huijun 祁惠君, "Erguna diqu zuqun guanxi de lishi yu gongshi kaocha" [A Historical and Synchronic Study of Relations between Ethnic Groups in the Argun Area], *Jinan xuebao (zhexue, shehui kexue)* 4 (2009): 126–31, at 128, illustrates the break-up of mixed families in this process.

[19] The Hailar-born authors identified themselves by both their Chinese and Russian names, indicating patrilineal Chinese and matrilineal Russian surnames. See Guo Peihuang 郭佩璜 (Leonid Go-Cherepanov) and Zheng Naidong 鄭乃東 (Semen Chzhen-Bersenev), *Hua-E houyi* [Chinese Russians], 2nd revised ed. (Sydney: Seven-pointed Star Press, 2004).

[20] The number of "Russians" grew to 15,609 in the Fifth census of 2000. A key factor here is that data since the Third census of 1982 have been calculated on the basis of new legislation, allowing descendants of mixed unions the choice of registering as either Han Chinese or minority nationals. The privileges given to members of the 22 "relatively small nationalities", the category which includes the "Russians", have a large influence on this choice and are especially attractive to the young (cf. Qi Huijun, "Erguna diqu zuqun guanxi," 131). For example, in Argun town in Hulunbuir, only two persons declared themselves Russian in 1964 and in 1982, but 2,071 persons (out of 7,012 self-declared descendants of mixed marriages) were recognized as such in 1990.

part, if not fully, to persons of Sino-Russian descent."[21] This last term (in Chinese, *Hua-E houyi* 華俄後裔) is indeed the cultural, rather than the legal, self-definition most widely accepted by people of this background. Voluntary emigration from China after the Cultural Revolution brought many of the Sino-Russians to Australia, where the Sydney-based Association of Aid for Russians in Harbin made efforts to assist the offspring of mixed parentage, and to New Zealand. Their main concentration today, after China and Russia, is in Sydney and Melbourne.

A comparison with the situation in other treaty ports in late imperial and republican China will show that Harbin was typical rather than unique in its lack of tolerance for interracial marriage, although it did differ in the composition of such unions: with other Westerners in China, the Chinese partner of the interracial relationship was usually the female, rather than the male. Such liaisons formed for example in Canton before the Opium War, when European merchants were prohibited from bringing their women with them. Among the British in early twentieth-century Shanghai, however, marriages with the Chinese were feared. The "Eurasian" children of racially mixed parentage were accused of contaminating the race and diluting the boundaries that were believed necessary for the maintenance of a segregated colonial environment. Sexual relations with Chinese women were tolerated (and were certainly common), but marrying them was not.[22]

Here the example for Shanghai was India: British racial mixing with the local population was still frequent there at the end of the eighteenth century, but a series of measures were taken to stop it from the 1820s, while the rise of nationalism caused Indian society likewise to urge segregation and condemn racial intermingling.[23] The long British rule in Hong Kong, from 1842 to 1997, left only a small Sino-English community, and although a number of the "Eurasians" rose to financial and political prominence, they were considered Chinese by the Europeans and often treated as foreign by the Chinese.[24] The French in their colonies and protectorates in Indo-China had pulled back by the early 1900s from their previous policy of assimilating the offspring of cohabitation with native

A.P. Tarasov, "Rossiia na Vostoke. Russkie v prigranichnom Kitae" [Russia in the East: Russians in the Chinese Border Area], *Vostok (Oriens)* 4 (2005): 65–82, here 77–8.

[21] *Hua-E houyi*, 5; Russian version on 25. Note that current PRC statistics therefore exclude the "Sino-Russians" who registered as Han Chinese.

[22] Robert Bickers, *Britain in China: Community, Culture and Colonialism 1900–1949* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 49, 73, 94, 97ff. See also Herbert Day Lamson, "The Eurasian in Shanghai," *American Journal of Sociology* 41 (1936): 642–48; idem, "Sino-American Miscegenation in Shanghai," *Social Forces* 14 (1936): 573–81.

[23] Deep Kanta Lahiri-Choudhury, "Westernization," entry in *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, ed. Iriye and Saunier, 1102–7, at 1103–4. On the expansion of racial discourse in the nineteenth century and its viability since then, cf. Frank Dikötter, "The Racialization of the Globe: An Interactive Interpretation," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31 (2008): 1478–96.

[24] John M. Carroll, *Edge of Empires: Chinese Elites and British Colonials in Hong Kong* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 95, 140.

women.[25] Compared with the British, the French still placed few social restrictions on mixed couples and their children in twentieth century Shanghai.[26]

The most significant community of persons of mixed descent to emerge from the history of European imperialism in China formed in China's distant periphery. These were the Macanese in Macao, the peninsula opposite Hong Kong that was leased to Portugal in the 1550s. Some of these descendants of Portuguese unions with Malayans, Africans and Chinese served as intermediaries for the Portuguese administration.[27] By 2006, when a census indicated their number in Macao as 6,825 persons,[28] most of the Macanese had already left the peninsula. In the second half of the nineteenth century, many had moved to work for British firms in Shanghai and Hong Kong, where they formed "Portuguese" communities while often taking British nationality and adopting English as their language.[29] A century later, a riot in Macao in December 1966 fostered feelings of insecurity among the Portuguese-speaking Macanese, leading to mass emigration. In anticipation of Macao's return to the PRC in 1999 and in the aftermath of that event, many more joined the Macanese diaspora, whose members are spread between Hong Kong, Britain, Australia, the United States, Canada, Portugal, Peru and Brazil.

From northeastern China we have drifted as far south as Macao, but placing the offspring of mixed parentage in Manchuria in this wider historical and geographical context can help explain why (political repression apart) so many of them did not remain in the country and region in which the phenomenon of mixed Russian-Chinese marriages had begun, and instead took part in what a recent writer has called the post-World War Two "Eurasian exodus."[30] The modern nation state, premised on the linkage of identity with ethnicity, has difficult relations with the

[25] The status of children recognised by their French fathers was superior to that of most mixed children, who were abandoned; French racial sensitivity to the hybridity of "half-breeds" increased from the 1890s onward. Mark Schindler-Bondiguel, "Die 'Mischlingsfrage' in französisch Indochina zwischen Assimilation und Differenz (1894–1914) – 'Rasse', Geschlecht und Republik in der imperialen Gesellschaft," in *Rassenmischehen – Mischlinge – Rassentrennung. Zur Politik der Rasse im deutschen Kolonialreich*, ed. Frank Becker (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2004), 269–303.

[26] This was a reflection of the general French attitude towards the Chinese in Shanghai, which was less exclusive than that of the British; cf. Bickers, *Britain in China*, 83.

[27] See Herbert S. Yee, "The Eurasians (Macanese) in Macau: The Neglected Minority," chap. 7 in his *Macau in Transition: From Colony to Autonomous Region* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 129–49.

[28] John Byrne, "The Luso-Asians and Other Eurasians: Their Domestic and Diasporic Identities," in *The Making of the Luso-Asian World: Intricacies of Engagement*, ed. Laura Jarnagin (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2011), 131–54, at 142. The total population of Macao in 2010 was estimated at about 560,000 people, over 95 % of whom were Han Chinese. See also A. Jacobs, "Distinct Mix Holds On in a Corner of China," *New York Times*, 7 February 2011.

[29] Byrne, "The Luso-Asians and Other Eurasians," 140–43.

[30] Ibid., 141.

alternative model, which interracial unions and their mixed progeny represent.[31] While Soviet ideology celebrated mixed marriages between nationalities of the Soviet Union (describing ethnic Russians as agents of modernity in this process),[32] the history of the Russian emigration began to be written in the early 1990s largely with a commitment to portraying the cultural loyalty of Russians abroad. Rarely discussed also in Chinese histories, which until recently were conditioned to viewing "tsarist" Russians as imperialists and "White" Russians as counter-revolutionaries, the reality of mixed marriages in Manchuria challenged the standard segregation of Russian and Chinese lives.

Two social groups of Chinese persons in Harbin went further than most of their contemporaries in the social and professional links that they established with Russians. One group was made up of interpreters, translators, teachers of Chinese at Russian schools, journalists in the Russian-managed Chinese-language daily, *Yuandong bao* 遠東報 (The Far Eastern Paper, 1906–1921), on which Rudolph Ng writes in this volume, and commercial intermediaries. Another group consisted of high Chinese officials and wealthy businessmen, who gave their children the best Russian education they could afford. Among their sons and daughters, who grew up speaking Russian and using Russian names, some were to marry into the Russian community. Three such cases will be summarized below so as to illustrate both the varied backgrounds of mixed Russian-Chinese families in Harbin and the subsequent trajectories of their members.

Born in Shanghai, Li Jia'ao 李家鏊 (1860?–1926) studied in St Petersburg and went on to serve in the Qing diplomatic legation there. From 1897 to 1906, he was the Chinese commercial agent (the equivalent of a consul) in Vladivostok. The Russians as well as the Chinese in Harbin got to know him well, because from 1911 onward Li was successively appointed to senior positions in the city: the last of these, from 1920 to 1923, was as presiding judge of the High Court of the Special Administrative Region. After the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Soviet Russia in 1924, Li was Chinese minister to Moscow and then to Helsinki, where he died. While Li Jia'ao was famous for his fluent Russian, his wife (a Chinese like him) spoke it poorly. Their son, known as Vladimir Aleksandrovich to the Russians, married in the Soviet Union a woman by the name of Maria Marks. Vladimir and Maria lived in Harbin in the 1930s and Shanghai in the 1940s.

[31] Cf. the difficulties of the circa four million people known as "coloureds" in post-apartheid South Africa: "In the dream of a non-racial South Africa, mixed-race people were to become simply South Africans, no longer burdened with the inhuman probing of their identity. But their status today illustrates just how difficult the task of creating a nonracial identity has been." Lydia Polgreen, "For Mixed-Race South Africans, Equity is Elusive," *New York Times*, 27 July 2003. An important exception is Latin America, where "the idea of race mixture. . . has been a central pillar of nation building and nationalism." Edward E. Telles and Christina A. Sue, "Race Mixture: Boundary Crossing in Comparative Perspective," *Annual Review of Sociology* 35 (2009): 129–46, here 133.

[32] Adrienne Lynn Edgar, "Marriage, Modernity, and the 'Friendship of Nations': Interethnic Intimacy in Post-war Central Asia in Comparative Perspective," *Central Asian Survey* 26 (2007): 581–99.

They had a son, Valentin, who reportedly committed suicide in his youth, and two daughters: Ariadna, who was maltreated in the Cultural Revolution in Shanghai and died in China some years later, and Rita, who moved to Hong Kong to marry a businessman of mixed Chinese-British descent.[33]

The teaching staff of the Harbin Polytechnic from the 1920s to the early 1930s included Liu Zerong 劉澤榮 (1892–1970), also known by the name of Liu Shaozhou 劉紹周 but more familiar to Russians as Sergei Ivanovich. Of Cantonese origin, he attended grammar school in the Black Sea port of Batumi, Georgia, graduated from the Physical–mathematical Faculty of St Petersburg University and then taught in Kislovodsk (in the Northern Caucasus) and Petrograd from 1914 to 1917.[34] He was the eldest son of Liu Junzhou 劉峻周 (1870–1942), who had come to Batumi to work for a Russian tea magnate in 1893, had earned fame and fortune as the tea producer "Ivan Lao" and returned to China, to settle in Harbin, in 1924.

As chairman of the Union of Chinese Workers in Russia, Liu Zerong was the only Chinese delegate to attend both the First and Second congresses of the Comintern, in 1919 and 1920; he later reminisced about his talk with Lenin.[35] A high-ranking official on the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER) from 1923, he left Harbin in 1933 or 1935 to teach in Beijing and Kunming. He compiled a book on Russian materials in the Palace Museum and began work on a pioneering Russian-Chinese dictionary.[36] In 1940, he was appointed counsellor to the Chinese embassy in the Soviet Union and after 1944 was special envoy of the Nationalist government to Xinjiang. In 1956 he joined the Chinese Communist Party.[37] According to a memoirist, the wife of Sergei Ivanovich/Liu Zerong was Russian and their children

[33] The official career of Li Jia'ao is summarised from various sources, including entries in *Who's Who in China* of 1920 and 1925, and *The China Yearbook* of 1926. On his wife, see M. A. Gintse, *Russkaia sem'ia doma i v Man'chzhurii* [A Russian Family at Home and in Manchuria] (Sydney: author's edition, 1986), 272. There are unfortunate mistakes in the presentation of the Li family in James H. Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916–1932* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 78–9. For information on Li's descendants I am relying on the memoirs of N. Kruk, "Nam ulybalas' Kvan In" [Guanyin Smiled to Us], *Rossiiane v Azii* (Toronto) 7 (2000): 151–97, here 161–2; and a telephone interview with Nora Kruk (Sydney), 24 January 2005.

[34] *Istoricheskii obzor i sovremennoe polozhenie podgotovitel'nykh kursov* [Historical Survey and Current State of the Preparatory Courses at the Harbin Polytechnic] (Harbin: Izdanie Pedagogicheskoi Korporatsii Podgotovitel'nykh Kursov, 1932), 14–15.

[35] M. V. Kriukov, *Ulitsa Mol'era, 29. Sekretnaia missiia polkovnika Popova* [29 Rue Molière: The Secret Mission of Colonel Popov] (Moscow: Pamiatniki istoricheskoi mysli, 2000), 39–41.

[36] Liu Zerong and Wang Zhixiang 王之相, *Gugong Ewen shiliao* (with Russian and English titles: *Arkhivnye materialy na russkom iazyke iz byvshego Pekinskogo imperatorskogo dvortsa/ Documents in Russian Preserved in the National Palace Museum of Peiping*) (Peiping, 1936); Liu Zerong et al. ed., *E-Han xin cidian*, in 2 vols. (Beijing, 1956–58). Liu's work on the dictionary was continued by his daughter, Liu Hualan 劉華蘭.

[37] *Zhongguo renming da cidian, dangdai renwu juan* [Large Dictionary of Chinese Names: The Contemporary Period] (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1992), 550.

were all fluent in the language.[38] Liu Zerong's younger Batumi-born brother, Liu Zehua 劉澤華 (aka Liu Weizhou 劉維周, 1903–1974), married the Georgian Nonna Tushmalishvili (1905–1983). The couple spent ten calm years in Harbin until the time of the Japanese occupation, when they moved south to Beijing and then to Lanzhou, the remote capital of the northwestern Gansu province. Liu Zehua returned to teach Russian there after 1949, while his wife taught Russian at Beijing Normal University. Their daughter left China for Soviet Georgia in 1960. Their two sons were arrested as "Soviet spies" in the Cultural Revolution, but survived, while Liu Zehua was tortured to near death in Lanzhou. In 1980, his widow travelled to Georgia to see her daughter. She did come back to Beijing, where she died.[39]

Alexander (Shura) Lütai 呂泰, who recalled Liu Zerong's family as one of those Chinese families in Harbin who had been closest to the Russians, did so in 1988 in a short article in the journal of the alumni of the Harbin Polytechnic in Sydney. Born in 1914 to parents who were both Chinese, he nevertheless grew up speaking Russian in Harbin. His Shandong-born father, a wealthy contractor of the CER known as Mikhail Ivanovich Liutai, brought over a new wife from Russia in 1917 and then dispatched Alexander's mother to live with his relatives elsewhere. It was one of the cases when a Russian woman became a second wife, taking the place of the first; in this case, uncommonly, the new stepmother brought after her to China a son of her own, Sergei. The children received their education in Russian schools and for all their father's efforts, did not learn good Chinese. One of Alexander's natural sisters, Liza, was to travel to Switzerland to study and remain there; an adopted sister, a Chinese girl, was to marry a Russian and depart with him for the Soviet Union. After briefly attending the Harbin Polytechnic, Alexander also spent some time at universities in Hong Kong and Japan. He graduated from Waseda in Tokyo and, on his return home, freed himself from the Chinese wife whom he had married at his father's insistence, in order to marry a Japanese woman he had met during his studies. They lived peacefully in Harbin under the Manchukuo regime.

After the Communists took power, however, Alexander's father was arrested on account of his work for the Japanese occupants and was eventually sentenced to fifteen years in prison (of which he served five or six). Alexander Lütai at first found a job with the railway and then worked as a sports instructor at the Polytechnic. When he was arrested in 1968, his interrogators refused to believe that, while being

[38] A. Liutai, "O russko-kitaiskoi druzhbe" [On Russian-Chinese Friendship], *Polytechnic* (Sydney) 12 (1988): 191–4, at 191.

[39] Shu Tao 述弢, "Nongna Zahaluofuna de Zhongguo qingjie—Ji Liu Aina xiansheng" [The China Complex of Nonna Zakharovna: In Memory of Teacher Liu Aina], *Eluosi wenyi* 1 (2001): 41–5. This unusually outspoken article was balanced with the publication of Bian Liaosha 卞廖沙, "Zhongguo chawang zai Wai Gaojiasi – Liu Junzhou zai Eguo zhongcha de gushi" [China's Tea King in the Outer Caucasus: The Story of Liu Junzhou's Tea Planting in Russia], *Eluosi wenyi* 3 (2001): 51–5, a more upbeat biographical sketch of Liu Junzhou and his descendants. The year of Liu's return to China was given here as 1926 and that of his death as 1939; his granddaughter Liu Guangwen 劉光文 was presently teaching Chinese in Tbilisi, where she was also serving as chairperson of the Georgian-Chinese Friendship Association.

able to speak Russian and Japanese, he could hardly write or read Chinese. He was released after more than eight months' detention to sweep floors and clean toilets in the Polytechnic until the end of the 1960s. He returned to his previous job in the 1970s. In 1978 or 1980 his wife and two of their sons were permitted to leave for Japan, where he and a third son were able to join them several years later. His wife died soon thereafter and Lütai felt lonely in Japan, missing Russian company. In 1987 he moved to Sydney and soon married the Russian widow of a Harbin Chinese, who had come to Australia with her sons in the 1970s. This marriage allowed him to stay on among Sydney's Sino-Russian community, and in 1988 he expressed pride in stating that "like many other Chinese, thanks to the Russian influence in Manchuria [he] had become russified (*obrusel*)."[40]

The question of individual self-understanding or identification must be raised at this point, if only to refrain from offering a generalized answer to it. There is no obligation for children of mixed marriages to declare their loyalty to any one of the ethnicities and cultures to which their parents may have considered themselves to belong. Today as in the past, some descendants of mixed Russian-Chinese couples may feel affinities with these cultural worlds, but may not necessarily want to define their relationship to them. Being proficient in both or either of these languages is also no precondition for a personal sense of belonging. Some may call themselves both Chinese *and* Russian, while others may find in the term "Sino-Russian" the most precise expression of who they think they are. Other varieties of what Sören Urbansky, in his chapter in this volume, calls "transcultural identities", would have been manifested in daily life in Manchuria and the Russian Far East while hardly ever being articulated in "identity" terms by the historical agents.

It is not by chance that we hear so little of such persons, and that the stories of cross-national marriages are now difficult to reconstruct; in a historical narrative adopting the national perspective, persons marrying outside of their ethnic group were easily accused of failing to preserve their "Russianness" or their "Chineseness." If, however, we try reading history at the level of people's experience, we will be sure to come across more examples of both Russian and Chinese persons in Manchuria during the first half of the twentieth century, who in their private lives made choices that brought them into close contact with the other side of the ethnic divide. And we may yet discover that such contacts were more frequent than the majority group within the two communities was willing to acknowledge.

[40] Liutai, "O russko-kitaiskoi druzhbe," 194. Biographical information is drawn from transcripts of interviews with Alexander Lütai in Sydney in the 1980s, carried out by Olga Bakich and her mother Tat'iana P. Bakich. Alexander Lütai died in Sydney in April 2010.

The Globalisation of Death: Foreign Cemeteries in a Transnational Perspective

Madeleine Herren

Abstract Since the late nineteenth century, processes of globalisation have brought transgressive dynamics into almost every imaginable sphere of life. Objects, people, concepts and practices travelled worldwide and necessitated the standardization of issues of both health and death. The transboundary transport of corpses, however, remained problematic. An increasing number of foreign cemeteries testify to the effects of both migration and imperialism. In death, so it seems, we can find the ultimate metaphor for an eternal claim on space. With Harbin and its Jewish cemetery as an example, the question is whether the cemetery of a constantly migrating community in a place with multilayered borders can be read as a "freeze image" of global interferences, suitable for further research in these fields. In order to find out to what extent the Jewish cemetery has the quality of mirroring Harbin's characteristic as a global crossroads until the end of World War II, the article retraces the activities of a Jewish international organization on migration on the basis of the papers of its leading figure, Meir Birman. Inconsistencies between the gravestones and the information on migration during World War II gained from the Birman papers explain the political value of a cemetery and its use as an 'archive'.

Introduction

In 1908, the English positivist Frederic Harrison located the idea of progress in the land of shades. "Alas!"—he wrote—"in the practical conditions of modern life we are frequently changing our residence, and our children are ... scattered across a huge area. There are no permanent homes, no fixed localities in modern life, and the attempt to make a permanent family grave is as impracticable for most of us as to

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make a permanent family home."[1] For Frederic Harrison, the very fact of globalisation supported the need to adapt mourning practices. He suggested cremation as a modern solution, making the dead ready to follow the living wherever they decided to go. Harrison's plea for cremation was not unusual. In late nineteenth century Europe, a group of intellectuals, inspired by the labour movement and progressivists, from liberal Jewish and protestant communities, pleaded for cremation for different reasons, all presenting the fact that death had in many ways transgressed traditional religious rules.

The idea of travelling graves and the assumption of a cosmopolitan death seems, however, rather unusual. Within this proposition, territoriality and globalisation collide as two apparently inconsistent concepts. The idea of thinking about the travelling dead seems strange, although the incontestable process of globalisation brought transgressive dynamics into almost every imaginable sphere from the late nineteenth century on. Within this development, health and causes of death became topics of standardisation,[2] while objects, people, concepts and practices travelled worldwide. Corpses did not. In 1937, an international agreement fixed the rules for the international transfer of corpses.[3] Limited to only a few states and coming into force no earlier than 1939/1940,[4] the treaty introduced a complex set of rules—e.g. a passport for the dead person (*laissez passer mortuaire*)—demanding legal confirmation not available in times of forced migration. Travelling corpses were a rare exception. Up to the end of World War II, the dead still did not move—at least not in the understanding of Western internationalism as the master narrative of border crossing rationale. Death thus remained the ultimate metaphor for an eternal claim on space, but one that possessed an increasingly global scale. And the number of foreign cemeteries increased, at least for the time period of the late nineteenth century up to World War II. As an issue mentioned in international treaties, cemeteries became a political matter beyond all practical reasons resulting e.g. from the need of having burial grounds for missionaries. Governmental activities, however, were just one aspect of a topic that was becoming a matter

[1] Frederic Harrison, *Realities and Ideals*: *social*, *political*, *literary and artistic* (London: Macmillan, 1908), 164–5.

[2] See Susan Gross Solomon, Lion Murard, and Patrick Zylberman eds., *Shifting Boundaries of Public Health*: *Europe in the Twentieth Century* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2008).

[3] Eidgenössisches Departement für auswärtige Angelegenheiten, "Arrangement international du 10 février 1937 concernant le transport des corps," in *Die Bundesbehörden der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft*, 2010, accessed 27 March, 2010, http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/de/home/topics/intla/intrea/dbstv/data10/e_19370010.html. Bilateral treaties regulating the reciprocal acceptance of passports for corpses between neighbour states started in the late nineteenth century. See Optobyte AG ed., "Vereinbarung zwischen der Schweiz und dem Deutschen Reiche über die gegenseitige Anerkennung von Leichenpässen," in idem ed., *Schweizer Gesetzestexte*, 2010, accessed 27 March 2010, http://www.gesetze.ch/sr/0.818.691.36/0.818.691.36_000.htm, coming into effect 1 January 1910.

[4] Before the end of World War II the treaty came into force in Belgium, Germany, Denmark, France, Italy, Mexico, Romania, Switzerland and Egypt.

of personal concern: due to worldwide migration and global wars, the chance of ending up far away from relatives increased, even for those who did not belong to a cosmopolitan elite.

This paper discusses the missing link between dynamic practices of border crossing and immobility after death. In so doing, the discussion circles round a methodological blind spot by pointing to the disciplinary suitability of foreign cemeteries as a topic of research. The time frame chosen for this study, namely the years around the First and the Second World War, analyses a period when societies had every reason to be concerned with the dead: International law and political debates increasingly discussed the territoriality of cemeteries as a consequence of World War I. This debate followed a procedure well established in peace treaties, where not only military cemeteries, but also cemeteries in former colonies were mentioned.[5] While foreign cemeteries had their significance in international law, and served to build new nations on the basis of common remembrance, there was an increasing academic interest in discussing death rituals and ancestor worship in archaeology, anthropology, psychiatry, and theological studies. Interestingly, both narratives developed in different spatial contexts, in a Western-oriented context based on international relations and nation-building, and in an Eastern context with cemeteries as an expression of myths and rituals. It is not the aim of this article to overcome the East–West divide described here. Although the idea of bones that had been removed from graves for ancestor worship had in fact established a long-lasting tradition of moving death in Asian countries, this article focuses on the years of the World Wars and the example of the Jewish cemetery in Harbin. This example provides an interesting case study for a variety of reasons, for it points to the question of how a diaspora community was influenced by the increasing awareness of globality in a place of dynamic change like Harbin. Moreover, this essay questions the apparently obvious approach, which prompts the researcher to investigate the cemetery, the gravestones and the names of the dead. Although a database of the Jewish cemetery in Harbin provides the most important source material used in this article,[6] a discussion of international ordering principles and transcultural entanglements will allow us to address critical questions about these findings by considering the papers of Meir Birman and his international migration organization. Therefore, from a methodological point of view, the design of this research has not excluded, but included contradictory interferences by mentioning the following aspects: First, Harbin was not a global city, but clearly was a place of global interferences. Second, the Jewish community was not mentioned when peace treaties came to agree on foreign cemeteries, but the

[5] As an example see Annexe II to the Convention for the rendition of Weihaiwei between the British and the Chinese Government, 18.4.1930, in Stephen A. Heald, "Great Britain and the Pacific", *Pacific Affairs* 4,1 (1931), 32.

[6] See Harbin Jewish Cemetery, http://www.zegk.uni-heidelberg.de/hist/ausstellungen/harbin/project.html

increasing significance of national remembrance and places of mourning far removed from what relatives claimed to be home may have influenced this. Third, Harbin is located in a contested field of national claims and cultural influences, and the establishment of Chinese sovereignty had to tackle these efforts to establish the "imagined community" long after the Jewish community had lost its former significance. Since the late nineteenth century, borders had multiplied and developed in a dynamic way in Harbin, so the question is whether the cemetery of a constantly migrating community in a place with multilayered borders gives rise to a "freeze image" of global interferences, suitable for further research in fields into ongoing dynamics on a global scale. Thus instead of following a narrative that shows that an increasing number of foreign cemeteries are still noticeably foreign, this approach discusses the tensions between transboundary lives and immobile dead in an East–West narrative from the late nineteenth century to the end of World War II.

In Theodor Fontane's novel *Effi Briest*, the grave of the Chinese remains outside the fence of a Pomeranian Christian cemetery and functions as a metaphor of spooky foreignness. Shortly after the publication of the novel in 1895, World War I produced endless fields of graves worldwide, and the dead soldiers' cultural and religious roots led to a policy of common national remembrance. Additional factors accelerated this development. The number of *foreign* graves increased due to the simple fact that new borders and migration had changed the territorial denominations after World War I. An analytical approach towards this development has to distinguish between the specification of foreign graves as visual relicts of a global, cosmopolitan community, and as a way of preserving religious *and* national affiliation abroad. This approach needs a specific "historiography of the dead", as discussed in the following section. Subsequently, foreign death will be examined from a transnational and a transcultural perspective with special attention being paid to conditions created by World War I. In a subsequent section, the Jewish cemetery in Harbin will serve as the local example of global death. In this section, the counter-evidence of de-globalisation for political reasons demonstrates the strong impact of the global dead. Although this contribution does not discuss the special case of Jewish burial traditions, Jewish cemeteries challenge both the nationalising attitude and international regulations up to the nineteenth century. Jewish cemeteries mostly remained outside of governmental consideration and were not mentioned in the peace treaties prior to the post-World War II regulations. Their opening and maintenance was based on civil agreements. On the other hand, the spread of Jewish communities followed in fact European imperialism, encouraging the participation of Jewish communities, but also offering safe havens from pogroms and the rising tide of anti-Semitism. The presence of Jewish communities in China is quite typical of the historical development mentioned. Jewish communities increased with the forced opening of China, especially in international cities such as Hong Kong and Shanghai. Jewish life developed within a multilayered, transcultural community. Sephardic Jews from Baghdad and Bombay had a strong presence during the international settlement of Shanghai,

while Ashkenazi Jews from Russia settled in the North and came from Harbin to the South.[7] The different traditions of Jewish life merged under the pressure of World War II, when fugitives from Europe arrived in Harbin and Shanghai. For this region, during the short time period from 1900 to 1950, the development of conditions of Jewish life in China assumed a breathtaking dynamism, but almost came to an end after the foundation of the People's Republic of China, even before the Cultural Revolution broke out. In this process of migration, suppression, changes of power, and escape, not only people but also objects, buildings and archives travelled and underwent fundamental changes in function: in the 1950s, the synagogues of Shanghai and Tianjin were sold to the Chinese government. Objects and writings of religious importance were sent, however, to Israel—interestingly even before China and Israel established formal diplomatic relations. But death remained, and the question of whether graves were maintained or neglected or desecrated was not debated from the perspective of international law. This situation changed after the end of the Cold War. Cemeteries now became cultural property protected by international law. In 2001, the United Nations General Assembly approved Resolution 55/254 on the protection of religious sites.[8] According to this resolution, the protection of religious minorities as a concern of the Declaration of Human Rights[9] henceforth includes religious spaces—independent of whether or not these places are still in use. Resolution 55/254 surfaces in reports to the Human Rights Council,[10] but in several cases also came under criticism.[11] The resolution is in line with the Resolution of the Commission on Human Rights 2003/54, which obliges states to establish national legislation for the protection of religious places.[12] The desecration of cemeteries therefore became an issue in international legislation and human rights. Although the dead can travel in the twenty-first century, foreign cemeteries now attract the kind of attention previously reserved for soldiers' remains.

[7] Xu Xin, "Jewish Diaspora in Modern China," in *Encyclopedia of Diasporas. Immigrants and Refugee Cultures around the World*, ed. Melvin Ember, Carol R. Ember and Ian Skoggard (Springer Science + Business Media Inc., 2005), 152–64.

[8] United Nations General Assembly, Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly 55/254, http://www.un-documents.net/a55r254.htm

[9] United Nations General Assembly, Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly 217 (III). International Bill of Human Rights, http://www.un-documents.net/a3r217.htm

[10] United Nations Economic and Social Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Asma Jahangir. http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/43f305ef0.html

[11] As for instance in a legal report for the US congress on the destruction of cultural property in Cyprus. The Law Library of Congress, Report for Congress April 2009, File 2008–01356.

[12] United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Elimination of all Forms of Religious Intolerance, Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/54, http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/%28Symbol%29/E.CN.4.RES.2003.54.En?Opendocument

Historiography of the Dead: Theoretical and Methodological Reflections

At the latest since Philippe Ariès's groundbreaking book on the history of death,[13] historiography has explained changing attitudes towards dead persons in modern times in analogy to increasing governmental decision-making and control: death, formerly the ritual prerogative of religious institutions, became a domain of secular administration and registration. The same secular institutions decided about the spatial organisation of death. Based on reflections about hygiene and urban planning, places for the dead became clearly separated from other spheres of life. By the nineteenth century, single graves had disappeared and cemeteries shaped in precisely measured rows turned into restricted places of remembrance, of highly emotional hero worship—and of national grief for millions of soldiers killed in action. The cremation movement mentioned above covers one aspect of this narrative,[14] indicating the influence of urban planning, social exclusion and inclusion, modernisation and the prevailing discourse on hygiene. In recent literature, the research interest had extended to performative activities and to rituals and cultural differences of remembrance.[15] Historical anthropology and art history increasingly discuss tombstones as examples of material culture, as sources providing genealogical information and reflecting historical conditions of life. Cemeteries and graves tell us about rituals, symbols and ways of grieving, and the maintenance of graveyards opens up opportunities to understand a subsequent generation's connection to the past. Although it is not at the centre of interest, the global aspect of death is mentioned in some promising projects in the field of heritage studies and material culture. These projects have started to question the meaning of the presence of foreign dead in a colonial context. Authors such as Ashish Chadha highlight the meaning of colonial graves beyond remembrance as "monuments that fixed over a captured terrain, the mark of conquest."[16]

[13] Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. Helen Weaver, (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1981).

[14] Douglas James Davies ed., *Encyclopaedia of Cremation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005). Brian Parsons, *Committed to the Cleansing Flame*: *the development of cremation in nineteenth-century England* (Reading: Spire Books, 2005). Norbert Fischer, *Zwischen Trauer und Technik*: *Feuerbestattung*, *Krematorium*, *Flamarium*: *eine Kulturgeschichte* (Berlin: NORA, 2002).

[15] For the growing interest in the question of burials, the rituals of mourning, and cemeteries, see Jonathan Carl Jackson, "Reforming the Dead: the intersection of socialist merit and agnatic descent in a Chinese funeral home" (PhD. diss., University of California, 2008); Robin A. Hanson, "The National Cemetery: race and sectional reconciliation in a contested landscape" (PhD. diss., Saint Louis University, 2008); Chana Kraus-Friedberg, "'Where you stay?': transnational identity in sugar plantation worker cemeteries Pahala, Hawai'i" (PhD. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2008).

[16] Ashish Chadha, "Ambivalent heritage: between affect and ideology in a colonial cemetery," *Journal of Material Culture* 11,3 (2006), 347.

I agree with an understanding of colonial cemeteries as territorial markers of power, and I approve the allocation of the term "negative heritage" to these sites after the end of colonial governance. This argument has a strong political impact and raises the question of whether cemeteries should be documented as a specific form of land seizure in an imperial context. There is indeed an interesting gap in the empirical evidence between the slow disappearance of foreign burial sites in twentieth century Asia as a result of independence, cultural revolution or simply the growth of cities, and the rich data collected since at least the nineteenth century. For India, contemporary collections of epitaphs[17] published about the colonial dead present a powerful narrative oscillating between a register of remembrance, and the establishment of an explicitly *British* history of India. It is no wonder that the interest of newly independent countries in the monuments of past governance remained small and turned into postcolonial neglect or even desecration. Cemeteries as a manifestation of more national than religious claims correspond to a practice often used during the nineteenth century: transnationally organised communities maintained different prerogatives protected by international treaties. Burial grounds were therefore protected by the exterritorial rights, and connected to the establishment of international settlements. The legal protection of foreign dead, however, transgressed colonial rules and became part of international martial law.[18] While soldiers, diplomats and established foreign communities had at least established rules, the situation was much more difficult for diaspora communities and members of what could be described as international civil society. From a methodological point of view, the development of private data collections is remarkable. Whenever foreigners developed communities and/or diaspora identities, data collections started. Even those who had to escape tried to pass on the information as to where they had had to lay down those who had died.[19]

Until now, the expression "foreign cemeteries" has referred to burial grounds with dead persons of a different nationality, lending some importance to the question of to what extent corpses contribute to the imagined community of the

[17] For example, Vere Langford Oliver ed., *The Monumental Inscriptions of the British West Indies* (Dorchester: Longman, 1927), or the famous *Bengal Obituary*, published in Calcutta in 1851 by Holmes and Co. For an overview, see Karl S. Guthke, *Sprechende Steine*: *Eine Kulturgeschichte der Grabschrift* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006).

[18] Adequate burial for prisoners of war is mentioned in the Hague Convention 1899/1907; the Geneva Conventions mention information and honourable interment. The question remained on the agenda of international conferences after World War I, e.g. for the British position at the Genoa Conference in 1922, the restoration clause not only mentioned the property of embassies but also of the cemeteries. See British Cabinet, Genoa Conference, Second Interim Report, British National Archives, CAB/24/133.

[19] The German exile press gives an example of these data collections. The organisation of burial grounds and the listing of the names of the deceased were an important part of these journals. See, for example, *The Jewish Voice of the Far East*, published in Shanghai. For the list of exile journals see http://www.dnb.de/DE/DEA/Kataloge/Exilpresse/listeExilpressePeriodika.html, accessed May 26, 2013.

nation and whether the idea of a society as a melting pot arose from the way in which the dead are grouped. In recent research, there is indeed an increasing interest in rebalancing the historical knowledge about the Western dead in Asia with investigations into the Asian dead abroad.[20] However, ongoing research into places of cultural entanglement, e.g. treaty port communities,[21] challenges the idea of still regarding the foreign bodies as dead national citizens abroad. In fact, death as an additional agency of globalisation raises the question about the very existence of an authentic culture of mourning. There is a lively debate about port communities that live in international settlements or perceive themselves as strangers, as people who have adapted a set of global behaviour and therefore dissociated themselves from their ancestry. Recent publications on global history argue in both directions. Christopher Bayly's *The Birth of the Modern World* insists on seeing in a densely connected modern world a variety of concepts and practices lacking any border-crossing aspects. [22] By contrast, Jürgen Osterhammel focuses on the ambiguities of a century in which the close connections between national authenticity and border-crossing networks produced both new forms of border-crossing agencies and political, social and cultural frictions.[23] The question of foreign dead might add another aspect to this debate, namely the resistance to transcultural entanglements in the face of their inevitability. For historical research focussed on the late nineteenth century until the end of World War II, the obvious contradiction between "eternal territoriality" and rising globalisation provides a fruitful starting point for theoretical and methodological reflections. The practices of nationalising the dead and transgressing religious and confessional borders have together created a global form of death since the late nineteenth century.

Foreign Cemeteries in Asia: Transnational Arrangements and Transcultural Entanglements

In the nineteenth century, the number of European cemeteries in Asia grew substantially in commercial cities, ports, international settlements, colonies and the sites of European church missions, and came to outnumber the older graves of

[20] An 11-volume publication about Chinese graves in Australia, edited by Hu Jin Kok, systematically displays Chinese cemeteries in Australia, but also lists almost all Chinese graves in common cemeteries. Hu Jin Kok ed., *Chinese Cemeteries in Australia*, 11 vols. (Bendigo: Golden Dragon Museum, 2002–6).

[21] Robert A. Bickers and Christian Henriot eds., *New Frontiers*: *imperialism's new communities in East Asia*, *1842–1953* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).

[22] Christopher A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World*, *1780–1914*: *global connections and comparisons* (Malden: Blackwell, 2009).

[23] Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt*: *Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Beck, 2009).

missionaries and East India Company traders.[24] This is by no means new, although with new possibilities of bringing together shattered pieces of information by means of the internet, the foreign cemeteries are being rediscovered as evidence of a global history.[25]

In the case of independent Asian states, the opening of Western cemeteries became an issue in international politics. The particular case of Japan shaped the predominant procedure in the nineteenth century: The Yokohama Foreign General Cemetery opened in 1854, when members of the Perry expedition died. The formal permission required to open a cemetery followed the American-Japanese peace treaty signed in 1854. Nineteenth century foreign cemeteries usually were created following formal diplomatic agreements, peace treaties, and/or agreements on the opening of foreign settlements. Treaties of this kind were concluded with a multilateral agreement, whereby the specific religion or confession played a minor role and often all of the different religions were united in one place.[26] Although based on governmental decision-making, the maintenance of these cemeteries was in most

[24] Of course, foreign cemeteries in Asia are not limited to Christian and Jewish graves. Thomas H. Hahn mentions the Arab traders whose Islamic graves can be found in the old Chinese commercial city Yangzhou. See Thomas H. Hahn, "More on Foreign Cemeteries in China," *H-Asia*, online posting accessed February 9, 2010, available by e-mail: H-ASIA@h-net.msu.edu

[25] Chair of Modern History, Department of Modern History, ZEGK, University of Heidelberg, School of Western Studies, Heilongjiang University, Harbin, and Department of History, Achva College of Education, Israel ed., *Harbin Jewish Cemetery*, accessed March 28, 2010, http://www.zegk.uni-heidelberg.de/hist/ausstellungen/harbin/project.html. Cemeteries can be found in the *Virtual Shanghai* database (Christian Henriot, *Virtual Shanghai*: *Shanghai urban space in time*, accessed 28 March 2010, http://virtualshanghai.net/index.php), Jewish graves can be found in various databases, e.g. Shanghai Jewish Memorial ed., *Shanghai Jewish Memorial*, accessed 28 March 2010, http://www.shanghaijewishmemorial.com/index_1.htm, also on JewishGen ed., *JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry*, 2010, accessed 28 March 2010, http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Cemetery/. In addition, an increasing quantity of military cemeteries from different wars are presented online. One of the most extensive sources of biographical information on European cemeteries in South Asia, recording European cemeteries "wherever the East India Company set foot," was provided by the British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia, *British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia*: *Home Page*, 2005, accessed 28 March 2010, http://www.bacsa.org.uk. The Chinese Maritime Customs Project (University of Bristol) provides a searchable cemetery database. See Chinese Maritime Customs Project, Department of Historical Studies, University of Bristol, *Search for a Person in our Union Cemetery Database*, accessed 28 March 2010, http://www.bristol.ac.uk/history/customs/search.html. According to the Harbin city records, in 1958 Harbin still had four foreign residence cemeteries. The so-called United Cemetery provided space for different religions. I am grateful to Dan Ben-Canaan for this information.

[26] See "Arrangements for the establishment of a foreign settlement at the port of Hiogo and Osacca": "The Japanese government will form a cemetery for the use of all nations, at Hiogo, on the hill in the rear of the foreign settlement, and another at Osacca, at Zuikensan. The Japanese government will lay out the cemeteries and surround them with fences. The expense of maintaining and repairing the cemeteries will be borne by the foreign communities." (in United States Department of State ed., *Executive Documents Printed by Order of the House of Representatives*, *during the Second Session of the Fortieth Congress*, *1867–'68*, vol. 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868), 40).

cases—with the exception of military cemeteries—the responsibility of the foreigners, organised for this purpose in private associations. With regard to Yokohama, a Foreign General Cemetery Foundation has administered the cemetery since the 1860 s. From the perspective of a more traditional historiography, the diplomatic foundation gives the cemeteries a status comparable to the establishment of foreign mailrooms and foreign jurisdiction. Both are well known instruments of Western penetration of the East in the era of imperialism.

From the perspective of the Asian countries, European graves were clearly placed outside of indigenous graveyards and were perceived as examples of foreign power. Therefore, on various occasions complaints about desecration were lodged in diplomatic correspondence,[27] typically during wars and revolutions. Normally, peace treaties stipulated the reestablishment of graveyards. In recent Western perception, the so-called Boxer Rebellion brought the question of desecration to the public. The rebellion led to the destruction of graveyards in and around Peking. In article IV of the Boxer Protocol, the Chinese government agreed to establish monuments in the desecrated foreign and international cemeteries and to re-establish the cemeteries mentioned.[28]

World War I reinforced the link between death and nationalism, smoothed out religious and confessional differences, propagated military mourning practices, and transgressed the colonial context. With endless fields of identical-looking tombstones and names in languages locally unknown, the dead provided the strongest argument for globalisation after 1918. The poppy, the symbol of remembrance throughout the British Empire, gained a metaphoric significance from Sydney to Flanders. The same can be found in the rituals of mourning established after the end of World War I, such as the 2 minutes' silence and the celebrations at war memorials and cemeteries. At this time, death became an important political factor for more than one reason. A crucial political problem of the post-First World War order, the question of affiliation of multinational territories, occasionally led to investigations in cemeteries: in 1919, the Italian majority of Fiume, today the Croatian city of Rijeka, sent a "plebiscite of the dead" to the Paris Peace Conference, a statistical-epigraphical survey of the languages used on the graves and tombs of Fiume during the previous 100 years, which allegedly showed that more than 80 % of the epitaphs were in Italian.[29] For nations seeking independence,

[27] For example, "Legation of the United States to United States Consul, Peking 21 March 1866," in *Executive Documents Printed by Order of the House of Representatives, during the Second Session of the Thirty-Ninth Congress, 1866-'67*, ed. United States Department of State, vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867), 510.

[28] "Boxer Protocol, Peking, September 7, 1901." For the list of cemeteries mentioned—in Peking, 1 British, 5 French and 1 Russian—see *Foreign Relations of the United States, Affairs in China*, Appendix, 325. A transcultural approach points to the fact that the same clause has a completely different meaning when the destruction and the reestablishment of graves have to be conducted by a state with ancestral worship.

[29] Sacha Zala, "Jenseits des Revolutionsfestes: Anmerkungen zu D'Annunzios Fiume," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte und Kultur Südosteuropas* 8 (2006), 73–84.

military cemeteries became places of nation-building. The cemeteries in Gallipoli, a Turkish peninsula and theatre of war in 1915/1916, turned into highly nationalised places, important for the creation of national identities in Australia, New Zealand, India and Canada. Governments, not religion, made decisions about military cemeteries and mourning practices. For the UK, the grounds for remembrance were prepared by the Imperial War Graves Commission.[30] Founded in 1917, the Imperial War Graves Commission, later renamed the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, did not start collecting the remains until after the end of the war. Consequently many of the graves in these places of nationalised mourning in a global context are empty, the integrity of the corpses is destroyed, and the dead reduced to a list of names. In a strange way, World War I cemeteries created a transcultural form of extraterritoriality. Shaped by British architects, military cemeteries worldwide were a sign of Western mourning, but also included special places for so-called Chinese "coolies" who died in Western Europe.

The country most experienced in national mourning, the United States,[31] followed a different strategy. Rather than erecting cemeteries worldwide, the American Army focused on repatriation, and in 1917 established a Graves Registration Service, which was later transformed into a Memorial Division. Although logistical problems made it difficult to collect the bodies, the American strategy was clearly aimed at bringing back the dead, and hence establishing only temporary graves outside of national borders. However different the chosen strategy was, the nationalised global dead shaped the master narrative after World War I. Although respected, religion counted less than the national denomination of the dead. At the same time, religious practices blurred the lines between faiths.

In terms of the multilayered task of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and American repatriation promises, the question is what the consequences from a transcultural perspective would be. The war brought global death into a *glocal* context. Millions of relatives asked where on the globe their fathers and sons were at rest. Even for ordinary people who did not leave their local regions and did not use telegraphy, trains and airplanes, death had turned into a global actor. Moreover, with the graves of World War I, globality became dissociated from Western modernity. The Chinese coolies' relatives now had to familiarise themselves with Noyelles-sur-Mer, a small village in the French Picardie where the Imperial War Graves Commission opened a Chinese cemetery. In the meantime, Europeans became acquainted with Indian names. In 1949 in India, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission handed over more than 350 European

[30] For this Commission and the complex difficulties of handling the different religions, see Alex King, "The Archive of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission," *History Workshop Journal* 47 (1999), 253–9.

[31] The construction of national military cemeteries started during the Civil War in 1862. Michael Sledge, *Soldier Dead*: *how we recover*, *identify*, *bury*, *and honor our military fallen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 33.

cemeteries that were still open for further burials to the newly sovereign Indian government.[32] Doing so, one imperial illusion disappeared. A place where the bones of British soldiers lay was no longer, as a famous poem proclaimed, "a corner of a foreign field that is forever England."[33] India and Australia successfully claimed the same eternal nationalism based on a global context. The tendency of different nations to compete with the same national arguments grew stronger, because this development did not simply copy a Western approach. In actual fact, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and similar institutions of other countries introduced remembrance with individual tombstones, even when there was no dead body. Without going into the complex debate on how the soul is related to the body in different religions, the fundamental and officially recognised separation of body and soul was maintained by the arguments of the cremation community.[34]

After World War I, the interest in cremation increased,[35] though not without the growing impact of reflections on Buddhist practices in the West. Western Cremation supporters had already mentioned the Indian Buddhist tradition of burning the body as presenting a transcultural perspective.[36] Besides the need to quote an old cultural tradition missing in the European context, this reference also provided the opportunity to confirm Western supremacy. Of course, as all these liberal Western cremationists claimed, British rule was needed to stop the barbarian burning of Indian widows and to enable cremation to be reformulated in a modern way. However, in the 1920s the transcultural background was actually clear in both directions, in the form of the Western adaptation of Asian practices, and also in the appearance of Asian burials in Europe[37] and the mentions of mixed rituals as first

[32] The question of European cemeteries in India was part of the British deliberations on Indian independence. See British cabinet, The White Paper on Indian Constitutional Reform, memorandum by the Secretary of State for India. British National Archives CAB/24/238. In this paper, European cemeteries remained a matter of federal decision making and therefore on the same level as military questions, while burials and burial grounds other than European cemeteries were solely provincial matters.

[33] Rupert Brooke, *The Soldier* (1914).

[34] For the development of the cremation movement, see Stephen Prothero, *Purified by Fire*: *a history of cremation in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

[35] Quincy L. Dowd, *Funeral Management and Costs*: *a world-survey of burial and cremation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1921).

[36] William Eassie, *Cremation of the Dead*: *its history and bearings upon public health* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1875).

[37] In Asia, Western cremation also influenced traditional mourning practices in a complex way. In the Chinese case, hygiene discourses, adaptation to Western modernity and the incompatibility of cremation with ancestral worship show transculturality as an area of conflict, especially in the case of governmental epidemics control, when cremation became an instrument of disease control. See Mark Gamsa, "The Epidemic of Pneumonic Plague in Manchuria 1910–1911," *Past and Present* 190 (2006), 147–83.

attempts at global forms of mourning. Thus, the relatives of an Indian prince performed cremation as a specific form of Indian rite,[38] and the Western press showed an interest in Mr. Hardoon's burial. In 1931, Silas Aaron Hardoon, one of the wealthiest citizens of Shanghai, left the world with the support of Jewish and Buddhist ceremonials in the presence of a brass band playing the Dead March, composed in 1738 by George Frideric.[39] The international press liked to give accounts of glamorous burials as part of its society news featuring the behaviour of a rich cosmopolitan elite.

The question is whether transcultural entanglements resulted from an increasing influence of globalisation or from the rising importance of forced migration, or whether mixed rituals had always been a part of multiethnic religious communities. The latter argument can be discussed with reference to David Sorkin's concept of the "port Jews." This approach highlights specific Jewish traditions performed by those who lived in trading and distribution centres in a global environment.[40] Seaports are indeed special places—but research into Jewish history has expanded the approach to other places that were global but had no port close by. The Chinese city of Harbin provides an interesting example of a port city without a port, and the Jewish cemetery of Harbin could serve as a starting point for the question of how the concept of the "port Jews" interacted with the structural change towards more national and transcultural but global dead between 1919 and the end of World War II.

Harbin: The Global Outback

The foundation of a Russian city on Chinese territory at the end of the nineteenth century challenged the usual forms of nation-building right from the beginning: a small fishing village turned into a hub for a long-distance railway construction firm, and then into a transport junction between Europe and Asia. However, trade on a global scale was just one characteristic of Harbin. Overlapping political agencies seem to have been even more important: based on land concessions from China, the Russian government influenced this little place's character deeply. Russian workers built the railway, and, accepting the Russian government's offer to escape the severe restrictions for Jews under tsarist rule, a new elite of Russian Jews started to shape the city's cultural, social and economic life.

[38] When the Maharaja of Gwalior died in 1925, the British embassy tried in vain to organise an open air funeral pyre in Paris. However, the prince was cremated in a form which came as close as possible to the Indian rites (Anonymous, "Indian prince's body cremated in Paris," *The New York Times*, 7 June 1925, 5).

[39] Anonymous, "Mixed rituals mark funeral," *Los Angeles Times*, 19 July 1931, 13.

[40] David Cesarani ed., *Port Jews*: *Jewish communities in cosmopolitan maritime trading centres, 1550–1950* (London: Cass, 2002). Jonathan Goldstein, "Singapore, Manila, and Harbin as reference points for an Asian "Port Jewish" Identity," accessed 3 April 2010, http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/harbin/Goldstein–Singapore,_Manila_and_Harbin.pdf

Beyond Russian influence and Chinese territoriality, the Chinese Eastern Railway gained a para-governmental character, organising almost every aspect in the lives of the railway workers. In the years following the Russians' arrival in Harbin, political agencies with border-crossing aims and foreign governmental influences multiplied: Zionist organisations, white Russian organisations, Russian fascists and German protestants shaped social and cultural life, among other things. The official part of governance turned into a continuously discussed, multilateral problem. When the Chinese Eastern Railway tried to exclude other foreigners from trade by the introduction of a municipal government, diplomatic correspondence between China, Russia, and the United States discussed the issue of whether a private company had executive rights over foreigners protected by bilateral treaties between China and the respective states.[41] The problem was aggravated by the Japanese occupation in 1932, as a result of which the city came under the rule of the state of Manchukuo.[42] With its large presence of established Western consulates, Harbin remained one of the information nodes during the political and military tensions leading to the start of World War II in Asia. At the end of World War II, in September 1946, Harbin regained for a short time its position as an international hub with consular representatives from Denmark, France and the Soviet Union, reparation and repatriation representatives, as well as the deputies of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and its Chinese sister organisation. The American Consul even mentioned the presence of newspapermen.[43] However, two months later, the de-globalisation of Harbin commenced. The reopening of the American consulate failed and the Danish consul—head of the East Asiatic Company in Harbin—had to leave the city,[44] followed by all foreign representatives under diplomatic law.

How do these troubled political developments fit into our analysis of global death? We of course expect cemeteries to show the place's global past. Indeed, Harbin city records mention several cemeteries described as "foreign residents' cemeteries," whose foundation dates back to the late nineteenth century.[45] Shortly

[41] United States Department of State ed., *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States with the Annual Message of the President Transmitted to Congress December 6, 1910* (Washington: Government Printing Office 1910), 203 ff.

[42] For the situation in Harbin during the Manchukuo period, see Dan Ben-Canaan, *The Kaspe File, A Case Study of Harbin as an Intersection of Cultural and Ethnical Communities in Conflict 1932–1945* (Heilongjian: People's Publishing House, 2009).

[43] "Consul at Mudken to Secretary of State 28 September 1946," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946*, ed. United States Department of State, vol. 10: *The Far East: China* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1972), 1144–5.

[44] "Ambassador in China to State Department, Nanking 10 December 1946," in *Foreign Relations, 1946*, ed. United States Department of State, vol. 10, 1151. "Re-opening of consular posts in Manchuria; inability to open consulate at Harbin due to Communist obstruction," in *Foreign Relations, 1946*, ed. United States Department of State, vol. 10, 1130–52.

[45] Harbin City Local Records Editing Committee ed., *Harbin City Records, On Foreign Affairs, Foreign Business, Trades and Tourism* (Harbin 1998), 102–5. I am grateful to Professor Dan Ben-Canaan for making this material available in English translation.

after the establishment of the Chinese Eastern Railway in 1898, the company bought the ground for a Russian orthodox cemetery, and other burial grounds followed. The Russian orthodox cemetery, which opened in 1902, became too small after one only year because of the victims of the cholera epidemic. In 1903, a Jewish cemetery opened, followed by other foreign graveyards in 1907. The so-called "United Cemetery" contained the graves of Catholics, Karaites, Muslims, Lutherans and Armenians, all with their respective subgroups. Death in Harbin was in fact cosmopolitan, although due to the special form of city administration the cemeteries were more a picture of transcultural entanglement. Transnational agreements regulating the position of foreigners did not exist in this far-flung corner of the world.

Globality in the shape of influences, ideas, concepts and people crossing borders from different sides gained a new political profile under Japanese rule in the 1930s. Historical narrative gives an ambivalent picture about the situation in Harbin during this period. One interpretation accentuates the rising political pressure amid a decreasing Jewish population under Japanese governance. Harbin therefore appears as a "sophisticated metropolis" until the mid-1920s,[46] while the 1930s brought political pressure and introduced an era of de-globalisation. Another narrative highlights the role of Harbin from a broader angle, presenting the Jewish community less from a local than from a border-crossing perspective. In this approach, the Harbin Jewish Community is "considered as a large umbrella organization that covered an area of northeast China and today's Inner Mongolia, where thousands of Jews settled from the end of the nineteenth century to the mid twentieth century."[47]

Before comparing what the cemetery is telling us through the ambivalent findings of the literature mentioned above, we need an understanding of the global agencies active in 1930ies Harbin. Interestingly, Harbin remained a global place, even during the Manchukuo regime and even when the Japanese Army invaded Shanghai in 1937. The more the connections between Harbin and Shanghai were at risk, the stronger was the flow of refugees. According to reports from Harbin, flows of refugees turned from Shanghai to the north and back to the south, not only consolidating their distress in this way, but also changing the Jewish community. The separation of an almost exclusively Russian community in the north and a Sephardim community in the south gave way to dynamic entanglements, which created the profile of a border-crossing Asian Jewish community.

In addition, Harbin became an issue in the newly founded Japanese bilateral cultural organisations, which document the turnabout of Japanese policy. A Far Eastern Jewish Council played a crucial role in the controversial attitude of

[46] Jonathan Goldstein, Jews in Harbin, in *Encyclopedia of Jewish Diaspora*: *origins*, ed. M. Avrum Ehrlich, vol. 3, ABC-CLIO, LLC, 1184.

[47] Xin, "Jewish Diaspora in Modern China", 158.

Japanese policy towards the Jewish community.[48] Initially focussing on close connections with the Soviet Union,[49] the Council was established in 1937 and organised conferences up to 1939. Chaired by Abraham Kaufman, the council started to support Japanese propaganda about racial equality and even the border-crossing flow at Harbin. Besides the hidden aims of the so-called *Fugu plan*, the activities of the group around Kaufman actually brought together a border-crossing Jewish Asian society concerned with the ambivalent idea of establishing a Zionist community under Japanese rule. Harbin played a crucial role in these plans as a central hub for Asia. The Jewish exile press followed these debates closely, asking whether Harbin under Japanese rule was still the "Paris of the Orient", or instead a highly dangerous place. In 1939, the *Pariser Tageszeitung* published its own enquiry into the Far East, investigating the question of how attractive migration into Manchukuo still was.[50] The newspaper came to an ambivalent conclusion, pointing out cultural difficulties, the overarching Japanese control and the challenging necessity of language competence in, among other languages, Russian, Chinese, and Japanese. As an additional difficulty, the journal mentioned the strong competition with cheap Chinese workers and the presence of only a few Europeans controlled by a dominant Japanese elite. The inquiry gave women and jazz players the best chances of survival, but presented Harbin as still a place to go to and as a "Jewish centre of the Far East."[51]

Besides Japanese political strategies and the border-crossing politics of the Far Eastern Jewish Council, there is a third agency to mention, namely the organisations that tried to organise Jewish migration. Meir Birman, a stateless Jewish activist of Russian origin, created a powerful organisation to support migrants in Harbin. Birman's organisation, HICEM, located in Harbin and later in Shanghai, gained increasing importance during the war. In 1942, Birman explained that he had never expected the Far East would become such an important place for immigration from all over Europe.[52]

The agencies described above influenced each other in a way that emphasised the importance of Harbin as a global crossroads. As confirmed by the Far Eastern Council, Harbin was still an important place in the late 1930s, adding to the aspect of migration the ambivalent idea of a Zionist community under Japanese surveillance. The global aspect of Harbin had thus resulted in the idea of giving a transcultural community a national profile. In these plans, Harbin had a strong

[48] For an overview see Izabella Goikhman, *Juden in China. Diskurse und ihre Kontextualisierung* (Lit Verlag, 2007).

[49] Harbin was an issue for the Japan-Soviet Society, which was involved in maintaining the commercial museum in Harbin. http://www.lonsea.de/pub/org/497

[50] "Die Enquête der "Pariser Tageszeitung": Wohin auswandern? Der Ferne Osten," *Pariser Tageszeitung*, 28 April 1939.

[51] "Die Enquête der "Pariser Tageszeitung": Wohin auswandern? Der Ferne Osten," *Pariser Tageszeitung*, 9 May 1939.

[52] "25 Jahre *Hicem* in Ostasien. Aus einem Gespräch mit M. Birman," *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 19 May 1942.

position, as was reflected in the composition of the Far Eastern Council. In 1939, no less than 6 of the council's 12 members were from Harbin.[53]

Summing up the situation in Harbin in the 1930s, several aspects increase our expectations of finding global death still present at the Jewish cemetery: on the one hand, there was an increase in multicultural flows of migrants, managed by an organisation that gained global importance. On the other hand, the Zionist part of the community claimed a new role in planning a border-crossing Asian Jewish society. Interestingly, both findings are lacking in today's cemetery: firstly, the cemetery shows no traces of an increasing presence of Jews beyond the Russian community; secondly, families related to Far Eastern Council members are difficult to find.[54]

In the case of Harbin, the strongest argument for the political and historical value of the global dead started after World War II, when the foreign cemeteries underwent substantial reduction in size and numbers during a process of relocation. At the same time, shortly after the end of World War II and thus long before cultural revolution started in China, parallel to the expulsion of foreigners, death became a source of a bilateral imaginary and Harbin lost the characteristics of a port city. In addition to a small Soviet Army cemetery, a Soviet Army Memorial was erected in 1945 in front of the railway station, and another close to the provincial museum. Some architectural relicts from Harbin's global past were now passed on to memorial sites; the former police station, located in a neo-classical European style building, became the memorial hall of martyrs in Northeast China in 1948. As a next step, the city government decided in 1958 to relocate foreign cemeteries. The Foreign Residents' Propaganda and Education Group kept the Harbin City Committee and the provincial government informed on the progress.[55]

The establishment of a foreign residents' cemeteries relocation committee was only partly successful; foreigners were invited to cooperate but proved reluctant to move or level their relatives' graves.[56] Although the relocation of old cemeteries is a well-known procedure, the action ended in a substantial diminution in foreign representation in Harbin. According to the numbers available, the Jewish cemetery

[53] Dr. A. I. Kaufman, M.M(iron). Grossmann, J(acob).W. Syskind (Ziskind), M(oshe).G. Simin (Zimin), M(ax).I. Heimann, I(oseph).M. Berkowitsch (Berkovitch) , *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, Sondernummer March 1940, 20.

[54] Although more research is needed, this article presumes that the members of the Far Eastern Council came from well-established Harbin families. Graves with names potentially connected to the Far Eastern Council members can be found in the cases of Kaufman (or Kaufmann) and Berkovitch, while the identity is rather unlikely in the case of Grossmann (Grosman), and no matches can be found for Simin and Heimann, http://www.zegk.uni-heidelberg.de/hist/ausstellungen/harbin/project.html

[55] See *Reports of the Foreign Residents' Propaganda and Education Group* 69/3-6. I am grateful to Professor Dan Ben-Canaan for making this material available in English translation.

[56] Based on the material available, the participating foreigners belonged to the (Russian) Orthodox and Catholic churches or to the Armenian church, and some were described as Jewish. In addition, a Soviet and a Polish foreign residents' committee are mentioned (*Reports of the Foreign Residents' Propaganda and Education Group* 69/3).

comprised 3,173 graves. From the 853 planned relocations,[57] only 513 tombstones were actually moved to the new graveyard on the periphery of the city.[58] Although relatives took the big decision to relocate, the new graveyard raises some questions: with regard to the year of death marked on the tombstones, the cemetery shows annual cases of death which are difficult to explain. In 1918/1919, the community numbered over 10,000 people,[59] but only 11 tombstones remained from these 2 years. Although still open, the relocated cemetery no longer represented a global city with various nationalities, languages and religious preferences. The selection of Jewish tombstones shows an almost exclusively Russian Jewish community with a constant 8–14 burials per year. But why, in an almost bilingual Chinese-Russian city, should relatives engrave the names of the dead in Latin letters if not in awareness of a multilingual community? The cemetery was therefore arranged in such a way that the dead represented a newly invented bilateral history of Harbin ruled by Soviet and Chinese inhabitants. Graves confirmed ex post facto the Cold War's new political arrangement. This statement highlights the explanatory power of the cemetery, where the relicts of a global past clearly seemed important enough to warrant corrective political intervention. From a methodological point of view, however, the findings presented above are not limited to the statement that the transnational character of a cemetery should be considered seriously. Moreover, transnational death defines a specific area of global memory, at least in the context of a border-crossing flow of information. Memory needs ongoing care and accessibility, and families have to know that relatives are buried there; therefore, rearranged cemeteries also indicate a severe change in border-crossing flows of information. Based on the information that the cemetery gives us, we even might consider the rearrangement of the cemetery as a consequence and not as the beginning of provincialisation in Harbin.

However, the question of when the global characteristics of the city first turned into a local peculiarity is difficult to answer. One possible way to find an answer might be hidden in the archives of the Far Eastern Jewish Central Information Bureau—archives that have thus far not often been used, and that are sometimes called *Daljewcib* after the organisation's telegraph address.[60] This institution was a branch of the HIAS–JCA Emigration Association "HICEM," founded in 1927 with

[57] Harbin City Local Records Editing Committee, *Harbin City Records*, 105.

[58] For a list of names, see The Jewish Community of China, "Biographies," in *Jewish Communities of China*, 2008, accessed 31 March 2010, http://www.jewsofchina.org/JewsOfChina08/Templates/showpage.asp?DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=302&FID=622. For the statistical data used in this contribution, see Chair of Modern History Heidelberg et al., *Harbin Jewish Cemetery* with many thanks to Manja Altenburg for making the data available.

[59] Jonathan Goldstein ed., *The Jews of China*, vol. 1: *Historical and Comparative Perspectives* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 191.

[60] The HICEM archives are part of the Meir Birman collection. See Meir Birman papers, RG 352, MKM 15.144-MKM 15.148 from the Archives of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research New York, henceforth quoted as YIVO Birman papers with the respective microfilm number.

its main seat in Paris.[61] The branch in Harbin, well established since 1917 and therefore older than the association in Paris, had to send regular reports to Paris based on a very detailed questionnaire, which was, as Birman stated, sometimes difficult to answer. However, the correspondence confirms the organisation's function as the city's global backbone, since this organisation developed into a search and migration service which over the years was not limited to Jews.[62] *Daljewcib* informed Paris that the official statistics on migrants in the state of Manchukuo were instable, and that in 1934 different groups of German fugitives had already arrived.[63] For the next year, the organisation gave the figure of 1,141 newly registered persons,[64] noted 18–20 visits by migrants every day to the Harbin office, and explained that more than half of the supported individuals went to the Soviet Union, and not to Palestine. In 1938, the cash statement showed four salaries, one for Meir Birman, the others for A. Halpern, L. Golovtchiner and Sh. Feller.[65] In the following years, the number of persons working for *Daljewcib* increased. On the December 1938 cash statement it was mentioned that T. Reichman was hired as German correspondent.[66] In January 1939, the office had six staff members including Ilse Stern,[67] in March G. Goldschmidt enlarged the staff,[68] in May 1939 two additional salaries (D. Krol, P. Nirenberg) appeared on the wage roll,[69] and in July, three part-time staff members (W. Spitzer, I. Stern and D. Krol) worked their way through the clearly huge amount of German correspondence.[70] In the second half of September 1939 Briman left Harbin and transferred the office with the HICEM archives to Shanghai, with three part-time workers still in Harbin.[71] As explained in a report to Paris from April 1940, the situation in Shanghai had worsened in

[61] The organisation consisted of 41 local organisations, which spent the money as required. During the war, substantial financial support came from JCA London and HIAS New York. See League of Nations, *Handbook of International Organizations* (Geneva 1939), 64.

[62] As mentioned in a survey that was not signed, the organisation was well connected to non-Jewish international organisations, e.g. the League of Nations' migration offices (Nansen Office), the American and International Red Cross, the Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children, the *Zentralnachweisamt für Kriegsverluste und Kriegsgräber*, with organisations in Moscow, in: 5–page historical abstract, undated and unsigned. YIVO Birman papers, Roll 1.

[63] Daljewcib, Harbin, 28 January 1935, Report of the activities of our Organisation for 1934, YWO Birman papers Roll 1.

[64] Harbin, Bericht für das Jahr 1935, Zahl der Neuangemeldeten, YWO Birman papers Roll 1.

[65] Cash statement for January 1938, YWO Birman papers Roll 1.

[66] Daljewcib, Harbin, Cash statement for December 1938, YWO Birman papers Roll 1.

[67] Daljewcib, Harbin, Cash statement for January 1939, YWO Birman papers Roll 1. In April 1940, the office reported to Paris "we are overburdened with work" (Birman to HICEM Paris, 5, 5 April 1939), ibid. Ilse Stern left to Dairen in August 1939, (see Cash statement for August 1939). For staff in Shanghai, see No. 14, The Far Eastern Jewish Central Information Bureau, 18 December 1941, YWO Birman papers Roll 5.

[68] Daljewcib, Harbin, Cash statement for February 1939, YWO Birman papers Roll 1.

[69] Daljewcib, Harbin, Cash statement for May 1939, YWO Birman papers Roll 1.

[70] Daljewcib, Harbin, Cash statement for July 1939, YWO Birman papers Roll 1.

[71] Daljewcib, Harbin, Cash statement for September 1939, YWO Birman papers Roll 1.

November/December 1939 when the city was confronted with 17,000–18,000 refugees.[72] The office in Shanghai now had 15 employees, and the organisation transferred additional money to assistant workers in Harbin. In the same long letter from April 1940, Birman explained that the Far Eastern Jewish Central Information Bureau for Emigrants only had an office in Shanghai, but felt responsible for the Far East in general. Indeed, Birman's organisation knew and made use of the differences and contradictions between the increasingly difficult local immigration laws, in which the J stamp aggravated the transit of German emigrants. Within these strategies, and despite a substantial increase in visa problems from August 1939 on, moving to Harbin was still an option for many people. Birman managed to bypass Manchukuo visa regulations by bringing small numbers of persons into Japanese territory from whence the prospect of obtaining a visa to Manchukuo was more promising. The Jewish National Council in Harbin also played a certain role in this very impressive handling of visa, money and tickets. This organisation had started to discuss an immigration quota for German Jews with the Japanese authorities, and asked Birman to send the names of suitable persons, starting with specialists in engineering and technical professions. Whether Birman passed on names or not remains unclear, but Paris was informed in a rather cautious way.[73] Although the source material is far from complete, the situation was evidently difficult. It was not always Harbin that was the worst off, because in Shanghai from 1943 on, reports by associations also had to be forwarded to the police station.

However, the source material confirms that it was not the war that destroyed the global space. Quite to the contrary: Birman's staff had constantly increased during the war, and with small loans, donations and credits for ship tickets, the financial volume became substantial, due to the fact the transfer of money was based on personal contacts in neutral countries. The global space actually collapsed at the end of the war. Significantly, Birman reported no earlier than January 1947 that Harbin had been "cut off from the whole outer world" since 1946.[74] Information at this time remained instable and the situation changed several times in the course of just a few months. In May 1949, Birman explained in an interview to the German exile journal *Aufbau* that only a small group of Jews had remained in Harbin, but without any chance of leaving the city.[75] Two months later, however, contacts between Harbin and Shanghai seemed to have been resumed, and emigration was again possible.[76]

[72] Birman to HICEM Paris, 5 April 1939, YWO Birman papers Roll 1.

[73] Ibid. 4: "It is difficult to foresee whether they will succeed in reaching the quota, and when, to which extent."

[74] Birman to W.L. Brand, 15 January, 1947, YWO Birman papers Roll 5.

[75] R. Dyck, "Erster Bericht aus dem belagerten Shanghai. Gespräch mit dem HIAS-Direktor M. Birman," *Aufbau*, XV (20), 20 May, 1949.

[76] Single page of a letter addressed to HIAS Shanghai , 16 September 1949, signed I. Dijour, YWO Birman papers Roll 5.

For Harbin, a biographical approach confirms the end of the war as the most delicate moment for the city as a global space. Kaufman, Orlovsky, and Zimin, the leading figures of the Far Eastern Jewish Council, were arrested and deported to the Soviet Union. Max Heimann, the former treasurer and director of the Jewish Bank in Harbin, worked under Soviet occupation as a wheat and seed expert. He left Harbin in the 1950s, as did Joseph Berkovitch, hotel owner and former treasurer of the Far Eastern Jewish Council.[77] Given the uneven tides of Jewish migration through Harbin, and the presence of a global association with increasingly dense networks, which included the Far Eastern Council's politics with Japan, the cemetery does indeed reveal the ex post facto destruction of a global space.

Conclusions

Death did not escape globalisation; rather, the foreign dead provided a painful lesson as a metaphor of globality from the late nineteenth century to the end of World War II. During this time, tensions between transboundary lives and immobile dead played a major role in East–West narratives in both directions: Western dead in Asian foreign cemeteries demonstrated in fact colonial power. However, under the influence of World War I and transcultural mourning practices, death turned into powerful evidence for the spread of "port communities." De-globalisation after World War II confirms the historiographical value of analysing foreign cemeteries. Relocated in 1958, the Jewish cemetery of Harbin confirms the tensions between transboundary lives and territorialized dead in an East–West narrative from the late nineteenth century to the end of World War II.

[77] See *Time Line of the Jewish Community of Harbin*, with many thanks to Dan Ben-Canaan for the biographical information.

Part II
Constructing Identities: The Harbin Example

Russian Émigrés in Harbin's Multinational Past: Censuses and Identity

Olga Bakich

Abstract The paper examines censuses of Harbin population held in turn by Tsarist Russia, China, the Japanese rulers of Manchukuo, and the PRC in the first five decades of the twentieth century. These censuses reveal how Harbin émigrés from Russia were forced into mutually exclusive collective political identities and how this labelling served political ends of the ruling powers and controlled people's lives.

There is a Russian saying: "Without a piece of paper you are a miserable little cockroach, but with a piece of paper you are a person" [*Без бумажки таракашка, а с бумажкой человек/bez bumazhki tarakashka, a s bumazhkoi chelovek*], a reflection on how states control people by passports, identity papers, residence permits, green cards, social insurance numbers, immigrant status, work permits, etc., forcing people to fear authorities and obediently serve them, or lie low and try to escape. Census is another governmental tool which "does much more than simply reflect social reality; rather it plays a key role in the construction of that reality"; it "emerged as the most visible, and arguably the most politically important, means by which states statistically depict collective identities," "link them to the state and thereby make them governable," and "divide the people into mutually exclusive and exhaustive identity categories."[1]

In the twentieth century, this state control was applied to people driven from native countries by poverty, discrimination, revolutions, wars, and other upheavals. One such wave was the great exodus from Russia after the 1917 Revolution and the

[1] David I. Kertzer and Dominique Arel, "Census, identity formation, and the struggle for political power," in *Census and Identity: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Language in National Censuses,* ed. idem (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2, 3, 9.

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1918–1922 Civil War, when over two million subjects of the former Russian empire, ethnic Russians and people of various other ethnic groups, left for Europe, North and South America, Africa, Australia and Asia—and in particular China.

This paper distinguishes between the experiences of immigration and emigration. Immigrants generally leave native lands in search of work and better life in countries willing to accept them, are usually granted a new citizenship and often permitted to have a dual citizenship. In contrast, the Russian subjects of all classes and professions were forced by violent and fundamental changes to leave their homeland to escape persecution and death in the face of a repressive and hostile regime. They became émigrés, refugees, stateless people, aliens, exiles, homeless drifters in the world; emigration was a severe national, cultural, professional, psychological and linguistic trauma. Most had to work not in their professional fields, but as factory workers, cab drivers and restaurant employees, or take up physical labour and menial jobs. Many never mastered a foreign language, but in most countries their children went to local schools and became bilingual, and their grandchildren assimilated into a new life and culture. What helped adults to survive was their belief that the emigration was temporary and the Communist regime would be destroyed. They set up ethnic organisations and temples, published books and periodicals, and kept in touch with émigrés in other countries.

A part of this unprecedented exodus came to China. No statistics were kept at the time, which is hardly surprising: a considerable number fled individually or in groups, and smaller numbers continued to escape throughout the 1920s. Some sources document 150,000–200,000 Russians in Northeast China.[2] The magnet was Harbin, a city with a sizeable multinational population, formed by the intrusion of Russia and Japan into Northeast China. Russians came in 1898 to build and operate the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER), and for the following 60 years or so, three generations of ethnic Russians and other ethnic groups from the Russian Empire settled in Harbin.[3] Japan's invasion of Northeast China in 1931 and occupation of the region for 14 years brought many Japanese and Koreans to Harbin, Korea being already occupied by Japan.

[2] N.G. Tretchikov, *Sovremennaia Man'chzhuriia v faktakh i tsifrakh* [Contemporary Manchuria in Facts and Figures] (Shanghai: The China Economic Press, 1936), 74; K. Ocheretin, *Kharbin-Futsziadian'. Torgovo-promyshlennyi i zheleznodorozhnyi spravochnik* [Harbin-Fujiadian. Commercial, Industrial, and Railway Reference Book] (Harbin: Transpechat' NKPS, 1925) 2.

[3] Nikolai Shteinfel'd, *Russkoe delo v Man'chzhurii* [Russian Cause in Manchuria] (Harbin: Russko-Kitaisko-Mongol'skaia tip. gaz. "Iuan'-dun-bao," 1910); E. Kh. Nilus, *Kitaiskaia Vostochnaia zheleznaia doroga. Istoricheskii ocherk, 1896–1923 gg*. [Chinese Eastern Railway. Historical Survey, 1896–1923], vol. 1 (Harbin: Tipografii Kit. Vost. zhel. dor. i T-va "Ozo," 1923); Petr Balakshin, *Final v Kitae. Vozniknovenie, razvitie i ischeznovenie Beloi Emigratsii na Dal'nem Vostoke* [Finale in China. Appearance, Development, and Disappearance of White Emigration in the Far East], 2 vols. (San Francisco: Sirius, 1958–1959).

1898–1917

When Russian engineers and builders arrived on the site of the future Harbin railway junction at the point where the CER was to cross the Songhua River [松花江], or the Sungari, the CER representatives acquired large tracts of land from the Chinese government and local landowners for the CER right-of-way land [*полоса отчуждения/polosa otchzhdeniia*]. This technical term refers to an area on both sides of railway tracks, obtained by that railway for its needs. It also means the zone of alienation, and this ribbon of right-of-way land along the tracks of the west, east, and south branches of CER with bulges at the stations and at Harbin was considered by Tsarist Russia as a *de facto* extension of Siberia, a point that was always disputed by the Chinese government, but evident in the establishment of Russian border guards, courts, police, postal and telegraph services, taxation, etc.[4]

Harbin grew within the invisible border of this right-of-way, largely on the south side of the Songhua River, as a cluster of three major suburbs: commercial Quay [*Daoli* 道里, *Butou* 埠头, *Пристань/Pristan'*], administrative Newtown [*Nangang*南岗, *Новый Город/Novyi Gorod*], and distant Old Harbin [*Xiangfang* 香坊, *Старый Харбин/Staryi Kharbin*], the first settlement of the railway builders, which explains its designation as "old." These central parts soon acquired satellite-like outlying suburbs, some for railway needs, others as a result of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 or the influx of émigrés in 1918–1922. Outside of the right-of-way were Chinese settlements and villages; the largest, Fujiadian 傅家甸, later known as Daowai 道外, had existed since the last decades of the nineteenth century and developed into a large Chinese city, Harbin's twin.[5]

With the CER Administration in charge of Harbin, the first two major censuses were carried out by the Russians. The first was held in May 1903—not good timing, because the construction work on the railway was being completed for the official opening on 1 July 1903, so certain builders and workers were leaving and new employees arriving. All results were lost in a suspicious fire at the CER Administration in Harbin during the 1905 Russian Revolution, [6] but some data had been reported in a Harbin reference book and the local newspaper. On 15 May 1903 Harbin had 44,576 residents, of whom 28,338 were Chinese and 15,579 Russians;

[4] Boris A. Romanov, *Russia in Manchuria (1892–1906)* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Edwards Brothers Inc., 1952); Peter S. Tang, *Russian and Soviet Policy in Manchuria and Outer Mongolia, 1911–1931* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1959); Rosemary K.I. Quested, "*Matey" Imperialists? The Tsarist Russians in Manchuria, 1895–1917* (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, 1982), 96, 163; a Russian pre-revolutionary postcard with the caption: "Siberia. Railway Station in the City of Harbin."

[5] Ji Fenghui, *Haerbin xungen* [Tracing Harbin Roots] (Harbin: Haerbin chubanshe, 1996), 88–102.

[6] V.V. Soldatov, "Gorod Kharbin po odnodnevnoi perepisi 24 fevralia 1913 goda" [City of Harbin by One-Day Census of 24 February 1913], *G. Kharbin i ego prigorody po odnodnevnoi perepisi 24 fevralia 1913 goda* [City of Harbin and Its Suburbs According to One Day Census of 24 February 1913], vol. 2, part 1 (Harbin: Elekt.-par. tipo-litografiia "T-va Bergut i Syn," 1914), 9–10.

there were also 462 Japanese and 197 "subjects of other states," such as Austrians (63), Turks (35), Koreans (30), Germans (22), Greeks (20), and other groups of less than ten people. The data for Russians included all subjects of the Russian Empire, such as Poles, Jews, Ukrainians, Georgians and other ethnic groups.[7]

The next census was held in 1913 by the Russian-run Harbin Municipal Council for the future planning of such urban services as water supply, sewage, public transport, policing, affordable housing, etc. with the resulting equitable taxation.[8] The CER Administration fully supported the census as beneficial to its political and economic goals, but much as the CER and the Council wanted to include the adjacent town of Fujiadian, which was demographically and economically connected with Harbin, the local Chinese authorities refused to grant permission. Permission was also denied for the adjacent Tianjiashaoguo 田家烧锅 settlement and Chinese villages which lay half-way into the right-of-way zone or next to it. Chinese newspapers in Beijing and Fujiadian opposed the census as a further encroachment on Chinese sovereignty.[9]

The 1913 census was held around midnight from 23 to 24 February, when there were not many seasonal workers or itinerant labourers. To obtain information from the Harbin Chinese, the Russian census takers relied on CER Chinese interpreters and specially trained students from Harbin Commercial Schools and Trade School. In addition to name, sex, age, marital status, and religion, the forms asked: Were you born in Harbin? If not, how long have you been living in Harbin? Where did you live before coming to Harbin? Are you here temporarily or permanently? What country are you the subject of [*поддaнство*/*poddanstvo*]? What is your nationality [*национальность*/*natsional'nost'*]? What is your religion? What language do you use at home [*в семье*/*v sem'e*]? If not Russian, do you speak Russian? Can you read and write Russian? What other languages do you speak (the options given were "Chinese, Japanese, Mongolian, and others")? Other questions on the type of residence (house, apartment), numbers of rooms, heating, water, sewage, livestock, etc. were of interest to the Municipal Council.[10] In its clear distinction between self-defined nationality and language spoken at home the census makers showed an acquaintanceship with modern European censuses and consideration towards the thorny issue of nationality.[11]

[7] *Spravochnaia knizhka Kharbina* [Harbin Reference Book] (Harbin: Pervaia chastnaia tipografiia v Kharbine, 1904), 7; "Khronika" [Chronicle], *Kharbinskii vestnik* [Harbin Herald], 3 September 1903; "1903 god" [The Year of 1903], *Kharbinskii vestnik*, 6 January 1904.

[8] V.V. Soldatov, *K perepisi naseleniia goroda Kharbina* [Towards the Census of Harbin Population] (Harbin: Elektro-Tipo-Litografiia "T-vo Bergut i Syn," 1912), 3–12; idem, "Predislovie" [Foreword], *G. Kharbin i ego prigorody*, i–iii.

[9] Ibid., iv.

[10] Soldatov, "Gorod Kharbin po odnodnevnoi perepisi 24 fevralia 1913 goda," 113–35.

[11] Ulrike von Hirschhausen, "People that Count. The Imperial Census in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Europe and India," *Schriftenreihe der FRIAS School of History*, vol. 1 *Comparing Empires. Encounters and Transfers in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Jörn Leonhard and Ulrike

The published volume of statistical tables and its summary offers a wealth of information. On that cold winter night, Harbin had 68,549 residents, which was almost half the population of the entire CER right-of-way with its station settlements. Nearly two thirds (43,691) were subjects of the Russian Empire and over one third (23,639), subjects of the Chinese Empire, with Japan following far behind with 757. Subjects of other states were 119 Austro-Hungarians, 93 Germans, 42 British, 40 Turks, 39 Greeks, 30 French, 11 Americans, 9 Italians, 8 Persians, 7 Dutch, 7 Danes, 6 Bulgarians, 5 Rumanians, 5 Mongols, 4 Serbs, 2 Belgians, 2 Swiss, 1 Norvegian, 1 Montenegrin, 1 Portuguese, and 28 "unknowns".[12]

As for ethnicity, the census came up with 53 "peoples" [*народности*/*narodnosti*], divided into Indo-European, Mongolian, and Malayan "tribes" [*племена*/*plemena*]. The Indo-European "tribe" of 43,644 residents consisted of Slavic, Germanic, Greco-Roman, Semitic, Caucasian (i.e. from the Caucasus), Lithuanian-Latvian, and other (Hindu, Persian, "Gypsy") "peoples." In that "tribe," ethnic Russians made up the largest group with 34,313, followed by 5,032 Jews and 2,556 Poles; the figures for numerous other "peoples" were well below 1,000. No Ukrainians were listed, although the census showed that 503 persons spoke Ukrainian at home. The Mongolian "tribe" of 24,354 included the Chinese, Mongol, Türk-Tatar, and Finnish "peoples," with the Chinese by far the largest group at 23,537. The Malayan "tribe" had only one person, a native of Java. 42 people were listed as "nationality unknown." As the summary revealed, "with all the variety of tribes in Harbin, in the final account, four main peoples, Russians, Chinese, Jews, and Poles, constituting 65,438 people, are predominant; the rest of the 49 peoples only come to 3,111."[13]

As for language spoken at home, these 53 "peoples" [*narodnosti*] spoke 45 languages. Although 34,313 residents identified themselves as Russian, over 2,000 more (36,603) spoke the language; of the 5,032 Jews, 1,637 spoke what the census called a "Jewish jargon" [*по–еврейски (жаргон)*/*po–evreiski (zhargon)*] which means Yiddish; of 2,556 Poles, 1,805 spoke Polish. The second dominant language was Chinese: 23,422 out of the 23,537 Chinese residents used Chinese as their native tongue. In terms of religion, the major groups were Russian Orthodox (34,377 residents), Buddhist (7,940), Confucian (7,658), Jewish (4,981), and Catholic (3,907), plus a wide variety of smaller religions and sects.[14]

The census also showed that the overwhelming majority of residents, both Chinese and Russian, were newcomers. It thereby strengthened the Russian political and strategic assertions that Harbin was built and settled by Russian subjects in an area with few native residents. Of the total of 68,519 residents, only 7,902, or 11.5 %, were born in Harbin. Harbin-born Russians were of course 15 years of age

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von Horschhausen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 148. I am grateful to Dr. Mark Gamsa for drawing my attention to this work.

[12] Soldatov, "Gorod Kharbin po odnodnevnoi perepisi 24 fevralia 1913 goda," 1, 63.

[13] Ibid., 51–3, 58, quote on 53.

[14] Ibid., 58–63, 74.

and younger, because the Russiansfirst appeared only in the spring of 1898, and the residents over 15 years of age were Chinese and Manchus.[15]

1918–1931

In the early 1920s, many changes took place in Harbin. The city was flooded with émigrés from Russia, who felt that they were fleeing not so much to China as to a Russian semi-colonial city, built and controlled by Tsarist Russia. The pre-Revolutionary settlers became émigrés by default. The CER Land Department reported 165,857 residents in Harbin in 1921, with the note that only permanent residents had been counted.[16] Émigrés tended to see Harbin as settled primarily by Russians, as well as Chinese and foreigners (largely European and American diplomats and businessmen), the implication being that the former Russian subjects were not foreigners in Harbin.[17] In this "Russian" Harbin people spoke Russian, maintained traditional lifestyles, attended Orthodox churches, sent their children to Russian schools, and formed cultural, political, and military associations. Poles, Jews, Ukrainians, Tatars, Georgians, Armenians, Latvians, Germans and a few other ethnic groups from Russia had their associations, temples, and activities, and educated their children in Russian and in their native languages. It was possible to live in Harbin without learning Chinese or having contact with the Chinese.

This life, however, was not as stable as it seemed. In September 1920, the Chinese Republic declared that it no longer recognized diplomatic representatives of Tsarist Russia. Russian subjects in China lost territorial rights and became stateless, the "flotsam of the revolution," or *fengyu fuping* 风雨浮萍,[18] the latter describing leaves and weeds carried in the water by wind and rain. In 1920, the CER Manager, Lieutenant-General D.L. Khorvat, was removed from his position by the Chinese, invited to Bejing and never permitted to return to or even visit Harbin. In

[15] Ibid., 36–7. The table on page 36 presents a problem: the total for Harbin-born residents comes to 9,602, not 7,902, or 11.5 %, as stated correctly above the table. The discrepancy might have been caused by a printing error in the first line.

[16] "Naselenie polosy otchuzhdeniia Kit. Vost. zhel. dor. na 1921 god po dannym Zemel'nogo otdela KVzhd" [Population of the CER Right-of-Way for 1921, From the Data of the CER Land Department], *Severnaia Man'chzhuriia i Kitaiskaia Vostochnaia zheleznaia doroga* [North Manchuria and the Chinese Eastern Railway] (Harbin: Ekonomicheskoe biuro KVzhd, 1922), xxi.

[17] "Deiatel'nost' inostrantsev v Kharbine" [Activities of Foreigners in Harbin], *Kharbinskii vestnik*, 13 February 1914; "Novoe polozhenie o munitsipalitete" [New Regulations on the Municipal Council], *Zaria*, 19 June 1926; "190 tysiach kharbintsev" [190 Thousand Harbin Residents], *Zaria*, 21 August 1930; "Shest' let kitaizirovannogo munitsipaliteta" [Six Years of Sinified Municipal Council], *Russkoe slovo*, 2 April 1932.

[18] William C. White, "White Russians: Flotsam of the Revolution," *New York Times*, 5 June 1932, reprinted in *China Weekly Review,* Shanghai, 23 July 1932, vol. 61, no. 8, 277–8; Li Xinggeng et al., *Fengyu fuping. Eguo qiaomin zai Zhongguo* [Flotsam Driven by Wind and Rain. Russian Émigrés in China] (Beijing: Zhongyang bianyi chubanshe, 1997).

that same year, the entire CER right-of-way was made a Special Region of the Eastern Provinces [*Dongsheng tebiequ*东省特别区, *Особый район Восточных провинций*/*Osobyi raion Vosmochnykh provintsii*] under the rule of warlord Zhang Zuolin. In 1921–1924, the CER was administered by the Directorate of the French-owned Russo-Asian Bank.

With the change of power, censuses were held by the Chinese authorities of the Special Region of the Eastern Provinces. These censuses were somewhat deficient in that they took place not in 1 or 2 days, but over several summer months. In 1923, the census by the Police Department listed 122,821 residents, with 60,725 Chinese, 58,754 Russians, 2,344 Japanese, 699 Europeans and 299 Koreans.[19] In the same year the Bureau of Assessment and Statistics of the Trade and Taxes Department at the Harbin Public Administration came up with slightly different numbers: 126,952 residents, of which 65,498 were Chinese, 61,454 Europeans, and 3,496 Japanese, the latter figure provided by the Japanese Consulate. The Europeans consisted of citizens of foreign countries with extraterritorial rights and "people from Russia and other states under Chinese jurisdiction," the latter coming to 56,369.[20]

From the second half of the 1920s, Harbin émigrés became minor pawns in the struggle between the three major powers in the area: China, the USSR and Japan. In 1924, by agreement with the Chinese Republican government and the Mukden government of Zhang Zuolin, the CER became an allegedly commercial enterprise run on a parity basis by the Sino-Soviet administration, in reality by the USSR. The judicial, military, administrative and police power in the former CER right-of-way belonged to China.

The USSR then demanded that all employees become either Soviet or Chinese citizens,[21] which forced émigrés to face a difficult choice: the CER and its auxiliaries were the major source of employment. Many applied for Soviet citizenship. Some saw the USSR as an egalitarian state of workers and peasants; some hoped that after the revolutionary excesses things would work out for the best; others did not want to become Chinese citizens. There was a considerable number of "Harbin radishes"—Red outside and White inside, who became Soviet citizens to keep their jobs.

The émigrés were now divided into collective political identities based exclusively on citizenship: (1) Soviet citizens proper, i.e. those sent from the USSR to

[19] V.A. Kormazov, "Dvizhenie naseleniia v raione Zapadnoi linii KVzhd" [Movement of Population in the Region of the West Line of the CER], *Vestnik Man'chzhurii*/*Manchuria Monitor*, Harbin, 4, 1930, 51–2; V.A. Kormazov, "Rost naseleniia v Kharbine i Futsziadiane" [Growth of Population in Harbin and Fujiadian], *Vestnik Man'chzhurii*/*Manchuria Monitor*, 7, 1930, 25.

[20] *Kharbin. Itogi otsenochnoi perepisi po dannym statisticheskogo obsledovaniia, proizvodivshegosia s 15-go iiunia po 1-oe sentiabria 1923 g. Otsenochno-Statisticheskoe biuro Kh.O.U.* [Harbin. Results of Assessment Census By the Data of Statistical Investigation, Held from 15 June to 1 September 1923. Bureau of Assessment and Statistics of Harbin Public Administration] (Harbin: Izdanie Otsenochno-Statisticheskogo buiro pri Torgovo-Nalogovom Otdelenii Kh.O.U, 1924), 99; Ocheretin, *Kharbin-Futsziadian*', 35.

[21] "Prikaz po KVzhd No. 94" [CER Order No. 94], *Tribuna*, Harbin, 10 April 1925.

work on the CER and in Soviet firms and organizations; (2) local Harbin Soviet citizens [*советские подданные, совподы, совы*/*sovetskie poddannye, sovpody, sovy*]; (3) those who applied for Soviet citizenship and were issued receipts, pending an investigation [*квитанционные подданные, квитподы, квиты*/*kvitantsionnye poddannye, kvitpody, kvity*]; (4) Chinese citizens [*китайские подданные, китподы, киты*/*kitaiskie poddannye, kitpody, kity*]; (5) those who applied for Chinese citizenship and were issued receipts [also *квитподы*/*kvitpody*] and (6) those who refused to take either, remained stateless [*бесподданные*/*bespoddannye*], and were fired. The diversity was confusing: the CER employees were described by one Russian émigré newspaper as consisting of Soviet citizens, Chinese, and Chinese subjects [*граждане СССР, китайцы и китайские подданные*/*grazhdane SSSR, kitaitsy i kitaiskie poddannye*], as if the Chinese were not Chinese subjects.[22]

People lived in two mutually hostile worlds, Soviet and émigré, each with its own schools, clubs, organisations, celebrations, newspapers, journals, and so on. The numbers kept fluctuating: there were 30,322 stateless people [*wuguoji* 无国籍] versus 25,637 Soviet citizens in 1927; the figures changed to 29,652 stateless versus 27,492 Soviets in 1928; the relation was 30,415 versus 26,704 in 1929; 36,837 versus 27,633 in 1930 and 41,188 versus 27,617 in 1931. Some 4,000 held Chinese citizenship in 1926.[23]

In the 1920s, the Chinese took over the Russian courts, police, postal service, telegraph and telephone, the Harbin Municipal Council and other Russian institutions. In January 1926, the Chinese court upheld the ruling of 1923 that all land in the former right-of-way, unless required strictly for the CER's technical needs, belonged to China, not the CER.[24] The émigré newspapers published statements of the Chinese authorities claiming that the Special Region of the Eastern Provinces was a part of the Chinese Republic, and all of its residents, including the new Soviet citizens, must obey Chinese law. Now émigrés were treated by the Chinese officials and police in the same often brutal and corrupt way that the Chinese were treated. Some started to give up Chinese citizenship or take Soviet citizenship as well, but were informed that under the Chinese law this

[22] "Kogda na KVzhd budet ustanovlen paritet?" [When Would Parity Be Established on the CER?], *Rupor* Harbin, 7 September 1927; Henry Walsworth Kinney, "Notes on the Manchurian Situation," typescript, Dairen, 8 June 1935.

[23] Xue Lianju, *Haerbin renkou bianqian* [Changes in Harbin Population] (Harbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1998), 137, Table 4–3; Shi Fang, Liu Shuang and Gao Ling, *Haerbin eqiao shi* [History of Russian Émigrés] (Harbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe), 80; "Otkaz ot poddanstva priravnen k izmene" [Renunciation of Citizenship Is Tantamount to Treason], *Zaria*, 4 March 1926.

[24] "Doroga ne poluchit zemli" [The Railway Will Not Get Land], *Zaria*, 22 January 1926; "Zemel'nyi vopros reshen" [Land Question is Resolved], *Zaria*, 28 January 1926.

amounted to treason, that dual citizenship was not recognized and that dual citizens would be deported or deprived of civil rights.[25]

Language became an issue. The Harbin Municipal Council, which managed its affairs largely in Russian, now used Chinese. By 1929, the same applied to all government offices, telegraph, telegram, and postal services.[26] Most émigrés, however, could not speak, let alone read and write Chinese, and had avoided giving their children an opportunity to become bilingual. They feared denationalisation and could not understand that bilingualism provided not only a survival skill, but also a cultural enrichment. The Chinese saw this attitude as an offensive effort to preserve the pre-Revolutionary status quo, when Russian was the operative language in the area. In 1930, it was announced that émigré elementary schools could no longer accept children of Russian Chinese citizens, who had to attend preparatory classes in order to continue their education in Chinese schools.[27]

Now the censuses conducted by the Chinese mirrored the changes in the political status of émigrés from Russia by following the Soviet division of collective political identities. According to the 1929 census by the Chinese Police Department, Harbin had 160,670 residents, of whom the largest group of 97,776 was Chinese (including émigrés with Chinese citizenship), followed by 30,362 émigrés and 26,759 Soviet citizens. There were 2,683 Japanese citizens, 2,002 citizens from 18 European countries, 949 Koreans, 101 Americans and 18 people of "other nationalities."[28] The figures in the Soviet press had 70,000 Soviet citizens and about 40,000 so-called "White Guards."[29]

These collective political identities encompassed ethnic groups, and their numbers can only be gleaned from secondary sources. The Jewish community was estimated to be 7,500 in 1918–1919, about 20,000 in 1920, over 55,000 in 1921–1922, 15,000 in 1923, 5,848 in 1924, and 1,400 in 1925; the figures ranged

[25] "Preduprezhdenie Glavnogo politseiskogo upravleniia" [Warning by the Main Police Department], *Zaria*, 1 February 1926; "Zakon o poddanstve—ne detskaia igrushka" [Law of Citizenship Is Not to Be Toyed With], *Zaria,* 3 March 1926; "Otkaz ot poddanstva priravnen k izmene" [Renunciation of Citizenship Is Tantamount to Treason], *Zaria*, 4 March 1926; "Vysylka za dvupoddanstvo" [Deportation for Dual Citizenship], *Zaria*, 22 January 1929; "Pokhod protiv dvupoddanstva" [Campaign Against Dual Citizenship], *Zaria*, 1 October 1930.

[26] "Ostryi konflikt iz-za ofitsial'nogo iazyka v munitsipalitete" [Sharp Conflict Over the Official Language in the Municipal Council], *Zaria*, 24 March 1926; "Uprazdnenie Gorodskogo Soveta i raskassirovanie glasnykh" [Abolishment of the City Council and Liquidation of Councillors], *Zaria*, 31 March 1926; "Osnovnoi iazyk dlia vsekh uchrezhdenii sviazi" [Main Language for All Communication Offices], *Zaria*, 1 February 1929; "Kitaiskii iazyk v gorodskoi uprave" [Chinese Language in the City Hall], *Zaria*, 2 February 1929.

[27] "Vazhnyi shag v dele sblizheniia dvukh narodov" [Important Step in the Cause of Rapprochement Between Two Nations], *Zaria*, 22 January 1929; "Gde obuchat' detei kitpodov" [Where to Educate Children of Chinese Citizens], *Zaria*, 24 October 1930; "Kitaiskii iazyk dlia detei" [Chinese Language for Children], *Zaria,* 30 October 1930.

[28] Kormazov, "Rost naseleniia v Kharbine i Futsziadiane," 25–31.

[29] V. Avarin, "Kharbin revoliutsionnyi" [Revolutionary Harbin], *Novyi mir*, 11, Moscow, 1929, 166.

from 293 to 1,357 in 1926, and from 391 to 1,324 in 1929.[30] The Türk-Tatar community had about 1,500 members in 1925.[31] No reliable figures exist for Armenian, Georgian, Polish, Ukrainian and other communities.

1932–1945

In the early 1930s, the population of Northeast China was estimated to consist of 33,661,000 Chinese, 1,000,000 Mongols, 800,000 Koreans, 300,000 Manchus, 300,000 Daurs, 300,000 Japanese, 115,000 Russians, and smaller national groups such as Orochens, Solons, Hezhe (*Gol'ds*), Buriats and Tungus.[32] In 1931–32, Japan occupied the area, established the puppet state of Manchukuo as an alleged restoration of the Manchu rule, and made Pu-yi, the heir of the Manchu Qing Dynasty, its Supreme Ruler in 1932, and Emperor in 1934.

Guided by political and colonising considerations, the Japanese classified people in Manchukuo under collective identities, ranging from simple binaries of Manchukuoans and Japanese, natives and Japanese, *mankei* 満族 (of Manchu descent) and *nikkei* 日族 (of Japanese descent), to more complex constructs of Manchus, Japanese, Koreans, Han Chinese, Mongols, Muslims, foreigners or Euro-Americans, and émigrés from Russia.[33] The national flag depicted a square of red, blue, white and black stripes on a yellow background, symbolising "interracial harmony" [*minzoku kyōwa* 民族协和] and "cooperative unity of five dominant racial groups in Manchuria, namely, the Manchus, the Hans, the Mongols, the Japanese, and the Chosenese [Koreans]."[34]

The Chinese population of Manchukuo was labelled "Manchu" [*Manzhou* 满洲]. The word is conveniently hard to define: it could refer to either ethnic Manchus or to all "Manchurian" ("Manchukuoan") residents, including Chinese, Japanese, Mongols, Manchus, Koreans and émigrés from Russia. One propaganda pamphlet in English stated that "the population of Manchuria on December 31, 1936, was estimated at around 35,255,000. Of this number, Manchurians numbered 34,202,000, Chosenese [Koreans] 819,000, Japanese 167,000, and others 66,000."

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[30] Xue Lianju, *Haerbin renkou bianqian*, 146, Table 4–6; Li Shuxiao and Fu Mingjing, "Research on the Demographic Profile of the Jews in Harbin," typescript, SIRSC Archives Harbin, [2005], courtesy of Professor Dan Ben-Canaan.

[31] Larisa Usmanova, *The Türk-Tatar Diaspora in Northeast Asia* (Tokyo: Rakudasha, 2007), 111.

[32] Tretchikov, *Sovremennaia Man'chzhuriia v faktakh i tsifrakh,* 69.

[33] Mariko Asano Tamanoi, "Knowledge, Power, and Racial Classifications: the 'Japanese' in 'Manchuria,'" *Journal of Asian Studies*, 59, 2 (May 2000): 255; *Answering Questions on Manchuria*, *1937* (Tokyo: The Herald Press, South Manchurian Railway, 1937), photo of "The Harmony of Five Races" fresco in the State Council Building, Hsinking [Xinjing], 59; V. Sannikov, *Pod znakom voskhodiashchego solntsa v Man'chzhurii* [Under the Sign of the "Rising" Sun in Manchuria] (Sydney: Published by Author, 1990), 37.

[34] *Answering Questions*, 3.

It pointed out that "the indigenous people of Manchuria are the Manchus and Mongols although the greater part of the present population are the Hans or the descendants of Chinese settlers or immigrants from China. It is estimated that the Hans comprise more than 80 % of the entire population, the Manchus and Mongols and the Chosenese together about 10 %, the Japanese 5 %, and the others 5 %." Another pamphlet used similar terminology: in 1933 the 418,100 Harbin residents consisted of 350,000 "Manchoukuo people," 29,000 "White Russians," 25,000 "Soviet Russians," 13,100 "Japanese" and 1,000 "others".[35]

The Harbin Russian press, subjected to Japanese control and censorship, now spoke of the Chinese as Manchurians [*маньчжурцы/man'chzhurtsy*] or the "Manchurian population" [*маньчжурское население/man'chzhurskoe naselenie*], though one newspaper warned that it might be better to use Manchukuoan [*маньчжоугоский/man'chzhougoskii*] instead of Manchurian [*маньчжурский/man'chzhurskii*], because the latter could mean Manchus, the branch of the "Tungus tribe". Rare uses of the word "Chinese" tended to be negative. In 1938, when Manchukuo police arrested some alleged communists, the Japanese-owned Russian newspaper reported that most were "people of the Han tribe (Chinese)" [*лица ханьского племени (китайцы)/litsa khan'skogo plemeni (kitaitsy)*]. The Russian press, it might be added, also obeyed orders to call Japan not by the standard Russian word [*Япония/Iaponiia*], but as Nippon [*Ниппон/Nippon*] and the Japanese as Nipponese [*ниппонцы/nippontsy*].[36] From the second half of the 1930s, with Japanisation in full swing, adults were strongly urged to learn Japanese, and the Manchukuo Ministry of Education ordered that, while émigré elementary schools could teach in Russian, junior and senior schools should gradually switch to the State Language (Japanese) [*государственный язык (ниппонский)/gosudarstvennyi iazyk (nipponskii)*].[37]

The status of émigrés was uncertain. At the Manchukuo inauguration ceremonies, some posters showed a Russian-looking person as one of the "five harmonious races," but the figure was soon blackened out.[38] Propaganda posters, banners and postage stamps depicted five happy young women or children, recognisable by their clothes as Manchus, Hans, Mongols, Japanese, and

[35] Ibid., 3; *Guide to Manchoukuo* (Dairen: South Manchurian Railway Co., 1934), 79.

[36] "Lynnyi Novyi god" [Lunar New Year], *Gun-bao*, Harbin, 3 February 1935; "Listok iz bloknota" [Page from a Notebook], *Nasha gazeta*, Harbin, 14 April 1933; "Reshitel'no presecheny podryvnye zamysly kominterna protiv Man'chzhu-ti-go" [Subversive Plans of Comintern Against the Manchu Empire Were Resolutely Stopped], *Kharbinskoe vremia*, 12 February 1938.

[37] "Ofitsial'nyi otdel. Prikaz No. 68" [Official Section. Order No. 68], *Nash put'*, Harbin, November 18, 1937; "Tsel' shkol'noi reformy" [Goal of the School Reform], *Nash put'*, 7 December 1937; "Kak budet provodit'sia shkol'naia reforma v russkikh shkolakh" [How the School Reform Will Be Carried out in Russian Schools], *Kharbinskoe vremia*, 8 December, 1937.

[38] O. Leshko, *Russkie v Man'chzhugo* [Russians in Manchukuo] (Shanghai: 1937), i; a procession of children, one looking vaguely European on a poster for Pu Yi's coronation, as reproduced in M. Talyzin, *Man'chzhu-Ti-Go strana vozmozhnostei* [Manchu Empire a Country of Possibilities] (Harbin: Ekonomist, 1936), 2; a Manchukuo stamp of 1942, reproduced in G. McCormack, "Manchukuo: Constructing the Past," *East Asian History* 2 (December 1991): 119, Fig. 9.

Chosenese. The Japanese way of controlling émigrés was to set up, at the end of 1934, a Bureau for the Affairs of Émigrés from Russia in the Manchu Empire [*Бюро по делам российских эмигрантов в Маньчжурской империи*/*Biuro po delam rossiiskikh emigrantov v Man'chzhurskoi*, BREM], headed by a succession of White Russian generals appointed by the Japanese and staffed by Russian stooges; the Russian Fascist Party played a prominent part in BREM.[39] Opposition was squashed: several prominent émigré dissenters were deported, others were arrested and disappeared.[40] All people and organisations had to register with BREM, which was empowered to give people the status of an "émigré from Russia" [*российский эмигрант*/*rossiiskii emigrant*]. As instructed, BREM reassured émigrés that they "were considered one of the peoples of Manchukuo" [*русские эмигранты рассматриваются как одна из народностей Маньчжу-ди-го*/*russkie emigranty rassmatrivaiutsia kak odna iz narodnostei Man'chzhu-di-go*] and subjects of Manchukuo.[41] It was not easy to leave Manchukuo; when an exit visa was granted, the Manchukuo Office of Foreign Affairs issued a special passport, where the page in the Chinese section described the bearer as "stateless" [*wuguoji*无籍国], the one in the English had "Russian emigrant", and in the Russian an "émigré from Russia".[42]

Many Jews, Poles, Georgians, Armenians, Ukrainians and members of other ethnic groups pragmatically registered in BREM. In 1940, BREM headed an "Association of Émigrés from Russia in the Manchu Empire," which included "Committee of Nationalities" with representatives from the Armenian National Society, Georgian National Society, National Council of Jews in the Far East, Türk-Tatar National and Spiritual Community and Ukrainian National Colony.[43]

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[39] "Russkaia emigratsiia poluchila svoe predstavitel'stvo" [Russian Emigration Received Its Own Representation], *Gun-bao*, 13 January 1935; "Biuro po delam Rossiiskoi emigratsii v Man'chzhurskoi imperii" [Bureau for the Affairs of Émigrés from Russia in Manchu Empire], *Luch Azii*, no. 5, 1935, 31–35, and no. 7, 1935, 37–41; *Velikaia Man'chzhurskaia Imperiia. K desiatiletnemu iubileiu, 1932–1942* [The Great Manchu Empire. For the Tenth Anniversary, 1932–1942] (Harbin: Kio-va-kai i Glavnoe Biuro po delam rossiiskikh emigrantov v Man'chzhurskoi imperii, 1942), 293–320.

[40] "Vcherashnie aresty v Kharbine" [Yesterday's Arrests in Harbin], *Russkoe slovo,* 16 August 1935; "Aresty vreditelei v Kharbine" [Arrests of Saboteurs in Harbin], *Gun-bao*, 8 October 1935; "Deportatsiia iz predelov Man'chzhu-Di-Go" [Deportation from the Borders of the Manchu Empire], *Luch Azii*, no. 12, December, 1935, 44.

[41] "Russkie emigranty—ravnopravnye grazhdane Man'chzhu-di-go" [Russian Émigrés Are Citizens with Equal Rights in the Manchu Empire], *Gun-bao*, 24 January 1935; "Russkie emigranty iavliaiutsia poddannymi Man'chzhu-di-go" [Émigrés from Russia Are Citizens of the Manchu Empire], *Rupor*, 20 February 1935; "Biuro po delam Rossiiskikh emigrantov v Man'chzhurskoi imperii" [Bureau for the Affairs of Émigrés from Russia in the Manchu Empire], *Russkii nastol'nyi kalendar' na 1936 god* [Russian Table Calendar for 1936] (Harbin: Izdanie BREM, 1936), 53.

[42] Passport of a former Harbin resident, issued in 1939. Author's collection.

[43] "BREM schitaet evreev-emigrantov ravnopravnymi chlenami Rossiiskoi emigrantskoi sem'i" [BREM Considers Jewish Émigrés to Be Equal Members of the Émigré Family from Russia], *Kharbinskoe vremia*, 28 December 1935; "Evrei o Biuro" [Jews about the Bureau], *Luch Azii*,

Émigrés could not get jobs or ration cards without registering with the BREM. Local Soviet citizens were fired from railway or government jobs, and private firms were hounded to fire them as well. It was even proposed that special boards should be hung at the places where the Soviet citizens lived, allegedly to protect them from the rightful animosity of émigrés. Similar pressure was applied to émigrés with Chinese passports.[44] 25,360 émigrés registered with the BREM in Harbin by 1938; the BREM archive in Khabarovsk has some 86,000 registration records for the entire Manchukuo.[45]

The Manchukuo censuses, it is important to note, reflected the fact that, as of 1 July 1933, Harbin, Fujiadian, and settlements and villages nearby on both banks of the Songhua River were merged into the Special City of Great Harbin [*Da Haerbin tebieshi* 大哈尔滨特别市], thus greatly increasing the area covered by censuses; this Special City status was abolished in 1937. Plans for developing "Great Harbin" were quite ambitious: new railway branches and stations, new arterial roads, development of new suburbs in various sparsely settled parts of the city, growth of industrial enterprises, policing and security, prisons, schools, and numerous urban amenities such as water, sewage, sanitation, parks, cemeteries, and so on.[46] Such massive re-planning required population figures which also served as useful data for administering the residents.

As Table 1 below shows, [47] Manchukuo censuses classified the population by the above-mentioned collective identities based on political factors, i.e. citizenship or lack of it.

The sharp drop in Soviet citizens in 1935, as shown in the Table 1, is due to the fact that when the USSR sold its share of the CER ostensibly to Manchukuo but in fact to Japan, over 25,000 CER employees, Harbin Soviet citizens and those sent

no. 17, January 1936, 28; *Velikaia Man'chzhurskaia Imperiia,* 299, 312–320; Usmanova, *The Türk-Tatar Diaspora in Northeast Asia*, 56.

[44] "Osobye tablichki na domakh sovetskikh grazhdan" [Special Plaques on the Houses of Soviet Citizens], *Kharbinskoe vremia*, 1 June, 1938; "Vlasti idut navstrechu zhelaiushchim vyiti is sovetskogo poddanstva" [Authorities Welcome Those Who Want to Give up Soviet Citizenship], *Kharbinskoe vremia*, 25 February 1938; "Kak pereiti iz kitaiskogo poddanstva v emigranty?" [How Does One Change from Chinese Citizenship to Émigré Status?], *Kharbinskoe vremia*, 2 October 1937; "Kitaiskii passport ne daet grazhdanstva Man-chzhu-di-go" [Chinese Passport Does Not Give Manchukuo Citizenship], *Kharbinskoe vremia*, 24 December 1937.

[45] "Skol'ko emigrantov zaregistrirovalos' v Biuro i otdeleniiakh" [How Many Émigrés Have Registered in the Bureau and Its Branches], *Kharbinskoe vremia*, 18 September 1935; [untitled news item], *Kharbinskoe vremia,* 15 February 1938; Usmanova, *The Türk-Tatar Diaspora in Northeast Asia,* 73.

[46] Koshizawa Akira, *Harubin no toshi keikaku* (Tokyo: Sowa sha, 1990).

[47] Table 1 is compiled from data and terminology given in *Daiichi dainichi shisei nenkan* [The First and the Second Yearbook on the State of the City] (Harbin: Harbin Special City Office, 1935), 11–13; "Harbin, City of Historic Lore and Romance," *Contemporary Manchuria*, Dairen, v. II,5, September 1938, 62; *Vseobshchii kalendar' na 1938 god* [Universal Calendar for 1938] (Harbin: Biuro po delam rossiiskikh emigrantov, 1937), 63; *Vseobshchii calendar' na 1943 god* [Universal Calendar for 1943] (Harbin: Biuro po delam rossiiskikh emigrantov, 1942), unpag.

Table 1 Classification of Harbin Population in Manchukuo Censuses, 1933–1942

Years	Harbin total	Manchukuo citizens [国籍]	Japanese citizens	Citizens of the Chinese Republic	Soviet citizen	Émigrés	Other foreigners
1933	414,386	341,368 Manchu [满洲] (334,663 natives [本国] and 6,705 naturalised [归化)	14,303 9,096 Japanese [日本] and 5,207 Koreans [朝鲜]	964 [中华民国]	24,908 [苏联]	29,346 “stateless” people [无国籍]	2,497
1935	462,060	389,410 (385,552 Manchus, Mongols, Muslims, and 3,858 naturalised)	33,465 (27,399 Japanese and 6,066 Chosenese [Koreans])	20	7,384	29,493 of “no nationality”	2,288
1936	464,812	388,658	39,151 (32,472 Japanese and 6,679 Chosenese)	37,003 foreigners			
1937	474,951	397,791	35,685	–	–	25,865 émigrés	7,788 foreigners
1942	721,951	560,000 Manchus, Han Chinese, Mongols, and other native people	125,000 Japanese and Koreans	–	–	30,000 émigrés and Manchu citizens	5,060 subjects of other countries

from the USSR, left for the USSR.[48] Other, both émigrés and holders of Soviet passports, started leaving for other Chinese cities, particularly Shanghai, as the first step towards the USA or other countries.

Contemporary studies of the Harbin population have recalculated the figures of the Manchukuo censuses (there were no other for the years of 1932–1945) to fit different divisions. A recent Chinese study splits Harbin residents of those years into two collective identities: "Chinese population" [*zhongguorenkou* 中国人口] and "foreign population" [*waiqiaorenkou* 外侨人口]. The Chinese population is then subdivided into Hans 汉族, Manchus 满族, Hui 回族, Mongols 蒙族, and "others," including émigrés from Russia with Chinese citizenship. The foreign population refers to Japanese, Koreans, ethnic Russians, Jews, Poles and numerous smaller ethnic groups.[49] This recalculation accounts for variations between Tables 1 and 2.[50]

1945–1980

With the end of World War II and the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the multinational face of Harbin vanished. In 1945, when the Red Army occupied Northeast China, 15,000–20,000 émigrés from Harbin and other cities and settlements were arrested and taken to the USSR, to be shot or sentenced to hard labour.[51] The remaining émigrés were heavily pressured to take on Soviet citizenship, and many did so, won over by propaganda, patriotic feelings, hopes for a better life in the USSR, or the inability to get a visa to go elsewhere; they were issued special surrogate passports. As a result, in 1949 there were 24,166 Soviet citizens and 2,144 émigrés.

Israel, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia and a few other countries repatriated their nationals. In 1954, when the numbers stood at 15,673 Soviet citizens and 1,505 émigrés, the USSR offered the Harbin Soviet citizens a resettlement in Kazakhstan and similar barely developed regions. 11,889 residents accepted and more followed in the next few years. [52] The remainder applied for visas to countries in North and South America and to Australia, and were eventually able to leave Harbin. By the end of the 1960s, the Chinese sources listed 69 émigrés or "stateless" people, and the number dropped to 11 by the end of 1980s.[53] Multinational Harbin had come to an end.

[48] Tretchikov, *Sovremennaia Man'chzhuriia v faktakh i tsifrakh*, 74; Xue Lianju, *Haerbin renkou bianqian*, 152.

[49] Ibid., 114, Table 3–20 and note 1.

[50] Table 2 is compiled from ibid. 103, Table 3–13; 157–61, Table 4–8 and diagram on 161.

[51] The number of émigrés arrested and taken to the USSR in 1945–1946 is based on statements of former Harbin residents interviewed by the author.

[52] Xu Lianju, *Haerbin renkou bianqian*, 257–61, table 7–21, 262.

[53] Ibid., 260–61.

Table 2 Harbin Population in 1932–1946 as presented in Modern Chinese Research

Years	Harbin total	Chinese [*Zhongguorenkou* 中国人口]	Foreign residents [*Waiqiaorenkuo* 外侨人口]	Breakdown of four major groups of foreign residents			
				Japanese [*Riben* 日本]	Koreans [*Chaoxian*朝鲜]	Stateless [*wuguoji* 无国籍], i.e. émigrés	Soviet citizens [*Sulian* 苏联]
1932	404,797	295,365	109,432	2,751	3,245	26,234	21,839
1933	413,386	342,332	71,054	9,096	5,207	29,346	24,908
1934	500,526	420,922	79,604	15,656	5,631	34,178	20,801
1935	462,060	389,430	72,630	27,399	6,066	29,493	7,384
1936	464,812	388,658	76,154	32,472	6,679	27,992	6,561
1937	457,980	393,157	64,823	26,347	4,355	25,751	9,578
1938	460,206	394,540	65,666	28,238	5,056	25,366	4,457
1939	517,127	439,491	77,636	38,917	6,330	28,103	2,548
1940	645,531	549,536	95,995	51,448	8,962	31,346	1,845
1941	681,882	582,457	99,425	55,448	8,119	31,346	Not given
1942	713,943	602,689	111,254	76,450	Not given	Not given	Not given
1943	723,782	604,761	119,021	86,395	Not given	Not given	Not given
1944	711,818	595,207	116,611	83,886	Not given	Not given	Not given
1945	Not given	Not given	Not given	Not given	Not given	Not given	Not given
1946	531,070	394,454	136,626	84,986	20,097	18,448	11,074

Censuses of Harbin performed in the last century show how the émigrés from Russia were labelled and controlled for the political ends of the ruling powers. The 1913 census, by showing the majority of residents to be subjects of the Russian Empire, reinforced the notion of Russia's entitlement to its semi-colonial CER zone. The 1920s censuses done by the Chinese authorities followed the Soviet division of people into political collective identities, namely those of stateless émigrés versus Soviet citizens. This division became entrenched in the censuses of the puppet Manchukuo and later of the People's Republic of China. Harbin émigrés became defined by the presence or absence of citizenship, and this definition, captured in censuses, in many ways affected their identities and their lives.

The *Yuandongbao* 遠東報: A Chinese or a Russian Newspaper?

Rudolph Ng

Abstract The *Yuandongbao* 遠東報 [The Far Eastern Journal] was the first Chinese-language newspaper in Northern Manchuria and is a critical primary source for Sino–Russian relations and Manchurian history in the early twentieth century. Financed by the Tsarist government, managed by Russian sinologists, and written by Chinese editors, this unique newspaper reflects an intriguing relationship of competition and cooperation between China and Russia in Northeast Asia that neither side could have foreseen. Tracing the history and development of this newspaper from its creation shortly after the Russo–Japanese War until 1921, when Russian and Chinese authorities finally closed it down, this paper departs from traditional historiographies by postulating that the *Yuandongbao* was in fact an evolving amalgamation of Russian policies and Chinese interests. These in turn resulted from a series of delicate balancing acts between the journal's Russian managers and Chinese editors. Therefore, any simplification that would reduce the newspaper to a national label— either Chinese or Russian—does not reflect the complicated historical realities in Northern Manchuria in the early twentieth century.

> Large daily political, economic, and literary newspaper, *Yuandongbao*. Published in Harbin in Chinese. Eight pages of text and advertisements appear daily. The newspaper's main task is to aid the development of trade and economic relations and the cultural exchange between Russia and China on the basis of equal economic cooperation between both nations. The newspaper is the best go-between for trade, commerce and industrial advertising for North China, Manchuria, and Mongolia. Letters and advertisements can be sent in Russian, Chinese, Mongolian, and English. Free translation of advertisements and printing orders into Chinese.[1]

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The *Yuandongbao* 遠東報 [The Far Eastern Journal], the first Chinese newspaper in Northern Manchuria, constitutes an important primary source on Harbin and Manchurian history in the early twentieth century.[2] Not only did this newspaper provide extensive news coverage of Harbin and Manchuria, but its many editorials and opinion columns also reflected key Russian policies and Chinese opinions in the region. Since Harbin was the major port of exchange for agricultural products in Northeast Asia, the newspaper also reported local commodity prices, which had worldwide influence. It was, moreover, an official medium by which the Russian authorities in Harbin, the imperial Qing court, and the subsequent republican government published edicts and official messages. The *Yuandongbao* was even selected as one of the few journals read by the prince-regent of China and as one of five newspapers worth reading by the China International Student Federation—a highly nationalistic organisation.[3] Given the newspaper's importance, it is quite surprising that only limited scholarship—both Chinese and Western—has been devoted to it.[4] This paper intends to remedy the situation by tracing the newspaper's history and answering certain key questions about the *Yuandongbao*'s historical role in the Russo-Chinese community of Harbin.

Harbin, where the *Yuandongbao* had its headquarters, was developed by the Russians into a transportation hub of the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER) in the

[2] Some issues of the *Yuandongbao* are missing, especially those published before 1910. Microfilm collections of the newspaper can be accessed at the Harvard-Yenching Library and the Heilongjiang Provincial Library. Partial prints can also be found at the Shanghai Library. Volumes of selected issues of the *Yuandongbao* were also published in Harbin. See Haerbinshi difangshi yanjiusuo [Institute for Research on the Local History of the City of Harbin], ed., *Yuandongbao zhebian* [Far Eastern Journal: A Selection] (Harbin: Haerbinshi difangshi yanjiusuo, 1980). These volumes contain several issues of the *Yuandongbao,* but only from between 1916 and 1921.

[3] Among the most useful sources concerning the development of the *Yuandongbao* is Fond 323 at the Russian State Historic Archive (RGIA). The specific reference about the *Yuandongbao*'s popularity among the Chinese is noted in RGIA, Fond 323, Opis' 1, Delo 878, 46.

[4] Brief and similar entries from the *Yuandongbao* can be found in two new local gazetteers: Haerbinshi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui [Editorial Committee of the Harbin City Gazetteers], ed., *Haerbin shizhi* [Harbin City Gazetteer] (Harbin, 1994), XXV, 18–21; and *Heilongjiang shengzhi* [Heilongjiang Provincial Gazetteer], ed. Heilongjiangsheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui [Editorial Committee of the Heilongjiang Provincial Gazetteers] (Harbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1993), l, 169–172. In addition, a short discussion on the *Yuandongbao* is given in the Heilongjiangribaoshe xinwenzhi bianjishi [Heilongjiang Journal's Office of Journalism History], ed., *Dongbei xinwenshi* [History of Journalism in the Northeast] (Harbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 2001), 21–4. To my knowledge, there has been no standalone English publication on the *Yuandongbao*. A few historians on Harbin have, however, written about the newspaper in the context of their research. For information on the *Yuandongbao* and its Russian management, see David Wolff, *To the Harbin Station: The Liberal Alternative in Russian Manchuria, 1898–1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 155–67. For an example of how the *Yuandongbao* promoted Chinese nationalism in Harbin, see James Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916–1932* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 61–65.

early 1900s. Many people—above all Chinese and Russians—lived and worked side-by-side in this "international city".[5] Not until the 1960s did the last Russians leave Harbin. Because of the decades of Sino-Russian coexistence, Harbin has remained of great interest to both Russian and Chinese historians to this day. And yet they are unable to agree on the city's history. Who established Harbin? When was it founded? Who developed it into a metropolis? In short, was Harbin primarily Chinese or Russian?[6] For many Chinese historians, the *Yuandongbao* has been part of the larger "Harbin question," with descriptions of this Russian-sponsored newspaper referring to it as a "Tsarist mouthpiece," a "foreign newspaper," and an "imperialist vehicle."[7] These views, however, overlook the meaning of the *Yuandongbao* for the history of Harbin. Instead of providing a straight Chinese-or-Russian answer to the Harbin question, the varied nature of the newspaper's representation precisely reflects Harbin's multifaceted development into a metropolis, unparalleled in Northeast Asia for generations to come. The following discussion is intended to demonstrate that the *Yuandongbao* was the evolving product of delicate balancing acts in which the interests of all contending parties in Harbin were represented. At no point was the *Yuandongbao* an exclusively Chinese or Russian journal. Essentially it was always an amalgamation, which mirrored the development of the Sino-Russian border town itself in the early twentieth century.

This study first describes the history of the *Yuandongbao*, showing its progression from a newspaper aligned with Russian intentions to a more China-oriented paper. Next it discusses the newspaper's Russian management and Chinese editorial staff, whose education and background made possible its pluralistic nature. This is followed by an examination of the financial and market realities faced by the *Yuandongbao* as a business venture, since fierce competition in the Manchurian press market helps explain some of the decisions made about the perspectives it adopted. These perspectives, namely the Russian and Chinese, will then demonstrate the balanced presentation of the interests of both communities. Finally, the implications of the evidence are considered in relation to the historical development of Harbin as a Sino-Russian border town.

Brief History of the *Yuandongbao*

The birth of the *Yuandongbao* can be traced back to its predecessor in southern Manchuria. The Russian army had already printed a Chinese-language newspaper in Mukden, the *Shengjingbao* 盛京報, up to October 1904. After their defeat in the

[5] In addition to the two largest populations, Japanese, Koreans, Poles, Americans, British, Germans, French, and a sizeable Jewish population also resided in Harbin. See ibid., 4 and 145.

[6] For a detailed discussion of the Harbin question, see Thomas Lahusen, "A Place Called Harbin: Reflections on a Centennial," *China Quarterly* 154 (1998): 400–10.

[7] *Dongbei xinwenshi*, 21; *Heilongjiang shengzhi*, 170; *Haerbin shizhi*, 19.

Russo-Japanese War, the Russian troops moved north, and the *Shengjingbao*'s printing presses were handed over to the CER.[8] The railway administrator, Dmitrii Leonidovich Khorvat, seized this opportunity to launch a new Chinese newspaper, the *Yuandongbao*, with multiple objectives. This new Chinese daily in Harbin was intended to cultivate Russo-Chinese friendship in the region, bring more Chinese customers to the CER, and improve Russia's image after the war.[9]

With its CER connections, the newspaper maintained a large network of reporters across Manchuria and was able to reprint stories from foreign news outlets such as Reuters. Its key circulation area extended far beyond Harbin itself, since it was sold in both Russian-controlled northern and Japanese-controlled southern Manchuria. For some readers in rural northern Manchuria, the *Yuandongbao* was the only newspaper they could obtain for years. Furthermore, the first newspaper in Mongolian, the *Monggol-un sonin bichig*, not only used the *Yuandongbao*'s office and printing machines, but also culled its news reports and editorials.[10] The *Yuandongbao*'s news coverage and opinions thus reached far into Outer Mongolia. Moreover, although Manchuria remained the *Yuandongbao*'s main audience, readership elsewhere in China also paid attention to what it reported and opined, with newspapers in Shanghai often reproducing its editorials and news reports.[11]

After over a year of preparations, 1,000 copies of the first issue of the *Yuandongbao* were distributed on 14 March 1906.[12] Within 4 years, the paper had tripled its circulation to 3,000 when the 1,000th issue was celebrated on 19 May 1910.[13] An important moment early on for the *Yuandongbao* came during the winter of 1910–1911, when pneumonic plague spread across Manchuria, because evidently the journal became a critical bridge between the authorities and a nervous public. For months it reported almost daily on the epidemic and corresponding policies by the local and regional governments. Through the *Yuandongbao*, Harbin

[8] "Voprosy dnia" [Issues of the Day], *Kharbinskii vestnik* [Harbin Herald], 7 October, 1904.

[9] Wolff, *To the Harbin Station*, 161.

[10] Most issues of this CER-backed newspaper in Mongolian have been lost. Two issues from 1915 can be found, however, in "Two Old Mongolian Newspapers," *The Mongolia Society Special Papers* 5 (1969). Its location in Harbin is recorded in "Khronika" [Chronicle], *Zheleznodorozhnaia zhizn' na Dal'nem Vostoke* [Railway Life in the Far East] 27 (22 July), 1914, 11. The newspaper's influence extended well into the Mongolian People's Republic; see Tatsuo Nakami, "The Minority's Groping: Further Light on Khaisan and Udai," *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 20 (1980): 108.

[11] For instance, the *Shenbao* often cited the *Yuandongbao* reports concerning happenings in Northeast China and China's relations with foreign powers. The *Shenbao* also took special interest in the competition faced by the *Yuandongbao* in Harbin. See "Dongchuigongbao beifeng zhi beifenlu" [The Indignant Story of the Closing of the *Dongchuigongbao*], *Shenbao*, 3–4 April, 1911.

[12] *Kharbinskii vestnik*, 4 December 1913. The creation of the *Yuandongbao*'s office in Harbin took place before the Russo-Japanese War had ended. As early as February 1905, the management was searching for a Chinese editor-in-chief. See "E qiu zhubi" [Russians Looking for Editor-in-Chief], *Shenbao*, 27 February, 1905.

[13] Wolff, *To the Harbin Station*, 161.

and Manchurian residents learned about the concept of personal hygiene and new burial practices, along with other advice in the fight against the plague.

The events between 1912 and 1913 marked a turning point for the *Yuandongbao*. The newspaper's strong alignment to Russian policies during the Sino-Mongolian conflict eventually led to a public boycott of the *Yuandongbao* in 1913 (described below). The paper's management, however, promptly took steps to rectify the situation, including toning down the pro-Russian rhetoric and inserting more—material to please the Chinese, such as a supplemental page written exclusively in vernacular Chinese. More entertaining pieces such as poems and serial stories were also part of the revamped newspaper, and as an additional means to curry favour in the Chinese community, the *Yuandongbao* regularly raised funds for local charitable causes. As a result of these measures, the newspaper survived a difficult period and evidently continued to gain ground in the community.

Already towards the end of 1913, one could find evidence of renewed acceptance of the newspaper. On 17 December 1913, the *Yuandongbao* marked its 2,000th issue by printing portraits of prominent Chinese figures congratulating the paper. Xiang Xilong 熊希齡, premier of the Chinese Republic, sent his best wishes. On 14 March 1916, the paper celebrated its tenth anniversary, and needed 3 days to print the more than 70 congratulatory messages from officials, businesses, schools, and organisations of both the Chinese and Russian communities. The year 1916 also saw the number of pages increase to 12,[14] and circulation reached a new volume of 5000, making the *Yuandongbao* the largest among the 20 Chinese newspapers in the region. With the exception of its chief rival, the *Shengjing shibao* 盛京時報—a Japanese-financed Chinese newspaper based in Mukden—the *Yuandongbao*'s influence in the region was unparalleled.

But after 1916, the *Yuandongbao* was unable to continue to thrive for a number of reasons. During the political upheavals in Russia between 1917 and 1918, Harbin experienced high inflation, and the price of paper skyrocketed, forcing the publication to reduce its number of pages first to ten and eventually to eight. Occasionally, the printing department could not even publish because of a lack of paper or a workers' strike. Moreover, the struggle in 1918 between the Soviets and the Whites in Harbin must have contributed to the disruption of the paper's operations, as its editor-in-chief, A.V. Spitsyn (discussed below), sought refuge in Harbin's Chinese sector and became chief negotiator with the Chinese on behalf of Khorvat, the CER administrator. But although Khorvat and his allies survived the power struggle in Harbin, the *Yuandongbao* was ultimately forced to shut down. In the last week of February 1921, the journal published a short notice on its front page announcing its

[14] The number of pages of the *Yuandongbao* varied from 8 to 12. The publication format of the paper closely modelled the already successful Chinese-language newspapers *Shenbao* 申報 and *Shibao* 時報 in Shanghai. A typical issue was published in the following format: page 1—editorials, page 2—wire news items, page 3—national and local news, pages 6 and 7—reports from Manchuria and other provinces, pages 10 and 11—cultural and entertaining items such as short stories, literature, and letters to the editor. The rest of the *Yuandongbao* (at least five pages) was dedicated to advertisements.

forthcoming end and stating that subscriptions would be refunded.[15] The paper claimed that its cessation was on the order of the CER, but gave no further explanation. In fact, a few months earlier an agreement had already been reached between the Chinese and the Russians. The *Yuandongbao* was to be terminated, though not for financial reasons, since it was still a viable commercial enterprise and financially independent of the CER.[16] Instead, the closure was political, and not under the control of the editors, because the Chinese government had begun taking away the privileges of the Russians in Harbin, including the *Yuandongbao*, other CER publications, and the Russian-controlled municipal council.

Management and Staff of the *Yuandongbao*

The *Yuandongbao* was headed by two Russian sinologists. Aleksandr Vasil'evich Spitsyn[17] (1876–1941), the *Shengjingbao*'s editor-in-chief, continued to work in this capacity on the *Yuandongbao*. His assistant editor was Il'ia Amvlikhovich Dobrolovskii[18] (1877–1920). Both were from the class of 1905 at the Oriental Institute in Vladivostok, which had its roots in the "Practical School" of Russia's Asian studies. The school, which can be traced back to Russian sinologist Vasilii Pavlovich Vasil'ev (1818–1900), saw China as a partner, rather than an enemy, in pursuing Russian interests in the Far East. The school's followers further maintained sympathetic feelings towards embattled China and believed in the intellectual potential of the Chinese. Since Vasil'ev's students were founders of the Oriental Institute in 1899, his enlightened views on China took root in the new institution and became the *modus operandi* for many of its graduates; in other words, they were to work with, not against, the Chinese.[19] Spitsyn, among the first students at the Oriental Institute, was the product of this approach, even if it was at times unpopular within the Russian establishment. For instance, in a research article published in 1901, Spitsyn exposed the lethal conditions in Russian-owned mines

[15] "Benguan jinyao qishi" [Important Announcement from the Office], *Yuandongbao*, 25–28 February 1921.

[16] Wolff, *To the Harbin Station*, 232.

[17] Spitsyn's Chinese name was Shibichen 史弼臣 in the *Yuandongbao*. Many Chinese primary sources used Sibichen 司弼臣 instead.

[18] In the *Yuandongbao*, Dobrolovskii was referred to as Duobuluofusi 多布羅夫斯.

[19] During the early 1900s, two divergent strategies emerged among Russian policymakers concerning Manchuria and China. Both were targeted at expanding Russian influence in the Far East. One of them, preferred by many military officers, meant complete control over Manchuria, by force if necessary. The other, supported by Finance Minister Sergei Witte, sought to employ cultural and economic measures to obtain the desired goal. See Wolff, *To the Harbin Station*, 146–67 and 181–90, for detailed discussions on Russian orientology.

under which Chinese coalminers were suffering. For his publication, Spitsyn was reprimanded by both the CER chief and the Russian consul in Qiqihar.[20]

This approach evinced an even clearer departure from the establishment when several Oriental Institute graduates formed the Society of Russian Orientalists in Harbin in 1909, independent of similar organisations in St Petersburg. Spitsyn and Dobrolovskii were among the founding members.[21] The society's aims were to promote cultural inclusiveness between Chinese and Russians at a time when the Russian army preferred military means for expanding Russian influence in Manchuria.[22] Through research and teaching, the society came to represent an increasingly different approach to China from those desired by the military or the Russian government. From 1909 to 1926, the society published the *Vestnik Azii* [Herald of Asia], and its writers demonstrated a progressive outlook concerning the future of China and Sino-Russian relationships. A typical article in the *Vestnik Azii,* written by Spitsyn in 1909, explained contemporary regional reforms in Northeast China. Spitsyn praised these Chinese measures and argued that the reforms enacted in Fengtian, Jilin and Heilongjiang Provinces would have national relevance in a new China.[23] But the *Vestnik Azii* did not merely show sympathy towards China; its often contributors levelled outright criticism at Russian policies in Manchuria. For instance, an article by Dobrolovskii in 1910 was critical of some of the Russian opposition to Harbin's self-government and ridiculed the Russian central press for its factual mistakes concerning the Sino-Russian community.[24]

Spitsyn's and Dobrolovskii's goal of Sino-Russian harmony can also be observed in their endeavours beyond their publication careers. In the 1910s, Spitsyn acted as advisor to both CER manager Khorvat and successive Heilongjiang governors Bi Guifang 畢桂芳 and Bao Guiqing 鮑貴卿.[25] His main task was to troubleshoot issues between the Russian and Chinese establishments,[26] and he continued in this role of go-between after the Russians had lost much of their power in the region. In the 1920s, Spitsyn worked as an advisor to Manchurian warlord Zhang Zoulin 張作霖 and the Soviet authorities, particularly on the joint

[20] Rosemary K. I. Quested, *"Matey" Imperialist? The Tsarist Russians in Manchuria, 1895–1917* (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press, 1982), 244–45.

[21] I. Verevkin, "Kratkii ocherk vozniknoveniia i deiatel'nosti Obshchestva russkikh orientalistov" [A Brief Account of the Establishment and Activities of the Society of Russian Orientalists], *Vestnik Azii* 1(1909): 272–80.

[22] Wolff, *To the Harbin Station*, 12.

[23] A.V. Spitsyn, "Administrativnoe ustroistvo Man'chzhurii" [Administrative Structure of Manchuria], *Vestnik Azii* 2 (1909): 26–54.

[24] I.A. Dobrolovskii, "Vnezemel'nost' inostrantsev v Kitae" [Extraterritoriality of Foreigners in China], *Vestnik Azii* 1 (1909): 136–88.

[25] Some details of Spitsyn's employment are available. See correspondence from the Chinese Finance Ministry to the Foreign Ministry, "Pin Shibichen wei guwen zhuijia yusuan shi" [Additional Budget Request for Hiring Spitsyn as Advisor], 1 March 1914, Record 03-42-001-04-005, Archive of the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

[26] Quested, *"Matey" Imperialists?*, 244.

Sino-Soviet administration of the CER.[27] To Khorvat, Spitsyn was a confidant, while the Chinese officials were also well disposed towards him.[28] Indeed, Spitsyn was honoured for his contributions by *both* the Russian and the Chinese authorities. In September 1913, he received the Third Class Order of the Republic of China for "achievements of the *Yuandongbao* in building friendly cultural and economic Sino-Russian relations,"[29] while the CER directorate issued a special order in March 1916 recognising Spitsyn for his editorship of the *Yuandongbao*.[30]

Like Spitsyn, Dobrolovskii strove for mutual understanding between the Russian and Chinese communities in Harbin. For him, education and political engagement were important steps towards that objective. But although he was a long-term member of the municipal council, his passions appeared to remain with elementary education.[31] After becoming the chairman of Harbin's schools commission, he advocated that instruction in Chinese be included in the public school curriculum.[32] Eventually, Chinese did become a required course in some Harbin high schools, which Russian children attended, and Dobrolovskii prepared a lecture series for the teachers. When language teachers were lacking, Dobrolovskii taught schoolchildren Chinese for free. Indeed, both Spitsyn and Dobrolovskii spent most of their lives in Harbin and also died there. Dobrolovskii passed away in 1920 while still compiling a Chinese textbook for Russian pupils.[33] Spitsyn remained in Harbin long after the Chinese, and subsequently the Japanese, took over the city, and died a respected sinologist and member of the Harbin community in 1941.[34]

Although Spitsyn and Dobrolovskii may have made many editorial decisions, they still relied on Chinese editors to do most of the writing. Spitsyn hired at least three Chinese editors-in-chief for this purpose. Leading the Chinese team were Gu Zhi 顧植 (1906–1908?), Lian Mengqing 連夢青 (1909?–1913), and Yang Kai 楊楷

[27] "Na panikhidakh po A.V. Spitsynu" [Funeral Services for A.V. Spitsyn], *Zaria* [Dawn], 25 November 1941. His prominent role in Sino–Soviet negotiations in Harbin was also noted in the news. See "Guonei zhuandian" [Special Domestic Dispatches], *Shenbao*, 29 January 1925.

[28] In a number of internal dispatches, senior Chinese diplomats described Spitsyn as a well-educated individual with an unpretentious personality. See correspondence from the Heilongjiang Provincial Administration Office to the Foreign Ministry, "Pin Shibichen wei guwen shi" [Concerning the Hiring of Spitsyn as Advisor], 1 March 1914, Record 03-01-018-03-001, Archive of the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

[29] *Kharbinskii vestnik*, 19 March, 1913.

[30] "Tieluzongban zhihe benbao" [Railway Directorate Congratulates the Newspaper], *Yuandongbao*, 16 March 1916.

[31] Concerning Dobrolovskii's election to the council, see "Dongshihui xuanju huiyuan", *Yuandongbao*, 14 March 1917. He had belonged for a long time to the small group of Russians that made decisions for the city. See the list of council members in 1911 as cited by Quested, *"Matey" Imperialists?*, 406.

[32] Wolff, *To the Harbin Station*, 167.

[33] Obituary of Dobrolovskii in *Vestnik Azii* 48 (1922): 3–5.

[34] "Zaiha baie juzi Shibichen shishi" [Spitsyn, Leader of the Whites in Harbin, Passes Away], *Binjiangribao* [Binjiang Times], 26 November, 1941.

(1913?–1921).[35] These Chinese intellectuals appeared to share the liberal views of Spitsyn and Dobrolovskii. Two of them, Gu and Lian, were also members of the Revolutionary Alliance (the *Tongmenghui*) and strove for a new Chinese Republic. Gu, in fact, was arrested and imprisoned in Shanghai for his revolutionary activities before moving to Manchuria.[36] The *Yuandongbao*'s Chinese motto—"Developing Manchurian culture and forging friendship between Chinese and Russians"—was coined jointly by Spitsyn and Gu.[37] Lian, who succeeded Gu, also ran into problems with the imperial authorities because of his anti-Qing activities and sought refuge in foreign concession zones in Shanghai. There, as a journalist, he persisted in criticising the Qing government, an activity he continued in the *Yuandongbao*. The last Chinese editor was Yang Kai, who publicly proclaimed that he would not write anything contrary to his own conscience. Yang further asserted that he and Spitsyn had reached an agreement: no anti-Chinese editorials would be printed as long as Yang was editor of the *Yuandongbao*.[38]

The daily writing of the *Yuandongbao* lay in the hands of these Russian sinologists and Chinese progressives. Whereas tsarist policies in the Far East were not to be blatantly contradicted at any point, Spitsyn—a trusted aide to Khorvat—had a high degree of autonomy in all matters concerning the *Yuandongbao*.[39] Afforded such freedom, the liberal and reformist personalities of these Russian and Chinese writers shone through in the news reports and editorials of the *Yuandongbao*. The liberal ideas of the paper's management and staff, however, were not the only guiding principles in its development. Financial considerations and market realities must also have influenced the *Yuandongbao*'s editorial decisions.

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[35] *Dongbei xinwenshi*, 22; *Spravochnaia knizhka po lichnomu sostavu sluzhashchikh Kitaiskoi Vostochnoi zheleznoi dorogi na 1-oe ianvaria 1917 goda* [Reference Book on the Composition of Employees of the Chinese Eastern Railway on 1 January 1917] (Harbin, 1917), 234–35. I have listed these three names because only Gu, Lian, and Yang have been confirmed by both Russian and Chinese primary sources. Two more Chinese editorships cannot be corroborated by multiple sources. The editorship of Zhang Songqing (1914–1917) was noted in a Russian source; see *Spravochnaia*, 234–35. That of Su Ziwu 蘇子武 (–1912?) was recorded in one Chinese source; see "Zhuyi panku zuijin zhi xingdong" [Pay Attention to Activities of the Rebellious Küriye], *Shenbao*, 10 December 1912.

[36] *Dongbei xinwenshi*, 22.

[37] "Gejie zhuci" [Congratulatory Messages from All Walks of Life], *Yuandongbao*, 14 March 1916.

[38] "Xinnian fakanci" [Forewords to the New Year], *Yuandongbao*, 5 January 1919.

[39] Between the two CER-sponsored publications, the *Yuandongbao* and the *Kharbinskii vestnik*, the Chinese paper appeared to have considerably more latitude. See Quested, *"Matey" Imperialists?*, 264.

Market Competition and Financial Considerations

From its inception, the *Yuandongbao* faced fierce competition from many Chinese-language newspapers in Manchuria. Although the Russian-backed publication remained the leader of the Manchurian press during most of its existence, Chinese- and Japanese-sponsored papers posed a constant threat to the *Yuandongbao*'s vanguard role. Its major competitor was the Japanese-owned *Shengjingshibao*. Established in Mukden just a few months after the *Yuandongbao* in Harbin, the *Shengjingshibao* shared similar objectives to its Russian counterpart.[40] It was funded by the Japanese consulate-general in Mukden and could rely on the vast newspaper network of its founder, Nakajima Masao 中島真雄 (1859–1943). The *Shengjingshibao*'s circulation rivaled that of the *Yuandongbao,* and after the latter's demise, its position as the leading opinion maker in Northeast China remained unchallenged until the closing months of World War II. Besides the Japanese-backed newspaper, numerous newspapers, albeit short-lived, were published in Harbin by the Chinese themselves, many with the explicit aim of competing against the *Yuandongbao*. Printed in the Chinese sector of Harbin, the most notable were the *Dongfangxiaobao* 東方曉報 (1907–1908), the *Binjiangribao* 濱江日報 (1908–1910), and the *Dongchuigongbao* 東陲公報 (1910–1911), all of which were engaged in a war of words against the *Yuandongbao*. The multitude of these Chinese newspapers gives a vibrant picture of the Manchurian press market. Especially in urban Manchuria, where newspaper choices were abundant, no one had a monopoly on information. Regardless of what the *Yuandongbao*'s management might have wanted their readers to believe, a transparent market of information, as in Manchuria in the 1910s, restricted what the *Yuandongbao* could actually propagate. Under these circumstances, Spitsyn and his colleagues had to respond accordingly to their competition by adjusting their style and content for the reading public, since in Harbin and other Manchurian cities, readers could simply stop purchasing the *Yuandongbao,* effectively forcing a change of editorial direction.

Not only did the *Yuandongbao* have to cope with external threats; internally it also had to face financial challenges. Initially the *Yuandongbao* was supported by the Russian Finance Ministry, which allocated 170,000 roubles for the paper's annual budget.[41] This large annual subsidy was justified by the newspaper's contribution to better understanding between the Russian and Chinese communities in Harbin and beyond. But from 1906 onward, this financial backing decreased year after year. Budgetary problems became particularly acute after the October Revolution, when inflation and rouble depreciation multiplied the *Yuandongbao*'s losses

[40] Marian Young, "Shengjing shibao: Constructing Public Opinion in Late Qing China," (Ph.D. diss., University of Hawaii, 2009), 42.

[41] S. Li, F. Shi, and L. Gao, *Haerbin shilue* [A Brief History of Harbin] (Harbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1994), 2.

by a factor of ten.[42] The CER and the editorship of the *Yuandongbao* had no choice but to transform the newspaper into a financially independent business venture.[43] For this purpose, subscriptions and advertisement revenue became increasingly vital to the newspaper's survival. Starting from the mid-1910s, the *Yuandongbao* embarked on an aggressive drive to increase this revenue. Regular recruitment waves for "journalists" across Manchuria were advertised in the newspaper. These employees were stationed in various Manchurian cities and served multiple functions. In addition to sending back news reports to Harbin, they were responsible for promoting advertisements in and subscriptions to the *Yuandongbao* in their local communities, the results of which had a direct impact on their income.

The impact of this new strategy was evident in the increased number of advertisements in 1916, when half of the *Yuandongbao's* pages became purely commercial. Although the notices of Russian companies promoting their businesses remained important throughout the paper's publication history, Chinese products were featured even more frequently. Even Japanese companies—supposedly the archrivals to Russian interests in Manchuria—were regular customers of the *Yuandongbao*. Among these firms were the Hidika Company, a respectable firm in Manchuria and Japan importing Japanese products; the Tongren Hospital, a Japanese medical institution located at Harbin's centre; the Kato Sauce Company, a Japanese business in the Chinese sector of Harbin; and the Bank of Chosen, a Japanese-controlled bank headquartered in Seoul. Not only were all products—Chinese, Russian, Japanese, British, and American—welcomed in the advertisement section of the *Yuandongbao*, but also some harsh criticism of the Russians would appear if someone had the money to pay for it. For example, the owner of Xi Shengtai 西盛泰, a Chinese company in Harbin, bore a grudge against the son of a Russian general because allegedly the Russian had cheated him out of a 1,000 roubles. In a paid announcement, he made this serious allegation while thanking his friends for assisting him during the tough times.[44]

This is the historical context in which the *Yuandongbao* was published. While its management and staff subscribed to a liberal philosophy on Sino-Russian relations, they also had to confront market forces and financial difficulties. These two conditions can be understood as the rationale behind what the *Yuandongbao* had come to represent. In the following sections, both the Russian and the Chinese perspectives as expressed by the *Yuandongbao* are examined, and it will be shown that the journal was neither one-sided (Russian or Chinese) nor monolithic (within either the Russian or the Chinese perspectives).

[42] "Yueduzhujun gongjian" [A Public Announcement for All Readers], *Yuandongbao*, 10 January 1918. The newspaper justified its immediate rise in the subscription price by the losses it was making.

[43] Wolff, *To the Harbin Station*, 161, 232.

[44] "Minxie bugao" [Notice of Appreciation], *Yuandongbao*, 20 March 1917.

The Russian Perspective, Interests, and Representation

In the early years of the *Yuandongbao*, the editorials quite explicitly defended tsarist interests in the Far East. After the signing of the Li-Lobanov Treaty (1896) and the Sino-Russian Convention (1898), Russia gained the right to construct a railway across Manchuria and the Liaotung Peninsula, reaching a planned naval base at Port Arthur. Although the tsarist designs on the Far East were checked after Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, Russians still retained solid control over Northern Manchuria and remained a key competitor of Japan in the area. In the *Yuandongbao*, the Russian occupation and plans in Manchuria were either denied or justified on the basis of mutual Sino-Russian benefits and protecting the area from undue Japanese influence. For instance, the newspaper maintained that "there is no evidence that Russia is plotting to gain one inch of land in China."[45] Furthermore, it claimed that "Russia does not want to stir up tensions with China; every move by Russia is meant to keep the peace and friendship between China and Russia."[46] Sometimes, the newspaper even argued that the Chinese government was anti-Russian in order to justify Russian actions. On 11 August 1911, an editorial stated that "in the past, Russia never used force against China; however, as events have demonstrated, China is indeed against Russia and wants forcibly to eject it from Manchuria." As a result, the increase in the Russian military presence at the border was "to ensure its own rights in the Far East."[47]

The *Yuandongbao*'s defence of the Russian sphere of influence reached a climax between 1912 and 1913, when multiple *Yuandongbao* pieces advocated Mongolian independence from China. This proved to be a turning point for the newspaper. The subsequent readership boycott caused sales to plummet by 30 %. Several Chinese citizens sent insulting and threatening letters to the newspaper's headquarters in Harbin, and Spitsyn personally received four death threats.[48] All these events evidently had a significant impact on the Russian management, who demonstrated their willingness to change in order to rescue the newspaper. The newspaper undertook critical modifications in both format and content. Together with more entertaining elements such as short stories, it inserted a supplement in vernacular Chinese to attract more readers from the lower classes. In addition, Spitsyn hired a new Chinese editor-in-chief, Yang Kai. Spitsyn and Yang agreed that from then on that they would not print editorials that were damaging to China. Indeed, explicitly anti-Chinese pieces were rarely published afterwards.

[45] "Zhonge huajie qingxing" [The State of Sino-Russian Demarcation], *Yuandongbao*, 6 October 1910.

[46] "Zhonge jiaoji guanxi" [The Sino-Russian Diplomatic Relationship], *Yuandongbao*, 31 May 1911.

[47] "Dungu zhonge bangjiao zhi zuihouqi" [In the Last Phase of Consolidating Sino-Russian Diplomatic Relations], *Yuandongbao*, 15 August 1911.

[48] Quested, *"Matey" Imperialist?*, 241.

Nevertheless, the pro-Russian stance of the *Yuandongbao* did not waver in matters not directly related to China. This was particularly apparent in its reports on World War I. From 1914 to 1918, Spitsyn's team diligently culled reports from Russian, French, and other wire services. A special section, "A Bundle of Telegrams on the European War," was dedicated each day to the war. Hardly any negative messages, however, were detectable in all 5 years, even when Russian troops repeatedly suffered disastrous losses. Most items described how Russia had achieved victories by strategic manoeuvres, how German attacks were ruthlessly repulsed, and how the Turks suffered great losses in retreat. Actions by key allies such as England and France received relatively little coverage. On the home front, while Russians suffered from erratic food supplies, the *Yuandongbao*, citing two separate wires, claimed that the war effort had not adversely affected the Russian people and that they were "entirely willing" to sacrifice more foodstuff for the army.[49] The movements of Nicholas II on the frontline were carefully noted, but no mention was made of the mistakes he or his commanders committed.[50] When the Russian treasury issued the new 1,000 rouble notes, the *Yuandongbao* claimed that it was only for the people's convenience and that it was "mind-boggling" that some people in Harbin would not accept them.[51] No mention was made of hyperinflation as a consequence of the war and political instability. Such selective reporting made the tsarist army appear almost on the verge of final victory. Naturally, when Russia was issuing national bonds during the war, the *Yuandongbao* recommended them highly to its Chinese readers. While the return of 5.8 % was lucrative, so the editorial explained, purchase of the bonds would help "defeat the enemies and develop the economy."[52]

The *Yuandongbao*'s commentaries on the February Revolution in 1917 were equally upbeat. An editorial asserted that the 1905 Revolution and the February Revolution were completely different, as the latter had received solid popular support. As a result, so the newspaper explained, the political transition was completed peacefully, accompanied by the applause of the Russian people. The editorial finally urged its readers not to worry about the changes in Russia, since the new government would continue to develop cultural and economic connections between China and Russia.[53] According to the *Yuandongbao*, the February Revolution was a universally joyous occasion. The Russian population in Harbin was "elated" after receiving the news of the Revolution; indeed, more than 1,000 of them celebrated the establishment of the Provisional Government on the streets of Harbin, waving the national flag.[54]

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[49] "Zhuandian" [Special Dispatches], *Yuandongbao*, 21 March 1917.

[50] "Shijie xinwen" [World News], *Yuandongbao*, 13 March 1917.

[51] "Qianyuan lubu zhi yiwen" [Question of the One Thousand Rouble Note], *Yuandongbao*, 28 October 1917.

[52] "Tonglun: Eguo xin nianzhai" [General Survey: Russia's New Bonds], *Yuandongbao*, 17 March 1916.

[53] "Shiping" [Commentaries], *Yuandongbao*, 20 March 1917.

[54] "Benfu xinwen" [News of the Region], *Yuandongbao*, 20 March 1917.

It would, however, be amiss to assume that the *Yuandongbao* was always optimistic or in agreement with St Petersburg. The situation, in fact, turned out to be exactly the opposite after the October Revolution, when the Soviets took power in Russia. The Russian community in Harbin, under Khorvat, remained one of the last bastions of the Whites. Khorvat was kept in power by the Chinese, but only after several struggles against the Soviet forces in Harbin.[55] A staunch supporter of Khorvat, Spitsyn made his feelings towards the Bolsheviks clear. The *Yuandongbao* was decidedly against the new regime in St Petersburg, and this stance lasted until the end of its operation in 1921. Explaining the October Revolution, the *Yuandongbao* suggested that the Provisional Government was proceeding too quickly with its reforms, and put the blame squarely on Alexander Kerensky, the Minister Chairman of the government.[56] Having thus attributed the failure, the *Yuandongbao* then published horrific stories associated with the new regime. Yet the newspaper remained hopeful that the Whites would eventually stage a comeback. On 13 November 1918, it reported that the White movement had asked the United States for financial support to launch a counteroffensive against the Bolsheviks.[57] In the same report, the *Yuandongbao* culled a wire item from London stating that a political conflict might arise between Germany and Russia as a result of the revolution. When foreign powers sent troops into the Far East during the Siberian Intervention, the newspaper believed that the White movement would triumph.[58] Furthermore, it objected to any diplomatic relations between China and Russia as long as the Soviets remained in power. The editorials reasoned that the Soviets would have a negative influence on the new Chinese republic; communism should have no place in China, an ancient country with more than a 1,000 years of tradition.[59]

In one of its last editorials, the *Yuandongbao* issued a bleak warning to readers: all moves by the Bolsheviks were aimed at causing chaos in the world so that communism could take root in every country. Humanity would be at great risk if the world failed to arrest their advances. The recent proposal by Lenin to cancel all German debts from World War I, argued the *Yuandongbao*, was nothing more than a plot to cause a rift between Germany and the Franco-British alliance.[60] It was in this tone that the *Yuandongbao* finished 15 years of publication.

Reviewing the editorials over the years, one may observe that the *Yuandongbao*'s "Russian perspective" was never static or homogeneous. In the

[55] Lenin in fact ordered the Soviets to seize control of Harbin. The power struggle between Khorvat and the Bolsheviks reached its climax in November and December 1917. Khorvat succeeded in retaining power when the Chinese sent in troops in December 1917. For a detailed chronicle of this episode, see Quested, *"Matey" Imperialists?* 308–324.

[56] "Shiping: Eguo geming yinian zhi jingguo" [Commentary: The Course of the Russian Revolution in One Year], *Yuandongbao*, 14 March 1918.

[57] "Zhuandian" [Special Dispatches], *Yuandongbao*, 13 November 1918.

[58] "Eguo zhanxian zhi zhenxiang" [Truth behind the Russian Front], *Yuandongbao*, 13 November 1918.

[59] "Zhongguo yu duoshuzhuyi" [China and Pluralism], *Yuandongbao*, 4 September 1920.

[60] "Liening lun shijie dashi" [Lenin's Speech on World Affairs], *Yuandongbao*, 27 February 1921.

beginning, the journal came close to representing a hard line, which had to be adjusted after the reader boycott in 1913. Afterwards, the editorial direction remained Russian as long as the core issues did not conflict with Chinese interests. The revolutions of 1917 proved to be another turning point for the *Yuandongbao*, since it opposed all policies coming from St Petersburg. This zigzag in the editorial line was also followed by the "Chinese perspective."

The Chinese Perspective, Interests, and Representation

Despite being an official CER newspaper, Chinese interests remained a central focus throughout the publication of the *Yuandongbao*. The "Chinese perspective" can be observed in three areas of the journal: culture, politics, and nationalism. First, the *Yuandongbao* was very much "Chinese" when it came to the discussion of China's cultural heritage. It often reminded readers of long-standing Chinese Confucian traditions, such as filial piety and moderation. Editorials and news reports were regularly featured to this end. For example, on 27 August 1910, despite a loss of revenue, the *Yuandongbao* commemorated the birthday of Confucius by creating a holiday for the staff the following day. In addition, it printed an editorial glorifying not only Confucius but also all the Chinese people who shared this great heritage. It asserted that the cultural superiority of the Chinese as a civilised people, with a "thousand years of history" and an enlightened culture, stemmed from the guidance of the great teacher Confucius.[61] Complying with Chinese tradition, the *Yuandongbao* also gave its staff holidays for Chinese festivities such as the Chinese New Year, the Mid-Autumn Festival, and the Qingming Festival. All these appeared to display the enlightened ideas of Russo-Chinese relationships believed in by Spitsyn and his colleagues.

Chinese news also received the most coverage in the paper's reporting of political events. Its viewpoint, however, was by no means monolithic or consistent during its 15 years of existence. For instance, the Revolution of 1911 was satirically branded as a farce and its participants as actors.[62] Sun Yat-sen, the first president of the Republic of China, was accused of having "monarchist" designs and his Chinese nationality was questioned.[63] Nevertheless, such opinions were hard to find after the boycott of 1913, when the paper began emphasising its opinions on regional and international politics. The *Yuandongbao* took special interest, for example, in the appointments of regional officials and their policies. A clear pro-China stance, however, took centre stage after 1917, as budding nationalism revealed itself in the paper's extensive coverage of various national events. Following the end of World War I, it was agreed at the Paris Peace Conference that Japan would take

[61] *Yuandongbao*, 27 August 1910.

[62] "Xiaoyan" [A Few Words], *Yuandongbao*, 1 December 1911.

[63] "Lun Zhongguo zongtong" [Discussing the President of China], *Yuandongbao*, 3 February 1912.

over German interests in China. Such terms caused outrage in China. Later referred to as the "May Fourth Movement," protests were organised by students across the country. In May 1919, the *Yuandongbao* reported these demonstrations in various Chinese cities at length and described the students as patriots.[64]

But the type of nationalism promoted by the *Yuandongbao* differed from the xenophobic nationalism associated with the Boxer Rebellion. The newspaper's focus was on an enlightened nationalism in a reformed China, which called for multicultural coexistence and Sino-Russian cooperation in Manchuria. This position resembled the philosophy of Spitsyn and Dobrolovskii and the progressive stand of the Chinese editors, and an editorial approach that could already be seen long before the 1913 boycott. In an early opinion column, the writer recalled his own childhood experiences in Shanghai when he observed policemen in the foreign concession zone brutally beat a Chinese strolling on the street. At that time, he thought that police brutality was the norm and that police would do the same in England or France. Now, as an adult, he had had the chance to travel abroad and realised that police in other countries saw themselves as public servants. They treated people properly and in return were respected as custodians of law and order.[65] The editorial closed with an urgent call for police reform, the essence of which echoed Spitsyn's research paper in 1901. Both saw a social problem within society and hoped for changes that would improve the welfare of the Chinese people.

Another typical editorial proposing that kind of vision was printed on 1 October 1911, just as the revolutionary activities against the Qing court were reaching their peak. Entitled "A Warning against Anti-Manchu and Anti-Han Individuals," the editorial took the position that the future of Manchuria depended on multicultural cooperation in a new Chinese state after the removal of the Qing court. A region without Manchus or Han Chinese, according to the *Yuandongbao*, could not develop economically; more importantly, China, with its long-inclusive tradition inherited from Confucius, could show its "thousand years of civilisation" only by accepting different races within its borders.[66]

Such arguments for a progressive form of Chinese nationalism continued up to the journal's last years. An example was the cooperation between the *Yuandongbao* and the Donghua School.[67] The Donghua School was founded on 1 April 1918 by a number of zealous nationalists with the goal of forging a stronger China by educating a new generation of Chinese using foreign learning. The school taught students both Chinese literature and Western science and promoted a brand of

[64] For example, see "Beijing xuesheng zhi aiguochao" [The Patriotic Movement of the Students], *Yuandongbao*, 9 May 1919.

[65] "Andong huabu rumin ganshu" [Afterthoughts on Police Brutality in Andong], *Yuandongbao*, 6 September 1910.

[66] "Jinggao paiman yu paihan zhe" [A Warning against Anti-Manchu and Anti-Han Individuals], *Yuandongbao*, 1 October 1911.

[67] This case study was researched in detail by Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin*, 31–65.

nationalism in line with the *Yuandongbao*'s editorial approach.[68] The school especially wanted to cultivate a national identity in its students without provoking the Russian community in Harbin. The Donghua experience offered a "cooperative nationalism" that accepted the large foreign population and the associated cosmopolitanism as part of the city's identity and strength.[69]

This nationalist-minded institution received coverage from the *Yuandongbao* even before its doors were opened to students. On 18 March 1918, the first of a series of Donghua School-related news reports and advertisements appeared in the *Yuandongbao*. The paper discussed the preparations for the school and the biography of its Christian, Russian-speaking principal, Deng Jiemin 鄧潔民. The next two articles, on 19 March and 30 March 1918, further reported the school's financial difficulties and noted donations from local Chinese officials.[70] All this set the stage for a direct advertisement from the school itself, on 8 November 1918, which called for donations from the public. Principal Deng and other board members pleaded for financial contributions by appealing to the public with patriotic sentiments such as, "Do you want to strengthen the nation? Then please contribute to the Donghua School!"[71] Thanks partly to the *Yuandongbao*'s coverage, the fundraising efforts for the Donghua School were a success and the class size doubled.[72]

The Donghua School coverage thus illustrated that the *Yuandongbao*'s support for an enlightened nationalism was not limited to national matters. Inclusiveness on a local level was also part of the newspaper's interests. Based on Western learning, Chinese traditions, and multicultural exchanges, the philosophies of the Donghua School of Deng and the principles of the "Practical School" of Spitsyn and Dobrolovskii came into alignment. From this perspective, the *Yuandongbao* represented both Chinese and Western values.

Conclusions

The *Yuandongbao* demonstrates a unique course of development in the history of the Chinese press. It was never a purely Russian or solely Chinese newspaper, because it represented both sides. Likewise within the "Russian" and "Chinese" perspectives, no one single opinion ran throughout its 15 years of existence. Unlike most other presses in China, the *Yuandongbao* began with a political mission and

[68] Ibid., 32.

[69] Ibid., 31.

[70] "Hou Jiandu juanfei xing xiao," *Yuandongbao*, 19 May 1918, as cited in Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin*, 43.

[71] "Haerbin donghua xuexiao mujintuan qishi" [Announcement from the Fundraising Group for the Harbin Donghua School], *Yuandongbao*, 8 November 1918.

[72] *Donghua xuexiao chengli jinian shu* [Volume Commemorating the Founding of the Donghua School], 3, Harbin Municipal Archives, wenjiao fond, File 4, 15–22, as cited in Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin*, 63.

ended up with a mixed agenda of commercial and cultural goals. Although short-lived, the newspaper highlights a period when press freedom arbitrated political intentions. The newspaper had the journal's Russian and Chinese staff to thank for this approach.

It would be inaccurate to depict Russia as a nation with an unequivocal policy in the Far East that was executed exactly as planned in St Petersburg. The Society of Russian Orientalists, to which Spitsyn and Dobrolovskii belonged, was a telling example of how different policies on China could be. While some in the military and political circles of St Petersburg favoured a hard-line approach to China, the Russian management of the *Yuandongbao* aspired to a cooperative position vis-à-vis the Chinese. Spitsyn believed that he was serving long-term Russian interests, although his way of achieving them departed decidedly from the main opinion in the Russian capital. But because of the wide degree of operational freedom given to Spitsyn under General Khorvat, he was able to express his opinions through the *Yuandongbao* rather than strictly following Russian policy.

The history of this Sino-Russian newspaper is thus indicative of the complexity of the city of Harbin. The *Yuandongbao* is important not only because it was the first Chinese newspaper in Harbin or because of its enormous circulation. Rather, the newspaper is also a critical source for cultural historians of Harbin and northern Manchuria because its contents vividly reflect the complicated nature of the society at that time. Never was the *Yuandongbao* a one-sided mouthpiece for St Petersburg, nor did it neglect Chinese national interests. In short, the paper was neither a monolithic Chinese nor a foreign newspaper. Instead it represented the opinions and interests of the competing parties of Harbin, which in turn reflected the social realities of this Sino-Russian border town. The *Yuandongbao*'s delicately balanced representation of often differing and conflicting interests is thus in and of itself a sign of the complex history of early twentieth-century Harbin and Manchuria.

"Kharbinger" of Trouble. Anti-German Protest and Power Relations in a Manchurian City 1933

Susanne Hohler

Abstract This paper examines the anti-German protest of the Jewish community in the Manchurian city of Harbin under the Manchukuo government. It presents an answer to the question of how the reactions to global events are shaped by local particularities. In this case, the ascendance of Hitler and his National Socialists is the global event, and the Jewish responses to it in Harbin were unique because of the local power relations between different ethnic groups and the Japanese rulers. These interrelations are demonstrated by two peculiarities. Firstly, the Japanese administration in Harbin censored and even fabricated information about events inside the Jewish community. Secondly, despite being able to suppress Jewish protests and having an interest in doing so, the Japanese officials refrained, because the Jews' perceived economic hegemony led them to opt for a moderate response. Despite being in a position of formal superiority, the Japanese administration was restrained in its ability to shape its multi-ethnic society, and the groups inside that society therefore had room to act.

In March 1933 a remarkable event took many by surprise: Hitler and his National Socialists came to power in Germany. The takeover clearly affected the whole world, but it was especially significant for the Jewish diaspora since, within days, the already precarious situation of the German Jews rapidly worsened and the acts of intimidation, repression, and violence multiplied. The outrage about Hitler's anti-Semitic politics reached even the most distant populations of the Jewish diaspora and, in reaction, Jewish organisations and individuals worldwide held

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protest rallies and called for a boycott of German goods and services to pressure the Nazi regime as well as their "own" governments.[1]

This paper examines the anti-German protest of the Jewish community in the Manchurian city of Harbin under the Manchukuo government. It presents an answer to the question of how the reactions to global events are shaped by local particularities. In this case, the ascendance of Hitler and his National Socialists is the global event, and the Jewish responses to it in Harbin were unique because of the local power relations between different ethnic groups and the Japanese rulers. These interrelations are demonstrated by two peculiarities. Firstly, the Japanese administration in Harbin censored and even fabricated information about events inside the Jewish community. Secondly, despite being able to suppress Jewish protests and having an interest in doing so, the Japanese officials refrained.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Harbin was home to many different ethnic, national, and religious groups, which generally practiced mutual tolerance, at least until the end of the 1920s. The situation worsened rapidly at the beginning of the 1930s after the successful invasion of Manchuria and Japan's establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo in March 1932. Ordinary crime, like armed robbery, blackmailing and kidnapping became endemic, as people disappeared or were found dead on the streets, and ethnic antagonism increased.

Formally, the new state was under the rule of the last Chinese emperor, Pu-Yi, himself an ethnic Manchu, but in reality the Japanese and especially the Guangdong army were firmly in control. The desire for a staging ground to enable further expansion into China and to gain control over the economy and the exploitation of natural resources in Manchuria motivated Japan to establish Manchukuo. However, the act also exacerbated Japan's increasing international isolation, since neither the League of Nations nor most states were willing to recognise Manchukuo, which led the Japanese to withdraw from the League in the spring of 1933.[2]

The Japanese exercised rigid control over the multiethnic population in almost all areas of life. They strictly monitored the economy, the press, the education system, and civil society, among other areas, and they were willing to employ any means necessary to enforce their will.[3] In contrast, the Jewish community of Harbin, consisting mainly of stateless Russian refugees with nowhere else to go,

[1] There are very few publications about the anti-German boycott, and they mainly focus on American Jews. Moshe Gottlieb, "The Anti–Nazi Boycott Movement in the American Jewish Community, 1933–1941" (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1967); Richard Hawkings, "Hitler's Bitterest Foe: Samuel Untermeyer and the Boycott of Nazi Germany, 1933–1938," *American Jewish History* 93 (2007): 21–50.

[2] For an overview of the Japanese occupation of Manchuria see: Yamamuro Shin'ichi, and Joshua A. Fogel, *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Luise Young, *Japan's Total Empire Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[3] Among other things, the Japanese arrested, tortured, and killed political opponents. For an extensive list of tools, see: Dan Ben-Canaan, *The Kaspe File. A Case Study of Harbin as an Intersection of Cultural and Ethnical Communities in Conflict 1932–1945* (Harbin: Heilongjiang University, School of Western Studies, 2008), 29–30.

appears to have been powerless and inferior despite their considerable numbers. But the case of Jewish protests against the Nazi regime in Germany shows that the Jews were nonetheless able to oppose the demands of the Japanese, and some were willing to do so.

The Setting

Russian Jews had been living in Harbin since it was founded in 1898. In the beginning they were attracted by the special business opportunities Manchuria had to offer. Since Harbin was located outside of the empire and the management of the Chinese-Eastern Railway wanted to promote the economic development of the region, they forewent integrating the economic and social restrictions, which made life difficult for Jews in Russia proper. Later, the community consisted mainly of emigrants from the former Russian empire, fleeing first the pogroms, the Russian Revolution and the Civil War, and later the Bolshevik regime, especially after the end of the NEP (New Economic Policy).[4] By the beginning of the 1930s, the community totalled around 13,000 members and managed several educational, cultural, religious, and charitable institutions under the umbrella organisation HEDO[5] (*Kharbinskoe Evreiskoe Dukhovnoe Obshchestvo/* Harbin Jewish Religious Community), making it the largest and most important Jewish community in Manchuria. With few exceptions, Jews in Harbin belonged to the middle class and retained a strong Jewish identity, but they were far from being religiously orthodox.[6] Many were members or supporters of different Zionist movements, but the most left wing of the socialist-Zionist movement was not represented because it had effectively ceased to exist in Harbin after a series of bitter contests over leadership in the Jewish community in the 1920s.[7]

[4] David Wolff, "Evrei Manchzhurii: Kharbin, 1903–1914 gg.," *Ab Imperio* 4 (2003): 239–70; Ziva Shickman-Bowmann, "The Construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway and the Origin of the Harbin Jewish Community, 1898–1931," in *The Jews of China*, vol. 1: *Historical and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Jonathan Goldstein (New York: M.E. Sharpe /East Gate, 1999), 187–99; Victoria Romanova, "Russkiiskie Evrei v Kharbine," *Diaspory* 1(1999): 115–42.

[5] HEDO, the first Jewish organisation in Harbin, was founded in 1903 to fulfill the religious needs of the community and to register births, marriages, and deaths. The institution was reorganised, and its functions expanded far beyond religious matters in 1917 after the Kerensky government lifted all religiously–based restrictions. Boris Bresler, "Harbin's Jewish Community, 1898–1958: Politics, Prosperity, and Adversity," in *The Jews of China*, ed. Goldstein 200–15, here 202–3.

[6] In the conflict between secular and orthodox Jews that evolved around the reorganisation of HEDO in 1917, the orthodox minority in Harbin suffered a severe defeat. After that, it seems that they did not play any important role within HEDO and the Jewish Community as a whole. Bresler, "Harbin's Jewish Community," 203.

[7] Ibid., 201.

Despite the remoteness of their location relative to Europe, Jews in Harbin obtained ample information from Jewish and gentile newspapers about the developing situation in Germany and about Jewish actions against the Nazi regime.[8] The Harbin-based newspaper *Evreskaia Zhizn'* (Jewish Life), for example, had a special section entitled "The Tragedy of the German Jews" and another about the protest and boycott movement, entitled "Protest against Barbarism."[9] In Harbin, the inspiration to act came from the Zionist organisations, who, around the beginning of April 1933, proposed holding a protest rally in the main synagogue.[10] This proposal, however, met with disapproval among certain factions of HEDO. A majority group called "the non-party members," probably meaning non-Zionists, vigorously opposed the idea of a rally and suggested publishing a letter of protest instead. The various factions failed to achieve consensus, even after three special meetings, which resulted in a cleft of the organisation. The Zionists walked out and started to organise the rally independently of HEDO, while "the non-party members" drafted their own protest letter,[11] which was published on 23 April in the most widely circulated local newspaper, *Kharbinskoe Vremia* (Harbin Times).[12]

Without HEDO's participation, a group of influential community members met on 21 April to voice opinions about the current situation in Germany.[13] At this meeting, a number of Jewish merchants and shop owners agreed among themselves not to buy or sell German goods, to cancel current purchase orders, and to avoid hiring German shipping companies in the future.[14] Interestingly, this part of the debate appeared only in the *Harbin Herald*, which belonged to the British consulate, while the *Kharbinskoe Vremia*, which published a shortened record of the debate, failed to mention the merchants' agreement at all.[15]

[8] For example, see in *Kharbinskoe Vremia*: "Posledniia Sobytia v Germanii. Korichnevye Batal'ony i Evrei" [The latest events in Germany. The brown battalion and the Jews], *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 83, 2 April 1933, 2; "Anti–evreiskii prizyv Gitlera. Sovieshchanie Gitlera s ministrom propagandy Gebbel'som" [Anti–Jewish appeal by Hitler. A meeting of Hitler with the propaganda minister Goebbels], *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 79, 29 March 1933, 5; "Voina Gitlerovtsev s Evreiami" [The war of Hitler's supporters with the Jews], *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 103, 20 April 1933, 3.

[9] See for example *Evreskaia Zhizn'* 12, 11 April 1933; 13, 23 April 1933; 14, 5 May 1933; 19, 6 June 1933.

[10] "Kharbinskaia Nedelia" [The Week in Harbin], *Evreskaia Zhizn'* 12, 11 April 1933, 25.

[11] "Kharbinskaia Nedelia," *Evreskaia Zhizn'* 13, 23 April 1933, 26.

[12] "Protest kharbinskoi evreiskoi obshchiny" [Protest of the Jewish Community], *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 106, 23 April, 1933, 10.

[13] "Evreistvo i germaniia. Zlobodnevnaia anketa sredi evreiskikh obshchestvennykh Kharbina" [Jewry and Germany: Current poll among the representatives of Jewish community in Harbin], *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 105, 22 April 1933,7.

[14] "Kharbinskie evrei protestuiut" [The Jews of Harbin Protest], *Harbin Herald* 99, 22 April 1933, 4.

[15] "Evreistvo i germaniia," *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 105, 22 April 1933, 7.

Intergroup Interaction

One day before the rally in the synagogue, the Japanese rulers of Harbin issued a warning to the Jewish community in the form of an editorial entitled "German Nationalism and the Jews" in *Kharbinskoe Vremia*, saying that any escalation of the situation on the part of the Jewish community in Harbin would do them more harm than good.[16] The author advised the Jews to be careful and calm in their statements and actions regarding the situation in Germany. As an example of the desired attitude, the article cited a statement that Dr. Kaufman,[17] one of best known and most respected members of the community, allegedly made in the debate on the previous day. The words attributed to Dr. Kaufman, cited in the *Kharbinskoe Vremia* article describing the rally as well as in the editorial, indicated that, since he did not know enough about the situation in Germany, he "would prefer to abstain from expressing his opinion."[18] Kaufman denied ever having said anything of the kind, and tried to correct the attribution in a letter to the Harbin Herald shortly thereafter.[19] This in itself was nothing unusual, and censorship was commonly and widely used under the Manchukuo government. But why did the Japanese censor fabricate news about the Jewish community's protest and eliminate any mention of the boycott in the Japanese-controlled press?

Preserving the local distribution of power that the Japanese created and upon which they and their allies relied was a likely motive. Most Russian emigrants living in Harbin were among the so-called "White Russians," the opponents of the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War and faithful advocates of the old order. Moreover, Harbin witnessed the rise of a new phenomenon—Russian fascism, a blend of the ultraconservative *Weltanschauung* of the Russian radical right, and continental fascism under the trinity of "God, nation, and work" and the slogan "Russia for the Russians." The first Russian fascist organisation in Harbin was founded as early as 1925 by students of the Law Faculty. The movement, which attracted several thousand members and supporters, played a decisive role in the

[16] "Germanskii 'Natsionalizm' i Evrei" [German National Socialism and the Jews], *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 106, 23 April 1933, 2. The first issue of *Kharbinskoe Vremia* was printed short before the Japanese occupation of Harbin in September 1931. The newspaper was published until September 1945 by the Japanese consulate in Harbin and therefore firmly under Japanese control.

[17] Avraham Iosifovich Kaufman was born in 1886 in a Ukrainian village. During his time as a student, Kaufman became an active supporter of the Zionist movement in Russia. In 1909, after his return from Switzerland where he studied medicine, Kaufman worked as a doctor in Perm. He moved to Harbin in 1912, where he soon became one of the most important leaders of the Jewish community and of the Zionist movement in China. After the Soviet invasion of Harbin, Kaufman was arrested and spent 11 years in a labour camp in the Soviet Union before he was released in 1956. Kaufman emigrated in 1961to Israel, where he died 10 years later.

[18] "Evreistvo i germaniia," *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 105, 22 April 1933, 7.

[19] Letter to the editor, *Harbin Herald* 6, 27 April 1933, 4.

public life of the city, especially within the Russian community.[20] The Russian fascists collaborated with the Japanese occupants from the outset. Their leader, Konstantin Rodzaevskii, was probably in contact with the *Tokumu Kikan* (Japanese Army Espionage Service) as early as 1931—long before the occupation of Harbin.[21] Their cooperation intensified after the establishment of Manchukuo, when it became common for Japanese security forces to employ Russian fascists as thugs and henchmen, because the Japanese wanted "young men of fair intelligence who will be proud to accept some sort of rank and who will be disposed to do what we want."[22] Perhaps the Russian fascists tried to pressure the Japanese to quash Jewish actions against the Germans, but this is implausible because the Russian fascists were much more dependent on their benefactors than the other way around.

In the editorial of the *Kharbinskoe Vremia*, the debates about the National Socialists and the Jews in Germany were said to aggravate the tension between the Jewish community and other sections of the population in Harbin.[23] Japanese rulers wanted to avoid any sign of conflict between the different nations and instability in their newly acquired realm, which would contradict the proclaimed "harmony between the races." A harmonious image was even more important given that such conflicts would worsen the image of Manchukuo and of Japan in the eyes of the world, especially after the unfavourable Lytton Report in 1932.[24]

Another group that might have tried to exert influence on the Japanese was the actual target of the protests—the National Socialists and the Germans in Harbin and in Europe. The NSDAP operated a branch in Harbin, but in 1933 the organisation was still very weak, even within the German community, as was the case throughout the cities of Manchukuo and China at the time.[25] In Harbin, the party struggled to gain control over the German population because the principal German cultural

[20] For the Russian Fascists in Harbin, see Heinz-Dietrich Löwe's essay in this book; also: John Stephan, *The Russian Fascists. Tragedy and Farce in Exile, 1925–1945* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1978); Aleksandr Vasil'evich Okorokov, *Fashizm i Russkaia Emigratsiia: (1920–1945 gg.), (Moscow: Rusaki, 2002)*; Erwin Oberländer, "All–Russian–Fascist–Party," *Journal of Contemporary History* 1 (1966): 158–73. Russian Fascism in Exile. A Historical and Phenomenological Perspective on Transnational Fascism, Fascism. Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies (forthcoming September 2013).

[21] Stephan, *Russian Fascists*, 68–9.

[22] Amleto Vespa, *Secret Agent of Japan. A Handbook to Japanese Imperialism* (London: Gollancz, 1938), 50.

[23] "Germanskii 'Natsionalizm' i Evrei," *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 106, 23 April, 1933, 2.

[24] The Lytton Report was commissioned by the League of Nations to investigate Japan's role in the so-called Mukden incident, which served as the pretext for the invasion of Manchuria. The report concluded that the new state of Manchukuo could not exist without the patronage of the Japanese army and had only limited Chinese support. As a result, Japan withdrew from the League of Nations. Sandra Wilson, *The Manchurian crisis and Japanese society, 1931–1933* (London: Routledge, 2002).

[25] See: Astrid Freyeisen, *Shanghai und die Politik des Dritten Reiches* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2000); Donald McKale, "The Nazi Party in the Far East 1931–1945," *Journal of Contemporary History* 12 (1977): 291–311.

organisation, the *Reichsdeutsche Vereinigung* (Association of German Nationals) resisted the Nazi intrusion. One means of doing so was to reject NSDAP demands that the *Vereinigung* change its membership requirements. The *Vereinigung* only required that applicants hold a German passport, but did not require them to be "Aryan."[26] Additionally, the NSDAP in Harbin lacked members of the social elite, which seems to have damaged the party's prestige. The leader of the party in northern China praised the local Nazis in Harbin for supporting their fellow German citizens during the Jewish anti-German boycott, even if eight of them were unemployed.[27] The mention of this trivial detail indicates that the party, at least in Harbin, had so few members that he must have personally known most of them. If the relations between the Japanese administration in Manchukuo and Germany therefore played any role in the Japanese reaction to the boycott, local pressure from the side of the Germans was probably negligible.[28]

Nevertheless, the increasing isolation of Japan and Manchukuo, which in 1933 was not recognised by any country other than Japan itself, was a source of dismay, especially in economic terms. As a result of China's trade boycott of Japanese goods and the closing of Chinese harbours to Japanese ships, Japan's exports fell by around 80 percent. From the beginning, Japan expended considerable effort to obtain formal recognition for its newly created puppet state. Germany seemed to be a promising candidate, since it also had a rather tense relationship with the League of Nations, and it was also one of the Japanese empire's most important trading partners. Therefore, Japan tried to secure Germany's support in its conflict with the League of Nations, and Japanese diplomats in Berlin constantly campaigned for the recognition of Manchukuo. Even if Hitler had complied in return for preferential terms of trade, the German foreign ministry made it clear that Germany did not want to risk their relations with China, and any involvement would be contrary to German interests.[29] So even if a rapprochement existed, at the time Japan could gain nothing substantial from being the willing tool of the Nazis in their anti-Semitic policy.

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[26] This rule also implied that Aryans without a German passport were excluded from the club. *Mitteilungsblatt der NSDAP* 45/5, February 1936, 77.

[27] *Mitteilungs- und Verordnungsblatt der Landesgruppe Ostasien der NSDAP* 9/1, February 1934, 26.

[28] *Kharbinskoe Vremia* and other newspapers said nothing about how Germans in Harbin reacted to the boycott, but one can assume that it did not differ much from other German colonies in the Far East, where, for example, Germans protested against the *Deutschenhetze* (agitation towards Germans), but at the same time tried to make clear that the anti–Jewish boycott in Germany was at least formally an initiative of the NSDAP and not of the German state itself. For an exemplary source, see: "Maßnahmen gegen die Deutschenhetze im Ausland. Der Boykott gegen Deutschland wird mit dem Boykott gegen die Juden beantwortet" [Measures against the agitation towards Germans abroad. The boycott against Germany will be answered with a boycott against the Jews], *Deutsch Chinesische Nachrichten* 765, 30 March 1933, 1.

[29] Z. Huimin, *Die Deutsche Beziehungen zum Man–zhou–guo und dem Wang Jing–wei Regime*, history department, National Chengchi University, September 1995, 4; see also Gabriele Ratenhof, *Das Deutsche Reich und die internationale Krise um die Mandschurei 1931-1933. Die deutsche Fernostpolitik als Spiegel und Instrument deutscher Revisionspolitik* (Frankfurt a.M.,: Peter Lang, 1984).

Japanese censorship and fabrication of the Harbin press relating to Jewish matters doubtlessly reflected an interest in maintaining mutual toleration among the national groups, but there was no group powerful enough to determine the policy of the Japanese. However, given the Japanese interest in shaping local social relations in Harbin, it is all the more puzzling that they did not put their power to good use by suppressing troublesome Jewish groups outright. Why, for example, did they allow the rally to occur at all when they had foreknowledge of it?

One clue about the motivation behind the Japanese hesitation can be found in an exchange of letters between the German consul in Harbin and the Japanese consul general concerning the protest rally. The German consul formally protested against the language that the Jews used at the rally, subsequently published in a local newspaper, as an offence to Hitler. The Japanese consul general, however, after consultation with the army's special service agency in Harbin, refused to take any action "because limiting the Jews' freedom of speech would provoke hostility here and throughout the world of the Jews, who exercise economic hegemony."[30]

The Japanese, as a non-Christian nation and lacking any experience with Jews, had no tradition of anti-Semitism, since the first small Jewish community in Japan did not appear until the nineteenth century in Kobe.[31] Two events were decisive in shaping the image of the Jews among the Japanese in the twentieth century: the Russo-Japanese war of 1905 and the Siberian intervention during the Russian Civil War. When Japan was in danger of losing the war against the Russian Empire in 1905 due to a lack of funding, a Jewish-American banker, Jacob Henry Schiff, helped Japan to obtain credit in excess of $50 million (USD) to pursue and finally win the war.[32] Schiff was explicit about why he was willing to help Japan against the Russian empire, as Takahashi Korekiyo, vice-president of the Bank of Japan at the time, remembers:

> He was justly indignant at the unfair treatment of the Jewish population by the Russian Government, which had culminated in the notorious persecutions [. . .] He felt sure that if

[30] United States Library of Congress, Japan. Ministry of Foreign Affairs S Series, Reel 431, frames 286–287, Morishima Morioto to Mutō Nobuyoshi, 25 April, 1933, cited from: Avraham Altman, "Controlling the Jews, Manchukuo Style," in *Jews in China. From Kaifeng . . .to Shanghai*, ed. Roman Malek (Sankt Augustin: Steyler Verlag, 2000), 279–317, here 293.

[31] See: David Goodman and Miyazawa Miyazawa, *Jews in the Japanese Mind. The History and Uses of a Cultural Stereotype* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2000); Heinz Eberhard Maul, "Juden und Japaner. Studie über die Judenpolitik des Kaiserreiches Japan während der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933–1945" (Ph.D. diss., Rheinischen Friedrich–Wilhelms–Universität zu Bonn, 2000).

[32] Cyrus Adler, *Jacob Henry Schiff: a Biographical Sketch* (Eastbourne: Gardners Books, 2007); Gary Dean Best, "Financing a foreign war: Jacob H. Schiff and Japan, 1904–05," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 61 (1972): 313–24; Priscilla Roberts, "Jewish bankers, Russia, and the Soviet Union, 1900–1940: The case of Kuhn, Loeb and Company," *American Jewish Archives Journal* 49 (1997): 9–37.

> defeated, Russia would be led in the path of betterment, whether it be revolution or reformation, and he decided to exercise whatever influence he had for placing the weight of American resources on the side of Japan.[33]

After the war, Schiff was invited to Japan and received a medal from the emperor personally—the first time the honour was bestowed on a foreigner.[34] The significance of Schiff's help should not be underestimated, since the Russo-Japanese War was the first war an Asian state won against a Western power in modern times, and was consequently a grand propaganda victory for Japan. These events simultaneously provided the basis for the Japanese image of the Jews as a formidable economic force that could be used in the future for the benefit of the Japanese Empire.

Through their involvement in the Russian Civil War on the side of the White Russians, Japanese military personnel encountered Russian anti-Semitism, especially due to the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. This text was a hoax of Russian origin that accused the Jews of pursuing world domination by all means possible, but especially by revolution, communism, capitalism, and economic domination.[35] The protocols were first translated into Japanese in 1924 by Yasue Norihiro, an army officer who became an anti-Semite after his participation in the Siberian Intervention. The text then circulated widely in Japan and few questioned its authenticity.[36]

The protocols, in combination with Jacob Schiff's timely assistance, led to a very ambiguous image of the Jews as an omnipotent force that could be potentially useful or very dangerous, and therefore one that should be controlled as carefully as possible.

To the Japanese, the anti-German protest and worldwide boycott perfectly fit the stereotype of Jews using their economic influence to defend their brothers and punish their enemies. In the context of the Japanese perception of the Jews, the former's hesitant reaction in Harbin can be understood. On the one hand, they

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[33] Cited in Maul, "Juden und Japaner," 30.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ben-Itto, Hadassa, *The lie that wouldn't die: the Protocols of the elders of Zion* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2005).

[36] Later, in 1938, Yasue Norihiro was appointed head of the intelligence division of the Kwantung Army in Manchuria. Gerhard Krebs, "The 'Jewish Problem' in Japanese–German Relations, 1933–1945," in *Japan in the Fascist Era*, ed. E. Bruce. Reynolds (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 107–32, here 109. On the impact of the protocols in Japan see: Jacob Korvalio, *The Russian Protocols of Zion in Japan: Yudayaka/Jewish Peril Propaganda and Debates in the 1920s* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009).

Incidentally, Japan never adopted, and even opposed, the race–based anti–Semitism of the West, since the Japanese had been discriminated against on racial grounds themselves. Within Nazi ideology, they were seen as a people who preserved a foreign culture (*kulturtragend*) without creating a culture of their own (*kulturschaffend*), a mark of inferiority to the Germans. Krebs, "The 'Jewish Problem'," 111.

wanted to maintain control over the population, but on the other hand, the Japanese feared the potential consequences of repressing the Jewish community, especially at a time when Japan was desperate for foreign investment to develop Manchukuo.

Inner Group Interaction

The conflict regarding the organisation of a mass rally and the letters of protest that it provoked within HEDO probably reflect internal dissent, but that could hardly have been the sole determinant for the Jewish reactions. The resolution passed during the meeting in the main synagogue and the letter of protest published by HEDO in *Kharbinskoe Vremia* show many similarities.[37] Both express concern and indignation about the treatment of the German Jews, emphasising the withdrawal of civil rights and sentiments of solidarity. They both align themselves with the worldwide protest and voice their disbelief that such an outrage could ever happen in a civilised and cultured country. The main difference between the resolution and the letter is the mention of Palestine in the former, which asked German Jews to unite for the reestablishment of a Jewish homeland. It is plausible that the non-party members of HEDO merely wanted to deny the Zionists a platform at this serious occasion, and though there had been tensions and competition between the different fractions before, this does not sufficiently explain the non-party members' condemnation of any kind of protest meeting, with or without the Zionists.

In the debate, the Zionists argued that a mere protest letter would not gratify people's emotions, but a symbolic gesture, like the proposed protest meeting where everyone had an opportunity to express his or her opinion, was obligatory.[38] The opponents of the meeting may have wanted to avoid precisely this outcome for two possible reasons: their fear of growing anti-Semitism and their reluctance to displease the Japanese.

Anti-Semitic agitation and violent attacks on Jews had been a common occurrence in Harbin since the late 1920s. For instance, in spring 1932 the Harbin correspondent of *Israel's Messenger* reported: "Jews were attacked today by White Russian students in the Russo-Chinese Polytechnic. [. . .] Shouting 'Kill the Jews and save Russia' the students attacked every passerby who looked Semitic. Jacob Litwin an aged Jewish merchant was seriously injured during the excesses."[39] Later in the summer of 1933, a series of kidnappings, mainly targeting affluent or supposedly rich Jews and Chinese, culminated in the famous Kaspe Affair.[40] The

[37] For the letter of protest drafted by the "non–party members" in HEDO see: "Protest kharbinskoi evreiskoi obshchiny," *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 106, 23 April, 1933,10; for the resolution of the rally: "Kharbinskaia Nedelia," *Evreskaia Zhizn'* 14, 5 May, 1933, 21.

[38] "Kharbinskaia Nedelia," *Evreskaia Zhizn'* 13, 23 April, 1933, 26.

[39] "Jews attacked in Harbin," *Israel's Messenger*, 1 March 1932, 15.

[40] See Ben-Canaan, *The Kaspe File*.

Jewish community had been suffering from such acts since spring 1932. Many of the Jewish victims did not survive the ordeal, like the pharmacist Michael Kofman, the first Jewish victim, who was found tortured to death after his family had difficulties paying the huge ransom of $30,000 (USD).[41]

Their situation was nevertheless so dire that neither leaving nor acquiescing was an appealing option. Most Jews in Harbin, at least the adults, were emigrants who had been forced to flee their homes in Russia, often under difficult and dangerous circumstances, in many cases leaving behind most of their property and family. And for many there was really no other place to go, since most states had effectively closed their borders, and obtaining an immigration permit for the United States of America, for example, was a very lengthy and costly procedure. Therefore, it is not surprising that many Jews in Harbin shrank from any confrontation with the authorities that could have exacerbated their perilous situation or provoked repression and expulsion. Thus, fear of growing anti-Semitism was far from groundless, but it is also hard to believe that it alone was enough to intimidate the Jews so profoundly. However, Jewish dependence on the Japanese for security, who in turn relied on the youth of the anti-Semitic Russian fascists to help provide public order, gave the Jews a more convincing incentive not to disturb the status quo too drastically.

The Zionist actions could also be ascribed to the strength of Revisionist Zionists in Harbin, one of the dominant factions within the Jewish community in the 1930s. They were especially influential among the Jewish youth, though the majority of the community did not belong to the Revisionists, but to the so-called "general Zionists." Represented mostly by a secular Jewish middle class, the Revisionists constituted the nationalistic and anti-socialist element within Zionism. The founder, Ze'ev Vladimir Jabotinsky from Odessa, saw himself as the true heir and advocate of Herzl's political Zionism and sought to turn the Jewish people, especially the youth, into warriors for an independent Jewish homeland in Palestine, and defenders of the Jewish people, their honour, and their pride. His vehicle for this program was the youth organisation Betar. Jabotinsky emphasised militancy and violence for the transformation of the Jews into his vision of a modern nation equal to all others.[42] The Revisionists in Harbin, above all Betar, took great pride in their willingness to stand up and fight for themselves and their community against their enemies, whom they mostly considered to be the Russian fascists, which resulted in frequent frays between different youth groups. They should have been among the most eager advocates of a strong signal against anti-Semitism and fascism. The rally itself was a big success. Around 2,500 people participated, among them

[41] Verba, *Secret Agent*, 191–4; Stephen, *Russian Fascists*, 80.

[42] For the Revisionist Movement see: Leonid Brenner, *The iron wall: Zionist Revisionism from Jabotinsky to Shamir* (London: Zed 1984); Yaakov Shavit, *Jabotinsky and the Revisionist Movement 1925–1948* (London: Frank Cass 1988); Colin Shindler, *The Triumph of Military Zionism. Nationalism and the Origins of the Israeli Right* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., 2006); Eran Kaplan, *The Jewish Radical Right: Revisionist Zionism and its Ideological Legacy* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005).

several employees of different Harbin consulates. In the speeches and comments made, most did not show the reticence demanded by the Japanese, but rather compared the politics of Hitler with the Crusades and drew parallels between the National Socialist and the Bolsheviks in the Soviet Union.[43]

The mass rally in the synagogue was approved by the Japanese, though they did caution the Jews to restrain themselves and not worsen the existing fissures between different sections of the population. But the Japanese certainly disapproved of any boycott on German goods and services, since the economies of Japan and Manchukuo were already suffering severely from the conflict surrounding Japan's imperialist policy, and they did not want to lose trade with one of their most important partners. Therefore, the Japanese censors suppressed any mention in newspapers that were subject to their control. In Harbin there was neither an officially declared boycott nor any public resolution calling for a boycott. Apparently, just a fraction of Jewish merchants participated in the boycott, among them many of the richest and most influential Jewish businessmen, like Joseph Kaspe, who owned several enterprises, including the city's best hotel, the famous "Modern."[44]

Nonetheless, the boycott that Jewish merchants in Harbin imposed on goods manufactured in Germany or shipped through German shipping agencies seems to have tangibly affected commercial enterprises and other businesses, since it is the only such action in the Far East to have attracted attention elsewhere. For example, the Shanghai-based newspaper, *Israel's Messenger*, reported that it was almost impossible to purchase German patent medicines in Harbin, as most of the pharmacies belonged to Jews. Local representatives of British and Polish companies also noticed an increasing demand for their goods and services.[45] Moreover, the National Committee of the NSDAP in China declared to its members in February 1934: "The Jewish boycott made itself felt just in Harbin, where the Jews fully exploit their superiority of 60 000 men. [. . .] In other places, like elsewhere in the world, the boycott was a fiasco."[46] This estimate of Harbin's

[43] "Kharbinskie evrei protestuiut" [The Jews of Harbin Protest], *Kharbinskoe Vremia* 108, 25April 1933, 6.

[44] "Kharbinskie evrei protestuiut," *Harbin Herold* 99, 22 April 1933, 4.

Many Jews worldwide, especially in the United States, did not participate in the boycott. Some rejected the idea of a boycott on religious grounds. There is no indication that any orthodox Rabbi supported the boycott, and those who observed it often did so on moral grounds. The American Jewish Committee, for example, called the boycott "unethical" and "unJewish." Another potential motive was the fear, often justified in light of the fascist movements in the United States, Great Britain, and elsewhere, that a boycott would just fuel anti–Semitism further. Finally, by the end of April, Hitler had already shown with his infamous and brutal national boycott of Jewish shops on 1 April that his intention to make the German Jews pay for any anti–German agitation was not an idle threat. For the debate about the boycott among Jews see: William Orbach, "Shattering the Shackles of Powerlessness: The Debate surrounding the Anti–Nazi Boycott of 1933–41," *Modern Judaism* 2 (1982): 149–69.

[45] "Harbin Jews boycott German Goods," *Israel's Messenger*, 1933, 22.

[46] *Mitteilungs- und Verordnungsblatt der Landesgruppe Ostasien der NSDAP* 9/1, February 1934, 26.

Jewish population is naturally a gross exaggeration. At the time, Harbin probably had fewer than 13,000 Jewish inhabitants. It was also false that the boycott was a failure everywhere. Nearly all branches of German industry and many companies suffered considerably in the United States of America.[47] Because of their specialist knowledge of the market in Manchukuo and their personal prominence, the richest and most influential merchants probably felt more able to resist Japanese demands than most.

Conclusion

The global nature of the ascendance of the National Socialists in Germany is brought into sharp relief by an examination of the reactions between and within the various national groups in a distant, multi-ethnic city. Nevertheless, the outcomes in Harbin depended on the local configurations of power between these groups. Because of the Japanese fear of the Jews' ability to disrupt the intergroup status quo, they should have suppressed any Jewish reaction, but the Jews' perceived economic hegemony led them to opt for a moderate response. Internally, the Jews were divided among themselves. Aware of the fact that their existence depended on Japanese sufferance, and, fearing a rise in local anti-Semitism, many Jews would have preferred not to provoke. Others, including the Revisionist Zionists and local magnates, called for a stronger reaction to preserve their respective self-conceptions as militant guardians and men of influence. Despite being in a position of formal superiority, the Japanese administration was restrained in its ability to shape its multi-ethnic society, and the groups inside that society therefore had room to act.

[47] Moshe: *The Anti–German Boycott Movement*, 438.

Russian Fascism in Harbin and Manchuria

Heinz-Dietrich Löwe

Abstract This article covers the development of Russian fascism in the Far East in the context of Russian traditions and international political developments. It considers it a phenomenon in its own right—not as a mere imitation of Italian fascism and as more than a simple negation of Soviet Communism.

It was in its first instance the result of a generational conflict—the rejection of White Russian restaurationism and of its dearest political and social tenets: the monarchy and the nobility. On the other hand many elements of Soviet reality were to be accepted for the new Russian nation. Communist thinking left its traces on Russian inter-war fascist ideology and activities in Harbin.

This Russian fascism saw itself as a genuinely Russian phenomenon, claiming to have developed the first variant of fascism even though it rejected many aspects of pre-World War I Russian proto-fascism, as for instance the *obshchina* and (to some degree at least) the idea of an ethnically based nationalism. Thus it developed many similarities to pre-revolutionary Russian populism.

Harbin fascists rejected Nazi racism and largely propounded a religious basis of anti-Semitism. Orthodox religion was of paramount importance to them individually and it was an important tool in developing a nation.

They depicted an ideal of a society characterized by solidarism where the class-struggle would be overcome through a system of corporatist structures for which pre-revolutionary ideas and Soviet realities provided a panacea and Italian fascist policies set an example.

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The Historical Background

Russian Far Eastern fascism in Manchuria and especially in Harbin was the most important of all Russian émigré fascist groups. It fits into a general framework of interwar fascisms and also fulfils Roger Griffin's "fascist minimum": the belief in a nationalist revolutionary rebirth of one's country.[1] Beyond this, however, it also has many elements in common with other fascisms. The observable differences are a result of two important facts:

Firstly, Russian fascism had a powerful and highly discernible precursor which had no equal in pre-World War I Europe. The different pre-revolutionary groups that were, with some justification, seen as one movement and collectively dubbed "Black Hundreds" (including the different branches of the Union of the Russian People, the Union of the Russian People of the Archangel Michael, the Union of Russian Men), could at times attract large crowds, were not averse to mass violence, and even committed acts of terror, some of them quite spectacular, against individuals. This has led some to call them fascists or "proto-fascists", and they certainly were predecessors to Russian interwar fascism.[2] They were recognized as such by Harbin fascists, who saw them and especially their leaders just as one piece of evidence among many for their belief that fascism had deep roots in Russian history.[3]

Secondly, Russian fascists in Harbin and in Manchuria operated under the conditions of exile. This made them, on the one hand, increasingly dependent on the ruling powers—first the Chinese (especially Chinese warlords), and then the Japanese and their collaborators in the region, who were often anchored in the criminal milieu. On the other hand, a constant pressure to cooperate with or at least not antagonize other anti-Bolshevik forces remained. The Japanese reinforced these tendencies by insisting in 1935 that Russian émigrés cooperated and united under the umbrella organisation BREM (Bureau of Russian émigrés in Manchuria) and eventually in 1940 by—at least nominally—banning all Russian émigré organisations, among them the Russian Fascist Union, as it was then called. The

[1] Rogger Griffin, "Fascism's new faces (and new facelessness) in the "post-fascist" epoch," in *Fascism Past and Present, West and East. An International Debate on Concepts and Cases in the Comparative Study of the Extreme Right,* ed. idem et al. (Stuttgart, 2006), 41 and passim.

[2] Hans Rogger, "Was there a Russian Fascism? The Union of Russian People," in *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia*, ed. idem (Houndmills, London 1986), 212–32; for their ideology and many of their activities see the relevant chapters in Heinz-Dietrich Löwe, *The Tsars and the Jews. Reform, Reaction and Antisemitism in Imperial Russia 1772–1917* (Chur, 1993); also idem, "Political Symbols and Rituals of the Russian Radical Right, 1900–1914," *Slavonic and East European Review* 76 (1998): 441–66; Don C. Rawson, *Russian Rightists and the Revolution of 1905* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[3] Konstantin Rodzaevskii, "Russkost' (sic!) rossiiskogo fashizma," *Natsiia* 6, 10 June 1938,1–2; Oberländer's dictum "there is no reference to the 'fascist character' of the pre-revolutionary Russian Right" cannot be upheld, see Erwin Oberländer, "The All-Russian Fascist Party," *Journal of Contemporary History* 1 (1966): 171, fn. 20.

latter officially had to move its headquarters (its leader, Konstantin Rodzaevskii remained in Harbin, however) and its newspaper *Nash Put'* to Shanghai. By 1943, even the tolerated, but "illegal", activities of the fascists had to be discontinued at Japanese insistence.[4]

Both facts, and especially the programmatic and organisational dissociation from other Russian émigré groups, worked against the quick development of a Russian variant of fascism. Thus, although fascist leaders, especially Rodzaevskii, the real head of fascists in Harbin, rejected it, for example, the idea of absolute monarchy nevertheless still figured in the public announcements of Harbin fascists. In 1940, Rodzaevskii, under growing Japanese pressure for cooperation among the émigrés, even seems to have declared his readiness to reestablish the monarchy in the event of a fascist victory.[5] Harbin fascists protested that they were willing to cooperate with all anti-Bolshevik forces, even the liberals, but at the same time they called them the worst enemies of fascism. As the Second World War drew closer, hints that the Japanese were trying to force the fascists to extol Russian unity became ever clearer, but fascists also tried to stipulate conditions for this kind of "united front."[6] Russian fascists not only had to compete with other Russian anti-Bolshevik groups, they also had a difficult choice to make between fascist countries from which they sought support; for example: they had to seek or "accept" Japanese support, and, worse still, they increasingly had to praise the Russian-Japanese friendship or even extol Japan as the new, almost messianic power in Asia.[7] They disagreed over their attitude towards Nazi Germany, as many came to be aware of her anti-Slavic policies, so much so that some—at least from 1939 onwards—even started to doubt the efficacy of anti-Semitism, which had otherwise proved very popular with many Russians in Harbin, and demanded from their fellow fascists to give up the swastika, understood as the sign under which one fought Jewish world domination.[8] Not surprisingly, in the course of time, most fascist leaders declared fascist Italy as the embodiment of pure fascism. This led many historians to see Russian fascism, and the variant in Harbin in particular, as a completely imitative

[4] Ibid., 172; Svetlana Viktorivna Onegina, "Rossiiskii Fashistskii Soiuz v Man'chzhurii i ego zarubezhnye sviazi," *Voprosy istorii* 6 (1997): 157–6; Aleksandr Vasil'evich Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia (1920–1945 gg.)* (Moscow, 2002), 190–1.

[5] Cf. Bundesarchiv Koblenz, NS–Mischbest. vorl. 1589 (250–d–I8–o0/3), quoted by Oberländer, "The All-Russian Fascist Party," 172, fn. 21; however, this is the only "proof" of Rodzaevskii's compromise.

[6] *Natsiia*, 27 April 1941, 2; reports of this kind, or those indicating that the cooperation with other non-fascists groups were frequent and "welcome", can be easily multiplied.

[7] *Nash Put'* 288, 11 November 1935, 4.

[8] John J.Stephan, *Russian Fascists. Tragedy and Farce in Exile 1925–1945* (London, 1978), 200; before this, in 1934, Vonsiatskii, the leader of the Russian fascists of America and the head of a shortlived All Russian Fascist Party (with Rodzaevskii as general secretary), had even demanded a "moratorium" on anti-Semitism from the Harbin Russian fascists, ibid., 141–2; on the battles over pro- and anti-German stances, see Susanne Hohler, "'Kharbinger' of Trouble. Anti-German Protest and Power Relations in a Manchurian City 1933," in this volume.

phenomenon that took its cues from fascist Italy.[9] This is precisely the assumption that will be disputed in this article.

The Political Circumstances

The general conditions in Harbin and the twisted road to organisational autonomy go some way to explain the special ideological and structural features of interwar Russian fascism in Manchuria. Russian fascism first arose as a reaction against the shortcomings of the older generation, which, in the opinion of the fascists knew neither how to fight the Bolsheviks nor had any clear picture of Russia's future. The fascist journal *Nash Put'* at least once—even if not as a main line argument—explained the Second World War in the context of a generational conflict.[10] Harbin fascism was fascism for the young, very probably even more so than other types of fascism; it developed among the students and before long tensions arose between pro- and anti-Soviet professors and like-minded student groups within the Russian Students Society (RSO), especially in the Harbin Russian Law Faculty. Here bitter debates arose among and between professors and students[11] and acquired additional momentum from about 1925 due to developments that made life for the Russians in Harbin increasingly more difficult: the dismissal by Bolshevik authorities of all non-Soviet citizens—thus excluding Russian émigrés—working for the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER), the endeavours of the Soviet authorities, which by 1929 had fully succeeded to tighten their grip on the CER, and the takeover by the Chinese of the municipal and police authority in Harbin and in all of Manchuria.[12] It also appeared that the Chinese authorities were preparing large scale arrests among Russian émigrés in order to please the Soviets.[13] Moreover, the budding fascist movement was hampered due to the prohibition of their propaganda by the

[9] V. P. Buldakov, "Natsional'naia Pravaia prezhde i teper," *Otechestvennaia istoriia* 3 (1994): 202; idem, *Natsional'naia pravaia prezhde i teper': istoriko-sotsiologicheskie ocherki* (St. Peterburg, 1993); Nadezhda Evgen'evna Ablova, *Istoriia KVZhD i rossiiskoi emigratsii v Kitae (pervaia polovina XX v* (Minsk, 1999), chpt. 4.4; Jurii Mel'nikov, "Russkie fashisty Man'chzhurii (K. V. Rodzaevskii: tragediia lichnosti)," *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka* 2 (1991): 119; Oberländer and Stephan seem to hold the same view; also K. Gusev in K. Rodzaevskii, *Zaveshchenie russkogo fashista* (Moscow, 2001), 14.

[10] *Nash Put'* 3, 4 May 1941, 1, 8.

[11] See below the text above the footnotes 21–6, 51–0 and the remarks in the footnotes.

[12] On the increasing feeling of insecurity among Russians as a consequence see James Carter, *Creating A Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an international City, 1916–1932* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), e.g.,107ff.

[13] L. V. Kuras, "Kharbinskaia belaia emigratsiia v osveshchenii spetssluzhb SSSR (konets 20kh – nachalo 30kh godov)," in *Iz istorii spetssluzhb Buriatii* , ed. V. I. Khalanov and B. V. Bazarov (Ulan-Ude, 1997), 46.

Chinese authorities who, around 1929, became anxious not to let their conflict with the Soviet Union get out of hand.[14]

The fascist movement in Harbin started in the summer of 1925 with a small but increasingly active Russian Fascist Organisation (RFO) within the Russian Student Society (RSO). In 1926, it published its basic principles which clearly signalled that the RFO had moved away from monarchist principles and the restorationist mood of émigré circles, even if they could not always be open about this because monarchist feeling was still comparatively strong in Harbin and Manchuria: "We are neither right nor left—. . .we are Russian fascists. . .We combine under our flag all workers—intellectual and physical. . .The return to the old order won't be, the communists also have no future, for them there is no place in Russia."[15] The RSO, although monarchist in principle, had to accommodate this clearly fascist group in their midst and proclaim their own variant of Harbin fascism in 1927: "The Russian Student Society is a fascist organisation based upon the idea of the autocratic monarchy, as it found its theoretical foundation in the letters of Ivan Groznyj and in the works of Russian national-monarchist thinkers, as it was for all practical purposes realized in the foundation of the Great Orthodox Empire. . .Although the RSO in principle does not adhere to Western political ideas, which are based on the liberal-egalitarian principle, the RSO will nonetheless cooperate amicably with all anti-Bolshevik parties and organisations that are willing to fight the Bolsheviks. . .be they Cadets, socialists, *narodniki*, liberals a.s.o."[16] Although both organisations called themselves fascists, there is a further difference in tone and content beyond these quotations. The monarchist students declaration is restorationist and devoid of any real political content beyond the propagation of educational and agitational work, whereas the RFO also pronounces: "we combine the best which the Russian nation has created in the past and the good that was born in the revolutionary years. . .we bring the protection of the land- and cultural interests of the village, the protection of his work to the worker. . .we strive for the establishment of national syndicates and to put the productive processes under the control of the national state authority."[17] At the same time, they pronounced concisely: "No privileges based on birth and money," and added that land should

[14] Oberländer, "The All-Russian Fascist Party," 160–1; there were many conflicts within Chinese politics and society, including with respect to their attitude towards fascism—Chinese or otherwise. See Margaret Clinton, *Fascism, Cultural Revolution, and National Sovereignty in 1930s China* (New York University, 2009).

[15] "Theses of Russian Fascism", reprinted in *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoi emigratsii 1920–1940gg*., ed. A.F. Kisilev (Moscow, 1999), 306–7, presumably appeared as a leaflet, translation tries to preserve original features.

[16] "Our Demands," ibid., 308–9.

[17] Ibid., 306–7; all historians lump together the two tendencies, e.g. Mel'nikov, "Russkie fashisty," 110; Oberländer, "The All-Russian Fascist Party," 160. However, in reports by fascist agitators in the districts of Manchuria, it became clear that they did not like members who, when asked about their political convictions, answered "I am a monarchist," see *Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Man'chzhurii. Voenno-politicheskaia deiatel'nost' (1920–1945)* (Iuzhno Sakhalinsk, 1994), 73.

only be restored to the peasants, not to the former landlords (*pomeshchiki)*.[18] This must have been hard to stomach for the monarchists in the Russian Student Society. But worse was in store for them: In 1926 the Russian fascists even promised to introduce *pravovoi poriadok* (lawful order), which before the revolution was the Russian translation of the German term *Rechtsstaat*—a decisively Western concept adopted by a normally anti-Western fascist movement. In the second half of the 1920s, however, the two tendencies worked together so successfully in the discussions with pro-Soviet professors and students that all pro-Soviet students were voted out of the student representative body of the Harbin Law Faculty.[19] Despite this, tensions and conflicts remained at the surface, even within the fascist organisations, but in particular between fascists and monarchists or legitimists. This was especially the case from the time of the Japanese take-over of Manchuria—triumphant reports in the fascist press that the monarchists and legitimists had joined the fascists notwithstanding.[20] The fascists were ill at ease with this policy of a united front, against which, however, opposition could only cautiously be expressed under the conditions of Japanese rule.[21] The points in which the more radical elements of the monarchists and the fascists could easily find common ground—besides anti-Bolshevism—were of course anti-Semitism and anti-Masonism. Clearly, both elements were also a useful tool for attracting the elements of Russian émigré society that otherwise were not easily accessible for fascists, and they were used to a large extent by the Russian Students Society in its struggle against Bolshevik sympathizers among students and professors of the Harbin Law Faculty. Frequent lectures "On the Role of the Masons in the Downfall of Russia" and on "The Worldwide Conspiracy of the Judaeo-Masons," in which speakers called for the struggle against the Judaeo-Masonic yoke of the Bolshevik communist international seem to have been crowd pullers.[22] In particular A. N. Pokrovskii, who was to organize the first fascist trade unions (more specifically, syndicalist organisations) in 1927, and V. F. Ivanov,[23] a former minister of interior in a Far

[18] Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 243, 250.

[19] There was no university in Harbin, but several institutions of university level, including a law faculty as well as a polytechnic institute, cf. I. V. Potapova, *Russkaia sistema obrazovaniia v Man'chzhurii 1898–1945*. Spetsial'nost' 07.00.02—Otechestvennaia istoriia. Avtoreferat dissertatsii na soiskovanie uchebnoi stepeni kandidata istorii (Khabarovsk, 2006), 22–3.

[20] This kind of a report, which was probably incorrect or only reflected a brief truce, can be found in *Nash Put'*, 6 October 1933, 1.

[21] For example, the ideologue and inveterate anti-Semite V. F. Ivanov, who basically accused non-fascists of lacking political consciousness, see *Nash Put'*, 26 November 1933, 3.

[22] Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 121; Mel'nikov, "Russkie fashisty," 109.

[23] V.F. Ivanov is even today a very popular figure among Russian rightists. One of his major works, *Ot Petra Pervogo do nashikh dnei. Russkaia intelligentsia i masonstvo* (Harbin, 1934), was reprinted as *Russkaia intelligentsiia i masonstvo. Ot Petra do nashikh dnei* (Moscow, 1957) (in the Soviet Union!) and 1997, and is unfortunately regarded by many as a serious piece of historical research. In Harbin he also published works like *Pravoslavnyi mir i masonstvo* (Harbin, 1935) and *Tainaia diplomatiia. Vneshnaia politika Rossii i mezhduradnoe masonstvo* (Harbin, 1937), whereby all tracts busied themselves with inventing and uncovering Judaeo-Masonic plots.

Eastern anti-Bolshevik government, were the main speakers on these subjects..[24] Former tsarist general V. D. Kos'min spoke heatedly in favour of the formation of a fascist party in Harbin[25] and about his strongly held conviction—shared by most other fascist leaders—that fascism had deep roots in Russian history.[26]

The Organisational Background

The institutional basis of emerging Russian fascism was, however, not the Faculty of Law or the Polytechnic Institute,[27] but the Russian Club founded in 1929, chaired by another former tsarist general and fascist organizer, V. V. Rychkov.[28] In spite of the many activities offered here, among them interesting educational and even technical courses, it seems that the club fell into hibernation for some time before it could be revived in the early 1930s—perhaps because the Chinese placed a tight rein on radical émigré activities.[29] The Russian Club, of course, served all Russian émigrés (perhaps with the exception of socialists and liberals, but certainly with the exception of the Jews) and thus was used to draw as many people as possible into the fascist circle. A reading room with fascist literature, Russian émigré newspapers, and papers in many other languages formed an important element of the Russian Club and also seems to have attracted a range of different elements from the émigré community. This arrangement seems to have been typical for Manchurian fascists, as they were only one group among a number of relatively important émigré organisations and it allowed them to propagate their ideas to people whom they had not reached up to that point.[30] This arrangement continued

[24] At the time, non-fascist elements among Russian émigrés were also interested in the Masons; see V. N. Ivanov: *Ogni v Tumane* (Harbin, 1932), 107–16, first published in 1924 in Harbin as *O Masonakh* in the paper *Svet*.

[25] Mel'nikov, "Russkie fashisty," 109; others maintain that it was N. I. Nikoforov who founded those syndicalist organisations, see Oberländer, "The All-Russian Fascist Party," 160; in different publications and also in reports by Soviet security organs, different information is given regarding the years(!) of these events and the main actors, cf. *Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Man'chzhurii. Voenno-politicheskaia deiatel'nost'*, 45–6.

[26] "Fascism to a considerable degree comes from Russia" maintained K. V. Rodzaevskii in 1939, see ibid., *Russkii Put'* (Harbin, 1939), 37; Rodzaevskii always maintained this.

[27] According to *Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Man'chzhurii. Voenno-politicheskaia deiatel'nost'*, 60, fascists students were also very active at this institute.

[28] See Sabine Breuillard, "General V. A. Kislitsin. From Russian Monarchism to the Spirit of Bushido," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 99 (2000): 129.

[29] Not in 1934, as Mel'nikov, "Russkie fashisty," 113 maintains; cf. *Nash Put'*, 6 October 1933, 1.

[30] Mel'nikov, "Russkie fashisty," 109–10; *Nash Put'*, 6 October 1933, 1. Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 180. According to *Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Man'chzhurii. Voenno-politicheskaia deiatel'nost'*, 46, the Russian Club was established by Rodzaevskii, the real leader of the Russian fascists, only in 1933. The decor of the Russian club was in tune with the broader layers of society that it sought to attract: on one side of the foyer there was the imperial seal, on the

to exist right to the end with Russian Clubs in other towns established for similar purposes.[31] However, this again put restraints on fascists and the development of their ideology. They at least had to take the positions of the monarchists into account, who could not, on the pain of serious loss of influence, be light-heartedly offended.

In the context of international interwar fascism, it was quite typical for fascism to make its first major inroads into broader segments of society within the student body.[32] Understandably, therefore, it was the students and their own student organisation that Russian fascists in Harbin regarded as their vanguard and "élite," although very occasionally they also admitted that many members of the intelligentsia were somewhat unsympathetic. Nevertheless, the party was of the opinion that one should draw in the intelligentsia and invite them to give talks, even if they were not members of the party.[33] The leader of the Harbin fascists, Konstantin Vladimirovich Rodzaevskii, who had fled from the Soviets in Blagoveshchensk to Harbin, also emerged from among the students of the Law Faculty, although only after he had been dismissed from the university and then reinstated surprisingly quickly.[34] As students indeed represented the core element and very considerable numbers of the fascist cadres, for a long time a need was not felt to set up a special student organisation. When the fascists established their own special student organisation as late as 1936, this must have signalled a differentiation process in fascist membership, and certainly a considerable increase in non-student members. Rodzaevskii's definition of a fascist on that occasion was that he or she had to remember first of all that he is a fascist, who in a real way, especially by setting an example, preaches his beliefs, sacrificially serves the Russian nation, and strives with all his powers to be useful to the national-revolutionary struggle of the Russian people (*narod*). A fascist has to fight the godless and the sectarians; all his actions have to correspond to the laws of Christian morality; he has to educate himself in the life of his nation and the ideology of the VFP.[35] Regional or city branches of student organisations, however, were founded earlier (for example, as early as 1933) and often took on a leading role within the fascist organisation.[36] The fascists were active among boy and girl scouts, and also set up separate youth organisations for young men and women, including one for

other, a picture of the "apostle-like" St. Vladimir, "the heavenly protector of the Russian fascists," and a picture of Nicholas II and his wife, see *Natsiia* 6 (28), 20 February, 1939, 10.

[31] Russian Clubs existed also in different cities, see *Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Man'chzhurii. Voenno-politicheskaia deiatel'nost'*, 75. Shanghai also had its own Russian Club, where fascist organisations played an important role, see *Nash Put'* 211, 16 August 1936, 6.; according to the Soviet secret services, all major towns of Manchuria had a branch of the fascist party, Kuras, "Kharbinskaia belaia emigratsiia," 47.

[32] Michael H. Kater, *Studentenschaft und Rechtsradikalismus in Deutschland 1918–1933* (Hamburg, 1975).

[33] *Natsiia* 6 (28), 20 February 1939, 10, article on propaganda.

[34] Mel'nikov, "Russkie fashisty," 110.

[35] Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 169–70.

[36] *Nash Put'*, 7 October 1933, 15.

children. On the initiative of Rodzaevskii in 1932, they established a women's organisation, which originally defended the traditional roles of women, but increasingly involved them in political work and started to train them as cadres and even, it seems, for direct activities against the Soviet Union.[37] As early as 1928, Harbin fascists formed partisan detachments (*partizanskie otriady*) in order to penetrate to the Soviet Union, but it seems that this activity acquired some degree of importance only in the mid-1930s. In 1937, a special school for this purpose was established under the direct responsibility of Rodzaevskii.[38] Nevertheless, fascists who were sent to places close to the Soviet border for diversionist purposes did find that the local populations (and even other Russians preparing for anti-Soviet activities) were hostile. Soon Rodzaevskii stopped fascist support for these activities and also the support for Russian units within the regular Japanese army because by this point partisan activities and Russian national units were run entirely in the interest of and controlled by the Japanese, who ignored Russian interests.[39] However, these activities still continued with the support of other émigré groups.

The Founding of the Fascist Party and Its Further Development

The umbrella organisation of the fascist party in Harbin, again after some lull in fascist activities, was inaugurated rather inconspicuously on 22 May 1931 in Rodzaevskii's flat, where a few people held the first meeting.[40] From there, the organisation spread and became fairly strong, although it probably always exaggerated its strength. Given the materials currently available, it is impossible to give any reliable statistical indications. Scholars put the organisation's strength at its peak in the mid-1930s somewhere between 4 and 7,000 members, fascists

[37] See S. Lazareva, "Soiuz russikh zhenshchin' so svastikoi," *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka* 3 (1994): 151–4 is unfortunately very general and non-analytical; Nadezhda Evgen'evna Ablova, *KVZhD i rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Kitae. Mezhdunarodnye i politicheskie aspekty istorii (pervaia polovina XXv.)* (Moscow, 2005), 330; Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 149, 171ff.; *Natsiia,* 7 January 1940; ibid. 6, 10 June 1938, 22.

[38] Ablova, *KVZhD*, 325, 331; *Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Man'chzhurii. Voenno-politicheskaia deiatel'nost'*, 50ff.; in the year of conflict between China and the SU, 1929, there were numerous accusations of white guardists attacking Soviet guards and crossing the border, but none against fascists specifically, see *Sovetsko-kitaiskii konflikt 1929g.. Sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow, 1930), 4, 39–8, 47ff., 56ff., the Nanking government rejected all accusations and added its own, 71–2; according to Kuras, "Kharbinskaia belaia emigratsiia," 47; these kinds of activities began in 1934.

[39] Other groups, such as the Cossacks of ataman Semenov, were mostly more important than the fascists in these "military" activities, ibid., 47–8.

[40] *Nash Put'* 9, 15 June 1941, 4.

themselves claimed 20,000.[41] But it is not clear who counted what: there was the Fascist Syndicalist Union, headed by Pokrovskii—who broke with Rodzaevskii and had to leave for Shanghai before the Japanese dissolved the Union—and other fascist sub-organisations. Certainly syndicalist organisations were revived even after Pokrovskii's defection and were reported sporadically in the fascist press.[42]

Until the second half of the 1930s the fascist party was growing in strength and could, for some time at least, count on the support of the Japanese. Rodzaevskii had in any case chosen them as allies, something that he may have slowly come to regret—whether or not he really did we will never know. Fascists were increasingly drawn into the more contemptible activities of the corrupt Japanese occupation forces, and many willingly let themselves be drawn in by the Harbin underworld, which was connected with different Japanese organs of security working at cross purposes. RFP members were very often used by the Japanese as puppet racketeers; some of the fascists who had naively and also idealistically prepared themselves for the national (Russian) revolution were drawn into dirty, criminal, and murderous activities, skilfully masterminded behind the scenes by the Japanese.[43] Harbin's most scandalous affair was the kidnapping and eventual murder of Semion Kaspe by the Manchukuo police, and the attempt to blackmail his father, the owner of the best hotel in the city, which the Japanese wanted to take over.[44] Fascists had a hand in this, in particular the man who did their dirty work, Aleksandr Bolotov, and perhaps even Rodzaevskii himself, although the evidence is still inconclusive. The convicted murderers were pardoned by the Japanese authorities on the grounds of "national patriotism." A special unit (*osobyj otdel*) of thugs was formed—modelled on the Italian squadristi, as Stephan states (although the pre-revolutionary "black hundreds" had their own thugs and terror groups that committed political murders)—but this was mainly for protecting RFP leaders and carrying out dirty jobs, to attack other émigrés, Jews, or whomever the leaders focussed their attention on. The boss of this special unit (*osobyi otde*l) was Aleksandr Bolotov, a man averse to ideology but prone to violence, especially if he did not receive his regular dose of morphine. He also ran a gambling den on the second floor of the RFP headquarters. Bolotov's specialty was contract killings, but he also acted on his own volition.[45]

On top of all this, many failures reduced fascism's attraction: the short-lived union with the American-Russian fascists under Vonsiatskii; the overly confident announcement in 1935 of a 3-year plan to oust communism, which failed to materialize; the obvious failures of fascist and other attempts to seriously and

[41] Onegina, "Rossiiskii Fashistskii soiuz v Man'chzhurii," 151 accepts the number of 20,000 for members in the whole world; see also Mel'nikov, "Russkie fashisty," 119; Stephan, *Russian Fascists*, 176.

[42] Mel'nikov, "Russkie fashisty," 113; *Natsiia,* 21 January 1940, 7.

[43] Stephan, *Russian Fascists*, 73.

[44] The latest study of this affair and its background is Dan Ben-Canaan, *The Kaspe File. A Case Study of Harbin as an intersection of Cultural and Ethnical Communities in Conflict 1932–1945* (Heilongjiang, 2009).

[45] Stephan, *Russian Fascists*, 77.

successfully penetrate the territory of the Soviet Union,[46] and so on. War and international developments were increasingly robbing the fascists of any credible policy options. In particular, Rodzaevskii's heavy reliance on Japan as an ally and his decision to welcome Hitler's attack on Russia antagonized many otherwise sympathetic elements.[47]

The leader of the Russian fascists, Konstantin Vladimirovich Rodzaevskii, had from early on connected his political fortunes with an alliance with Japan. When the Japanese took over Manchuria in 1931/1932 and created their puppet regime of Manchukuo he indeed got support from this camp. However, Russian fascists soon found their room to manoeuvre increasingly circumscribed. Organisational structures and policy choices could no longer be freely decided upon, friendship with Nippon had to be emphasized, and the Japanese flag displayed on memorable occasions.[48] It also seems, even if this is not spoken of openly, that the Japanese strongly advocated a policy of a united, anti-Soviet White Russian front[49]—advice the fascists could not ignore. All Russian émigrés had to become members of BREM when it was set up in 1935. The Japanese controlled its activities rather tightly, which further reduced the freedom of action for the fascists, whose leader, therefore, in the second half of the 1930s, concentrated more and more on cultural work to strengthen Russian (émigré) identity. Tensions must have grown, as already indicated, and in 1937 the Japanese closed for some time the fascist party organ *Nash Put'* in order to teach Rodzaevskii a lesson.[50] Ideologically not much seems to have changed; maybe anti-Semitism became somewhat more frequently written about in the second half of the 1930s, to which the creation of the Soviet Jewish autonomnous region of Birobidzhan may have contributed. But an increasing anti-Semitism could also have been a flight of fancy, which Russian fascists may have taken to, in view of deteriorating prospects and the unpalatable policy choices with which they were faced—between Nazi-Germany, nationalist and racist Japan, and the threat of rising Soviet power.

[46] Some did, however; one group disturbed the October celebrations in Chita by distributing leaflets condemning Stalin as a criminal, Stephan, *Russian fascists*, 193–8; on the other hand, a small fascist military detachment organized by the Japanese and commanded by Rodzaevskiis former body guard was completely destroyed by NKVD troops near Amazar (close to Irkutsk). Many individual "scouts" perished in the Soviet Union and only a few were known; see Nadezhda Evgen'evna Ablova, "Rossiiskaia fashistskaia partiia v Man'chzhurii," *Belorusskii zhurnal mezhdunarodnogo prava i mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii*, 2 (1999), accessed 9 March 2010, http://nationalism.org/rodina/history/rusfas.htm. *Natsiia* 25 (47), 3 September, 1939, 4–5. describes the public ceremonies of a Russian killed in action, under the heading "Russian hero Mikhail Natarov earned for Russian émigrés the deep veneration of Nippon and Manchukuo," which clearly betrays a strong air of subordination.

[47] Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 187–8; *Nash Put'* 16, 3 August 1941, 1.

[48] *Natsiia,* 7 January 1940; *Nash Put'* 62, 12 July 1942, 6; appears here as "Our Way" in English.

[49] *Natsiia,* 27 April 1941, 2.

[50] Oberländer, "The All-Russian Fascist Party," 172.

The Great Debates and Fascist Ideology

The great debates of 1927 at the Law Faculty represented the gestation period for the formation of the ideology, and to a lesser degree, perhaps, of the organisational forms of Harbin's Russian fascism. Unfortunately, we do not presently have any sources for these debates. Only indirect conclusions can be drawn. First of all, the professors at the Law Faculty had an influence on students' thinking.[51] Among them were Georgii Konstantinovich Gins[52] and Nikolai Vasil'evich Ustrialov. Ustrialov, originally a member of the Cadet Party like Gins, then the most important figure of the *smeno-vekhovtsy* (Change of Signposts), and for a short time a National Bolshevik, certainly influenced the students with his basic idea that after Bolshevism a simple return to earlier conditions would no longer be possible. This idea was taken up by most fascist students, even if most of them later did not condone his gradual shift to Bolshevism. [53] He was also highly interested in Italian fascism and published one of the earliest scholarly studies on fascism.[54] G. K. Gins, with his discoveries of "solidarism," may have been more influential when he researched, as early as 1910, the regulation of the water supply in Turkestan—a theory that he developed into a theory of a new form of state before and after a visit to fascist Italy (1928/1929).[55] With this, Gins, one of the most important

[51] This becomes clear from correspondence and the oral interview given by Gins in Berkeley in the 1960s; cf. below.

[52] In America he was George Constantine Guins. He lived from 1887 to 1972, and after 1945 he became a professor in California. Before the revolution he was a member of the Constitutional Democratic Party and a *privat-dotsent* at St. Petersburg University. In 1918 he became "chargé d'affaires" of Kolchaks government. After the defeat of the Whites he became a professor at the Harbin Law Faculty.

[53] Ustrialov was born in 1890, 1916–8 he worked as a *privat-dotsent* at Moscow and Perm universities. In 1921 in Prague, together with others, he published an important collection of articles *Smena vekh* ("Change of Landmarks" or "Signposts"). Here Ustrialov expounded his theories of nationalism, maintaining that the Soviet Union will develop in the direction of a nationalist, in the long run maybe even bourgeois, state. The gist of "*Smena vekh*" is contained in a sentence like this: "Either recognize this Russia, hated by you all, or stay without Russia, because a "third Russia" by your recipes does not and will not exist." This publication took its name from the Russian philosophical publication *Vekhi* ("Signposts") published in 1909, which demanded a radical reversal of "intelligentsia" politics away from revolution. From 1920 on, Ustrialov was a professor at the Harbin Law Faculty. In 1935 he returned to the Soviet Union, and in 1937 he was arrested and shot.

[54] N.V. Ustrialov, *Italianskii fashizm* (Harbin 1928), accessed 9 March 2010, http://www.gumer.info/bibliotek_Buks/Polit/Ustr/20.php; cf. also idem, *Problema progressa* (Harbin 1931), accessed 9 March, 2010, http://www.moshkow.nino.ru/cgi-bin/lat/POLITOLOG/ustrqlow2.txt

[55] See his interview, George Constantine Guins, *Professor and Government Official. Russia, China, and California. An Interview,* conducted by Boris Raymond (Berkeley 1966), 271, accessed 5 January 2010, http://www.archive.org/stream/guinsconstprofes00guinrich/guinsconstprofes00guinrich_djvu.txt. Gins. "I found the ethical basis of this system, which I called "solidarism," from the word and principle of solidarity which united people with common interests. Such were the general ideas which I set forth in my work written on the special subject,

intellectuals of the Russian community in Harbin,[56] propagated a third way, an alternative to socialism and capitalism—an idea which must have been relatively popular with Russian students at the faculty.[57] Gins, as Ustrialov reports in one of his letters, strongly supported the right-wing émigrés in the Law Faculty, and together with the fascist professors Nikiforov, Engel'fel'd, and others, he drove out the "Soviet" professors Ustrialov and Setnitskii.[58] According to one historian, Gins extolled in his lectures the idea of the corporatist state and its creator Mussolini.[59] It was certainly no accident that Rodzaevskii, a student of his, whom Gins evidently knew quite well,[60] spoke in a relatively early ideological statement of the "new third structure of solidarism."[61] The aforementioned creation of syndicalist labour organisations in 1927 attests to the popularity of the idea. Therefore, it may very well be the case that one of the most important aspects of Harbin fascism derived in the first place from the growing inner-Russian (pre-revolutionary) interest in everything Asian—be it in the arts, philosophy, politics, or law—known as "Orientalism."

In this context, when discussing the precursors of Russian fascist corporatist ideas, it is of importance that former tsarist general V. D. Kos'min extolled in the "great debates" the *Zubatovshchina* as the first fascist organisation in Russia.[62] The "*Zubatovshchina*", also known as police socialism, was the attempt by the Moscow chief of the secret police (*okhrana*), Sergei Zubatov, to organize trade unions loyal to the tsarist system; by many they were also understood as a means of Russian autocracy to reconcile employers and workers.[63] Kos'min was perhaps the first to publicly maintain that the corporatist structures that Russian fascists advocated and

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The Water Law" (see George Constantine Gins, *Deistvuiushchee vodnoe pravo Turkestana i budushchii vodnyi zakon* (St. Petersburg, 1910); idem, *Osnovnyia nachala proekta vodnago zakona dlia Turkestana*, St. Petersburg, 1912). —Solidarism is even today seen as an important element of an independent Russian tradition by V. A. Senderov ed., *Portret Solidarizma. Idei i liudi* (Moscow, 2007).

[56] N. Reznikova, "V russkom Kharbine," *Novyi Zhurnal* 172, 3 (1988): 387.

[57] Relevant publications by Gins were *Ethical problems of contemporary China* (Harbin: Russko-Man'chzhurskaia Knigotorgovlia, 1927); *Na putiach k gosudarstvu budushchego. Ot liberalizma k solidarizmu* (Harbin: Tipografiia Chinareva, 1930); *Novye idei v prave i osnovnye problemy sovremennosti*, vol. 2 (Harbin: Tip. N.E. Chinareva, 1932), here 638, "The essence of solidarism does not lie in the outward organisation of society, but in the change of the mutual relationship between entrepreneurs and toilers."

[58] V.G. Makarov, *Russkii filosof Nikolai Setnitskii. Ot KVZhD do NKVD*, 138, accessed 3 March 2010, http//www.ihst.ru/projects/sohist/papers/vf/2004/7/136-157.pdf

[59] K. Gusev in K. Rodzaevskii, *Zaveshchanie russkogo fashista*, 14.

[60] Gins interview, 194; in 1927, Rodzaevskii was also a member of Ustrialov's philosophical seminar; see Rodzaevskii, *Sovremennaia iudizatsiia mira ili evreiskii vopros v XX stoletii*, 2nd ed. (Harbin, 1943), 267.

[61] GARF [State Archive of the Russian Federation] f. 10073, opis' 3, delo 55, l. 0782.

[62] Mel'nikov, "Russkie fashisty," 109.

[63] For these organisations and the politics around them, see Jeremiah Schneiderman, *Sergei Zubatov and Revolutionary Marxism. The Struggle for the Working Class in Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976).

tried to put into practice even in exile were a genuinely Russian idea. A well-known former tsarist gendarmerie general and historian of the revolutionary movement, A. I. Spiridovich, was even of the opinion that Mussolini's trade unions were inspired by Zubatov's unions.[64] It is also a well-known fact that the Black Hundreds before the revolution were strong supporters of corporatism and a state based on corporatist structures. They regarded attempts to dismantle what was left of a corporatist system in pre-revolutionary Russia as a step towards capitalism and the dreaded equal rights for Jews. They tried to operate through these corporatist structures in order to defend their economic and political interests, and especially to exclude Jews as competitors.[65] This clearly suggests that Russian fascists were well acquainted with corporatist ideas before they learnt of Mussolini. However, they did not share their pre-revolutionary predecessors' abhorrence of modern industrial structures and industrialization. On the contrary, most of them even accepted the Stolypin agrarian reforms and rejected the reintroduction of the *obshchina* (the peasant community) as the holder of collective property rights. More radical still, the fascists propagated that peasant land should be indivisible, in order to prevent the dwarfing of peasant holdings by means of inheritance, thus revealing a precision in their perception of Russian economic problems that the Black Hundreds never matched.[66]

Anti-Semitism

With respect to anti-Semitism, there was not much to learn from Italy for Russian fascists. They had their own pre-revolutionary tradition that they, on the whole, clung to religiously, in both senses of the word. In fact, Rodzaevskii maintained that Russia gave the world the most important revelations about the world-wide destructive role of the Jews; equally, he maintained that Germany had taken its anti-Semitism from Russia.[67] Harbin fascists were not influenced by Nazism's racial elements[68]—all images from *Der Stürmer* and the occasional reprint of some of

[64] Stephan, *Russian Fascists*, 57; Oberländer, "The All-Russian Fascist Party," 171. Rodzaevskii, too, saw Zubatov as the founder—"in the name of the state"—of the "national" trade union movement, see *Natsiia* 6, 10 July 1938, 1–2.

[65] The topic has not been developed in the literature; short, often indirect references are found in Löwe, *The Tsar and the Jews*, especially 105ff., 267ff., 284ff.; in their public marches, the Black Hundreds also made it symbolically clear that their world was based on estates and corporations, see Löwe, "Political Symbols."

[66] Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 250.

[67] Rodzaevskii, *Russkii put'*, 36; idem, *Sovremennaia Iudizatsiia mira*, 327.

[68] Recently it has been argued that Russian émigrés brought their anti-Semitism to Germany and Nazism, see Michael. Kellogg, *The Russian Roots of Nazism, White Émigrés and the Making of National Socialism, 1917–1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005). It must, however, remain doubtful as to whether this theory can be substantiated "vis a vis" Nazism's racism. For a

Rosenberg's utterances and so on notwithstanding. They did not use the concept connected with the word "Aryan". If they used the word—it served only as a synonym for Christians. Anti-Semitism played a role in the seminal period of Russian fascism in Harbin as it seemed to attract people who were normally beyond its reach. For some, however, it did not seem essential to fascism—for instance for Vonsiatskii, the leader of the American fascists and short-term leader of the unified All-Russian Fascist Party in America, China, and elsewhere, but also for important leaders who had been close to Rodzaevskii for some time: in 1938–1939 the group surrounding Matkovskii, including the authors of the "ABC of Fascism" (*Azbuka Fashizma*), Taradanov and Kibardin, voiced their doubt about the efficacy of anti-Semitism and of the close cooperation with the Japanese, especially their shadier elements in Manchuria. At the fourth party congress in January 1939 they openly demanded that the swastika and the merely verbal support for Nazi-Germany be discarded because they saw Hitler as a potential enemy of Russia; still, no final split occurred, but Rodzaevskii won the day. However, he was not able to impose a pro-German resolution on the congress.[69] Nevertheless, anti-Semitism seemed to become more pronounced when the Second World War began. At least the articles and news items on Jews in the fascist press seemed to increase considerably, which, perhaps with Rodzaevskii as editor, did not really surprise anybody. During the war, various articles appeared about questions of intermarriage with Jews, which Harbin fascists rejected for the loss of religion that this might mean, whereas Nazi Germany, as it was pointed out, outlawed mixed marriages on racial grounds.[70] But this was at worst a trial balloon. On the whole, Russian fascists in Harbin reprinted and quoted the old dark masters of forgeries of world conspiracies and Masonic plots to dominate the world—including the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*—as well as the hysterical impresarios of Jewish Satanism and the blood legend: Liutostanskii, Sergei Nilus, N. A. and V. G. Butmi, A. Men'shchikov, V. Purishkevich, Vasilii Rozanov, G. Zamyslovskii, E. N. Markov II, A. S. Shmakov, Pavel I. Kovalevskii. The Harbiners saw themselves in this tradition and as its direct and rightful successors—which they took as just another proof of the "Russianness" of their version of fascism if not of fascism as such. The only one who differed slightly was Rozanov, whose book about the attitude of the Jews towards blood had only been published in 1918 and was quoted regularly. Harbin fascists frequently published accounts or statements on the ritual murder trial of 1911/1912 in Kiev, in one case of an orthodox priest who maintained that ritual murder was a form of mass for Jews.[71] On the whole, fascist Harbin's anti-Semitism was to a very large extent Christian with its West and East European traditions, which even the pre-revolutionary Russian anti-Semitic protagonists had

very rare hint regarding the role of "blood", see *Nash Put'* 11, 29 June 1941, 3; ibid. 32, 23 November 1941, 6.

[69] Stephan, *Russian Fascists*, 200ff.; Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 188–9.

[70] *Nash Put'* 47, 15 March 1942, 6–5.

[71] For example, the speech of "*protoier*" T. I. Butkevich before the *Russkoe Sobranie* ("Russian Assembly") in St. Petersburg in October 1913, see *Nash Put'* 33, 4 January 1942 3.

reconstructed for their Russian readership.[72] Their anti-Semitism was to such a large extent Christian that they sometimes even distanced themselves from contributions in their own newspaper on the basis that supposedly scholarly hypotheses had contradicted the bible. This could not be tolerated, of course, "as this contradicts the ideology of Russian fascism."[73] Even with Rozanov's absurd theories of the attraction of blood for the Jews, fascists preferred to emphasize that "his fundamental world-view was always and wholly directed against Judaism and every sort of liberal, democratic and socialist pseudo-doctrines it gave birth to."[74] In any case, instead of propounding racial theories, Harbin fascists preferred to talk about the satanic essence of Judaism.[75] In some ways, the impression is also that, in terms of its role for the Jewish nation, deep down, Russians regarded Judaism as fundamentally similar to their own religion—in spite of all condemnation as Satanism. *Nash Put'* wrote: "To assert religion within their milieu is of paramount importance to the Jews—outside religion Jews don't think their national existence. More even—with the loss of religion they associate the end of their existence in this world." This, the paper continued, is why the Jews do everything to persecute Orthodoxy—because they want to destroy the Russian nation.[76]

When the war came, the allies were increasingly and frequently denounced as the main citadels of international Jewry or the "*finintern,*" which was seen to be just as "Jewish" as the *Comintern*.[77] And, of course, right from the beginning, they were of the opinion that the Jews controlled the Soviet Union. In this context, the Second World War turned into something like a war of liberation against the Jewish yoke by the *samobytnye* (autochthonous) nations.[78] They talked of communism as "Jewish fascism," which had to be overcome by Russian fascism.[79] Anti-Semitism

[72] M. Nedzvetskii, "Evrei. Populiarnyi kurs poznaniia iudaizma," *Nash Put'* 11, 29 June 1941, 3; ibid. 16, 3 August 1941, 4; ibid. 17, 10 August 1941, 5; ibid. 18, 17 August 1941, 4; ibid. 19, 24 August 1941, 4–5.; a separate print was sold in fascist offices, see *Nash Put'* 47, 15 March 1942, 6. Cf. Rodzaevskii, *Sovremennaia iudaizatsiia mira*; idem, *Iuda na ushcherbe. Mir pered osvobozhdeniem* (Shanghai, 1941), accessed 23 February 2011, http://www.velesova-sloboda.org/rhall/rodzaevsky-iuda-na-usherbe.html

[73] See comment on V. Irinin, "Evreiskaia istoriia bez prikras," *Natsiia* 19 (41), 1 July 1939, 9.

[74] Review by M. Spasovich, "V. V. Rozanov v poslednie gody svoei zhizni," *Natsiia* 19 (41), 1 July 1939, 10.

[75] *Nash Put'* 11, 29 June 1941, 3.

[76] *Nash Put'*, 22 March 1942, 6.

[77] Cf. K. V. Rodzaevskii, "Pereustroistvo mira i sud'by Rossii," *Nash Put'* 42, 1 February 1942, 3. In his letter to Stalin in 1945, Rodzaevskii declared, "We did not have a racist approach to the Jewish question, but concluded that the Jewish religion emphasizing the selection by god, made every Jew only think of his own nation and made them into anti-social enemies of every 'sambytnoj nation'," from *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoi emigratsii*, 320. In an article "On the Russianness of Russian Fascism," Rodzaevskii names exclusively pre-revolutionary Black Hundred authors as the sources of his anti-Semitism, who, according to Rodzaevskii, form the basis of National Socialism; see *Natsiia* 6, 10 June 1938, 2.

[78] This is one interpretation that can be drawn from Rodzaevskii, *Iuda na ushcherbe*, 2, 27, 41, passim; it is also a recurrent theme in idem, *Sovremennaia iudaizatsiia mira*.

[79] Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 284; Stephan, *Russian Fascists*, 58.

as the expression of a certain economic ideology, as implied here, also plays a significant role: Jews run the stock exchange, favour the gold standard and stand for monopolization of the economy.[80] This, however, is mainly mirrored in the economic program of the fascists, and the reference is indirect. In comparison to Russian pre-war anti-Semites, this aspect is not very pronounced, perhaps because Russian fascists did not have to conduct practical politics and—more importantly—did not want to defend outmoded economic and social structures. Moreover, they regarded economic modernization, and even to some degree capitalism—both of course organized according to their own panaceas—as a necessity.[81]

The Nation and the Economy

With respect to the nation, the fascists similarly upheld a non-racial definition: "The nation—above all, is spiritual unity. . .[which], however, is not accepted by all fascist movements. . .German National Socialists uphold a racist understanding of the nation."[82] Fascist leaders, and certainly Rodzaevskii, were aware of the fact that Russia was an unfinished nation: "The development of a national ideology is the liquidation of the most important pre-revolutionary 'lacunae' (*probel*) and the strengthening of the new worldview of Russian man, which turns the people (*narod*) into a nation."[83] The nation transcends the idea of Russianness, "Azbuka fashizma" (ABC of Fascism) explained.[84] This also allowed the fascists to hold a relatively positive attitude to non-Russian nationalities on the territory of the Russian (*Rossiiskoe*) state that they hoped to resurrect. They believed that all nationalities should be given cultural, administrative, and political autonomy with the exception of Jews, because these did not possess their own territory—this justification is a curious reflection of Bolshevik theory of the Jews. Jews were to be treated as undesirable foreigners. The Russian fascists had within their own ranks non-Russian subgroups of Georgians, Armenians, Ukrainians, and Tartars.[85] This was all quite a contrast to the pre-revolutionary forerunners of fascism who claimed for ethnic Russians the role of the "ruling nation" within the empire.[86] When *Azbuka fashizma* spoke about the nation in this context, it used the words

[80] *Nash Put'* 3, 4 May 1941, 1, 8; ibid. 8, 8 June 1941, 5.

[81] For a comparison with pre-1917 anti-Semitism, see Löwe, *The Tsar and the Jews*, 267ff.

[82] *Azbuka fascizma*, 2nd edition, reprinted in Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 210.

[83] Rodzaevskii, *Russkii put'*, 81; for this very reason, it seems, fascists put so much emphasis on education and culture, ibid., 82.

[84] *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoi emigratsii*, 314–13.

[85] *Natsiia* 2 (26), 1 February(?) 1939, 2.

[86] Heinz-Dietrich Löwe, "Russian Nationalism and Tsarist Nationality Policies in Semi-Constitutional Russia," in *New Perspectives in Modern Russian History*, ed. Robert B. McKean (Basingstoke, 1992), 267.

Rossiiskaia natsiia[87]—with the non-ethnic denomination. Rodzaevskii was quite explicit: "The Nation—this is the Russlandish (*rossiiskaia*) nation: The union of peoples of Russland (*Rossiia*) which preserved their special [character] within the framework of the general unified State. This is the Russian (*russkii*) nation and those peoples (*narody*) which joined Russia with their territory, culture and history."[88] The fascists intended to organize a regionalized state, characterized by the devolution of power, which would also have been a radical break with the traditions prevailing since the seventeenth century.[89]

The economy of fascist Russia was to be completely independent from outside influences. With respect to the economy, fascists saw a distinct necessity to accept the role of the individual and of private property. To a certain degree, capitalism was a positive development to Russian fascists—in contrast to the views of pre-revolutionary right-wingers. With a fascist takeover, there would, therefore, have to be a relatively far-reaching privatization in industry, crafts, and agriculture. However, banks and some other business institutions were to remain the property of the state,[90] and foreign trade—as a rule—was to be in the hands of the government. In the eyes of the fascists, this was the best guarantee against international capital, or the "*finintern*" (financial international)—both just synonyms for world domination by the Jews.[91] A paper currency for Russia, as already advocated by the pre-revolutionary Black Hundreds or their ideological predecessors, had to be the weapon to fight the influence of international capital—the Jews[92]—by isolating Russia from the international money market. It was only to be used inside Russia and was to have a stable value. The corporatist system[93] was to discipline economic life, but not to destroy personal interest; it recognized private property and was a specific system within which each citizen would be in a position to develop his private initiative. Economic development had to be even-handed between the different branches of the economy, which was perhaps a rejection of pre-revolutionary and certainly of Bolshevik development models of hyper-industrialization. Internal trade, another jibe at Bolshevik policies and at the same

[87] *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoi emigratsii*, 314–15; Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaja emigratsiia*, 234.

[88] Rodzaevskii, *Russkii put'*, 30–1.

[89] *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoi emigratsii*, 314–15; Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaja emigratsiia*, 234, 244ff.

[90] The IV Congress of the fascists once more confirmed that private banks should not be allowed, see *Natsiia* 4 (26), 2 February 1939, 3.

[91] Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 216, 245–6.

[92] For the anti-Semitic aspects of the great debates on the relative merit of a gold standard (= Jewish currency) or of paper money in the 1890s, see Löwe, *The Tsar and the Jews*, 106ff.

[93] The corporatist system was important for the Russian right before the revolution; see ibid. 105–6 and passim; however, the new corporatism was to be based on the system of soviets already in existence in Soviet Russia, cf. *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoi emigratsii*, 320; Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 238. "Soviets without Bolsheviks" was the slogan of the anti-Bolshevik socialist opposition in 1921.

time a proposition that took up a demand of peasant uprisings and worker protests in the Soviet Union of the early twenties, was to be completely free. Fascists advocated state intervention, state regulation, and planning. Economic development had to take place according to a premeditated plan; the plan, however, was only to set general targets and to leave ample space for private initiative. Special government organs and the corporations were to control the economy and to set rules in order to improve production. Factories were to have workers' participation. Everybody was to have the right to possess private property, to develop his entrepreneurial talents, and to amass riches, as long as this did not happen by means of speculation and usury, which fascists saw as the arch-evil of modern capitalism. On the other hand, the state had to guarantee every citizen a certain minimum. The fascists believed that exploitation could not exist in a "national toilers' state" as they envisaged it. The concentration of large amounts of property was not to be allowed. To prevent it from happening, workers were to be part-owners of all factories, whether set up privately or by the state.[94] The greater differences in income and wealth had to disappear, because they caused the anachronistic class struggle. Everybody was to be remunerated according to his productivity and responsibility.[95] Conflicts were to be solved by arbitrage commissions with, among others, representatives of the trade unions.[96] Social justice seemed to be of paramount importance to fascists for the future state that they envisaged.[97]

With this economic programme, the fascists proudly maintained that they stood for a new radical national revolution and not for the return of the old order. Of course, they did not govern a state, which might have been difficult with a program such as this. The fact that they tried to put part of their program (share in profits, workers' participation) into practice, even in exile in Harbin, attests to their seriousness, and sometimes they even succeeded—if their press is to be believed.[98]

With respect to economic thinking, it is worthwhile taking the terminology into account. Fascists had their own word for work—toil (*trud*), and they talked about toilers (*trudiashchie*) instead of workers and peasants in order to negate the differences between the two and to include the "*trudovaia intelligentsia,*" the toiling intelligentsia, in their concept of a toilers' state. They therefore put themselves right into the main stream of Russian pre-revolutionary anti-Western traditions—the right and left variants equally. In doing this, the right wanted to deny the class struggle and the existence of modern capitalism in Russia, while the left—the Socialist Revolutionaries—wanted to forge an alliance between peasants and workers by maintaining that both (and the *trudovaia intelligentsia*) were equally exploited by the modern capitalist system. Both groups in their own way

[94] *Azbuka fashizma*, 235, 244–51.

[95] *Nash Put'* 3, 4 May 1941, 8.

[96] *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoi emigratsii*, 334.

[97] Rodzaevskii, *Russkii put'*, 28.

[98] *Natsiia,* 21 January 1940, 7.

wanted to avoid modern capitalist development, and searched for a third way. To a certain degree, this also applied to Russian fascists in Harbin. Their primary aim was to abolish the class struggle and to create (or propagate) a peaceful, not socially antagonistic system, where, next to peasants and workers, specialists (a term borrowed from the Bolsheviks, i.e. the "*intelligentsia*"), clergy, entrepreneurs, and the army would form a fairly homogenous society characterized by "solidarism."[99] Work (*trud*)—including its highest form: the work of administering and governing—is what constitutes modern nations, and the different economic organisations were to represent basic structures on which the new fascist state would rest.[100]

Religion for Fascism and the Fascist State

Russian fascism was very religious. Their slogan was "God—Nation—Toil" (*Bog—Natsiia—Trud*), or sometimes also "pray, learn, fight."[101] Perhaps only the Romanian Legion of the Archangel Michael[102] put a similar emphasis on religion, but this Romanian movement was younger than the pre-revolutionary Union of the Russian People. The latter was also an organisation that put prime emphasis on religion, one branch of which was named Legion of the Russian People of the Archangel Michael by its breakaway leader, a Russified Moldavian, Vladimir Purishkevich.[103] The emphasis on the Orthodox Christian belief system was by no means just lip service. Rodzaevskii defined his fascism as follows: "What is Russian fascism—as an ideology, a religious-national consciousness and social justice; as a program it is the implanting of a national religious consciousness and of social justice in the forms of state, society and economy."[104] Every meeting of the fascists began with a prayer; major assemblies with a more elaborate church

[99] For the ideology of the Socialist Revolutionaries, see Manfred Hildermeier, *Agrarsozialismus und Modernisierung. Die Sozialrevolutionäre Partei Russlands 1900–1914*, (Köln, 1978); Maureen Perrie, *The Socialist Revolutionaries in Russia*, (Cambridge, 1979); for the pre-revolutionary right, see Löwe, *The Tsar and the Jews*, 103ff, 267ff.; Rogger, "Was there a Russian Fascism"; ibid., "Russia," in *The European Right. A Historical Profile* , ed. idem and Eugen Weber (London, 1965); for Harbin fascists see Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 210, 249–50.

[100] Rodzaevskii, *Russkii put'*, 21–2.

[101] *Natsiia* 17 (39), 1939, 8.

[102] See Eugen Weber, "Romania," in *The European Right: A Historical Profile*, ed. Hans Rogger (Berkely: University of California Press, 1965), 504ff.

[103] See Liubosh, *Russkii Fashist Vladimir Purishkevich*, (Leningrad, 1925). His organisation is treated as just another variant of the Union of the Russian people, and never as an organisation in its own right.

[104] *Natsiia* 6, 10 June 1938, 1.

service.[105] Detailed guidelines from the party regulated the everyday (prayers), weekly (Sunday service attendance), bi-weekly (reading of the bible), and yearly (confession and communion) religious obligations and activities of party members, and prescribed intensive endeavours to learn the tenets of the Orthodox belief.[106] The IV Party Congress admonished members of the fascist party for not wearing Christian symbols.[107] The party demanded a sober and thrifty lifestyle; a member had to be part of a Christian family, which it was every adult party member's duty to found. But it was not religiosity in an ordinary sense only that the RFP preached—it was a religiosity that advocated the union of church and state in the aggressive pre-revolutionary Black Hundred tradition, but with slightly different symbols and certainly different patron saints. Whereas the Black Hundreds liked the archangel Michael, St. George (*Pobedonostsec,* the provider of victory, was his Russian epithet), and certain icons because of their militant and almost military reputation or connotation,[108] the fascists preferred Prince Vladimir the Holy, who had baptized Russia, perhaps because Vladimir—at least in the understanding of the fascists—put a large emphasis on education and the development of a Russian culture. In December 1929, the Russian Orthodox church in exile, through its metropolitan bishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii), declared the day of the "apostle-like" Holy Prince Vladimir a special ecclesiastic-national holiday, a spiritual weapon to counter the persecution of the church in the USSR.[109] Although this saint was by no means absent during the pre-revolutionary years and was even used by the Union of the Russian People to enhance the position of its leader Vladimir Purishkevich,[110] it is in the following years that the name day of St. Vladimir became important and was marked by special occasions by the fascists, who claimed St. Vladimir as their patron saint.[111] The contemporary mood behind the cult of St. Vladimir is perhaps best described in a pronouncement by Iuvenial,[112] later bishop of—among other episcopal sees—Shanghai, who lived for many years in Harbin: "The time will come and has nearly come that Holy Rus, baptized and sanctified through martyrdom, will put aside all faddish idols, which presently oppress her, and throw them, similar to St. Vladimir, out of the Russian land into

[105] *Nash Put'*, 22 March 1942, 6; ibid. 10 January 1937, 5; *Natsiia*, 10 November 1938, 1; Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 174.

[106] *Nash Put'* 223 (650), 3 September 1935, 4(?—page number illegible).

[107] *Natsiia* 4 (26), 1 February(?) 1939, 6.

[108] Löwe, "Political Symbols," passim.

[109] *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti* ½, 1 January(14.)–15(28.) 1930, 12.

[110] Löwe, "Political Symbols," 450.

[111] *Natsiia* 6, 10 June 1938, 1; ibid. 6 (28), 20 February 1939, 10. The fascists also tried to create a Russian university of St. Vladimir, s. V. Iadrov, "Russkii klub—oplot kharbinskoi emigratsii," *Nash Put'*, 6 October 1933, 1.

[112] For some facts about his life "Rus' sviatogo Vladimira," accessed 31 January 2010, http://www.orthodox.cn/localchurch/harbin/yuvenaly_ru.htm. In 1947 Iuvenial returned to the Soviet Union and occupied several bishoprics in succession.

an abyss without return."[113] Archbishop Nestor of Harbin, on the occasion of a public celebration of St. Vladimir's name day, beseeched the saint to intercede with the Almighty to free Russia from the Bolsheviks and to resurrect the country.[114] Nestor, who knew St. John of Kronstadt, the famous "miracle worker" and very popular pastor in pre-revolutionary times, as well as a sort of spiritual father to Nestor, might actually have known of the now famous prediction of John of Kronstadt of 1908: "I foresee the restoration of a powerful Russia, still stronger and mightier than before. On the bones of these martyrs, remember, as on a strong foundation, the new Russia will be built—according to the old model: strong in her faith in Christ God and in the Holy Trinity! And she will be, in accordance with the covenant of the Holy Prince Vladimir, a single church!"[115] Clearly, orthodox saints had to be warring saints, and it may be revealing that at present a Google search produces a few thousand quotations of this supposed prophecy, which attests to the fact that this general attitude strikes a chord even now.

Nonetheless, the leader of the Russian fascists in Harbin preached tolerance towards non-Christian beliefs that preserved their heritage—which he called the "positive religions"—including Islam—within the future reconstituted Russian Empire.[116]

Fascism and Bolshevism

With all this in mind, it is rather surprising that Harbin fascists clearly admired and imitated the Soviet Union. At least occasionally, they did not shy away from directly admitting this. At one stage they even called Bolshevism a "Jewish form of fascism" and maintained that "the Soviet system is Jewish state capitalism,"[117] and all would be well if Bolshevism could be rid of its Jewish internationalist elements. For whatever it may be worth, when all was lost for his cause,

[113] http://www.krotov.info/library/17_r/us/s_1938.htm#local3, accessed 31 January 2010.

[114] *Natsiia* 22 (44), 1 August 1939, 9. Another important figure of the Russian emigration in Harbin, General V. A. Kislitsin, said at the same occasion, "Russians, remember that a thousand years back, as the Russian people adopted Orthodoxy under Vladimir the Holy, it became the bearers of light and truth—and so it will also now, having returned into the fold of Orthodoxy, be reborn. We will direct all our strength to the fight with the enemies of our motherland in the name of the resurrection of the Great Russian (*rossiiskii*) empire," loc.cit.

[115] Unfortunately, I have so far not found the original source for this quote. I first found it in T. V. Gracheva, *Sviataia Rus' protiv Khazarii. Algoritmy geopolitiki i strategii tainykh voin mirovoi zakulisy*, (Riazan', 2009); the title of the book is self-explanatory in its anti-Semitism (Khazaria was a Jewish principality in the nineth and tenth centuries)—a surprising and disquieting fact is that Gracheva works at the Military Academy of the Russian Federation.

[116] Rodzaevskii, *Russkii put'*, 25.

[117] Stephan, *Russian Fascists*, 58; see three articles, two by Rodzaevskii, in *Natsiia* 1, 1936; and ibid. 2, 1936; Elena E. Aurilene, *Rossiiskaia diaspora v Kitae (1920–1950gg.)* (Khabarovsk, 2008), 206.

Rodzaevskii even wrote in a letter to Stalin, "Stalinism . . . is our Russian (*rossiiskii* [sic!]) fascism, free of extremes, illusions and errors."[118] Similarities between fascists and Bolsheviks—in the eyes of the former—were also betrayed by the insistence of this group that the basis of the future fascist corporatist system in Russia would be the existing Bolshevik trade unions and soviets. In order to avoid chaos and disorder in the national revolution, they argued, it was necessary not to turn over the existing order, but to transform it by throwing out the *zhido*-communist fraction of Stalin and Kaganovich and to inspire it with completely new content.[119] In fact they began to repeat—in variation—an old socialist, but anti-Bolshevik slogan: for national "soviets without communists."[120] Another of their slogans was "anti-communists of all countries, unite." Also similar was the fact that both insisted that not the form of rule, but the social realities and the social nature of the governmental structure was important.[121] For the fascists, this reflected their view of mind over matter, of the rule of the spiritual over the material, i.e. the belief that ideas governed the world.[122] Therefore, it seemed quite appropriate to them to inspire Soviet institutions with the national idea in order to bring about political change. Both Bolshevism and fascism believed in the power of planning and the importance of the will; both betrayed a strong voluntaristic element in their mentality.[123] Rodzaevskii ridiculed Gins, his former professor, for the belief that modern wars were decided "by gasoline and not morale (*dukh*)."[124] Both were also characterized by a strange belief in the inevitability of the historical process, even if on the side of the fascists this view may have been simply proclaimed rather than firmly held.[125] However, it may very well have been from this belief, in the case of the fascists, that the strange 3-Year Plan of National Liberation developed, which they proclaimed under the prompting of their leader Konstantin Rodzaevskii.[126]

Russian fascists—in a similar frame of mind as the communists with regard to their movement—regarded fascism as a stage in world history through which the whole of humanity inevitably had to pass. The fact that they tried to form or join the world fascist movement had the additional advantage of being able to escape the suffocating narrowness of émigré circles and to put before the Russian people prospects for the future that hardly any other émigré group could compete with. This "universal character" of fascism was clearly a means of counterbalancing

[118] *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoi emigratsii*, 325.

[119] Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 238–9.

[120] Cf. flyer of the RFP in GARF f. 10073, f. 3, op. 55, l. 0782.

[121] Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 241.

[122] Ibid. 220–1; Rodzaevskii, *Russkii put'*, 27–6.

[123] *Nash Put'*, 25 May, 1941, 5.

[124] Rodzaevskii, *Iuda na ushcherbe*, 40.

[125] Oberländer, "The All-Russian Fascist Party," 159.

[126] Ibid., 168; unfortunately I was unable to obtain Rodzaevskii, *Za i protiv trekh-letki* (Harbin 1935).

Soviet internationalism and at the same time it was most likely an indication of the influence of the Soviet model.[127]

In other areas, the fascists very simply imitated the Soviet administrative structures or organisational lexis. The RFP had its own general secretary, central executive, and supreme soviet; it had to be represented in all state and societal organisations and play the leading role.[128] A fascist national dictatorship was to be in place for a transition period. Just as the Communist Party had its best brains writing an "ABC of Communism," the RFP produced an "ABC of Fascism."[129] In 1935, Rodzaevskii wrote his own "What is to be done"—borrowing from the Russian revolutionary tradition of Chernyshevskii and Lenin.[130] And as the communists had *rabkory* (workers' correspondents), *selkory* (rural correspondents), and *pikory* (pioneer correspondents), the fascists had to have their *fashkory* (fascist correspondents).[131]

Symbols

The symbolical and other "material" presentation of the ideology of Harbin fascism was a strange mixture of incongruous elements. On official occasions, they displayed three flags: The pre-revolutionary imperial flag, the Japanese flag, and their own flag with the swastika.[132] The first was perhaps liked, but the second probably not: the double-headed eagle figured prominently because of the deference the fascists had to pay to the ruling powers. The Japanese could not be slighted under any circumstance and monarchical feeling among the Russian émigrés still proved relatively strong. From Italian fascism Harbin fascists took the black shirts and from Nazism perhaps the mould of vicious caricatures from *Der Stürmer*.[133] However, with respect to the latter, Russian models—especially from the civil war—and even Soviet models also certainly existed.[134] The pre-revolutionary

[127] Oberländer, "The All-Russian Fascist Party," 159.

[128] Okorokov, *Fashizm i russkaia emigratsiia*, 241.

[129] *Azbuka fashizma*, 210, *Azbuka fashizma* even directly acknowledged the link with *Azbuka Kommunizma*, ibid., 205.

[130] Stephan, *Russian Fascists*, 75.

[131] Cf. *Nash Put'* 223, 3 September 1939, 3(?).

[132] *Natsiia* 4 (26), 1 February 1939, 2; ibid. 6 (28), 20 February 1939, 7.

[133] Stephan, *Russian Fascists*, 58.

[134] By the second half of the 1920s, *Der Emes*, the official Soviet Yiddish paper, in its fight against traditional Judaism and rabbinical influences in particular, was also prone to publish *Der Stürmer* style Jewish physiognomies, see Gabriele Freitag, *Nächstes Jahr in Moskau. Die Zuwanderung von Juden in die sowjetische Metropole 1917–1932* (Göttingen, 2004), 205.

Moscow lawyer Shmakov, a vicious anti-Semite and member of the Union of the Russian People, decorated his office with Jewish physiognomies and studies of Jewish noses[135]; Black Hundreds periodicals sometimes had comparable drawings.

Summary and Conclusions

Ideologically, Russian fascism, as shown, was deeply rooted in Russian history and traditions, even if it did not slavishly follow any precedents. Its "Russianness" is also attested to by the fact that thousands of respective websites quote, report, and reprint Harbin and Harbin-related materials, and a number of books from Harbin with the respective content are reprinted in Russia today. But Italian fascism too had some influence on the Russian movement. In the view of the émigrés in Harbin, fascism had proven that communism could be stopped in a major crisis and that with radical nationalism, combined with the respective rhetoric and gestures in the right direction, workers could be integrated into an anti-communist front. Whatever the real value of the corporatist structures that Italian fascism gradually introduced during the twenties, for Russian fascists they seemed the most valuable elements in the new governmental structures in Italy and they reminded them of the fact that corporatism had been an important part of Russia's radical right-wing tradition. Mussolini's and Alfredo Rocco's laws of 1925 (Vidoni Palace agreement), (1926 the Synadicalist Laws) and 1927 (the Labour Charter) deeply impressed Russian fascists—in fact, it is no accident that the gestation phase of Russian fascism closely followed these acts. This seemed to prove that fascism not only had its black shirts and their arbitrary violence, but also a governmental structure that seemed workable, which was inherently popular with the Russian radical right. After all, this right (not just fascism or proto-fascism) had for a long time demanded a similar system. This was also the time when G. K. Gins became interested in Italian fascism and publicly expounded his theory of "solidarism." One of his students, Rodzaevskii, was the future leader of the fascists. Nikolai Ustrialov, another professor at the Law Faculty and leading intellectual in Harbin also took an interest in Italian fascism, probably—among other reasons—in an attempt to counter the growing fascist influence in the Harbin Law Faculty. In spite of his rather critical appraisal, Ustrialov viewed Italian fascism as a fascinating social experiment, and budding Harbin fascists probably found interesting material in his book.

Although many observers, Russian fascists included, always asserted a great similarity between Italian and Harbin varieties of fascism and saw the Italian as the original, there were in fact differences between the two. Italian fascists, as a rule, saw their country as a sort of pariah nation, kicked around by the big powers. The Russian fascists were not driven by this sense of inferiority, even if they assumed

[135] Hans Rogger, "The Beilis Case, Antisemitism and Politics in the Reign of Nicholas II," in *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia*,ed. idem, 53.

that Russia had to be reborn in a national revolution. The intention to regulate and to moderate capitalism and especially big industry and the banks was stronger in the Russian movement than Italian fascism's resolve in practice. And it is likely that Italian fascism was intentionally more modernizing than the Russian counterpart, even if the latter did acknowledge some need for it.

Russian fascists, on the other hand, especially Rodzaevskii, were increasingly preoccupied with *samobytnost'*, which is difficult to translate; it can perhaps be expressed with the word autochthonism and signifies the insistence on one's own, original, and unique way of life, which was threatened by Western civilization—or rather by the Anglo-Saxon world, "*finintern,*" Wall Street, or Komintern, which to them were all run by Jews. This insistence on *samobytnost*' was a protest against the dominance of Western or communist material and—as they saw it—materialistic culture. *Samobytnost*' was the key word of fascism's resistance against a Western, materialist culture, the moving spirit of which was for them the Jews; as a collective also called an "internation" (*internatsiia*) or "interstate" (*intergosudarstvo*), something devoid of any real national character. Italian fascists and Nazis did not espouse this form of anti-Semitism—theirs proved to be different. And *samobytnost'* certainly did not stir them in the same way as it did Russian fascists.

Harbin fascists were quite aware of the differences between them and other fascists, Nazism included. With the exception of anti-Semitism, with respect to which they very rarely addressed their differences directly, they put the differences down to the fact that fascism and Nazism had to fight against the chaos of liberalism and democracy, whereas Russian fascism was involved in a struggle against a stifling dictatorship and had to liberate their country before they could start to implement the program of the national revolution that they aimed for. Indeed, it still sounds strange that fascists promised *Rechtsstaatlichkeit* (*pravovi poriadok*) as well as full cultural autonomy to minorities, its people and economy, and extolled the role of the individual and of private property or capital in the economy. However, what would have happened if Russian fascists had come to power is an open question; their involvement (or that of some of them) in the criminal and corrupt practices of the Japanese occupation forces did not bode well for such a future.

In terms of intercultural influences, Russian fascism in exile was a phenomenon kick-started by the example of the Italian fascists, whose success triggered a large-scale revival of pre-revolutionary attempts to form a mass movement under the Tsar and to begin a fight for power against liberalism and socialism. And there was a lot to learn from the Black Hundreds. In terms of ideology the rise of Italian fascism triggered a reaffirmation of traditional Russian right-wing ideas and politics.

Part III
Soft Power and Imperialism

Late-Qing Adaptive Frontier Administrative Reform in Manchuria, 1900–1911

Blaine Chiasson

Abstract Between 1900 and 1911 the Qing government made revolutionary changes to the political administration of their dynastic homeland, Manchuria. Formerly under a separate frontier administration the Qing subdivided the region into three new Chinese provinces, incorporating the region into the regular Chinese political administration. This paper argues that this change was not a simple reaction to a growing Russian imperial presence. Instead it was part of a complex renegotiation of the Qing's imperial and administrative identity, from having semi-permeable borders with indirect administrations under allied tribal peoples, to a policy of direct administrative control, uniform administrative standards empire-wide, along with policies of frontier colonization and development. This places the Qing within the norm of other contemporary imperial powers, each of which justified its imperial rule over frontiers and frontiers peoples through a policy of modernization, development and direct administration.

In 1900, the Russian Imperial Army invaded and conquered Manchuria.[1] Overwhelming the Manchu and Chinese armies, a Russian force numbering nearly

[1] The geographical term Manchuria is ambiguous and the use of the term invites criticism because the term itself was created by colonial powers with their own agendas in Manchuria. Mark Elliott's article persuasively argues that even if the Qing did not call the region Manchuria, it was they who created it as a place separate from China, investing it with a special regional identity that would be transferred into a potentially separate political identity. For the sake of convenience, and aware it is very much a nineteenth century practice, I will refer to the region as Manchuria. See Mark C. Elliott, "The Limits of Tartary: Manchuria in Imperial and National Geographies," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 59.3 (Aug. 2000): 603–46.

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200,000[2] solidified Russian colonial control over a Qing northern frontier region that had to that point only witnessed creeping Russian economic and political influence, and a sparse Han Chinese population. The Russian invasion was accompanied by a 4-year assumption of complete administrative as well as military control over Manchuria by the Russian state. The Russian Empire was already well known by the Qing for their appetite for Qing territory, having detached from the Qing enormous territories now known as the Amur *oblast* and the Primorsky and Khabarovsk *krais* or regions.[3] Russian economic and political control over northern Manchuria within Qing borders had already begun in 1896, with the signing of a contract to create a Russian railway concession. Due to a questionable interpretation of the word "administer" in this contract, this line, the Chinese Eastern Railway, would serve as an instrument in Russia's virtual colonization of North Manchuria.[4] These events—the loss of territory, the building of the CER, and the 1900 post-Boxer invasion—were a clear demonstration to the Qing that their policy of keeping Manchuria under a separate administration would no longer protect the heart of the empire. Manchurian administrative reform, it will be argued, was aimed at establishing Manchuria as a full part of the Qing Empire, a part administratively identical to the empire's heartland. This served to transform this administratively separate frontier, which appeared to the Russians, among others, to be a region of indeterminate political and administrative identity, into a Qing, and by extension, a Chinese place. In doing so, the Qing was not just simply changing administrative patterns and dividing regions into provinces, but entering into a complex renegotiation of its own imperial administrative identity.

Before 1900 the Qing administered the component parts of its empire according to the cultural and political norms, a form of adaptive political administration employed by the Manchus before their conquest of China proper in the seventeenth century. According to this model the most important peoples of the empire would be ruled according to their political norms. For example Tibet was ruled with the Qing emperor as a Tibetan Buddhist monarch, Mongolia with the Qing Emperor as Mongolian Khan, China as a Confucian monarch, and Manchuria as separate Manchu homeland. After 1900, the Qing adopted an administrative policy for the empire that stressed direct control, uniform administration, settlement, and development over frontiers and ethnic minorities, as proof of imperial sovereignty over its territory. This entangled the Qing into the relatively recently articulated global standard for national and imperial sovereignty that posited direct administration, with its simultaneous processes of colonization, and development, as the hallmark of legal sovereignty over territory. The implications of Qing administrative reform

[2] The Russians were by far the largest of the combined great power expeditionary force of 1900. The total for the other seven powers was 18,000. George Alexander Lensen, *The Russo-Chinese War* (Tallahassee, Florida: The Diplomatic Press, 1967), 232.

[3] Despite the different terms administratively, in the contemporary Russian Federation, the two types are equal, and in English are sometimes translated as provinces.

[4] Blaine R. Chiasson, *Administering the Colonizer: Manchuria's Russians under Chinese Rule, 1919–1929* (Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 2010), Chapter 2.

for modern Chinese history would be significant, as Qing and later Chinese nationalists would now imagine "China" stretching over the various peoples and polities of the Qing Empire. For Manchuria, these reforms were the beginning of the transformation of a region from a vaguely defined Manchu homeland, to the *dongbei sansheng*, the three Chinese provinces of the northeast, from an administratively ambiguous space open to conquest, to Qing and later Chinese sovereign territory.

Qing administration in Manchuria before 1900 preserved its status as the dynastic homeland and as an imagined cultural and ethnic refuge for the empire's Manchu population. By maintaining Manchuria separate from regular Chinese administration the Qing created a semipermeable frontier, a *cordon sanitaire* between the two empires, that allowed for Qing controlled passage of goods and peoples, but prevented too much direct contact between Russians and Chinese; contact that had the potential to disrupt the Qing's carefully constructed self-identity as a Chinese dynasty. In the late nineteenth century, Imperial Russia adopted a policy of direct administration and settlement of former Qing territory based on the proposals of Sergei Witte, which intended to turn northern Manchuria into a Russian sphere of influence. To this point, the Qing, distracted by internal rebellions and foreign coastal occupation, had been unable to counter Russian attempts to turn northern Manchuria into its sphere of influence. After 1903, responding to the reports by a number of reform-minded Han Chinese officials, the Qing acted in 1907 to transform Manchuria, first by creating three regular Chinese provinces in the former military administrative region with all accompanying sub-provincial political divisions, then by creating a network of provincial administrative bureaus, city governments, and diplomatic agencies in each province. Allied tribal peoples, once essential for extending the claim of Qing sovereignty over the northern frontier, were abandoned in favor of a direct Chinese-style local administration, under which the tribal peoples were placed. Finally, in acknowledgement that settlement and development were now the criteria by which sovereign control was determined, Manchuria was opened to Han Chinese settlement and economic development.

A brief summary of traditional Qing imperial administration will demonstrate how revolutionary were the administrative changes adopted by the late Qing. China proper, the heartland of the former Ming dynasty, was divided into 18 provinces *sheng*, with subdivisions of circuit *dao*, prefectures *fu*, and county *xian*, in order of importance. Tibet, Mongolia, and Xinjiang were defined as independent princedoms under the *Li Fan Yuan* with their own administrations, supervised by Manchu military appointees. *Li Fan Yuan* can be translated as Court of Colonial Affairs or Court of Frontier Affairs and was also responsible for all relations with the Russian Empire until the establishment of the *Zongli Yamen* in 1861. As such the *Li Fan Yuan* was the closest approximation to a Qing ministry of foreign affairs, acknowledging that this concept, based on Western diplomacy that took at its first principle the equality of states, had no basis in the Qing's Sino-centric worldview before 1861. These administrative divisions demonstrate that Tibet, Mongolia, and Xinjiang, like Manchuria, were seen as distinct political entities, outside of China proper, deserving and having their own distinct political administrations.

Like Tibet, Mongolia, and Xinjiang, Manchuria was administered separately from the Chinese heartland of the Qing Empire, and like the other three it was a sensitive frontier region. Unlike the aforementioned three princedoms it did not have its own independent political administration because it was the designated Qing homeland. Instead of a status of imperial ally, brought under the supervision of the Qing, acknowledged in the concept of independent princedom, Manchurian administration was a purely military affair under the direct control of the Qing court. Before 1907, it was a military governorship under a military governor and subdivided into three military districts of Mukden/Shenyang, Jilin, and Heilongjiang, each controlled by a military deputy lieutenant-governor.[5] In theory a small civilian administration supervised the non-Manchu, non-military populations; in practice this was also the domain of the military administration. At the lowest administrative level Manchu military banners served as both local officials and local administration. The Qing also relied on Manchurian and Siberian tribes, bound to the dynasty through tributary alliances, for additional local administration, tribute collection and border security.[6] Finally, unlike the densely populated, highly commercialized Chinese core of the empire, Manchuria had been left deliberately unpopulated and unsettled. Chinese were not permitted to travel and settle north of Mukden/Shenyang.[7] Although Chinese had been steadily moving north since the eighteenth century they were still a relatively urban population in Manchuria. As hunters, tradesmen, miners, and bandits, they would not establish permanent agricultural settlements of any significance in northern Manchuria until allowed to do so by the Qing after 1900. Control of northern Manchuria, and Qing sovereignty over this territory, still relied on alliances with conquered tribes which were largely self-administering, and whose relationship with the Qing consisted of paying tribute and providing border security. Manchuria's administrative system remained in place after the signing of the 1689 Treaty of Nerchinsk, which delineated the border between the Qing and Russian empires. Even after the treaties of Aigun and Beijing (1858 and 1860 respectively), pushed Imperial Russia's border south to the Amur River, the Qing continued to administer their Manchurian frontier in their traditional fashion.

Qing frontier administrative change after 1907, from a policy of indirect military rule to one based on direct administration using the Chinese model, seems to have been a radical, perhaps revolutionary change. It would be a mistake, however, to see these reforms as just a "modern" response to a "modern" administrative problem. Flexibility in administrative practice was first a legacy of the Chinese imperial system to the age-old problem of Chinese frontier expansion. In Sichuan, in

[5] Hippolit.Semonovich Brunnert and V.V. Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization of China*, Part III: Government of Manchuria (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, 1912), 384. Elliot, "The Limits of Tartary," 605. Robert H. G. Lee, *The Manchurian Frontier in Ch'ing History* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1970), 59–77.

[6] See Loretta Eumie Kim, "Marginal Constituencies: Qing Borderland Polices and Vernacular Histories of Five Tribes on the Sino-Russian Frontier," (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2009).

[7] Lee, *The Manchurian Frontier*, 78–102.

Yunnan, in Qinghai, Guangdong, and Guangxi, formerly non-Chinese frontier regions were tamed by the gradual extension of Chinese administration. Although the methods varied from region to region, sometimes having more of a military caste, sometimes more of a civilian orientation, sometimes including the native elite, sometimes replacing them, the goal was the same: extending and legitimizing Chinese rule over formerly non-Chinese space.[8] Therefore, the Chinese imperial state had lengthy experience, well before the Manchu Qing dynasty, of creating hybrid administrative solutions for ruling non-Chinese areas.

To this administrative history, the Qing drew on their particular experience as a minority, semi-nomadic, semi-settled conquest dynasty from the steppe. As a conquest dynasty and demographic minority, the Qing had to be sensitive to the political norms of the peoples they ruled. Manchu leaders first consciously transformed the Qing into a Chinese-style dynasty before conquering the Ming, and after the conquest accommodated themselves to their largest constituency, the Chinese, by ruling as Confucian monarchs, and ruled others according to their political and religious norms. If we understand the entire Qing Empire as an ever-expanding frontier, radiating southwards from Manchuria, the Qing took the Chinese model of a culturally sensitive adaptive political administration to their new frontiers. In essence, the Chinese became one more frontier subject people ruled according to local norms. The Qing, therefore, demonstrated a history of administrative adaptation well before their encounter with the Russians or Japanese in Manchuria. Adaptation, administrative or cultural, was part of Qing political DNA.[9]

Until 1907 the one exception to this adaptive administrative model was Manchuria itself, perhaps because Manchuria was the invented homeland, constituted so by Nurhachi, the first Qing monarch, and set apart from the rest of the empire. Although it is tempting to view Manchuria's pre-1907 military and banner administration, and deliberate policy of underdevelopment as a lesser form of administration, compared to the direct Chinese administration that was created after 1907, from the Qing perspective this was incorrect. From the Qing perspective not developing Manchuria and keeping it under Qing military administration had two purposes; it reinforced and maintained the sense of who the Manchus were, and it acted as protection for the rich Chinese heartland. For the Qing colonizers of China it was the one place truly, in its ethnic and military administration, Qing.

Colonial power means the creation of colonial identities; the ruler and the ruled, the superior and the inferior. For the minority Manchus, it was necessary to adapt to China, however, from Nurhachi onwards, successive Qing emperors worried that the Manchu would lose the very talent that transformed them into a colonial power,

[8] See Cui Wei, "Settling Relations between the Temporary Nanjing Government and China's Minorities," *Nanjing jihui kexue* 2 (February 2003): 52–55 and Yang Zuoshan, "A Discussion of Republican period frontier ethnic policy," *Guyuan shixuebao[shehui kexueban]* 21/5 (September 2000): 43–47. See also Yingcong Dai, *The Sichuan Frontier and Tibet: Imperial Strategy in the Early Qing* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009).

[9] See Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

their Manchu military heritage. Even before China was conquered, the Qing began a process of enforced separation of populations; Manchu monopoly over key political positions and domination of the landscape was a process that we now recognize as colonial. Manchus were forbidden to marry Chinese, and the two communities were not permitted to even live next to one another. Once China was conquered and the Manchus began the process of cultural accommodation, Qing emperors maintained Manchu identity through enforced language instruction and military training, along with the aforementioned prohibitions against intermarriage and settlement. As colonizers the maintenance of Manchuria as a military region, a place apart, allowed the Manchus to keep a memory of an invented homeland alive. Manchurian separateness, therefore, was an effort to maintain Manchu distinctiveness in a colonial empire where their political administrative identity was often blurred by the political norms of the majorities the Manchus ruled. In Manchuria they would always and only be Manchu. Paradoxically, it was this administrative adaptability, necessary for the Qing as a colonial power, that allowed the dynasty after 1907 to experiment with a new direct form of frontier administration, one however that would transform Manchuria from a Manchu to a Chinese place.

Along with its function as imagined ethnic homeland for the colonial Manchus, keeping Manchuria separate also allowed the Qing to maintain that region as a frontier buffer. In 1644, the region's boundaries were unclear and this worked to the Qing's benefit. They could regulate trade, ethnic, and tribal alliances, as well as information and technologies that might trickle into the empire. This was not a Qing innovation but one common to all great land empires before the seventeenth century, such the Roman, Russian, Ottoman, and Mogul Indian. All their imperial frontiers were the home of frontier subject peoples, and lacking the manpower to staff a direct administration, tribal alliances were crucial to controlling borders. Frontiers, permeable boundaries of unclear jurisdiction, allowed goods, persons, and ideas to pass, or be rejected by the empire's center, and these ill-defined, permeable frontiers acted as a means to diffuse economic and military tensions between empires. The Qing kept Manchuria separate in order to avoid this important relationship with the region's tribes compromised by potential competitors. This is illustrated by the Qing's first experiment with state-to-state diplomacy and border demarcation, the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689), often seen as China's first leap into modern diplomacy. The impetus for this treaty however, was for both the Russian and Qing empires a solution to the tradition imperial problem of ethnic frontier administration. Tribal allies were playing both sides. Beijing and Moscow agreed to the first Sino-Russian border agreement in order to have a clear line designating whose allied tribes were whose.[10] Finally, a separate administrative identity for Manchuria permitted unchallenged Manchu control over the region's resources, the lucrative ginseng, fur, and tea trade. To sum up, from 1644 to the mid nineteenth century, keeping Manchuria as a separate Qing homeland, a permeable

[10] Peter C. Perdue, "Boundaries and Trade in the early Modern World: Negotiations at Nerchinsk and Beijing," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 43:3 (Spring 2001): 341–56.

barrier, a *cordon sanitaire* separating the two empires made perfect sense as long as both Russian and Qing empires conceived of their frontiers in the same manner.

By 1900 this model of administrative separateness no longer served its purpose. The Qing Empire had encountered a new form of imperial legitimacy and a changed geopolitical world of Western imperial encroachment, the creation of dependent colonies, leased concessions, extraterritoriality and foreign settlements, unequal treaties, and gunboat diplomacy.[11] In Manchuria the Russian Empire, and the expanding Japanese Empire, with new technologies of transportation and resource extraction, new concepts of administrative legitimacy and national sovereignty based on direct, dense administration, accompanied with settlement and government sponsored economic development, defined Manchuria as an "empty" frontier of indeterminate political administration. The Qing, drawing on their history of adaptation, would change administrative models once more.

By the 1860s the dynasty had been buffeted by internal and external conflicts, such as the Taiping rebellion and the first and second Opium Wars, with the resulting creation of concessions, resident foreign populations, extraterritoriality and foreign economic exploitation, alongside a mounting economic and demographic crisis. Foreign powers, and their capacity to build cities, railroads, and armies in the Qing Empire, appeared to the Qing to be based on the West's seemingly endless capacity for direct organization, in both military and civilian administration.[12] This encounter, therefore, both revealed the necessity of, and provided the model for a series of empire-wide political and administrative reforms that heralded a new form of Qing political legitimacy, one based on direct and uniform political administration of the entire empire by Beijing, the Qing capital. It was a model of direct administration that aimed to eliminate regional and ethnic variations of political administration, along with the opening of formerly closed frontiers to development and settlement. The Tongzhi Restoration and the Self-Strengthening Movement of the 1860s and 1870s, a series of cultural, economic and eventually political reform movements, all drew on the West and Japan's Meiji Restoration. These merged into the 1898 Hundred Days Reforms and eventually into the late Qing political reforms following the 1900 Boxer Rebellion. These reforms are notable for their emphasis on uniform and comprehensive empire-wide solutions to China's crisis. They attempted to create new Qing imperial institutions, such as modern imperial armies and navies, and, for the first time, an imperial ministry of foreign affairs, the *Zongli Yamen*, innovations in international law, the creation of a Chinese diplomatic corps, a new imperial law code, a proposed imperial parliament, and new political federation. Although a number of these reforms were stillborn, or had limited success they reflected a new style of rule for the Qing, in which legitimacy was based on direct, rather than indirect, control.

[11] I include Japan in this definition of the model of Western imperialism.

[12] For the nineteenth century Asian "quest" for the secret of the West's power to organize and administer see Pankaj Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire: The Revolt Against the West and the remaking of Asia* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2012).

By 1900 imperial identities not just being built on direct administration and economic development: they were also being built on nationalism and demographic majorities. The Japanese, Russian, French, and British empires were, although all multinational, and multilingual were defined by, and legitimized through, their core national populations and national identities. Empires such as the Qing or the Ottoman, which were defined and built on a polymorphous political identity, were by the end of the nineteenth century the "sick men" of their respective regions. They were being redefined and potentially torn apart by the creation of national identities among the component imperial populations. This was especially problematic along imperial frontiers inhabited by different ethnic or national populations than the imperial core, such as Tibet, Xinjiang, Mongolia, and Manchuria in the case of the Qing. If the Qing was increasingly seen, and saw itself, as a Chinese empire, and yet these frontiers were not Chinese, what and whose were they? This problem of the ambiguous national identity of the Manchurian frontier, which by 1900 was defined by accepted standards of national identity and direct administration, is perhaps one of the reasons the Qing dynasty accepted without question the proposals from Han Chinese officials that resulted in the complete administrative sinicization of the Manchu homeland.

Administrative reforms that would culminate in the division of Manchuria in 1907 into three provinces, along with the direct Chinese administration and development of those new provinces, had precedents in the creation of two other new provinces: Xinjiang in 1884 and Taiwan in 1895. Xinjiang, formerly under the *Li Fan Yuan* was in 1884 transformed into a province whose political status was identical to China proper.[13] This was a response to the Muslim or Dungan Revolt (1862–1877) and the Russian occupation of the Ili valley, which was ended in the Qing's favor by the 1881 Treaty of Saint Petersburg, negotiated by the *Zongli Yamen*. [14] Xinjiang's new status as a province was undoubtedly due to its vulnerability as a Qing dependency at the intersection of both the Russian and British empires. General Zuo Zongtong, who recovered the territory for the Qing, had also served as viceroy and governor general of Shaanxi and Gansu. Attuned to the advantages of direct administration, Zuo, in 1877 while Russia still occupied the Ili valley, recommended that Xinjiang become a Chinese province after observing the speed by which Chinese settled the area after it was secured by his army. Its conversion to a Chinese province was accompanied by a settlement program aimed at creating enough tax revenue so the province would be militarily and administratively self-sufficient.[15] Undertaken for military reasons, the conversion

[13] Brunnert and Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization*, 439.

[14] Immanuel Hsu, *The Ili Crisis: a Study of Sino-Russian Diplomacy, 1871–1881* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

[15] Kwang-Ching Liu and Richard J. Smith, "The Military Challenge: the north-west and the coast," *Cambridge History of China*, Vol.11: Late Ch'ing, 1800–1911 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 242–43.

of Xinjiang into a Chinese province and its direct administration demonstrates that the Qing believed an undefined Qing territory was more vulnerable than a Chinese province.

In 1884–1885 the French had attempted to invade Taiwan, then a circuit *dao* of Fujian Province, during the Sino-French War. Although Taiwan was successfully defended the Qing decided to transform Taiwan into a province in the hope it would become part of the empire's new naval defense strategy. Taiwan was made a province on 12 October 1885, the same day the Navy *Yamen* or Ministry, was created. The new governor Liu Mingchuan set about building coastal defenses, but also laid down plans for coal mines, a railway, and telegraph system to crisscross the island. He had the island's land holdings surveyed, created a tax bureau, pushed through a tax reform, encouraged colonization from Fujian and created a number of bureaus for Taiwan's industrial modernization. Once again, although prompted by military considerations Taiwan's conversion to a Chinese province indicated that the Qing saw imperial legitimacy as derived from direct Chinese administration and modern economic development.[16]

Like Xinjiang and Taiwan, Manchuria's conversion into three Chinese provinces came about as a result of invasion, in this case the 1900 Boxer Rebellion, the occupation of Manchuria by Russian troops, and the simultaneous assumption of administration over all Manchuria by Russia, which lasted until the withdrawal of Russian troops in 1902. The war was a transformative experience for one Qing bureaucrat, Cheng Dechuan, who would in 1904 and 1905 submitted two memorials to the court that recommended Manchuria's administration be sinicized. Cheng, a Sichuan native, had served in the Manchurian military government since 1891 as an assistant in charge of military affairs. During the Russian attack on Qiqihar Cheng successfully negotiated a truce with the Russians for the withdrawal of Chinese troops from that city, at one point placing himself in front of a Russian cannon. Recognized by his Qing superiors as a loyal and talented bureaucrat Cheng rose in the Manchurian military administration. Between 1900 and 1906, he held a number of military administrative posts, each more powerful than the last, cumulating in his position as Heilongjiang military governor in 1906, the first Chinese to hold this position.[17]

In 1904 and 1905, encouraged by the atmosphere of reform prevailing at the Qing court Cheng submitted a series of proposals to the Qing court that became the foundation of the Manchurian administrative reforms. Cheng's administrative proposals, like the provincial reforms in Xinjiang and Taiwan, were framed in the context of Manchuria's military vulnerability due to its weak civilian administration and its indeterminate political status. Cheng advised that the military government be transformed into a civilian government and the three military subdivisions

[16] When Liu retired in 1891 Taiwan had increased its tax revenues from 183,366 to 674,468 taels. Fifteen miles of the railway had been built, in a period when there were only 319 miles of rail in all of Qing China, including Taiwan. Ibid., 258–66.

[17] Lee, *The Manchurian Frontier*, 140–43.

be turned into provinces. He also recommended that the region be opened to Chinese settlement, a reform he initiated by selling land without first receiving Beijing's permission, and for which he was impeached and later acquitted.[18] Contained in Cheng's memorials is the argument that Manchuria's status as a region of administrative separateness was no longer adequate to prevent it from being detached from the Qing, and that sovereignty for the needs of a modern empire meant developing and administering its frontiers.

Cheng's position was taken up by Xu Shichang and Tsai Chen, respectively presidents of the new ministries of the interior and of commerce, and part of the new wave of Qing reformist ministers. In 1906, these two men toured Manchuria, met with Cheng and submitted their own memorial. In it they argued civilian administration and economic development, particularly agriculture was underdeveloped and unsupervised, and the Qing by allowing much of the land to remain in the hands of bannermen was losing tax revenue.[19] On 20 April 1907, an imperial decree abolished Manchuria's military government and replaced it with a civilian government. The region was still to be treated separately; there was one governor general with jurisdiction over all three provinces, and a governor each in the new provinces of Jilin, Heilongjiang, and Fengtian.[20] Administrative councils were created for each province to advise the governor on administrative and judicial reforms.[21] Bureaus for education, judicial affairs, industrial affairs, finance, and foreign affairs were among the ten bureaus created in 1907, along with bureaus administering traditional Manchurian concerns such as the Manchu and Mongolian bannermen, and military affairs.[22] In 1908 the Qiqihar Central Colonization Bureau, the *genwu congju,* was opened by imperial decree responsible for encouraging settlement and the sale of public land to immigrants, and in 1909 immigrant agencies for the colonization of the Heilongjiang frontier *Heilongjing shengpian zhaodaichu* were opened in six cities, including Shanghai and Tientsin.[23]

The above administrative changes transformed Manchuria from a Qing military administrative region and homeland to three Chinese provinces. Although both Russia and Japan would continue to create their own spheres of influence in Manchuria, their task would be more difficult with a genuine Chinese administrative presence in place. These reforms could be seen only as a defensive measure, reforms protecting the Qing frontier against foreign threat. Instead I would argue that these reforms were designed to both protect the Qing frontier, and transform Manchuria into Chinese territory through creating the Chinese "fact" in Manchuria. This was accomplished by creating a modern administration that could pragmatically and immediately respond to Russian and Japanese threats, but also through

[18] Ibid., 146.

[19] Ibid., 147.

[20] Brunnert and Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization*, 385.

[21] Ibid., 387, 404.

[22] Ibid., 388–94.

[23] Ibid., 368.

settlement and economic development, as seen in the new provinces of Xinjiang and Taiwan. This can be seen in two areas; foreign affairs and the settlement of Han Chinese. In both of these areas the Qing endowed the new Manchurian provincial governments with considerable power to innovate and interpret policy. Often criticized as a sign of Qing and Chinese decentralization, these measures should be seen, as Xu Shichang, Qing president of the ministry of the interior, paraphrased in article 11 of his 1907 memorial, "because of the strategic location of the Three Eastern Provinces and the recent origin of the local civil governments, all existing precedents governing provincial administration should be relaxed to permit greater flexibility in solving local problems."[24] Manchuria was a contested region between Russia, China, and Japan and Chinese sovereignty was at risk because the Japanese and Russian states were building competing administrations. It was necessary to give considerable power to the Manchurian governments so that they were able to respond and form policy on the spot, and flexibility in designing administrative solutions and administrative innovation would certainly be a hallmark of Chinese Manchurian administration.

One example was the creation of local diplomatic bureaus in each province, with different jurisdictions, some for general foreign affairs, and others for questions arising from first Russian and then the Russian and Japanese Manchurian railway concessions. The inspiration for the Chinese foreign bureaus may have come from a Russian precedent, the CER General Office for Railway Diplomacy. The first general offices were created in Jilin in 1896 after the signing of the contract for the construction of the CER that same year. In 1899 a second bureau was established in Harbin.[25] When founded, the general offices supervised the collection of tariffs and the settlement of disputes between railway employees, presumably Russians, and the Chinese. Given the need for trained Chinese professionals in such matters, in 1902 the general offices' duties were formalized in an agreement between the CER and the Heilongjiang military government. In return for funding and training provided by the CER other offices were constructed along the line. Along with their tariff collection duties the offices now trained Chinese officials in Russian language and Russian law. The offices acted as local courts for cases arising between the Qing government and the CER, as well as criminal cases concerning Chinese subjects within concession boundaries. The offices also maintained a small police force and a jail and employees were expected to consult regularly with both the CER and the Qing military administrations, occasionally acting as mediators between them.[26] The CER general offices, designed and funded by the CER to train loyal Chinese servants, trained a generation of bureaucrats in

[24] Hsu Shi-ch'ang (Xu Shichang), *T'ui-Keng-t'ang cheng-shu*, 8:21–30. Translated and quoted in Lee, *The Manchurian Frontier*, 154.

[25] Ibid., 158.

[26] Number 1902/1 Russia (CER Railway Company) and China (Provincial Government of Heilongjiang), "Agreement regarding the Jurisdiction over Chinese Subjects in the Railway Zone, 1/14 January 1902," in *Treaties and Agreements Concerning China, 1984–1919*, Vol. 1: Manchu Period, ed. John V.A. MacMurray (New York: Oxford University Press, 1921), 321.

modern Russian judicial, territorial, and economic administration, who then went on to work for the foreign bureaus of the three Manchurian provinces.[27]

In 1907, as part of the general administrative reform of Manchuria the *Jiaoshe sishi* Bureau of Foreign Affairs was established with one office each in Fengtien and Jilin provinces. In recognition of the particular importance of the Russian presence a separate Head Office for Foreign Affairs *Jiaoshe zongju* was located in Qiihar for Heilongjiang province, specializing in mediation between Russian and Chinese. Building on the example of the CER general offices in both Heilongjiang and Jilin provinces were *Tielu jiaoshe zongju* head offices for railway foreign affairs for each province specializing in Russian and Japanese railway affairs. The CER was singled out for particular attention and five branch offices of railway foreign affairs *Tielu jiaoshe fenju* were created in larger stations along the CER line. Finally a General Office for Foreign Affairs, *Jiaosheju* was established for each district and prefecture where a foreign consul was located so that the lowest two administrative levels could be advised on disputes arising from concessionary rights, and for the protection of Chinese sovereignty. Two frontier commissioners to adjudicate affairs between Manchuria and Japan were formed alongside the Korean border.[28]

The various levels of the Manchurian foreign office hierarchy served as clearing houses for advice and strategy for keeping the Russians and Japanese within the limits of their respective railway concession agreements. Later, along the CER line, after Imperial Russian power began to collapse after 1917 the offices for foreign and railway affairs took the initiative in proposing the administrative solution of taking over the CER concession and transforming it into the Special District of the Three Northern Provinces *Dongsansheng tebiechu* an administrative solution that preserved the Russian form of the CER under Chinese management, while removing all that railway's political powers and placing them under Chinese administration.[29] For example Fujiatien district intendant, and former Branch Office of Railway Affairs Office employee Dong Shian, who was familiar with Russian administration, especially policing, would propose the takeover of the CER concession police. The foreign and railway bureaus, born as a defensive measure to protect Chinese sovereignty, pioneered new administrative solutions to what the Russian and Japanese saw as Manchuria's ambiguous political identity. The creation of the Special District in 1919, a Chinese administration that replaced the CER concession but preserved its population and money generating potential, was an

[27] Peilin Xin, "Ma Zhongjun shensheng" [A biographical sketch of Mr. Ma Zhongjun], *Harbin wenshi ziliao* [Harbin Cultural and Historical Materials] 6 (1985): 1–22 and "Foreign Relations: The Origins of the CER," *Dongchui shangbao* [Northern Frontier Business Association] *Haerbin Zhinan* [Guide to Harbin] (Harbin, Jilin Province, 1922) Vol. 2, third chapter, first section.

[28] Brunnert and Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization*, 388–89.

[29] Dongchui shangbao, [Northern Frontier Business Association], *Haerbin Zhinan* [Guide to Harbin] (Harbin, 1922), Introduction and Chiasson, *Administering the Colonizer*.

example of the innovative, adaptive and pragmatic administrative solutions generated by this cohort of Manchurian foreign office employees.[30]

Official proposals for increasing Chinese settlement in Manchuria had been in circulation before 1900 but most land was still owned by the Qing. Since 1740, the Qing had passed successive laws to prevent Chinese immigration. These laws were not successful and Chinese were settling in north Manchuria, few however were settling in the countryside.[31] After the loss of territory north of the Amur and east of the Ussuri to Russia in the Treaty of Beijing (1860), Heilongjiang's military governor memorialized the Qing to open the region to Chinese settlement, citing the need for a large civilian population to offset Russian advances, an innovation known as *shibian* border fortification.[32] Once again a solution proposed as a defensive measure, in this case Chinese settlement, to protect the borders, would become a means to establish Manchuria as a Chinese place through agricultural development. The areas permitted for official Chinese settlement, however, were limited until 1900.

By 1900, Russia had signaled its intentions to incorporate Manchuria into its economic and perhaps political sphere of influence, and Russians began to settle the railway concession. In response the court in 1902 created an official colonization project that rested on the dismantling of what had been the Qing's main sources of support in North Manchuria; its control over land and land tenure through the banners and the allied tribes, whom they also supported with military allowances. In 1904, unrestricted settlement was permitted by an imperial decree permitting "overall opening" *quanbu kaifang* allowing, in principle, unrestricted Chinese settlement into formerly restricted Manchu and tribal areas of Heilongjiang. Migration from Northern China, already high, increased. Between 1905 and 1910 and average of 400,000 people were migrating to Manchuria annually.[33]

Many of these men were only temporary migrants and potential Chinese settlers were discouraged by the absence of property for sale. Much of the best agricultural land in Heilongjiang was owned by the Qing government; in order to create a permanent agricultural settlement the Qing would have to divest itself of this dynastic land. Between 1904 and 1911 the Qing sold 5.63 million *sang*, 9.38 million acres of Qing owned land in Heilongjiang to Chinese, Manchu, Mongol, and tribal peoples.[34] In 1907, the Qing permitted individuals in Manchuria to sell land, creating for the first time a market in private property. Purchases of large amounts of land were permitted only to individuals and corporations on condition they resell

[30] "Foreign Relations: The Origins of the CER," *Dongchui shangbao* [Northern Frontier Business Association] in *Haerbin Zhinan* Vol. 2, third chapter, first section.

[31] Lee, *The Manchurian Frontier,* 102.

[32] Patrick Shan, "The Development of the North Manchurian Frontier" (PhD diss., McMaster University, March 2003), 6.

[33] Thomas R. Gottschang, "Economic Change, Disasters, and Migration: The Historical Case of Manchuria," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 35,3 (Apr. 1987): 464–65.

[34] Shan, "The Development of the North Manchurian Frontier," 72.

or lease the land to many individuals, thus helping to settle the territory. Manchu and Mongol bannermen and allied tribes were encouraged to become farmers. After 1907 the Qing created bureaus to assist Manchu and Mongol bannermen in their transition from a military existence subsidized by the Qing, to new careers as farmers, by giving them instruction with tools, seeds, and financing.[35] Manchus and Chinese, both as owners or as leaseholders turned the Heilongjiang landscape from pasture into farmland and Manchuria became a zone of Chinese agricultural production. In 21 counties in 1925 there were more than 200 landowners who owned more than 2000 *sang* (1 *sang* = 1.67 acres). The ethnicity of the large landowners was not recorded, and it is possible that Chinese and Manchus were both large landowners and poor farmers.[36] Although most Manchus made the transition from banner solder to farmer the Manchus were still greatly outnumbered by Chinese. As a settlement policy the opening of the market in land was successful; by 1911 the non-Han population of Heilongjiang, Mongols, Manchus, and tribal peoples, was less than 100,000 in a population of well over two million.[37]

The revolutionary nature of these reforms to land tenure and settlement which overturned fundamental sources of Qing military and ethnic support, to say nothing of the changes to Manchu identity, demonstrates the willingness of the Qing to innovate in the face of changed historical and political conditions. The administrative strategy of direct Manchu military rule in alliance with important tribes could no longer compete with the new administrative dynamic of direct control and agricultural development. Allowing Chinese settlement in the Manchurian homeland was the first indication and proof that the Qing was willing to jettison three-century long policies of frontier protection and ethnic identity in order to retain Manchuria, as a Chinese, not a Manchu, place. On one hand, this was an acknowledgement of reality. Chinese had been settling in Manchuria since the eighteenth century. Northern China was desperately over populated, in environmental crisis, and the surplus population needed to immigrate.[38] On the other hand, settlement in North Manchuria was generally sparse so a land-holding regime connected to tribal and banner lands, which privileged the banner elites, no longer made sense. Although also crucial as a form of demographic relief for northern China the settlement of Heilongjiang demonstrated the Qing were committed to creating the conditions necessary for the retention of Manchuria as part of the Qing Empire, even in a form not necessarily recognizable as Manchu, or even Qing, a form of administrative modernism and frontier development which would code Manchuria as Chinese.

Manchurian administrative reform was a complex solution to what had become a complex problem. A region whose administrative separateness, deliberate

[35] Ibid., 122.

[36] Sun Zhanwen, *Heilongjiang shnegshi tansuo* [Exploration of the History of Heilongjiang Province] (Harbin: Heilongjiang Renmin Chubanshe, 1983), 324.

[37] Shan, "The Development of the North Manchurian Frontier," 25–6, 114.

[38] Gottschang, "Economic Change, Disasters, and Migration," 472.

underdevelopment, Manchu and tribal ethnic identity, and weak civil administration was no match for a new form of imperial frontier development based on a deep local administration, settlement, resource extraction, and connection to the global market, all managed by the power who could best administer the region. Administration was the key to sovereignty, and the Qing, who had adapted before, in Xinjiang and Taiwan, adapted again, radically changing Manchuria's administration and ethnic face, from a Manchu to a Chinese place. Although the Qing fell, the administrative model they pioneered in *dongbei* served the region well, pushing back Russian and Japanese imperial pretensions. The heroes of this struggle would no longer be Manchu military men, they would be Chinese bureaucrats defending, innovating, and administering this Chinese place.

Surveying Manchuria: Imperial Russia's Topographers at Work

Victor Zatsepine

Abstract Russia's eastward expansion in Manchuria during the last decade of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth century was one of the most ambitious colonisation projects by a European power in Asia. Geographic and military expeditions to Manchuria were persistent and wide—ranging, examining geography, climate, natural resources, indigenous peoples and local traditions. Russian topographic surveys produced detailed maps of Manchuria and facilitated railway expansion in this region. However, accounts of Russian military topographers reveal the difficulties of travelling and collecting data in Manchuria. They were less enthusiastic about the prospect of occupying this region, but their voices rarely reached the high echelons of power. As a result, Russia's colonial enterprise in Manchuria was accompanied by constant frustrations. Russian territorial expansion beyond its own borders had common features with the colonial ambitions of European empires in China, Asia and elsewhere during the high tide of global imperialism.

Russia's eastward expansion in Manchuria during the last decade of the nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth century was one of the most ambitious colonisation projects by a European power in Asia. Even though Manchuria had never been entirely colonised, it had the longest railway built in China by a foreign power, and a fast growing community of Russians who after 1898 made Manchuria their home. While most previous studies have examined Russia's diplomacy, railway expansion, or military presence in Manchuria, little attention has been paid to the process of collecting knowledge about this region.[1] Imperial Russia's expansion in

[1] For standard historical accounts of imperial Russia's expansion in this region, see Boris Aleksandrovich Romanov, *Russia in Manchuria (1892–1906)* (Michigan: Ann Arbor, 1952);

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Manchuria from the 1850s on was accompanied by geographic expeditions that became more specialised and professional during the second wave of Russia's expansion in this region in the 1890s. How did imperial Russia collect knowledge about Manchuria? How did geographic and military expeditions contribute to Russia's economic and military expansion in this region? What do these expeditions tell us about the limits of Russia's colonisation? Geographic and military expeditions to Manchuria were persistent and wide ranging, examining geography, climate, natural resources, indigenous peoples and local traditions. This search for knowledge was not solely a product of the curiosity of European Russia. The provincial government of eastern Siberia and of the Russian Far East played a dominant role in colonising this frontier, hoping to satisfy its own needs in terms of labour and resources.[2]

Russian topographic surveys produced detailed maps of Manchuria, and facilitated the expansion of the Trans-Siberian Railway to the Chinese Eastern Railway in Manchuria, which was built with unparalleled speed from 1898 to 1903. The knowledge acquired by state-sponsored expeditions gave the Russian army an advantage over Qing troops during the occupation of Manchuria in 1900 and helped Russian authorities to negotiate borders with the Qing government on terms favourable to Russia. However, this knowledge was not able to save the Russian army from being defeated in southern Manchuria by Japan during the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). Accounts of Russian military topographers reveal the difficulties of travelling and collecting data in Manchuria. The region's geography and climate always interfered with Russia's plans for long-term colonisation. This paper discusses the role played by the Russian military topographers in collecting knowledge about Manchuria. Imperial Russia's expansionist policies in Manchuria were carried out despite sceptical reports by its military topographers, who seemed to be less enthusiastic about the prospect of occupying this region than the military elite in St. Petersburg. Yet topographer's voices never reached the high echelons of power and, as a result, Russia's colonial enterprise in Manchuria was accompanied by constant frustrations, as was the case in Central and Inner Asia. This expansion

Rosemary K.I. Quested, *"Matei" Imperialists?: The Tsarist Russians in Manchuria, 1895–1917* (Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, 1982). For ideological and intellectual aspects of Russia's eastward expansion, see David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Toward the Rising Sun: Russian Ideologies of Empire and the Path to War with Japan* (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001), and Mark Bassin, *Imperial Visions: Nationalist Imagination and Geographical Expansion in the Russian Far East (1840–1865)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[2] On the role of Count Nikolai Nikolaevich Murav'iev, the governor general of Eastern Siberia, in the acquisition of the Amur region and on his tensions with St. Petersburg, in particular with the imperial Russia's Foreign Ministry over this issue, see Mark Bassin, "The Russian Geographical Society, the 'Amur Epoch', and the Great Siberian Expedition 1855–1863," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 73, 2 (June 1983): 246. Also see N.F. Nikitina, "Rol' N. N Muravieva-Amurskogo v stanovlenii Amurskoi Oblasti" [The Role of N.N. Muraviev-Amurskii in the Establishment of the Amur Region], in *Priamur'ie: ot pervoprokhodtsev do nashikh dnei* [Priamur: From pioneer explorers to the modern day], ed. V.N. Abelentsev et al. (Blagoveshchensk: Amur regional museum, 2003), 128–39.

often ignored local conditions and realities. Russian territorial expansion beyond its own borders had common features with the colonial ambitions of European empires during the high tide of global imperialism. There was no rationale delimiting the extent of that expansion, nor was there a coherent plan.

Russian military and civilian expeditions to Manchuria were financed and supervised by the Ministry of Finance, the War Ministry, the Imperial Russian Geographic Society, and by their branches in eastern Siberia and the Russian Far East. The reports and travel accounts of these expeditions were published in specialised journals affiliated with, or published by, the above-mentioned government bodies, for example, the St. Petersburg-based *Zapiski Imperatorskogo Russkogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva* (Notes of the Imperial Russian Geographic Society), and *Sbornik geograficheskikh, topograficheskikh i statisticheskikh materialov po Azii* (Geographic, Topographic, and Statistical Materials About Asia), published by the General Staff of the Imperial Russian Army. This chapter has been informed by these official reports of expeditions in Manchuria. Most lack the explorers' personal feelings and provide sterile descriptions of surveyed places. However, one of the main sources for this chapter, a collection of memoirs by Russian military topographers, published by the Odessa Branch of the Imperial Russian Army in 1910, is different. [3] In contrast to official mainstream reports, it describes topographer's sentiments, frustrations, and the true challenges of surveying territories beyond Russia's borders with China. Their experiences reflect the ubiquity of their assigned roles as agents of imperial expansion and their scientific interest in mapping the challenging terrain.

Russia's Corps of Military Topographers

In the Russian empire, like in other empires of the eighteenth century, the study and practice of geography has been linked to warfare and military expansion. Military topography was established in St. Petersburg as a separate corps, or branch of the military, in 1822, a decade after Napoleon's invasion of Russia. The function of military topographers was to survey the land, make geodesic and astronomic measurements, produce maps for military and civilian use, and preserve geographic knowledge about the Russian Empire in the form of statistics and maps, for future geostrategic purposes.[4] Measuring Russia's territory and producing detailed maps was an arduous task on account of the empire's size, its diverse topography, and difficult climates. It took years of training and fieldwork for a person to become a

[3] M. M. Levitskii ed., *V trushchobakh Manchzhurii i nashikh vostochnykh okrain: sbornik ocherkov, rasskazov i vospominanii voennykh topografov* [In the Depths of Manchuria and our Remote Eastern Parts] (Odessa: Tipografiia Shtaba Okruga, 1910).

[4] *Istoricheskii ocherk deyatel'nosti korpusa voennykh topografov* [A Historical Survey of the Activities of the Corps of Military Topographers] (St. Petersburg, 1872), 34.

good topographer. While St. Petersburg was the main training location for military and civilian topographers, regional military headquarters also set up their own divisions of topographers. Thus, in 1848, the General Staff of the Imperial Russian Army in western Siberia established the Corps of Topographers, which in 1867 was named the Military-Topographic Department of Western Siberia.[5] They surveyed different parts of Siberia and the Russian Far East, including sparsely populated areas bordering the Qing Empire.

Military topographers became important agents of Russia's territorial expansion in the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Russian Far East, and Manchuria. Russia's War Ministry cooperated with the Imperial Russian Geographic Society in funding, equipping and supervising expeditions to the regions in which Russia had strategic interests. For example, in the 1870s, they jointly supported Inner Asian expeditions of the Russian officer and explorer Nikolai Mikhailovich Przhevalskii (1839–1888).[6] Imperial Russia's occupation of the Amur basin in 1858 and 1860 was accompanied by dozens of expeditions along the Amur/Heilong River and its tributaries. Topographic surveys and the production of maps were integral parts of these expeditions. While topographic surveys facilitated the process of territorial expansion, the newly produced maps were used to negotiate and legitimise the new Qing-Russian border along the Amur River. The Map of Asiatic Russia published in 1872 summed up the achievements of the military topographers throughout half a century, showing that Russia's southern borders and major water routes of northern Manchuria had been already surveyed and mapped.[7] In 1895, when the Imperial Russian Geographic Society celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, it proudly announced that the Russians were pioneers in surveying northern Manchuria's Greater Xing'an mountains.[8] Thus, Russia claimed to be first among European powers to possess knowledge about the region soon to become its sphere of influence in Qing China.

Military topographers worked closely with civilian populations, including scientists, engineers, explorers, and officials. Different ministries, departments, and organisations exchanged personnel and data for the purpose of making expeditions to Manchuria more successful. From 1896 to 1898, a prominent geologist, Eduard Eduardovich Anert (1865–1946), led an expedition to Manchuria organised by the Imperial Russian Geographic Society. He was assisted by the Priamur regional government, and relied on survey data and maps of the Songhua River basin made by teams of military topographers under Boltenko, Kozlovskii,

[5] Ibid., 410–14.

[6] Schimmelpenninck van Der Oye, *Toward the Rising Sun*, 30–1.

[7] *Istoricheskii ocherk deyatel'nosty korpusa voennykh topografov,* Appendix.

[8] G. P. Beloglazov, "Vtoroye otkrytie Manchzhurii: Russkie nauchnye ekspeditsii v Manchzhurii vo vtoroi polovine 20 veka" [Second Discovery of Manchuria: Russian Expeditions in Manchuria in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century], *Rossiya i ATR* 3 (1997): 48.

and Kokshaiskii.[9] His surveys contributed to the successful construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway, which employed him for nearly three decades. His geological research contributed to the development of Manchuria's natural resources, especially coal, by the Chinese Eastern Railway company.[10] During their long careers, military topographers often switched from military to civilian jobs, or had both. During the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway, the officers of the Russian Topographic Corps in Manchuria surveyed much of the railway's route and produced maps of different parts of Manchuria and of Russia's borders in Asia.[11] Yet, despite these achievements, geographic knowledge about Manchuria, at least up to the end of the Russo-Japanese War, remained very poor. Even the most popular *Karta Manchzhurii* (Map of Manchuria), published in 1897 by the Ministry of Finance (and its new editions in 1899 and 1900), suffered from topographic inaccuracies as a result of insufficient data.[12] Published records (reports and memoirs) of the Russian military topographers provide clues about their limitations in gathering geographic data in Manchuria.

Local Challenges

Most of the topographers in Manchuria were officers with technical educations; they were stationed in major cities of the Russian Far East, like Irkutsk, Khabarovsk, Vladivostok, and, later, Harbin. Service in the Russian Far East was not the most desired career choice for military officers coming from European Russia. They travelled across Manchuria in small parties, with little or no communication with other surveying parties. They were accompanied by armed soldiers or Cossacks, guides, and interpreters hired locally among the Chinese, Koreans, and indigenous people (*Goldi* and *Orochen*). Very few of them spoke Chinese, or other local languages. Few of them were as enthusiastic about their expeditions as the famous Russian explorer Vladimir Klavdievich Arseniev (1872–1930). Unlike others, he possessed the multiple skills of an explorer, topographer, ethnographer, and storyteller. As an officer of the Imperial Russian Army, he not only surveyed eastern Manchuria and the Ussuri region, but also became known for his vivid descriptions of nature, indigenous people, and the challenges of travelling in the taiga. His novel *Dersu Uzala* (Dersu the Trapper) (1923) was based on the author's encounter and friendship with his Goldi guide during expeditions to the Priamur

[9] E.E. Anert, "Puteshestvie po Manchzhurii" [Travel in Manchuria], in *Zapiski Imperatorskogo Russkogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva po obshchei geografii*, vol. 35 (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk, 1904), 1–2.

[10] See, Ye. P. Taskina, *Russkii Kharbin* (Moscow: Nauka, 2005), 245.

[11] Alex Marshall, *The Russian General Staff and Asia, 1800–1917* (London: Routledge, 2006), 76–7.

[12] I. K. M. Finansov, *Alfavitnyi ukazatel' geograficheskikh imen pomeshchennykh na karte Manchzhurii L. Borodovskogo* [Alphabetic Index of Geographic Names on the Map of Manchuria Produced by L. Borodovsky] (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia V. Kirshbauma, 1901), 1–3.

region from 1902 to 1908. *Dersu Usala* became a Russian literary symbol of the Ussuri forest people facing the advance of Russian civilisation.[13]

Of all the Russian explorers of Manchuria and the Russian Far East, only Nikolai Appolonovich Baikov (1872–1958) was comparable to Arseniev in his appreciation of Manchuria's incredible flora and fauna, and its local society.[14] Baikov was a military engineer by training. He joined the Imperial Russian Army in 1892 and served in the Caucasus. Before the Russo-Japanese War, he served with frontier troops in the Russian Far East. He lived in Manchuria from 1922 to 1956, studying the flora and fauna of eastern Manchuria and participating in expeditions sponsored by the Imperial Russian Academy of Sciences. He was one of the founders of Harbin's nature museum. He was a passionate hunter and a prolific writer.[15] He popularised this region's natural world in his books *V Gorakh i Lesakh Manchzhurii* (In the Mountains and Forests of Manchuria) (1914) and *V Debriakh Manchzhurii* (In the Depths of Manchuria) (1934).

Travelling in Manchuria required not only physical endurance, but also good luck. The mountains, forests, rivers, lakes, and marshes of Manchuria complicated the daily routine of travelling and surveying. Seasonal rain and floods turned roads into marshes. Many parts of Manchuria had no roads.[16] Surveying groups travelled by small boats/junks, horses, and on foot. They bought the means of transportation and provisions en route, in transit places like Sanxing, Ningguta, and Qiqihar.[17] Transportation in Manchuria was expensive, but crucial for the success of expeditions. Travel by river was most efficient, if the equipment and provisions were not too heavy. As Arseniev remembered in his memoirs years later, horses were indispensable when crossing the mountain ranges covered with thick forests. Shrubs and fallen trees blocked man-made paths, so moving through the forest with animals and provisions was slow, and required an axe to clear the way of vegetation. It was easy to get lost. The army of mosquitoes, gnats and wasps, exhausted people, horses, and dogs.[18] Many parts of Manchuria, especially in the extreme north, were not inhabited. Any damage to transportation or loss of provisions could result in death by starvation, especially in the mountains and dense forests. One team surveying the Songhua river basin in 1906 lost their junk with all provisions and survived on a diet of only mushrooms, nuts, and squirrels.[19]

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[13] I. Kuzmichev, *Pisatel' Arseniev* [Writer Arseniev] (Leningrad: Sovetskii Pisatel, 1977), 144–65.

[14] See N. A. Baikov, *V debriakh Manchzhurii* [In the Depths of Manchuria] (Harbin: Izd. K. I. Ivanitskii, 1934), 36–8.

[15] See Taskina, *Russkii Kharbin,* 245.

[16] Bogachevskii, *San'-sin'skoe fudutunstvo* [Administrative district of Sanxing (Yilan)] (Khabarovsk: Tipografiia Shtaba Priamurskogo Voennogo Okruga, 1903), 2.

[17] Levitskii, *V trushchobakh Manchzhurii i nashikh vostochnykh okrain*, 202–3.

[18] V. K. Arseniev, *V debriakh Ussuriiskogo kraya* [In the Depths of the Ussury Region] (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Geograficheskoi Literatury, 1951), 84, 87; idem, *Kitaitsy v Ussuriiskom Krae* [The Chinese in the Ussuri Region] (Moscow: Kraft, 2004), 17–18. The latter book was originally published in 1914 in Khabarovsk by the Priamur Section of the Imperial Russian Geographic Society.

[19] Levitskii, *V trushchobakh Manchzhurii i nashikh vostochnykh okrain*, 221.

Expeditions to Manchuria were inadequately funded. Travelling for several weeks or months on a frugal diet without proper rest was a dull and exhausting enterprise. In October of 1905, a team of topographers were surveying sparsely inhabited parts of southern Manchuria. One night they had to stay the night in the house of two elderly Chinese peasants, whose worldly possessions consisted of two empty coffins that they kept, awaiting their own deaths. Topographer E. Osadchii reflected in his diary[20]:

> A person does not need much after a hard working day! A piece of dried sausage, Chinese flat bread as dry as wood and half-cooked corn are greedily devoured. What a pleasure to drink several glasses of tea, even if there is not enough sugar. If you find some condensed milk with coffee among the remaining provisions, then nothing feels better. What a pleasure to stretch out on the *kang* [Chinese heated bed] and to dip into a book, or if there is no book an old newspaper, which has been used to wrap Moscow sausages. Insects are all around us. But we don't pay any attention to them. Let them wander around…The *fangzi* [Chinese-style peasant house] is full of smoke, which irritates the eyes. An old Chinese man sits near the fireplace, smoking a pipe as if he has been there forever; he looks at you while moving the coal under the teapot with two iron sticks. God knows what it is he is thinking about…The Cossacks lie next to us, talking about their memories of recent battles. Sulphurous stench mixes with a smell of smoke and sweat.

Despite Osadchii's complaints, they were lucky to be allowed to stay overnight in a heated house. Most surveying teams had to stay in tents that they carried with them throughout their journeys.

The climate of Manchuria imposed its own limits on the work of topographers. Spring and autumn floods turned rivers and valleys into vast lakes and marshes. Summers were accompanied by regular heavy rain. The areas between the lower Songhua and the Ussuri were home to marshes. Deadly diseases like pneumonia, scurvy, and bubonic plague were common in Manchuria's wetlands. Long, cold winters were another challenge for human activities in this region; the further west from the sea, the colder the winter. In northwestern Manchuria, in areas like Barga, the temperature in January could be as low as −50 °C. The cold weather arrived in northern Manchuria as early as the end of August.[21] Thus, Russian topographers usually chose to travel during the warm months, which ranged from 2 months to half a year, when the weather did not interfere with the task of measuring an assigned area by fixing astronomic and geodesic points.

Imperial Russia's expansionist policies in Manchuria complicated the work of topographers there. After 1898, imperial Russia leased part of the Liaodong Peninsula and built the Chinese Eastern Railway. Imperial Russia faced hostile local populations along the railway and in the newly leased Kwantung territory. There were separate incidents of armed clashes there between the Russian soldiers and

[20] Ibid., 265.

[21] V. A. Anuchin, *Geograficheskie ocherki Manchzhurii* [Essays About the Geography of Manchuria] (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Geograficheskoi Literatury, 1948), 151; D. A. Davydov, *Kolonizatsiia Manchzhurii y severo-vostochnoi Mongolii* [The Colonisation of Manchuria and of Northeastern Mongolia] (Vladivostok: Vostochnyi Institut, 1911), 125.

Chinese peasants, with casualties suffered by the latter.[22] Military topographers had to carry out their work, often disguised as scientists or traders, despite these tensions. In most cases, they carried a letter of introduction from the Russian provincial authorities and paid respect to local Chinese officials, who were often informed beforehand about arriving expeditions.

Imperial Russia's occupation of Manchuria in 1900, in the wake of the Boxer Rebellion, was accompanied by killings and violence along the Qing-Russian border, sending shockwaves to the populations of Manchuria's three provinces. Resistance to Russia's military actions complicated topographers' work in densely populated areas such as southern Manchuria. In smaller settlements, local administration was hesitant (and often refused) to accommodate armed surveying groups, while local men hid their women and possessions, fearing rape and looting. This limited interaction with the local population deprived surveying parties of local sources of knowledge and of valuable advice.

Roaming bandits were another challenge to topographers. In several parts of Manchuria, Chinese bandits had considerable influence. They attacked local villages, towns, and settlements along the Chinese Eastern Railway, and robbed and killed the Chinese and Russian merchants, civilians, and military personnel. Russian surveying teams were always accompanied by several Cossacks armed with rifles. They avoided areas frequented by the bandits. Yet their isolated surveying groups working in sparsely populated areas became easy targets for bandits. In 1906, Captain Yavshits was working in Manchuria's forest with a team of topographers which was divided into several small groups. Yavshits was accompanied by a soldier who left his rifle in the camp. They ran into Chinese bandits in a small forest settlement. They approached the bandits, thinking that they were Chinese peasants, and were suddenly met by gunfire. They ran away in different directions, but the bandits followed. Yavshits was wounded, but was able to escape and arrived safely at the camp. The bandits shot the soldier and left him to die in the forest.[23]

The most serious challenge was the lack of educated personnel to cover the vast areas of Manchuria that lay beyond major transportation routes. Russian institutions in the Russian Far East and Manchuria did not have enough people and finances to maintain a permanent network of surveyors in Manchuria. It is no wonder that geographic data and maps were either inaccurate or incomplete. In 1904, in his study of Asia's mountains, Prince Petr Alekseevich Kropotkin[24] (1842–1921) wrote that the location and direction of the mountain ranges of northern Manchuria and

[22] V.P. Kozlov, *Iz istorii Russko-Yaponskoi voiny 1904–1905, Port Artur* [The History of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–1905, Port Arthur] (Moscow: Drevnekhranilishche, 2008), 109.

[23] Levitskii, *V trushchobakh Manchzhurii i nashikh vostochnykh okrain,* 216–17.

[24] Prince Kropotkin was a distinguished Russian geographer, traveler, and anarchist. He acquired his knowledge about the geography of East Asia during his early expeditions there. In 1863, he travelled along the Amur River as a member of the Mounted Cossacks of the Amur, taking a fleet of barges with provisions for new Russian settlers. Later he wrote extensively about this region's topography and natural conditions. His contributions to the study of geography of Siberia,

the Amur region on the maps contained serious errors due to inadequate understanding of the nature of mountain formation in the region. He argued: [25]

> As a rule, the true direction of a chain of mountains cannot be determined by one single crossing of the chain, because the traveler who crosses a chain of mountains is always inclined to represent it as perpendicular to the main direction of his route, which is by no means always the case. Two crossings, at least, are required. As to the directions of mountain ranges in an Alpine region of complicated structure, they can only be ascertained from a general and detailed study of the region. I had thus to complete my journeys by such a study.

Russian surveying teams could hardly afford multiple mountain crossings. In addition, the Greater Xing'an mountains, marshy valleys at the confluence of the Amur and Ussuri Rivers, and dense forests were difficult to reach and to survey properly (Fig. 1).

After 1900, the Russian military discovered the complexity of moving troops and conducting warfare in Manchuria due to large distances and difficult natural conditions. In the fall of 1900, Russia's war minister Aleksei Nikolaevich Kuropatkin (1848–1925) (a son of the military topographer!) complained to Tsar Nicholas II (r.1894–1917) that Russia did not possess good topographic maps and had sparse knowledge of Manchuria. He asked for permission to expand the area of topographic surveys to the remote parts of Manchuria.[26] As a result, during the period from 1901 to 1903 several teams of officers of the General Staff of the Imperial Russian Army surveyed and produced new detailed maps of more than a dozen of Manchuria's *fudutunstva,* or local military-administrative districts.[27] But even these surveys still covered only a small fraction of Manchuria's territory. More resources were needed to maintain good coordination between surveying teams and to bring together their data. Russia's war with Japan in 1904–1905 complicated the arduous task of surveying and map-making. The work of military topographers is ideally conducted during times of peace. During the war, military topographers were under the double pressure of being part of military operations and at the same time producing surveys and strategic maps.

While in 1900 Russian troops had no difficulty defeating weak Qing fortifications in Manchuria, just 4 years later in 1904 they faced a more serious and sophisticated enemy—the Japanese military—which had spent several years

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Manchuria, and Central Asia were acknowledged both in imperial Russia and in Europe. See, J. S. Keltie, "Obituary: Prince Kropotkin," *The Geographical Journal* 57, 4 (April 1921): 316–19.

[25] P. Kropotkin, "The Orography of Asia," *The Geographic Journal* 23,2 (February 1904): 178–84. The term "orography" referred to the geographic study of mountain formations and relief.

[26] V. V. Glushkov and K. E. Cherevko, *Russko-Yaponskaya voina 1904–1905 g.g. v dokumentakh vneshnepoliticheskogo vedomstva Rossii* [Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 in the documents of imperial Russia's foreign policy archives] (Moscow: Institut Rossiiskoi Istorii Rossiiskoi Academii Nauk, 2006), 384.

[27] The Russian word *fudutunstvo* is derived from the Chinese word *fudutun,* which refers to a lieutenant general in the Qing army who served as a deputy military governor of the garrison town. See Robert H. G. Lee, *The Manchurian Frontier in Ch'ing History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 72.

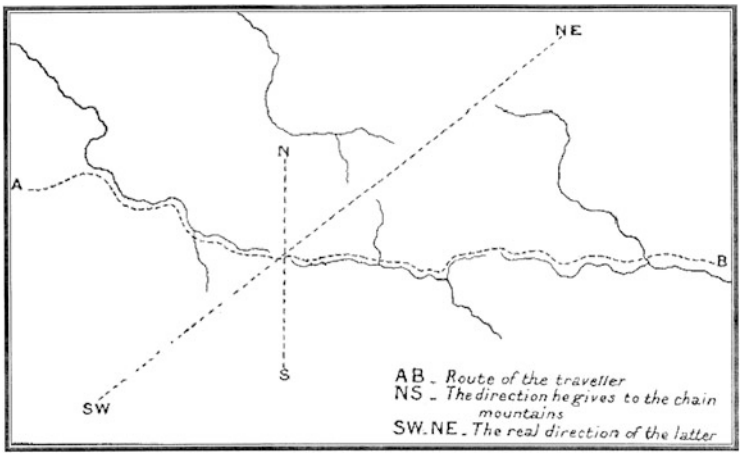

Fig. 1 Map supporting Kropotkin's argument. Source: P. Kropotkin, "The Orography of Asia," *The Geographic Journal* 23, 2 (February 1904):179

preparing for this war and had a better understanding of the correlation between sea and land war arenas.[28] Historian Alex Marshall argues that Russia went to war with Japan armed with inadequate maps, poor cultural knowledge of its opponents, and a critical lack of reliable interpreters, despite the many military-scientific expeditions in the region.[29] As a result of this war, Russia lost South Manchuria to the Japanese. With this defeat, Russia lost its strategic necessity to further survey Manchuria south of Harbin.

Russian Manchuria and Global Imperialist mapping

Imperial Russia's limits in mapping Manchuria were not unique during this time. The efforts of Russian topographers in Manchuria represented the high tide of global imperialism, which in China culminated in 1900 when allied armies of eight countries invaded Beijing, occupied the Forbidden City, and caused the imperial court to flee the Qing capital. For several decades after the Opium Wars, the European powers, and later Japan, learned about China's geography and local conditions from their bases in China's treaty ports in order to increase their influence. By the beginning of the twentieth century, collecting topographic knowledge was a well-established practice used by European powers to colonise or

[28] For example, see Inaba Chiharu, "The history of Japan's preparation for the Russo-Japanese War. Military aspects," in *Russko-Yaponskaya Voina 1904–1905: Vzgliad cherez stoletie*, ed. O. R. Airapetov (Moscow: Tri Kvadrata, 2004), 56.

[29] Marshall, *The Russian General Staff and Asia, 1800–1917*, 182.

negotiate new spheres of influence in different parts of China (Germany in Shandong, Britain in the Yangtze River Delta, and France in Yunnan), in East and Southeast Asia, and elsewhere. Yet the European urge to colonise the world often suffered from insufficient attention to local conditions in the non-European territories. In 1902, Colonel T. H. Holdich, addressing the British Association for Advancement of Science, blamed British military mistakes in the African colonies on inadequate geographical surveys. In contrast, he claimed that the Germans, Russians, French, and Americans were all "conducting their campaigns with maps in their hands, taking every special means at their command in order to acquire such maps before they commence operations."[30] He called for more coordination between small surveying parties in order to produce a good topographic guide to the country in which Britain was interested, like a good jigsaw. He complained that Britain did not possess refined topographers and that it had few who knew what was meant by a geographical survey. He also advocated speeding up the process of accurate mapping of the world under British influence. It is therefore no surprise that during the Great War (1914–1918) Britain was ahead of the rest of the world in the mass production of military maps.

Compared to other European powers, Russia fared well in the use of geographic knowledge to expand its borders. Russia's geographic location on the Eurasian continent gave it several advantages over other European empires. Russia had a common border with Manchuria. The Amur/Heilong river system ran through Manchuria's three provinces, while its estuary was in possession of the Russian Far East. The geographic location of Manchuria alone made it easy for imperial Russia to study it. Russia's earlier colonisation of Siberia, the Caucasus, and Central Asia gave it valuable experience in collecting geographic knowledge prior to conducting military campaigns of conquest. Russia's expansion in Manchuria in the late 1890s was envisioned as an economic enterprise, which had to engage the commerce of Siberia with the rest of Asia, and to connect landlocked Russia with the Pacific Ocean and adjacent countries. The military aspect of Russian territorial expansion after 1899 required a new vision of Russia's role in Asia and a reevaluation of its capabilities in the Russian Far East. Underdeveloped and sparsely populated, the Russian Far East became a poor base for the empire's expansion into Manchuria. Military occupation required a more detailed and comprehensive study of the land and people, to which St. Petersburg was not committed financially and for which the Russian Far East was not prepared. Russia's study of Manchuria was rushed and badly coordinated, ignoring the region's topography and local conditions. Imperial Russia may not have encountered the same resistance from the local population in Manchuria as imperial Britain did in Afghanistan, but it is quite possible that Russian topographers surveying Manchuria's rivers and forests had similar frustrations to their French counterparts along the Mekong River. The government in St. Petersburg did not take into account the experiences of the military topographers in Manchuria, and instead pursued its own utopian

[30] T. H. Holdich, "Some Geographical Problems," *The Geographic Journal* 20, 4 (October 1902): 421.

dream of expanding its influence across the vast territory of Manchuria, losing its once advantageous position when it was forced to forfeit Port Arthur after the disastrous war with Japan. At the same time, the individual efforts of the Russian topographers, surveyors, and scientists in collecting knowledge about the vast region of Manchuria contributed to the emergence of the practical school of "Oriental" studies in the Russian Far East and in Harbin. After 1905, economic and commercial interests replaced imperial Russia's military ambitions in Manchuria, diversifying the channels of collecting knowledge, and opening new opportunities for the study of Manchuria's land, people, and their languages and cultures, which served the broad goal of narrowing the gap in Sino-Russian interactions and in further understanding each other's cultures.

The Ambivalent Enterprise: Medical Activities of the Red Cross Society of Japan in the Northeastern Region of China during the Russo-Japanese War

Yoshiya Makita

Abstract This essay examines the hygiene measures and other medical activities deployed by the Red Cross Society of Japan for non-combatant indigenous people in the northeastern region of China during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905, through an analysis of the ideological operation of international normative politics of humanitarianism and civilisation behind these medical efforts. Assigned to the health care programmes for the indigenous population during the war, Japanese Red Cross workers rigorously implemented medical and sanitary measures within the areas occupied by the Japanese army. By introducing Western medicine and the modern principle of hygiene to the region, these medical workers ideologically differentiated themselves from 'uncivilised' native people based on the prevailing discourses on the standard of civilisation. Projecting asymmetric relations between the 'civilised' and those deemed 'uncivilised' in international society onto the Japanese military administration over the native population, the medical gaze of Red Cross workers provided a moral basis for the Japanese semi-colonial order over the region. Through an interactive process of coercion, adaptation, and resistance between Japanese Red Cross workers and native people, the global current of modern Western medicine came to take on a distinctive expression localised in the semi-colonial politics in the northeastern region of China.

In late May 1904, the Separate 10th Division of the Japanese Army landed on the eastern shore of Dalianwan Bay and seized the city of Dagushan. Still fiercely battling Russian troops near the city, the Japanese army declared the commencement of military administration in Dagushan on 24 May and established an army hospital to

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treat wounded soldiers.[1] On 21 July, the Dagushan army hospital also started providing medical care for native inhabitants for a few hours every day. Ichifuji Mototsugu,[2] a senior physician deployed by the Red Cross Society of Japan (RCSJ, *Nihon-Sekijujisha*), soon noticed a steady increase in the number of native patients at the hospital. "The attitude of *dojin* (barbarians) to our hospital is quite favourable," reported Ichifuji, "for they are enjoying the benefit of reliable medical care for the first time in their lives at our hospital and our treatment is effective and free." Propagation of Western-style medicine among native inhabitants was a "civilising" task for the physician and his only complaint stemmed from the high frequency with which "patients abandon the treatment before complete therapy once they make a partial recovery, although we are earnestly encouraging these patients to visit the hospital continuously to ensure the complete cure and thus to reveal miraculous effects of our medical treatment to them."[3] At the request of the commissioner of the military administration in Dagushan, the 106th Special Relief Squad of the RCSJ came to take exclusive charge of the outpatient department for natives at the army hospital, and Red Cross medical workers endeavoured to disseminate the gospel of medicine over this "remote area difficult to access and short of physicians where [native people] never received any treatment of Western medicine."[4]

This essay examines the hygiene measures and other medical activities deployed by the RCSJ for non-combatant indigenous people in the northeastern region of China during the Russo-Japanese War through an analysis of the ideological operation of international normative politics of humanitarianism and civilisation behind these medical efforts. The previous scholarly discussion on the history of the RCSJ has long concentrated on its rescue work for captives and wounded soldiers and emphasised the ideological deviation of the Japanese Red Cross movement from its stated principle of humanitarianism in the early period to the blind subservience to the Japanese militarism during the 1930s.[5] Yet the ways in which the RCSJ upheld the concept of humanitarianism at the turn of the twentieth century and its medical workers implemented the ideal at the actual sites of practice on the continent still

[1] Keiichi Kawamata, *Nichiro Sensou Shi* (Tokyo: Shobunsha, 1906), 228–30; Rikugun Shou, *Meiji Sanju-Shichi-Hachi-Nen Seneki Manshu Gunsei Shi,* vol. 2–2 (Tokyo: Rikugun Shou, 1917), 244–5, 268–70, 398–400.

[2] In the main text of this essay, names of Japanese appear by family name, last name in order.

[3] The 106th Special Relief Squad, Monthly Medical Report (July 1904). Nihon-Sekijujisha Bunsho [Records of the Japanese Red Cross Society], Japanese Red Cross Toyota College of Nursing, File B534: S–454. I owe particular thanks to Professor Toshinobu Kawai and the librarians of the college for giving me special permission to see the original records. See also *Nihon Sekijuji,* 146 (October 1904): 19–20.

[4] Monthly Medical Report (July 1904), 106th Special Relief Squad.

[5] Fumitaka Kurosawa and Toshinobu Kawai eds., *Nihon-Sekijujisha to Jindou Enjo* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2009); Keiko Kawaguchi and Akiko Kurokawa eds., *Jugun-Kangohu to Nihon-Sekijuji: Sono Rekishi to Jugun-Shougen* (Kyoto: Bunrikaku, 2008); Taku Nomura ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji no Sugao: Anataha Gozonjidesuka?* (Tokyo: Akebi-shobo, 2003); Michiko Kameyama, *Nihon-Sekijujisha to Kangohu* (Tokyo: Domesu-shuppan, 1983); *Sensou to Kango* (Tokyo: Domesu-shuppan, 1984).

remain unclear. From the late nineteenth century onward, the RCSJ had rapidly developed as part of the Japanese imperial project to modernise national institutions in order to become a competent member of international society. As Gerrit W. Gong points out, throughout the nineteenth century, European countries gradually developed a set of standards of civilisation to assess the ability of a nation to join international society. Formulated from European values and practices, the criteria to distinguish "civilised" nations from "uncivilised" others ranged from the existence of a bureaucratic system of sovereign state to the acceptance of basic human rights such as the protection of life and property. These European-centred standards of civilisation stigmatised most Asian countries as the "uncivilised" outside of international society and functioned to justify European exploitation of Asian and African resources by means of unequal treaties and protectorate systems.[6] Since the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan had endeavoured to gain international recognition of its "civilised" status and appropriated the discourses of civilisation in its relations with other Asian countries. Participation in the international Red Cross movement and commitment to its operating principle of humanitarianism conferred on Japan a moral guise of a "civilised" country ideologically differentiated from other Asian countries without Red Cross organisations. During the war of 1904–1905, the hygiene programmes implemented by the RCSJ among native inhabitants carried the moral implication of humanitarian aid to the "uncivilised" and legitimatised Japanese rule over the region. Focusing on the public health programmes for indigenous communities carried out by the RCSJ during the Russo-Japanese War, this essay inquires into the ways in which medical activities of the RCSJ in northeastern China complemented, and in practice created the foundation for, the Japanese semi-colonial rule under the banner of humanitarianism.

Performed on the grounds of the ideological dichotomy of the "civilised" and the "uncivilised," medical activities of the RCSJ in the northeastern region of China entailed basic features of colonial medicine that had progressed in tandem with imperial expansion of the Western powers across African and Asian countries. Colonial medicine, a collection of medical knowledge accumulated through medical activities in colonial settings, often functioned as a tool for colonisers to regulate everyday life of the colonised and thus to scientifically legitimatise their colonial rule. David Arnold reveals in his analysis of colonial medicine in British India that the medical gaze of physicians reconstructed the body of native people as a site for the construction of the authority and control of colonisers.[7] The medicalisation of indigenous people motivated the health care programmes of the RCSJ, and Japanese medical workers attempted to objectify, categorise, and judge the inferiority of local people in the name of medicine, thus justifying the Japanese military order as

[6] Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of "Civilization" in International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984). On the "civilisation" as a historical concept, see Prasenjit Duara, "The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism," *Journal of World History* 12 (2001): 99–130; Kazuomi Sakai, *Kindai Nihon Gaikou to Ajia-Taiheiyou Chitsujo* (Kyoto: Shouwadou, 2009).

[7] David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

a "civilising mission."[8] Still, people in northeastern China were not docile and submissive to the medical authority of the RCSJ. Indigenous inhabitants at times rejected Western-style medicine with suspicion and hostility and, as some patients at the Dagushan army hospital refused the continuation of medical treatment, often appropriated Japanese medical services for their own needs. Colonial medicine, therefore, in reality developed through the interaction between Western medicine and indigenous practices.[9] Based on both published and unpublished records of the RCSJ, this essay unveils colonial politics of medical representation operating behind the humanitarian activities of the RCSJ.[10] During the Russo-Japanese War, the northeastern region of China came to the fore on the international scene as a crossroads where global currents of modern medicine intersected with regional colonial politics in the early twentieth century.

The Politics of Humanitarianism between the West and East

From the late nineteenth century onward, the Red Cross societies in European countries had developed an international normative agenda of humanitarianism, in which Japan ardently endeavoured to represent itself as a competent member of the international community. The international Red Cross movement formally began in 1863 when Henry Dunant and other Swiss citizens organised the International

[8] Medicalisation in this essay signifies medical intervention in the fields previously considered as non–medical spheres. See Peter Conrad, *Medicalization of Society: On the Transformation of Human Conditions into Treatable Disorder* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007).

[9] With respect to the agency of native residents in the face of Western–style medicine, see Ruth Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). See also Mark Gamsa, "The Epidemic of Pneumonic Plague in Manchuria 1910-1911," *Past and Present* 190 (2006): 147–83.

[10] The source materials will require further explanation. As the official compilation of the records of the RCSJ, Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou* (Tokyo: Nihon-Sekijujisha, 1911), provides basic information on the activities of the RCSJ. The following books on the history of the RCSJ were also published for the wider public: Hakuaisha ed., *Nihon-Sekijujisha Enkakushi* (Tokyo: Hakuaisha, 1905); Teikoku-Haiheiisekikai ed., *Nihon-Sekijujisha Hattatsushi* (Tokyo: Teikoku-Haiheiisekikai, 1906); Kawamata, *Nihon-Sekijujisha Hattatsushi* (Tokyo: Nihon-Sekijujisha Hattatsushi Hakkoujo, 1910). Concerning the rescue activities during the Russo-Japanese War, the RCSJ published a report titled *Meiji Sanju-Shichi-Hachi-Nen Seneki Nihon-Sekijujisha Kyugo-Houkoku* (Tokyo: Nihon-Sekijujisha, 1908). *Nihon-Sekijuji*, the semi-weekly magazine published by the RCSJ, also includes articles written during the war. Many of these books were published a few years after the end of the Russo–Japanese War. Yet I was able to ascertain through archival research that basic facts and descriptions of the lives of indigenous people in the war that appeared in these published materials are almost identical to those in the original reports handwritten by Japanese Red Cross workers in the midst of the war, which are now preserved in Nihon-Sekijujisha Bunsho. The description of the indigenous lives in northeastern China during the war in these books is a compilation of original observations rather than afterthoughts. *Meiji Sanju-Shichi-Hachi-Nen Seneki Manshu Gunsei Shi*, which was compiled by the Ministry of the Army in 1917 but not open to the public, also gave detailed information on the Japanese military administration in northeastern China during the war.

Committee for Relief to the War Wounded, which was later renamed the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The advocacy of the committee for the establishment of neutral organisations to rescue wounded soldiers regardless of their side on the battlefield crystallised as the Geneva Convention a year later, in which delegates from 12 European states agreed to launch relief organisations for the care of wounded soldiers in their respective countries and to recognise each other's neutrality in a combat zone. The Red Cross movement gradually enhanced its international presence and the number of national societies admitted to the ICRC increased from 21 in 1869 to 37 in 1899 and 62 in 1939.[11] Although entangled with ulterior motives of the world powers in international politics and often distorted by chauvinistic fervour for war victory, the international Red Cross movement promoted humanitarianism as a moral standard of civilisation at least in a normative sense by its advocacy of humane assistance to the war wounded of both sides of belligerent countries.

For Japan, still a small country in the Far East struggling to elevate its international status, membership to the ICRC would provide diplomatic leverage to establish its position as a world power as well as an ideological device to differentiate itself from other Asian countries. At the turn of the twentieth century, admission of a national organisation to the ICRC came to signify the legitimacy for a nation to be a "civilised" member of international society.[12] Japanese advocates of the Red Cross movement believed that approval of the Japanese Red Cross organisation by the ICRC would mean "occupying an honoured place rated on par with *civilised* countries in Europe with equal rights."[13] The Red Cross movement in Japan officially started in 1877 when a Japanese statesman Sano Tsunetami established *Hakuaisha* (the Society of Benevolence) for the rescue of wounded soldiers during the Satsuma Rebellion in the southwestern area of Japan. Sano first encountered the ideas of the Red Cross at the Paris Exposition in 1867 and became a staunch advocate for the creation of a war-related relief organisation in Japan. After the Japanese government acceded to the Geneva Convention in 1886, *Hakuaisha* changed its title to the Red Cross Society of Japan and became the first Asian member of the ICRC the following year. The international Red Cross movement provided one of the few international arenas in which Japanese agencies could secure equal representation at the turn of the twentieth century, when Japan was still burdened by unequal treaties with the United States and European countries. Yet, even within the Red Cross movement, Japan still faced difficulty at times in gaining approval of the Western powers to position itself as a "civilised" country, an exception in "backward" Asia. At the Fourth International

[11] On the early history of the international Red Cross movement, see John F. Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity: War and the Rise of the Red Cross* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996); Pierre Boissier, *From Solferino to Tsushima: History of the International Committee of the Red Cross* (Geneva: Henry Dunant Institute, 1985).

[12] Caroline Reeves, "From Red Crosses to Golden Arches: China, the Red Cross, and The Hague Peace Conference, 1899–1900," in *Interactions: Transregional Perspectives on World History*, ed. Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal and Anand A. Yang (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 64–93.

[13] Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou*, 505, emphasis added.

Conference of the Red Cross held at Karlsruhe in 1887, one European delegate proposed to draw a "distinction" between the Asian and European Red Cross societies. Ishiguro Tadanori, the surgeon major general of the Japanese army, furiously opposed the motion as "betraying it [the principle of the Red Cross organisation] into differentiating its benefits according to mere accidents of race, religion, politics, manners, customs, and geographical divisions." Ishiguro finally succeeded in suppressing the motion but this incident deeply shocked Japanese delegates who attended the conference.[14] Since its inception, the RCSJ had stood on the uncertain ground of the contemporary notion of civilisation ideologically dividing the West and East.

To attain a higher reputation, equal to that of other European Red Cross societies, the RCSJ vigorously strived to establish a large-scale organisational structure. The RCSJ developed as a semi-public enterprise under the patronage of the Japanese imperial family. From the time when Higashi-Fushiminomiya Yoshiakira, a relative of the emperor, accepted the office of the director-general of *Hakuaisha* during the Satsuma Rebellion, the honorary president of the RCSJ had been selected from the imperial family. The standing committee of the RCSJ designed its activities under the supervision of the Imperial Household and the Ministries of the Army and Navy. The bylaws of the RCSJ defined its wartime activities as "to attend and support the military medical service" as an auxiliary, and the army and the navy sent officers to the RCSJ and supervised its activities in detail.[15] Integrated with the Japanese military system as a semi-governmental agency under the royal aegis, the RCSJ rapidly built up a highly centralised organisational structure for the effective mobilisation of its medical workers in times of war and turmoil.[16] With its headquarters in Tokyo, the RCSJ appointed regional governors of the prefectures as heads of its local branches, and officials of local governments often took responsibilities for recruiting members and gathering subscriptions. While the RCSJ extended its organisational basis over the country, all the power and control in policy making still rested with the governing body in Tokyo, and the RCSJ mobilised local human resources for war-related activities on the unified order of its central office during times of conflict.[17] Centralisation of the command structure enabled the RCSJ to launch a large-scale deployment of medical workers in times of war. With the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, the RCSJ sent its medical workers to the continent for the first time. 1,396 Japanese medical workers with armbands of the Red Cross treated a total of 101,675 wounded soldiers and captives at 17 army hospitals on the continent and

[14] Ibid., 550–1; Kawamata, *Nihon-Sekijujisha Hattatsushi*, 212–213. Quotation from Tadanori Ishiguro, "The Red Cross in Japan," in *Fifty Years of New Japan*, ed. Marcus B. Huish, compiled by Shigenobu Okuma, vol. 2 (London: Smith, Elder, and Company, 1909), 316.

[15] Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou*, 158–60.

[16] Red Cross Society of Japan, *Humanity and Patriotism*, a pamphlet presented at the Panama Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco (1915), 4–6.

[17] Kawamata, *Nihon-Sekijujisha Hattatsushi*; Red Cross Society of Japan, *Humanity and Patriotism*, 6–11.

in Taiwan as well as at reserve hospitals in Japan. During the international intervention in the Boxer Rebellion in 1900–1901, the RCSJ again sent its relief squads to China, helping 12,835 patients on aggregate, including 249 foreign soldiers.[18]

Placing the wartime activities of the RCSJ within international normative politics of humanitarianism illuminates the process of ideological differentiation between the "civilised" and the "uncivilised" behind the humanitarian relief activities of the RCSJ on the continent. As the only Asian country with an organisation admitted to the ICRC, Japan sought to strengthen its international position as a "civilised" country by upholding the Red Cross ideal of humanitarianism while distancing itself from other Asian countries. During the Sino-Japanese War, the RCSJ offered aid to 1,484 Chinese captives when no national Red Cross organisation existed in China.[19] Although the Qing Dynasty did not accede to the Geneva Convention at that time and therefore Japanese soldiers could not expect mutual protection for wounded captives during the war, the RCSJ still extended its relief activities to Chinese captives based on the principle of humanitarianism.[20] One official historical account of the RCSJ, published in 1910, described the conduct as humane aid to the "backward" country, stating that Japan "tolerated the stupidity and obstinacy of this country [China] by unbounded magnanimity" and thus "showed the virtue of our country known by her righteousness and revealed the brightness and modest character of our nation before the eyes of the world public."[21] While faithfully implementing humanitarian aid on the battlefields, the RCSJ disapproved of any move to establish Chinese and Korean Red Cross societies, and thus secured its exceptional status in Asia. When a "Chinese Red Cross Society" was launched in Shanghai during the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese government refused to recognise its legitimacy. Although Korea joined the Geneva Convention in 1903 and set up a Korean Red Cross organisation, the RCSJ established its own regional committee in Korea after the Russo-Japanese War and forcibly disbanded the Korean national society under Japanese colonial rule in 1909.[22]

The desperate efforts of Japan to project itself as a "civilised" nation mirrored the fragility of its international standing at the turn of the twentieth century. Combined with Japanese military successes, the humanitarian activities of the RCSJ enhanced the international reputation of Japan. During the Sino-Japanese War, an article in *The New York Times* depicted the efforts of the RCSJ in China and stated with praise that "Japan is not only in perfect accord with the letter and spirit of the Red Cross, but her

[18] Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou*, 1166–1264, 1290–91, 1302–37. See also Kyoichi Tachikawa and Haruhiko Shuku, "Seihu oyobi Gun to ICRC tou tono Kankei: Nisshin Sensou kara Taiheiyou Sensou made," *Bouei-Kenkyujo Kiyou* 11 (2008): 69–125.

[19] Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou*, 1290.

[20] In the Sino-Japanese War, the Japanese government first sought the conclusion of a bilateral treaty that would have provided the mutual protection of the war wounded, but was eventually forced to give up the attempt. See Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou*, 1137–8.

[21] Kawamata, *Nihon-Sekijujisha Hattatsushi*, 248–50.

[22] Tachikawa and Shuku, "Seihu oyobi Gun to ICRC tou tono Kankei," 95–6, 111; Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou*, 266–73; Kawamata, *Nihon-Sekijujisha Hattatsushi*, 644–7.

splendid work in this war demands the admiration of the world."[23] Yet, at the same time, the racialised delusion of the yellow peril propelled by the increasing presence of the Japanese military power in East Asia gradually came to hamper Japanese attempts to establish its "civilised" status in international society. Matsudaira Noritsugu, the administration officer of the RCSJ, found that the advancement of Japan in East Asia was often criticised in profoundly racialised terms in the United States when he joined the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at St. Louis in 1904. Surprised at sensational headlines on the yellow peril in American newspapers, Matsudaira assured reporters that Japan did not aim to infringe on the lives and safety of the white race. Matsudaira insisted that "the distinction of white and yellow races should not be the criterion to distinguish the civilised from savages" and explained that the Japanese intention on the continent was "to cultivate and carry China to the level of civilisation."[24] Bolstered, but often constrained too, by the ideological dichotomy of civilisation and savage, Japan struggled to enhance its international standing in between the West and East. The advocacy of humanitarianism by the RCSJ through its relief activities on the continent functioned to reinforce this national effort at the turn of the twentieth century.

Under the Aegis of Medicine: The Japanese Red Cross in the War of 1904–1905

During the war of 1904–1905, the RCSJ continuously sent its medical workers to Korea and northeastern China on a scale unprecedented in its history. On 9 February 1904, the Japanese Minister of the Army ordered the RCSJ to dispatch the first two relief squads to the army assembly headquarters in Korea. By the end of the war, the RCSJ had sent a total of 32 relief squads and one patient-transportation column to the battlefields. 1,451 officers, physicians, pharmacists, male nurses, and transporters of the RCSJ carried out medical activities at 81 army hospitals and clinics in the northeastern region of China and 16 medical facilities in Korea.[25] The RCSJ gained an international reputation for its humane treatment of Russian captives. Teresa Eden Richardson, an English volunteer who visited the internment camp for Russian captives in Matsuyama, stated with admiration that "[t]he Japanese treated them [captives] more as honoured guests than as prisoners."[26] While large-scale mobilisation of medical workers and kind treatment of the prisoners of

[23] *New York Times,* 17 December 1894, 9.

[24] *Nihon Sekijuji* 164, 14 July 1904, 20–2.

[25] Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou*, 1339–46, 1541–9.

[26] Teresa Eden Richardson, *In Japanese Hospitals during War-Time: Fifteen Months with the Red Cross Society of Japan* (London: William Blackwood and Son, 1905), 121. For the Japanese internment camps, see Matsuyama University ed., *Matsuyama no Kioku: Nichiro Sensou 100 nen to Roshia-hei Horyo* (Yokohama: Seibunsha, 2004).

war by the RCSJ have drawn the attention of many scholars and contemporary observers, little has been known of its medical activities for the indigenous population in northeastern China.[27] Yet we need to note the fact that medical workers of the RCSJ treated a total of 10,104 local non-combatant patients as well as 13,995 Russian captives during the war.[28] Close analysis of the medical work of the RCSJ for native inhabitants uncovers a hidden history of early Japanese medical efforts in northeastern China.

As the war progressed, the Japanese army strengthened its control over the native population in the occupied areas, and the RCSJ played an active role in implementing public health regulations among indigenous people. Soon after the outbreak of the war, the central military headquarters in Tokyo launched preparations for setting up the military administration throughout the areas occupied by the Japanese army in northeastern China. The Russo-Japanese War was, after all, a war fought on the soil of the third country. As Ariga Nagao, a law scholar who accompanied the Japanese army during the war, aptly pointed out, "the legitimate legal power over Manchuria is still in the hands of the local officials of the Qing Dynasty and our army has not yet acquired it."[29] The Japanese army had to negotiate with officials of the Chinese local governments to ensure a stable supply of food, manpower, and other necessities on the battlefield. For this purpose, in April 1904, the central military headquarters selected administration commissioners "who are familiar with the ways to manipulate Chinese officials and people."[30] Between the time when the first military administration office started its operation on 7 May 1904 and the end of the war, the Japanese army had established a total of 20 administration offices in the northeastern region of China.[31] Inspecting sanitary conditions of native lives stood out as a task of utmost importance for the Japanese military administration in order to prevent the outbreak of infectious diseases in the areas under Japanese rule. According to the sanitary report of the Japanese army garrison in Liaodong Bandao on 31 October 1904, four military administration offices in the garrison area had opened clinics for the health care of indigenous people by that time and the relief squads of the RCSJ had provided medical services at these facilities. The main task assigned to the medical workers of the RCSJ was to detect infection and improve sanitary conditions of the native population, largely comprising Han–Chinese migrants.[32] By enforcing the

[27] One exception in this historiographical trend is Yuji Yamazaki, "Nichiro Sensou niokeru Nihon Sekijujisha no Kangonin," *Bulletin of the Japanese Red Cross College of Nursing* 11 (1998) 113–35, which touches on the RCSJ's medical activities for indigenous people in northeastern China very briefly.

[28] Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou*, 1544.

[29] Nagao Ariga, *Nichiro Rikusen Kokusaihouron* (Tokyo: Tokyo Kaikousha, 1911), 710–1.

[30] Rikugun Shou, *Meiji Sanju-Shichi-Hachi-Nen Seneki Manshu Gunsei Shi*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Rikugun Shou, 1916), 9.

[31] Ibid., 8–9, 67–78.

[32] Ibid., 812.

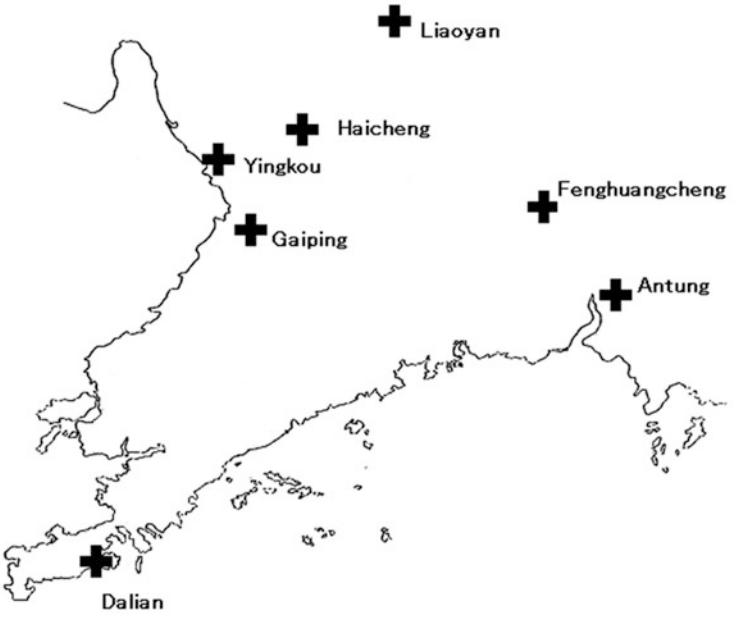

Fig. 1 Medical Clinics in Liaodong Bandao managed by the Red Cross Society of Japan. *Source*: Based on Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou ed., *Shashi Hensan Iinkai* (Tokyo: Nihon-Sekijujisha, 1911), 1411–12

sanitary code as the health commissioners of the military administration,[33] medical workers of the RCSJ came to intervene medically in the lives of native inhabitants.

As the Japanese army gradually extended the area of its military control in the northeastern region of China, the health care programmes for indigenous people added weight to the field activities of the RCSJ. On 24 May 1905, the central office of the RCSJ in Tokyo issued an order to establish a temporary field office in Dalian.[34] The field office began operations on 15 June with most of the relief squads in northeastern China under its direction. Designed as a medium for the prompt transmission of information between the army headquarters and the Red Cross squads working in various locations, the Dalian office coordinated the health care programmes of the RCSJ in the military administration areas.[35] Under the supervision of the field office, Japanese Red Cross workers started to provide medical care for native inhabitants at clinics in densely-populated urban areas. From late May to June, the relief squads of the RCSJ continuously opened health

[33] Ibid., 813–5.

[34] Regulations of the Dalian Temporary Field Office for the Special Relief Squads, issued on 24 May 1905, in Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed, *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou*, 1390.

[35] Ibid., 1389–92; Kawamata, *Nihon-Sekijujisha Hattatsushi*, 468–72.

clinics in Antung, Fenghuancheng, Liaoyan, Haicheng, Yingkou, Gaiping, and Dalian (Fig. 1).[36] Chinese labourers, especially those in utter poverty, constituted a vast majority of the patients at these clinics. Although the official purpose of these medical activities was to prevent the spread of infectious diseases to Japanese soldiers, the number of sufferers from contagious diseases made up only 2.1 % of the total number of native patients treated by the RCSJ.[37] Most of the patients suffered from ordinary illnesses, and the Red Cross clinics came to take on the function of general health care centres among the indigenous population.

Medical activities by the RCSJ both practically and ideologically reinforced the control and authority of the Japanese military administration over the native population. The health care programme for native inhabitants of Yingkou during Japanese occupation exemplifies a pivotal role that medicine played in the control of native lives. On 27 July 1904, the Japanese army entered the city of Yingkou and implemented military rule. In the course of the military administration in Yingkou, Japanese medical workers became deeply involved in the health care of indigenous people beyond the initial goal of epidemic prevention, and thus strengthened their medical control over the native population. In August 1904, after initiating the military administration, Japanese officials first set up the Bureau of Medicine for the supervision of the medical facilities in Yingkou. During the early period of Japanese occupation, the bureau introduced a wide range of hygiene measures from quarantine to sanitary inspections of the city districts, in addition to the medical treatment of Japanese soldiers, Russian captives, and indigenous patients. On 6 January 1905, the Yingkou Hospital also opened in a building originally constructed by Russians for the care of impoverished natives. At this hospital established primarily to prevent the spread of venereal diseases to Japanese soldiers, medical staff strenuously conducted examinations of both local and Japanese prostitutes.[38] Japanese Red Cross workers practiced medicine mainly at the wards in the medical clinic and the pest house.[39] The medical clinic started providing services on 12 May 1905. By the order of the Liaodong Defense Army on 30 April, which stipulated the endorsement of medical practices among native people with instructions that "the Red Cross relief squads should treat patients based on the Red Cross principle of benevolence with the spirit of humanitarianism,"[40] the medical clinic operated chiefly for the care of the indigenous poor in the city. The pest house commenced operations for the incarceration of those infected by epidemics in April 1905. Yet the majority of patients at the pest house in fact consisted of local patients with ordinary illnesses. While the pest house housed

[36] Shashi Hensan Iinkai ed., *Nihon-Sekijuji Shashi-Kou*, 1411–2.

[37] Ibid., 1541–5.

[38] Rikugun Shou, *Meiji Sanju-Shichi-Hachi-Nen Seneki Manshu Gunsei Shi,* vol. 5, 219–49.

[39] The 6th Special Relief Squad, Monthly Report (May 1905); Report no. 2287 (7 June 1905); Report no. 2510 (3 July 1905). Nihon-Sekijujisha Bunsho, File B549: S–469.

[40] Order no. 2321, the Liaodong Defense Army, in Rikugun Shou, *Meiji Sanju-Shichi-Hachi-Nen Seneki Manshu Gunsei Shi,* vol. 5, 250.

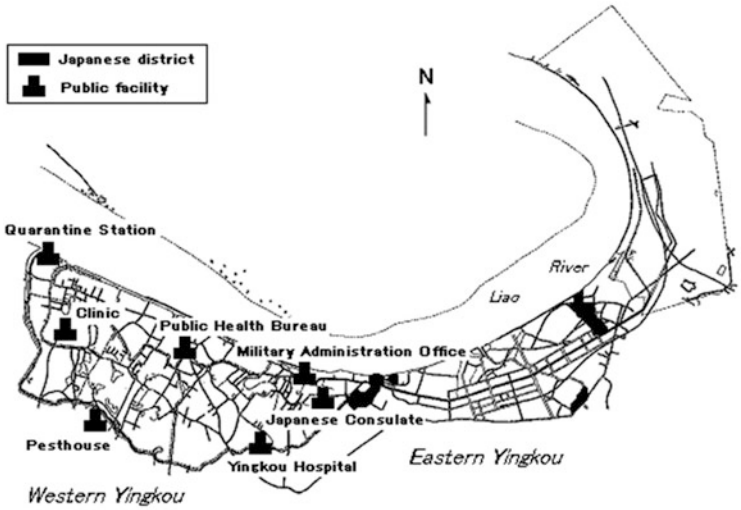

Fig. 2 Public Health Facilities in Yingkou under Japanese Military Administration. *Source*: Remade from the original map in Rikugun Shou, *Meiji Sanju-Shichi-Hachi-Nen Seneki Manshu Gunsei Shi*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Rikugun Shou, 1917), foldout on the face of page 62

21 Japanese and 93 native patients who contracted infectious diseases during its operation, the number of native patients hospitalised due to common illnesses reached 384 in the same period (Fig. 2).[41]

These medical activities provided Japanese Red Cross workers in Yingkou with ample opportunities to point out the "savage" state of indigenous lives from their medical viewpoints. Yaoi Hidekazu, the chief physician of the sixth special relief squad, emphasised the lack of hygiene among Chinese patients at the pest house, stating that *dojin* are innately never repulsed by the filthy conditions, and they cannot understand what infectious diseases mean."[42] Michimoto Shigeaki, a senior physician in charge of the pest house, also reported that native patients "are in dirty and grimy clothes whose terrible smell strikes our noses so that we have to sterilise or cleanse their outer garments and disinfect them by sunlight." According to Michimoto's observation, most of the inmates at the pest house were Chinese dock labourers who "lack the idea of hygiene and cannot comprehend the meaning of infection."[43] By stressing the unhygienic conditions of native lives, Red Cross

[41] Ibid., 249–59.

[42] The 6th Special Relief Squad, Monthly Report (June 1905). Nihon-Sekijujisha Bunsho, File B549: S–469.

[43] Ibid.

workers inversely highlighted the civilising nature of Japanese rule.[44] The response of Red Cross workers to the epidemic of bubonic plague in the autumn of 1905 exemplifies the strong connection between the concept of hygiene and the ideological dichotomy of "civilised" Japanese and "savage" natives. On 12 October, a Japanese lady named Saeki Yuri died of bubonic plague in eastern Yingkou and several other Japanese persons in the city also became infected within the following week. The incident deeply shocked Japanese medical workers. The fact that "hygienic" Japanese, not "filthy" indigenous people, were the first to become infected was impermissible for them, and Japanese medical workers attempted to identify the true culprit. "On the plague epidemic which had broken out among our Japanese people and horrified the entire city, the infection route remained quite dubious," reported Michimoto, but "then, sure enough, we discovered the origin of infection." Japanese medical workers found out a 15-year-old Chinese boy named Wang Naiwu in eastern Yingkou who had fallen sick on 9 October and died 3 days later, and the postmortem examination "revealed that he had been infected with genuine plague."[45] For Japanese medical workers, the idea of hygiene had to function as a sign of stark distinction between Japanese and native people, a notion that symbolised the irreversible power relation.

Indigenous people responded with both partial adaptation and sometimes stiff resistance to this often coercive medical stance of Japanese Red Cross workers. Although tinged with a coercive tone, the medical practices of Red Cross workers nevertheless gradually gained ground among the native population. When the 38th special relief squad opened a clinic in Haicheng on 5 May 1905, Nakajima Mitsuo, the chief physician, was soon faced with difficulties in examining native women who, "with the traditional Chinese lady-like attitude, hated to leave home and come into contact with others." Many of the indigenous women who were accustomed to traditional medicine, in which a Chinese physician usually diagnosed patients by checking the pulse and the state of the tongue, at first refused to undress and expose their bodies. Yet, after the initial period of suspicion, reported Nakajima, these women "steadily came to learn the nature of our procedures, and currently we can make a physiological diagnosis by means of thoraco-abdominal examination."[46] At the Yingkou Hospital, local prostitutes did not let Japanese surgeons put a scalpel into their bodies.[47] Surgical operation first

[44] Similar remarks on "unhygienic" native people were also found in the reports of other relief squads. See, for example, the 3rd Special Relief Squad, Medical Report (May 1905), Monthly Report (July 1905), Operation Report (4 January 1906), File B547: S–467; the 38th Special Relief Squad, Monthly Report (June 1905); Medical Report (July 1905), File B570: S–490 in Nihon-Sekijujisha Bunsho. See also *Nihon Sekijuji,* 144, September 1904, 10; 145, September 1904, 9; 166, August 1905, 12–3.

[45] The 6th Special Relief Squad, the Fifteenth Medical Report (October 1905). Nihon-Sekijujisha Bunsho, File B549: S–469.

[46] The 38th Special Relief Squad, Report written by Nakajima Mitsuo (1 June 1905). Nihon-Sekijujisha Bunsho, File B570: S–490.

[47] Rikugun Shou, *Meiji Sanju-Shichi-Hachi-Nen Seneki Manshu Gunsei Shi,* vol. 5, 240.

provoked desperate opposition among native patients, but as chief physician Yaoi stated, these patients "gradually came to give consent to surgical operation as days went by, and we became able to perform it for appropriate cases."[48] By receiving medical treatment at the Red Cross clinics, indigenous people started a process of internalising the scientific authority of Western medicine through their bodies.

While at least partially accepting medical treatment by the RCSJ, native inhabitants put up resistance to the public health programmes, and Japanese medical workers often had to compromise their ideals of medicine and hygiene. Medical staff of the RCSJ frequently complained of the refusal of their Western-style medical treatment by indigenous people. At the charity hospital in Antung, native patients often preferred their own traditional medicine of herbal extracts, removing bandages provided by Red Cross staff and throwing away drugs prescribed by Japanese medical workers.[49] The emergency of war also forced Japanese medical workers to cooperate with indigenous people outside of medical institutions. In reality, Japanese Red Cross workers in Yingkou could not maintain total control of the sanitation system of the entire city by themselves. To more fully eradicate the roots of epidemics from the city, the army surgeon Suzuki Kyunoshin organised a public health committee in each district, which came under the direction of the newly established Public Health Bureau in June 1905. Japanese officials appointed members of the committees from among native residents of influence as mediators between Japanese medical workers and the indigenous population, and they mobilised local neighbourhood organisations into overseeing their districts and enforcing hygiene measures among their neighbours.[50] Despite the ideological persistence of Red Cross workers with the differentiating standard of civilisation, actual practices of medicine and hygiene among indigenous people necessitated compromise and cooperation. The Japanese public health programmes during the war in practice progressed through interaction with, and often dependence on, the social and cultural structures of the indigenous population in northeastern China.

Conclusion

During the Russo-Japanese War, the RCSJ deployed its relief squads throughout the northeastern region of China. Assigned to the health care programmes for the indigenous population, Red Cross medical workers rigorously implemented medical and sanitary measures within the areas occupied by the Japanese army.

[48] The 6th Special Relief Squad, Operation Report (18 December 1905). Nihon-Sekijujisha Bunsho, File B549: S–469.

[49] The 18th Special Relief Squad, Medical Report (May 1905). Nihon-Sekijujisha Bunsho, File B555: S–475; *Nihon Sekijuji,* 166, August 1905, 12–3.

[50] Rikugun Shou, *Meiji Sanju-Shichi-Hachi-Nen Seneki Manshu Gunsei Shi,* vol. 5, 260, 294–300, 330.

By introducing Western medicine and the modern principle of hygiene to the region, these medical workers ideologically differentiated themselves from "uncivilised" native people based on the prevailing discourses on the standard of civilisation. Projecting asymmetric relations between the "civilised" and those deemed "uncivilised" in international society onto the Japanese military administration over the native population, the medical gaze of Red Cross workers thus provided a moral basis for the Japanese semi-colonial order over the region.

The actual power relation between Japanese Red Cross workers and indigenous people during the war was, however, much less stable than theoretically contemplated. Japanese medical workers gradually gained the confidence of local inhabitants in some cases. But native patients stuck to traditional ways of therapy in other cases, and they sometimes furiously resisted modern medical treatment. In part at least, these seemingly contradictory responses to the Japanese introduction of Western medicine reflected national disputes over the legitimacy, both scientific and political, of Western-style modern medicine in China. The last decades of the Qing dynasty saw ideological contestation between Chinese traditional medicine and Western medicine among Chinese medical circles. From the mid-nineteenth century onward, Western missionaries and other secular organisations had long attempted to transplant their modern medical ideas into China.[51] Yet, in the early twentieth century, advocates of Western medicine still faced fierce opposition from Chinese medical practitioners. Whereas Chinese reformist physicians promoted the Westernisation of medicine as the basis for modern nation building, traditional practitioners, who dominated in number and had a strong foothold in rural areas, characterised Western medicine as "foreign" and thwarted extension of its influence over China.[52] In the wartime emergency, this unsettled controversy across the nation gave a background for indigenous people in northeastern China to selectively appropriate each trend of medicine as conforming to their social norms for different occasions, consequently metamorphosing the local health care system under Japanese rule into a vernacular composite of conflicting medical ideas. Through an interactive process of coercion, adaptation, and resistance between Japanese Red Cross workers and native people, the global current of modern Western medicine came to take on a distinctive expression localised in the semi-colonial politics of the northeastern region of China.

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[51] See, for example, Iris Borowy ed., *Uneasy Encounters: The Politics of Medicine and Health in China, 1900-1937* (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 2009); Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Modern Science in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), esp. 101–11, 207–11; David Hardiman ed., *Healing Bodies, Saving Souls: Medical Missions in Asia and Africa* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi B.V., 2006), 59–136; Mary B. Bullock, *The Oil Prince's Legacy: Rockefeller Philanthropy in China* (Washington, D. C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2011).

[52] Xiaoqun Xu, "'National Essence' vs. 'Science': Chinese Native Physicians Fight for Legitimacy," *Modern Asian Studies* 31, 4 (Oct. 1997): 847–77; Ralph C. Croizier, *Traditional Medicine in Modern China: Science, Nationalism, and the Tensions of Cultural Change* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968). As to the institutionalization of Western medicine and public health in China, see Wataru Iijima, *Pesuto to Kindai Chugoku: Eisei no "Seidoka" to Shakai Henyou* (Tokyo: Kenbun Shuppan, 2000).

Projecting a Fiction of the Nation State to the World: The Manzhouguo News Agency in Japanese-Occupied Northeast China, 1932–1945

Tomoko Akami

Abstract The chapter examines the Manzhouguo News Agency or the MNA (1932–1945) in Japanese-occupied Northeast China, Manchuria. It demonstrates that it played the central role for Japanese imperial authorities in their control of the information flow within and out of the area.

The MNA had two major duties. Its priority was overseas propaganda, and its creation demonstrated that the Japanese imperial authorities, including the Guandong Army, paid great attention to new norms of international politics in the age of the League of Nations, namely the principle of self-determination, and international public opinion as a moral force in international politics. The MNA's second duty was to control information for internal and border security of the occupied area, and this aspect was strengthened after the Guandong Army achieved its territorial ambitions.

The chapter is an offshoot from a project on Japan's news propaganda in its foreign policy, 1909–1945, a part of which is now Tomoko Akami, *Japan's News Propaganda and Reuters' News Empire in Northeast Asia, 1870–1934* (Dordrecht: Republic of Letters, 2012). For the later period, see, Tomoko Akami, *Soft Power of Japan's Total War State: The Board of Information and the National News Agency, 1934–45* (Dordrecht: Republic of Letters, forthcoming). I thank Heilongjiang University, the University of Heidelberg, and the Australian National University for their support in researching and writing this paper. I would also like to thank Gakushūin University for its fellowship in summer 2002, and the Australian Research Council for its Discovery Grant in 2002–2005. Furthermore, I thank Ms Li Gan and Mr Wei Kewei for their help with my research in Changchun, and Dr Wei Shuge for translating Chinese newspaper articles. I also thank the editors, and the readers of this chapter for valuable comments, and thank the participants of the conference, "Global Challenge and Regional Response: Early 20th Century Northeast China and Harbin," at Heilongjiang University on 16–19 June 2009. Finally, I thank Karina Pelling of the cartography section of the College of Asia and the Pacific of the Australian National University for map making. All translations of the Japanese source materials are mine.

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The MNA's structure constantly changed. While this instability reflected changes of Japan's strategic policy towards the area, it also demonstrated its dual function and inherent dilemma. It was an imperial agency whose main job was to project a fiction of an independent nation state of Manzhouguo. Even after Japan failed to gain support at the League in February 1933, it continued to see this fiction useful, especially to the Chinese elite and expatriates in the rest of China. The chapter suggests the MNA became a prototype of the information control for the Japanese Army in its creation of pro-Japan regimes in North China. The MNA's international propaganda operation was absorbed by Tokyo-based *Dōmei* News Agency by the time the Sino-Japanese War began.

In recent years, scholars have seen Northeast China as a dynamic space where diverse actors competed for greater influence. These works focus on the literary scene, mass media and mass culture, and stress the complexity and ambiguity of the rhetoric of nation in the region.[1]

This chapter examines the role of the Manzhouguo News Agency, or MNA (*Manshūkoku tsūshinsha*, often called *Kokutsū*), in these complex dynamics of the region during the period of Japan's occupation. The MNA was founded on 1 December 1932 at Changchun, or Xinjing, as the Japanese called the capital of Japan's "puppet state" (*Kairai seiken*), Manzhouguo (established in March 1932).[2] Manzhouguo existed until Japan's defeat in August 1945. The chapter argues that the MNA was not only a tool of the Japanese imperial authorities in their control of Northeast China, but also a part of their response to new norms of international politics in the age of the League of Nations.

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[1] Prasenjit Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (Boulder: Rowan and Littlefield, 2003); Mariko Asano-Tamanoi, ed., *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005); Rana Mitter, "Evil empire?: Competing constructions of Japanese imperialism in Manchuria, 1928–1937," in *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia, 1895–1945*, eds, Narangoa Li and Robert Cribb (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003); Kawashima Shin, "'Teikoku' to rajio: Manshūkoku ni oite 'seiji o seikatsu surukoto'" ["Empire" and Radio: "Living Politics" in Manzhouguo], in *"Teikoku" Nihon no gakuchi* [Empire Japan and Knowledge] *vol. 4*, ed. Yamamoto Taketoshi (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2006).

[2] Scholars contest this conventional term. Indeed the notion of the divisible sovereignty was evident from the very beginning of international law. Edward Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). And this practice was applied in Euro-America powers' dealings with the Japanese, Chinese and Ottoman Empires. See, for example, Tomoko Akami, 'The nation-state/empire as a unit of an analysis of the history of international relations: A case study in Northeast Asia, 1868–1933', in Isabella Löhr and Roland Wenzlhuemer eds, *The Nation State and Beyond: Governing Globalization Processes in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Springer, 2013). Thomas DuBois applies this idea of the divisible sovereignty in Japan's relationship to Manzhouguo, and stresses its limited sovereignty at least until the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in July 1937. Thomas David Dubois: "Inauthentic sovereignty: Law and legal institutions in Manchukuo," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 69, 3 (2010): 749–770. The aspect of the military occupation nonetheless creates a further complication in this debate.

I have argued elsewhere that many states, including the Japanese state, began a systematic use of soft power in foreign policy in the 1930s. Although most scholars assume that "public diplomacy" is a recent phenomenon,[3] I suggested that its origin can be seen in these states' initiatives in the 1930s.[4] Furthermore, while most works on public diplomacy are largely concerned with culture and values, I stressed the state's use of news as an important part of soft power.

The roles of news and news agencies in international politics have been discussed since the 1970s. These works were mostly concerned with the information imbalance between the North and the South.[5] Historians examined empires' dominance[6] over international news. Although their main concern has been telecommunication infrastructure, such as cables and wireless networks, not news distribution.[7]

The Japanese Empire's use of news in foreign policy has also not been well examined. Scholars applied the notion of an informal empire/colony to analyse Japan's non-military means to dominate China in 1895–1937.[8] While others examined the relationship between Japan's imperialism and mass media,[9] these works

[3] Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004); Jan Melissen, "The new public diplomacy: between theory and practice," in *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, ed. idem (London: Palgrave, 2005), 3–27; Nancy Snow and Philip M. Taylor, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (London: Routledge, 2009).

[4] Akami, *Japan's News Propaganda*, 14–20; idem, "The emergence of international public opinion and the origin of public diplomacy in Japan in the inter-war period," *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 3 (2008): 99.

[5] Mark D. Alleyne, *International Power and International Communication* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); Hamid Mowlana, *Global Information and World Communication: New Frontiers in International Relations* (White Plains, N.Y.: Longman, 1986); Phillip M. Taylor, *Global Communications, International Affairs and the Media since 1945* (London: Routledge, 1997).

[6] Historians paid attention to empires' non-military means of dominance over non-formal colonies, and used the notion of "informal empire." The initial concept of an informal empire was based on the trading relationships of the British Empire. John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," *Economic History Review* 6, 2 (1953): 1–15.

[7] Daniel R. Headrick, *The Invisible Weapon: Telecommunication and International Politics, 1851–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Bernhard Finn and Daqing Yang, eds., *Communications under the Seas: The Evolving Cable Network and Its Implications* (London: The MIT Press, 2009); Robert M. Pike and Dwayne R. Winseck, *Communication and Empire: Media, Markets, and Globalization, 1860–1930* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

[8] Peter Duus, "Introduction: Japan's informal empire in China, 1895–1937: An overview," in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–*1937, eds., idem, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

[9] See, for example, Yamamoto ed., *'Teikoku' Nihon no gakuchi vol. 4*; Luise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Barak Kushner, *The Thought War: Japan's Imperial Propaganda* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006); Grant K. Goodman ed., *Japanese Cultural Policies in Southeast Asia during World War 2* (New York: St. Martin's Place, 1991).

mainly focused on the content of mass propaganda, rather than policies and institutions. A few scholars began to examine how the Japanese Empire used news and news agencies, although they have mainly focused on domestic media control or war propaganda.[10]

In a recent analysis of the relationship between empires and international news gathering and dissemination, I have argued that the Japanese Empire used news not only as a means to achieve dominance in Northeast Asia, but also as a response to international public opinion, and to the developments of mass politics and new telecommunication technologies.[11] This chapter demonstrates that the MNA was an important part of this Japanese state's initiative to use news systematically.

We now know some details on the propaganda operations of the Japanese metropolitan state to the League of Nations and other major powers during the Manchurian Crisis of 1931–1933.[12] We have only begun to discover how Japanese imperial authorities conducted overseas propaganda out of occupied Manchuria.[13]

So far little attention has been paid to the role of the MNA in Northeast China under the Japanese military occupation (Manchuria) in 1931–1945.[14] This is in stark contrast to substantial literature on the South Manchuria Railway Company, or SMR (1906–1945).[15] Tak Matsusaka, for example, regarded the SMR as the key imperial agency of Japan's "railway imperialism" in Manchuria.[16]

The lack of scholarly works on the MNA does not mean that the Japanese imperial authorities neglected news networks during the occupation. The Guandong Army identified transportation and communication, as well as defence and foreign

[10] Yamamoto Taketoshi, "'Teikoku' o katsuida media" [Media Which Carried "Empire"], in idem ed., '*Teikoku*' *Nihon no gakuchi vol. 4*, 8; Satomi Shū, "Dōmei tsūshinsha no 'senji hōdō taisei': Senjiki ni okeru tsūshinkei media to kokka" [The war reporting system of the Dōmei News Agency: the state and news media organisations during the war], in'*Teikoku*' *Nihon no gakuchi vol. 4*, ed. Yamamoto.

[11] Akami, *Japan's News Propaganda*, 15–17, 22.

[12] Sandra Wilson, "Containing the crisis: Japan's diplomatic offensive in the West, 1931–33," *Modern Asian Studies* 29 (1995): 337–72; Ian Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*: *Japan*, *China and the League of Nations*, *1931–3* (London: K. Paul International, 1993).

[13] See, for example, Michael Baskett, "Goodwill hunting: Rediscovering and remembering Manchukuo in Japanese 'goodwill films,'" in *Crossed Histories*, ed. Asano-Tamanoi.

[14] So far, the only scholarly work on the MNA is Satō Junko's article, which examines the formation of the MNA in 1931–1932. Satō Junko, "Manshūkoku tsūshinsha no setsuritsu to jōhō taisaku" [The foundation of the MNA and information policy], *Media shi kenkyū* 9 (2000): 24–43.

[15] Leading works on the SMR include: Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria*, *1904–1932* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); idem, "Managing occupied Manchuria, 1931–1945," in *The Japanese Wartime Empire*, *1931–1945*, eds., Duus, Myers, and Peattie; Ramon H. Myers, "Japanese imperialism in Manchuria: The South Manchuria Railway Company, 1906–1933," in *The Japanese Informal Empire*, eds., Duus, Myers, and Peattie; Harada Katsumasa, *Mantetsu* [The SMR] (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1981); Andō Hikotarō ed., *Mantetsu*: *Nihon teikoku shugi to Chūgoku* [The SMR: Japanese imperialism and China] (Tokyo: Ochanomizu shobō, 1969); Kobayashi Hideo ed., *Kindai Nihon to Mantetsu* [Modern Japan and the SMR] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 2000).

[16] Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria*, 8, 62.

affairs, as the four essential areas in its occupation of the region. Accordingly, it insisted that these fields should remain directly under the Japanese imperial authorities even after the establishment of Manzhouguo.[17] The Guandong Army indeed took control of the telecommunication infrastructures in the occupied area in 1934, by taking over the supervision of the Manchurian Telegram and Telephone Company, or MTTC (*Manshū denshin denwa kabushiki gaisha*, established in August 1933), from the Colonial Ministry of the Japanese metropolitan government in 1934.[18] In contrast, the control of news out of Japanese-occupied Manchuria was trickier for the imperial authorities, because they needed to project the success of an autonomous new state, which was an imperial construction. Such a projection was important in the age of the League of Nations, when empires needed new institutions and tactics of propaganda in order to justify their rule over newly acquired mandates as well as existing colonies and territories. Occupied Manchuria was no exception.

Primary source materials are scarce on the MNA, which also explains why little work has been done on it. The file on the MNA at the Archives of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is sketchy.

Some documents on Japanese news agencies, which included their dealings with the MNA, however, began to be reprinted in the late 1990s.[19] As well as these materials, I have also used other Japanese diplomatic documents,[20] biographies of the key personnel, and official organisational histories of MOFA, Japanese news agencies, and the MNA. The official history of the MNA was particularly valuable. It was published in 1942 to commemorate the agency's tenth anniversary. Contributors to the volume were keen to boost their achievements. If this were a collection of their memories of the MNA written after the end of the war they would have been more concerned with their possible war crime charges, and might not have been as candid or detailed in describing their MNA experiences. The volume is also useful as it includes not only detailed accounts of the founders, but also reprints of key organisational documents, the details of its operations, and some lists of the employees in 1932–1942.[21]

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[17] [Kantōgun Sanbō honbu] (The Guandong Army Headquarters), "Manmō mondai kaiketsusaku an" [An idea for solving the problem of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia], 22 September 1931, compiled in Sanbō honbu [The Chief of Staff Office of the Army], "Manshū jihen ni okeru gun no tōsui (an)" [An idea for the army command during the Manchurian Incident], reprinted in *Gendaishi shiryō vol. 11* [Sources on Modern Japanese History], eds., Inaba Masao, Kobayashi Tatsuo, and Shimada Toshihiko (Tokyo: Misuzu shobō, 1964), 328.

[18] Gaimushō hyakunenshi hensan iinkai [MOFA's a hundred years history editing committee], *Gaimushō no hyakunen* [A Hundred Years of MOFA] *vol. 2* (Tokyo: Hara shobō, 1969), 260.

[19] Ariyama Teruo and Nishiyama Takesuke compiled and reprinted these newly found documents in the late 1990s and the early 2000s.

[20] These are two volumes on the reprinted documents concerning the Manchurian Incident in *Gendaishi shiryō*, and the volume of the reprints of Japanese diplomatic documents on the Manchurian Incident.

[21] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha [the MNA] ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi* [Ten Year History of the MNA] (Xinjing: Editor, [1942]).

With these materials, this chapter demonstrates the centrality of the MNA for Japan's imperial authorities, especially the Guandong Army, in their control of the information flow within and out of occupied Manchuriain. The MNA had four main roles. First, the imperial authorities used the MNA to propagate the "successful" experiment of a new "nation state," Manzhouguo, to the rest of China, Japan, and the world. Second, they used it to monopolise news and news media organisations in occupied Manchuria in order to maintain the internal security. Third, the MNA gathered and assessed intelligence, especially on strategically significant border cities near Korea and the Soviet Union. Fourth, the Guandong Army used the MNA to expand and establish its sphere of influence in North China outside Manzhouguo.

These roles of the MNA highlight the above-mentioned two main points of this chapter. First, the foundation and the operation of the MNA indicated that the Japanese imperial authorities, including the Guandong Army (both at the metropolitan centre, Tokyo, and at the colonial outpost of Northeast China), paid great attention to new international norms of the state's conduct in the era of the League of Nations. These new norms included the principle of self-determination, and international public opinion as a moral force in international politics.[22]

In this new environment, the Japanese imperial authorities did not regard the annexation of Manchuria as a politically wise option. Rather, they felt the need to legitimise their new military occupation of the region in the League's new norms of "self-determination" and "good governance." Almost immediately after the Guandong Army began its military aggression on 18 September 1931, it proposed to the Ministry of the Army in Tokyo the creation of a new state in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, not formal colonisation.[23] The reasons for this decision were strategic, economic, and political. It wanted to "free" Manchuria from the sovereignty of China, expand and unify its control in the region, and exclude the intervention of other powers. It also wanted to create a self-sufficient fort against an anticipated attack from the Soviet Union.[24]

International concerns were important in this choice of non-formal colonisation. Soon after the Japanese aggression had begun, the Chinese Nationalist Government appealed the case against Japan to the League of Nations. Although the Ministry of the Army in Tokyo and the Guandong Army were not interested in negotiating the

[22] For the definition and the significance of the norm of international public opinion in Japan's foreign policy in the 1920s and 1930s, see Akami, "The emergence of international public opinion," 108–110.

[23] On 22 September 1931, the army minister wrote to the commander of the Guandong Army that "considering domestic and international contexts," the Japanese direct military rule in Manchuria would not be possible or desirable, and that the establishment of a new governing body by the Chinese would be the best available option. Accordingly, on 23 September, the Guandong Army proposed the establishment of a new state, and asked the Ministry of the Army to send advisers on [domestic] and international law and economy. The ministry then instructed the SMR to research legal and financial aspects of the proposed new state in early October 1931. Sanbō honbu, "Manshū jihen ni okeru gun no tōsui (an)," reprinted in *Gendaishi shiryō vol. 11*, eds., Inaba et al., 327, 328, 337–8.

[24] Ibid., 334, 337, 486.

case with the League, they still recognised the need to appeal the righteousness of their actions to "international public opinion" and demonstrate their legitimacy according to international legal codes.[25]

In the era of the League, the image of good governance by the empires in their colonies and mandates became as important as its substance.[26] By the early 1930s, the Japanese imperial authorities were well aware of the power of information and images in international politics, or what we now call "soft power."[27] In fact, Edward H. Carr observed in 1939 that most states, whether they were regarded as "liberal democratic regimes" or "totalitarian regimes," recognised the significance of this kind of "power over opinion" in foreign policy, and began to establish systematic propaganda policies and institutions in 1919–1939.[28] The MNA was a product of this new thinking. It was a part of the responses of the Japanese imperial authorities, including the Guandong Army, to what they considered new global norms. They tried to project positive images of a Japanese-"guided" yet "independent" Manzhouguo to the rest of China, Japan, and the world.

The MNA's roles also illuminate the second main point of this chapter, namely the MNA's inherent dilemma as an imperial agency, the duties of which included the projection of an independent nation state, Manzhouguo. Its institutional instability reflected this dilemma as well as the changes in Japan's strategic policies on occupied Manchuria. The MNA went through several structural changes in its brief history of 1932–1945. It was an imperial agency which the official history of Japanese news agencies described as "virtually a branch office"[29] of the Japanese news agency, *Dōmei tsūshin* or *Dōmei* News Agency (which succeeded *Shimbun Rengōsha* or *Rengō* News Agency at the end of 1935).[30] Yet the MNA could not be a straightforward imperial agency, because it was envisaged to become the "national" news agency of a "new state", Manzhouguo. The chapter suggests that the Japanese imperial authorities changed the MNA's status, structure, and roles, as

[25] Ibid., 328, 334, 338, 347, 348–9.

[26] Susan Pedersen, "The meaning of the mandates system: an argument," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 32 (2006): 560–82.

[27] According to Nye, the power of certain ideas and ideologies resides with their attraction, and diverse political actors wanted to adopt the ideas and to be coopted voluntarily, not by force. While Nye's main focus is American soft power, especially the idea of democracy and freedom, he does not limit the application of his argument to the United States. Instead, he refers to the cases of other kinds of political regimes, including Russia. Nye, *Soft Power*, 5–9.

[28] Edward H. Carr, *Propaganda in International Politics* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1939), 5; idem, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: Papermac, 1993, c1939), 137.

[29] Furuno Inosuke denki henshū iinkai [The editing committee of the biography of Furuno Inosuke] ed., *Furuno Inosuke* (Tokyo: Editor, 1970), 189; Tsūshinshashi kankōkai [The committee to publish the official history of Japanese news agencies] ed., *Tsūshinshashi* [History of Japanese News Agencies] (Tokyo: Editor, 1958), 372–3.

[30] *Dōmei* then began its operations in January 1936.

well as its control and funding. These changes reflected not the level of their commitment to Manzhouguo's "self-determination", but rather their judgements on the utility of the fiction of a nation state for Japan's strategic goals.

In this chapter I use the Japanese imperial terms for Northeast China, such as "Manchuria" (*Manshū*) or "Manchuria and [Inner] Mongolia" (*Manmō*). To Japanese imperial minds, these terms represented a coherent area of their assumed sphere of influence, and defined the border of Manzhouguo. Broader Manchuria included the three eastern provinces (Heilongjiang, Jilin, and Liaoning[31]), the eastern part of Inner Mongolia, and Rehe Province. In September 1931, the Guandong Army described the area as the "Northeastern four provinces (Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning and Rehe) and Mongolia," all of which it intended to eventually occupy.[32] The garrison's invasion and occupation of Rehe Province in March 1933, and the incorporation of this province into Manzhouguo, therefore completed its plan. By "North China" I refer to North China (*Kahoku*) outside Manzhouguo. It includes the provinces of Hebei, Shanxi, and Shandong, as well as South Chahar and Suiyuan. The Japanese also used another term, Mengjiang, which referred to North Shanxi, South Chahar, and Suiyuan.[33] There were, therefore, some overlaps between North China and Mengjiang.

The Formation of the MNA as an Imperial/National Agency, September 1931–December 1932

In October 1932, the Lytton Commission, the League of Nations' Inquiry Commission on the Manchurian Incident, presented its report to the League on the Japanese actions in Manchuria in 1931–1932 and the legitimacy of Manzhouguo.

> The chief agency in bringing about independence was the Self-Government Guiding Board, which had its central office in Mukden. … It was stated to the Commission … to have functioned as an organ of the Fourth Department of the Kwantung [Guandong] Army Headquarters. Its main purpose was to foster the independence movement. Under the direction and supervision of this central board, local self-overnment executive committees were formed in the district of Fengtien [sic] Province. To those various districts, … the Central Board sent out members from its large and experienced staff of inspectors, directors and lecturers, many of who were Japanese. It utilized also a newspaper, which it edited and published.[34]

[31] The Japanese documents used the older term, Fengtian (Mukden), for Liaoning Province.

[32] [Kantōgun sanbō honbu], "Manmō mondai kaiketsusaku an" [22 September 1931], compiled in Sanbō honbu, "Manshū jihen ni okeru gun no tōsui (an)," 328.

[33] Boyle points out that the term Mengjiang was rarely used. It was also a misleading term, as it indicated not only [Inner] Mongolia, but also Xinjiang, which the Guandong Army did not intend to occupy. John Hunter Boyle, *China and Japan at War, 1937–1945: The Politics of Collaboration* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), 131.

[34] [The Lytton Commission], "Report of the Commission of Enquiry," 1 October 1932, reprinted in *Nihon gaikō monjo: Manshū jihen, Bekkan* [Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy: the Manchurian Incident, A Supplementary Volume], ed. Gaimushō [MOFA] (Tokyo: Gaimushō, 1981), 92.

The Lytton Commission concluded that Manzhouguo was a creation of this Fourth Department of the Guandong Army's General Staff Office. The department specialised in propaganda, and directed what became the Concordance Society (*Kyōwakai*) in 1931–1932. It also worked on the creation of another organisation, which was to become the MNA in December 1932.

The Fourth Department used two expert groups for the making of the MNA. The first group came from the SMR (based at Dalian, before moving to Changchun). Soon after the Guandong Army began its military campaign near Mukden (Fengtian or Shenyang) on 18 September 1931, four commissioned staff members (*shokutaku*) of the SMR were sent to the Fourth Department. Katō Shinkichi was one of these four. He noted that they had been working on information policies in Manchuria at the SMR for some time, which they were ready to implement by September 1931.[35] The Guandong Army was happy with their work on propaganda within the occupied area in late 1931.

The creation of the MNA, however, reflected the Guandong Army's serious concern about overseas propaganda. In other words, the garrison's concern with international public opinion led to the establishment of the MNA. This was why the garrison brought in the second expert group, *Rengō* News Agency, in November 1931.

Rengō had its own concerns. Its headquarters at Tokyo sent Sasaki Kenji, its correspondent in North China, to Mukden on 17 November 1931, in order to strengthen its coverage of the unfolding "Manchurian Incident" against its rival, *Dentsū* News Agency (*Nihon denpō tsūshinsha*). Sasaki was fluent in Chinese and had good contacts in the Guandong Army and Chinese vernacular media. As the *Rengō* management hoped, he was to reverse *Rengō*'s lesser position in Manchuria. Upon arrival in Mukden, Sasaki called on the Guandong Army Headquarters.

Sasaki realized that *Rengō* and the Guandong Army shared their interests. The garrison's top brass told him that although they were satisfied with "internal" propaganda, they were concerned with bad international publicity about the garrison's actions in Manchuria. These officers asked for his advice. Sasaki promised to help, and contacted Furuno Inosuke, general manager of *Rengō* in Tokyo. A month later, on 19 December 1931, Iwanaga Yūkichi, *Rengō*'s president, submitted to the Guandong Army his proposal, "On the Manchuria and [Inner] Mongolia News Agency."[36] This became the blueprint for the MNA.[37]

The Guandong Army took the issue of international publicity seriously, and needed to contact *Rengō*, not *Dentsū*. The garrison was aware that the world was seeing *Dentsū* as its mouthpiece organisation. It also recognised that *Dentsū* was

[35] The department was located at the secretariat office of the director of the SMR, and it had been researching media and information policies of Manchuria since 1927. Katō Shinkichi, "Kioku o tadoru" [Tracing a Memory], in *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, ed. Manshūkoku tsūshinsha, 24.

[36] Sasaki Kenji, "Kokutsū no shinwa o kataru" [Talking the Mythology of the MNA], in *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, ed. Manshūkoku tsūshinsha, 28–30.

[37] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, 39.

part of the news ring of the American United Press (UP), which had a reputation for "sensationalist" news. In contrast, *Rengō* belonged to Reuters' news ring, which included the other leading news agencies—American Associated Press (AP), French Havas and German Wolff. Its news had more credibility, and was more widely distributed than *Dentsū*'s. *Rengō*'s president, Iwanaga, was also the best-informed person in Japan about international news. He had been working closely with MOFA since 1923 when he took over the managing directorship of *Rengō*'s predecessor, *Kokusai* News Agency. He also knew Manchuria well,[38] and was well connected to the Japanese political elite, including Inukai Tsuyoshi (prime minister after 13 December 1931).[39]

The timing of the actions of the Japanese imperial authorities, including the Guandong Army, indicated that they paid great attention to what was happening at the League of Nations in late 1931–1932. Responding to China's appeal, the League decided on 10 December 1931 to send an inquiry commission to the "Far East" to investigate the case. The commission, which Lord Victor Lytton chaired, arrived in Japan on 29 February 1932. The Guandong Army created Manzhouguo on 1 March, just before the commission reached Manchuria.[40] The commission landed in China on 14 March. After visiting Nanjing, Beijing, Hankou, and Chongqing, it travelled to Manchuria. There, under the tight control of the Guandong Army, until 28 June the members examined the explosion site on the railway near Mukden, and investigated whether the claimed "nation" had any substance.[41] The commission came back to Japan via Korea on 4 July, and then went back to Beijing on 20 July, where Lytton drafted his report. He completed it by 4 September 1932. This Lytton report was not unsympathetic to Japan's pre-September 1931 imperial interests in Manchuria. However, it regarded Japanese military action after then as aggression, not "self-defence." It also did not recognise Manzhouguo as a genuine nation.

The Japanese government formally recognised Manzhouguo on 15 September 1932, two weeks before the report was officially sent to the governments of Japan and China as well as other League member countries (30 September). The League began discussions of the report on 21 November, and its Committee of Nineteen worked out a solution based on the report. The League's General Assembly finally voted to adopt the committee's proposal on 24 February 1933. The Japanese delegation cast the only vote against this proposal. On 27 March 1933, the Saitō Makoto Cabinet sent the League a formal notification of Japan's withdrawal from the League.

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[38] Iwanaga spent several years in the 1910s as the SMR's stationmaster in Changchun.

[39] Inukai formed the cabinet almost a week before Iwanaga submitted the above proposal to the Guandong Army. Furuno's biography stated that Iwanaga visited Inukai in December 1931, most likely after he became prime minister. Furuno Inosuke denki henshū iinkai ed., *Furuno Inosuke*, 193. Inukai was also foreign minister until January 1932.

[40] "Itagaki sanbō jōkyō ni saishi ataetaru shiji no yōshi," 4 January [1932], compiled in Sanbō honbu, "Manshū jihen ni okeru gun no tōsui (an)," 484.

[41] [Kantōgun sanbōbu] (The Guandong Army Headquarters), "Renmei chōsain ni taisuru junbi an" [An idea to prepare for the League's inquiry commission], reprinted in *Gendaishi shiryō vol. 11*, eds., Inaba et al., 817–20.

In retrospect, Japan "lost the battle for world opinion" in 1931–1933, as Ian Nish concluded.[42] Japan's propaganda did not work, or, more precisely, it could not negate the consequence of Japan's military aggression. In 1931–1932, however, Japanese officials, politicians, officers, and non-official elite were yet to discover this final verdict. They thought they had a chance to change the League's course of action.

They therefore conducted massive propaganda operations to appeal the Japanese case to the Lytton Commission and member countries of the League in 1931–1933. MOFA, for example, used various means to appeal to the League and "international public opinion," especially in English-language media. First, it closely monitored pro-Japan articles in English-language papers in China and Japan. When it found articles such as those by Henry G. W. Woodhead in the *Shanghai Evening Post and Mercury* or by Hugh Byas (Tokyo correspondent for the *New York Times* and the London *Times*), it used them as propaganda materials by compiling edited volumes and recirculating them to the world. Second, MOFA organised lecture tours by Japanese-American journalists or leading internationalist Japanese, such as Nitobe Inazō, in the United States in order to "explain Japanese views."[43] Third, the Japanese imperial authorities "appointed" pro-Japan George Bronson Rea, owner and editor of the *Far Eastern Review* of Shanghai, as counsellor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the government of Manzhouguo in 1932.[44] Rea accompanied the Lytton Commission in Manchuria, and assisted the Japanese case at the League in Geneva. He was then sent to Washington D.C. to "advise" Japanese/Manzhouguo officials on pro-Japan propaganda at an attractive yearly salay of $30,000 until 1935.[45]

Their efforts to create a news agency in Manchuria in 1931–1932 were part of this response to the League's actions, in which the Guandong Army also took part. Iwanaga submitted the aforementioned proposal almost a week after the League had decided to send the Lytton Commission to China and Japan in December 1931. He argued for the formation of the key news agency in occupied Manchuria, which he called "the Manchuria and [Inner] Mongolia News Agency."

In this proposal, he shared a few assumptions with the Ministry of the Army and MOFA. First, he accepted Japanese military occupation in Manchuria as an inevitable new phase of the Japanese presence in the region.[46] Second, Iwanaga assumed that after a transitional period with a temporary administrative body in the occupied

[42] Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*, 191, 239, 240.

[43] Wilson, "Containing the crisis," 357–9, 367; Tomoko Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific: The United States, Japan and the Institute of Pacific Relations in War and Peace, 1919–45* (London: Routledge, 2002), 193.

[44] Wilson, "Containing the crisis," 350–51; F. B. Hoyt, "George Bronson Rea: From Old China Hand to Apologist for Japan," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 69 (April 1978): 61–70.

[45] His contract was not renewed in 1935. After an understandably unhappy short return to Shanghai, he died of cancer in the United States in 1936. Hoyt, "George Bronson Rea," 68–9.

[46] Iwanaga Yūkichi, "Manmō tsūshinsha ron" [On the Manchuria and Inner Mongolia News Agency] [December 1931], reprinted in *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, ed. Manshūkoku tsūshinsha, 39.

area, a new state under Japanese "guidance" would be created.[47] Third, he understood that this new state would eventually administer a broader region beyond the area occupied at that time (December 1931). He called the region *Manmō* (including the four northeastern provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning, and Rehe, and part of Inner Mongolia). He also regarded the region as a coherent area, autonomous from the rest of China, and as Japan's sphere of influence.[48] Hence the name "the *Manmō* news agency."

Iwanaga suggested that this proposed news agency would become the "national" news agency for this new autonomous state that would integrate all the administrations in the area.[49] He acknowledged that because the new state was not an ordinary one, its "national" news agency had to be different from national news agencies in other countries. Although official control and monopoly of news would not be ideal for a normal national news agency, he argued, it was necessary in occupied Manchuria. Without it, he continued, the area would become "a dumping ground of foreign and Chinese propaganda." He noted that tighter state control was important, especially during the initial stage, because both Japan and this envisaged new state had to make the world properly understand their respective policies. The proposed "national" news agency should, he argued, also have the same privileges from the new state as other national news agencies had. These were: an exclusive right to wireless communication and the first access to official statements.[50]

Furuno Inosuke, Iwanaga's right-hand man, visited occupied Manchuria in January 1932 in order to further Iwanaga's proposal. He found that the top officials of the Guandong Army agreed with Iwanaga that "news was central in propaganda and a news agency was a crucial institution of overseas propaganda."[51]

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[47] A similar suggestion was made by the Ministry of the Army to the Guandong Army on 1 and 2 December 1931. Sanbō honbu, "Manshū jihen ni okeru gun no tōsui (an)," 479–80.

[48] Duara argues that such a claim had been valid until the late nineteenth century and was accepted in Japanese and Western scholarship. Japanese scholarship, he argues, deliberately ignored the recent development of substantial Chinese migration into the area in the first two decades of the twentieth century. This served Japan's strategic and economic interests. Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 56–8. Boyle also points out that this "Sinification of vast areas beyond the Wall" was symbolised by the Nationalist Government's creation of "four new provinces in what was once Mongol territory" (Rehe, Chahar, Suiyuan, and Ningsia) in 1928. Boyle, *China and Japan at War*, 123–4.

[49] MOFA also shared a similar view on this point in December 1931–January 1932. Gaimushō hyakunenshi hensan iinkai, *Gaimushō no hyakunen vol. 2*, 217–18.

[50] Iwanaga even suggested no news censorship: news should be delivered quickly, as well as accurately, selectively, and cheaply in order to be picked up as "valuable news" by leading news agencies. Iwanaga, "Manmō tsūshinsha ron," 39–41.

[51] These officers included Lieutenant-Colonel Honjō Shigeru, Colonel Itagaki Seishirō, and Lieutenant-Colonel Ishiwara Kanji. Furuno also met Doihara Kenji, the head of the Guandong Army's Special Service Unit at Harbin. Furuno had known some of these army officers since the early 1920s, when he had been posted as a correspondent in Beijing. Sasaki, "Kokutsū no shinwa o kataru," 31–32; Tsūshinshashi kankōkai ed., *Tsūshinshashi*, 356; Furuno Inosuke denki henshū iinkai ed., *Furuno Inosuke*, 187–8.

It took a year, however, before the proposed news agency was finally created. Satō Junko points out that this was due to the lack of coherent policy in Tokyo.[52] The Inukai Cabinet had begun to coordinate Japan's overseas news dissemination in December 1931, trying to send a unanimous message of "Japan" to the world and the League. Despite the fact that the Inukai government won a landslide victory in the general election in February 1932, many factors, including intra-party fights, military actions in China, and terrorist attacks on leaders of political parties and big business, obstructed the government in formulating and implementing unified policies in the first half of the year. On 15 May, Inukai himself was gunned down in a terrorist attack.

Coherent policies on Manchuria and overseas propaganda began to emerge only after Saitō Makoto, former navy admiral who was fluent in English, formed the national unity government on 26 May 1932. This corresponded to the Saitō Cabinet's prompt action to deal with the pressing issues of the time. One of these issues was the decision on the form of the imperial authority to supervise Manzhouguo, and the government needed to coordinate competing key imperial stakeholders (the Guandong Army, the Ministry of the Army, MOFA and the Colonial Ministry).[53] In July 1932, these stakeholders decided that they would bestow imperial authority on the Japanese ambassador extraordinary to Manzhouguo, who was also the Guandong Army's commander, and the governor of the Guandong Agency (which had managed the leased territory in the Liaodong peninsula).[54] This imperial authority was called "the Three-in-One-System," as it compromised the interests of the three key stakeholders: MOFA, the Guandong Army, and the Colonial Ministry.

At the same time, the Saitō Cabinet restarted the process of coordinating overseas propaganda operations. Its main concern was the Lytton Commission. Having finished its investigation in Manchuria, the commission was returning to Tokyo. After the bloody May 15 Incident, the Saitō Cabinet had to propagate positive images of Japan and promote the Japanese case at the League. Reflecting this concern, the cabinet created the informal inter-ministerial information committee in September 1932 (hereafter referred to as the September Committee).

This metropolitan action needed to proceed in tandem with propaganda coming from Manchuria, which the Saitō government felt also had to be unified.[55] Now Iwanaga's proposal of December 1931 presented a well-informed blueprint for the creation of the new news agency in occupied Manchuria, which proposed to unite the operations of *Dentsū* and *Rengō*.

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[52] Satō, "Manshūkoku tsūshinsha no setsuritsu," 39.

[53] The Colonial Ministry (founded in 1929) had been the supervisory ministry of the SMR and the Guandong Agency (*Kantōchō*). The Guandong Agency was Japan's colonial administrative authority for the leased territory (from China) at the southern part of the Liaodong peninsula, where Manchuria's two major ports, Dalian and Port Arthur, were located. In 1905, Japan had gained the right from Russia to lease this land from China.

[54] The first ambassador extraordinary was the Guandong Army Commander and Army General, Mutō Nobuyoshi.

[55] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, 47.

In Tokyo from summer to autumn 1932, MOFA, not the Army, took the initiative in the creation of this news agency in Manchuria. This meant that the metropolitan stakeholders agreed that the main role of the proposed news agency was the coordination of overseas (out of occupied Manchuria) propaganda operations. It also meant that in mid–late 1932, the metropolitan government regarded the Manchurian Affair as a "diplomatic," not a colonial, problem in relations mainly with Euro-American powers and the League of Nations. The Department of Information of MOFA had been subsidising *Rengō*'s overseas operations as a part of foreign policy. It understood the amalgamation of *Dentsū* into *Rengō* in Manchuria as an issue of this continuing overseas operation. The decision in July 1932 to establish the embassy extraordinary, nominally MOFA's mission, as the imperial supervisory body over Manzhouguo further strengthened MOFA's case: Japan's relationship with Manzhouguo was now formally defined as diplomatic, not colonial. Accordingly, Shiratori Toshio, Director of MOFA's Department of Information, sent Secretary Suma Yakichirō to Mukden in late summer to assist the founding of this news agency.

In occupied Manchuria, however, the Guandong Army, not MOFA missions, was in charge of the creation of this news agency. It nonetheless agreed with MOFA on the importance of appealing to international public opinion and the League. The garrison nominated Satomi Hajime, a SMR man in the Fourth Department of the Guandong Army headquarters, to lead the establishment of the proposed news agency. Satomi had been closely involved in Japanese intelligence and propaganda operations in North China in the previous decade, and had known Suma well since their days in Beijing.[56] The meeting between Satomi and Suma went smoothly, which ensured a close connection between MOFA and the Guandong Army.[57]

As Matsusaka suggests, although the Guandong Army was the most dominant force in occupied Manchuria, it was still not dominant enough to overrule all the other imperial agencies in this period.[58] The Saitō government prompted coordination among these imperial authorities within Manchuria to create the proposed news agency. They formed a committee, which held its first meeting at Yamato Hotel in Mukden on 17–18 August 1932. The committee (hereafter referred to as the Mukden Committee) included the main imperial stakeholders in occupied

[56] Satomi became "consultant" for the SMR's Nanjing office, and then he was seconded by the SMR to the Fourth Department soon after the "Manchurian Incident" occurred in September 1931. Tsūshinshashi kankōkai ed., *Tsūshinshashi*, 359. He was a graduate of the Shanghai-based Japanese imperial institution, the East Asia Common Culture Academy, and fluent in Chinese. On the East Asia Common Culture Academy, see Douglas R. Reynolds, "Training young China hands: Tōa Dōbun Shoin and its precursors, 1886–1945," in *The Japanese Informal Empire*, eds., Duus, Myers, and Peattie, 210–71. He also had extensive contacts in the Chinese underground.

[57] Satomi Hajime, "Sōritsu no zengo dan" [Stories before and after the foundation of the MNA], in *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, ed. Manshūkoku tsūshinsha, 15, 23; Matsumoto Shigeharu, *Shanhai jidai* [The Shanghai period] *vol. 1* (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1974), 186.

[58] Matsusaka makes this point in his analysis on the garrison's failed attempt to control the SMR in 1932–1933. Matsusaka, "Managing occupied Manchuria," 120–27.

Manchuria: the Guandong Army's General Staff Office, the Japanese Consulate at Mukden (MOFA), the Guandong Agency (the Colonial Ministry), the SMR, and the Manzhouguo administration. Although the Guandong Army had the ultimate power over the Manzhuguo administration's policy-making office, the Board of General Affairs in the Council of the State,[59] bureaucrats from metroplitan imperial ministries in Tokyo also filled the relevant top positions and often voiced their own ministerial interests.[60]

While the Mukden Committee became a standing one to coordinate these imperial agencies' sectional interests, the committee members were unanimous in their priority at the first meeting: they needed to appeal to international public opinion and win its sympathy for Japan's actions in Manchuria. The minutes noted: "it was imperative to establish a news agency in Manchuria" which could let the world know what was happening in this region. The initial main task of this envisaged news agency was, therefore, overseas propaganda, although internal control was not neglected. The committee also discussed the consolidation of Japanese-run (pro-Japan) newspapers in the Chinese, English, Russian, Korean, and Japanese languages in Manzhouguo and the leased Guandong area.[61]

Despite the fact that Japan formally acknowledged Manzhouguo on 15 September 1932, the proposed news agency remained an agency for imperial Japan's diplomacy. The idea of the "national" news agency of Manzhouguo did not emerge until the end of 1932. In mid-August 1932, the committee still used the name, "the news agency of Manchuria and [Inner] Mongolia," not the Manzhouguo News Agency.[62] Although the Guandong Army was in charge of the creation of the news agency within occupied Manchuria, the Mukden Committee continued to assume that MOFA would mainly fund the agency, and indeed it did so.[63] The proposed news agency was, therefore, funded by MOFA as its imperial diplomatic machine.

The colonial outpost's needs accelerated metropolitan inter-ministerial coordination in the crucial period of Japan's response to the League in autumn 1932.[64] Satomi came to Tokyo in September to work out technical details in the metropolitan agencies. The above-mentioned September Committee had just been formed in Tokyo, and upon Satomi's request, the Ministry of the Army and the Ministry of Communication worked out the details of the proposed news agency's use of

[59] Ibid., 107.

[60] MOFA also argued that the Meiji Constitution demanded a clear division between the military (military affairs) and civilian bureaucracy (administration for managing the occupied area), which strengthened these bureaucrats' roles in the occupied area. Even after December 1934, while the Army was most powerful in the Manchurian Affairs Bureau, MOFA and the Ministry of Finance still maintained influence. Gaimushō hyakunenshi hensan iinkai, *Gaimushō no hyakunen vol. 2*, 228–66.

[61] Katō, "Kioku o tadoru," 25–6; Satō, "Manshūkoku tsūshinsha no setsuritsu," 30–2.

[62] Katō, "Kioku o tadoru," 26.

[63] In September–November 1932, MOFA guaranteed 200,000 yen for the foundation of the proposed news agency, and 240,000 yen for its first year. Satomi, "Sōritsu no zengo dan," 19.

[64] Satō, "Manshūkoku tsūshinsha no setsuritsu," 34–5.

wireless in Manzhouguo.[65] *Dentsū* also agreed to a deal that specified incorporation into *Rengō* in Manchuria.[66] Satomi completed his mission in Tokyo by early November 1932.

By the time the Guandong Army announced the establishment of this proposed news agency on 15 November, however, it used the new term, "the Manzhouguo News Agency" (*Manshūkoku tsūshinsha*), which could also be translated as "the national news agency of Manchuria." Sasaki Kenji recorded in 1942 that this name was chosen because the founders regarded the proposed news agency as the "national policy" (*Kokusaku*) organisation for Manzhouguo.[67]

The new name indicated the key dilemma of the MNA. It was funded by the metropolitan ministry, MOFA, and came under the supervision of the imperial authorities. Yet it aimed to become the "national" news agency of Manzhouguo in order to project the fiction of an independent nation state to the world.

The MNA as an Imperial Agency, December 1932

The MNA was founded on 1 December 1932 (Fig. 1). While it contained "Manzhouguo" in its name, it was an imperial agency in its funding, supervisory body, staff composition, and functions. Which ministry had the most influence over the MNA, however, was unclear. MOFA funded the MNA, and the MNA was placed formerly under the jurisdiction of the Japanese Embassy Extraordinary. At the same time, the Fourth Department of the Guandong Army was also involved. It dissolved the Mukden Committee, and created the Publicity Association (*Kōhō kyōkai*) as the direct supervising body for the MNA. The Guandong Army's Chief of Staff called for its first meeting on 20 December 1932 at Yamato Hotel in Changchun. At this meeting, the association was defined as "being located directly under the Ambassador Extraordinary."

This Publicity Association's function was "to discuss and decide the propaganda policy of Japan and Manzhouguo." It saw propaganda to the League of Nations as one of its main duties. Other duties included "internal" management: guidance of news media organisations in Manchuria, namely the MNA and newspapers; control over films in Manchuria; and the reorganisation of the Manchurian Cultural Association.[68]

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[65] Satomi, "Sōritsu no zengo dan," 19.

[66] The deal was that the news input into Manchuria would be channelled to the single proposed new news agency, while news output from Manchuria would be distributed to both Rengō and Dentsū in Tokyo. Satomi, "Sōritsu no zengo dan," 20; Tsūshinshashi kankōkai ed., *Tsūshinshashi*, 359–60. This coordination between Rengō and Dentsū proved to be possible in the colonial outpost, but not in the metropolitan centre where existing interests could not be brushed away by military coercion. Satomi Shū, *Nyūsu egenshi*: *Dōmei tsūshinsha no kōbō* [The News Agency: The Rise and Fall of Dōmei] (Tokyo: Chūō kōron shinsha, 2000), 84–94.

[67] Sasaki, "Kokutsū no shinwa o kataru," 37.

[68] Katō, "Kioku o tadoru," 26–7.

Fig. 1 The front of the MNA, December 1932. *Source*: Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, n.p.

Its staff was imperial. Satomi became the MNA's first head (*Shukan*), and its editor-in-chief was Ōya Nobuhiko from the SMR (Fig. 2). At the time of its foundation, the MNA had 74 staff, among which 37 were at the headquarters, and 37 worked at its five branch offices in Dalian (15 staff), Mukden (11), Harbin (7), Quiqihar (3) and Tokyo (1). Most were former correspondents and technicians of the two imperial news agencies (*Rengō* and *Dentsū*). They were all Japanese, except for one Russian in Harbin. There were no Chinese, Mongols, or Koreans.[69]

The lists of the heads of the MNA's bureaus and departments of July 1937 and November 1942 suggest that the MNA retained its "imperial" substance. In July 1937, among 448 MNA employees, the Japanese held all the top jobs except for one. The president was Japanese. Among nine directors, eight were Japanese and one was Chinese, possibly a token appointment. All the heads of the bureaus and the departments at the headquarters were Japanese, and so were the heads of its 15 branch offices (and 8 other smaller offices) in Manchuria, Korea, and Japan.[70] In November 1942, all 5 members of the board of directors were Japanese. Among 65 heads and deputy heads of the bureaus and departments of the headquarters, only 3 had Chinese names (2 in the editing department, and 1 in the special report [intelligence] department). All the chiefs of 16 branch offices and 5 correspondents in more peripheral locations were Japanese.[71]

Imperial authority nonetheless recognised that the MNA had to address the "local" population. While the MNA distributed its news mainly in Japanese, it also did so in Chinese and English. In some areas, it delivered news in Russian, and possibly Korean. In Harbin, for example, Japanese news agencies (starting with the MOFA-funded Oriental News Agency, which *Rengō* absorbed in 1929) had distributed news in Russian and Chinese as well as in Japanese since 1925. Because *Rengō*'s Harbin office was particularly keen to provide news for anti-communist papers,[72] the MNA's Harbin office continued this practice after December 1932.

[69] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, 50–51.
[70] Ibid., 57–9.
[71] Ibid., 68–70.
[72] Ibid., 229–30.

Fig. 2 Directors of the MNA: Satomi Hajime (*Top Right*), Ōya Nobuhiko (*Top Left*), Takayanagi Yasutarō, *Lower Right*), Morita Hisashi (*Lower Left*). *Source*: Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, n.p.

The Guandong Army recognised the strategic significance of news and telecommunication and wanted to strengthen its control in the occupied area. It nonetheless needed to work with MOFA. In 1932–1934, the garrison and MOFA tried to take control of the telecommunication infrastructure in the occupied area from the Colonial Ministry. The move was related to a broader action by the Guandong Army, the Ministry of the Army, and MOFA, which tried to eliminate the Colonial Ministry (and the Guandong Agency) from Japan's imperial supervisory body, currently the Three-in-One System of the Japanese Embassy Extraordinary. They succeeded in December 1934, when the Manchurian Affairs Bureau superseded this system. The army minister headed the new Manchurian Affairs Bureau, which came directly under the prime minister, and which absorbed the Guandong Agency.[73] Recognising the significance of transportation and communication, and using this organisational change as an opportunity, the Guandong Army and MOFA also took over the supervising role of the SMR and the MTTC (the Manchurian Telegram and Telephone Company) from the Colonial Ministry.[74]

Although the imperial authorities competed to control the infrastructure of transportation and communication, control over the gathering and delivery of news was a more complex matter, and the supervisory body of the MNA changed several times between the imperial authorities and the Manzhouguo administration in the following decades.

[73] Matsusaka, "Managing occupied Manchuria," 127–33; Gaimushō hyakunenshi hensan iinkai, *Gaimushō no hyakunen vol. 2*, 215–19.

[74] Ibid., 260.

Making the MNA the "National" News Agency, April 1933

What made control over the MNA more complex than control over the MTTC? The MNA had a dual function. Its initial priority was overseas propaganda, which needed to be coordinated with MOFA headquarters in Tokyo and its diplomatic missions in Manchuria. Yet, while imperial control over the MNA was inevitable, in order to propagate the fiction of the nation state to the world, the MNA also needed to project itself as a "national" organisation. Furthermore, the MNA had another role to play in the internal security of military-occupied Manchuria, and also in the mobilisation of diverse residents in the area. For the MNA's internal propaganda to be effective, it needed to find the right balance between being an imperial agency and a "national" agency.

Reflecting this complex situation, the imperial authorities could not agree on the MNA's legal status until April 1933. The MNA's official history of 1942 presented the process of defining the MNA's status as a story of MNA staff's struggle to realize the ideal of self-determination by creating the "national" news agency of Manzhouguo. By January 1933, the MNA's official history argued, MNA staff proposed that the MNA should be incorporated like *Nippon hōsō kyōkai* or NHK (Japanese Broadcasting Association) in Tokyo, and be supervised by the Manzhouguo administration. As a result, it continued, "the MNA ceased to come under the jurisdiction of the [Japanese] Embassy Extraordinary at the end of March 1933, and came under that of the Manzhouguo administration on 1 April 1933."[75] Corresponding to this move, the Manzhouguo administration created the Department of Information at the Board of General Affairs in the Council of the State, which became the MNA's supervisory body and its main source of funding.[76]

A great deal of time, effort, and money were invested in the creation of this facade of the new nation state, and in making the MNA the "national" news agency. This continued even after Japan lost the propaganda war at the League in February 1933.

The MNA's "nationalisation" in this period, however, did not mean that Japanese policy-makers were committed to the autonomous nation state. Rather, it reflected their pragmatic judgement that the fiction of the autonomous nation state had some political and strategic merit. Here, the timing seems to be critical. First, this "nationalisation" occurred soon after the Japanese official declaration of withdrawal from the League of Nations. The metropolitan government now had to rethink and redirect overseas propaganda, as it had thus far concentrated on the League. Second, this change also occurred immediately after the Guandong Army had completed the military expansion. The garrison now had to consolidate its rule of the expanded Manzhouguo. The creation of the Department of Information in the Board of General Affairs most likely reflected this strategic thinking. Accordingly, the Guandong Army now stressed the role of the MNA in systematic media control

[75] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, 51–2.

[76] Ibid., 52–3.

and intelligence gathering for the internal security of the broadened occupied area. It is important to point out here that MOFA's subsidy was decreasing, but continued in 1934–1936.[77] MOFA, therefore, still saw some merit in the MNA's overseas propaganda.[78]

The official history of the MNA of 1942 repeatedly stressed the MNA's continuing efforts to become the "national" news agency. In April 1933, it argued, the new arrangements intended to give certain privileges to the MNA as the "national" news agency. These included: the MNA's monopoly of wireless news within and from Manzhouguo; special rates for its use of telecommunication; and its priority access to Manzhouguo's official statements. Rather tellingly, the MNA was now also the "advertising" agency for Manzhouguo.[79]

This "nationalisation", therefore, was an imperial strategic plan to make the MNA the central source of international and "national" news for newspapers in Manzhouguo. The imperial authorities aimed for three major outcomes: stronger and extended pro-Japan news networks, the consolidation and the monopoly of news media organisations, and the standardisation (nationalisation) of pro-Japan news in the occupied area.

The official account of the MNA noted that the MNA began to expand its "national" news network in this period. This meant that the Guandong Army strengthened media control and intelligence gathering at strategically and economically significant locations in the occupied territory. When the MNA was established in December 1932, it had branch offices only in Dalian, Mukden, Harbin, Qiqihaer, and Tokyo. By the end of 1934, it had added seven more offices in Manchuria—Haila'er (海拉爾), Jilin (吉林), Rongjing (龍井), Andong (安東), Yingkou (営口), Chengde (承德), and Shanhaiguan (山海関)—three in China (Tianjin, Beijing, and Shanghai), and another in Osaka (see Fig. 3).[80] One can see that they were located at key spots for border security, trade, transportation, and communication.

The activities of MNA offices included not only news propaganda (providing pro-Japan news to local papers, and controlling or running local papers), but also "news" (intelligence) collection. The office in Andong, for example, was established in February 1933. It was located on the border with Korea, crucial for border security and trading with Korea.[81] It was also a key point for news transmission from Seoul and Fukuoka (Japan). The office in Haila'er, founded in May 1933, was located on the northwestern border with the Soviet Union. The office in

[77] Hishikari to Hirota, 20 March 1934; Hishikari to Hirata, 5 July 1935; Moriya to Amō, 10 February 1936, in the file of "Manshūkoku tsūshinsha kankei ikken" [The case concerning the MNA: MTKI], Gaikō shiryōkan [MOFA Archives] (GS).

[78] MOFA was supporting MNA's operation of English news distribution within and outside of Manzhouguo. Yasui to Arita [and Home Minister et al.], 29 August 1936, in the file of MTKI, GS.

[79] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, 53.

[80] Ibid., 53–4.

[81] Ibid., 84.

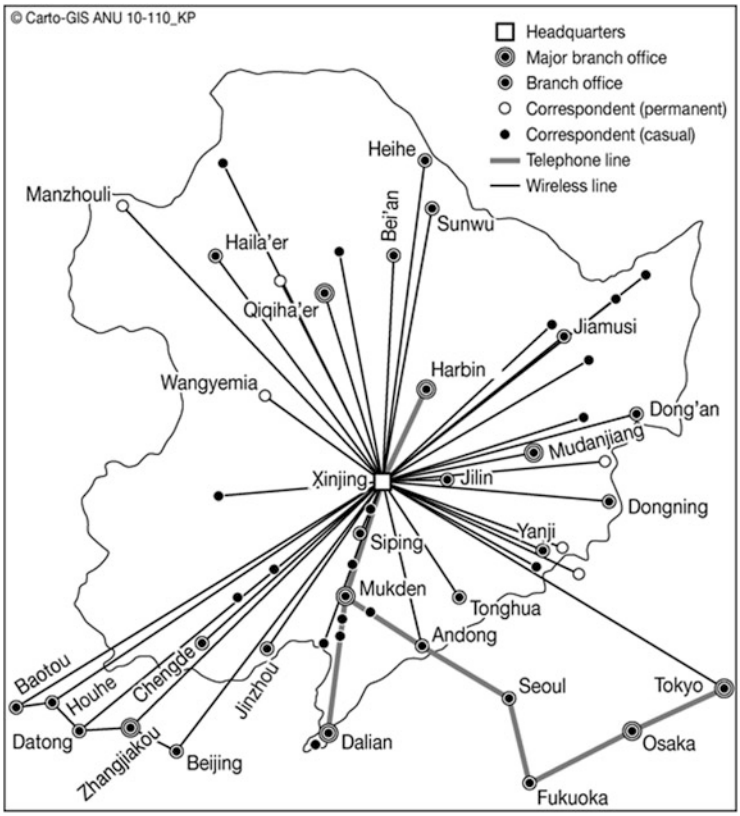

Fig. 3 News network of the Manzhouguo News Agency, 1942. *Source*: Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi* (Xinjing [Changchun]: Editor, [1942]), n.p.; Tsūshinshashi kankōkai ed., *Tsūshinshashi* (Tokyo: Editor, 1958), p. 392

Chengde in Rehe Province was created to prepare for the Guandong Army's occupation of the province in March 1933.[82]

A new MNA operation in this period suggests that the Japanese imperial authorities paid great attention to public opinion in the rest of China. The MNA established a cover organisation, *Daitō tsūshinsha* (Great East News Agency), in key cities in China outside Manzhouguo, and began "news" delivery and gathering. This organisation had two main duties: to propagate rosy images of Manzhouguo under Japanese "guidance" to the rest of China, and to gather "news" about the rest of China for the Japanese imperial authorities in Manchuria. The first office was set up in Tianjin in February 1933 (just before Japan's occupation of Rehe Province). This was followed by the offices in Beijing (May), the International Settlement in Shanghai (September), and the British Concession in Guangdong (October).

[82] Ibid., 84–6.

These offices distributed pro-Japan news on Manzhouguo by means of pro-Japan Chinese-language newspapers, as well as the English-language papers of *The North China Daily*, *The China Press*, and *The Shanghai Mercury*. *Daitō*'s news propaganda targets were, therefore, not only the educated Chinese elite, but also foreign expatriates. This cover organisation took extra care to hide its "news" source, although many probably suspected it. It was absorbed into the Shanghai office of *Rengō*'s successor, *Dōmei*, in April 1937.[83]

The Japanese imperial agencies needed to strengthen their propaganda in the rest of China. This was not to counteract American propaganda operations within China; in this period, there is little evidence for the U.S. State Department's systematic propaganda in China.[84] There were other reasons. First, the Shanghai Incident of January-February 1932, not the Mukden Incident of September 1931, had a negative impact on Japan's image in China, and the image needed to be improved.[85] Second, the Japanese government declared its withdrawal from the League in March 1933. As a result, Japan now shifted its propaganda focus away from Geneva.[86] Third, the Japanese government also concluded a truce with China in May 1933. Now it needed to strengthen its dominance in the region not only by force, but by persuasion.

The MNA and the Guandong Army's Expansion into North China, September 1936

The Guandong Army began to increase its direct control over the MNA in early autumn 1935. It proposed the formation of the Manchurian Publicity Association or the MPA (*Manshū kōhō kyōkai*), to take over the supervisory body of the MNA from Manzhouguo's Board of General Affairs. The MPA was established as a

[83] Ibid., 104–8.

[84] The most obvious propaganda agent in China, which the U.S. State Department could have used, was the advertising company of Carl Crow. Crow worked as the key person in China for the U.S. Committee on Public Information towards the end of the First World War and its immediate aftermath. In the 1920s and early 1930s, however, Crow ran a successful advertising company in Shanghai, and the recent most detailed account of his activities in this period do not refer to any direction from the State Department. Paul French, *Carl Crow–A Tough Old China Hand*: *The Life*, *Times*, *and Adventures of an American in Shanghai* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006). After leaving China in 1937, Crow went back to China in 1939 as a reporter for *Liberty*. His only official service recorded in this book was for what soon became the Office of War Information between January 1942 and January 1943. Ibid., 223–48, 253, 259.

[85] Wei argues a great negative impact on treaty port English-language papers in China. S. Wei, "To win the West: China's propaganda in the English-language press, 1928–1941," (PhD diss., Australian National University, 2012), 159–63. Its impact on the opinions among the Chinese was also significant, while the impacts on metropolitan opinions in Europe and North America were more nuanced. Akami, *Japan's News propaganda*, 245–8.

[86] Ibid., 277.

"government-affiliated" corporation (*Tokushu hōjin*) almost a year later in September 1936 (this lasted until December 1940). The MPA's legal status was a joint-stock company (*Kabushiki gaisha*),[87] of which the MNA became "the central organisation." The MNA's official history noted that MNA employees became MPA employees, while they "acted as press officers of the Department of Information of the Manzhouguo administration."[88]

According to the MNA's official history, this change was another attempt to "give more substance as the national news agency" to the MNA. The national news agency, it argued, should monopolise wireless news transmission within and outside the state, should have a special rate for transmission, and exclusive access to official statements. These arrangements, which should have been made in April 1933, it continued, were completed in September 1936. Although the Guandong Army was trying to supervise the MNA without the medium of the Manzhouguo administration, the administration remained the main source of funding. The subsidies came from the Manzhouguo administration (700,000 yen), the Guandong Army (150,000 yen), the SMR (150,000 yen), the Guandong Bureau (15,000 yen), the MTTC (3,000 yen), and the Navy (2,000 yen). MOFA still contributed, but only 10,000 yen.[89]

Why then did the Guandong Army create a separate organisation to supervise the MNA, while its connection with the Manzhouguo administration remained strong? The move was probably related to the garrison's actions in North China in 1935–1936. In mid–late 1935, the garrison expanded its sphere of influence into Hebei, Chahar, Suiyuan, Shanxi, and Shandong, creating a non-fighting zone and a pro-Japan regime. Its special unit (*Tokumubu*) most likely used the MNA for co-opting leaders in the region without attracting the attention of the world to military conflicts.

The Guandong Army, therefore, created the MPA as a way to control the MNA directly (not financially, but within its chain of command). By doing so, it could expand MNA operations into North China, while more effectively rationalising and centralising them within Manzhouguo. Using the MPA (mainly the MNA), the Guandong Army "rationalised" news media organisations in Manzhouguo. This meant that it funded a smaller number of useful pro-Japan news organisations, while closing down other less compliant or less useful ones. The garrison centralised wireless communication at the MNA. In this way, the Guandong Army most likely intended to make the MPA (more precisely its MNA component) the central office for news propaganda operations, and for gathering and assessing intelligence on Manzhouguo. The garrison also used the MPA to strengthen photo and film propaganda. Its MNA component was to boost the photo news service and the production and distribution of news films. Furthermore, using the MNA and the MTTC, the MPA expanded wireless and cable networks to North China.[90]

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[87] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, 71.

[88] Furuno Inosuke came to Manchuria to mediate this transition. Ibid., 56.

[89] Ueda to Arita, 24 September 1936, in the file of MTKI, GS.

[90] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, 54–6; Tsūshinshashi kankōkai ed., *Tsūshinshashi*, 367–8; Furuno Inosuke denki henshū iinkai ed., *Furuno Inosuke*, 189.

Could the Chinese- and Korean-language newspapers that the MPA (and the MNA) controlled in this period (before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War) make the local Chinese and Korean people imagine "their nation" in occupied Manchuria? John Hunter Boyle argued that other later pro-Japanese regimes in North China created "real" networks of "local" interests.[91] As Duara suggested,[92] however, being "national" in occupied Manchuria also meant being "imperial" when the "nation" itself was an imperial construct.[93]

The MNA as a Part of the Metropolitan Imperial Agency, July 1937

The MNA underwent another status change just before the outbreak of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. On the surface, it appears that this altered the MNA from a government-controlled organisation to an "independent" news media organisation. At the beginning of July 1937, a week before the incident, the MNA became legally separate from the MPA, and was established as an independent company. According to the official history of Japanese news agencies, Furuno Inosuke directed this restructuring. Furuno purportedly found the earlier MNA's organisational change (in September 1936) detrimental to the MNA's international reputation as it obstructed the essential functions of a news agency, such as the swift gathering and delivery of news. Based on Furuno's proposal, the official historical account noted, the MNA was reorganised on 1 July 1937. It became a joint-stock company with capital of 500,000 yen and was "formally independent" from the MPA.[94]

One document of 12 April 1937 suggests that this change was part of a greater restructuring of *Dōmei* operations in the first half of 1937, and was closely related to Japan's policy towards China in this critical period. This document was an agreement on promoting greater "cooperation" between two "private" organisations, *Dōmei* in Tokyo and the MPA in Xinjing (Changchun). It regarded the MPA and the MNA as identical. By "greater cooperation," it meant an integration of the

[91] Boyle, *China and Japan at War*, 83.

[92] Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 248.

[93] Kawashima Shin defines the creation of Manchurian "national" culture as the imperial political project. Kawashima, "'Teikoku' to rajio," 228–31. One can see the creation of a "national" space in MNA-controlled Chinese language newspapers in terms and ideas such as "national army," "national defence," "national education," "national sporting events," and "national team" for the Olympic games. I would like to thank Wei Shuge for her translation of the articles of *Shengjing shibao* (12, 13, 18, 27 September 1936, 2 October 1936, 20, 21 April 1937, 1, 12, 13, 20 July 1937).

[94] Tsūshinshashi kankōkai ed., *Tsūshinshashi*, 370–1.

operations and personnel of *Dōmei* and the MNA.[95] At this precise point in time, April 1937, the official history of Japanese news agencies also tells us, the MNA's operations in North China were absorbed into *Dōmei*'s Beijing bureau. Sasaki Kenji, who was then the head of the MNA's Beijing office, supervised this integration, and became the chief of *Dōmei*'s Beijing bureau.[96] This was followed by Furuno's move to separate the MNA in Xinjing from the MPA on 1 July 1937.

Was this series of reorganisations between April and July a part of *Dōmei*'s preparations for war in coordination with the Japan's North China Expedition Army and the Guandong Army? If this was the case, was *Dōmei* informed of the likely timing of Japan's planned military attack on North China? It is unlikely that the *Dōmei* management in Tokyo directed such major changes in this strategically significant area at this time without any consultation with, or any pressure from, these Japanese regional army commands and/or MOFA. A military clash was expected sooner or later in North China in mid-1937, and the imperial authorities might have advised *Dōmei* to prepare for it in general terms.

The fact that the restructuring of the MNA occurred only a week before the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, however, may have been coincidental. It is more reasonable to connect the changes of *Dōmei* and the MNA in April–July with the Japanese metropolitan government's decision on "The Third Outline on How to Deal with North China" in late February 1937, and the appointment of Satō Naotake as the new foreign minister in early March 1937. Foreign Minister Satō (March–June 1937) emphasised non-military, economic and cultural manipulation to make North China a pro-Japan buffer zone against communism and the Soviet Union, and a provider of necessary resources for the Japanese Empire.[97] For this policy, MOFA needed to mobilise soft power in the area, and strengthen propaganda activities. *Dōmei*'s operations were critical for Satō's new policy. Satō, a close friend of Iwanaga, may have discussed the matter with him. Such emphasis by the Japanese government on non-military means in North China most likely prompted the integration of *Dōmei* and MNA's operations in the region in April 1937.

Intended or accidental, the changes in April–July prepared *Dōmei* well for war operations. A local military clash between Japan and China began at the Marco Polo Bridge on 7 July 1937, and developed into a full confrontation. Upon the outbreak of the initial conflict, Furuno travelled to Beijing to take charge of *Dōmei*'s operations in North China. By then, the MNA's operations in the area had already

[95] Iwanaga Yūkichi (Shadan hōjin, Dōmei) and Morita Hisashi (Kabushiki gaisha, Manshū kōhō kyōkai), "Keiyakusho" [Contract paper], 12 April 1937, reprinted in *Dōmei tsūshinsha kankei shiryō* [Documents on Dōmei] *vol. 6*, eds., Ariyama Teruo and Nishiyama Takesuke (Tokyo: Kashiwa shobō, 1999), 89–94.

[96] Tsūshinshashi kankōkai ed., *Tsūshinshashi*, 489–90.

[97] "Dai sanji Hokushi shori yōkō" [The Third Outline on the Dealing with North China], 20 February 1937, reprinted in *Nihon gaikō nenpyō narabini shuyō bunsho, 1840–1945* [The Time Table and Main Documents of Japanese Foreign Policy, 1840–1945] *vol. 2*, ed. Gaimushō (Tokyo: Hara shobō, 1969), 356.

been integrated into *Dōmei*'s, and came under *Dōmei*'s Beijing bureau. Furuno, therefore, had more staff and resources. Furthermore, the MNA was now "independent" from the MPA and could be mobilised for imperial war operations without going through the bureaucracy of the Manzhouguo administration.

The MNA's operations expanded greatly after July 1937, but not because of Furuno's restructuring, as the official historical account claimed. It was a result of the Japanese military expansion, its greater need for war propaganda and intelligence operations, and the metropolitan state's support for these wartime activities.[98] New branch offices were established in Inner Mongolia and North China, as well as within Manzhouguo after the war broke out. In Manzhouguo, an office was founded in Yanji (延吉) in June 1937. Once the war had started, other offices were established in Jiamusi (佳木斯) in November–December 1937, Tonghua (通化) in October 1938, Wangyemiao (王爺廟, currently called Wulanhaote) in July 1939, Heihe (黒河) and Beian (千安) in August 1939, Sunwu (孫呉) in October 1939, Dongan (東安) in August 1940, and Siping (四平) in July 1941. Many of them were located near the northern border with the Soviet Union or the eastern border with Korea (see Fig. 3).[99]

The special unit of the Guandong Army directed the MNA's wartime operations in Inner Mongolia and North China (or Mengjiang, 蒙疆) in the first few years of the Sino-Japanese War. It founded MNA new branch offices in Hauhe or Huhehot (厚和) in Suiyuan (綏遠) Province in November–December 1937, in Zhangjiakou (張家口) in Chahar Province in December 1937, in Datong (大同) in Shanxi Province in May 1938, and in Baotou (包頭) in Suiyuan Province in September 1938.[100] These were the locations of the pro-Japan regimes that the Guandong Army created: the Federated Autonomous Government of Mongolia (蒙古連盟自治政府) at Hauhe (founded in late October 1937), and the United Committee of Mengjiang (蒙疆連合委員会) at Zhangjiakou (founded in November 1937).[101]

Just as the MNA became the central organ for managing information in and out of Manzhouguo, these MNA branch offices were to play a similar strategic role for these pro-Japan regimes. They conducted the regimes' external and internal propaganda, controlled pro-Japan newspapers in the areas (or even created them when there was none), contributed to internal security, worked for the army's economic and social projects, and covered news at the war fronts.[102]

[98] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, 57–61, 91–6; Tsūshinshashi kankōkai ed., *Tsūshinshashi*, 370–72, 376.

[99] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnenshi*, 83–8.

[100] Ibid., 83–8, 91–6. Offices were established in Jinzhou (錦州) in October 1936 and in Dongning (東寧) in November 1936.

[101] Boyle, *China and Japan at War*, 127, 131–2

[102] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnenshi*, 92–5.

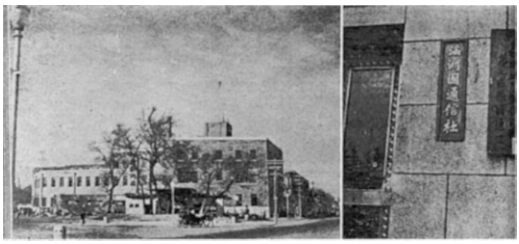

Fig. 4 The headquarters of the MNA, 1938. *Source*: Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, n.p.

The MNA's Further Integration into the Metropolitan Imperial Agency in North China, January 1938

In January 1938, directed by the metropolitan government in Tokyo, *Dōmei* restructured and strengthened its operations in China, especially in North China. The Beijing bureau became the North China Regional Headquarters with Furuno as its head, Sasaki Kenji as the head of its Chinese Language Department, and Matsukata Saburō as the head of the English Language Department. Beijing became the centre of *Dōmei*'s news flow in the broad northern area of China, of which MNA's branch offices in North China, Inner Mongolia, and Manzhouguo were an integral part. All the news from Mongolia, Shinjang, and northern China was gathered at the North China Regional Headquarters. The headquarters edited and transmitted news by means of wireless to various parts of Manzhouguo, the rest of China, and Japan's formal empire.[103] In August 1938, Matsukata took over the position from Furuno (Figs. 4 and 5).[104]

The MNA for a Self-Funded Fort State of the Japanese Empire, August 1941 and January 1942

The MNA went through a structural change in August 1941, which put it back under the supervision of the Manzhouguo administration. By then, as Japan's war with the Allied powers became imminent, Japan's imperial authorities had to make Manzhouguo a self-funded fort against the Soviet Union and divert their attention and resources to anticipated new war fronts in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. The changes in the MNA therefore reflected this new strategic priority. The funding of the MNA came largely from the Manzhouguo administration (2,550,000 yen out of its total budget of 2,800,000 yen).

[103] Tsūshinshashi kankōkai ed., *Tsūshinshashi*, 497.

[104] "Matsukata Saburō nenpu" [The Timeline of Matsukata Saburō], in *Matsukata Saburō*, eds., Matsumoto Shigeharu et al. (Tokyo: Kyōdō tsūshinsha, 1974), 321–53.

Fig. 5 The MNA branch buiding at Harbin, 1938. *Source*: Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnen shi*, n.p.

To further this trend, in January 1942 (after the outbreak of war with the Allied powers), the MNA underwent its last change: it changed its status from a joint-stock company to Manzhouguo's "state-run" news agency. The official historical account of Japanese news agencies notes that the Manzhouguo government funded 90 % of its budget, and controlled its personnel and editorials.[105]

The MNA continued to conduct small-scale overseas propaganda. In November 1942, for example, it was sending English news on Manzhouguo to *Dōmei* and *Deutsches Nachrichten Buero*, or D.N.B. The MNA had a supply of international news from *Dōmei*, D.N.B. and Italian Stephani, which it translated into English and delivered to *Daily News*, the Xinjing Central Broadcasting Station, and Harbin *Sukouremia* (Japanese transliteration of a Russian name) in Manzhouguo.[106]

By then, however, the MNA's operations in North China outside Manzhouguo had largely been absorbed into *Dōmei*'s, and the MNA was more internally focused.

[105] Tsūshinshashi kankōkai ed., *Tsūshinshashi*, 376–9. Matsukata Saburō, who was the head of Dōmei's North China Regional Headquarters, and then the head of its Central and South Regional Headquarters (from the end of 1938), became the chair of the board of directors (*Rijichō*) of the MNA in April 1942. He also became the director of *Manshū nippō* (*Manchurian Daily*) in June 1944. He remained in these positions until June 1945. "Matsukata Saburō nenpu," in *Matsukata Saburō*, eds., Matsumoto et al., 321–53.

[106] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnenshi*, 229–30.

Its main objective was to maintain the internal security of the self-funded fort state. Its branches at the borders with Korea and the Soviet Union gathered and assessed intelligence for border security. It also mobilised residents for this fort state. For both purposes, the MNA monopolised news media organisations, and made news "nationalised" (standardised and pro-Japan) within Manzhouguo.

The MNA regarded Japanese residents as one of the main targets of its internal propaganda.[107] It delivered a Japanese-language news service 3–4 times per day. It controlled 40 Japanese-language newspapers (the readership of which was recorded as one million), as well as 50 broadcasting offices in Manzhouguo. It also tried to mobilise non-Japanese residents, who were the majority in the occupied territory. By November 1942, the MNA delivered Chinese-language news 3–4 times a day and controlled at least 19 Chinese newspapers, including *Datong bao* (大同報) in Changchun, *Shengjing shibao* (盛京時報) in Mukden, and *Dabei shibao* (大千新報) in Harbin.[108] The MNA's Harbin office continued a Russian-language news service (anti-communist and pro-Japan) to the city's broadcasting station, and two Russian-language papers in the city (*Vremia* and *Zaria*). Mongolian-language news began in December 1940 at Wangyemiao. Korean news was also delivered.

Conclusion

The MNA played the central role in Japan's occupation of Northeast Asia in 1931–1945 in the area of the information control within and out of the area. First, its establishment and operation reflected Japanese imperial authorities' adaption of new international norms in the age of the League of Nations. Second, it was crucial in their management of the occupation in Northeast China and the expansion of the sphere of their influence in North China beyond the border of Manzhouguo.

The MNA was initially established to propagate the legitimacy of Japan's occupation of Northeast China to the world, including the rest of China and Japan. This meant that in 1931–1933, even the Guandong Army Headquarters felt the need to gain the approval of international public opinion, of the League in particular, but also of European powers, the United States, China, and Japan.

The MNA's structure constantly changed during its brief history. This instability reflected its dual function and inherent dilemma. It was an imperial agency whose main job was to project to the world, as well as the residents within the military-occupied Northeast China and the people in Japan, the fiction of the nation state of Manzhouguo. As Japan's imperial strategic policies towards the region changed, so did the imperial authorities' view of the merit of the fiction of the nation state. Even after they failed to gain support at the League's General Assembly in February 1933, they continued to see this fiction useful. They urged the MNA to initiate an

[107] Kawashima, "'Teikoku' to rajio", 231, 234, 237.

[108] Manshūkoku tsūshinsha ed., *Kokutsū jūnenshi*, 229.

operation to project a rosy picture of Manzhouguo to the Chinese elite and expatriates in the rest of China, especially North China. As the Guandong Army achieved its territorial ambitions, the MNA began to focus on internal and border security of the occupied area. The MNA's international propaganda operation nonetheless continued, although Tokyo-based *Dōmei* virtually absorbed this external function by the time the Sino-Japanese War began.

By January 1942, the MNA had become a state-run organisation of Manzhouguo. Manzhouguo's strategic merit for the imperial authorities was now as a self-funded fort state, not a fiction of an independent nation state. Yet it is still evident that the authorities continued to use this rhetoric in the Declaration of the Great East Asia in November 1943, when they emphasised the Japanese Empire's "cooperation" with Manzhouguo and the pro-Japan Nanjing government as the basis for an alliance with other pro-Japan regimes in Asia and the Pacific region. It is clear that the less substance the state can show to the public, the more ideological and abstract the propaganda becomes. The rhetoric was hollow, betraying the brutality of the occupation and the exploitation of the people who lived in this region.

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