

## **“The Persistence of Conflict”: Programme on the Experience, Legacy and Memory of China’s War with Japan, 1937-45 (University of Oxford)**

Rana Mitter Professor of the History and Politics of  
Modern China, University of Oxford

The Second World War in China was the single most wrenching event in modern Chinese history. Yet the second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45), known in China as the War of Resistance to Japan, is little known or understood in the western world. While there are a variety of excellent scholarly monographs and articles on specific aspects of the war, there exists in English nothing like the wealth of scholarship on the European and Pacific wars. When Japan was finally defeated in 1945, China was on the winning side, but lay devastated, having suffered some 15 million deaths, massive destruction of industrial infrastructure and agricultural production, and the shattering of the tentative modernization begun by the Nationalist government. The understanding of this history, and making it central to interpretations of the global history of the twentieth century, has been a key task of a research group based at Oxford since 2007.

This research group is based on a concept grounded in the discipline of history, but with rich implications for our understanding of postwar and contemporary China – that China’s conflict with Japan in the mid-twentieth century must be brought to the forefront of our understanding of the wider path of Chinese modernity, and that to do so will bring about significant new historical and political insights, not only for the academic world, but also for the wider public understanding of China, the rising power of the decades to come.

In spring 2007, the British educational charity the Leverhulme Trust generously awarded a major grant to this project under its Research Leadership Award Scheme. Over the period 2007-12, a dedicated research programme involving postdoctoral Research Associates, doctoral students, and research assistants has worked

## 衝突持續：「中日戰爭的經驗、遺緒、記憶（1937-45）」研究計畫

米德 英國牛津大學中國歷史與政治學教授

二次大戰是近代中國史上最慘烈的戰事，西方對於中國對日抗戰（即西方所指第二次中日戰爭）所知與所識卻仍極為有限。有關中日戰爭的個別層面雖然已有多種優秀學術專著及論文出版，然而與歐戰及太平洋戰爭的眾多著作相較，仍大為遜色。1945年日本最終戰敗，中國以慘痛的代價取得勝利：1,500 萬人死亡，工業基礎被大規模破壞，國民政府的現代化嘗試慘遭粉碎。理解這段歷史，並視之為 20 世紀世界史核心來詮釋，正是本研究群自 2007 年於牛津大學成立以來的主要工作。

以史學研究出發，進而豐富對戰後與當代中國的認識，本研究群相信，20 世紀中期的這場中日衝突應視為中國現代化的前沿來理解，如此有助於學界和大眾就歷史及政治層面，掌握未來數十年間中國霸權崛起的意義。

2007 年春，本研究計畫獲得贊助教育的英國列維赫姆基金慷慨餽贈，自 2007 至 2012 年間，成立研究中心並延攬博士後研究人員、博士班學生、研究助理等，進行出版、田野調查、國際合作如會議及工作坊等，牛津大學現代中國歷史與政治教授米德

on publications, fieldwork, and international collaborations including conferences and workshops. The programme is directed by Rana Mitter (Professor of the History and Politics of Modern China, University of Oxford).

Our overall scholarly position is that the contribution of the Nationalists (or Guomindang) to the war effort has been underestimated, particularly in the field of social reform in China. Moreover, more attention needs to be paid to the figures and governments who collaborated with the Japanese, rather than opposing them. In a broader sense, our project emphasises that global historians need to rediscover the history of China as the missing Allied power of the Second World War, alongside Britain, the US, and the USSR. Below, we outline the publications and events, now forthcoming in some quantity, that underpin this interpretative change. We seek to move away from the historical positions about the Sino-Japanese War which became frozen during the Cold War as part of the debate about communism, which and instead ask the broader question, “How did the war change China?”

During the past five years, members of the research team have explored a variety of areas in the political, cultural and social history of the war, as well as its impact on contemporary Chinese society.

Among the monographs published or forthcoming from team members are:

**Sherman Lai, *A Springboard to Victory: Shandong Province and Chinese Communist Military and Financial Strength, 1937-1945* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).**

(Rana Mitter) 為研究中心主持人。

我們的學術立場是，中國國民黨在抗戰期間的貢獻一直被低估，尤其在社會改革方面。此外，與日本以合作取代對抗的個人及政權，也值得更多關注。廣泛而言，本研究計畫強調，世界史學家應重新認識在二戰期間，與英、美、蘇並列為盟國之一、卻被忽略的中國。本中心近期出版品及活動為上述在詮釋上的修正奠定基礎，以下將有簡短介紹。冷戰時期對共產主義的爭辯，致使中日戰爭的歷史觀點為之僵化，我們嘗試擺脫這樣的觀點，並提出一個更為寬廣的問題：「戰爭如何改變中國？」

過去五年來，本研究群成員從政治、文化及社會史等領域探索中日戰爭，及其對當代中國社會的影響。以下略述成員已經出版或即將出版的著作：

**1. 賴曉剛 (Sherman Lai) 著，《勝利的跳板：山東省與中國共產黨的軍事及財政實力 (1937-1945)》(書名暫譯，萊登：Brill, 2011 年)。**

本書談第二次中日戰爭期間中國共產黨的勝利，回溯中共在山東如何從抗戰初期的邊緣政治團體，到抗戰結束前成為主要勢力，並闡述中共在山東的成功與國共內戰再起、1949 年取得全面勝利等的關聯性。證明中共憑藉軍事財政體制而壯大，充分利用戰時山東的混亂情勢及傳統田賦制度的技術性缺陷，於根據地發行鈔票，並控制日本

This book concerns the success of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) during the Second Sino-Japanese War. It traces the growth of the CCP in Shandong from a marginal political group at the beginning of the war to the dominant power in the province when the war came to an end. It illustrates the linkage of this success with the resumed CCP-Nationalist civil war and its significance to the CCP national victory in 1949. It proves that the strength of the CCP came from its military-fiscal state that enable it to exploit the chaotic situation in wartime Shandong and the technical deficiencies in the traditional revenue system of tianfu. The CCP was then able to establish the exclusive zone of its banknotes and controlled the production and sales of the essential items of staple food, cotton, salt and peanut oil that the Japanese war economy was dependent on. Because the Japanese were preoccupied with the war against the United States in the Pacific, they had to trade with the CCP in disadvantage terms. The CCP could then turn the trade with the occupied areas into the principal source of revenue and accumulate materials for racing into Manchuria in the future. This book revealed that the CCP's justification for its agrarian reform was fabricated. Because it was destroying the basic condition of trade, the local CCP boycotted the agrarian reform.

**James Reilly, *Strong Society, Smart State: The Rise of Public Opinion in China's Japan Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).**

Through a detailed examination of China's relations with Japan from 1980 to 2010, James Reilly shows how Chinese leaders have responded to popular demands for political participation with a sophisticated strategy of tolerance, responsiveness, persuasion, and repression -- a successful approach

經濟所仰賴的基本物資買賣，包括主要糧食、棉花、鹽、花生油等。由於日本集中火力在太平洋戰場與美國交戰，只得在劣勢條件下交易。與占領區的貿易遂成為中共在山東的主要稅收來源，並藉機儲存物資，為日後進入東北預作準備。本書指出，中共土地改革的合理化基礎是編造的。山東的共產黨員事實上以土地改革破壞貿易的基本條件為由，進行杯葛。

**2. James Reilly 著，《強大社會、聰明國家：中國對日政策相關公共意見的崛起》（書名暫譯，紐約：哥倫比亞大學出版社，2012年）。**

本書透過對 1980 至 2010 年間中日關係的縝密研究，指出中國領導人因應政治參與的普遍要求，以寬容、回應、勸說、鎮壓等複雜的策略，成功地解釋了共產黨如何及為何能繼續統治中國。在大眾民族主義、市場力量、資訊科技等淹沒下，中國強大而有彈性的統治足以快速有效地適應新環境。Reilly 以公共意見調查、中國活動人士訪談、量化媒體分析、政府內部文件等為據，支持上述論點。

**3. Aaron William Moore 著，《自律的危險：士兵記錄日本帝國興衰（1937-1945）》（書名暫譯，麻州劍橋：哈佛大學出版社，2013年）。**

本書針對日本、中國國民黨、美國等方

that helps explain how and why the Communist Party continues to rule China. Far from being a fragile state overwhelmed by popular nationalism, market forces, or information technology, China has emerged as a robust and flexible regime that has adapted to its new environment with remarkable speed and effectiveness. Reilly draws upon public opinion surveys, interviews with Chinese activists, quantitative media analysis, and internal government documents to support his findings.

**Aaron William Moore, *The Perils of Self-Discipline: Chinese Nationalist, Japanese, and American Servicemen Record the Rise and Fall of the Japanese Empire, 1937-1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, forthcoming in 2013).**

This book is a comparison of Japanese, Chinese Nationalist, and American accounts of World War II. It is the first book to examine the Asia-Pacific Theater by placing soldiers at the same places and the same times to describe the differences and similarities in how they described the experience. Conducting research in dozens of archives in China, Taiwan, Japan, and the United States, Moore uses hundreds of diaries and memoirs to investigate the boundary between beliefs about the self and physical experience.

**Rana Mitter, *The Enduring War: Experience, Legacy and Memory of the Sino-Japanese War* [provisional title] (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; London: Penguin, 2013).**

This book seeks to restore China's participation in the war against Japan to a more central role

面的二次大戰相關記載進行比較研究，首次檢視亞太戰區同一時間地點下，士兵所陳述經歷的異同。作者於中國、臺灣、日本及美國各地檔案館進行研究，運用數百種日記、回憶錄等，探索自我信念與實際經歷的分際。

4. 米德著，《中日戰爭的經驗、遺緒與記憶（1937-1945）》（書名暫定暫譯，波士頓：Houghton Mifflin Harcourt；倫敦：企鵝出版社，2013年）。

本書嘗試重現中國抗日戰爭在二次大戰史的核心角色，對於國民黨人、中共黨人、與日本合作者等（包括三方首腦蔣中正、毛澤東、汪精衛），特別提供較為持平的解釋。本書也從外交與軍事方面，探討美英與戰時中國的艱難關係。中日衝突的本質，包括國內經驗及跨國流動的影響，深刻地改變了中國社會。舉例來說，國共雙方均發展社會福利，作為國家與社會關係核心的願景。末了，本書檢視自1945年戰爭結束至今，戰爭經驗如何被記憶和遺忘，也同時塑造了中國的社會與政治。

5. 《現代亞洲研究》（*Modern Asian Studies*）期刊「二次大戰下的中國（1937-1945）：經驗、記憶與遺緒」專號（第45卷第2部分，2011年3月出版）。

in the general understanding of the Second World War, and in particular provide a more balanced account of the roles of the Nationalists, Communists, and collaborators with Japan (along with the key figures in each group, Chiang Kaishek, Mao Zedong, and Wang Jingwei). It also looks at the difficult relationship that Britain and the US had with wartime China in diplomatic and military terms. It also argues that the nature of the conflict against Japan served to change Chinese society in profound ways that were influenced both by indigenous experience and by transnational flows. For instance, both the Nationalists and the Communists developed welfare provision as a more central part of the state-society relationship that they envisioned in China. Finally, the book examines ways in which memory and forgetting of the wartime experience have shaped Chinese society and politics from the end of the war in 1945 to the present day.

**Special edition of *Modern Asian Studies*: “China in World War II, 1937-1945: Experience, Memory and Legacy” (Volume 45: part 2, March 2011).**

**A special journal issue is also in preparation on “Relief and Rehabilitation in Wartime China,” edited by Helen Schneider and Rana Mitter.**

**Events:**

The “China’s War with Japan” team were kindly hosted for two events at Harvard University, the first by the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies on 10 April 2012, and the second by the Center for History and Economics on 11 April 2012.

6. 舒海瀾 (Helen Schneider)、米德主編，  
「戰時中國的救濟與復原」專輯 (籌備出版中)。

近期活動：

美國哈佛大學近期為本研究群舉辦了兩場學術討論會：2012年4月10日於費正清研究中心、次日於歷史與經濟中心。

在第一場「從家門口到戰場前線：中國二次大戰經驗研究的新視野」討論會中，舒海瀾首先報告其研究計畫「中日戰爭期間婦女指導委員會的抗戰與重建工作」，談抗戰期間國民政府透過新生活運動婦女指導委員會進行婦女組織動員工作。以該委員會戰時工作的諸多層面為例，此一進行中的研究計畫探討受過教育的婦女如何規劃並執行抗戰與社會建設項目，包括教育、生產、生活改善、民族意識等，強調1930至1940年代中國戰時動員的性別及階級劃分，顯示除了在中共根據地之外，動員工作也得到高度重視。

賴曉剛的報告題目是「韋維爾將軍 (General Archibald Wavell) 與1942年緬甸陷落」。太平洋戰爭爆發之初，緬甸隨即在1942年為日軍占領，一般歸咎於盟軍東南亞戰區最高司令韋維爾將軍，因傲慢拒絕接受蔣介石援助，而未能即時於緬甸部署中國軍隊，對抗日軍進襲。賴博士根據蔣介石日記提出翻案，認為蔣與美軍總司令史迪威應同為此事負責。

In the first event, entitled “From the Home Front to the Battlefield: New Research on China's World War II Experience,” Dr Helen Schneider presented on her new project on women’s “The Women’s Advisory Council, Resistance, and Reconstruction during China’s War with Japan.” She addressed the Women's Advisory Council of the New Life Movement, a significant umbrella organization for women's mobilization work during the Sino-Japanese war in Nationalist China. Using aspects of the council's wartime activities as a case study, this ongoing research shows how educated women formulated and conducted resistance and social construction programs that addressed issues of education, production, life improvement, and national consciousness. It highlights both the gendered and class-based aspects of wartime mobilization in 1930s and 1940s China, showing that mobilization was serious and important even outside the Communist areas of control.

Dr Sherman Lai spoke on “General Archibald Wavell and the Defeat in Burma in 1942.” General Archibald Wavell, the commander of the Allied forces in Southeast Asia at the beginning of the Pacific War, has been blamed for the Allied defeat in Burma in 1942. He was said to be too proud to accept Chiang Kai-shek's offer of help and let the Chinese army be deployed in Burma in time to save it from Japanese invasion. Lai’s revisionist research on the Chiang Kai-shek diaries, however, now suggests that two figures - Chiang Kai-shek and American commander Joseph Stilwell - must take a significant portion of the blame

In his lecture at the Center for History and Economics on 11 April 2012, titled “Warfare and welfare: how social pressure and global conflict in World War II changed China,” Rana Mitter analysed the way in which indigenous

米德於4月11日在哈佛大學歷史與經濟研究中心以「戰爭與福利：二次大戰期間社會壓力與國際衝突如何改變中國」為題發表演講，分析戰時中國災難救助的本土觀念與跨國界福利趨勢的互動。國民政府、國際及非政府人員致力於救難工作，彼此關係變得極度緊張，戰後中國復原的主要觀念在當時也得到討論。國共之間的激烈競爭使國際人士明白，在全然改變的國際秩序下，戰後中國即將產生嶄新局面。

我們希望，在2012年底本研究計畫獎助結束後，其學術影響力仍能延續。過去五年來，我們有機會與來自東亞、歐洲及北美的傑出學者合作，也期待這些合作關係在未來能持續蓬勃發展。

相關資訊詳見網站：[www.history.ox.ac.uk/china](http://www.history.ox.ac.uk/china)，或聯繫主持人米德（電郵地址為 [rana.mitter@chinese.ox.ac.uk](mailto:rana.mitter@chinese.ox.ac.uk)）。

（翻譯 / 廖文碩）

ideas of disaster relief interacted with wide transnational currents of welfarism in wartime Nationalist China. The relationship between the Nationalist government and international and non-governmental actors attempting to relieve the destruction of the time became extremely fraught. However, important ideas about the shape of a postwar China were also discussed at the time, and the fierce competition between the Nationalists and Communists in the eyes of the international community helped shape new visions of the way in which a postwar China would take its place in a highly altered international order.

We hope that the scholarly impact of the project will continue to be felt beyond the end of the funding period in 2012. Over the past five years, we have had the opportunity to collaborate with outstanding scholars from East Asia, Europe and North America, and we hope that these links will continue to thrive and develop over the years to come.

For full details, please visit [www.history.ox.ac.uk/china](http://www.history.ox.ac.uk/china) or to contact the programme director, email [rana.mitter@chinese.ox.ac.uk](mailto:rana.mitter@chinese.ox.ac.uk)