



## **EAI** Working Paper Series 2

The Stubborn Myth of  
'Rising Patriotism' in Modern China?

April 2006

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**ABSTRACTS:** This paper examines how veterans of the People's Liberation Army were treated in their communities and workplaces after their demobilization in the 1950s and 1960s. It argues that evidence of widespread discrimination against veterans, who were lauded by the state for their heroism and sacrifice, challenges one of the more common "tropes" of contemporary Chinese politics--that patriotism and nationalism are rising among wide swathes of the population. Using new archival sources, the paper focuses on the challenges veterans faced in the post-war era, among them chronic pain, poverty, job discrimination, and marriage difficulties, as well as how they responded to them. To be sure, these problems were not unique to China; many veterans around the world experienced them. The paper concludes by exploring the cultural, political, and economic reasons why veterans in China appear to have fared particularly poorly when compared with many of their counterparts elsewhere in the world.

**KEYWORDS:** Veterans, Patriotism, War, China, Nationalism, People's Liberation Army, Disability, Suicide, Protest, Shanghai, Shandong

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### Missing Days

The Chinese state, like many modern ones, has two calendars. The first, shaped by culture and history, is the more familiar one: all students in courses in East Asian Studies departments learn about Chinese New Year, the Moon and Dragon Boat Festivals, Qingming (Tomb-Sweeping) and others. The other, less familiar to foreigners, is the political calendar. Its features, however, are readily recognizable: a day celebrating a political founding (Oct. 1, 1949 in the PRC; Jan. 1, 1912 in Taiwan), critical junctures in history, or the contributions of various social groups to national development (for example, May 1<sup>st</sup> for labor, March 8 for women). Sometimes cultural and political holidays overlap—the ROC government notes that, during the Qingming festival, it's "customary to visit the tombs of the martyrs or the revolution"—but usually the calendars remain separate, and change little or only incrementally, usually accompanied by controversy. Governments, like leaders of organized religion, understand the

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\* I am very grateful to the William J. Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board for generous funding for this project.

need to maintain ritual and routine to sustain legitimacy, and attempt to create rituals that speak to the heart of their citizens.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the plethora of political events and the variety of groups they commemorate, two days are conspicuously missing from the PRC's political calendar: a "Veterans Day" and "Memorial Day." Despite the fact that the CCP emerged victorious from its decades-long rivalry with the Nationalist Party, awarded veterans high class status (they belonged to the "red" category), claims victory in the war against Japan and the United States in the Sino-Japanese and Korean Wars respectively, defeated the Indian Army in the border wars of the early 1960s, there is not a single holiday devoted to the people responsible for these accomplishments. Nor has current-day bellicosity among "nationalists" (who threaten to use military force against Taiwan and the US should Taiwan declare independence) translated into a commemorative holiday for veterans, even as they were called the "flesh and blood" of the revolution.<sup>2</sup> Years of veteran political activism, which include uprisings, strikes, slow-downs, sit-ins and petitioning Beijing, has not resulted in their "elevation" to holiday status (unlike women and children, who both have their days).<sup>3</sup> On the contrary: groups of organized veterans are swatted away much like any other group that "threatens social stability." In April 2005, just to give one recent example, 1,000-2,000 veterans (including divisional commanders), many wearing their old uniforms, gathered in front of the General Political Department of the PLA to protest their treatment after their discharge,<sup>4</sup> and on August 1 2005 (Army Day), hundreds of veterans protested in Beijing but were quickly dragged away by the police. The missing commemorative day for PRC veterans is somewhat of an anomaly when considering the comparative record of modern states that have fought large scale wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>5</sup> The United States, which has lost far fewer soldiers than the PRC, has a Veterans Day and a Memorial Day; the Mall in Washington has public memorials for three wars, including one that was lost. Israel's Memorial Day comes the day before Independence Day, cementing the link between sacrifice and nation-building. In the post WWII period in the Soviet Union, perhaps the country most comparable to China in terms of its political system, veterans managed to "carve[d] their own space" within the "highly styled parameters of the Soviet polity." There, veterans came to dominate the post-war scene politically and culturally: war novels, memoirs, and parades and honors galore were bestowed upon the victors in the "Great Patriotic War." There was no status higher than a decorated and wounded combat veteran; those not serving in combat were marginalized in the Communist Party.<sup>6</sup>

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In this paper I suggest that China's missing days are not happenstance: they speak to the highly problematic position veterans occupy in the Chinese state and society. I will also suggest that a deeper understanding of veterans' experiences places us in a unique vantage point to reassess many of the key components of Chinese patriotism after the 1949 revolution. Let's think about it: Why would officials and citizens of a country that asserts its patriotic pride by pointing to the positive outcome of military successes (such as a strong state that can no longer be "bullied") discriminate against or ignore the veterans who fought those wars, to the point where veteran suicides prompted numerous state investigations? What does it say about the nature of patriotism when urban youth who protest against Japanese textbooks and casually assert a military response to Taiwanese independence, pay no heed to their own veterans' predicament, or when the only Letter to the Editor concerning veterans that was written by a student in *People's Daily* between 1949-1978 registers complaints about them? What does it say about the Chinese state when those who sacrificed so much for it—one of the 2005 protesters was the son of a Korean War veteran who was denied medical insurance and petitioned the state for a decade—are carted off by the police and have their leaders arrested? These events (from the 1950s, 1990s and after the turn of the century) surely complicate the notion of Chinese patriotism as an ascending ideological force legitimating the regime, as well as a "bonding force" between people. They demand that we revisit a question that preoccupied state-builders from Liang Qichao, Kang Youwei, Sun Yatsen and Mao Zedong: do Chinese citizens appreciate martial qualities? Most citizens do not join the military, but are they willing to give a "fair shake," in the sense of fair and equitable treatment, to those who are rhetorically and legislatively praised (in the form of beneficial policies) for having risked their lives and devoted time, resources, and families for the sake of the nation?<sup>7</sup> While the narrative of "ascendant patriotism" would suggest an answer in the affirmative, the evidence suggests a far more complicated picture.

### **Hollow Definitions**

How would one know to what extent citizens in China, or anywhere for that matter, are "patriotic"? Any assessment of this question must begin with at least a rudimentary effort to

define the term. This isn't easy: patriotism often is a value-laden and politicized term. American surveys repeatedly show that most people consider themselves to be "patriotic,"<sup>8</sup> probably because its antonym connotes treasonous or at least less than honorable behavior. Political baggage, however, should not deter us from trying to get a better sense of what it involves; it is not any different than "democracy," "corruption," "justice" or "equality" in terms of its contested qualities. A reasonable place to begin, it seems to me, is the most common and seemingly straightforward definition of it (and the one that was translated into Chinese): "love of country." "Love" is sometimes padded with qualities such as loyalty, pride, "an attitude of sentiment and devotion" to a state or nation,<sup>9</sup> "ongoing civic concerns" for fellow citizens,<sup>10</sup> or "identification with others in a particular common enterprise."<sup>11</sup> Maurizio Viroli suggests that historically *patriotism* has been used to strengthen or invoke "love of political institutions and the way of life that sustain the common liberty of a people," while *nationalism* focuses on defending or reinforcing the "cultural, linguistic and ethnic oneness" of a people. This concept of nationalism overlaps somewhat with Tamir's stress on civic, rather than solely political, engagement,<sup>12</sup> but it is often the case that patriotism and nationalism are used interchangeably, or left undefined.<sup>13</sup>

These definitions of patriotism and nationalism (love, loyalty, devotion, or defending a sense of oneness, ethnic or otherwise) are problematic. First, and I don't mean to be coy or cute here, but what is *love*, actually? It is, first of all, an *emotion*, and commonsense tells us that *all* emotions vary in intensity across time and the object of desire or affection. Who among us has not experienced different sorts of "loves" during our life? We love parents, relatives, girlfriends or boyfriends, spouses (sometimes more than one) and children; we fall in and out of love. To which sort of "love" is "love of country" most similar? It's not very clear: governments would not be pleased if citizens' "love of country" was similar to that of a teenage boy toward his girlfriend (far too fickle)! Second, the concepts of "love," "loyalty" and "devotion" are excessively low thresholds for claiming or assigning patriotic status. How should we consider a military contractor who cuts costs by knowingly producing sub-par equipment to send to troops on the front but says, "I love my country"? Is he as patriotic as soldiers on the front risking their lives with the defective product? I would guess that most people would consider this absurd. "Loyalty" is also too easy. As Morton Grodzins pointed out half a century ago, the overwhelming majority of citizens are "loyal" simply because they do not actively join ranks with a country's sworn enemies; it's a *passive* sentiment.<sup>14</sup> In other words, the most common

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definitions of patriotism suffer from either opaque or low boundaries—pretty much anyone can get classified as a “patriot” or “nationalist” if they say the right words regarding love or loyalty, even if their behavior is entirely inconsistent with their professed beliefs.

This problem also applies to the concept of “nationalism”—a term used more frequently than “patriotism” in Western history and social science (but less so in China). Inspired by Benedict Anderson’s tremendously popular definition of the nation as an “imagined community,” scores of works have looked at the rise of this sentiment throughout the world, China included.<sup>15</sup> According to this view, nation-states, assisted by the rise of print capitalism, try to convince people (with varying degrees of success) that they belong to the same political community—that they have an essential “one-ness,” if not in actual kinship ties than at least in their imagination. The mass production of books, maps, state-run schools and national museums (war is not a factor in his study) all played a role in this gradual, and often fragmented, transition of loyalties from the local to the national, but the focus largely remains on the firing of neurons in our brains: ideas and imagination are formed. While many have questioned whether this argument can be applied to China, a late-comer to capitalism, and whether Anderson’s singular focus on the “nation” as the sole object of loyalty and identity is sufficient given the prominence of regionalism,<sup>16</sup> few have noted what I call the “threshold” problem: one becomes a “nationalist” (or a “regionalist,” for that matter) either through an “act” of imagination, by suggesting, usually in speech or writing, that one has this identity and “fellow feeling” with one’s fellow citizens, or that other citizens *should* “awaken,” and/or embrace a higher degree of cultural, linguistic or ethnic homogeneity. Not surprisingly, much of the work on nationalism focuses on what happens in people’s minds—the sentiments, ideas, ideals, and ideology as embraced by the educated classes, such as editors, politicians, journalists, students, and intellectuals that can be detected in their writings, speeches or generally short-lived protest movements, such as May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1989 etc.<sup>17</sup> Unger, for example, argues that Chinese peasants “had little *notion* of China as a whole, let alone being attuned to the nationalist *sentiments* that were developing among the educated classes in China’s urban areas.”<sup>18</sup>

Peter Gries’ *China’s New Nationalism* and some of the reviews of this work (which achieved “best-seller” status at the University of California Press) are good examples of the problems of this approach.<sup>19</sup> In this study, Gries examines the writings of a new cohort of young “nationalists,” some of whom also wrote best-selling books with fairly bombastic titles such as

*China cannot be insulted!*, *China cannot be bullied!* and *China that can say no*, as well as sporadic incidents of outrage against Japan (for its lack of sufficient contrition for atrocities during WWII) and the United States (for the 1999 bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade). Arguing that “to understand Chinese nationalism, we must listen to the Chinese,” Gries offers a number of interesting historical and social-psychological explanations for the high-octane “nationalist” discourse that emerged in the press and public demonstrations in the mid-1990s, among them an overwrought sense of “face” and victimization.<sup>20</sup> While reviewers questioned his use of social psychology and the motives he attributed to Chinese writers and protesters,<sup>21</sup> neither Gries nor his critics questioned the extent to which penning a book (and making money from it) or participating in a short-lived, virtually risk-free protest (since they were tacitly supported by the government) qualifies someone as a “nationalist” or “patriot.” *China’s New Nationalism* zeroes in on a phenomenon that exists *only if* we adopt a fairly flat threshold for considering a person a patriot; the real topic appears to be anti-American and Japanese sentiments among people who are either self-described or author-ascribed patriots. Nor is the book about “the Chinese,” or even “popular nationalism” (the subject of chapter 7) since most Chinese citizens live in the countryside and do not discourse about these topics. That reviewers failed to notice this issue even as they called attention to other methodological problems attests to the low standards we use in evaluating claims to nationalistic or patriotic status.<sup>22</sup> The reasoning is as follows: if you claim you are a patriot/nationalist, you are. This flies in the face of common sense as well as standard social science conceptual analysis: if we do not accept state leaders’ definition of their regime as a “democracy” if they do not hold free, fair and frequent elections, why should we accept claims of patriotism or nationalism unless some sort of definitional threshold is passed?

To be even moderately meaningful and useful, concepts must include *and exclude* certain behaviors, qualities, and attitudes. Self-definition, claims of love, devotion, and loyalty are insufficient in this respect, since they tend to include most everybody. So this is what I suggest: to be meaningful, patriotism should incorporate at least two of the following three criteria: *sustained action*, moderate to long-term *commitment of resources*, and what a “reasonable person” would consider a *sacrifice* (not just a “willingness” or “readiness” to sacrifice).<sup>23</sup> These dimensions of patriotism are not new by any stretch of the imagination, maybe just unfashionable in a materialistic and individuated age. They hark back to a long

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tradition of *republican patriotism* (no connection to the American political party) which stresses the notion of “self-sacrifice for the good of all.”<sup>24</sup> It recognizes that speech and right-minded thinking do not a functioning society, nation, or state make. Political theorist Michael Walzer, for example, argues that “Men are bound by their significant actions, not by their feelings and thoughts; *action is the crucial language of moral commitment.*”<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Carole Pateman, who by no means comes from the political right, critiques liberal political theory for not providing an adequate intellectual basis for political obligations. In her view, the citizen voluntarism that is at the heart of social contract theory (and the basis for civil society) is only “hypothetical”; there is no requirement to commit.<sup>26</sup> Such “obligations” cannot be only fleeting ones, however. “The nation’s existence is a *daily plebiscite,*” notes French theorist Ernest Renan in “What is a Nation?” which he defines as “the culmination of a long past of endeavors, sacrifice, and devotion.”<sup>27</sup> More recently, political scientists such as Robert Putnam have sounded the alarm about the lack of sustained political and civic engagement in American society and the danger this poses for democracy.<sup>28</sup> In other words, most things that we consider valuable would not exist without citizens’ sacrifice of something of themselves through action and long-term commitment. This perspective weakens the claims to patriotic (or even elite) status of those who speak but do not follow up with action, who act—but only for the moment, and who might give something—but do not pay what a reasonable person would consider a personal cost.

One corollary of this definition is that those who have demonstrated this sort of commitment will demand, and often receive, a greater “claim” on patriotic status than those who have not, even if it challenges notions of equality inherent in the concept of citizenship. This has been standard political practice for thousands of years, in multiple contexts. It’s why both empires and modern states have provided wide-ranging benefits to veterans, and fewer (or none at all) to many other groups. There is a fairly wide consensus that spending years in the army, risking one’s life by fighting wars or in dangerous training, and losing limbs, even when the motives for service or enlistment are not “pure,”<sup>29</sup> is qualitatively different than, say, cutting gas consumption or working overtime on the home front.<sup>30</sup> It is also why veterans, as well as others who have made significant sacrifices, are often accorded higher political and moral authority than those who have not. The Nixon White House, for example, found it fairly easy to rebuff the attacks of student anti-Vietnam War protesters, calling them “spoiled” kids, but became very



worried when criticized by a very small organization of returned veterans.<sup>31</sup> Other examples abound: widows of 9/11 successfully used their moral authority from having lost their loved ones to establish the 9/11 Commission (they won despite opposition from the White House) as well as the use of space in commemorating that event.<sup>32</sup>

This sort of moral authority and the political claims resulting from it—particularly among veterans—are rarely discussed in academic circles, at least in the United States. As Maris Vinovskis points out, American social historians who came of age during the Vietnam War were generally suspicious of all things military and saw veterans as “tainted” by imperialism and militarism. As a result, veterans were shunned as a topic of serious research, even as thousands of studies were devoted to workers, women, and minorities.<sup>33</sup> This neglect of veterans is also present in mainstream political science—*The American Political Science Review*, in its over 100 year history—includes less than 10 articles expressly devoted to veterans’ politics, *Comparative Politics* has none, and social movement theorists have studied pretty much every group except for veterans<sup>34</sup>—as well as in the China politics field as well: “policy types” (in government and think tanks) are far more likely to study military matters than political scientists in academia; scholars of intellectual history, labor history or women’s history far outnumber those interested in military history, despite the acknowledged importance of warfare in Chinese history.<sup>35</sup> Then there is the question of sources. In China, veterans and war widows rarely left written testimony in the form of books or coherent articles, and as a result the “search” for patriotism gravitated to those who left clearer accounts of their motivations and sentiments.<sup>36</sup> This partially explains why China has millions of veterans and military families but not a single scholarly book about them; the contrast between their numbers and those of intellectuals and the number of articles and books written about each of these populations respectively could not be starker.

Thankfully, new sources have become available that allow us to correct this imbalance and reconsider some basic questions about Chinese patriotism and nationalism.<sup>37</sup> These sources only rarely allow us to delve into the murky area of motivation for service. They do, however, allow us to assess, with unprecedented clarity, how those individuals whose actions led to the results that make many “nationalists” proud, such as a strong state that is no longer “pushed around” in international politics and a powerful military able to deter or attack Taiwan or the US, were treated after they were discharged from duty and reentered civilian life. Given this quasi-martial pride, one could reasonably expect that veterans would be appreciated and honored—the

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polar opposite of the situation of veterans in Japan after WWII, who, according to John Dower, were “detested” for their country’s defeat.<sup>38</sup> Officially, veterans in China were honored: the State Council issued hundreds of directives and circulars delineating benefits,<sup>39</sup> and they were the beneficiaries of good class status, years of propaganda in print and art about their heroism, and campaigns to promote the People’s Liberation Army as a role model for all citizens in the pre-Cultural Revolution years. The new sources, however, allow us to move beyond the official narrative about veterans and national pride or various “patriotic movements” by looking at how the real, flesh-and-blood people behind nationalist discourse were treated in more mundane, “everyday” circumstances: in villages when disabled veterans needed help with the harvest, in factories when an old wound flared up, in government offices when they requested housing or when they needed time off from work to go to a hospital. If patriotism can be conceptualized as a “daily plebiscite” that involves action, sacrifice, and commitment of resources, we should be able to get a better sense of its content by examining documents that hone in on the actual interactions between citizens and state and those who are said to embody those qualities in “everyday” circumstances that involve some personal or institutional *cost* (for example, giving a job to a veteran rather than a younger, more skilled individual). This strikes me as a fair threshold to cross because, unlike saying “I love my country,” it is not very easy: it requires that governments and society live up to lofty rhetoric and policies in political, administrative, and social practices. It’s particularly difficult in the case of veterans, historically a “problematic” population owing to their experiences in war and long time away from family and civilian society; it would be a mistake to sentimentalize them.<sup>40</sup> This, I argue, is a better gauge of patriotism (which, unlike concepts such as “inequality,” does not have any standardized measure) than studying a dozen urban residents writing books and articles about China’s position in the world, or even a “movement” involving hundreds of them marching on the streets, only to return home several hours later.

In this paper I argue that the Chinese state and Chinese citizens, even highly educated urbanites, frequently failed to provide veterans with a sense that their service was appreciated, let alone honored and valued, even as veterans identified themselves as patriotic flag-bearers for their service who were entitled to such treatment. Hundreds of reports from those years when the emotions associated with patriotism and nationalism supposedly peaked—the tension-filled 1950s and 1960s<sup>41</sup>—document a widespread pattern of overt, often public discrimination, limited

access to medical care and land, and politically motivated bullying and retribution by other officials.<sup>42</sup> By the mid-1950s, high-placed veterans in the provinces wrote letters to Mao's second in command, Liu Shaoqi, complaining that veterans were treated like “donkeys slaughtered after having ground the wheat”—that is, “disposed of” after having served their purpose. Others warned that they would not serve in the reserves if a war broke out because of the lack of state and public support for them.<sup>43</sup> In a single factory in Shandong, eighty veterans, angry at the CCP, refused to register for the reserves,<sup>44</sup> and suicide and strikes involving them were serious concerns. To be sure, these problems did not affect all veterans—higher ranking officers were more successful in the transition to civilian life—but they did shape the lives of hundreds of thousands in the enlisted ranks and junior officers, particularly the 70-80% of discharged soldiers who did not become bureaucrats and were forced to return to agriculture or relatively menial jobs in the industrial sector of the economy.<sup>45</sup> To explain this, I focus on a number of less-than-parsimonious factors, including veterans' complicated biographies, ambiguity over what “counted” as patriotic and revolutionary, the growth of an industrialized economy, and the absence of legitimate avenues to garner support from society and represent their interests in a vigorous way. Taken together, they tell a story of a state and a society that frequently proved unwilling and incapable of dealing equitably with the complex individuals who, according to the state's own rhetoric, were patriotism's corporal manifestation.

## **The Complexity of Biography**

When people engage the political system, they do so not as generic political “actors” but as an amalgam of experiences, resources, problems, and abilities that shape their “success” in that system. To the extent that we are interested in the interactions between veterans and the state and their community, we must begin by examining what sort of “cards” they brought to the political table, and why many of these were trumped. Given the size and diversity of China's veteran population, this isn't easy. Moreover, the veteran population changed over time: those who joined in the mid-1950s were somewhat different than those who participated in the war against Japan and in Korea. Nevertheless, several issues rise to the surface in the archival sources, especially when we look at China in comparative perspective.

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Generally speaking, since the advent of mass land armies, most people who have served in the military have largely come from the lower socioeconomic strata, especially among enlisted men. This was true of the Continental Army during the US Revolutionary War,<sup>46</sup> the British Army until WWI,<sup>47</sup> and Russia until Bolshevik victory over the Whites.<sup>48</sup> In those countries, however, the mass nature of warfare in the 20<sup>th</sup> century led to a broadening of the social classes that were drafted into military service; writers, poets, businessmen, clerks, laborers and government officials were all thrown into the mix. There was a relatively high degree of literacy among ordinary soldiers, as well as a modicum of social and financial capital that helped them reintegrate after war. China was somewhat different in this respect. Owing to the rural-to-urban dynamic of the revolution, the majority of soldiers (and veterans) were peasants who hailed from some of the poorest provinces in the country (Anhui, Shaanxi, Shandong, Hebei). Most had minimal education. An analysis of 2105 veterans in Shanghai in 1952 noted that 64% were either illiterate or had primary school education, 34% had attended middle school and 3% had university experience.<sup>49</sup> They were also overwhelmingly male, and roughly 25% of them (in Shandong, among 550,000 vets in the early 1950s) were unmarried at the time of their discharge because of lengthy military service.<sup>50</sup> In Fan County, Henan, 64% of veterans were bachelors when they returned from war.<sup>51</sup> Some veterans lost their entire families in the war, and had little choice but to move to villages where they were strangers, or they became adopted sons of poor families.<sup>52</sup> Given that women were in relatively short "supply," and willing to divorce using the provisions of the 1950 Marriage Law (in Xu Family Village in Shandong, for example, 25 out of 32 young women divorced in 1952<sup>53</sup>), the bachelor-veterans were probably anxious about their own prospects.

Military service and lack of modern medical care and supplies also resulted in veterans with serious war-related disabilities, chronic diseases (10% of all veterans in Shandong<sup>54</sup>), post-traumatic stress disorder (then diagnosed as "insanity"), depression, or unexplained maladies. The 1952 report on 2,105 Shanghai vets mentioned earlier noted that "most" veterans were "not healthy." Chronic illnesses were common (818 veterans or 38.8%), and some suffered from STDs (89 veterans, or 4.2%), and mental illness (32 veterans or 1.5%). Only 893 of the 2105 veterans were said to be in good health.<sup>55</sup> In Qingpu, some 8.2% of veterans had officially recognized disabilities, mainly severed limbs and facial injuries, a category that did not include those with chronic illnesses.<sup>56</sup> In Shandong, one of five veterans had disabilities in 1951.<sup>57</sup> But

even when the medical infrastructure improved after the establishment of the state, the PLA generally drew from the same recruiting pool: peasants and lower-class urbanites. Many veterans, particularly in the 1950s, thus entered politics and society lacking many of the skills necessary to compete with those who, by virtue of different pre-1949 experiences, were either more educated, skilled, or just healthier; many of us know from our experience that constant pain makes it difficult to work and manage our affairs, increases dependency and, in many cases, depression and irritability.

Whether they were discharged back to villages or cities—the policy was to discharge veterans to their hometowns—veterans immediately encountered grave difficulties, which were aggravated further by unsympathetic citizens and officials. Take marital status for example. Some veterans returned to their village and discovered that their wives were living with other men, or found out that they had been abused, “seduced” or raped by village officials.<sup>58</sup> Eventually, most married, but not easily: the All-China Women’s Federation became involved in “arranging” veterans’ marriages, especially for those who were disabled.<sup>59</sup> In one county in Anhui, 28% of the veterans absorbed between 1949-1958 received some assistance finding a spouse.<sup>60</sup> Widows appear to have been especially attractive candidates for marriage to them, even though some areas still had conservative views towards widows’ remarriage.<sup>61</sup>

Marriage, however, did not necessarily result in a quiet life with family. Veterans in China found it difficult to settle down into the routines of family life; many gazetteers’ summary of veteran affairs mention marriage disputes, and confidential provincial-level investigations reported unorthodox or illegal sexual behavior.<sup>62</sup> Zhao Yikang, for example, was a veteran employed by a unit supervising meat and dairy inspection for the Health Department in Shanghai. Claiming he had tuberculosis and needed to recuperate, he left work and visited a prostitute instead. Another report complained that Fei Suisheng, a veteran who was working as an apprentice in a factory, “frequently” left work to flirt with women. His supervisors talked to him on three occasions, and then kicked him out of the factory.<sup>63</sup> In a 1956 investigation of crimes committed by veterans, some 20% were due to rape, adultery, or prostitution.<sup>64</sup> Other crimes were more serious: some veterans murdered their wives because they suspected them of having affairs.<sup>65</sup>

Sex, marriage and family-related problems also account for suicides among ostensibly “good class” veterans throughout the 1950s.<sup>66</sup> A 1956 investigation of veterans in Shanghai

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noted 18 cases of suicide attempts “in the last several years.” Among these, four were due to “ridicule because of marriage problems or because they feared punishment because of illicit sexual relations.”<sup>67</sup> A 1957 report from that city indicates a higher number—“40 suicides in the last several years”—with 27% attributed to marriage problems and adultery-related panic.<sup>68</sup> Suicides occurred in rural areas as well. A 1954 report on veterans in Shandong noted that 75% of 24 cases in a six month period were due to marriage or family related disputes.<sup>69</sup> The chain of events preceding these suicides varied. Veteran An Fuhuan in Shanxi Province took his life when he returned home from service and found that his wife had remarried and his son and mother had died; according to the case synopsis, no one helped him out. In Sichuan, Wenjiang county, Wu Qingyun fell in love with a poor widow and wanted to marry, but the village chief accused him of immoral behavior and threatened him. Soon after, he hung himself. In Jiangxi Province, Yichun county, Li Rufa returned to his village and fell in love with Zhong Guiyin. When they applied for marriage at the district, officials refused, claiming her late father was a landlord (a status that did not apply to Guiyin). He was criticized at the district and in a meeting in the township government, where officials gathered other veterans and “struggled” against him. He jumped into a river and drowned.<sup>70</sup>

Veterans' health was even more problematic, and serves as a stronger “test” of a government and society's willingness to give veterans a “fair shake” than marriage. As we all know, health care is a scarce resource that involves significant costs—medicine, hospital beds, sick leave, pensions—as well as many educated personnel (doctors, nurses, personnel officials in work units), those who, at least according to scholarly accounts, were most exposed to patriotic sentiments.

Two impassioned letters from Gao Jinlong and Zhang Xinyi, two disabled veterans, to the chief of Qingpu county, is a good place to start to get some sense of their views. In his letter, Gao had a litany of complaints, many of them implicating local officials for callousness. Even though he was entitled to government aid, he claimed that he did not receive any, but others did. District officials were aware of his situation, but took no action. The land he received in land reform could not sustain him because he never received fertilizer, his father was old, and, because of his disability, he could not perform heavy labor. Years away from Qingpu meant that, at 30, he was still unmarried, and did not have his own home. Zhang's complaints were more serious. He joined the army in 1937, right after the beginning of the war with Japan; there were

six people in his family. When he returned in 1951, his father, mother, and daughter had died, and his wife left him during the war, taking their son with her. He scratched out a living because he was not allocated land during land reform, and depended on other villagers' assistance. He wrote hoping that the county could help return his son.<sup>71</sup> While these letters might have exaggerated certain circumstances to gain officials' sympathy, the circumstances they describe were not exceptional—there are many like them in the archives. Taken together, they highlight several features of disabled and sick veterans' existence: dependence, poverty, and a sense of entitlement, as seen in their willingness to complain about these issues.

Dependence is a near universal experience of those with disabilities or chronic illnesses, and the near universal solution to it is gainful employment. The disabled want to work to reduce their dependency, and governments are anxious to provide work to lower their financial burden. Few employers in China, however, were enthusiastic about shouldering this extra responsibility. Typically, the hiring process worked like this: veterans' dossiers would be sent from the military to the local "Resettlement" department of the Bureau of Civil Affairs, who would then contact the personnel department of the hiring unit, who could then select the veterans he would hire, if any; local labor bureau employment offices also forwarded files of "regular" unemployed people. Given the labor supply, many units simply refused to hire disabled or chronically ill veterans.<sup>72</sup> In the Spring of 1955, for example, the China Record Factory was preparing to hire 200 workers. Someone mentioned hiring veterans, but the "leading cadres" at the firm said, "They've all been disabled fighting war. But some might have some skills—those guys we can assign to clean up."<sup>73</sup> When BCA officials asked the personnel directors why these veterans were not chosen, they claimed that their factory had "unique conditions" that would make it difficult to employ the disabled,<sup>74</sup> but it was well-known that the real reason was financial: they did not want to be saddled with the medical expenses. For their part, hospitals routinely turned away veterans with chronic illnesses, claiming insufficient funds to care for them, or that they "never received" the policy regulations from the Ministry of Health.<sup>75</sup> Not surprisingly, in Qingpu, 50% of letters the Bureau of Civil Affairs received from veterans in 1958 were job-related. Of those, half were written by the disabled or sick veterans appealing for employment assistance or transferring to a more appropriate job.<sup>76</sup>

Ill veterans who passed through this hoop and found positions in government or factories did not necessarily fare very well, however. In Qingpu, for example, Ling Linsheng

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returned to the village in 1953 and was appointed secretary of the township Youth League and militia. He was reported to be very effective at his job, but was frequently ill. This led to arguments between him and the township party secretary, Tao Genfu. Using Ling's recurring illness as an excuse, Tao forced him out of power, sending him back to his village to work in agriculture. Two village officials, however, opposed this move, but Tao falsely told the two that Ling was to return "by order of the district party secretary." They eventually relented and Ling returned home.<sup>77</sup> Ridicule was not unusual. Kong Jinlong, for example, lost the use of his right arm in war, making it hard for him to shower or wash his clothes. The deputy director of the factory was aware of his problem, but instead of helping him, called him "Filthy Kong Jinlong" (*wochuo*), because he smelled badly.<sup>78</sup> Others were assigned to jobs that required physical strength well beyond their capacity,<sup>79</sup> which also prompted complaints, requests for job transfers, and internal critiques of the Bureau of Civil Affairs for not conducting any follow-up investigation after veterans were assigned jobs.

The case of Shao Ran, a Korean War veteran working at the Jinxing Pen Factory in Shanghai, illustrates the causes of this sort of critique.<sup>80</sup> Shao frequently experienced flare-ups of his old wounds, sometimes resulting in high fevers. On one occasion, Shao's fever reached 40°C and he was not able to go to the hospital himself. He requested that the factory's personnel department arrange for a vehicle to send him. The department refused, arguing that, because Shao's injury "was not a work accident," it was not their responsibility to help him. With the help of some of his fellow veterans "angered at this injustice," however, Shao managed to get a vehicle. But his problems did not end there: the hospital called the factory demanding to know who would cover the hospital expenses, despite state regulations stating that disabled revolutionary veterans were entitled to free medical care.<sup>81</sup> They sent him back to the factory, where he was treated in the infirmary. Because of his absence, his salary was docked 50 yuan. When he complained about this, management accused him of looking at issues only through the narrow lens of money. He then went to the union and said, "I'm a disabled veteran, and according to central state regulations I am entitled to 100% labor insurance coverage." The union turned him down. Its chair, Xie Yimin, told him, "You're a war hero and a labor model and you still want 100% insurance coverage?", and an adjacent worker piped up, "Do you think you get 100% coverage just because you have two red certificates [one for his veteran status, the other for his disability]?" Shao then contacted two organizations that were expected to help enforce



central state regulations, the Bureau of Civil Affairs and the Municipal Veteran's Committee. They both called union chair Xie about Shao, urging him to implement the regulation guaranteeing 100% coverage for disabled veterans. Xie again refused, telling them that "government institutions can't tell our factory what to do." Sometime later, Shao overdosed on drugs in a suicide attempt. Management was unmoved, and claimed that Shao attempted suicide because of "unrequited love."<sup>82</sup>

Shao's case was but one of many health-related suicides (and suicide attempts) throughout the 1950s and 1960s in urban and rural areas. Lack of access to medicine, chronic pain, lack of public and family sympathy and official indifference were generally cited as the main causes.<sup>83</sup> In a 1956 report from Shanghai, 22% of 18 suicide cases from 1954-1956 were due to "ridicule because of mental illness,"<sup>84</sup> and in 1959, Chen Shusen, a high-ranking civil affairs official responsible for the northern provinces, noted in a summary report that "a considerable proportion of suicides among veterans during the last several years have been caused by chronic illnesses that were not treated in a timely manner."<sup>85</sup> In the early 1960s there was Han Enyou, 66, a disabled veteran who suffered from chronic high blood pressure and committed suicide; Li Qingpu, whose marriage was not good, was frequently sick and "could not afford medicine," and Hu Jinfa, a 28 year old veteran from Songjiang county who was frequently ill, resulting in his wife petitioning for divorce.<sup>86</sup>

More can be gleaned from these reports than victimization, however. The veterans in Qingpu cited earlier petitioned the county chief and frequently wrote letters to administrative offices; Shao Ran was determined to secure his rights to free medical care, and persisted despite the objections from his superiors; similarly, Zeng Jiti, a veteran in Wan county, Sichuan, wrote to Marshal Liu Bocheng, then one of the heads of the CCP's Southwest Bureau, "asking him to send someone to investigate" why county industries were hiring, but veterans were still jobless, or held "inappropriate ones,"<sup>87</sup> while in Shanghai they appealed to the local People's Congress, and "frequently" went to the District Committee or local BCA to seek help transferring jobs.<sup>88</sup> An investigation by *People's Daily* mentioned veterans who filed charges with the "district, country, provincial people's congresses and even CCP central."<sup>89</sup> What these and many other reports suggest is that there were quite a few veterans, including those who were disabled, who took to heart the government and military's education and propaganda that their sacrifices were heroic, and their contributions patriotic. Archival reports note that veterans were "arrogant,"

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“think of themselves as having rendered a great service,” and looked down upon officials whose history and class status was less illustrious, had never been abroad (“I’ve been in Korea! What makes you think you’re such a hotshot?”) or who were younger than them;<sup>90</sup> in Qingpu, veterans were well-known for their “strong personalities” and for “saying whatever they want to say” (*you sa jiang sa*).<sup>91</sup>

Veterans’ biographical profiles were, it seems, very complex. While generalizations about large populations are always fraught with methodological difficulties, the available evidence does suggest that, for many, everyday life posed formidable challenges: health problems, outsider-status in cities and in villages, lack of land, high rates of illiteracy, poverty, and the stresses of bachelorhood. This profile, in some respects, mirrored the recruiting pool of the PLA, which drew disproportionately from the rural poor where Chinese revolution was based, as well as the disinterest of cultural elites from serving in the military after 1949 (many more were inclined to serve during the Cultural Revolution, when schools were closed). These attributes were somewhat balanced by veterans’ sense of entitlement, confidence, and “strong personalities.”<sup>92</sup> Below I examine what happened when these ran up against a government and society that either denigrated, refused to recognize, or were threatened by their contribution.

### **The Whistleblowers**

In their study of whistleblowing in the United States, Myron Glazer and Penina Migdal Glazer noted that whistleblowers tend to be “conservative people devoted to their work and their organizations...they believed that they were defending the true mission of their organization by resisting illicit practices.” This defense most always comes at a steep price. Regardless of how well-justified the complaint, government and industry showed a “consistent pattern of harsh reprisals—from blacklisting, dismissal or transfer to personal harassment.”<sup>93</sup> While the term “whistleblowing” does not have a precise lexical equivalent in Chinese, the concept is not foreign: in the Confucian tradition, it was the literati’s obligation to call attention to immorality, injustice, and corruption in government; in more modern times, intellectuals and educated youth have generally claimed this mantle, “whistleblowing” against the regime during the 100 Flower Movement (1956-7), “revisionism,” corruption and sexual immorality during the Cultural

Revolution, and against leftist radicalism and injustice in its aftermath (Democracy Wall). But when we turn our attention away from educated elites, “movements,” and “campaigns,” it becomes clear that it was often veterans who “blew the whistle” on corruption, injustice and “immorality” in the state and society, and not only when this was sanctioned by the state. Those veterans who found themselves outside of the power structure (i.e., the majority of them) in factories and villages took very seriously the public-minded ideals they had been taught and experienced in the military. Veterans’ strong personalities, frankness, and conviction that they were protected by their status led to an outpouring of complaints, protests, strikes, and sarcastic letters addressed to civilian officials throughout the Maoist years. Interestingly, in the immediate post-war period, American WWII veterans in Georgia played a similar role in state politics, running for office on “clean government” platforms because they were dismayed by the corruption and waste they saw around them.<sup>94</sup> Chinese veterans also suffered a similar fate as their American whistleblowing counterparts, as we will see below.

The press was where whistleblowing often surfaced. In 1957, Zhang Zhengfei penned an essay that appeared in *People’s Daily* under the title, “In the end, is complaining a lot good or bad?”<sup>95</sup> In it, he recalled the following incident:

In the fall of 1953 I was at a meeting in the Shanxi government. I overheard a personnel official in the General Office proclaiming that “there are very many veterans who have come to Taiyuan [the Provincial capital], and there are some units in the city that think that veterans “raise too many objections” (*ti yijian*) and refuse to hire them. We’re now supposed to rectify this mistake.”

This brief account does not delve into details about what sort of issues veterans raised, but it does show that as early as 1953, veterans already had a reputation. References to veterans “habitually” (*ai tiyijian*) or “readily” (*hao tiyijian*) raising objections to various practices abound in the archival sources as well. These were often paired with complaints about the difficulty “leading” veterans (*bu hao lingdao*) and retaliation (*baofu*) against them. These issues were connected: veterans’ claims to status, dissatisfaction and tendency to speak out did make it difficult to “lead” them, and retaliation usually followed complaints. The topic of complaints

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varied over the years, but tended to focus on several issues: sex, corruption and waste as the following abbreviated examples show.

### **Sex**

Two cases from Qingpu suggest that veterans brought with them to civilian life a rather austere sense of official morality, even though quite a few of them, for reasons discussed above, failed to maintain the ideals of a “socialist family.” The first case involved Tang Jinfu and two veterans, Wang Rong and Shen Yanmin. Shen and Wang were temporary workers who became aware of Tang (who served in the county’s fishing industry department), committing adultery. Together they reported him to the higher authorities. Tang retaliated by charging that the two veterans had a “bad attitude at work,” which promptly resulted in their dismissal; another document on the same case notes that Tang falsely claimed that their contract “expired.” Eventually they found work in a factory that employed only veterans—a solution that prevented their mingling with other civilians during working hours.

The second case, which is a bit more fleshed out, took place in Zhaidong township and involved a veteran named Tao Baoqing, who was discharged in 1950. Upon his return, Tao was upset to discover that Zhang Yongzhen, a member of Siyi village’s Women’s Committee, was having an illicit relationship with Zhao Borong, a village cadre. He repeatedly yelled and cursed at Zhang and Zhao, who naturally came to despise him. In 1951, village cadre Zhao refused to supply water for Tao Baoqing’s field, causing a loud argument between them. The two then attempted to mobilize the village women to struggle against him, but this plan was nixed by the township organization committee. Tao had yet another argument with township and village cadres in 1952, during the campaign to eradicate pests; the latter all claimed that Tao was “unruly” and “lacked authority” among the villagers. As for Tao, he was said to be “very dissatisfied” with village and township authorities and did not hesitate to complain about them. “A very negative influence,” the report noted.<sup>96</sup>

## Corruption, Theft and Waste

These were more serious charges than illicit affairs, as the CCP had specifically targeted them in political campaigns throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The conventional wisdom about these campaigns is that veterans were the primary perpetrators of corruption: they entered the city, got power, and were seduced by urban materialism.<sup>97</sup> This was undoubtedly true, but since most veterans did not have access to power and valuable resources, it stands to reason that more may have complained about corruption than perpetrated it. Veteran complaints against corruption were very threatening, and the retaliation against them harsh. In Qingpu, for example, a veteran surnamed Lu worked at a cooperative and witnessed the director falsely reporting inventory and then selling the extra goods at a higher price on the private market. Lu “exposed” him and was promptly fired and reassigned to a factory that only employed veterans. “If you raise objections, only misfortune befalls you,” veterans noted.<sup>98</sup> In Liantang district, Zhenghe township, the head of a production team named Lu Renliang took some melons from a field, but veteran Cao Xiangqin caught him red-handed. Cao charged that officials cannot just walk into a field and take whatever they feel like (this was a strict rule in the PLA). As a result, Lu told other officials that Cao was “an unruly bastard” with a “wavering class standpoint” because his wife was a daughter of a rich peasant. Lu was very worried about his future in the village.<sup>99</sup> In Shanghai, a report from 1955 noted that when veterans criticize “some unreasonable phenomenon the factory,” administrators think they are a “pain in the ass” and then falsely charge them with “violating labor discipline.” Factory unions collaborated in the search for incriminating materials, arrests, and expulsions from the party. One union took pride in having veterans berated for their “mistakes,” spreading the word on the factory floor that “the union really stuck it to the PLA.” A pharmaceutical firm’s manager said at a public meeting, “On the battlefield they were heroes, but in the factory they’re just stuffed teddy bears.” These “mistaken views and attitudes” were reported to be “relatively common” in firms.<sup>100</sup>

Corruption, of course, was not limited to “decadent” Shanghai, nor was retaliation for its exposure. Veterans who blew the whistle on corruption in rural areas—even those with a long history of military recruitment—suffered comparable punishments. A summary report by a “Letters and Visits” office in Shandong in 1962 included a case in a village in Chendu commune in which a veteran named Xiao Changli was beaten, hanged and eventually murdered by local

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cadres for exposing corruption. Xiao's wife, Hu Siling, filed charges against them at the provincial government. The Letters and Visits Office contacted the provincial procurator, and introduced her for a face-to-face talk. The case was handled properly, they noted. This was a "positive" example in the report, but negative ones were also included, such as local cadres who "took revenge" upon disabled veterans by arbitrarily canceling their benefits, lowering their disability level, beating them up, taking away their good class status, and denying financial aid to their families. Most of these cases remained unresolved: an investigation revealed that many counties and cities paid little attention to these letters, stuffing them into drawers or under chairs.<sup>101</sup>

To be properly understood, corruption charges in China (as in many other countries), must be placed in political context. For veterans, the most salient feature of this environment was their struggle for power and survival against cadres who rose through the civilian hierarchy: activists during land reform, unions, or those with more education or specialized skills. Numerous reports indicate estrangement and mutual resentment between these cadres and veterans, and were even noted in a speech by Peng Dehuai published in *People's Daily*.<sup>102</sup> Because veterans rarely constituted a majority, it was not very difficult to isolate them politically.<sup>103</sup> In Shandong, Qingpu, and elsewhere veterans disrespected village cadres because they "talk a lot, but can't get much done,"<sup>104</sup> while local cadres complained of veteran "arrogance," telling them that "the revolution would've succeeded without you,"<sup>105</sup> and "why are you so arrogant if you need welfare?"<sup>106</sup> A *People's Daily* investigation noted that, "there are some basic-level organizations that can only see veterans' weak points and not any of their positive traits."<sup>107</sup> Even when rural cadres respected veterans (there isn't much evidence of this in urban areas), they feared them politically, and kept them at a distance (*jing er yuan*).<sup>108</sup> Accusations of corruption were surely an attempt to gain leverage in this struggle, as well as an effort to purge the party of those who were seen as corrupting the revolutionary ideal.

### The Ammunition of Retaliation

The cases described above illustrate the extent to which many veterans were vulnerable to predation by other officials on account of their precarious economic situation, political

isolation, and the tactical deployment of impromptu and vague class labels, such as “alien class element.” Veterans, for their part, shared this language: in Shanghai, one accused a union member of serving as “the running dog of capitalism” for refusing to promote him.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, because most veterans remained out of power and had less “cultural capital” than others, they remained particularly vulnerable to political attack.

In making these class-based charges, civilian officials capitalized upon a fundamental feature of the Chinese Communist Revolution: very few people were politically “pure” in the sense of having perfect class background (poor peasants, worker etc.) and an unblemished record of meritorious, selfless service to the cause. This was true of the CCP<sup>110</sup> and the PLA, which could not afford to be extremely selective in its recruitment by excluding everyone who did not have poor peasant or proletarian background, especially during the civil war when entire Nationalist units switched sides. As a result, the PLA that emerged from the civil war in 1949 was a hodgepodge of individuals with a variety of class and social backgrounds, and so were its veterans. A 1952 analysis of the social and political background of 2,105 veterans in Shanghai, for example, showed that 70% were “volunteers,” 6% left the Nationalist Army on their own accord and were absorbed into the PLA during the latter phases of the Civil War (*qiyi*) and almost one-quarter were pre-1949 POWs who were reeducated.<sup>111</sup> But even these veterans were not as problematic history-wise as those who joined the PLA after 1949. The Minister of the Interior, Xie Juezai, wrote that “the majority” of problematic cases involved veterans with some education and urban background (and thus likely to have more contact with the Nationalists), and the minority were former POWs and Nationalist soldiers.<sup>112</sup> The implications of a muddled background could be the same for all groups, however.

Crime and suicide statistics reveal some of the repercussions from “problematic” social and political histories. In a 1957 investigation of 40 suicide cases occurring between 1955-1957, 12.5% were caused by stress and anxiety stemming from “political history problems,”<sup>113</sup> while some 25% of 135 criminal cases involving veterans in 1956 resulted from the politicized charge of “counterrevolution,” the second largest category after theft (36%).<sup>114</sup> The categories of “counterrevolution” and “problematic history” incorporated a wide range of experiences, but mainly referred to veterans who were in the GMD at some point, had kin or friends in Hong Kong or Taiwan, suspect class background (landlord, rich peasant) or whose father or brothers were in trouble with the government.<sup>115</sup> For many organizations, these facets of veterans’

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biography outweighed the significance of their military service and made them particularly vulnerable to political persecution and job discrimination.

Some cases flesh out the stories behind the statistics. In Shanhe county, Shandong, Lu Yongwen was a veteran with landlord background. After he was discharged, he returned to the county and sought permission to enter a mutual aid team. The county refused, and he threw himself into a well. In a Guizhou case (Songtao county), Wu Enyun joined the PLA while he was a student at Sichuan university. When he was discharged in the mid-1950s, Wu tried to resume his studies, but the university refused because his father was a “counterrevolutionary” who had been arrested (other relatives were also under investigation) and he had been in a Nationalist Party organization (not unlike Chairman Mao, Zhou Enlai and many others). Wu traveled to Beijing and lived at the guest house of the Ministry of Interior. From there he appealed to the Department of Higher Education, who sent a letter back to Sichuan inquiring about Wu’s situation. The university explained their case, and the Education Department concurred with their decision. On January 5, 1956, Wu attempted suicide at Beijing’s Worker’s Cultural Palace, but this, too, failed. Family background was also at the heart of another case involving an education institution. Veteran Tao Manhua entered Shandong Normal University, but was expelled when the university, ignoring his veteran status, discovered that his parents were former landlords and his uncle had been arrested. There were “very many” similar cases (all were violations of central state policy), and they caused veterans a great deal of anger at the government, stress, and sense of hopelessness.<sup>116</sup>

Education institutions, to be sure, were not the only ones who excluded or retaliated against veterans because of their “problematic” political histories. This was common in government and industry as well, and by the mid-1950s was well-known to veterans. Those who knew of problems in their families were very anxious and worried about their prospects.<sup>117</sup> And they were right: the Bureau of Civil Affairs in Shanghai had great difficulty placing veterans with complicated pasts or families<sup>118</sup>; close to 30% of veterans who had not found any employment after a year of searching—reducing them all to welfare cases—were because of “political history problems and complicated social relations.”<sup>119</sup> Gu Hua, for example, served in the PLA for 15 years and was discharged in 1955, but nine units in Hongkou District in Shanghai refused to hire him because his father was a “counterrevolutionary.” One of these was the District Government’s Educational section, which “housed” many educated people.<sup>120</sup>



Given the complex history of the Chinese Revolution and the need to remain on war footing in the early 1950s, the CCP may have been justified in limiting some former regime elements from gaining access to important jobs. It is not unusual either: it took thirty years and the Spanish American and Indian wars for former Union and Confederate soldiers to reconcile after the Civil War.<sup>121</sup> Even so, Gu Hua served for a long time in the PLA, but this did not immunize him from discrimination. But even less reasonable, and probably more indicative of veterans' overall low status, was the discrimination they faced even when there was no evidence of participation in the Nationalist Army or political organizations. Throughout the 1950s, a widely held perception in Chinese society was that *anyone* who became a veteran had some sort of “political problem,” otherwise, why would the PLA have demobilized them? By discharging them the PLA “separated the bones from the meat,” a union official claimed.<sup>122</sup> According to an investigation by the cadre section of a Shanghai firm, *all* veterans were said to have “physical or political history problems or else were purged by their units.”<sup>123</sup> Another quoted a workshop director who said that veterans were “garbage (*laji*) swept out by the military,” or “inferior goods” because of all their baggage and ailments.<sup>124</sup> Even military families also expressed these sentiments. In some areas, they thought it was a “loss of face” if their soldier returned home and claimed veteran status—perhaps he had deserted?<sup>125</sup> Scores of documents from the Center to local officials attesting to the contrary were ignored or filed away, or else read, but not announced publicly.<sup>126</sup> This served their interests: by “blockading” this information,<sup>127</sup> officials had an even stronger hand in their political battles with veterans. This was not the case for all veterans, but certainly among many hung a cloud of political suspicion that never quite went away.

What might have improved this situation? If the US case of Union and Confederate reconciliation is any sort of guide, a foreign conflict helps resolve, or at least softens, animosity between former combatants. The tensions of the Civil War in China thus might have given way to a stronger sense of unity against the United States during the Korean War; by 1951 the US posed a more serious threat than veterans who, 15 years ago, served in the Nationalist Army! This is the image China projected to the world during the war and afterward, but archival evidence suggests a more complex picture. The campaign to muster public support for the Korean War made for great photo-ops and film clips,<sup>128</sup> but it was implemented very “unevenly”: factory managers were often too busy to deal with it, coming as it did on the heels of other

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campaigns and ordinary production demands. Assembled crowds gathered to listen to speeches that even party officials acknowledged were long-winded and boring. “Hardly anything at all” was accomplished at a number of factories in Shanghai.<sup>129</sup> But more problematic as far as veterans were concerned was the war’s apparent lack of legitimacy among ordinary citizens. Workers wondered: where’s Korea in relation to China? Why isn’t the PLA liberating Taiwan rather than fighting in North Korea? Why was China fighting for North Korea, when that country “helped Japan”? Many were unwilling to contribute to the war effort.<sup>130</sup> Such sentiments were shared among not a few elites as well, many of whom admired the US and suspected that China was fighting a war on behalf of the Soviet Union.<sup>131</sup> That the war reached a stalemate and there were many POWs did not help either. Unsurprisingly, those who returned from this war were not respected, heroic statues of them notwithstanding. Veterans in Shanghai were sometimes derided as “POWs,”<sup>132</sup> while those who returned to rural areas, as noted earlier, were denied land they were entitled to during land reform. It also explains the widespread desire among veterans to return to the “warmth” of military service after their “cold” experience in civilian life.<sup>133</sup>

### The Job Front

For many veterans in China, surviving war or extended periods of military service turned out to be only one of several obstacles they had to overcome. Employment, job security and promotion were all battles that proved to be as challenging as some of their experiences in the military. But quite unlike the military where one can marshal non-technical skills such as courage and perseverance, the civilian world, with its emphases on production, technology, and skills that enhance income, proved to be a very forbidding one, particularly for veterans who hailed from poor rural areas. This situation was not unfamiliar to top Chinese leaders. Central state policies encouraged units to hire veterans knowing they faced many disadvantages, as well as out of recognition for their sacrifices. This recognition, however, was not widely shared in society. As a result, many organizations refused to employ them and did their best to frustrate their ambitions.

The refusal to hire veterans was no secret in China. During the mid-1950s, the *People’s Daily* published several highly critical articles concerning the practice of “unreasonably

refusing to hire veterans,” Letters to the Editor from veterans, responses to these letters and “apologies” from personnel departments, as well as words of encouragement from former comrades-in-arm.<sup>134</sup> These articles indicate that discrimination was widespread—problems in Shanghai, Shandong, Liaoning, Guangzhou and Jiangsu were all covered in these articles—but affected urban areas with even greater intensity.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s cities were magnets that attracted hundreds of thousands of veterans from around the country owing to better economic prospects, pressure from family members, abuse at the hands of rural officials, lack of assistance for disabled soldiers, difficulty adjusting to back-breaking work, natural disasters or a sense that after their horizon-opening experience in the army, returning to become an ordinary peasant was simply out of the question.<sup>135</sup> Rural officials were only too glad to be rid of them, so they “casually” issued them unauthorized “letters of introduction” to whatever urban destination they desired.<sup>136</sup> If such letters could not be procured, veterans forged them (even as late as 1961), making sure to falsify their native place, party member status, or location of family members.<sup>137</sup> Urban officials, however, concerned with overpopulation, were far less pleased by the influx of veterans: Shanghai cracked down, and pleaded with the PLA and the central government to be more careful with their paperwork and verification processes, as did other municipalities throughout the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>138</sup> They were only partially successful. While some veterans who could not find a position in the city labor force could be persuaded to return to the countryside, most did not give up so easily. In Shandong, unemployed veterans banded together and “raised a ruckus” in local government offices; others joined with veterans from neighboring Hebei province and paraded down the street with an image of Mao Zedong and a sign that read, “The government doesn’t care, so we have to beg.”<sup>139</sup> Some wrote to Mao and Marshal Zhu De, while others plopped themselves down on railway tracks (“a very bad influence”), begged, sold matches and odds and ends, slept in police pillboxes, threatened suicide (“the Huangpu River will be my home!”) or pummeled urban officials who tried to force them back to the countryside. Theft of food was not uncommon. Some were said to have sold every piece of clothing they owned except what they had on their backs.<sup>140</sup> As late as 1957, demobilized naval veterans in Wuhan threatened a large demonstration if the government forced them to return to the countryside.<sup>141</sup>

This initial reception did not bode well for veterans’ future job prospects. Because of their military service, many were newcomers to the urban work force and power structure and

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thus lacked connections to employers, who valued skill and similar native place ties.<sup>142</sup> This is not unusual: when African-American veterans from WWII faced comparable political and economic discrimination when they returned to the South, many of them migrated to Northern cities where they occupied the lowest rungs in the labor force.<sup>143</sup> Interestingly, a letter written from a high-ranking veteran in Hebei to Liu Shaoqi explicitly compared their situation to that of American blacks: “we’re treated just like white people treat blacks in the US!”<sup>144</sup> Moreover, much like African-American veterans who carried the extra burden of their skin color, Chinese veterans brought with them a lot of unwelcome “baggage”: an “attitude” about privileges and rights, health problems, unsophisticated manners and lack of education; “they all have problems,” one manager complained.<sup>145</sup> “As soon as they hear the applicant is a veteran, they think of dozens of excuses not to hire him,” a provincial report noted. Units that needed cooks preferred someone younger, whom they could “mentor” and even factories that needed guards informed the Labor Bureau that “we don’t want veterans.”<sup>146</sup> In Qingpu, when two employers approached the Bureau looking for a cook, the Bureau official referred them to several veterans. At this, the employers “wrinkled their eyebrows, frowned and asked ‘isn’t there anyone else?’” The Bureau officials then reminded them of the State Council directives regarding veteran employment, but to no avail: “Ah, we don’t need a cook anymore,” they said.<sup>147</sup> In Hunan, the Veterans Committee in the Chengde Administrative Region (*zhuanqu*) also complained about personnel directors who refused to hire veterans, even those who had skill and education.<sup>148</sup> Even when veterans managed to find positions by themselves or with the assistance of the Bureau, the process was extremely slow and their status still pended a positive decision by the Personnel Department in the Labor Bureau, which was not always forthcoming. Frustrated Civil Affairs officials pointed to the “contradiction” between central government directives demanding that they “directly” find jobs for veterans and the role of Personnel Departments in central planning.<sup>149</sup>

Owing to the rapid expansion of industry in the early 1950s, many veterans eventually managed to find jobs, but these tended to be in low-skill positions in the expanding state sector. By the mid-1950s, however, employment opportunities for veterans constricted. The gradual dismantling of the private sector during the socialist transformation of industries meant that few private firms were willing to take on new workers. Veterans were aware of this transition and refused to be assigned to firms in that sector because “it doesn’t have a future.”<sup>150</sup> Moreover, in

the mid-1950s the government implemented a fiscal austerity program that resulted in very tight restrictions on hiring: factories needed higher-level approval to add even one temporary worker.<sup>151</sup> When firms hired, they were extremely particular about the applicant. For example, Shanghai Factory #614 received authorization from the Central Bank to hire 153 workers. The Bank informed the Central Veterans' Committee, which in turn notified the Shanghai Veteran Committee, of 50 positions for which veterans were to receive priority. All had to meet the following conditions, however: "politically reliable, healthy, and junior high school education." The Veteran Committee sent 700 files of qualified veterans to the factory's personnel department, but the factory only chose six, after a month and half of delays.<sup>152</sup>

Similar problems were noted in firms and organizations in the publishing and cultural world. More than most, these institutions were staffed by the urban cultural elite, and their jobs probably involved publishing magazines, books, and films extolling the virtues of the PLA and CCP. In December 1955, an investigation team found that publishing houses repeatedly failed to implement the 1955 State Council "Decision" (*jueyi*) regarding preferential access for veterans in employment. Here again, Personnel Department directors appear to have been the main obstacle preventing veterans from gaining access to good jobs. In 1955, Hu Zhangxian, a section chief of personnel in the Publishing Division (which was responsible for publishing houses), approached Zhu Chuanrong of the Bureau of Civil Affairs seeking fifty veterans, mainly to work as apprentice editors. The two agreed that they would consider veterans with high school education (which precluded most all rural veterans), "reliable" politics, "clean" political history, and relatively good physical condition. On May 25, Zhu sent over 60 files for them to peruse. Sometime later, Zhu called Hu and told them that his superior in Personnel, Gu Qiu, demanded that those selected also be CCP or Communist Youth League members, not "ordinary people." If they could not satisfy these conditions, he would not even look at the files. Zhu called Hu Zhangxian, complaining that only 24 veterans of the 60 were CCP or CYL members, but most had the necessary educational credentials and had "undergone several years of revolutionary tempering." But the personnel director refused to reconsider. After another round of negotiating, they "reluctantly" agreed to take a look at the files. In the end, seven people were chosen as apprentices. Among those rejected were two CCP members, 15 CYL members who were teachers in the army or involved in the communication field. On August 6, 1955, investigators sent their findings to the city government, charging that the demands of cultural institutions were

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“divorced from reality.” The city requested that the Publishing Division reconsider this problem, but they ignored the letter.<sup>153</sup>

This, as well as other reports, not only suggest that veterans were discriminated against when they applied for jobs, but also that when they were placed, it was usually at the lowest rung of the hierarchy—as apprentices and contract and temporary workers. Such placement meant that they earned less than workers who were younger but who had more skills and work experience, or were better educated. Veterans could have earned more to the extent that their units followed national salary regulations, which stated that veterans’ civilian job rank and salary scale should include their time in the army; if a veteran was an apprentice in 1950, joined the military for five years and then returned to the factory, their salary should be based on 5 “work years.” But this regulation was frequently ignored. In Shanghai, some managers claimed that they “never received” the relevant documents, but even when they did, they were not implemented; salary analyses showed that it was common for veterans to be 3-4 ranks below what they deserved.<sup>154</sup> In Liaoning Province, *People Daily* reporters noted very similar problems.<sup>155</sup> The letter written by the Hebei Province veteran to Liu Shaoqi expressed deep frustration with this state of affairs:

We obeyed our superiors’ orders and left the army to work in various localities. We thought this was glorious work. Even though the nature of it was different, it was for the socialist construction of our country. Of course we had no objections to it. But after we started work we saw that the determination of our rank violated cadre policy—our past work for the revolution was completely tossed aside, as if we were greenhorns. Then the local authorities decided that they didn’t like us, so when we were assigned jobs, our rank was reduced by 2-3 levels... We think this is illogical and unreasonable: a cadre who was in the revolution for 12 years is not the same as some young office worker whose been on the job for a year or two. All of us veterans say: “People like us can only look forward to next year, since that’s the only way we’ll be popular” [a war was expected to break out].<sup>156</sup>

There is little evidence of meaningful change during the late 1950s and early 1960s; *People's Daily* rarely published letters of complaint or investigation results after 1957. Although most urban salaries were frozen after 1958, veterans were hit particularly hard, since many were discharged only several years prior to the national salary freeze and thus found themselves stuck as apprentices or temporary workers for years. Their promotions were also very slow (“not one veteran who was demobilized to the localities has been promoted in the last three years,” the Hebei veteran wrote in 1956) and, according to a 1960 report from Songjiang county, hiring units preferred “young guys” in good physical condition, with good political history, and finished their service on time.” This in itself could disqualify 80% of veterans.<sup>157</sup>

This issue proved to be a major source of contention between veterans and other workers and local authorities. Veterans wrote letters complaining about it (63% of letters from veterans to the Labor Bureau concerned salary and rank not including time spent in the military<sup>158</sup>), staged work slow-downs and strikes, even at very sensitive facilities (such as the Jiangnan Shipyard), posted big character posters, and petitioned local authorities.<sup>159</sup> It is also highly likely that many veterans were involved in the 1957 “Strike Wave” in Shanghai, as those who were most active in it were temporary and contract workers.<sup>160</sup> By bringing this issue to the attention of city or district level officials, collective action proved to be effective, just as in the post-Mao period unemployed workers have learned that the bigger the noise they make, the most likely it is for their problem to be addressed. Some veterans received “permanent worker” status after bouts of collective action, or had their salaries adjusted after city or county level investigations.<sup>161</sup> Many did not, however, so resentments ran deep:

Many veterans [in Nanhui county] feel that they risked their life fighting the enemy, were not too late participating in the revolution and have made a definite contribution to it, yet when they return to their localities their salaries are lower than most everyone else's. Two veterans make 35 yuan a month, but have four children and their wives don't work. It's very tough for them, but they can't raise the salary issue given the political atmosphere.<sup>162</sup>

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Ironically, these festering resentments over status, salary and poor treatment occurred at the same time that the Center staged its “Learn from Lei Feng” campaign and promoted military education in the schools. Little of this propaganda appears to have improved veterans’ situation. Unsurprisingly, when the Cultural Revolution broke out in 1966, disgruntled veterans from around the country banded together (usually based on provincial or regional ties), made their way to the capital, broke into CCP Headquarters and demanded meetings with Mao, Zhou Enlai and other top politicians. Among their top demands was the right to organize an autonomous veteran’s association, which they believed was the only way to reverse widespread discrimination.<sup>163</sup> Like other groups that demanded this, the veterans were turned down and instructed to return home to their units.

### **So, what’s new?**

Although these findings about veterans in China seem counterintuitive in light of previous scholarship on nationalism and the benefits of “red” class status and revolutionary credentials in China, there is scarcely a problem identified here with regard to veterans’ benefits and status in society that veterans in far different contexts did not experience as well. When veterans of the Roman Army were demobilized to Egypt, for example, they encountered difficulties securing their rights and were sometimes subject to abuse (such as public beatings) by local officials who resented their claims to status.<sup>164</sup> Even when they were discharged to villages in Italy, villagers often treated them with contempt and hostility because they were granted land by the Emperor (and sometimes money), but had poor agricultural skills.<sup>165</sup> Australian veterans from WWI were sometimes cuckolded by their spouses while they were at war, and “Dear John” letters were not uncommon during WWII in the US either.<sup>166</sup> Veterans also suffer a relatively high level of disease and disability, and are often stigmatized. In Petrine Russia, the severely disabled were kept out of sight; in the USSR, veterans who suffered from trauma could be found in jails and asylums; Union veterans after the Civil War who suffered from chronic illness had a difficult time securing well-paying jobs; Japanese disabled war veterans suffered from the double stigma of “losers” and having a physical or mental problem; in



post WWI England, disabled veterans were lumped with “ordinary” poor people and were forced to “rely solely on the public spirit of private employers.”<sup>167</sup>

But problems are not the only thing veterans have in common. Veterans are also known for their strong sense of rights, status, and strong personalities, which often lead to dashed expectations in post-war environments. Scholarly types in the Roman Empire often complained of veterans’ “swaggering” and sense of themselves as beyond the law—a view, incidentally, that is not well-supported by evidence that provides a better sense of everyday life, such as papyri.<sup>168</sup> Disabled soldiers in Britain after WWI demanded special treatment,<sup>169</sup> and some Nigerian veterans from that war felt superior to their civilian peers (too provincial), and were resented for it. Ghanaian veterans returned from war with much higher expectations concerning employment, which were usually unfulfilled.<sup>170</sup> In Russia, the wartime experience “bred a new assertive citizen.”<sup>171</sup> In the US, veterans from both world wars (black and white) felt a “new, potent sense of identity,” and expected higher wages and status after their experience but were frustrated when those who did not serve—and used the war to acquire new skills—earned more than them.<sup>172</sup> They also resented “civilian ingratitude.”<sup>173</sup> They shared this sentiment with their Revolutionary War predecessors: Continental Army veterans were virtually forgotten in popular culture and in law until they began to die off in the 1820s, even as citizens celebrated American independence (this was largely due to Jeffersonian antipathy to standing armies). Many were destitute when they passed away.<sup>174</sup> Herman Melville (in his *Israel Potter*) and other literary figures wrote eloquently about the gap between patriotic and public ingratitude in everyday life.<sup>175</sup> In post-WWI France, veterans were extremely angry about their treatment—Prost calls it “semi-revolutionary” for a while—but it was directed largely against “shirkers” and the “new rich” in particular.<sup>176</sup>

Veterans in China also shared with many of their counterparts a feisty political stance, and a penchant for direct, frank language. Trained with weapons and organization, they have often been a potent political force, striking fear into the hearts of civilians and politicians alike. Roman veterans petitioned the Senate, and were suspicious of politicians.<sup>177</sup> Australian WWI veterans rioted and organized “secret armies.”<sup>178</sup> “Rough honesty, realism and devotion” were said to describe the French WWI veteran,<sup>179</sup> while the archtypical Israeli, having served in a military framework, is known for talking in *dugri* language: “unpolished, utilitarian, simple and direct idiom...telling the truth to someone’s face, without equivocation—the opposite of

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hypocritical, behind-the-back talk.”<sup>180</sup> In the US, in the mid-1780s economically pressed farmer-veterans rioted in western Massachusetts because they returned from war deeply indebted but “creditors in Boston nevertheless insisted on timely payments”; disgruntled WWI veterans mobilized *en masse*, and in military formation, for the 1932 Bonus March. Similar to veterans who organized during the Cultural Revolution in China (but with the labels switched!), the FBI accused them of being Communists and compiled an extensive file on their “un-American” activities before they were eventually suppressed.<sup>181</sup> Veterans were also very active in the early stages of the Civil Rights movement in the South. The Civil Rights leader (and veteran) Edgar Mevers “led a group of WWII veterans” to the county courthouse in Mississippi to vote in primary elections.<sup>182</sup> Hitler drew extensive support from disabled veterans who felt that society had ignored them, even as their material benefits and rights were far better than their British counterparts, who generally remained unpoliticized in the interwar years.<sup>183</sup>

There were, however, critical differences, and these, I argue, go to the heart of China’s “Missing Days” and what seems to be a shallow sense of “everyday” nationalism and patriotism both when it was most likely to occur (during the 1950s, when there was war and the government actively promoted martial spirit) and in the 1990s as well. Even though many of the problems Chinese veterans experienced were shared by counterparts around the globe, in many of the latter cases often there were two or three factors that made their situation somewhat more tolerable; while Chinese veterans continue to protest in the capital and provinces, one rarely sees this in the US, England, France, Russia, Australia, Taiwan and many other countries. First, in Western countries in particular, military service was frequently rewarded with land grants or veterans were settled in relatively cohesive communities with comrades-in-arm. The Roman Empire was the model for this, which was implemented in Great Britain, Russia, Canada, the US, and Australia, among others.<sup>184</sup> There is some evidence of entire PLA brigades sent to the Northwest of China after their demobilization, but this is quite different than veterans gaining property rights over land, even if these programs never attained total success. Second, in the West military service was associated with certain ideals of *manliness* that were accepted among broad swathes of the population. Returning Australian WWI veterans saw themselves, and were seen by others, as the embodiment of a masculine ideal, an updated version of the “bush worker.”<sup>185</sup> Returning WWII combat veterans in the US felt that they had “proven” their manhood,<sup>186</sup> and Union and Confederate soldiers reconciled after the Civil War because each respected an ideal of

masculinity that promoted the legitimacy and nobility of dying for a larger cause.<sup>187</sup> One editor of a veteran newspaper wrote that the main enemy of the Union veteran was not the former Confederate but “the selfish, cold-blooded, low-minded fellow, who cared too little for anything outside of his own mean little interests to be even an active rebel.”<sup>188</sup> In Great Britain, disabled soldiers, at least in the immediate post-war period, were seen as the “repository of national identity” and a “class above the average” because their mutilated bodies signaled bravery and masculine heroism.<sup>189</sup> The roots of this phenomenon are complex, but they seem to be linked to Greek and Roman idealization of the male body, the emergence of a ruling warrior class in Europe and schooling that emphasized physical education. China, with its long heritage of Confucianism and its emphasis on culture, humanistic learning, and social mobility ideally attained through scholarly examinations, apparently did not develop this connection.

But even if culture did encourage this perspective, it would not have been enough; Australian and American veterans did riot, after all. Much more important is the extent to which the military is *integrated* in terms of class and ethnicity, since this affects veterans’ ability to forge links to other groups in the post-war period. In Great Britain in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, veterans’ problems were exposed by the media (veterans were despised until the telegraph and the advent of mass circulation newspapers) and the public sympathized with them because they were familiar with the work of Florence Nightingale and other charities.<sup>190</sup> Demobilized writers and novelists in post WWII Russia published diaries and stories in literary journals, books (“The Front,” “Greeting from the Front”) or plays. The heroes of a “barrage of popular novels” on the post-war countryside were “demobilized officers.”<sup>191</sup> In his study of France, Eugen Weber argues that war and “something close to universal conscription” played an important role in promoting “national awareness” in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>192</sup> and Prost notes that the National Union of Veterans was supported by the state, “men of good works,” and business; the national veterans movement included peasants *and* small traders from cities.<sup>193</sup> In the United States, WWI veterans—who came from all social strata—were the “dominant object of commemoration,” a multivalent symbol that received the support of businessmen, civil organizations, and politicians.<sup>194</sup> After WWII, African-American veterans teamed up with liberal groups and labor (all of whom had veterans among them) to press for changes in their status.<sup>195</sup> In contrast, in China the military is largely peasant-based—it is unlikely that the children of today’s “patriotic” and “nationalist” stars are contemplating sending their children there. Not coincidentally,

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demobilized veterans are generally ignored by society; there are no NGOs promoting veterans' rights. Absent a more integrated military and what Charles Epp has called a "support structure" in civil society, the status of veterans will continue to be quite low.<sup>196</sup> This however, has not stopped veterans from protesting, or from working on behalf of others. One of China's most famous legal gadflies and star litigators, Gao Zhisheng, is a veteran, described by the *New York Times* in language we are familiar with by now: "bold, brusque and often roused to fiery indignation."<sup>197</sup>

The role of civil society is linked to the last, and probably most crucial, factor in the improvement of veterans' rights and "everyday" patriotism. There is significant historical evidence showing that both of these are closely linked to the development of *veterans organizations*, particularly those that have a cross-class membership and are organizationally cohesive and politically "feisty." In most countries, veterans' rights and benefits resulted from political battles and confrontations; highfalutin rhetoric notwithstanding, governments did not bestow them on a silver platter. Roman soldiers understood that "political organization and unity" are the only ways to secure rights.<sup>198</sup> In the US, various veteran groups have played a key role in securing privileges. The Society of the Cincinnati from the Revolutionary War period, the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) after the Civil War, the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Vietnam War Veterans Association are just a few of the more well-known of these. The results of this activism is impressive: by 1910, decades of GAR activism led to legislation for pensions for veterans and widows that represented 25-30% of average national earnings;<sup>199</sup> WWII veterans benefited from the GI Bill of 1944 in part because the administration feared tangling with them after the traumatic early 1930s Bonus March (clearly a "path-dependent" policy outcome). The Australian Returned Servicemen League, unlike its British counterpart, was very aggressive politically, had "intense member support" and a "front-line pride and ethos" that bore fruit in the benefits they received (they received most of what they demanded) and the status they were afforded. The British Legion, in contrast, was far more "gentlemanly," so politicians starved veterans in the budget.<sup>200</sup> In contemporary Russia, individual veterans of the war in Afghanistan were often ridiculed, but they organized and contacted foreign veterans' organizations and private philanthropies, which led to a significant improvement in their everyday life.<sup>201</sup> Organization is the key to gaining rights and status, since most civilians want to "move on" after war is over.<sup>202</sup>

By depriving their veterans of the right to organize their own association, the Chinese government is also depriving the country of a wellspring of patriotism. In the West, it has been veterans and others associated with the military—not well-intentioned professors, businessmen or lawyers—who have pressed for a version of patriotism that stresses sacrifice and action (as opposed to cheap words that do not involve costs<sup>203</sup>) as well as for civic activities and holidays promoting “love of country” such as flags in schools and public buildings, the pledge of allegiance in schools, national holidays, singing the National Anthem in sport events, war memorials (many with an anti-war message), pilgrimages, parades, fireworks and a great deal of social and political activism.<sup>204</sup> To a significant extent, then, both of China’s “Missing Days” can be traced back to its failure to incorporate veterans in a politically meaningful way. This, in turn, is linked to longer cultural patterns, the composition of its military and the authoritarian political system that denies a role to autonomous organizations.

Until these change, I would be very skeptical of accounts of patriotism and nationalism that stress its rapid rise in the last century. I’ll be more convinced when China’s “new nationalists” go to the countryside on their own accord, give more of their time in NGOs, help veterans sue employers for violating labor contracts, or return to China from abroad and work in poorer areas.<sup>205</sup> In any event, the bar for claiming or assigning nationalist or patriotic status needs to be set higher. Scholars, for their part, should move beyond the legacy of anti-militarism (a recent study has shown that in the US, the propensity to initiate armed conflict *decreases* the *higher* the proportion of veterans in the cabinet and congress,<sup>206</sup> and military officers are “unambiguously” on the side of civil liberties in surveys about banning books, more so than a random sample of civilians<sup>207</sup>) and treat veterans as a worthy subject for research in political science.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The term “civil religion” (which has a legacy running from Rousseau to Durkheim and Robert Bellah) is often associated with this effort.

<sup>2</sup> Shanghai Municipal Archive (SMA hereafter) B168-1-655, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Neil J. Diamant, "Hollow Glory," in Neil J. Diamant, Stanley Lubman and Kevin J. O'Brien (eds.), *Engaging the Law in China: State, Society and Possibilities for Justice* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> This protest did not receive extensive coverage, quite unlike the protests against Japan the same year. See Radio Free Asia, 4/13/2005.

<sup>5</sup> Most African countries do not have a veterans day, except for those tied to the British Commonwealth. In Latin America, only Argentina has a veterans day. Victory day is celebrated in Eastern Europe, and veterans are honored during this. Veteran's Day is more common in Western Europe, the US, UK and Oceania.

<sup>6</sup> Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2001), ch. 1.

<sup>7</sup> For late Qing and early Republican views of the importance of *shangwu* (respecting the martial) see Hans van de Ven, *War and Nationalism in China, 1925-1945* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 13.

<sup>8</sup> In a 2003 survey (1200 people contacted by phone) conducted by the Institute of Politics at Harvard University almost 90% of Americans considered themselves to be either "somewhat" or "very" patriotic. The results were the same in 2002. These rates may be higher because of 9/11. A Harris poll from 1998 found that 77% of Americans rank their level of patriotism from 7-10 on a scale of 1-10. See <http://poll.orpub.com>.

<sup>9</sup> George Fletcher, *Loyalty: An Essay on the Morality of Relationships* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993), 17, 140; Daniel Druckman, "Social-Psychological Aspects of Nationalism," in John Comeroff and Paul Stern (eds.), *Perspectives on Nationalism and War* (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1995), 58. Patriotism is referred to as an "acquired *sentiment*."

<sup>10</sup> Yael Tamir, "Reflections on Patriotism," in Daniel Bar-tal and Ervin Staub (eds.), *Patriotism in the Lives of Individuals and Nations* (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1997), 32-33, 37.

<sup>11</sup> Charles Taylor, "Cross-Purposes: The Liberal Communitarian Debate," in Nancy L. Rosenblum (ed.), *Liberalism and the Moral Life* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1989), 166.

<sup>12</sup> Maurizio Viroli *For Love of Country: An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 1.

<sup>13</sup> Han van de Ven's *War and Nationalism in China*, for example, does not define either term, nor specify how the two are causally related. He writes, "They [the Nationalists and Communists] portrayed warlordism as a pathology stemming from backwardness and a lack of patriotism, which was to be overcome by the forces of modernity, nationalism and revolution (p. 72). Formulated in this way, why would it not be possible to switch nationalism and patriotism around, so that nationalism could "solve" the problem of patriotism?"

<sup>14</sup> *The Loyal and the Disloyal: Social Boundaries of Patriotism and Treason* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1956), 3-35.

<sup>15</sup> For an application in the US see John Bodnar (ed.), *Bonds of Affection: Americans Define their Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1996).

<sup>16</sup> See many of the contributions to Jonathan Unger (ed.), *Chinese Nationalism* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1996). Also see Bryna Goodman, "Networks of News: Power, Language and the Transnational Dimensions of the Chinese Press, 1850-1949," *The China Review*, Vol. 4, no. 1 (Spring 2004), 1-10.

<sup>17</sup> It is very common in Chinese history to speak of *patriotic movements* or protests much like Chinese demands for democracy are often expressed in movements rather than in institutions. See David Strand, "Protest in Beijing: Civil Society and the Public Sphere in China," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 39, no. 3, 1-19. For a sophisticated approach to nationalism using intellectuals' writings see John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); Lei Guang, "Realpolitik Nationalism: International Sources of Chinese Nationalism," *Modern China*, Vol. 31, no. 4 (October 2005), 487-514.

<sup>18</sup> Unger, *Chinese Nationalism*, xv. Emphasis mine.

<sup>19</sup> Peter Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics and Diplomacy* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2004).

<sup>20</sup> Journalists have also adopted this "trope" of rising nationalist "sentiment" uncritically. See "Balancing Act; A Survey of China," *The Economist*, March 25, 2006.

<sup>21</sup> See Brantley Womack's review in the *Journal of Asian Studies* (vol. 64, no. 3) and Yan Sun's in *Perspectives on Politics* (March 2005).

<sup>22</sup> Yan Sun's review praises Gries for his argument that "Chinese nationalism involves the Chinese people, not just the party and elites," but does not notice that Gries' writers are, by virtue of their education, "elites." Even if they are not high ranking intellectuals, they are certainly not "ordinary" Chinese. Likewise, Womack notes that Gries "makes a thoroughly convincing argument that the demonstrations...expressed genuine *popular* sentiment," without questioning the paucity of evidence showing that 1) the sentiments were widespread in China, and 2) these views were distinct from the official view at that time.

<sup>23</sup> Druckman, 58. The notion of what a "reasonable person would consider" is a standard criterion in legal reasoning in common law (in areas such as contract, tort, criminal, and constitutional case law), but of course accepting this depends on whether one believes that "reason" exists (I do). The standard originated in English Law. Sacrifice should have this standard, otherwise a \$100 contribution from a millionaire "counts" the same as someone with meager resources.

<sup>24</sup> Bodnar, 7.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Walzer, *Obligations: Essays on Disobedience, War and Citizenship* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 98. Emphasis mine. Early Chinese Marxists accepted the notion that action is a necessary component of patriotism, but stressed the state as the sole recipient of citizen actions. They, too, did not specify what sort of "love" was involved between citizen and state. See "The Nationless State: The Search for a Nation in Modern Chinese Nationalism," in Unger (ed.), *Chinese Nationalism*, 70.

<sup>26</sup> Carole Pateman, *The Problem of Political Obligation: A Critique of Liberal Theory* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1985), 1, 163.

<sup>27</sup> Cited in Cecilia O'Leary, *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1999), 4-5. Emphasis mine.

<sup>28</sup> See Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The collapse and revival of American community* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 2000).

<sup>29</sup> If governments and societies required "pure motives" we would be forced to eliminate 99% of all of those who died for their country from receiving any sort of recognition. Many serve because it is the law and they are drafted. It is fairly far-fetched to imagine that societies would refuse to build commemorative sites such as the Vietnam War Memorial, the WWII Memorial or



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the Memorial to the Unknown Soldier because those who died in war were not “pure of heart.” We recognize *actions*, not “correct” thoughts. Here I take issue with Tamir, who demands pure motives to be patriotic: “inherent in the praise of patriotism...is the notion of rational, conscious self-sacrifice.” A person needs to be “motivated to act with the good of his country in mind” (25). This standard, I believe, is too high. Moreover, it is virtually impossible to research, since we do not have the opportunity to get inside the minds of people prior to making decisions such as these, and are forced to rely on *ex-post facto* accounts in memoirs or acquaintances’ testimonies.

<sup>30</sup> On these benefits in the Roman Empire see L. J. F. Keppie, *Colonisation and veteran settlement in Italy, 47-14 B.C.* (London: British School at Rome, 1983), 39-40, 74; Richard Alston, *Soldier and society in Roman Egypt : a social history* (London: Routledge, 1998), 6, 48; for Imperial Russia see Elise Wirtschafter, “Social Misfits: Veterans and Soldiers Families in Servile Russia,” *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 59 (April 1995), 226; for the US see John Resch, *Suffering Soldiers: Revolutionary War Veterans, Moral Sentiment and Political Culture in the Early Republic* (Amherst: Univ. of Mass. Press, 1999), 145, for the 1820 Pension Act, and Mark Van Ells, *To Hear Only Thunder Again* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2001) for an overview (7, 15); Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1992) on Civil War pensions.

<sup>31</sup> Andrew Hunt, *A History of Vietnam Veterans Against the War* (NY: New York University Press, 1999).

<sup>32</sup> Kirk Johnson, “In Bereavement, Pioneers on a Lonely Trail,” *New York Times*, Sept. 8, 2002; Andrew Jacobs, “Trade Center Widows Lobby for Independent Inquiry,” *New York Times*, June 12, 2002.

<sup>33</sup> Maris Vinovskis, “Have Social Historians Lost the Civil War: Some Preliminary Demographic Speculations,” in Vinovskis (eds.), *Toward a Social History of the American Civil War: Exploratory Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990), 1-2, 11, 29.

<sup>34</sup> I conducted a search on JSTOR, looking for articles with “veteran,” “military service,” and “servicemen” in their titles and “veteran politics” as a keyword anywhere in them. The lack of attention to veterans in social movement theory (even as a case study) is particularly interesting in light of the number of studies on the civil rights movement. Veterans are not mentioned as an important force in the emergence of the movement in the now classic study by Doug McAdam

*The Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency* (1982) or in his more recent work on it (in the volume below). Also see Meyer Zald, "Culture, Ideology and Strategic Framing," in McAdam, John McCarthy and Zald (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996), 268. Other 1960s-inspired topics such as revolutions, labor, students, the environment, women, and democracy all figure more prominently in this field.

<sup>35</sup> For an example of a pioneering work on the military from a social perspective see Diana Lary, *Warlord Soldiers: Chinese Common Soldiers, 1911-1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985).

<sup>36</sup> At the Longhua Martyr Memorial in Shanghai, almost every person who received a detailed account on the wall was educated, but most officially recognized "martyrs" (as I saw in the official registry) were illiterate peasants from Shandong Province killed in the battle for Shanghai.

<sup>37</sup> These sources include thousands of pages of declassified materials from the Interior Ministry, Bureau of Civil Affairs, Women's Federation, Labor Bureau and Trade Unions located in archives in Shanghai, Qingpu (a suburb of Shanghai), Shandong and Beijing, as well as gazetteers, and internally-circulated newsletters, particularly *Minzheng jianbao*, which was distributed in the 1950s. I also conducted a computerized search of all articles related to veterans in *People's Daily* between 1942-2004.

<sup>38</sup> John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (NY: Norton, 1999), 58-60.

<sup>39</sup> Benefits included free or discounted medical care, depending on the severity of illness, preferential treatment for job assignment, particularly in the bureaucracy and state owned enterprises, financial assistance if they fell on hard times.

<sup>40</sup> In the US case, both Union army veterans and veterans of WWII were suspected of violent and criminal tendencies, moral depravity and anti-democratic impulses because of their service in the military. See David Gerber, "Heroes and Misfits: The Troubled Social Reintegration of Disabled Veterans in 'The Best Years of Our Lives.'" *American Quarterly*, Vol. 46. no. 4 (1994), 547; Larry Logue, "Union Veterans and their Government: The Effect of Public Policies on Private Lives," *J. of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 22, no. 3 (1992), 413.

<sup>41</sup> James Townsend, “Chinese Nationalism,” in Unger (ed.), *Chinese Nationalism*, 20-1. Townsend is rightfully suspicious of accounts of popular nationalism in the post-Mao period, however (23).

<sup>42</sup> I used the term “widespread” as a close reflection of reports that indicate “very many problems,” “very serious problems” or “not a few problems” in a revised document that in its first draft that used the adjective “widespread” (*pubian*). See SMA B123-3-1442, 6; B168-1-630, 10; SMA B168-1-628, 30.

<sup>43</sup> SMA B168-1-628 (1956), 162; 161; SMA B168-1-628, 90.

<sup>44</sup> Shandong Provincial Archive (**SPA** hereafter) A1-2-516 (1957), 17.

<sup>45</sup> The number of veterans able to become officials varied over time and place, but rarely exceeded 35%, and most of these positions were at the village level and below. For instance, a report from Kunshan county near Shanghai noted that they received 1,258 veterans in 1960, of whom 492 (35%) became “cadres and people’s representatives” (SMA B168-1-655, 2); in Chongming county, 31.7% of veterans were “basic level cadres or advanced workers” (SMA B127-1-846, 25). A 1965 Shandong report noted that 37.9% of veterans and martyr families were cadres (SPA A20-1-411, 42). In Qingpu, a military investigation team showed that in an 11 year period (1951-1962), 9% of 1007 veterans received positions at the commune or county levels. Qingpu Archives (**QA** hereafter) 48-2-155, 23. A *People’s Daily* investigation (April 18, 1956) of a cooperative in Shanxi noted 13 party members, among whom 4 were veterans.

<sup>46</sup> Gary B. Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution* (N.Y.: Viking Penguin, 2005), 216-7.

<sup>47</sup> Alan Skelly, *The Victorian Army at Home* (Montreal: McGill-Queens Univ. Press, 1977), 297-8.

<sup>48</sup> John Keep, *Soldiers of the Czar: Army and Society in Russia, 1492-1874* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985), 147; David Moon, “Estimating the Peasant Population of Late Imperial Russia from the 1897 Census: A Research Note,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 48, no. 1 (1996), 142.

<sup>49</sup> SMA B168-1-607, 53.

<sup>50</sup> SPA A1-2-519, 19.

<sup>51</sup> Liu Wenping (ed.), *Fan xian zhi*, (Henan renmin chubanshe, 1993), 514.

- <sup>52</sup> *Wuqiang xian zhi* (Beijing: Fangzhi chubanshe, 1996), 416. Wuba county, located on the Hebei-Shandong border, also took in homeless veterans. See *Wuba xian zhi* (Beijing: Fangzhi chubanshe, 1998), 581.
- <sup>53</sup> SPA A20-1-41, 69.
- <sup>54</sup> SPA A1-2-519, 19.
- <sup>55</sup> SMA B168-1-607, 54.
- <sup>56</sup> QA 48-2-141, 12.
- <sup>57</sup> SPA A20-1-029, 17.
- <sup>58</sup> SMA B168-1-607, 73.
- <sup>59</sup> Ningguo county gazetteer, (Beijing: Sanlian, 1997), 574; Fan county gazetteer, 514; SPA A20-1-109, 47.
- <sup>60</sup> Donzhi county gazetteer (Hefei: Anhui renmin chubanshe, 1991), 538.
- <sup>61</sup> SPA A20-1-109, 47.
- <sup>62</sup> SPA A1-2-516 (1957), 15.
- <sup>63</sup> SMA B168-1-619, 70. Also see SMA B168-1-607, 71.
- <sup>64</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 90.
- <sup>65</sup> State Council Office on Veteran Resettlement, *Jundui ganbu zhuan ye fuyuan gongzuo wenjian huibian* (1950-1982) (Beijing: Laodong renshi chubanshe, 1983), 160.
- <sup>66</sup> There is very little data on suicide rates across occupational groups, so it is difficult to establish if veterans' experience was unique. But suicide does reveal the gap between official status and the everyday predicament faced by many veterans.
- <sup>67</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 22.
- <sup>68</sup> SMA B168-1-633, 78.
- <sup>69</sup> SPA A20-1-109, 48.
- <sup>70</sup> *Jundui ganbu*, 159-160.
- <sup>71</sup> QA 48-2-30, unpaginated. Some veterans took more desperate measures: hand-written transcripts of a meeting of county-level officials in Shandong mentioned "uprisings" by veterans "in every county" in an administrative region (*zhuanqu*), and in Tai'an, Changqing, Xintai and five other counties. These veterans lost contact with their families, were suddenly demobilized to the village, but after returning found there was no land left after land reform and no reserve

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housing for them. The township government cannot place them. Some were living at the District Government, others with relatives. Others committed suicide. See SPA A20-1-41 (1952), 69.

<sup>72</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 73; *Jundui ganbu*, 158.

<sup>73</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 74. All firms preferred hiring temporary workers “from society” than veterans.

<sup>74</sup> SMA B127-1-358, 136.

<sup>75</sup> SMA B127-1-358, 38; *Jundui ganbu*, 162.

<sup>76</sup> QA 48-1-40, 18.

<sup>77</sup> QA 48-2-98 (1956), 68.

<sup>78</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 3.

<sup>79</sup> SMA B127-1-358, 37 (1963).

<sup>80</sup> SMA B168-1-628 (1956), 45-6, 74; SMA B168-1-517, 139.

<sup>81</sup> This was not an isolated problem, as it came to the attention of the State Council in national-level reports about veteran issues. See *Jundui ganbu*, 162.

<sup>82</sup> Although there is no direct evidence for this, it is possible that this conflict masked regional tensions: most union officials came from the lower Yangze region, traditionally a fairly wealthy area with a long tradition of discriminating against relatively poor and unsophisticated Northerners, the recruiting ground for the PLA. On these tensions see Elizabeth Perry, *Shanghai on Strike: The Politics of Chinese Labor* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1994).

<sup>83</sup> For evidence of Shandong suicides in the early 1950s see SPA A20-1-81 (1953), 62. For the mid-1950s see SPA A1-2-516 (1957), 17. For the early 1960s see SPA A20-1-332, 1

<sup>84</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 22

<sup>85</sup> Dongcheng District Archive, 11-7-306 (1959), 3.

<sup>86</sup> SMA B168-1-209 (1963), 24.

<sup>87</sup> *Jundui ganbu*, 159.

<sup>88</sup> SMA B168-1-619 (1955), 49, 20.

<sup>89</sup> *People's Daily*, Aug, 6, 1956.

<sup>90</sup> SMA B168-1-619, 70; 48; QA 48-2-155, 24; SMA B168-1-633, 80, 102; SMA B168-1-641, 14; SPA A20-1-109, 4-5; SPA A101-1-607, 28.

<sup>91</sup> QA 48-2-98, 66.

<sup>92</sup> The issue of “personality” in collective action theory remains underdeveloped. Doug McAdam appropriately refers to it as a “hoary micro issue” (p. 225) but its importance cannot be underestimated in collective action in high risk environments. For a recent treatment of its importance see Ron Aminzade, Jack Goldstone and Elizabeth Perry, “Leadership Dynamics and Dynamics of Contention,” in Aminzade et al. (eds.), *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001), 126-154; Diamant, Lubman and O’Brien, *Engaging the Law in China*, 13-14.

<sup>93</sup> See *The Whistleblowers: Exposing Corruption in Government and Industry* (N.Y.: Basic Books, 1989), 5, 7.

<sup>94</sup> Jennifer Brooks, *Defining the Peace: World War II, Veterans, Race and the Remaking of the Southern Political Tradition* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2004), 7.

<sup>95</sup> May 29, 1957.

<sup>96</sup> QA 48-2-98, 68; QA 48-2-71, 38.

<sup>97</sup> Archival evidence tells of many veterans and martyr families who were caught in the net of political campaigns. The 5 Antis campaign, which ostensibly targeted the middle and upper classes, increased the ranks of unemployed among veterans and martyr families as well. See SMA B168-1-607, 50.

<sup>98</sup> QA 48-2-71, 38.

<sup>99</sup> QA 48-2-141, 15. Also see QA 48-35, 2 for exposing corruption in a private business.

<sup>100</sup> SMA 168-1-628, 21, 30.

<sup>101</sup> SPA A20-1-332, (1962), 1, 82-4.

<sup>102</sup> Nov. 16, 1956.

<sup>103</sup> SPA A20-1-109, 48; QA 48-2-141, 15.

<sup>104</sup> QA 48-2-141, 13.

<sup>105</sup> QA 48-2-141, 15; *People’s Daily*, April 18, 1956.

<sup>106</sup> SMA B168-1-633, 80.

<sup>107</sup> April 18, 1956.

<sup>108</sup> *People’s Daily*, Aug, 6, 1956; SPA A1-2-516, 17; QA 48-2-109 (1957), 4.

<sup>109</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 119-20.

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- <sup>110</sup> Chen Yung-fa, *Making Revolution: The Communist Movement in Eastern China, 1937-1945* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1986); Elizabeth Perry, *Patrolling the Revolution* (Lanham: Rowman Littlefield, 2006).
- <sup>111</sup> SMA B168-1-607, 53. I am not sure if this composition was typical, however.
- <sup>112</sup> *Minzheng jianbao*, May 24, 1956, 2.
- <sup>113</sup> SMA B168-1-633, 78.
- <sup>114</sup> SMA B168-1-517, 39.
- <sup>115</sup> *Minzheng Jianbao*, May 24, 1956, 2.
- <sup>116</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>117</sup> SMA B168-1-607, 49.
- <sup>118</sup> SMA B168-1-611, 126.
- <sup>119</sup> SMA B168-1-630, 10, 15.
- <sup>120</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 30.
- <sup>121</sup> O'Leary, "Blood Brotherhood," in Bodnar, *Bonds of Affection*.
- <sup>122</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 21.
- <sup>123</sup> SMA B123-3-1442, 6.
- <sup>124</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 47; B168-1-607, 50.
- <sup>125</sup> SMA B168-1-607, 50.
- <sup>126</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 3.
- <sup>127</sup> O'Brien, "Suing the Local State," in Diamant, Lubman and O'Brien (eds.), *Engaging the Law in China*.
- <sup>128</sup> *Kangmei yuanchao zhanzheng houjin jingyan zongjie tupian xuanji* (Changchun chubanshe, 1989).
- <sup>129</sup> SMA C1-2-361, 31, 34, 36-8; C1-2-121, 41.
- <sup>130</sup> SMA C1-2-361, 32, 33, 37; C1-2-121, .22; A22-2-45, 55.
- <sup>131</sup> SMA C1-2-121, 1, 22, 31.
- <sup>132</sup> SMA 168-1-628, 98.
- <sup>133</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 22; *Jundui ganbu*, 635.
- <sup>134</sup> See *People's Daily* April 3, 1955 ("Unreasonably refusing to hire veterans") August 3, 1955 for Shanxi; Dec. 25, 1955 (Jiangsu, Taicang county); November 29, 1956 (Liaoning); October 19,

1956 for a Letter to the Editor entitled "Why aren't veterans being hired?" For a letter of encouragement, see May 9, 1955.

<sup>135</sup> Shandong officials commented extensively on this problem, which they deemed "very serious." Most all Northeastern cities witnessed an influx of veterans. See SPA A20-1-109, 48. For Shanghai, see SMA B168-1-633, 101; B168-1-607, 74.

<sup>136</sup> *Shandong xingzheng gongbao*, December 1954, 13; SMA B168-1-607, 74; *People's Daily*, May 6, 1954.

<sup>137</sup> SMA B1-2-1519 (1954), 1-3; SMA B168-1-649 (1960), 19.

<sup>138</sup> SMA B168-1-658 (1961), 43-44; B168-1-607 (1952), 50.

<sup>139</sup> *Shandong xingzheng gongbao*, December 1954, 13.

<sup>140</sup> SMA B168-1-607 (1952), 74; B168-1-611 (1952), 124; *Jundui ganbu*, 159.

<sup>141</sup> SMA B1-2-1958, 55.

<sup>142</sup> Perry, *Shanghai on Strike*.

<sup>143</sup> Brooks, *Defining the Peace*, 24.

<sup>144</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 162.

<sup>145</sup> *Shandong xingzheng gongbao* (December 1955), 13.

<sup>146</sup> *Shandong xingzheng gongbao*, 13; QA 48-2-141.

<sup>147</sup> QA 48-2-71 (1955), 38.

<sup>148</sup> *People's Daily*, April 3, 1955.

<sup>149</sup> SMA B168-1-611 (1953), 124.

<sup>150</sup> SMA B168-1-619, 52.

<sup>151</sup> SMA B168-1-633 (1957), 81; B168-1-619, 52.

<sup>152</sup> SMA B168-1-619, 53.

<sup>153</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 43-4.

<sup>154</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 88; B168-1-633, 79; QA 48-2-141, 14.

<sup>155</sup> See issue of November 29, 1955.

<sup>156</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 162.

<sup>157</sup> SMA B168-1-666 (1960), 5.

<sup>158</sup> SMA B127-1-358, 37.



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<sup>159</sup> SMA B168-1-628, 140-54 (Shipyard Investigation); B168-1-666, 9; B168-1-649 (1960), 30 (big character posters in Nanhui county); SMA B168-1-666, 9 (work slow down in Songjiang in 1963).

<sup>160</sup> Elizabeth Perry, "The Shanghai Strike Wave of 1957," *China Quarterly*, no.137 (1994), 1-27.

<sup>161</sup> SMA B168-1-633 (1957), 79; B168-1-649 (1960), 31; *People's Daily*, Sept 22, 1957.

<sup>162</sup> SMA B168-1-649 (1960), 31.

<sup>163</sup> SMA B168-3-131. 3-6.

<sup>164</sup> Alston, 62, 64-6.

<sup>165</sup> Keppie, 101.

<sup>166</sup> Stephen Garton, *The Cost of War: Australians Return* (Melbourne: Oxford Univ. Press, 1996), 191. Susan Hartmann, *The Home Front and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s* (Boston: Twayne, 1982).

<sup>167</sup> Ethel Dunn, "Disabled Russian War Veterans: Surviving the Collapse of the Soviet Union," in Gerber, *Disabled Veterans in History*, 253; Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 61; Stuart McConnell, "Who Joined the Grand Army? Three Case Studies in the Construction of Union Veteranhood, 1866-1900," in Maris Vinovskis (ed.), *Toward a Social History of the Civil War*, 139; Seth Koven, "Remembering and Dismemberment: Crippled Children, Wounded Soldiers and the Great War in Great Britain," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 99, no. 4 (1994), 1201; Peter Reese, *Homecoming Heroes: An Account of the Reassimilation of British Military Personnel into Civilian Life* (London: Leo Cooper, 1992), 136.

<sup>168</sup> Alston, *Soldier and Society*, 53-4.

<sup>169</sup> Koven, 1192.

<sup>170</sup> James Matthews, "Clock Towers for the Colonized," *International J. of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 14, no. 2 (1981), 268; Adrienne Israel, "Ex-Servicemen at the Crossroads: Protest and Politics in Post-War Ghana," *The J. of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 30, no. 2 (1992), 362.

<sup>171</sup> Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 67.

<sup>172</sup> Donald Lisio, "United States: Bread and Butter Politics," in James Diehl and Stephen Ward (eds.), *The War Generation: Veterans of the First World War* (Port Washington: Kennikat, 1975), 39; Jessup, 8-9.

<sup>173</sup> van Ells, *To Hear Thunder*, 58-63, 189; Samuel Stouffer et.al, *The American Soldier: Combat and its Aftermath*, Vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1949), 308-9, 320; Brooks, *Defining the Peace*, 3-4; David Oknst, "First a Negro...Incidentally a Veteran," *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 31. no. 3, 517-534

<sup>174</sup> Resch, *Suffering Soldiers*, 1.

<sup>175</sup> Edward Tang, "Writing the American Revolution: War Veterans in the Nineteenth-Century Cultural Memory," *Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 32, (1998), 63-80.

<sup>176</sup> Antoine Prost, *In the Wake of War: 'Les Anciens Combattants' and French Society*, Helen McPhail trans. (Providence: Berg, 1992), 33.

<sup>177</sup> Keppie, *Colonization of Veteran Settlement*, 122.

<sup>178</sup> Garton, 59-61.

<sup>179</sup> Prost, 106-7.

<sup>180</sup> Oz Almog, *The Sabra: The Creation of the New Jew*, Haim Watzman trans. (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2000), 145. Almog writes, "the long periods in military frameworks required rapid speech with an instrumental cast to it. In battle or in a briefing before battle there was no place for intricacy or long 'academic' debates."

<sup>181</sup> van Ells, 8; Paul Dickson and Thomas Allen, "Marching on History," *Smithsonian*, February 2003), 90.

<sup>182</sup> John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois, 1994), 1, 5.

<sup>183</sup> Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home: Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany, 1914-1939* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2001).

<sup>184</sup> Pam and Brian O'Connor, *In Two Fields: Soldier Settlement in the South East of South Australia* (Millicent: S.E. Soldier Settlers Committee, 1991); Keppie, 39-40, 74; Resse, 39, 43; Desmond Morton and Glenn Wright, *Winning the Second Battle* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1987), 10, 100.

<sup>185</sup> Garton, 23, 47; Marilyn Lake, "Mission Impossible: How Men Gave Birth to the Australian Nation--Nationalism, Gender and Other Seminal Acts," *Gender and History*, vol. 4, no. 3 (1992), 308-310.

<sup>186</sup> Stouffer, 309; Brooks, 3-4.

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- <sup>187</sup> David Blight, *Race and Reunion* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2001), 209.
- <sup>188</sup> O’Leary, “Blood Brotherhood,” 64.
- <sup>189</sup> Koven, 1169, 1218-9.
- <sup>190</sup> Reese, 44.
- <sup>191</sup> Weiner, 45, 49, 57.
- <sup>192</sup> Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1976), 298. The army, at least for a time, was considered the “school of the fatherland.”
- <sup>193</sup> Prost, *In the Wake of War*, 29, 34, 46-7.
- <sup>194</sup> John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1992), 84.
- <sup>195</sup> Brooks, 7.
- <sup>196</sup> Charles Epp, *The Rights Revolution: Lawyers, Activists, and Supreme Courts in Comparative Perspective* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1998).
- <sup>197</sup> Joseph Kahn, “Legal Gadfly Bites Hard, and Beijing Slaps Him,” *New York Times*, December 13, 2005.
- <sup>198</sup> Alston, 158.
- <sup>199</sup> O’Leary, *To Die For*, 47.
- <sup>200</sup> G.L. Kristianson, *The Politics of Patriotism: The Pressure Group Activities of the Returned Servicemen’s League* (Canberra: Australia National Univ. Press, 1966), 189, 212; Reese, 137, 166.
- <sup>201</sup> Dunn, 256, 262, 268.
- <sup>202</sup> In post-WWI Canada, veterans did not forge a broad-based organization and failed to achieve significant benefits despite a hospitable political environment. See Morton and Wright, *Winning the Second Battle*, 178.
- <sup>203</sup> Prost writes of French WWI veterans: “It is impossible to overstate the veterans’ hatred for the patriotism of the home front. They detested the middle-aged men who demanded offensives and paid for them light-heartedly with the lives of others—their own lives” (p. 81).
- <sup>204</sup> See Mona Siegel, “History is the Opposite of Forgetting”: The Limits of Memory and the Lessons of History in Interwar France,” *J. of Modern History*, vol. 74 (2002), 784-7; David

Glassberg and J. Michael Moore, "Patriotism in Orange: The Memory of World War I in a Massachusetts Town," in Bodnar (ed.), *Bonds...*, 164-5; Prost, 53-4.

<sup>205</sup> Lawyers in China are rarely interested in representing plaintiffs in labor or pension disputes, even among revolutionary veterans, because of the small sums involved (in other words, they are not willing to make the sacrifice). See Ethan Michelson, "The Practice of Law as an Obstacle to Justice: Chinese Lawyers at Work," *Law and Society Review*, vol. 40, no. 1 (2006), 15.

<sup>206</sup> Christopher Gelpi and Peter Feaver, "Speak Softly and Carry a Big Stick? Veterans in the Political Elite and the American Use of Force," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 96, no. 4 (2002), 788. Lt. Gen. Gregory Newbold, a recently retired Marine Corps Lt. General, recently noted of the decision to invade Iraq: "The decision to invade was done with a casualness and swagger that are the special province of those who have never had to execute these missions — or bury the results." See *Time Magazine*, April 9, 2006.

<sup>207</sup> Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn (eds.), *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil- Military Gap and American National Security* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2001), 460.