

Trauma and Community: The Visual Politics of Chinese Nationalism and Sino-Japanese Relations

10:4 | © 2007

William A. Callahan

muse

search

contents



Figure 1: Illustration in Baden-Powell's *Rovering to Success* (1922)

I. The body politics of the body politic

1. While many celebrated the centenary of the Boy Scouts in 2007 through wholesome activities like camping trips in the great outdoors, the movement originally emerged in the early twentieth century as part of the British elite's response to the imperial anxieties of gender and racial pollution posed by 'the effeminate Bengali male' and 'savage' Africans. In a 1922 guidebook, Boy Scout-founder Robert Baden-Powell drew a picture that juxtaposes a healthy up-standing young white man with a shorter respectful African in a rumpled coat (see Figure 1);¹ this image exemplifies how in the twentieth century the modern body took on particular geopolitical value. With the coming of industry to Europe and European empire to the world, individual bodies took on a new role to represent the modern body politic in international space. Thus the Boy Scouts was established as a way of safeguarding the fitness not just of specific boys against venereal disease, but of safeguarding the general fitness of British imperial rule that was 'threatened' by miscegenational temptations in the

colonies.²



Figure 2: Title page and illustration, *National Humiliation Gymnastics* (1929)

2. While the Boy Scouts distributed patriotic images of a strong self compared with a weak and barbaric Other, a set of images from early twentieth century China twists this logic. At the time China was divided and exploited by European, American and Japanese imperial regimes. It was known as the 'Sick Man of Asia,' and in the popular imagination the political health of the Chinese nation was closely linked to the physical health of the Chinese people in ways analogous to the Boy Scouts' linkage of body-building and nation-building.³ In this spirit, a popular handbook, *National Humiliation Gymnastics* (1929), stresses the geopolitical relevance of physical education. The inside front cover of the book (see Figure 2) shows a tall, upright, muscular and young western man instructing a hunched, thin and exhausted Chinese man. The western man says: 'Model yourself on my body and who will dare bully or humiliate you? My pharmacist, my physician and I tirelessly worked together to achieve this body, which is the result of vigorous physical training.' The Chinese man replies: 'I not only get sick from having a weak body; I also suffer bullying and humiliation. Even little dogs can bully and humiliate me.'⁴

3. Rather than producing and distributing positive role models of Chinese patriots like the Boy Scouts, the *National Humiliation Gymnastics* primer uses basically the same image to construct the community of China through the trauma of its weakness. This method of patriotic self-criticism was common in the 1920s and 1930s -- and reappeared after 1989. The gymnastics manual thus outlines how China will only be able to assert itself nationally on

the world stage if it rigorously follows a regime of physical training; like the Boy Scouts, this program stressed the military exercises of the drill team over the gymnastics of the balance beam. Although *National Humiliation Gymnastics* is certainly odd, its logic was reproduced in 2001 when China instituted 'National Defense Education Day' (also known as National Humiliation Day) as an annual public holiday; one of its main purposes is to drill young people in military training. Magazine articles for primary school students promote this humiliation holiday by showing pictures of People's Liberation Army soldiers instructing school girls in proper techniques for marching and bayoneting.⁵ The idiom 'if you are poor, you will be bullied; if you are backward, you will be beaten' has thus been recycled in China for the twenty-first century.



Figure 3: Cover of *Painful History of National Humiliation* (1919)

4. The goal of Chinese intellectuals in the early twentieth century who pursued nation-building through body-building was certainly very positive: the regeneration of China both domestically and internationally against a very real imperialist challenge. But this attention to bodily health is always accompanied by its complementary opposite: serious concerns about the mutilation of the Chinese body politic. The cover of a popular history book, the *Painful History of National Humiliation* (1919), is indicative of the physical and spiritual trauma that China suffered in the early twentieth century (see Figure 3). It shows a crying man with an axe buried in his head -- this is also a spiritual mutilation because the blade is labeled 'May 9th' to signify the official national humiliation day (celebrated between 1916 and 1939) that initially marked Japan's 1915 imperialist incursion into China.⁶ While the focus of body-building was the west, the focus of mutilation is Japan; the goal here is not emulation, but vengeful rage.

5. The politics of bodily mutilation in Sino-Japanese relations is most graphically expressed in the horrible memories of another event, the Nanjing massacre, which have been seared onto the public consciousness. While the Second World War started in 1939 in Europe and 1941 in the Pacific, in East Asia it started in July 1937 with Japan's all-out invasion of China. After conquering Beijing and Shanghai, the imperial Japanese army set its sights on China's then-capital city: Nanjing. Iris Chang's 1997 best-seller, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*, which describes the horrors of the city's conquest and occupation, brought this tragic tale to an international audience for the first time since the war.⁷ 'Nanjing massacre' refers to the horrific series of atrocities committed by the imperial Japanese army as it invaded and occupied the Chinese capital. For the six weeks between 13 December 1937 and late January 1938 Japanese soldiers killed hundreds of thousands of civilians and POWs, and raped over 20,000 women. The city-scape itself was mutilated: homes and shops were looted, and one third of the buildings were set ablaze.

6. While Euro-America had largely forgotten about 'China's holocaust' before Chang's book, in early 1980s Chinese people started talking about this atrocity, initially in reaction to a new edition of a history textbook in Japan that whitewashed Japan's wartime atrocities. Chinese (and South Korean) anger continues to be aroused by right-wing Japanese politicians who still deny these war crimes.⁸ In China the party-state worked to turn a scattered collection of specific memories of the Nanjing massacre into lasting national institutions; to mark anniversaries of the massacre a memorial hall and museum were built, feature films distributed, and dozens of commemorative photo albums and hundreds of illustrated articles published. Paintings, sculptures and novels about the Nanjing massacre also have appeared in the last decade, while more feature films and documentaries are planned for its seventieth anniversary in 2007-08.⁹ The main purpose of these media products is to document the truth about the Nanjing massacre, often through the 'undeniable evidence' of iconic photographs of mutilated Chinese bodies: especially beheaded men and raped women. Starting in the 1990s these haunting images spread out into cyberspace, up-loaded onto the military websites of official security studies think tanks in

China,¹⁰ as well as patriotic websites maintained by transnational Chinese groups.¹¹ When posted on the web these free-floating images are separated from any narrative that would help us to interpret their meaning -- except as a provocation for the raw hatred of foreigners as devils. On the military website these graphic pictures have only short captions like, 'Never forget national humiliation: Chinese women raped by Japanese devils' and 'Never forget national humiliation: slaughtering our compatriots'.

7. The first aim of this essay is to put these free-floating images back into a historical and political context. Although one of the stated objectives of Nanjing massacre publications is to provide objective and thus irrefutable evidence of the truth of the event, we will see how these traumatic texts and images provoke different understandings of 'China' and its relationship with others, especially Japan. The Sino-Japanese relationship is a paradox. Their healthy economic relationship, which is based on complementary trade, aid and investment ties, forms one of the most important partnerships in the global political economy today. Yet their political relations are cool at best -- and remain frosty even after a tentative 'thaw' in 2006-07. The anti-Japanese riots that rocked urban China in April 2005, for example, were not sparked by a military clash, a diplomatic dispute or an economic crisis. Rather, they erupted in reaction to the spiritual and cultural affront that China felt with the publication of a new edition of a Japanese textbook that whitewashes Japan's wartime atrocities. Yet such identity issues are glossed over in geopolitical analyses of Sino-Japanese relations.
8. A year earlier I got the sense of how the troubles between China and Japan are more biopolitical than geopolitical -- the Sino-Japanese rivalry works itself out in the deeply-felt personal enmity that many individual Chinese feel for Japan. When a dinner conversation with Chinese colleagues steered toward the issue of international friendships, a Chinese specialist on US affairs told the group that although he didn't like the US government, he felt a certain empathy and fondness for the American people. Another person agreed, but pointed out how things were different with Japan; *everyone* hates Japan: Asians, Americans, Europeans, everyone. After a moment, I pointed out that Thais have a fondness for Japan and the Japanese -- one of

their most popular novels is about a wartime affair between a Thai woman and a Japanese officer. My Chinese friends were perplexed at this unthinkable possibility: the 'rape' of Nanjing defines the relationship between China and Japan. After a pregnant pause, the discussion moved on to happy memories of vacations in Thailand.

9. This conversation was not an isolated incident. In 2003-04 when a few prominent journalists and scholars suggested that China pursue a more normal relationship with Japan that did not simply dwell on 'the history question,' they were publicly denounced as traitors -- and even received death threats. In 2000, Jiang Wen's film *Devils on the Doorstep*, about a Japanese POW in China who is befriended by Chinese villagers, won the Cannes Grand Prix. But it was censored in China because, as the Film Censorship Committee explained, 'the Chinese civilians don't hate the Japanese' enough; rather, they are as 'close as brothers' with him.¹² Discussion of China's relations with Japan therefore is limited by both official censorship and vigilante harassment.

10. A critical examination of the magazine articles, textbooks, photo albums, museums and memorials representing the Nanjing massacre is important because this event is key to understanding the Sino-Japanese relationship in the twenty-first century, as well as modern Chinese identity politics more generally: *China Youth Daily's* public opinion poll in the mid-1990s reported that 83.9% of young Chinese associated Japan above all with the Nanjing massacre,¹³ and the 'General Preface' to the 28 volume *Nanjing Massacre: Historical Materials* book series (2005-06) explains the meaning of this mammoth scholarly endeavor in terms of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations.¹⁴ Certainly, the Nanjing massacre plays a pivotal role in the politics of Japanese historiography and national identity. It is the key event that divides the revisionist historians who deny it from the progressive historians and journalists who apologize for it.¹⁵ While it is necessary to recognize the horror of Japanese atrocities in the Second World War, and criticize those who deny them, this essay has a different goal: to recognize the pivotal role that the Nanjing massacre plays in Chinese identity and politics. Indeed even though Japan has had a 'Peace Constitution' for over fifty years, the image of a barbaric militarized Japan continues to be circulated in Chinese texts as a way of securitizing China against Japan. While

militarization refers to building national security in the sense of guarding borders and regimenting society, securitization is a deeper process whereby the state works not just through military and economic coercion, but through a productive cultural governance that further institutionalizes the borders between the self and the Other, between patriotic citizens and foreign enemies.¹⁶ As we saw above, the Chinese party-state securitizes its relation with Japan by setting limits on how to understand the Other, thus differentiating what is commonsense from what is unthinkable. Thus while friendship between specific Chinese and Japanese people certainly exists, it would be a mistake to characterize the relations of the two countries as generally friendly. After over two decades of feeding school children what one Chinese historian recently called the 'wolves milk' of devilish images,¹⁷ now this state-driven security narrative has been internalized by the Chinese public -- who themselves now police public discourse about Japan with a vengeance.

11. The essay will show how the Nanjing massacre and its iconic photographs are continually invoked in the party-state's cultural governance and resistance to it: informing both 'nationalist resistance' and 'resistance to nationalism'. Although China's patriotic education texts certainly are dominated by positive images of Chinese civilization, nationalism here is more *negative* than positive; it is produced more from China's 'resistance' (to Japan, the west, foreigners) than through any positive core values of Chinese culture. In this way, the coherence of China's body politic is produced through the mutilation of specific Chinese bodies. The party-state's cultural governance involves documenting the facts of the atrocities in a positivist spirit. The goal of these texts is to reflect the tragic truth -- often through photographs -- for the edification of future generations. The next section thus will analyze Nanjing massacre narratives to show how they use graphic descriptions and grotesque photographs to produce the hegemonic discourse of Chinese nationalism. It will examine how Chinese identity is formed through a process of describing, cataloguing and displaying these atrocities, where Chinese nationalism is defined against a standard of (Japanese) barbarism, rather than with a standard of (Chinese) civilization.
12. While my first concern in this paper is the worsening dynamics of Sino-Japanese relations, an analysis of Nanjing massacre media

products raises other concerns. The various magazine articles, textbooks, photo albums, museums and memorials reproduce the same photographic narrative of the horrors of the atrocity. Certainly, most texts appeal to the photographs and statistics as 'evidence' not only to document Japanese guilt, but also to nail down 'nationalism' as the dominant theme in the Chinese imaginary. But a second look at the photographs suggests that the Nanjing massacre discourse is heavily gendered; it is also called 'the Rape of Nanking,' and the dominant images of mutilated bodies show raped women and beheaded men in ways that reinforce patriarchal nationalism in China. Indeed, we will see how the Chinese visual texts recycle the horrible images taken by Japanese soldiers in order to promote a militant masculine nationalism in China, which is deployed against a militarized and masculinized image of the Japanese enemy. Although the texts use these images as evidence of Japanese war crimes, can they control the other meanings of these photos which were originally shot by Japanese soldiers as war pornography? What happens to the meaning of these iconic photographs when they are produced and distributed again and again? What are the political and ethical limits for realist photography? What is the relationship between political censorship and a voyeuristic aestheticization of horrible photos? To consider these questions, the third part of the essay thus will shift from 'documenting' the Nanjing massacre to theorizing it.

13. The fourth section of the essay will argue that a gendered reading of the visual images tells us about more than patriarchal nationalism; it also helps us to question the hegemonic theme of 'nationalist resistance' in ways that allow 'resistance to nationalism' to emerge in different spaces. Rather than question the evidence of the Nanjing massacre, the last section will question the categories that we use to understand it: 'nationalist resistance,' 'raped women,' 'beheaded men,' 'foreign devils,' and so on.

The visual is increasingly powerful, more and more shifting from the goal of reflecting reality to be a mode of 'targeting' enemies.¹⁸ In recognition of the visual's power, I will argue that part of 'resisting nationalism' involves resisting the use of visual texts. Thus this essay is careful about how it displays the images under analysis. Such ethical risks are multiplied since I am a 'whitemale' who is talking about sexual violence in Asia. Beverly Allen

encountered similar problems in writing about rape warfare in Bosnia: 'It is extremely difficult to write about such things. Every phrase risks misinterpretation; every analytic moment risks being incomplete.'¹⁹ Thus I have tried to get the right tone -- respectful, but still critical -- because any analysis of the visual politics of the Nanjing massacre risks offending women and men, Chinese and non-Chinese people.²⁰

II. Nationalist resistance

14. The aim of this section is to put the free-floating images of the Nanjing massacre back into a historical and political context. But as we will see, this does not mean that the images have a single stable relationship with a single stable Chinese history. Like in other places, history is constructed in China through a deliberate editing of what to include in and exclude from the national story. Indeed, rather than 'authoring' the pictorial *The Rape of Nanjing*, Shi Young and James Yin see their work as 'compiling and editing this book' of pictures.²¹ In a similar way, historians emplot the historical narrative to tell a story of a particular kind.²² The constructive process becomes more opaque in commemorative photo albums because, as Michael J. Shapiro writes, 'Of all modes of representation, photography is the one most easily assimilated into the discourses of knowledge and truth, for it is thought to be an unmediated simulacrum, a copy of what we consider the "real".'²³ Thus even more than the written text photographs take on an important 'evidence function' in knowledge production; they tend to reinforce existing practices and structures of power, authority and exchange.²⁴
15. Nanjing massacre texts, images and memorials are interesting because they emerge in the People's Republic of China (PRC) just as Chinese historiography was undergoing seismic shifts in the 1980s: what was 'true' one month could be 'false' the next -- with little or no explanation offered for the reversal.²⁵ Under Mao, history was written in terms of Marxist class struggle. The main enemy was Nationalist China on Taiwan. Hence the Chinese civil war (1946-1950) received much more attention than the Second World War (1937-45). Since Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist Party were the main enemies, Chinese historiography also treated

wartime Japan along class lines, differentiating between the heinous leaders of Japan and the exploited Japanese masses. According to this story, a small clique of Japanese militarists brought death and destruction not only to China, but to the vast majority of Japanese people as well. At this time, China was wooing Japan to gain official diplomatic recognition, so the party-state restricted historical research and public education on potentially 'embarrassing' topics like Japan's wartime atrocities.

16. China's official historiography changed in the 1980s as an ideological reaction to the social problems generated by economic reform. As the society become more complex, there were fears that rapid uneven economic development was ripping the country apart. Thus the Chinese leadership decided to shift from the guiding historiography of class struggle to unite China through a more nationalist historiography. This strategy revalued Taiwan and the Nationalist party from archenemies into compatriots to be wooed for eventual reunification. In terms of national history, this meant that the Second World War rose to new prominence both to acknowledge Nationalist victories and, more importantly, to capitalize on the strong negative commonality of a shared enemy: Japan. Moreover, once Japan recognized the PRC as the one-and-only China in 1972, Beijing no longer needed to woo Tokyo so actively -- or restrict research on Japanese atrocities.
17. In this way, a Chinese nationalist historiography emerged that pursues two opposite, but ultimately complementary images of China: China as a 'victim state, persecuted by the international community,' and China as a 'victorious great power, ready to take its rightful place on the world stage.'²⁶ These two nationalist narratives are often gendered, with China as a victim represented as feminine and heroic China represented as masculine. Like in gender politics more generally, feminine victim and masculine hero are not exclusive opposites; each is necessary to constitute the other in the production of the symbolic coherence of (Chinese) identity.²⁷ This productive tension between China as victim and China as victorious great power can be seen in the Nanjing massacre's role in three historical narratives: the Century of National Humiliation, the War of Resistance against Japan, and the city of Nanjing. Each of these historiographies has produced its own set of texts, albums and memorials.²⁸ Each has its own narrative logic and set of lessons -- yet all three stories work hard

not only to provide evidence of Japan's war crimes, but to continue to securitize Chinese identity by warning readers to 'beware of Japanese militarism.'

1. Nanjing massacre in the Century of National Humiliation

18. The Century of National Humiliation is a narrative of modern Chinese history that recounts how at the hands of foreign invaders and corrupt Chinese regimes, sovereignty was lost, territory dismembered, and the Chinese people thus humiliated. The Opium War whereby the British navy pried open the Chinese empire to western capitalism in 1840 is usually seen as the beginning of the century of national humiliation, and the communist revolution in 1949 as the end.²⁹ This kind of modern history characteristically excludes important 'positive' victories like the Republican revolution of 1911, and includes all of the events where China suffered at the hands of evil foreigners and Chinese traitors: National Humiliation textbooks list a series of invasions, massacres, unequal treaties, lost territories, war reparations, and so on. Like with the *Painful History of National Humiliation* (1919), national humiliation textbooks continue to pursue the 'China as victim' narrative, where patriotism emerges not from promoting positive Chinese values, but from remembering how foreigners have abused China. The title of a recent history textbook gives an idea of the tenor of this historiography: *National Humiliation, Hatred and the Chinese Soul* (2001).³⁰
19. The discourse of National Humiliation was popular in the 1910s-30s as the modern Chinese nation was taking shape, and it suddenly reappeared in the PRC in early 1990 as the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) response to the June 4th massacre (1989). As part of China's patriotic education policy, National Humiliation historiography's aim is to securitize Chinese identity by establishing and reinforcing a symbolic nationalist boundary between a patriotic inside and a threatening outside.³¹ To distract China's youth from criticizing internal problems, patriotic education works to refocus their ire on the foreigner as China's natural enemy. Indeed to securitize China, the party-state displaced memories the June 4th massacre with those of the

Nanjing massacre, and thus shifted political criticism from domestic corruption in the present to foreign atrocities in the past. People thus become patriotic Chinese when they distinguished themselves from foreigners who are categorically defined as invading imperialists and exploiting capitalists.

20. The Nanjing massacre constitutes one event among the many described in textbooks such as *National Humiliation: Chinese People Should Never Forget*.³² The general narrative of the book is laid out in the 'Preface,' which declares that Chinese civilization, with its thousands of years of creativity, is among the best in world history and is certainly better than the various barbarians who challenged it. Still, the preface reminds us that China's history is not all glorious; the nation also has suffered humiliation and pain in its modern history when China became a target of imperialist expansion: 'The merciless truth is that the backward must be beaten.' It is necessary for China's youth to study their country's national humiliation because, as the preface paraphrases Confucius, only if the nation has a sense of shame can it be courageous.³³

21. Dozens of atrocities and 427 pages later, Che's edited volume contains a four page description of the Nanjing massacre by Zuo Yi'na.³⁴ Although one would expect middle school students to be shell-shocked after reading hundreds of pages about China's bloody modern history of invasions, occupations and massacres, Zuo does not pull any punches in describing the massacre. While national humiliation histories characteristically do not include pictures -- *National Humiliation* is a mass market history textbook -- the book's descriptions are still quite graphic.³⁵ Following the guiding historiography, Zuo begins by summarizing how in December 1937, the invading Japanese army's bloody massacre in Nanjing 'turned the ancient capital of six civilized dynasties into hell.'³⁶ After a tactical analysis of Japan's invasion and occupation of Nanjing, which lists the relevant military statistics of the invading Japanese and retreating Nationalist armies, Zuo graphically describes the Japanese occupation as 'a bloody massacre that shocked the country and the whole world. ... when Japanese soldiers saw a man they would kill him; when they saw a woman they would rape her, and then kill her after the rape; when they saw a house, they would burn it,

when they saw a bank or a store, they would loot it.'³⁷ In order to document the facts of the atrocity, Zuo then describes in excruciating detail the slaughters, rapes, arsons and lootings. The purpose of this is to stress the *barbaric* nature of the Japanese army's excesses: 'In the great massacre, the Japanese army didn't just use modern weapons, but also used various primitive barbaric ways of killing, like decapitation, hacking skulls, stabbing bellies, digging into hearts, drowning, burning and quartering people, skinning people alive, and bayoneting vaginas and anuses.'³⁸

22. The sexual violence against women³⁹ is likewise documented in detail in this middle school textbook: 'like beasts' Japanese troops raped over 20,000 women and girls. The trauma was not just physical, but mental as well: after being gang raped by thirteen soldiers, one woman 'screamed and then stabbed herself in the belly and died.' After raping Chinese women, the text tells us that the Japanese soldiers were under orders to kill their victims in order to wipe out all witnesses to their crimes. But the brutality continued after death with the soldiers mutilating the still-warm bodies: 'they dug out breasts, and bayoneted heads and bellies until intestines spilled out. Some victims suffered the ill-fate of having their bodies ripped open and unceremoniously burnt.'⁴⁰
23. The last paragraph of the four page section sums up the universal lessons of the Nanjing massacre: 'It was something that is seldom seen in human history. This record of atrocity in the history of modern warfare is the most barbaric and shameful page in the history of human civilization.'⁴¹ The trauma of the Japanese atrocities set the barbaric standard that is used to define 'nationalist resistance,' and thus Chinese identity. To be Chinese patriots, the book instructs us, it is necessary to visualize the mutilation of specific Chinese bodies and the Chinese body politic. Chinese identity in the twenty-first century thus is securitized against foreign intrusion through popular education texts that vividly -- indeed, almost visually -- describe Japan's wartime atrocities.

2. Nanjing massacre in the War of Resistance

24. When the Nanjing massacre is narrated in the context of the

Second World War, the horrible event shifts from the guiding narrative of China as a victim, to China as a victorious great power. Indeed, the most common way of naming the Second World War in Chinese is the 'War of Resistance Against Japan' *KangRi zhanzheng*, (the War of Resistance *kangzhan* for short). Moreover, the present director of the national War of Resistance museum in Beijing emphatically states that the war is not a 'national humiliation'.⁴² Rather than focus on humiliations, these museums, teaching materials and commemorative albums frame the meaning of the Nanjing massacre in the larger context of China's *victory* in the Second World War. The foreword to a special book of illustrated flashcards for children put together in 2005 by China's Central Communist Party School explains:

Sixty years ago, the Chinese people won a great victory in the War of Resistance against Japan. With the War of Resistance, the Chinese nation washed away the century of humiliation with blood, thus realizing the turning point of the national fate in a great war of national liberation. In this war of national survival, the Sons of the Yellow Emperor were no longer divided by party, faction, ethnic group or age. We united together ... to defeat the Japanese fascists. In this war, the CCP united the people under one banner to resist Japan.⁴³

25. This victorious narrative links mainland China with Taiwan through the shared enemy of imperial Japan; here, the Nanjing massacre plays the role of the horrible war crime that finally shocked the Chinese people into overcoming their various differences.⁴⁴ In this way, the 'Nanjing massacre' comes into the story to 'feminize' all civilians as passive victims who need to be rescued and protected by the heroic military: disarmed men who are victims of brutal beheading and women who are victims of rape, murder and mutilation.
26. While the Nanjing massacre only occupies a few pages in popular histories of the War of Resistance, these pages are quite graphic, again displaying iconic images of beheaded men and raped women. As the caption to one photo tells us: 'After raping this old woman, Japanese troops force her to disrobe.'⁴⁵ Such pictures, as well as paintings inspired by the massacre, are

displayed in the War of Resistance Museum's 'Hall of the Japanese Army's Atrocities' in Beijing.⁴⁶ Children's magazines likewise have special commemorative articles that report their elder's war stories not as heroic soldiers, but as common people who were abused and murdered by Japanese troops.⁴⁷ Thus in most magazine articles, war histories and museum exhibits, the Nanjing massacre is the only time that civilians take on a significant role in the war. But civilians take on a very specific role in these media products: while the grand narrative of the Second World War is built around heroic military resistance by both the Communists and the Nationalists, civilians in the Nanjing massacre chapter of the story are very definitely portrayed as passive victims who are in need of rescue, in ways similar to the Century of National Humiliation historiography.

27. While descriptions of the Nanjing massacre are short, they are necessary in the narrative of China's eventual victory, and for larger understandings of Chinese national identity. The Nanjing massacre takes on particular symbolic weight because of its pivotal placement in Chinese history and historiography. In terms of physical and spiritual trauma, the Nanjing massacre is both the worst atrocity for China in the Second World War and the worst atrocity in the Century of National Humiliation as a whole. The physical trauma of these rapes and murders takes on symbolic significance: the Nanjing massacre represents the lowest point in modern Chinese history. Indeed, the sample sentence for '*zhenjing*-shock' in a prominent Chinese-English dictionary is 'The Nanjing Massacre shocked the country and the whole world.' Within the war itself, the Nanjing massacre is framed as a turning point whose barbaric atrocities 'aroused the spirit of the Chinese race'.
28. Yet the Nanjing massacre and the War of Resistance victory tell us about more than China's struggle against Japan. The War of Resistance is often described as the 'turning point' in modern history, where China went from being a humiliated victim to a self-confident great power:

China always faced failure and humiliation in its struggles against large imperialist powers since 1840; a century before the War of Resistance Against Japan, China had little ability to bear international responsibilities. ... The War of

Resistance Against Japan was a turning point in modern Chinese history. It ended the divided situation in which China found itself since the Opium War of 1840. It aroused the Chinese people, filled them with a common hatred against the enemy, and enhanced their traditional national spirit as never before.⁴⁸

29. The Nanjing massacre and the War of Resistance thus are employed to justify the legitimacy of the CCP and China's rise to world prominence.⁴⁹ As the Central Party School's flashcard history explains, through its wartime sacrifices China became a great power and 'won the respect of all the nations of the world, raising China's international status to an unprecedented height.'⁵⁰ The director of the War of Resistance Museum stated in 2005 that 'today Chinese around the world are still receiving the benefits of the victory in the War of Resistance,' when China went 'in one step from being a bullied and backward country to having a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.'⁵¹ To understand the rise of China to world prominence as a great power, he tells us it is necessary to remember the mutilation of the victims of the Nanjing massacre. The humiliation and mutilation of defeat is recognized in order to pave the way to final victory. The horrible photographs underline how even the generally positive narrative of China becoming a confident great power still depends on a rather negative patriarchal nationalist narrative: all civilians are 'feminized' as helpless victims who can only be saved by masculine military heroes.

3. Nanjing massacre: six weeks of living hell

30. The third historical narrative of the Nanjing massacre is much like the first two; it presents the imperial Japanese army as a barbaric force whose atrocities united the Chinese nation in order to first win the war, and ultimately to wash away the shame of the Century of National Humiliation. But as we will see, the third narrative of the Nanjing massacre is slightly different from the first two; as it reaffirms the dominant message of 'national resistance' it also allows avenues for 'resistance to nationalism.' While the first two narratives frame the Nanjing massacre in terms of long-term national history stories -- the *Century* of

National Humiliation and the *eight* year War of Resistance -- this narrative focuses on a very short period of time: the first six weeks of Japan's conquest and occupation of the Chinese capital. Nanjing as a 'hell on earth' is documented by commemorative picture albums published in mainland China, Hong Kong, the US, and on the web: *Photographic Evidence of the Nanjing Massacre* (1995), *The Nanjing Massacre* (1995), 'WWW Memorial Hall of the Victims in the Nanjing Massacre' (1995), *The Rape of Nanking: An Undeniable History in Photographs* (1996, 1997); the *Picture Collection of the Nanjing Massacre and the International Rescue* (2002), *The Nanjing Massacre* (2005), and *Historical Materials of the Nanjing Massacre*, vol. 28: *Historical Images* (2006).⁵² These albums tell the now horribly familiar tale of how China's 'ancient capital of six dynasties' suffered the 'fascist invasion of Japanese barbarians,' who engaged in an orgy of 'slaughter, rape, arson, and looting' in the first six weeks of the occupation of Nanjing.⁵³

31. There is very little text in these publications -- brutal pictures are worth even more than a thousand words. Attention to how these 'editors and compilers' constructed the visual narrative of these massacre albums thus is particularly important.⁵⁴ The atrocities of machine-gunning, shooting, stabbing, bayoneting, decapitating, disembowelling, burying alive, raping, gang raping and sexual mutilation of bodies that were graphically described in the middle school textbook *National Humiliation: Chinese People Should Never Forget*,⁵⁵ are even more grotesquely displayed with hundreds of photographs in these albums. Certainly, like in the other two narratives the story of the massacre is told in national terms: 'Japanese' people killed 'Chinese' people, and Japanese men raped Chinese women. But in another way, the photographic narrative strategy shared by these albums also stresses the impact of the massacre on specific people, rather than abstract nations. Although people died bravely in resistance, that is not the focus of these photo albums. The siege of Nanjing was not characterized by the heroic resistance that dominates Chinese narratives of the Second World War. Rather, the Nationalist Chinese army leadership was noteworthy for its cowardly retreat from Nanjing under cover of darkness the night before the city fell. Nanjing residents and refugees were abandoned by the Chinese leadership; testimony of people who survived the many mass slaughters shows how people had to sneak away from the killing fields after

dark to survive as individuals, not as a nation.⁵⁶

32. This narrative strategy has crucial implications for the ordering of the commemorative picture albums that mourn the atrocities of the Nanjing massacre. Some of the albums try to recapture the heroic narrative by including short descriptions of resistance by Chinese or by recounting how a few westerners protected thousands of Chinese refugees from Japanese troops in the Nanjing Safety Zone (more below).⁵⁷ But the dominant photographic narrative in these albums highlights the violent chaos of the time: each album displays page after page of beheaded men and raped women. Dozens of Chinese men are shown being executed, accompanied by still more photos of decapitated heads lying alone, lined up in row, strewn in piles or held as trophies by executioners. Along with the photos with captions like 'Japanese soldier rapes woman' and 'Japanese soldier humiliates woman,' the text tells us how Japanese soldiers not only violated women's bodies, but violated civilized categories: they did not distinguish between old women and very young girls, day or night, indoors or outdoors. After these 'perverse rapes and gang rapes, they killed the women and mutilated their bodies in a tragedy beyond comparison.'⁵⁸ One album has a chapter of pictures that catalogues the imperial Japanese army's 'Killing Methods;' the following chapter displays more gruesome photos over captions like 'A woman who was gang raped then mutilated by bayonets.'⁵⁹ These visual narratives thus focus in tightly on displaying the details of mutilation of Chinese bodies to represent the mutilation of both the Chinese spirit and the Chinese body politic in ways that eventually serve to produce the 'national' in national resistance.
33. The photo albums have a complementary relationship with the official 'Memorial to the Victims of the Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders,' whose museum includes large blow-ups of the same images. Many of the books end with a tour of the memorial, including pictures of Chinese school children on field trips, as well as specially guided tours of guilt-ridden veterans and penitent peace activists from Japan.⁶⁰ While these visitors are impressed by the overwhelming evidence of Japanese war atrocities, here we shift from the photo albums' objective presentation of historical facts, to the war memorial's more

deliberate artistic figuration of historical trauma.

34. The Nanjing Massacre Memorial was commissioned in 1983 just as China's official historiography shifted to target Japan. It was built on the site of an actual killing field, and unveiled in 1985 to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. In 1993, a second phase of the memorial was commissioned just as Beijing's post-June 4th massacre patriotic education campaign was gaining traction. It was dedicated on 13 December 1997, the sixtieth anniversary of the Nanjing massacre. (A third phase is being planned.) Like war memorials in other countries, the Nanjing memorial commemorates the dead for giving the ultimate sacrifice for the nation.⁶¹



Figure 4: Section of panel sculpture at Nanjing Massacre Memorial

35. Although the photo albums see their task of presenting the evidence of the massacre as self-evident, the memorial's award-winning architect, Qi Kang, was quite self-reflective about the architectural (including visual) problems he faced in properly representing the trauma in three dimensions. To express the 'social and national feelings' of the Nanjing massacre, Qi chose to 'embody the historical disaster in the entire design of the environment.'⁶² For the first phase of the memorial (1983-85), Qi used the central idea of 'to live and to die' to 'give expression to the themes of "disaster," "indignant grief," and "depression."⁶³ He accomplished this by constructing an enclosed plaza paved with grey pebbles and sculptures of dead trees; the anguish of the Chinese people is represented by a sculpture of a woman crying out in pain. This 'bleak, desolate, and wild' space is surrounded by walls of panel sculptures representing the Chinese victims of the massacre. These sculptures work to illustrate the themes of 'catastrophe, slaughter, and mourning'. While the photo albums have pictures of nameless individuals, the memorial further

abstracts and nationalizes war memory by framing the barren plaza with panel sculptures of mutilated men and raped women, including a terrified naked woman cowering from an unseen Japanese soldier (see Figure 4), beheaded men, and various severed body parts floating along the fractured wall. A stairway from this scene of desolation leads up to a grass lawn that symbolizes life, and the Chinese peoples' resistance to Japanese aggression. It contains a panel sculpture of people making a religious sacrifice to those who died in the tragedy.⁶⁴ The official Nanjing Massacre Memorial remembers the specific and unique murders and rapes of hundreds of thousands of people in Nanjing through a collective representation of archetypal victims -- rather than the unknown soldier, it presents the unknown victims.

36. Ten years later in phase two, the themes of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial shifted from a contemplative mourning of the victims to a more active focus on China's unfinished historical business with Japan: here Qi's organizing themes are 'pain' and 'hatred'.⁶⁵ A massive sculpture entitled 'Disaster in Jinling Nanjing' dominates phase two. It includes a huge decapitated man's screaming head, the frantically outstretched arm of a buried-alive victim, and a city wall that has been mutilated by artillery fire. Qi's aim here is for the memorial sculpture to be 'resonant with the wails and shrieks of the dead.'⁶⁶ Once again, the horror of the Nanjing massacre is embodied in larger-than-life visual images of mutilation. In this way, Qi has returned to his initial problem of how to properly represent unfathomable and unendurable atrocities. He writes that phase two is not figurative but 'is really a portrayal of the actual scene, and of that part of history written in blood and tears.'⁶⁷ The feelings of 'pain' and 'hatred' provoked by memories of the Nanjing massacre gain in reality as they are circulated. Indeed, like in Sino-Japanese relations more generally, since the 1990s the Chinese people's painful hatred of Japan is overwhelming the more contemplative grief seen in the Nanjing Massacre Memorial's first phase built in the early 1980s.⁶⁸
37. The memorial and the visual texts that focus on six weeks of hell in Nanjing reproduce the narrative of China as a victim of shocking persecution on a world scale. Like historical narratives of the Nanjing massacre that are framed by the War of Resistance

and the Century of National Humiliation, the ultimate message of these visual media products is the *victory* of 'nationalist resistance' to Japanese aggression that followed the atrocity. Hence rather than moving from a Maoist victory narrative to a reformist victim narrative of China's modern nationalist history, the Nanjing massacre texts show how these two seemingly opposite historiographies productively co-exist in complementary tension, each feeding off of and encouraging the other in order to securitize Chinese identity.

38. As the shocking textbook descriptions and grotesque photo albums graphically display, the Nanjing massacre is about more than China's uneasy relationship with Japan. In addition to asserting China as a world power, the written and visual texts promote a very gendered view of Chinese identity and history through the recurrent categories of 'beheaded men' and 'raped women'. As the visual texts suggest, although Japan's mutilation of Chinese bodies was certainly very physical, it was also symbolic: the Japanese army sought to humiliate the Chinese nation in very gendered ways -- there are no images of men being raped or women being beheaded -- that reinforce the notion that rape is about power than rather sex. Indeed, Chinese visual texts in the 1930s and the 1990s-2000s recycle the Japanese images to promote a patriarchal Chinese nationalism that is deployed against a militarized and masculinized image of the Japanese enemy.⁶⁹
39. This gendered narrative strategy is not unique to the Nanjing massacre or to China.⁷⁰ Indeed, most wars in the twentieth century are understood as rapes: the media referred to beginning of the First World War was the 'Rape of Belgium,' the beginning of the Gulf War in 1991 was called the 'Rape of Kuwait,' and later in the 1990s rape came to symbolize the Yugoslavian war. Women here are enlisted as national symbols not in positive ways -- the Statue of Liberty, Britannia or France's Marianne -- but in negative ways as the violated national bodies that challenge national honor -- and demand nationalist revenge. The purpose in these narratives is not to stop the rape of specific women and bring particular soldiers to criminal justice. Rather, like with other conflicts, China is aroused as a nation to resist Japan with military arms: the first Nanjing massacre photo album, *A Faithful Record of the Atrocities of the Japanese Invaders*, was published by the

political department of the military committee of China's ruling Nationalist party in July 1938.⁷¹ Indeed, many of the horrible pictures in photo albums published since 1989 are reproduced from *A Faithful Record*; the introduction to *Historical Materials of the Nanjing Massacre*, vol. 28: *Historical Images*, for example, goes out of its way to credit this 1938 book as a central source.⁷² The purpose of these albums is not merely to provide objective evidence, but to reproduce the gendered discourse of female victims that stokes desire for masculine military revenge. Here we thus come up against the limits of realism in photography.

40. The next section will argue that a nuanced understanding the symbolic politics of the Nanjing massacre can open up avenues of critical resistance through both gender politics and the politics of representation. Firstly, it will consider how to problematize the links between women, war and patriarchal nationalism asserted by the memorial and the photo albums; the aim is to criticize the resulting militarized masculinity that fosters violence in both biopolitical space (rapes and murders) and geopolitical space (war). Rather than just frame the problem as *Japanese* militarism, we thus can also criticize the *militarization* of Chinese society produced through such memories of 'national resistance.' Secondly, it will examine the politics of representation of the Nanjing massacre's visual narratives. It will explore how these photo albums risk becoming complicit not only in reproducing a patriarchal Sino-Japanese conflict, but also being complicit in encouraging a voyeuristic consumption of the rape photos as exotic erotica, especially as this war pornography spreads on the internet. By examining the tension between the twin hazards of censorship and voyeurism, we will be able to find new ways of looking at these images; and be able to critically recognize and understand the Nanjing massacre in ways that avoid reproducing gendered pain and patriarchal power. In other words, we need to move from 'documenting' the Nanjing massacre to theorizing it.

III. Theorizing the Nanjing Massacre

41. Nanjing massacre photographs were produced not just in the political context of the War of Resistance, but also in a technological context where cameras were becoming cheap and plentiful around the world in the 1930s. Photography thus was no longer a specialized profession that commemorated only formal

events. It was quickly becoming a popular hobby; the masses could now document their daily lives in a way that blurred the public and the private realms. As Roland Barthes explains, 'The age of Photography corresponds precisely to the explosion of the private into the public, or rather into the creation of a new social value, which is the publicity of the private: the private is consumed as such, publicly.'⁷³ The Nanjing massacre albums are sites where 'the private is consumed as such, publicly' because they publicly distribute, again and again, images where domestic violence and international violence overlap in very personal moments -- wartime executions and rapes -- not just in ever-growing numbers of books and articles, but also on the web. While the albums seek to reflect the truth of Japanese atrocities, an exploration of how the massacre albums themselves were produced can help us answer the ethical and political questions raised above.

42. *Photographic Evidence*, for example, prides itself not only for being the first book of Nanjing massacre photographs published in the PRC, but also for 'providing an objective view of the Nanjing massacre's historical background.' In addition to helping future generations of Chinese to understand this tragic period of their history, Liu and Bo are proud of how their professional work has 'raised the quality of historical research to a new level.'⁷⁴ Still, the provenance of the Nanjing massacre photos is problematic. Japanese revisionists typically try to prove either that the photographs are not of Japanese troops or that they were not taken in Nanjing in winter 1937-38.⁷⁵ That is not my argument. Rather than saying that the provenance of the pictures is unclear, I find that the *clarity* of the provenance is problematic: most of the photographs of raped Chinese women were shot as war souvenirs by the men who raped them.
43. Here we run into similar problems to those faced by journalists, academics and activists who sought to document the 'rape-warfare' activities of Serbs in the Bosnian war.⁷⁶ Much like in the Nanjing massacre six decades earlier, Serb soldiers took pictures and video of rapes to humiliate the women (and Bosnian nation) in ways that reinforced patriarchal nationalism. Moreover, there is evidence that these images were reproduced, distributed, and later used as pornographic stimulants for more rape warfare. The goal of feminist activists in the 1990s, like with the Nanjing

massacre books and albums, was to give an accurate accounting and meaningful analysis of the atrocities. But unlike in the Nanjing massacre albums, these activists understood rape as an expression of power, and thus sought to avoid reproducing war pornography and patriarchal nationalism in their work. Hence while criticizing 'the murderous misogyny and rabid nationalism' of Serbian rape camps and rape videos, Allen states that her 'challenge in representing them is to do so without repeating in any way the harm those atrocities have already perpetrated.'⁷⁷ In this way 'raped women' is shifted from a singular metaphor of national shame that is reproduced again and again over the decades, to refer a group of specific people who need care and support, and hopefully legal justice rather than military revenge.

44. The politics of representation is highlighted in all of the Nanjing massacre albums. Although they do not mention 'pornography,' some pictures in each of the albums are censored in the sense of having a black bar over the woman's genitalia. Just as asterisks in written text (i.e. f***) mark words as obscenity, black bars in visual texts code pictures as pornography. Actually, many of the photo albums were produced just after nudes entered the Chinese marketplace in the 1980s. While nude images are a crucial part of European art, the body itself is largely missing in traditional Chinese art.⁷⁸ Hence determining the proper methods -- and limits -- of representing the human body is a particularly modern problem in China. After being censored under the Maoist regime, in the 1980s nude images started to appear in art galleries and large-format picture books.⁷⁹ Artistic nudes were seen by many as a positive sign of the cultural impact of China's economic reforms. Still, conservatives in the party-state were uneasy with this new public display of the human body, which they saw as a threat to public order. Soon there were discussions about how to control these nude images as part of anti-pornography campaigns. China's elite defended the aesthetic values of nude painting as 'high art.' Many Chinese artists also argued that their nude paintings were engaged in a progressive scientific struggle against a backward feudal mentality. Thus while the Chinese state allowed high-brow artistic nudes, it clamped down on mass-market images; the political character of this policy was demonstrated in the crackdown after the June 4th massacre (1989) where the party-state used pornography as an excuse for censoring 'politically exciting books'. Thus as Richard Curt Kraus

concludes, the distractions of hedonism have priority over political rights.

45. The Nanjing massacre albums were also involved in a negotiation over the limits of China's 'standards of decency' for nude images; in the reform period, the line between publication and censorship has been quite flexible -- and often unpredictable. Since the photographs actually violate the party-state's detailed anti-pornography regulations, the black bars show how the authors and publishers have been pushed to make aesthetic judgments about the photographs. But rather than figure the photographs in terms of the aesthetics of high art, most Nanjing massacre photo albums follow the artists' other justification for nudes to frame the rape photos in terms of positivist rationality. The editors of *Photographic Evidence of the Nanjing Massacre* thus see the rape pictures taken by Japanese troops as a particularly authentic source of evidence. The introduction to the album's 'Brutally Raping Women' section concludes: 'This chapter's photographs of the rape and humiliation of women all were seized from Japanese POWs.' The album also has a special section for 'Pictures of atrocities taken by Japanese troops.'⁸⁰ Many of the captions also recognize the military rapist provenance of photos: 'After raping these women, the Japanese soldiers first forced them to take off their pants for a photo, and then one soldier extended his hand to spread her legs.' 'The camera caught this Japanese soldier in the act of rape.' 'A young woman was bound to a chair to be repeatedly raped by Japanese soldiers. One of these criminals took this photo, which became one of the undeniable pieces of evidence of Japanese atrocities.'⁸¹ Hence the mainland Chinese albums tend to celebrate the objective value of the photos, rather than critically engage with the limits of realism posed by war pornography.
46. The Chinese-American editors of *The Rape of Nanjing* photo album likewise skate over the controversial issue of rape photos with an appeal to a realist notion of truth and representation. Yet rather than just celebrating the scientific source-value of war pornography, they follow another artistic strategy by defensively arguing that any other editing of their books would amount to political censorship:

In the process of compiling and editing this book,

we showed parts of it to people from different walks of life. Many turned their faces away from these photographs taken 60 years ago. Some suggested that we censor the pictures and leave out those that are especially graphic and disturbing. Our purpose, however, is to record history, not to censor it.⁸²

47. Still, one of their photos has a black bar, suggesting that they did censor the image -- and recall that violating the rules of permission and prohibition is one of the mechanisms that commonly defines pornography.
48. Iris Chang is certainly concerned about compounding the atrocities with what she calls 'the second rape' of Nanjing. But this second rape is not of individual women; it is of historical memory and the Chinese nation: Japan's denial and refusal to apologize, for Chang, is the second rape. When Peter Hays Gries asked Chang 'if she worried about committing a "third rape" by reprinting graphic pictures of naked Chinese women in her book, thereby subjecting them to further indignity,' Chang answered that 'as a woman she had concerns about the pictures and had discussed the issue with her publishers, but had decided that rectifying the "second rape" (western ignorance of the Nanjing massacre) justified the risk of a "third rape".⁸³ Rather than appealing to positivism or fighting censorship, Chang curiously reproduces the gendered narrative of China as a 'raped woman' who can only be saved through 'national resistance.'
49. In a way, these authors are all struggling with similar gender/nation questions to those provoked by the publication of Malek Alloula's *The Colonial Harem*. This slick picture album gathers together postcard photos of semi-naked Algerian women taken by the French colonial regime, distributed primarily to the French occupying forces, and circulated around the empire by the French post office from 1900 to 1930. Like the Nanjing massacre photos, Alloula sees these erotic postcards as important evidence of colonial conquest: 'Offered up, body and soul, these algeriennes are the metaphorical equivalent of trophies, of war booty. The raiding of women has always been the dream and the obsession of the total victor.'⁸⁴ Much like the Chinese volumes that circulate horrific images to criticize the imperial Japanese army, Alloula's

coffee table book, which reproduces (and recirculates) ninety erotic images of Algerian women, is a critique of the French empire. He is able to exorcise the colonial horror by 'returning this immense postcard to its sender.'⁸⁵

50. But as the international history of representing war as 'rape' suggests, turning women into an erotic symbol is problematic for both gender and national identity politics. Mieke Bal, Rey Chow, Cynthia Enloe and other feminist critics have expressed mixed feelings about *The Colonial Harem*. While colonial pornography graphically shows the savagery of the imperial regime, Alloula's critique also tends to reinforce the patriarchal nationalist view where 'becoming nationalist requires a man to resist the foreigner's use and abuse of his women.' Indeed, Enloe notes that 'Malek Alloula and other male nationalists seem remarkably *un*curious about the abused women's own thoughts -- about the meaning they might have assigned to foreign conquest' and to the postcard photographs themselves. *The Colonial Harem* thus exemplifies how 'nationalism typically has sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation and masculinized hope'⁸⁶ in ways that are reproduced in the Nanjing massacre albums' assertions of patriarchal nationalism as the solution to China's problems.

51. Lydia Liu aptly summarizes how the symbol of raped women helped build Chinese identity according to a patriarchal nationalism:

As a sign of symbolic exchange, the raped woman often serves as a powerful trope in anti-Japanese propaganda. Her victimization is used to represent -- or more precisely, to eroticize -- China's own plight. In such a signifying practice, the female body is ultimately displaced by nationalism, whose discourse denies the specificity of female experience by giving larger symbolic meanings to the signifier of rape: namely, China itself is being violated by the Japanese rapist.⁸⁷

52. Hence the patriarchal nationalist meaning of the photos in the Nanjing massacre albums is like that of the images in *The Colonial Harem*, which as Rey Chow argues, entail 'neither a

dismantling of the pornographic apparatus of imperialist domination nor a restoration of the native to her "authentic" history but a perfect symmetry between the imperialist and anti-imperialist gazes, which cross over the images of native women as silent objects.⁸⁸ According to Enloe, 'The challenge is to make visible women raped by men as soldiers without further militarizing those women in the process.'⁸⁹

53. Mieke Bal uses *The Colonial Harem* and similar texts to elaborate on the links between feminist issues and the politics of representation. Although Alloula and other authors certainly have a critical *intent* -- seeking to analyze the cultural politics of empire -- doing it through such visual texts can be problematic. Rather than reading photographs individually, Bal highlights the importance of understanding how they are produced and distributed in photogenic albums; this is because coffee table books of semi-naked Others can end up being complicit with the very ideology that they intend to oppose. Gathered together in a beautifully-crafted book, Alloula's collection of larger-than-life postcards encourages a voyeuristic consumption of the images which serves 'to aestheticize the images and thus to anesthetize their conflicts.'⁹⁰ The core problem of critical pictorials and exhibitions, Bal argues, is 'the combination of exuberant illustration with poverty of explanation.'⁹¹ Indeed, it is easy to miss critical points written in the text or captions because we usually browse through coffee table books focusing on the visual narrative. Rather than reproducing hundreds of photos, Bal suggests that we employ 'a thoughtful, sparse use of visual material where every image is provided with an immediately accessible critique that justifies its use with specificity.' This critical strategy needs to stress the '*narrative* dimension of images' in terms of 'the way the story of reading the image happens.' Thus the rigidity and fixity of the images can be loosened in a way that allows multiple meanings to emerge.⁹²

54. To develop this critical engagement in a way that avoids simply censoring images as pornography, Bal suggests that we get behind the camera to thematize the workers (and workings) of the imperial regime more than the colonial subject of the photo. She points to an image from another colonial photo album where the shadow of the photographer (clearly marked as a 'colonial official'

by his pith helmet) is inscribed in foreground of the photograph of an African girl. To professional photographers, such a shadow is the mark of technical failure. But to Bal, this self-referential sign reveals how imperialism constructs its colonial subject through photography as well as through public policy. Moreover, Bal thinks that even the topless African girl in the photo is resisting the hierarchical relations of power; Bal reads her expression as 'a cynical refusal to smile ... that does not express complicity.'⁹³ The photograph resists complicity because it denaturalizes the workings of imperial power by highlighting hierarchical colonial power relationships, while also allowing the colonial subject to gaze back in resistance.

55. This feminist criticism of Alloula's *The Colonial Harem* can help us understand the ethical problems raised by the Nanjing massacre photo albums and memorial. While their intent of spreading the facts of this horrible atrocity is laudable, these visual texts have problems beyond reproducing a patriarchal Chinese nationalism that constitutes Japan as the barbaric Other. As we saw in section two, there is even less text in the Nanjing massacre photo albums than in *The Colonial Harem*; brutal pictures of the massacre are worth even more than a thousand words. With page after page of beheaded men and raped women, these albums focus tightly on displaying the visual details of the mutilation of Chinese bodies. The exuberant display of visual images thus obscures the impact of critical written text and captions, including references to the important details of the photographs' origins as Japanese war pornography. For these representational issues the Nanjing massacre photo albums thus risk being complicit in promoting the voyeuristic consumption of the rape photos as exotic erotica; they risk aestheticizing the image and anesthetizing readers to the violence suffered by these particular women and men.
56. The visual texts of the Nanjing massacre therefore raise the now sadly familiar question of how to understand horrific images in a way that is respectful, but also critical in a way that avoids using mutilated bodies to reproduce the power of a militaristic and patriarchal nationalism. Bal's analytical practice of giving detailed and accessible discussion of a few images is certainly a good way to avoid the twin hazards of voyeurism and censorship. Focusing on the narrative dimension of Nanjing massacre images also has helped to demonstrate how 'raped women' and 'beheaded

men' serve to reproduce patriarchal nationalism in both wartime Japan and contemporary China.

57. Yet following Bal's method of denaturalizing power relations by showing ties between the subject and the object in photography is much trickier for the Nanjing massacre photo albums. Like in Bal's example, the albums have photographs of raped women that have the shadow of the photographer (clearly identified as a Japanese soldier by his cap) in the foreground. Other pictures show the Japanese soldiers' outstretched arms pulling down pants, pushing up shirts, and spreading legs. But rather than these traces signifying a 'technical failure,' they more likely represent another expression of the Japanese soldiers' self-referential power after the rape. The picture of a woman in the process of being raped certainly has her returning the camera's gaze, not with the resistance of a smile-less cynicism, but with abject screaming terror. And how can a decapitated head return the gaze?⁹⁴



Figure 5: 'To wipe out our humiliation with our enemy's blood'

58. Rather than relating the Nanjing massacre albums to the critical debate surrounding *The Colonial Harem*, it might be better to consider what happened to the US Attorney General's Commission on Pornography's *Final Report* (1986): although it sought to define and thus control pornography, the meaning of the images could not be marshaled by the text of this official government report because of 'the impossibility of separating form from content in the process of sublimation.' The *Report* thus became a pornographic bestseller, selling out soon after it was issued -- as well as generating pirated copies.⁹⁵ Moreover, just as the Meese *Report* gathered evidence -- including photographs -- as examples of aberrant sexuality against which it defined the practices of 'very normal people,'⁹⁶ the Nanjing massacre texts look to Japanese atrocity to produce the norm of Chinese

nationalism. But like in the *Report*, these categorical distinctions soon dissolve: the Chinese army and state not only engaged in similar 'barbaric activities' against Chinese nationals, but as Figure 5 shows, also promoted beheading as a proper patriotic way of seeking vengeance against Japan.⁹⁷ While the representations of the Nanjing massacre may not produce erotic desire, they certainly produce a desire for revenge -- which like any desire, can never be satisfied.

59. To resist complicity in the reproduction of a voyeuristic aesthetics of eroticized revenge that is encouraged by these coffee table books it is necessary to suspend, for a moment, the continual reproduction of the iconic Nanjing massacre images. To resist the linkage between women, war and patriarchal nationalism it is necessary to change the subject, and re-read the texts in a different way. Indeed, part of 'resisting nationalism' here involves resisting the draw of such visual texts.

IV. Resisting nationalism

60. A gendered view of the Nanjing massacre that undermines the categories generated by 'the Rape of Nanking' provides openings for resistance to the dominant understanding of the War of Resistance, and the current securitization of Chinese identity. There is not much room for resistance in Chinese historical writing which remains quite 'monolithic': 'categories such as gender and ethnicity have made little impact on what remains a masculine, Han Chinese narrative.'⁹⁸ It is dangerous for historians in the PRC to directly criticize nationalist historiography: in January 2006 the party-state reacted harshly to scholarly criticism of its middle school history textbooks in a national newspaper supplement -- it not only banned the article, but fired the editors and closed down the magazine.⁹⁹
61. Chinese texts resist nationalist narratives largely by changing the subject, and thereby resist reproducing categories such as 'raped women' and 'beheaded men' that tend to produce Japan and China as archenemies. The aim here is not to deny the atrocities, but to rewrite the history that gives them meaning in the twenty-first century. While the horrible photos tend to reproduce the hegemonic discourse of nationalism, a gendered view of identity provides an opening to 'provoke critical analysis, to denaturalize

what is unproblematically accepted and to offer thereby an avenue for politicizing problematics.¹⁰⁰



Figure 6: 'Nanjing under construction and development'

62. Upon second reading, one can find resistance to nationalism even within the Nanjing massacre books and photo albums. On the one hand, the books are very deliberately produced by local publishers in the city of Nanjing and Jiangsu province, rather than the national publishers that produce and distribute tomes on the War of Resistance and the Century of National Humiliation.¹⁰¹ The Nanjing Massacre Memorial likewise was primarily funded by local sources, rather than through national budgets like the other key war museums.¹⁰² The message of the photo albums is also local: they healed the wounds of the Nanjing massacre by celebrating the modernization and development of Nanjing City rather than the rise of China. Living well is the best revenge.¹⁰³ Resisting any definition that looks to the mutilated bodies of the Nanjing massacre, photos at the end of the *Picture Collection* thus concentrate on wide-angle views of the physical infrastructure of this lively city (i.e. its regenerated municipal-body): superhighways, skyscrapers, tree-lined boulevards, and landscaped parks (see Figure 6).¹⁰⁴ In this way, many of the Nanjing massacre media products construct a Nanjing identity that displaces (although not necessarily opposes) national identity.
63. The international aspect of the Nanjing massacre also leads us away from the hegemonic national narrative. As the Nationalist leadership was retreating from Nanjing in early December 1937, two dozen western residents marked off a four square mile section of the city as the neutral Nanjing Safety Zone to shelter Chinese refugees during the Japanese invasion.¹⁰⁵ While Maoist histories at times denounced this foreign activity, writers since 1978 have

enthusiastically praised the westerners for saving tens of thousands of Chinese lives.¹⁰⁶ This is remarkable because it goes directly against the narrative logic of the Century of National Humiliation. The westerners who in humiliation history textbooks are commonly reduced to imperialist devils -- Christian missionaries and international capitalists -- become 'angels' in the Nanjing massacre books and albums. While the narrative strategies of national history work hard to differentiate between insiders as patriotic Chinese nationalists and outsiders as evil foreign invaders, the players here are more nuanced: while the Japanese are still devils, the westerners of the Nanjing Safety Zone Committee are praised as angelic heroes. Many of the albums recognize this heroism through their pictorial narrative.¹⁰⁷

64. Still others seek to go outside official (and professional) history-writing to construct a different set of memories about Nanjing in 1937 and broader Sino-Japanese relations. In the preface to his novel, *Nanjing 1937: A Love Story*, Ye Zhaoyan confesses his confusion over the meaning of official history: 'as a writer, I find myself unable to truly understand the history that historians call history. I see only shattered pieces, broken fragments, and a handful of melancholic stories destined to come to naught, all quietly playing out upon the grand stage of history.'¹⁰⁸
65. Xiao Hong's novel *Field of Life and Death* (1935) provides an interesting example of historical fiction that contests China's 'national resistance' history and its demonization of Japan. Although this novel was written before the Nanjing massacre it addresses another violent episode in Sino-Japanese relations: Japan's conquest of Manchuria in 1931. While the Nanjing government refused to mobilize armed resistance to Japan, Chinese writers and artists still fought Japan through their creative work. Indeed, Xiao Hong's lover Xiao Jun wrote a novel that 'epitomizes the ways nationalist discourse deploys gender during the war': its peasant widow character not only loses her family to the war, but 'on top of all her bereavements, is raped by a Japanese soldier.'¹⁰⁹ Xiao Hong's fiction, on the other hand, resisted this emerging patriarchal nationalism that was built on the mutilated bodies of women. Her character escapes being raped on the road by Japanese soldiers (by smearing her face with dust to look old and ugly), only to be raped by a Chinese man once she

enters the city.¹¹⁰ Rather than Japan being demonized for a collective rape of China, Xiao Hong writes of the barbarity of Chinese towards each other, and especially towards women. Through this unexpected narrative twist, Xiao Hong can highlight how rapes are important not just for geopolitical conflict. They are a problem at home as well, especially since domestic violence tends to increase with the militarization of society. Like in other cases, here the politics of differentiation that sorts patriotic Chinese from barbaric Japanese breaks down;¹¹¹ witness how 'heroically' the Chinese warrior displays a decapitated Japanese head in Figure 5.

66. Ye Zhaoyan contests the nationalist narrative of Nanjing in 1937 in a different way. Although Ye consulted primary and secondary historical sources in his meticulous research for the novel, he chose to write a different story that challenges the hegemonic narrative of a patriarchal Chinese nation involved in an increasingly violent geopolitical conflict with Japan. Rather than a geopolitical war story where Japan rapes China, Ye wrote a biopolitical love story where a Chinese man romances a Sino-Japanese woman. There is plenty of violence in *Nanjing 1937*; Ding, the protagonist, is killed in the Japanese attack on Nanjing. But that happens on the last page -- before then, all the violence is domestic: Chinese abusing, exploiting, raping and killing other Chinese.
67. However, the main narrative is not a war story, but a love story. At the beginning of 1937 Ding is an accomplished playboy who uses elaborate military language to plot his physical relations with women: 'He continuously sought out different types of women, and once he achieved his conquest, he would immediately initiate his next campaign. He was like a general who had endured a hundred battles, charging forward amid a sea of women....'¹¹² But when Yuyuan, the heroine, does not respond to Ding's standard strategies, he is forced to come to terms with the import of his 'true love' for her. Ding gives up chasing women, and engages in a largely unrequited daily correspondence with Yuyuan; his romancing is not organized around the physical act of sex, but around new-found spiritual feelings expressed in writing. Over the course of hundreds of pages, Ye thus shifts the meaning of 'Nanjing 1937' from the raw materiality of a brutal geopolitical rape to a deeply spiritual and chaste love between two people.

Rather than focus on hating Japan, he stresses the importance of love -- even love for a woman who is half-Japanese, a love that is largely unthinkable in the securitized Chinese imaginary.

68. While Ye's 1996 novel looks to an expanded and thoughtful notion of love (for the Other -- Japan), Xiao Hong's 1935 novel dwells on hatred -- hatred for men, Japan, China, everything: 'I used to hate men only; now I hate the Japanese instead. Perhaps I hate Chinese as well? Then there is nothing else for me to hate.'¹¹³ These two intensely self-reflective narrations of Chinese history and identity are remarkable because they are so risky for Chinese authors. Xiao Hong has been heavily censured by Chinese literary critics for her lack of patriotic fervor; soon after she published *Field of Life and Death*, she moved to Japan.¹¹⁴ Since 'Nanjing 1937' can signify only one thing in contemporary China, Ye's sometimes satirical, sometimes critical, and certainly 'unorthodox love story' constitutes a deliberate rewriting of Chinese identity away from national history. In the novel's afterword, Ye recognizes the limits of censorship that he might face: 'I write this novel without any regard for what the consequences might be; heaven only knows if anyone will read it.'¹¹⁵
69. The experience of the historian Yuan and the concerns of the novelist Ye show how resistance takes new and strange forms in China. In a sense they are not resisting nationalism so much as they are resisting history. While most people see an objective history as the solution to problems like the memories that animate Sino-Japanese conflict, Pierre Nora sees 'history' itself as the problem, and memories as the solution. While history is 'the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer,' memory 'is a perpetually active phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present' that is in 'permanent evolution'.¹¹⁶ While history tends to be singular, presenting itself as Universal History that 'belongs to everyone and yet no one,' memory is 'collective, plural, and yet individual': 'there are as many memories as there are groups.'¹¹⁷ Although Nora risks romanticizing memory, the three historiographies of the Nanjing massacre certainly show how the PRC engages in high modernist historiography since they draw this horrific series of events into the universal history of Nationalism, Revolution and Holocaust.

70. Moreover, this last section has shown how the Nanjing massacre can serve as what Nora calls a 'memory site' that takes on multiple meanings: typically national, but sometimes local or transnational; mostly patriarchal, but also questioning patriarchy; often expressing hatred, but other times emoting love or friendship. The texts show how resistance can be modernist in the sense of trying to replace one ideology or regime with another, but also how resistance can go beyond this modernist politics by growing out of alternative sets of 'spaces, gestures, images, and objects' that emerge alongside the party-state's institutions.¹¹⁸ Through this analysis of the securitization of Chinese identity, we can see how the limits of understanding China's relationship with Japan are both asserted and transgressed. Resistance to nationalism in China thus often entails resistance to the dominant reading of History.

V. Conclusion: Trauma and communities

71. On Sunday 23 April 2006, the 'Spotlight' section of MIT's homepage was linked to the university's NEH prize-winning 'Visualizing Cultures' project, which uses Japanese images to critically narrate modern East Asian history and politics. Within forty-eight hours MIT was forced to shut down the site.¹¹⁹ Hundreds of emails from outraged Chinese around the world had complained about a wood-block print of a Japanese soldier decapitating a Chinese prisoner in the first Sino-Japanese war (1894-95).¹²⁰ Many said that the image had 'hurt the feelings of China' because it celebrated Japanese racism and militarism. This issue became a *cause célèbre* in the Chinese-language press, and the two professors who created the site, John Dower and Shigeru Miyagawa, received emails so threatening that the police were called in. MIT's mainland Chinese graduate students' association, which led the campaign, demanded that the website's offending image be put in the 'proper historical context' with 'accessible explanations' -- or be shut down for good. After apologizing for any emotional distress, Dower and Miyagawa responded that the website's accompanying text did just that, and underlined how their 'intent was to illuminate aspects of the human experience -- including imperialism, racism, violence and war -- that we must confront squarely if we are to create a better world.'¹²¹ The website went back on-line a few days later, and included a

warning at the gateway of the controversial webpage: 'PLEASE VIEW AND USE THESE "VISUALIZING CULTURES" UNITS CAREFULLY AND IN THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN PREPARED.'¹²²

72. While the participants might characterize the 'Visualizing Cultures' incident as a struggle between 'defending academic freedom' and 'avoiding hurting the feelings of the Chinese people,' I think controversy here is more about who controls knowledge production and distribution, either in terms of asserting the 'proper historical context' or limiting understanding to 'THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN PREPARED.' Against the background of the graphic display of mutilated Chinese bodies -- including beheadings and photos by Japanese soldiers -- in the Nanjing massacre texts, it might seem odd that Chinese students would complain. But that would be missing the point; the controversy is not about the meaning of the individual photos or prints. It centers on the production and distribution of Visual Cultures. Although they might consume Nanjing massacre albums at home, as 'Chinese nationals' abroad they felt it was their duty to maintain control over images of ethnic Chinese people; as the internet discussion shows, activists were particularly enraged that one of the authors had a Japanese-sounding name, thus reaffirming the securitization of China against Japan.¹²³ On the other hand, Dower and Miyagawa's explanations that continually point to their written text show how they do not appreciate the power of the visual images. These beautiful wood-block prints aestheticize the violence; like with the Nanjing massacre photo albums, the graphic scenes overwhelm Dower and Miyagawa's critical written text. If we want readers to focus on the written text, then we should take Bal's commentary to heart and minimize the visual display.
73. The controversy thus neatly summarizes some of the questions raised in this essay: how are historical memory and national identity mobilized through cultural governance? What are the ethics of circulating horrible images, especially in cyberspace? What role does the diaspora play in producing and circulating national identity? What are the political and ethical limits of realist photography? What is the relation between visual images and a critical written text? How can we avoid the twin hazards of censorship and voyeurism? And how and where can cultural

resistance emerge?

74. Rather than directly answering these questions, this essay has looked to representations of the Nanjing massacre to show the workings of cultural governance and resistance in China, including among Chinese overseas. The essay's two guiding concerns were to examine the dynamic of Chinese nationalism in Sino-Japanese relations, and to analyze how official history and its visual narratives have reproduced problematic links between women, war and patriarchal nationalism. The second section conducted a close reading of written and visual texts to see how images of Japanese barbarism are mobilized to produce the Chinese nation. These texts demonstrate how successful China's patriotic education policy has been at setting the limits for the proper understanding of Japan -- hatred is the common theme in books, photo albums, and memorials for the Nanjing massacre. In so doing, it has distracted attention away from more recent violent events in the PRC such as the June 4th massacre.
75. The third section shifted from the Chinese photo albums' positivistic project of gathering evidence to document Japan's war crimes to see how knowledge is produced in China's visual narratives of nationalism. This is not to say that evidence is not valuable; many of these photos actually provided crucial evidence against Japanese soldiers and officers in the war crimes tribunals of the 1940s. Likewise, it is imperative to recognize and account for the horrible photos from Abu Ghraib prison, not just to criticize a few soldiers as individuals, but to critically understand the role of militarism and securitization in America and other societies. Certainly, it is not odd for nations on the losing side to obsess about the war -- the American South still fights imaginary battles against the North, as does Japan against the US. Yet although China was victorious in the Second World War, six decades after the Japanese surrender China is still waging war against Japan in discursive space, if not on physical terrain. Thus rather than fighting for peace in geopolitical struggle, the continual circulation of these images reproduces a biopolitics of vengeful militarism in China.
76. Nietzsche's concept of '*Ressentiment*,' the moralizing revenge of the powerless, is helpful for understanding the workings of China's national narrative. In her analysis of 'wounded attachments' Wendy Brown aptly describes *ressentiment* as a

triple achievement:

it produces an effect (rage, righteousness) that overwhelms the hurt; it produces a culprit responsible for the hurt; and it produces a site of revenge to displace the hurt (a place to inflict hurt as the sufferer has been hurt). Together these operations both ameliorate (in Nietzsche's term, 'anesthetize') and externalize what is otherwise 'unendurable'.¹²⁴

77. As with China's vicious cycle of national humiliation that targets Japan, there is 'a politics of recrimination that seeks to avenge the hurt even while it reaffirms it.' Hence like the images of beheaded men and raped women that circulate *ad infinitum* in cyberspace, *ressentiment* 'can hold out no future -- for itself or others -- that triumphs over this pain.'¹²⁵
78. Many first-class historians like Dower and Yuan look to rationality to provide a way out from *ressentiment* and national humiliation; their aim is to excise ideology from historiography to enable the writing of proper objective history. This essay, however, has examined resistance to the cultural governance of historiography by looking at how the trauma of the Nanjing massacre has generated different local, international, and gendered communities. It argued that 'resisting nationalism' is not straightforward because it involves both resisting the draw of visual texts and resisting History itself. The essay then traced how some authors have been able to displace the meaning of Nanjing 1937 from 'hatred' to 'love.' When we shift from re-citing the iconic photos to re-siting historical narratives, we can also shift from the hegemonic narrative of 'nationalist resistance' to a multitude of 'resistances to nationalism,' each of which has its own politics, possibilities and problems. This would multiply identity politics and allow for China to have a more fruitful engagement with Japan, other countries, other peoples -- and itself.

letter to the editors

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the Universities China Committee in London (2003) and the European Commission (ASI/B7-301/98/679-04) for funding fieldwork in China, and the Rockefeller Foundation for supporting my residency at the Bellagio Center (2006) where I wrote and first presented this essay. Comments from the following people were very helpful: Sumalee Bumroongsook, Elena Barabantseva, Rey Chow, Paul A. Cohen, Arif Dirlik, Edward Friedman, Yinan He, Christopher R. Hughes, Richard Curt Kraus, Rana Mitter, Michael J. Shapiro, Chih-yu Shih, Marie Thorsten, and an anonymous reviewer.

Notes

¹ See Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, updated edn., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 48-50; Robert Baden-Powell, *Rovering to Success*, (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1922), p. 120.

² Enloe, *Bananas*, p. 49.

³ Mark Selzer, *Bodies and Machines*, (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 149.

⁴ Wang Huaiki, *Guochi jinian ticao* [National humiliation gymnastics], (Shanghai: Zhongguo tixue chubanshe, 1929). Also see Wumu shanren, 'Yiguo xin yifang' Regulate the state with a new prescription, *Shenbao*, 9 May 1924, p. 18.

⁵ Huang Yungang, 'Guofang jiaoyu "wuwang 9-18" shuoqi' [Explaining national defense education's 'never forget September 18 [1931] campaign] *Yunnan jiaoyu* no. 30 (2004), pp. 39-42, on pp. 40-2.

⁶ Gongmin jiuguo tuan Citizen's national salvation association, *Guochi tongshi* [Painful history of national humiliation], (Shanghai: n.p., 1919); also see William A. Callahan, 'History, Identity and Security: Producing and Consuming Nationalism in China,' *Critical Asian Studies* 38:2 (2006), pp. 179-208.

⁷ Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1997). Although this book is a bestseller, it has been criticized by professional historians for its factual inaccuracies and inflammatory style.

⁸ For an English-language explanation by right-wing Japanese revisionists see Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, 'The Restoration of a National History,' n.p., 1988. For an analysis of revisionist history see John K. Nelson, 'Tempest in a Textbook: A Report on the New Middle-School History Textbook in Japan,' *Critical Asian Studies* 34:1 (March 2002), pp. 129-48. Also see Takashi Yoshida, *The Making of the 'Rape of Nanking': History and Memory in Japan, China and the United States*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 81-113; Arif Dirlik, "'Past Experience, If Not Forgotten, Is a Guide to the Future;" Or, What is in a Text? The Politics of History in Chinese-Japanese Relations,' *boundary 2* 18:3 (Autumn 1991), pp. 29-58.

⁹ A Hollywood-Chinese co-production of a feature film version of Iris Chang's 'The Rape of Nanking' is planned for late 2007, while a revisionist documentary from Japan called 'The Truth of Nanking' is planned for early 2008.

¹⁰ See the website of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, <http://www.chinaiiss.org/data/img/more.asp>. Also see a website called 'Soldier' (<http://www.junren.org>). (accessed on 28 February 2006).

¹¹ See for example, China News Daily, 'WWW Memorial Hall of the Victims in the Nanjing Massacre,' 1995, (<http://www.cnd.org/mirror/nanjing/NM.html>).

¹² Cited in Peter Hays Gries, 'China's "New Thinking" on Japan,' *The China Quarterly* no. 184 (2005), pp. 835.

¹³ Joseph Fewsmith and Stanley Rosen, 'The Domestic Context of Chinese Foreign Policy: Does 'Public Opinion' Matter?,' in *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978-2000*, edited by David M. Lampton, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 162.

¹⁴ Wang Renzhi, 'Zongxu' [General preface], in *Nanjing datusha shiliaoji*, vol. 28: *Lishi tuxiang* [Historical materials of the Nanjing Massacre, vol. 28: Historical images], edited by Cao Bihong, (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2006), pp. 1-2; also see Dirlik, 'Past Experience, If Not Forgotten.'

¹⁵ See for example, Saburo Ienaga, 'The Glorification of War in Japanese Education,' *International Security*, 18:3 (1993/94), pp. 113-133; Honda Katsuichi, *The Nanjing Massacre: A Japanese Journalist Confronts Japan's National Shame*, translated by Karen Sandness, (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999 [1987]). Also see Ian Buruma, *The Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan*, (London: Phoenix, 2002).

¹⁶ William A. Callahan, *Cultural Governance and Resistance in Pacific Asia*, (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 1-16; Michael J. Shapiro, *Methods and Nations: Cultural Governance and the Indigenous Subject*, (New York: Routledge, 2004).

¹⁷ Yuan Weishi 'Xiandaihua yu lishi jiaokeshu' [Modernization and History Textbooks], *Bingdian* weekly supplement to *China Youth Daily*, 11 January 2006. (<http://www.zonaeuropa>).

[com/20060126_1.htm](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/theory_and_event/v010/10.4callahan.html)), (read on 27 July 2006).

¹⁸ See Rey Chow, *The Age of the World Target: Self-Referentiality in War, Theory, and Comparative Work*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), pp. 25-43.

¹⁹ Beverly Allen, *Rape Warfare: The Hidden Genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia*, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p. xvii.

²⁰ For an exemplary case of responsible analysis of such topics see 'Normalizing Nudity' in Richard Curt Kraus, *The Party and the Arty in China: The New Politics of Culture*, (Boulder, CO: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), pp. 73-106.

²¹ Shi Young and James Yin, *The Rape of Nanjing: An Undeniable History in Photographs*, 2nd Ed, (Chicago: Innovative Publishing Group, 1997), p. 108.

²² Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), pp. 8-12.

²³ Michael J. Shapiro, *The Politics of Representation: Writing Practices in Biography, Photography, and Policy Analysis*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), p. 124.

²⁴ Ibid, pp. 141, 130; also see Susan Sontag, *On Photography*,

(New York: Penguin, 1977), pp. 5-8.

²⁵ For more discussion of the shift in official historiography see Rana Mitter, 'Old Ghosts, New Memories: China's Changing War History in the Era of Post-Mao Politics,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 38:1 (2003), pp. 117-131, on pp. 118-21; Yinan He, 'Remembering and Forgetting the War: Elite Mythmaking, Mass Reaction, and Sino-Japanese Relations, 1950–2006,' *History and Memory*, 19: 2 (2007); Peter Hays Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics and Diplomacy*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

²⁶ Mitter, 'Old Ghosts, New Memories,' p. 120.

²⁷ For another example of gendered identity politics provoked by war, see Veronique Pin-Fat and Maria Stern, 'The Scripting of Private Jessica Lynch: Biopolitics, Gender and the "Feminization" of the U.S. Military,' *Alternatives* 30:1 (2005), pp. 25-53.

²⁸ For another view of the historiographies of the Nanjing massacre see Joshua A. Fogel, ed., *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

²⁹ For further discussion of National Humiliation history see Callahan, 'History, Identity and Security'; Paul A. Cohen, 'Remembering and Forgetting: National Humiliation in Twentieth Century China,' *Twentieth Century China* 27:2 (2002), pp. 1-39; Gries, *China's New Nationalism*, pp. 43-53.

³⁰ Hou Jiefu and Dang Dexin, *Guochi hen yu Zhonghua hun: bainian lai Zhongguo renmin fanqinlue douzheng jishi* [National humiliation, hatred and the Chinese soul: A record of a century of Chinese people's struggles against invasion], (Shenyang: Liaoning education press, 2001).

³¹ For more on the symbolic identity politics of borders see R.B.J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); William Connolly, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 36-63.

³² Che Jixin, ed., *Guochi: Zhongguo renmin bu gai wangji* [National humiliation: Chinese people should never forget], (Ji'nan: Shangdong youyi shushe, 1992).

³³ An Zuozhang, 'Xu' [Preface], in Che, *National Humiliation*, pp. 1-2.

³⁴ Zuo Yi'na, 'Nanjing datusha [Nanjing massacre],' in *Ibid*, pp. 427-31.

³⁵ For a popular history of humiliation that includes pictures see Zhou Shan and Zhang Chunbo, eds., *Guochi lü: Tushuo Zhonghua bainian*. [A Record of National Humiliation: Pictures and Stories of China's Century], (Lanzhou: Gansu shaonian ertong chubanshe, 1998).

³⁶ Zuo, 'Nanjing massacre,' p. 427.

³⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 427-28.

³⁸ Ibid, pp. 428-29.

³⁹ Actually, the sexual violence in Nanjing was not an isolated event, but was an extreme example of how the Japanese military treated women during the war, especially with the forced prostitution of the 'comfort women' in occupied territories (See George L. Hicks, *The Comfort Women: Japan's Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997).)

⁴⁰ Zuo, 'Nanjing massacre,' p. 430.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 431.

⁴² Wang Xinhua, 'KangRi zhanzheng bu dengtong yu guochi' [The War of Resistance against Japan is not the same as national humiliation], *Wenming* [Civilization], no. 7 (2005), pp. 8-9.

⁴³ Central Party School [CPS], *Yishi weijing, mianxiang weilai: jinian Zhongguo renmin kangRi zhanzhengji* [Take history as a mirror to guide the future: Commemorate China's war of resistance against Japan], (Beijing: Zhonggong dangxiao chubanshe, 2005), p. 1.

⁴⁴ Recent research actually has showed how during the war rival Chinese armies spent a considerable amount of time and resources fighting each other. See Rana Mitter, 'Modernity, Internationalization, and War in the History of Modern China,' *The Historical Journal*, 48:2 (2005), pp. 523-43, on p. 537. Chinese texts also characteristically deny or downplay US involvement in the Second World War.

⁴⁵ Zhang Chengjun and Liu Jianye, *An Illustrated History of China's War of Resistance Against Japan*, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1995), p. 39.

⁴⁶ Museum of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japan, eds., *Zhongguo renmin kangri zhanzheng ji'nianguan* [Museum of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japan], (Beijing: Zhongguo heping chubanshe, 1998), pp. 24-5.

⁴⁷ La La, 'Wuwang guochi, fafen tuqiang [Never forget national humiliation, work to make the country strong],' *Xiaoxuesheng shidai* [Primary school students' times] No. 7/8 (2005), pp. 10-17, on p. 13-5.

⁴⁸ Zhang and Liu, *An Illustrated History of China's War of Resistance*, pp. 3, 1; also see CPS, *Take History as a Mirror*, p. 2; Wang, 'The War of Resistance,' p. 9.

⁴⁹ La, 'Never forget,' p. 10; Zhang and Liu, *An Illustrated History of China's War of Resistance*, p. 2.

⁵⁰ CPS, *Take History as a Mirror*, p. 2; also see Wang, 'The War of Resistance,' pp. 8-9; Museum of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japan, p. 1.

⁵¹ Wang, 'The War of Resistance,' pp. 8-9.

⁵² Liu Ye and Bo Liechen, eds., *Nanjing datusha tuzheng*

[Photographic evidence of the Nanjing massacre], (Changchun: Jilin renmin chubanshe, 1995); *Nanjing datusha* [The Nanjing massacre], (Hong Kong: Wide Angle press, 1995); China News Daily, 'WWW Memorial Hall of the Victims in the Nanjing Massacre'; Young and Yin, *The Rape of Nanjing: An Undeniable History in Photographs*, 1997; Zhu Chenshan, ed., *Nanjing datusha yu guoji dajiu jutuji* [Picture collection of the Nanjing massacre and the International rescue], (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2002); Li Guojiang and Zhang Peixin, *Nanjing datusha* [The Nanjing massacre], (Hong Kong: Hong Kong activities committee for commemorating the 60th anniversary of the victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan, 2005); Cao Bihong, ed., *Nanjing datusha shiliaoji*, vol. 28: *Lishi tuxiang* [Historical materials of the Nanjing Massacre, vol. 28: Historical images], (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2006).

⁵³ Liu and Bo, *Photographic Evidence*, pp. 45-48; Zhu, *Picture Collection*, p. 26.

⁵⁴ For further discussion of the politics of photography, albums and war see Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Matthew Brady to Walker Evans*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), pp. 71-118; Callahan, *Cultural Governance*, pp. 76-98; David Campbell, 'Cultural Governance and Pictorial Resistance: Reflections on the Imaging of War,' *Review of International Studies* 29 (2004), pp. 57-73.

⁵⁵ Zuo, 'Nanjing massacre,' pp. 427-31.

⁵⁶ See for example, Zhu, *Picture Collection*, p. 55.

⁵⁷ See Zhu, *Picture Collection*; Young & Yin, *The Rape of Nanjing*; Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, pp. 105-39.

⁵⁸ Liu and Bo, *Photographic Evidence*, p. 93, 132; also see Zhu, *Picture Collection*, pp. 46-97; Cao, *Historical Materials of the Nanjing Massacre*, vol. 28: *Historical Images*, p. 246.

⁵⁹ Young and Yin, *The Rape of Nanjing*, pp. 107-56, 168.

⁶⁰ Zhu, *Picture Collection*, pp. 170-78; Liu and Bo, *Photographic Evidence*, pp. 270ff.

⁶¹ See Jenny Edkins, *Trauma and the Memory of Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp 57-110.

⁶² Qi Kang, *QinHua Rijun Nanjing datusha yunan tongbao jinianguan* [The Monument Hall to compatriots murdered in the Japanese military invasion of China], (Shenyang: Liaoning daxue kexue jishu chubanshe, 1999), p. 12.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 13.

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 14.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p.16.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 17.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Also see recent paintings by Chinese and Chinese-American artists that graphically represent the slaughter and mutilation of the Nanjing massacre (Zhu, *Picture Collection*, pp. 60, 80-1).

⁶⁹ For a more general treatment of the relations of gender and nationalism see Andrew Parker, et al., eds., *Nationalisms & Sexualities*, (New York: Routledge, 1992).

⁷⁰ See Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), pp. 31-113.

⁷¹ *Richou baoxing shilü* [A faithful record of the atrocities of the Japanese invaders], (Political Department of the Military Committee of the Guomindang, 1938), pp. 29-34; also see Zhu, *Picture Collection*, p. 165.

⁷² Cao Bihong, 'Bence shuoming' [Introduction to this volume], in Cao, *Nanjing massacre historical materials*, vol. 28, p. 2.

⁷³ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1981), p. 98; also see Sontag, *On Photography*, pp. 7-12.

⁷⁴ Liu and Bo, *Photographic Evidence*, pp. xi, 294-45.

⁷⁵ Daqing Yang, 'The Challenges of the Nanjing Massacre: Reflections on Historical Inquiry,' in Fogel, ed., *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, pp. 133-79, on pp. 145-46. Yang notes that prominent Chinese historians have also criticized the cavalier way that photographs are used in Chinese texts, including Liu and Bo's *Photographic Evidence of the Nanjing Massacre*.

⁷⁶ Alexandra Stiglmayer, ed., *Mass Rape: The War Against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1993).

⁷⁷ Allen, *Rape Warfare*, pp. xii, 30.

⁷⁸ John Hay, 'The Body Invisible in Chinese Art?,' in *Body, Subject and Power in China*, edited by Angela Zito and Tani E. Barlow, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 42-77.

⁷⁹ The rest of this paragraph is a summary of arguments made in 'Normalizing Nudity,' a fascinating chapter in Kraus, *The Party and the Art in China*, pp. 73-106.

⁸⁰ Liu and Bo, *Photographic Evidence*, pp. 93, 126-36.

⁸¹ Ibid, p. 95; Zhang and Liu, *An Illustrated History*, p. 39; Young and Yin, *The Rape of Nanjing*, pp. 165-66, 169; also see Cao, *Historical Materials of the Nanjing Massacre*, vol. 28: *Historical Images*, pp. 247-52.

⁸² Young and Yin, *The Rape of Nanjing*, p. 108.

⁸³ Gries, *China's New Nationalism*, pp. 82-83.

⁸⁴ Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, trans. by Myrna Godzich and Wlad Godzich, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 122.

⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 5.

⁸⁶ Enloe, *Bananas*, p. 44.

⁸⁷ Lydia H. Liu, 'The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse: Manchuria in Xiao Hong's *Field of Life and Death*,' in Zito and Barlow, eds., *Body, Subject and Power in China*, pp. 157-77, on page 161; for similar arguments for Korean fiction see You-me Park, 'Against Metaphor: Gender, Violence, and Decolonization in Korean Nationalist Literature,' in *In Pursuit of Contemporary East Asian Culture*, edited by Xiaobing Tang and Stephen Snyder, (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996), pp. 33-47.

⁸⁸ Rey Chow, *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*, (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 1993), p. 41.

⁸⁹ Enloe, *Maneuvers*, p. 109.

⁹⁰ Mieke Bal, 'The Politics of Citation,' *Diacritics* 21:1 (1991), p. 31.

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 38.

⁹² Ibid, pp. 41-2. Sontag also famously resists using photographs as illustrations in her discussion of the power of photography (Sontag, *On Photography*).

⁹³ Bal, 'The Politics of Citation,' pp. 42-3.

⁹⁴ See Liu and Bo, *Photographic Evidence*, pp. 93-6; Zhu, *Picture Collection*, pp. 90-2.

⁹⁵ Susan Stewart, 'The Marquis de Meese,' *Critical Inquiry* 15:1 (1988), pp. 162-92, on pp. 163, 164; also see The Attorney General's Commission on Pornography, *Final Report*, (Washington, D.C.: US Department of Justice, 1986).

⁹⁶ Stewart, 'The Marquis de Meese,' p. 172.

⁹⁷ This silk painting was painted during the Second World War at the communists' Lu Xun Academy of Art and Literature in Yan'an. Note that it was produced for international consumption: the caption is written in both Chinese and English. The picture was taken in 1999 at a modern Chinese history exhibit in Hong Kong.

⁹⁸ Mitter, 'Old Ghosts, New Memories,' p. 129.

⁹⁹ See Yuan, 'Modernization and History Textbooks.' For the texts from the debate surrounding this controversy see (http://www.zonaeuropa.com/20060126_1.htm).

¹⁰⁰ Shapiro, *The Politics of Representation*, p. 130.

¹⁰¹ See Zhu *Picture Collection*; Cao, *Historical Materials of the*

Nanjing Massacre, vol. 28: *Historical Images*; Ye Zhaoyan's *Nanjing 1937: A Love Story* was originally published by Jiangsu Arts and Literature Press in 1996.

¹⁰² Qi, *The Monument Hall*, pp. 12, 132; Liu and Bo, *Photographic Evidence*, p. 278; Zhu, *Picture Collection*, p. 169.

¹⁰³ Zhu, *Picture Collection*, pp. 198-203. Ye's *Nanjing 1937* likewise is an example of 'local history'; he meticulously describes a pre-war city that is lively and prosperous, far removed from the national problems of North China and Shanghai.

¹⁰⁴ Zhu, *Picture Collection*, p. 200.

¹⁰⁵ For a contemporary discussion of the invasion and the safety zone, see F. Tillman Durdin, 'Butchery marked capture of Nanking,' *New York Times*, 18 December 1937; Timothy Brook, ed., *Documents on the Rape of Nanking*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

¹⁰⁶ Zhu, *Picture Collection*, p. 126.

¹⁰⁷ See Ibid, pp. 30ff; Young and Yin, *The Rape of Nanjing*, pp. 217-40; Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*, n.p.

¹⁰⁸ Ye, *Nanjing 1937*, p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Liu, 'The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse,' p. 161. The following discussion follows Lydia Liu's analysis of the novel.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 173.

¹¹¹ For a similar discussion about the representational politics of beheading in Chinese fiction, see David D.W. Wang, 'Lu Xun, Shen Congwen and Decapitation,' in *Politics, Ideology and Literary Discourse in Modern China*, edited by Liu Kang and Xiaobing Tang, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), pp. 174-87.

¹¹² Ye, *Nanjing 1937*, p. 36.

¹¹³ Liu, 'The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse,' p. 173.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, pp. 158, 175.

¹¹⁵ Ye, *Nanjing 1937: A Love Story*, pp. 392, 394.

¹¹⁶ Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire,' *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989), pp. 7-24, on p. 8.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 9.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p. 18-9.

¹¹⁹ See 'MIT Visualizing Cultures' webpage, (<http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027j/menu/index.html>) viewed on 5 August 2006. For a description of the controversy by one of its participants see Peter C. Perdue, 'Reflections on the "Visualizing Cultures" Incident,' *MIT Faculty Newsletter* 36:5 (May/June 2006).

¹²⁰ 'Illustration of the Decapitation of Violent Chinese Soldiers,' by Utagawa Kokunimasa, October 1894 (detail), in the 'Old China, New Japan' section of Visualizing Cultures, (http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027j/throwing_off_asia/toa_core_04.html)

¹²¹ See 'Statement from Professors Dower and Miyagawa,' 27 April 2006, <http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2006/visualizing-cultures.html#2>; The Chinese Students and Scholars Association, 'Chinese Students Association Offended by Homepage Art,' Letters to the Editor, *The Tech*, 28 April 2006, <http://www-tech.mit.edu/V126/N21/letters21.html>.

¹²² Purdue, 'Reflections.' The pop-up 'image advisory' was later changed to 'Visualizing Cultures presents images from the uncensored historical record as part of scholarly research. Be advised that some images may be offensive and difficult to view. Description and presentation of these images does not endorse their content' ('Old China, New Japan,' Visualizing Cultures).

¹²³ For a selection of Chinese responses, see (http://www.zonaeuropa.com/20060428_2.htm).

¹²⁴ Wendy Brown, *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 68. For an analysis of how *ressentiment* applies to ethnic politics among transnational Chinese artists and intellectuals see Rey Chow, *The Protestant Ethnic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, (New

York: Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 183-91.

¹²⁵ Brown, *States of Injury*, p. 74.

Copyright © 2007, William Callahan and The Johns Hopkins
University Press

[muse](#) [search](#) [contents](#) [top](#)