

COMPLETION REPORT

Water Carriers in Occupied Beijing, 1937-1945 (北京の水夫, 1937-1945)

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This research project studied Beijing's drinking water and water carriers during the Japanese occupation period (1937-1945). As a city seated on the North China Plain, Beijing was notorious for its brackish drinking water. As early as 1900, Japan's influence on the water system became apparent. But the most dramatic changes to Beijing's water supply came on August 8, 1937, when the Japanese occupational government reconstructed the city's drinking water system and executed a strict hygienic policy.

My study focused on water carrier, men who, beginning in the seventeenth century, delivered this important commodity to the city's residents. By placing water carriers into their three daily settings: wells, streets and courtyards under occupation, I attempted to understand how this system was modernized through complex interactions among the Japanese and Chinese governments and private enterprises. In so doing, I contributed to our understanding of Japan's role in the process of Chinese modernization and the multiple facets of everyday life in Beijing.

In this research, the approach I employed was micro history. By reducing the scale of observation, micro history was more likely to reveal the complicated functions within each and every social setting, and to stress its difference from larger trends. I focused on a small group of water carriers by in-depth investigations, and revealed how the Japanese regulation of drinking water impacted their lives and their ensuing reactions and strategies.

This project was built on the painstaking exploration of unexamined archives, newspapers, memoirs and surveys housed in Mainland China, Taiwan, and Japan. With the help of the Sumitomo Foundation, I was able to conduct on-site research and explored archives housed at the Beijing Municipal Archives and Chinese No. 2 Archives in Nanjing. I also examined a wealth of archives and newspapers collected in Taipei, Shanghai and Jinan. The specific primary sources I scrutinized in Taipei was *Xinminbao*, (New People Post, 1938-1944), *Shibao*, (Truth News, 1937-1944) and other rare journals such as *Pekin nihon kyoryūminkai shiryō*, (1-2) collected by the Libraries at Academia Sinica.

My research findings shed light on the effects of modernization in the transformation of Beijing's landscape through a compelling picture of the multileveled complexity and ambiguity of politics and society under Japanese occupation rather than simple resistance or collaboration. Thus, I argued that the occupation did not halt Beijing's ongoing attempt to modernize drinking water begun in the early twentieth century. Instead, modernization continued, but in new and more sophisticated ways. To that end, this study integrated the period of Japanese occupation into republican Chinese history. The results will be published in the near future.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)
Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)