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Textualizing cultures: thinking beyond the MIT controversy

**Article (Accepted version)
(Refereed)**

Original citation: Callahan, William A. (2015) *Textualizing cultures: thinking beyond the MIT controversy*. [positions: asia critique](#), 23 (1). pp. 131-144. ISSN 1067-9847

DOI: [10.1215/10679847-2870534](https://doi.org/10.1215/10679847-2870534)

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Available in LSE Research Online: November 2015

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William A. Callahan,¹ Textualizing Cultures: Thinking Beyond the MIT Controversy,² *positions: asia critique* 23:1 (2015): 131-144, doi: 10.1215/10679847-2870534

Abstract

This essay examines how the MIT Controversy hardened identities in terms of the time-worn template of geopolitical conflict of national stereotypes. It critically analyzes the Chinese students' response to the "Visualizing Cultures" project by putting it in the context of the PRC's patriotic education policy that securitizes culture by focusing on identity as difference in a zero-sum game that distinguishes civilization from barbarism, and China from the rest of the world. It critically analyzes the professors response to the controversy by highlighting how meaning is not only produced by the author; it is also consumed by various audiences that bring diverse sets of experiences into meaning-making. It concludes that the controversy is less about content, and more about who controls knowledge production and distribution.

Keywords: China, patriotic education, race, narrative, culture

On Sunday April 23, 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, according to Peter Perdue's chronology.³ 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).⁴ To some, the image "hurt the feelings of the Chinese people"

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."⁵ The website went back on-line a few days later, and included a warning at the gateway to the controversial webpage: "PLEASE VIEW AND USE THESE 'VISUALIZING CULTURES' UNITS CAREFULLY AND IN THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN PREPARED."⁶

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."

Although it is easy to sympathize with the outrage at the violence of the Japanese woodblock prints, we should note that violent images are an important part of Chinese popular discourse.⁷ There are numerous examples of Chinese war propaganda that celebrate Chinese violence against Japan during World War II (otherwise known as the

Anti-Japanese War). A patriotic banner from that conflict, for example, pictures a heroic Chinese soldier holding up a decapitated Japanese head as a trophy. This silk poster, which was painted at the Chinese Communist Party’s Lu Xun Academy of Art and Literature in Yan’an, declares (in Chinese and English) that its goal is “To wipe out our humiliation with our enemy’s blood.”⁸



Fig. 1: Chinese war propaganda

Source: William A. Callahan

Dehumanized images of Japanese as barbarians continue to be the stock-in-trade of the PRC’s mediascape. In 2012, sixty percent of the films and television shows made at China’s premier Hengdian World Studios were about the Anti-Japanese War, and around

700 million Japanese people were killed in all Chinese films that year.⁹ (The total population of Japan was estimated at 127,650,000 in 2012.) As one Chinese actor recounted, “I play a shameful Japanese soldier in a way that when people watch, they feel he deserves to die. I get bombed in the end.”¹⁰ In 2000, Jiang Wen’s film *Devils on the Doorstep*, which is 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” man enough; rather, they are as “close as brothers” with him.¹¹ Back in the nonfiction world, when a few prominent journalists and scholars suggested in 2002-04 that China pursue a “normal” relationship with Japan that did not simply dwell on “the history question,” they were publicly denounced as traitors to the Han race (*Hanjian*)—and even received death threats.¹²

Commentaries that seek to explain the position of Chinese students in the Visual Cultures controversy often instruct us to put the horrible images in the context of China and Japan’s sad history in the long twentieth century. Most discussions of the “history issue” outline the problems with Japan’s biased history textbooks, semi-official denials and half-hearted apologies. But the problems of Japanese textbooks should be put into perspective: the history textbook that generated massive protests in China and South Korea in 2001 and 2005 was adopted by less than one percent of school districts.¹³ Hence in a way, the “history problem” is more a media event than a pedagogical issue—a media event that is recirculated as much by Chinese reactions (both official and unofficial) as it is by Japan’s rightwing politicians and intellectuals. While it is necessary to recognize the horror of Japanese atrocities in the World War II, and criticize those who deny them, here

I have a different goal: to interrogate the pivotal role of violent images in narratives of Chinese identity and security.

To understand the import and influence of China's own pedagogy of violence, we need to put the horrible images of the Visualizing Cultures controversy in the context of China's patriotic education campaign, which involves textbooks and curricula for all levels of education, and includes mass media activities in museums, film, television, popular magazines, newspapers, and on official holidays. Deng Xiaoping instituted this campaign in late 1989 because he realized that loyalty to the party-state was not natural; China's youth needed to be taught how to be patriotic. In a speech to top generals on June 9, 1989, Deng concluded that "during the last ten years our biggest mistake was made in the field of education, primarily in ideological and political education—not just of students but of the people in general."¹⁴ The solution to this education problem was to shift the focus of youthful energies away from the domestic issues that defined the 1989 student movement to target foreign problems. The CCP thus formulated a patriotic education policy not so much to re-educate the youth (as in the past), as to *redirect* protest towards the foreigner as the primary enemy.

Patriotic education thus does more than celebrate the glories of civilization and revolution in China; it also includes a heavy dose of what is called "national humiliation education" that commemorates China's defeats.¹⁵ This moral tale, however, does not mention tragedies that have rocked the PRC since 1949: the Great Famine, the ten lost years of the Cultural Revolution, or the June 4, 1989 massacre. Rather than focus on the party-state's problems, the discourse of "Century of National Humiliation" (1840-1949) knits together all of the negative events—invasions, massacres, military occupations,

unequal treaties, and economic extractions—of pre-revolutionary history that can be blamed on outsiders. As the result of a combination of foreign invasions and corrupt Chinese regimes, patriotic education texts tell us how sovereignty was lost, territory dismembered, and the Chinese people thus humiliated. Such books narrate how China went from being at the center of the world, to the “Sick Man of East Asia” after the Opium War, only to rise again with the triumphant foundation of the PRC.¹⁶ Patriotic education thus draws thick moral boundaries between patriotic Chinese on the one hand, and evil foreigners and Chinese race traitors on the other.

Indeed, like with the Visualizing Cultures controversy in 2006, national humiliation discourse itself first emerged to explain China’s shocking defeat in the first Sino-Japanese war (1894-95): in a memorial to the throne, Kang Youwei described this loss as China’s “greatest humiliation in more than two hundred years since the advent of the Qing dynasty, and aroused the indignation of all the officials and people of the country.”¹⁷ This defeat was shocking because it reversed power relations; before the first Sino-Japanese war, Chinese saw Japan as a student of Chinese civilization. Now many Chinese people see Japan as a barbaric “country of ingratitude” because it turned on its teacher while still refusing to face up to its horrible crimes from the twentieth century.¹⁸

Sino-Japanese identity politics are still framed to a considerable extent by the Nanjing massacre (also known in English as “the Rape of Nanking”): a horrific series of atrocities committed by the imperial Japanese army as it invaded and occupied the Chinese capital.¹⁹ 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. Since the 1980s (and especially with the patriotic education campaign

after 1989), the party-state has worked to turn a scattered collection of specific memories of the Nanjing massacre into lasting national institutions: numerous museums and feature films, dozens of commemorative photo albums and hundreds of illustrated articles.²⁰ 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.²¹ 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, as well as patriotic websites maintained by transnational Chinese groups. When posted on the web these free-floating images are separated from any context that would help us to understand 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.”²² The purpose of such photo albums is not merely to provide objective evidence of Japanese war crimes, but to reproduce the gendered discourse of female victims that stokes desire for masculine military revenge. More generally, the reproduction and recirculation of mutilated Chinese bodies in Chinese texts suggests that nationalism is in many ways defined against a standard of (Japanese) barbarism, more than with a standard of (Chinese) civilization.

While national humiliation discourse is not always obvious, it is omnipresent in the background as a template that guides China’s national aesthetic. Stories of China’s civilization and humiliation are not only about past history; they provide the frame for understanding China’s current foreign relations that inflames popular feelings for future

demonstrations, and primes the indignant youth for explosive protests. It is common for people to suggest that national humiliation discourse is on the wane; but I have found it keeps reemerging to make sense of each new challenge to Chinese identity. More importantly, Xi Jinping's new "China Dream" discourse is heavily invested in national humiliation themes. Xi first uttered his new catchphrase after a tour of the National Museum's "Road to Rejuvenation" exhibit, which is ground-zero for national humiliation discourse. In this and later speeches, Xi's clarified that his dream of a strong country is a "rejuvenation" from bitter history of the Century of National Humiliation.²³

The conclusion is not that Chinese students have been "brainwashed" by this impressive multimedia campaign (that still continues to this day) or are "pawns of larger forces," but to suggest that patriotic education/national humiliation education provides the dominant template for understanding Chinese identity and security. China's diplomats, scholars and students often exude national pride when times are good, but quickly switch to national humiliation themes when China faces an international crisis.

In other words, if it is common for us to assume that the "general public" can be influenced by the media in the United States, why is it so difficult to accept that Chinese citizens, whose subjectivity emerges in the context of well-organized official media campaigns, cannot be likewise influenced? And isn't it a proper critical stance to treat the "Century of National Humiliation" as a discourse that needs to be explained in terms of power relations, rather than as a source of "facts" that will explain China's behaviour? Elsewhere, I conclude that the "Century of National Humiliation" is less important as a set of facts than as a structure of feeling that guides a certain form of politics. It is necessary, then, to understand national humiliation not because it is "true," but because

understanding it is helpful for critiquing this particular narrative of hostile international politics.²⁴ Certainly, individual Chinese express a wide range of views about their identity and history; but it is still important to understand the discursive economy of the PRC's propaganda system that not only censors information but also actively shapes all forms of education and entertainment.²⁵

Against the background of the graphic display of mutilated Chinese bodies—including horrible photos of Japanese soldiers beheading Chinese men and raping Chinese women—that are commonly displayed in discussions of the Nanjing massacre in the PRC, it might seem odd that Chinese students would complain about the prints picturing beheadings of Chinese soldiers on MIT's homepage. But that would be missing the point; the controversy is not about outrage at the violence of the images or the meaning of the individual photos and prints. It centers on the production and distribution of *Visualizing Cultures*.

Although they might unproblematically consume the “war porn” of Nanjing massacre albums at home in China, when abroad some felt that it was their duty to assert control over images of ethnic Chinese people. As one student put it, he and his classmates were angry “not [at] the images themselves, but the lack of a ‘righteous’ standpoint.”²⁶ The “righteous” standpoint, he explains, is the one supported by the Chinese state, i.e. patriotic education. 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.²⁷ Securitization here involves a focus on identity as difference in a zero-sum game that distinguishes civilization from barbarism, and China from the rest of the world.

We saw such popular passions erupt again in 2008, when Chinese citizens came out in force to defend the Olympic Torch Relay's international "Journey of Harmony" against "foreigners" who criticized Beijing's crackdown in Tibet. Rather than examine why Tibetans might protest Beijing's rule, the dominant discourse among Han Chinese around the world narrated the "bias" of Westerners who had unfairly criticized the Chinese homeland. The Tibetan unrest was thus transformed from a serious domestic issue of racial politics into an international issue of pride and humiliation that pits China against the West.

Beijing responded to international criticism in the run-up to the 2008 Olympics with a propaganda campaign that narrated "the real China" (*zhenshi de Zhongguo*) that Chinese officials and netizens expected foreign journalists to report.²⁸ As China has grown in global power over the past few years, this media campaign to present a singular correct view of the PRC to international audiences has gained much traction: Confucius Institutes are proliferating in universities around the world and China's new English language cable news channel, CNTV, spreads the word in a slick CNN-style. The importance of China's "image policy" was reaffirmed at the 2011 annual meeting of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, which focused on developing China's soft power and "cultural security."²⁹

Knowledge here shifts from being the product of expertise—i.e. the result of scholarly enquiry—to be the product of emotional feeling that one can only properly appreciate through direct experience.³⁰ It becomes a national commodity, an issue of national sovereignty and discursive power (*huayu quan*), where all Chinese, as a young Chinese diplomat recently told me, "instinctively" know the meaning of "harmony," the

PRC's recently declared national value. It becomes "racialized" in the sense that only "Chinese" can talk about China (or at least have editorial control about how others discuss it, as the Chinese students' association suggested). This sense of control sometimes takes blunt forms: the Chinese consulate in Manchester denied visas to any of the 50,000 people who worked or studied at the University for ten weeks in 2011; among other things, the consul-general was insulted by the critical discussion of China at a keynote speech that was sponsored by the Confucius Institute (and now is published as one of the articles in this special issue of *positions*).³¹

This argument of Chinese discursive sovereignty makes sense to postcolonial theorists who focus their critique on U.S. dominance of media and academic discourse. But since China is a growing global power—it is the no. 2 economy in the world, and is forecast to surpass the U.S. as early as 2015—I think that it is necessary to be critical of China's cultural politics as well. One of the aims of postcolonial theory is to question EuroAmerica's singular universalizing (self) definition of modernity, with a goal of promoting a more diverse set of views of the world.³² The intellectual trend in China, however, is going in the opposite direction to valorize "unity." China's futurologists are promoting the classical ideal of Great Harmony (*datong*) in books as diverse as philosopher Zhao Tingyang's *The Tianxia System*, political scientist Pan Wei's *The China Model*, economist Hu Angang's *2030 China*, and scholar-diplomat Zhang Weiwei's *China Shock*.³³

What does Great Harmony mean here? Descriptions are generally vague; but Pan's detailed outline in *The China Model* gives us some clues. He argues that the patriarchal values of village life, which is presented as a conflict-free organic society, are

the source of the PRC's economic success. Pan sees the PRC as village society writ large, where the party loves the people like a caring father, and the masses are loyal, grateful and respectful, like good children. There is no room in this national village for open debate in "civil society." Pan actually condemns civil society as the battleground of special interests that can only serve to divide the organic whole. For him, diversity is "division," and thus a problem that needs to be solved by the state. Unity here is the guiding value because Pan sees social order as a process of integrating divisions into the organic whole, ultimately into the World of Great Harmony.³⁴ Great Harmony thus is better understood according to its more literal translation: great unity, which does not allow much opportunity for diversity. Indeed, as the demands of Chinese students at MIT show, it involves "harmonizing" things that challenge Sinocentric views of the world.

The responses of professors (including Peter Purdue), who presented themselves as "experts," were also problematic at times. Dower and Miyagawa's explanations that continually point to their written text show how they do not appreciate the power of the visual images. While the Chinese students denounced the Visualizing Cultures website for not putting the images in the proper context, Dower responded that he actually had described the prints in question as shocking, racist and gruesome. Yet these beautiful wood-block prints aestheticize the violence; like with the photo albums of horrible pictures that commemorate the Nanjing massacre that are popular in China, the graphic scenes overwhelm Dower and Miyagawa's critical written text. The graphic images clearly overwhelmed any statement of "authorial intent."

To appreciate the politics of display, it is helpful to consider Mieke Bal's analysis of *The Colonial Harem*, a slick picture album by Malek Alloula that gathers together

postcard photos of semi-naked Algerian women taken by French colonial officials from 1900 to 1930. Bal agrees that Alloula has the proper critical *intent*: to analyze the cultural politics of empire. But she argues that employing visual texts of naked women to engage in this critique is problematic. Rather than reading photographs individually, she highlights the importance of understanding how they are produced and distributed in photogenic albums. When the coffee table “technology” displays semi-naked Others, she argues, it risks complicity in reproducing the very ideology that it intends to oppose.

Gathered together in a beautifully-crafted book, Alloula’s collection of postcards encourages a voyeuristic consumption that serves “to aestheticize the images and thus to anesthetize their conflicts.”³⁵ The core problem of critical pictorials and exhibitions, Bal argues, is “the combination of exuberant illustration with poverty of explanation.”³⁶ Indeed, it is easy to miss critical points written in the text because we usually browse through coffee table books focusing on the visual narrative. (A temptation that is even more powerful on the Internet.) 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.³⁷

Since highlighting Visualizing Cultures on MIT’s homepage turned this academic project into a coffee table book, it is not difficult to understand how some people were offended by the images posted on the website. It also highlights how meaning is not only produced by the author; it is also consumed by various audiences that bring diverse sets

of experiences into meaning-making. If authors want readers to focus on the written text, then they should take Bal's commentary to heart and minimize the visual display.



Fig. 2 Du Lala at work

Source: Screenshot of “Du Lala shengji zi,” 2010

Perhaps the saddest thing about the MIT controversy is how it hardened identities in terms of the time-worn template of geopolitical conflict. Rather than seeing themselves as, for example, historians and engineers, many participants were reduced to national stereotypes: “Chinese” versus “Americans.” Xu Jinglei’s blockbuster film “Go Lala Go” (“Du Lala shengzhi ji,” 2010) provides an interesting alternative model of transnational and transcultural engagement. This movie traces the career of Lala, a Chinese “everywoman” from the post-1980s generation, as she pursues a “Chimerican dream” that knits together Chinese and American individuals, rules, aspirations and values. In other words, it shows how people can work together for mutual benefit.

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² Many thanks to Wendy Larson, Sumalee Bumroongsook, Jing Wang and Winnie Wong for their helpful comments on this essay, and to Prasenjit Duara and the Asia Research Institute (Singapore) for supporting this research.

³ See “MIT Visualizing Cultures” webpage, (<http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027j/menu/index.html>) viewed on August 5, 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).

⁴ “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)

⁵ See “Statement from Professors Dower and Miyagawa,” April 27, 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>.

⁶ 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). Since I originally wrote this essay, the warnings have changed again, suggesting it is a shifting discourse.

⁷ Also see Michael Berry, *A History of Pain: Trauma in Modern Chinese Film and Literature*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

⁸ The picture was taken at “The Rise of Modern China: A Century of Self-Determination” exhibit, Hong Kong Museum of History, October 1999.

⁹ Ian Johnson, “Studio City,” *The New Yorker*, April 22, 2013, 48, 54.

¹⁰ Cited in David Lague and Jane Lanhee Lee, “Why China’s film makers love to hate Japan,” May 25, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/05/25/us-china-japan-specialreport-idUSBRE94O0CJ20130525>.

¹¹ Cited in Peter Hays Gries, “China’s ‘New Thinking’ on Japan,” *The China Quarterly* no. 184 (2005), 835.

¹² See Gries, “China’s ‘New Thinking’ on Japan.”

¹³ Claudia Schneider, “The Japanese History Textbook Controversy in East Asian Perspective,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 617 (2008): 111.

¹⁴ Deng Xiaoping, “Address to the Officers at the Rank of General and Above in the Command of the Troops Enforcing Martial Law in Beijing, June 9, 1989,” <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/dengxp/vol3/text/c1990.html>. For an analysis of this campaign see Suisheng Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004); Peter Hays Gries, *China’s New Nationalism: Pride, Politics and Diplomacy*, (Berkeley, CA: University of

California Press, 2004); William A. Callahan, *China: The Pessoptimist Nation*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

¹⁵ See Wei Pizhi, Qu Qingrong, and Xiang Wancheng, eds., *Aiguo zhuyi jiaoyu shiyong dadian*, (Beijing: Dianzi kezhi daxue chubanshe, 1997/2006), 581-938.

¹⁶ See He Yu, *Bainian guochi jiyao*, (Beijing: Beijing Yanshan Press, 1997).

¹⁷ Cited in Hu Sheng, *Imperialism and Chinese Politics*, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press), 1955, 126.

¹⁸ See Wu Xinbo, “Memory and Perception: The Chinese Thinking of Japan,” in *Memory and History in East and Southeast Asia: Issues of Identity in International Relations*, edited by Gerrit W. Gong, (Washington, D.C.: The CSIS Press, 2001), 65-85.

¹⁹ For a critical discussion of such images, see Callahan, *China: The Pessoptimist Nation*, 161-90. For an analysis of cinematic and literary texts about the Nanjing massacre, see Berry, *A History of Pain*, 108-78.

²⁰ For an analysis of memory, visual texts and the Holocaust see Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

²¹ For examples of Nanjing massacre visual texts see: Liu Ye and Bo Liechen, eds., *Nanjing datusha tuzheng*, (Changchun: Jilin renmin chubanshe, 1995); *Nanjing datusha*, (Hong Kong: Wide Angle Press, 1995); China News Daily, “WWW Memorial Hall of the Victims in the Nanjing Massacre”; Shi Young and James Yin, *The Rape of Nanjing: An Undeniable History in Photographs*, 2nd ed., (Chicago: Innovative Publishing Group, 1997); Zhu Chenshan, ed., *Nanjing datusha yu guoji dajiu jutuji*, (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2002); Li Guojiang and Zhang Peixin, *Nanjing datusha*, (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*, (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2006); “The Memorial Hall for Compatriots Killed in the Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders,” <http://www.nj1937.org/english/default.asp>.

²² 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).

²³ “Xi Jinping: Kongtan wuguo shigan xingbang,” Caixin wang, November, 30, 2012, <http://china.caixin.com/2012-11-30/100466950.html>. For an analysis of China dream discourse see William A. Callahan, *China Dreams: 20 Visions of the Future*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

²⁴ Callahan, *China: The Pessimist Nation*, 191-218

²⁵ See Anne-Marie Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*, (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008).

²⁶ He Huang, “hope this clears your curiosity” email, May 2, 2006.

²⁷ For a selection of Chinese responses, see (http://www.zonaeuropa.com/20060428_2.htm).

²⁸ See Kevin Latham, “Media, the Olympics and the Search for the ‘Real China’,” *The China Quarterly* 197 (2009):25-43.

²⁹ For a discussion of China’s soft power initiative see “Can China Do Soft Power?,” *The Atlantic*, April 11, 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/04/can-china-do-soft-power/274916/>; Trefor Moss, “Soft Power: China Has Plenty,” *The Diplomat*,

<https://thediplomat.com/2013/06/04/soft-power-china-has-plenty/>; William A. Callahan and Elena Barabantseva, eds., *China Orders the World: Normative Soft Power and Foreign Policy*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

³⁰ Both practices—expertise and experience—are important, and should be seen as joined in creative tension rather than deployed as exclusive opposites (as they sometimes were in the VC controversy).

³¹ I was a participant/observer in this controversy. Some people were able to evade this restriction—one colleague listed her occupation on the visa application form as “housewife” rather than “university lecturer.” But students who planned to go to China that summer for study and fieldwork were not able to employ such strategies, and had to cancel their trips.

³² Postcolonial theory is a broad and contested field. For different views see Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*, (London: Routledge, 2003); Arif Dirlik, *The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism*, (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997); L.H.M. Ling, *Postcolonial International Relations: Conquest and Desire between Asia and the West*, (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

³³ Zhao Tingyang, *Tianxia tixi: Shijie zhidu zhexue daolun*, rev. ed., (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin chubanshe, 2011); Pan Wei, “Dangdai Zhonghua tizhi: Zhongguo moshi de jingji, zhengzhi, shehui jixi” in *Zhongguo moshi jiedu renmin gongheguo de 60 nian*, ed. Pan Wei (Beijing: Zhongyang bianzhi chubanshe, 2009), 3-85; Hu Angang, Yan Yilong, and Wei Xing, *2030 Zhongguo: Maixiang gongtong fuse*, (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2011); Zhang Wei-wei, *Zhongguo zhenhan: Yige ‘wenming xing guojia’ de jueqi*, (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 2011). [For an analysis of this discourse see Xu](#)

Jilin, “Zhongguo xuyao liweidan? Jjin shinian lai Zhongguo guojiazhu yi sichao zhi pipan” [Does China need a Leviathan? Critique of the Statist Trend in China],

Gongshiwang (January 23, 2011); Callahan, *China Dreams*.

³⁴ Pan, “Dangdai Zhonghua tizhi,” 18, 29.

³⁵ Mieke Bal, “The Politics of Citation,” *Diacritics* 21:1 (1991), 31 (25-45).

³⁶ Bal, “The Politics of Citation,” 38.

³⁷ Bal, “The Politics of Citation,” 41-2. Sontag also famously resists using photographs as illustrations in her discussion of the power of photography (Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Penguin, 1977)).