

Gateway to Manchuria: The Port City of Dalian under Japanese, Russian and Chinese Control, 1898–1950

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RESÜMEE

Dieser Aufsatz untersucht die Transformation der Stadt Dalian (Russ. Dal'nii, Jap. Dairen) von einem Exporthafen der von kolonialen Einflüssen geprägten Mandschurei zu einer Industriemetropole des japanischen Imperiums während der Kriegszeit und schließlich zu einer Modellstadt für industrielle Produktion der Volksrepublik China. Dalian ist ein besonders eindrückliches lokales Beispiel für den Übergang vom Imperium zur Nation in dem strategisch wichtigen Gebiet der Mandschurei. Der Beitrag analysiert, wie die aufeinander folgenden Regime die Stadt definierten und sich die Stadt in wechselnden geographischen und ökonomischen Kontexten veränderte, von einem weit entfernten russischen Handelsposten über ein Zentrum des Exports während der japanischen Kolonialzeit und einer japanischen Produktionsstätte während des Krieges zu einer sowjetisch besetzten Zone und bis zu einem integralen Teil der Volksrepublik China. Diese fortwährenden Verschiebungen übten einen großen Einfluss auf die lokale Gesellschaft aus, insbesondere auf die chinesische Bevölkerungsmehrheit der Stadt. Der Wandel der wirtschaftlichen und politischen Funktionen der Stadt veränderte nicht nur ihre physische Gestalt, sondern auch die komplexe, im steten Wechsel begriffene Identität ihrer Bewohner. Als eine *instant city* oder „neue Stadt“ an den Grenzen des Imperiums, des militärischen Schutzgebiets und der Nation war die urbane Identität Dalians dynamischer als in anderen Städten Nordostasiens. Die Geschichte dieser Stadt rückt bislang von der historischen Forschung vernachlässigte Aspekte der großen Narrative von Entkolonialisierung, Revolution und Nationalstaatsbildung, die gemeinhin mit der Region in Verbindung gebracht werden, ins Zentrum der Analyse.

The port city of Dalian, located at the tip of the Liaodong peninsula in Northeast China, was one of the first 'instant cities' in Northeast Asia, growing from a trading outpost in the late 1890s to a city of close to 800,000 people by 1945. From its inception, the

city was built to serve as a model of empire, envisaged by Russian and Japanese imperial planners as an ultramodern gateway to the Manchurian frontier. For much of its early history, Dalian was, in fact, a city at the edge of empire and nation, and for a time in the late 1940s it existed in geopolitical limbo between the two main state formations of the 20th century. Built from the ground up first by Russia (1898–1905), then for forty years by Japan (1905–1945), Dalian ‘moved’ on the imperial map from being a peripheral colonial outpost, to a regionally and globally linked export port and finally to an integrated production node. During a five-year occupation by the Soviet military (1945–1950) Dalian teetered on the brink of collapse. Severed from the Japanese empire it once served, but not yet integrated with China, Dalian existed on the map only as part of the Soviet-controlled Port Arthur naval base area. It was finally reintegrated with China in 1950, at which time it was hailed as a model socialist production city, heavily influenced by the Soviet model.¹ By shedding light on Dalian’s changing position within borders of empire, military zone, and nation, we can begin to chart the understudied process of how it came to be defined and integrated into the geobody of various state formations.

Internal borders were likewise a major feature of Dalian’s urban landscape. Exploring these is vital to understanding city life and to identify where city people may have resisted the state’s efforts to be defined in certain ways. Unlike the treaty ports of coastal China, Dalian was a total colonial space, and the city was home to the largest urban population of Japanese civilians outside of Japan. Yet over two-thirds of the city’s total population were Chinese. Spatial divisions between colonizer and colonized changed over time, some divisions strengthened while others weakened. This often correlated to the larger political changes affecting Dalian’s status within empire and nation. This paper is organized chronologically, and traces Dalian’s shifting position within and between empire and nation. These shifts likewise had an impact on internal borders set by successive regimes. The resetting of these internal borders was an important part of Dalian’s changing identity from the late 1800s through the 1950s.

Manchuria’s Gateway: Dalian, frontier port city

The city of Dalian was born from the competing desires of Russia and Japan to gain a strategic foothold in Manchuria. After defeating Russia in the Russo-Japanese war, Japan inherited Russia’s colonial territory on the Liaodong peninsula, which included the naval port town of Lüshun and the blueprints for the magnificent but only partially constructed port city of Dal’nii. Japan renamed the city Dairen (Chinese: Dalian) in 1905, and set about finishing Russia’s dreams for an international trading port, linked by rail to the agricultural wealth of Manchuria, and by steamship to world markets. No city existed on the barren shores of Dalian bay before 1895, and the new town grew rapidly into a

1 Chen Qiyang, “Dalian – xin Zhongguo de mofan dushi” (Dalian – new China’s model metropolis), in: *Luxing zazhi* 23 (1949) 11 (November 1949).

city unfettered by walls. The opportunities for both Chinese and Japanese merchants to break into business success in a new place made Dalian an attractive destination. As a result, the first two decades of Japanese rule were boom years for the growing city. The population grew from 19,000 in 1906 to over 200,000 in 1926.² The port quickly surpassed its regional rival at Yingkou to become the major export and processing center of Manchuria's lucrative soybean trade.³ With an abundant source of cheap Chinese labor from nearby Shandong, long distance railroad connections to a fertile hinterland, and deepwater port facilities, Dalian's economic might grew rapidly. As the main city of the Guangdong Leased Territory (Japan's colonial leasehold over the Liaodong peninsula), it occupied a unique position on Japan's imperial map. It was not part of a formally annexed colony like Korea or Taiwan.

Dalian was the terminus and headquarters of the South Manchurian Railway Company (SMR), a massive, quasi-governmental entity that oversaw the development of the railway and port facilities which brought great wealth to the city. The company also systematically set out building Dalian into a model of Japanese colonial development in Asia. By the 1920s, visitors marveled at the city's wide, tree-lined boulevards, grand central plazas, parks, vibrant markets, and modern shopping districts. Dalian's "Great Plaza" (Ō-hiroba) served as a symbol of its booming economic clout. This central space was ringed with monumental commercial buildings, including two major banks, and the grandiose Yamato hotel. The SMR built schools, hospitals, libraries, port facilities, and established industrial enterprises in Dalian and the Leased Territory and the Railway Zone (*fuzokuchi*), a narrow strip of land controlled by the company on both sides of the tracks stretching to Changchun.⁴ The SMR hospital in Dalian was one of the largest modern facilities in China, with room for 450 patients, and an outpatient clinic serving over 800 people per day.⁵

By the 1920s, Dalian had grown from a fishing village into the formal symbol of Japan's informal empire in Manchuria. The Japanese population was always very high, and hovered between one-third and one-fourth of the total population of the city, reaching 225,000 by 1945. Japanese dominated the most lucrative businesses and industries, earned higher wages than Chinese, and had access to the best schools and hospitals. However, Chinese elites were far from politically powerless. Chinese residents were the majority population throughout the city's brief history, and Dalian was home to a sizable Chinese merchant community, with strong associational identities. By 1924 there were over 4,000 Chinese businesses of various sizes throughout the city.⁶ The largest and most profitable were bean mills, which processed soybeans into soybean oil for export to meet

2 Inoue Kenzaburo (ed.), *Dairen-shi shi*, Dairen 1936, pp. 15-16.

3 Zhou Yonggang (ed.), *Dalian gangshi* (A history of the port of Dalian), Dalian 1995, p. 170.

4 Manshikai (ed.), *Manshū kaihatsu yonjūnenshi*, Tokyo 1964, pp. 224-26.

5 Adachi Kinnosuke, *Manchuria: A Survey*, New York 1925, pp. 134-35.

6 Gu Mingyi/Fang Jun/Ma Lifeng/Wang Shengli/Zhang Qingshan/Lu Linxiu (eds), *Diguozhuyi qinlue Dalian shi congshu: Dalian jin bainian shi* (Collected history of the imperialist invasion of Dalian: the recent hundred-year history of Dalian), 2 vol., Shenyang 1999, p. 999.

the increase in demand from Europe and the United States.⁷ Many of the mill owners were members of the Shandong Native Place association, which served as a political and economic network for its elite members, while providing charitable functions for migrant laborers.⁸ This even included nighttime Japanese language courses and technical training. Dalian's vibrant colonial economy had grown so quickly that by the late 1920s there existed significant competition between Chinese and Japanese merchants, and it was not uncommon for smaller Japanese firms to lose business and even close due to Chinese competition.⁹

Colonial Dalian's commercial streets were not totally segregated, thus the sense of competition between Chinese and Japanese merchants could be intense. However, in terms of residency, the situation was more complex. Russian blueprints for the city from the late 1890s had called for racially segregated neighborhoods, with a European sector separated from a Chinese sector by a large park.¹⁰ However, as the city grew under the Japanese, strictly segregated areas became less tenable due to space demands. By the 1920s and early 1930s, Chinese and Japanese lived together in some neighborhoods in the city, creating anxieties among the colonial population. Starting with the population boom in the 1920s, there had been considerable public discourse in Japanese journals about the problems associated with 'mixed residency', with Chinese and Japanese living side by side. While these articles noted with some pride that Dalian was an "international city," the authors quickly turned their attention to the cultural differences between Chinese and Japanese, and how this impacted daily life. According to one author, Ishikawa Tetsuo, while it was part of the city's cosmopolitan character to have mixed commercial streets, it became more problematic with mixed residency, where cultural differences and hygiene were "issues." Ishikawa found mixed streetcars, for example, to be too much to handle, particularly when he had to sit with Chinese laborers.¹¹

Issues of mixed residency aside, a racial hierarchy characterized colonial society in Dalian. Japanese, regardless of class, were on top, and enjoyed the best housing, education for their children, and high-paying jobs. The Korean population, although never sizable, also enjoyed a privileged status as Japanese subjects. The large Chinese population had its own hierarchy as well. At the top were Taiwanese, who like Koreans, were thought of as loyal subjects. Most Taiwanese in Dalian came to attend technical schools, and were often trained as doctors. Next were those classified as "Kantōshū jin" (People from Guangdong), who were registered permanent residents of the Guangdong Leased Territory.

7 Xu Jingzhi, "Jiefang qian Dalian minzu gongshangye jianwen," (Information on pre-liberation Chinese industry and commerce in Dalian), *Dalian wenshi ziliao* (Dalian historical materials) 6 (1989), p. 87.

8 Dairen shōgakkai kenkyū bu, "Dairen chihō ni okeru shinajin no shakai jigyō" (Social enterprises of Dalian's Chinese residents). *Dalian*: 1930, pp. 8-11.

9 Yanagisawa Asobu. *Nihonjin no shokuminchi keiken: Dairen Nihonjin shōkōgyōsha norekishu* (The Japanese colonial experience: the history of Japanese entrepreneurs in Dalian), Tokyo 1999, pp. 168-72.

10 Koshizawa Akira, *Shokumin chi Manshū no toshi keikaku* (Urban planning in Manchuria) Tokyo 1978, pp. 49-50. See also Mark Gamsa, Harbin in comparative perspective, in: *Urban History* 37 (2010) 1, pp. 136-49.

11 Ishikawa Tetsuo, "Dairen shi to zakkyo mondai" (The problem of mixed residency in Dalian), in: *Shin tenchi*, September 1924, pp. 43-5.

Below them was the vague term “Manshū jin” (Manchurians), referring to people who came from the Northeast. At the bottom were Chinese migrants, the vast majority of whom were from rural Shandong, and often referred to as “hai nan ren” (people from the southern sea) or simply “Shandong ren” (Shandong people).¹² This system, as we will examine below, was not codified into hardened legal categories until the outbreak of the Pacific war. In most statistical compilations and census data, Japanese authorities typically divided the population into three categories: Japanese, Korea, and “Man-Shi jin” short for “Manshu jin” (Manchurians) and the pejorative “Shina jin” (Chinese).

Until the wartime period, there had been considerable confusion among colonial bureaucrats in Dalian and the Leased Territory about how best to classify the Chinese population. Much of this can be attributed to the unique political status of the Guandong Leased Territory, particularly prior to the founding of Manchukuo. While many bureaucrats saw the extension of Japanese laws in Guandong as beneficial, others wondered what it would mean for the Chinese population. Were they to become subjects of the Japanese empire like Taiwanese and Koreans? If not, were they to be treated like “foreigners” (*gaikoku-jin*)?¹³ Through the 1920s and 1930s, the status of most of Dalian’s Chinese population was somewhere in between, and often depended on one’s economic status.

Perhaps the most extreme example of the segregation of Chinese residents in colonial Dalian was the Chinese worker dormitories of the Fukushō Chinese Labor Company (Fukushō Kakō kabushiki kaisha). Located in the eastern side of the city, just south of the port, the Fukushō company built a massive dormitory complex to house Shandong migrant workers, which they called “Hekizansho” or “Blue Mountain Manor.” To Chinese it was known as “Hongfangzi” or the “red house,” for its red brick walls. Construction of the dorm complex began in the first few years of Japan’s rule. It was, from its inception, designed to be a city within a city. Japanese colonial authorities had expressed the desire to keep the Chinese migrant population contained and removed from Dalian proper, and Blue mountain manor was designed to accomplish this task. The dorm buildings themselves were built in long rows, some single-level others multi-level, 92 in all. Although designed to house 15,000 workers, throughout the 1930s and 1940s its actual capacity was between 30–40,000, making it extremely cramped. In addition to the living quarters, the complex featured ten gambling halls, seven opium dens, 13 brothels, and 11 money-lenders.¹⁴ There was also an opera stage and a temple facility. Each year, on July 15, company representatives made offerings to commemorate those workers who died on the job.

In reality, the “Red house” functioned like a prison. It had high walls, topped with metal fencing, and restricted access to only one main gate, which featured a tower with a large clock with faces in all four directions. Each morning at 4 am, the clock’s bells would ring,

12 Qi Hongshen (Takenaka Kenichi transl.), “Manshū” ōaru hisutori: “doreika kyōiku” ni kōshite (Oral histories from “Manchuria”: resisting slave education), Tōkyō 2004, pp. 501-14.

13 Yamada Takeyoshi, Kantōshū no shisei mondai (The problem of city administration in the Guandong Leased Territory), Dairen 1928, p. 2-4.

14 ESGYS, pp. 345-46.

signaling the start of another long work day.¹⁵ Workers were shuttled to work on special tramcars, painted bright orange to indicate they were from the “Red house.” Gate inspections occurred twice daily as workers entered and exited the dormitory, and included body and clothing searches. Outbreaks of infectious disease were especially brutal in the cramped quarters of the dorms, and often occurred in deadly waves. At the peak of an outbreak, dozens died each day. Those admitted to the infirmary seldom came back alive, and workers called it “the execution ground.”¹⁶

Colonial Dalian grew into a major trading metropolis due to both its location, and to the efforts of Japanese economic interests to change the flow of trade from established Chinese centers to the new city. The city’s political status as part of a leased territory, something between formal colony and national space, meant that for a time, Chinese and Japanese alike moved here in search of opportunity. Economic opportunity aside, the colonial city was divided by internal borders, and a racial hierarchy worked to keep Chinese and Japanese populations separated, particularly in terms of residence.

Dalian as an Imperial Production Center

On 18 September 1931, the Guandong Army, garrisoned in Dalian and Lüshun, invaded Manchuria and established the puppet state of Manchukuo. Over the next few years Dalian would lose its centrality as the political and economic capital of the Japanese empire in Manchuria. The shift of human and material resources to Manchukuo, and the outbreak of total war in China (1937) and the Pacific (1941) resulted in a fundamental re-shaping of the city’s economic function, as the colonial economy and the city built around it were militarized and industrialized. Dalian’s transformation from a colonial port to an imperial production node would have lasting consequences for its postwar fate.

Japan’s invasion of China in the mid 1930s, and the start of the Pacific War in 1941, led civilian and military planners alike to build and prioritize key parts of the empire as production bases. The former colonial gateway city of Dalian became one such place. If the symbol of the city in the 1920s was the bustling docks and the banks, hotels and business around the ‘Great Plaza’, then the 1930s saw the symbolic centre shift toward new suburban industrial zones and the imperial spaces of power like the new train station and the Guandong Leased Territory administration building. By the late 1930s the people of Dalian, Chinese and Japanese alike, were increasingly viewed and categorized in terms of their position and value towards production.

In Manchukuo, Japan implemented a blueprint for building a modern industrial base, designed to be a production center serving the expanding empire. This developmental scheme represents a significant break with the patterns common to European imperi-

15 Liu Yongcai/Sun Chunfu/Chen Shizong, “Xuelei jintou ‘Hekizansho’: jiefang qian Dalian matou gongren de kunan shenghuo” (‘Hekizansho’ soaked in blood and tears: the miserable life of pre-liberation dockworkers in Dalian), in: Dalian wenshiziliao no. 1 (1985), pp. 26-37.

16 Ibid.

alism, where the colony simply provided food and raw materials to the metropole.¹⁷ Rather, Manchukuo was a radical experiment, designed to be a self-sufficient part of the empire, able to consume its own resources for industrial development, and feed its population with its agricultural goods.¹⁸ Larger companies from Japan, Nissan in particular, migrated to Manchukuo to form the Manchuria Industrial Development Company (Mangyō). Mitsubishi and Mitsui also invested heavily in chemicals and machine factories.¹⁹ This wave of state-led industrialization would have a major impact on Dalian's urban development for the next four decades.

Before the 1930s, Dalian had never been a significant industrial or production center. The bulk of its industry was in SMR hands, namely the SMR locomotive manufacturing and repair facilities. However, with the prioritization of large-scale industrial development after 1932, the SMR and other companies were encouraged to invest in new factories. A new industrial zone was developed and incorporated into the city, which became a major chemical and manufacturing base.²⁰ The number of factories employing five or more employees in Dalian and the Guandong Leased Territory stood at 487 in 1932 and grew to over 1,000 by 1937.²¹ The industrial labor force increased 250 percent.²²

From the mid-1930s onward, Dalian was steadily transformed economically from an export port to a center of wartime production in service of Japan's expanding wartime empire. Politically, the city was no longer part of a leased outpost of Japan's informal economic empire in Northeast Asia. Dalian now found itself occupying a sort of middle space between two political incarnations of the Japanese empire. For a time, it kept its status as the main city of the Guandong Leased Territory, however after the leasehold was transferred to Manchukuo, Dalian became, in a sense, a border city of the puppet nation. This lack of clarity from 1932 to the outbreak of war in 1937 led to considerable tensions on the ground, tensions of identity felt by both colonizer and colonized as the internal borders set during the colonial period began to shift.

A notable Japanese author and resident of Dalian, Saitō Mitshuhiro, wrote a provocative article in the *Dalian Shibao* newspaper, asking “who are the people residing abroad in Guandong?” He continued, “now that Guandong is considered an extension of Japanese territory, for those Han people living here, whether consciously or not, we already consider them citizens of Manchukuo (*Manzhouguoren*).”²³ Saitō Mitshuhiro's fears rested on the administrative uncertainty of the Guandong Leased Territory. He continued, “We should set up a principle of putting Japanese first, otherwise, it will be like it has been in the past, where Han people are the original inhabitants and we Japanese are the people

17 W. G. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism, 1894–1945*, Oxford 1987, pp. 213–17.

18 Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism*, pp. 241–306.

19 W. G. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism* (note 17), pp. 213–17.

20 Dalian shi Ganjingzi qu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (ed.), *Ganjingzi quzhi* (Ganjingzi district gazetteer). Beijing 1995, pp. 18–19, 170.

21 Dairen shōkō kaigi (ed.), *Kantōshū no kogyō jijō* (The Guandong Leased Territory's industrial circumstances), Dairen 1939, pp. 10–11.

22 Ramon Myers, *The Japanese Economic Development of Manchuria, 1932–1945*, New York 1982, p. 127.

23 Diguozhuyi qinlue Dalian shi congshu: Dalian jin bainian shi, p. 423.

residing abroad. In the Guandong Leased Territory we must establish a system where we Japanese are the principal residents, and Chinese are the visitors.”²⁴

Clarity came during the war years (1937–1945). Dalian’s colonial core districts were the physical reminders of the glory years of the port. From 1935 onwards, new, imperial spaces dominated the map of the city. This included the new Dalian train station, and, to the west of the old downtown, the Guandong government offices, police headquarters and courts, constructed facing one another across a massive new square. All of these buildings were completed by the late 1930s. They served to signal Dalian’s new position as part of the Japanese empire, one city among many that this expanding empire covered.

The war brought changes to the old colonial social hierarchies as well. In practices consistent throughout the empire, the pressing need for wartime labor and biopower led to new policies, which promised elevated roles to non-Japanese subjects of the empire. In Dalian wartime industrial prioritization created new social hierarchies in the city. The biggest change was a redefinition of categories of residency in the Guandong Leased Territory which gave Chinese with permanent jobs, particularly those with industrial jobs, higher status in the eyes of the wartime state. Until the wartime period, there had been considerable confusion among colonial bureaucrats in Dalian and the Leased Territory about how best to classify the Chinese population. Much of this can be attributed to the unique political status of the Guandong Leased Territory, particularly prior to the founding of Manchukuo. While many bureaucrats saw the extension of Japanese laws in Guandong as beneficial, others wondered what it would mean for the Chinese population. Were they to become subjects of the Japanese empire like Taiwanese and Koreans? If not, were they to be treated like “foreigners” (*gaikokujin*)?²⁵ Through the 1920s and 1930s, the status of most of Dalian’s Chinese population was somewhere in between and often depended on one’s economic status.

By the early 1940s, Japanese authorities established a more definitive registration policy for the Guandong Leased Territory. The new registration laws of 1942 divided the Chinese population into two categories. Those whose family registry was now in Guandong were granted “registered” (*minseki*) status. Everyone else, including those who wanted to work in the city for more than 90 days with the hopes of someday becoming a permanent resident, was considered a temporary resident (*kiryū seki*).²⁶ To establish permanent residency, one had to have a permanent home in the Leased Territory, usually by owning property or a house. A stable job was also a factor. An individual hoping for this status would present these qualifications to the neighborhood or village leaders to forward to the higher up authorities for approval. Once approved, an entire family could gain status

24 Ibid.

25 Yamada Takeyoshi, *Kantōshū no shisei mondai*, Dairen 1928, pp. 2-4.

26 “Kantōshū minseki kisoku” (Regulations for Guandong Leased Territory residence), February 11, 1942, reprinted in: Nakamura Wataru (ed.), *Kantōshū soshakuchi to Minami Manshū Tetsudō fuzokuchi* (The Guandong Leased Territory and the South Manchuria Railway Zone), Tōkyō 1966, pp. 245-46.

as registered residents of the Leased Territory, with permission to work and move about far more freely than others.²⁷ They would then be issued a permanent resident card.²⁸ Being a registered resident of the Leased Territory, a “Kantōshū jin,” allowed one’s children to attend better schools, and afforded opportunities to try and attend Japanese-run schools, training institutes and colleges. College for most Chinese in Dalian was not a possibility, only 6.5 percent of Chinese students attended colleges.²⁹ Enterprising families from Shandong who had yet to attain permanent status might be able to send their children to school, but their path to success was much harder. Zhang Lianmin was born in a shantytown area outside of Dalian. His family was from Shandong, and lived in a community with others from their home village. Zhang was lucky enough to attend a school nearby, and recalls learning the harsh lessons of the colonial hierarchy, where Shandong people were generally mistrusted by the authorities. Shandong children who first started attending school had to learn not to refer to themselves as Chinese.³⁰ The most skilled Chinese workers, and those in prioritized industries were often locally born or with ‘registered’ status.³¹ Workers in the shipbuilding and machine tool manufacturing sector had comparatively higher literacy rates. Industrial surveys from the wartime period praise this highly skilled workforce, noting that the educated, permanent labor force found in Dalian was a key feature of its continued industrial growth, and that locals were well suited for factory work due to a “higher cultural level and an educational system in place for Chinese.”³² Thus, it was only under increasingly severe wartime conditions the Japanese imperialist system granted large numbers of Chinese a more privileged imperial status.

From 1932 to 1945, Dalian experienced major shifts in its position on Japan’s map of empire. What had once been an intermediary zone – a leased territory – now became in a sense a border of a new imperial construct, the puppet nation of Manchukuo. This in turn led to a reshuffling of internal borders, as it became less clear who was ‘Manchurian’ and what this meant. The war clarified Dalian’s position on the map. It became an integrated, imperial production city. As such, Chinese residents, particularly those with industrial skills, were granted a new status within the imperial racial hierarchy.

27 Ibid.

28 “Aiguo de minzu gongshangyezhe – Xu Jingzhi” (A patriotic industrialist—Xu Jingzhi), in: Dalian wenshiziliao no. 6 (December 1989), p. 18.

29 Qi Hongshen (ed.), *Dongbei difang jiaoyu shi* (The history of education in the Northeast), Shenyang 1991, p. 259.

30 Takenaka Kenichi, *Dairen akashia no gakusō: shōgen shokuminchi kyōiku ni kōshite*, Tokyo 2003, pp. 80-87.

31 Kantōshū rōmu kyōkai, “Kantōshū ManShijin keiei kōjō rōdō chōsasho” (An investigation of Chinese-managed factories in the Guandong Leased Territory) (August 1940), in: Shen Jie/Nagaoka Masami (ed.), *Shokuminchi shakai jigyo kankei shiryōshū* [Manshū, Manshūkoku] hen (Collected materials on colonial social enterprises in Manchuria and Manchukuo), vol. 11., Tokyo, 2005, pp. 89-168.

32 *Dairen shōkō kaigi*, ed. *Dairen keizai benran* (An economic handbook of Dalian), Dairen 1943, p. 51.

Between Empire and Nation: Dalian Under Soviet Occupation

From August 1945 through 1949, Dalian was a city caught between the empire and nation. The empire it had served for nearly its entire existence evaporated. Although Chinese political powers, both the Nationalists and the Chinese Communists, relished the opportunity to liberate the city, and control its vital industrial base and port facilities, in the end it was not Chinese troops who took over the city. On August 22, Soviet soldiers arrived on the streets. Unknown to most people in Dalian at the time, the Soviets were there to stay. The Yalta Agreement and the subsequent Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, signed in February 1945 with Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government, granted the Soviets control of the former Guandong Leased Territory.³³ Dalian would remain a part of the Soviet-controlled Lüshun Naval Base Area until 1950, at which time it was formally handed over to the People's Republic of China. Soviet military forces retained control of the nearby Lüshun naval port until 1955.

The prolonged Soviet presence would prove crucial in re-shaping the former Japanese city. In the first few months after Japan's defeat, expectations ran high among both Nationalists and Chinese Communists that their side would take over Dalian. In the fine print of the agreements at Yalta and those signed between the Soviets and the Nationalists in February 1945, Dalian was to remain open as an international port, while the rest of the surrounding territory was to be in Soviet military hands. However, the Soviet interpretation was that as long as a state of war existed with Japan, Dalian would not be open in such a way. Throughout 1945 and 1946, Chiang Kai-shek's government repeatedly attempted to gain a foothold in the city, only to be shut out by the Soviets. After these failures, the Nationalists resorted to defining the city in a negative way. In the Nationalist-controlled press, Dalian was portrayed as a place still suffering the indignity of foreign military occupation. Soviets were painted as imperialists, and the Chinese Communists as their willing collaborators in keeping Dalian separated from China. In this negative definition presented by the Nationalists, the city was a foreign-occupied periphery.

Many Chinese Communist officials sent to Dalian after 1945 shared this view, and played the nationalism card to win support of the population. They felt it was time that Dalian be reunited with China, and viewed the Soviet's military occupation and behavior as imperialistic.³⁴ However, the view of Mao and other key leaders was somewhat different. To them, Dalian was an important zone of contact with the Soviets. Moreover, the city's industries made it a vital production base for the civil war battles to come. It was strategically advantageous for the Soviets to retain military control over the city, which allowed for the reindustrialization of its war industries to serve the Chinese Communists war efforts in the Chinese civil war.

33 Dieter Heinzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China 1945–1950: The Arduous Road to the Alliance*, Armonk 2004, pp. 51-125, 348, 415.

34 Christian A. Hess, *Big Brother is Watching: Local Sino-Soviet Relations and the Building of New Dalian, 1945–1955*, in: Paul Pickowicz/ Jeremy Brown (eds), *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China*, Cambridge, Mass 2007, pp. 160-83.

Borders become extremely useful categories of analysis for clarifying the complex political and social situation in Dalian during the years of Soviet occupation. Despite Dalian's political limbo, the city did become a major source of contact between Soviet and Chinese Communist personnel. No other place in China had been under Soviet control for as long as Dalian and the other communities of the former Guandong Leased Territory. The Soviets had stationed over 100,000 military personnel throughout this 1300 square mile space. By 1947, several of the largest former Japanese industrial establishments were now under joint Sino-Soviet control. These places became the testing grounds and models for implementing the Soviet production model in China, and by 1949, Dalian was home to model industries pointing to the future of 1950s urban China.

To ease tensions between Chinese and Soviet military occupation forces, Sino-Soviet Friendship Associations were formed throughout Dalian and the Naval Base Area. Among their diverse functions, these organizations served to propagate positive images of the Soviets and point to a Soviet-style future for Dalian and all of China. As a city without a nation, the banner of socialist internationalism was particularly powerful in Dalian. Sino-Soviet Friendship stories in the press and read at Friendship Association meetings told dramatic tales of Soviet doctors saving local Chinese with blood transfusions, and Chinese orphans adopted by Soviet families stationed in Dalian and the nearby military port at Lüshun. The message here was that while racial hierarchies existed under the Japanese, Chinese and Soviets were all one family under socialism.³⁵

The borders within the city began to dramatically shift as well. As Japan's civilian population was repatriated through 1947–1948, entire neighborhoods stood vacant. In one of the more fascinating policies of the postwar period, Soviet and Chinese Communist leaders conducted what amounted to a program of urban land reform. Known officially as the "Housing readjustment movement" (*zhuzhai tiaozheng yundong*) and colloquially as the "poor people's moving campaign" (*pinmin banjia yundong*), the policy involved relocating upwards of 30,000 Chinese families from Dalian's shantytowns and poorer districts into modern spacious homes and apartments – once the exclusive home to Japanese and Chinese colonial elites.³⁶ Tales of such moves filled the pages of local newspapers and read like high socialist drama – the urban poor, the labourers, and industrial workers--those who had toiled under Japanese imperialism – were now the masters of the new society, complete with the mansions of their former colonial rulers. Strong patriotic and racial overtones were used to characterize the campaign, creating a sense that the comfortable life once denied Chinese was finally at hand.³⁷

35 Ibid.

36 These statistics are available at the Dalian municipal archive website: <http://www.da.dl.gov.cn/xhsb/message-info.asp?id=343>

37 Dalian ribao, August 27, 1946.

Dalian as a Chinese City: Integration with the PRC

It was not until late 1949-early 1950 that Dalian became formally integrated with the China. The city was no longer at the periphery of empires, or part of a contested military base. Yet Dalian's experience and history as a colonial trading port and imperial production city served to empower a new definition of the city. In 1949, the Chinese press was hailing 'New Dalian' as 'New China's model city'.³⁸ Its colonial past may have just as easily condemned it as a scarred city of victims of Japanese imperialism, or worse still, as a place whose majority Chinese population might be considered suspect in their collaboration with Japan. Instead, we see the fantastic tale of the rebirth of what is claimed to be an undeniably Chinese, cutting-edge production city. The People's Daily newspaper wrote of how Dalian had been 'transformed from an oppressed Japanese imperialist colony, to an industrial base of New Democracy and New China'.³⁹ One commentator even proclaimed the city to be 'a worker's paradise'.⁴⁰

Throughout the 1950s, Dalian became a less cosmopolitan space, its colonial population had long since been repatriated, and the number of Soviet citizens slowly declined. Integrated with the PRC, it was no longer a center of socialist internationalism. As China's other industrial cities came online, from Shenyang to Shanghai, Dalian's model status began to wane. Cut off from more expansive regional and global trade links, the port was now one of many serving the emerging Second World. As a city of the People's Republic of China, borders within Dalian's society became increasingly political and ideological. During the mass campaigns of the 1950s, for example, the city's skilled labor force, trained under the Japanese and prized for their knowledge and effort during the Chinese civil war, came under fire for their past collaboration. New lines were being drawn in the city.

Conclusion

Dalian's history of successive regime changes and its total colonial status make it unique among Chinese cities. However, its experience sheds important light on understudied process affecting many cities in China in the early 20th century. Dalian's shifting position on imperial and national maps highlights the challenges that various states faced as they attempted to incorporate and redefine the city within imperial and national projects.

While 'liberation' from colonial powers was certainly a monumental occasion, Dalian's case reminds us that the process of nationalizing a city may not always be positive. In the decades after Japan's defeat, Dalian's population shrank from its colonial and wartime peaks, and, with its port cut off from global and regional trading networks, the city came to occupy a less dynamic position on the map of 'New China'. Perhaps Dalian's histori-

38 Chen Qiyang, "Dalian – xin Zhongguo de mofan dushi" (note 1).

39 Dalian gongye zhanlanhui (ed.), *Gongye Zhongguo de chuxing* (The embryonic state of Industrial China), Guangzhou 1950, pp. 7-10.

40 Li Zongying/Liu Shiwei/Liao Bingxion (eds), *Dongbei xing* (Travels through the Northeast), Hongkong 1950, p. 50.

cal experience can shed new light on the concept of the Second World by revealing the complex and multiple paths that its various components experienced as they became a part of a new national and global order. In Dalian's case, its colonial past was not erased, but rather reworked into a new narrative to build up its claim as a model metropolis of the socialist world.