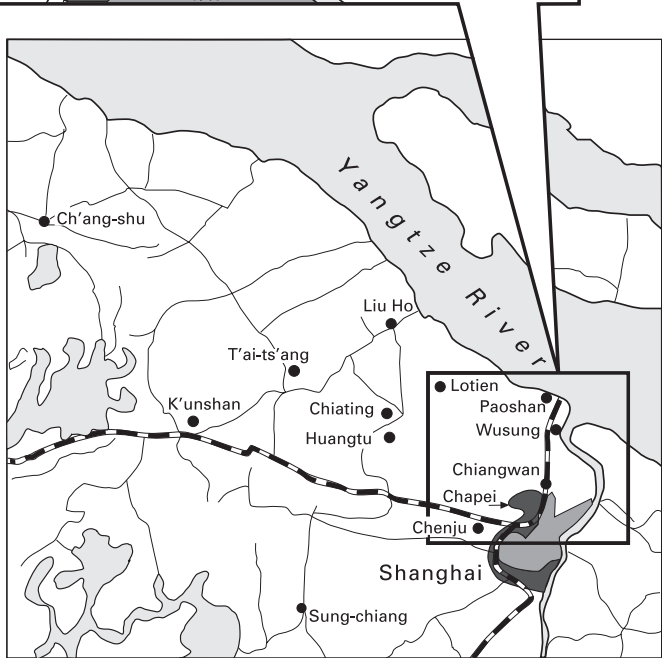
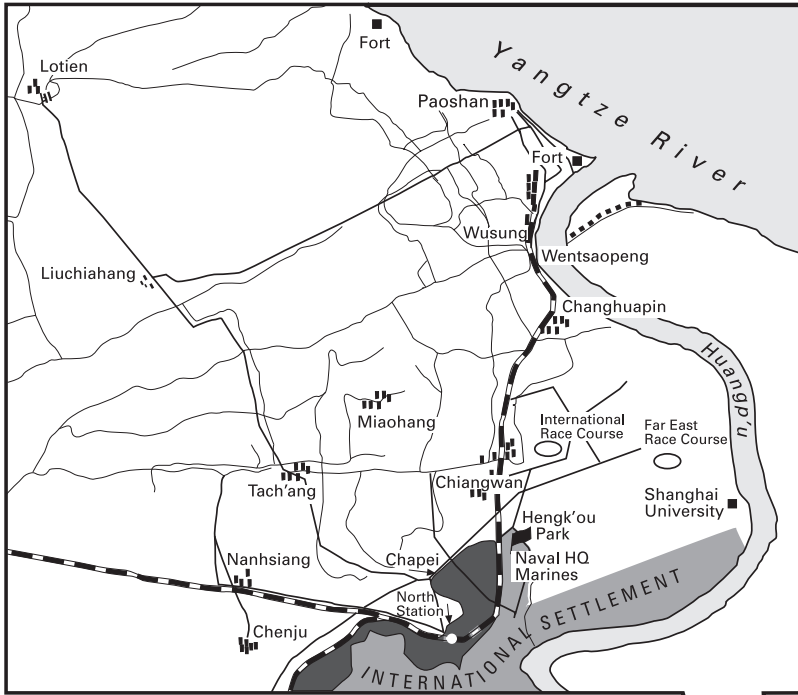


Introduction: Shanghai War Issues and Personnel

Shanghai in early 1932, prior to the war, was a place of opportunity and frustration—a bustling new city peopled mainly by those seeking their fortunes and those who had failed. Hundreds from upriver trudged in daily or disembarked from crowded steamers looking for work. The cataclysmic flood of 1931 had left human flotsam, and those who died of starvation on the streets during the night were carted away so as not to offend the nouveau riche in limousines. Foreign communities in the International Settlement, such as the thousands of Japanese and much smaller numbers of Westerners, were also there to make profits, by whatever means necessary. This was a do-or-die competitive environment both in the foreign concessions and Chinese Shanghai. Since the world war, ambitious new Chinese industrialists had to price their commodities lower than those of the more advanced Japanese *zaibatsu* branches that had sprung up, protected by extraterritorial rights and treaties and capital reserves in Osaka and Tokyo. Along Shanghai's glittering Bund on the waterfront of the Huangp'u River, the solid office buildings of Mitsui, Japanese banks, and warehouses of large Japanese cotton mills such as Kanebo and Nagai Wata jostled cheek to jowl with the Bank of China and the Wing On mills and department store. The background for the Sino-Japanese conflict involved the following mix of issues and characters.

After 1928, with its anti-Japanese boycott, the new era of the Kuomintang's national government at Nanking saw the zealous leadership translate their hot anti-imperialism into calls for a revolutionary diplomacy in which the new China would assert itself against the evils of unequal treaties. The Chinese rhetoric was abrasive, with threats of unilateral abrogation if treaties were not renegotiated. This assertive style of foreign relations reached a peak in the Great Anti-Japanese Boycott that began at Shanghai in July 1931.¹ The movement started as an answer



Map 1. Shanghai Vicinity

from capital-deficient KMT bureaucrats to Chinese producers begging for official aid in their struggle to compete with efficiently produced Japanese wares of all kinds but especially cotton textiles. Japanese products were increasingly being manufactured in Shanghai at a lower price than those made in Japan. In 1931, the summer massacres of overseas Chinese in Japanese Korea provided KMT organizers at Shanghai with an excellent reason to boycott Japanese products. Rather than cowing the Japanese into paying restitution, the ninth and greatest anti-Japanese boycott, which spread north even to the Southern Manchurian Railroad, had only made Japanese traders more defensive and encouraged the Japanese military to implement their dreams of taking over Manchuria (the three provinces of northeast China). That anti-Japanese boycott headquartered in Shanghai and its unforeseen consequences for Manchuria were the first phase of this author's research to better understand the antecedents of the ensuing Shanghai War.

The origins of the long-standing Sino-Japanese differences have been studied elsewhere and include volumes on the Manchurian Incident, a major turning point in international relations. In surveying the 1931 boycott and its relationship to the military conflict also at Shanghai, it can be seen that the Anti-Japanese National Salvation Association (AJNSA) and its enforcers or pickets were the bane of Japanese traders and mill managers in 1931 and into 1932. With popular goods and services that had earlier sold briskly on the huge Chinese market, Japanese businessmen, bankers, and shippers were suffering from loss of sales and contracts. While they may have earlier favored Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijuro's internationalism as being good for trade, the Japanese faith was shaken by the world depression and the increasing signs that China aimed to exclude Japanese from the Chinese marketplace.

When the local Japanese of Shanghai became aware that the Shanghai branch of the Kuomintang (KMT) had been among the sponsors of the boycott beginning in July 1931, they became cynical about the future of friendly relations. Seizures by AJNSA pickets of Japanese goods from Chinese shops, from harbor lighters, and from wharves were considered illegal by local Japanese, who called on their large Shanghai consulate for aid. Rushing to confront Chinese pickets and boycott enforcers, consular police and the Japanese naval landing party stationed permanently within the Settlement skirmished and recaptured impounded Japanese goods when possible. From August 1931 on, there had been armed struggles between the boycotters and those armed Japanese sailors who later

played such a key role in the Shanghai War. Because of the frequency of their mention in the text, the armed sailors in the local Japanese naval landing party will, for brevity, be referred to hereafter as marines (a common translation). When the Japanese marines began their raid into the Chapei district of Chinese Shanghai on January 28, they were escalating an existing hostility between themselves and contentious anti-Japanese activists. The local commander of Japanese warships and gunboats along the China coast and Yangtze River was traditionally responsible for the safety of Japanese resident nationals. Petitions from Japanese organizations within the large Japanese community in Shanghai's Little Tokyo pleading for armed intervention expose the link between the AJNSA boycott and the war. The background of the Shanghai War includes, by necessity, repeated reference to China's domestic political strife.

Some Japanese imperialists liked to chide the Chinese for the absence of a unified state of China, deriding China as being a loose grouping of warring states. Indeed, in China, there had been a history since 1911 of civil wars between military and political groups struggling for either local autonomy or unification of the new nation. The Japanese, especially the army, had learned to manipulate Chinese rivalries to keep China divided and weak, despite the protestations of Japan's modern internationalists such as Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijuro, who promised to respect China's territorial integrity after the Washington Conference treaties of the 1920s.

The year of the Manchurian Incident, 1931, started off badly for the Nanking circle of the Kuomintang (KMT) around Chiang Kai-shek bent on consolidating central power. The house arrest of the Cantonese Kuomintang elder Hu Han-min at Nanking in March became the dramatic event that triggered yet another factional struggle against Nanking. This time the rebellion emerged from KMT elites, mostly fellow Cantonese, who gathered at Canton united only in their opposition to Chiang's rising central powers. This rebellion was declared in May 1931, and soon a rival national government at Canton lined up southwestern provincial allies for a new "northern expedition" during the summer to attack Chiang's affiliates in Kiangsi.

As will be seen, this Canton KMT faction opposed whatever Chiang and his circles favored. First banning the anti-Japanese boycott organization from their territories, the Canton leadership represented by Wang Ching-wei; Sun Fo (K'o), son of Sun Yat-sen with his prince faction; and the overseas Chinese Eugene Chen (Yu-jen) sought entente with Japan's

foreign minister, claiming to be the true national representatives. However, when Shidehara's Foreign Ministry failed to restrain the Kwantung Army from grabbing Manchuria in September, the Canton KMT sensed Nanking's embarrassment in the face of an intense patriotic reaction over China's loss of Liaoning Province. Canton quickly retrieved its mission to Japan and became a hotbed of war hawks pressing Chiang to either go to war with Japan immediately or resign.

Contrary to the accounts given in most histories, Chinese did not quickly unite under the threat of Japanese aggression. By December 1931, the Canton faction encouraged the pro-war demonstrators to riot and burn Nanking government buildings and to beat successive foreign ministers. Finally forcing the resignation of Chiang Kai-shek from his top posts on December 15, the Cantonese KMT captured party leadership. This factional conflict cannot be ignored in that it was the reason for the transfer from the anti-Communist front in Kiangsi of three Cantonese divisions of what became the famous Nineteenth Route Army (Nineteenth R.A.) to defend the Cantonese regime at Nanking and Shanghai against their rivals. The Nineteenth R.A. generals Chiang Kuang-nai and Ts'ai T'ing-k'ai rose onto the national stage for their hour of glory against Japan but initially were there as part of the prior KMT compromise to resolve the intraparty split between Canton and Nanking. Their patron Chen Ming-shu and the three Cantonese divisions arrived at Nanking and Shanghai in November and December 1931 during the heat of the factional struggle and pro-war rioting, when Cantonese Sun Fo and Eugene Chen convinced Chiang Kai-shek to resign so they might head Nanking's national apparatus. Thus, the popular anti-Japanese movement aggravated intraparty conflict. The Nineteenth R.A., although at Shanghai to back up the Cantonese leaders against intimidation by Chiang Kai-shek's central army divisions, became outspoken anti-Japanese war hawks like the Cantonese faction leaders: Sun Fo, Eugene Chen, and the flexible Wang Ching-wei.

First, Shanghai mayor Chang Ch'un, a Chiang appointee, had turned the city over to Cantonese Chen Ming-shu and his Nineteenth R.A. protégés. After Chiang and his talented Soong in-laws, Finance Minister T. V. Soong (Sung Tzu-wen) and Minister of Industry H. H. K'ung (Hsiang-hsi), left Nanking to the Cantonese in mid-December, the Cantonese sun shone briefly. The civilian elites tried to rally enough support, financial as well as political and military, to command China. When the Cantonese failed to pull the central government out of its financial

bankruptcy, in desperation they were forced to invite Chiang to return and join with Wang Ching-wei to head a new coalition.

First a Cantonese acceptable both to Chiang and the Cantonese KMT, Wu T'ieh-ch'eng, was appointed in early January 1932 as mayor of Chinese Shanghai. Wu had been a close aide to Sun Yat-sen, a former police chief in Canton who had suppressed CCP unions, and friend to Sun Fo. Wu's fluency in English as well as Japanese suited the Shanghai job. A new Chiang-Wang military-civilian coalition of Cantonese and Chiang's team including T. V. Soong struggled at Nanking from mid-January 1932 to reunite the tattered KMT leadership with one eye on the threatening guns of the Japanese navy gathering at Shanghai. The strange political bedfellows managed to remain a duo through the Shanghai War and into 1935. Mayor Wu T'ieh-ch'eng, who had to deal with Japanese demands before and during the conflict, survived as mayor of the municipality until 1936. These KMT elites shared decision making throughout the Shanghai War and its resolution.

Another issue that recurs in this study of the Shanghai War was the division in the Chinese military between central forces and provincial-regional forces. This revealed the conflicting pulls throughout Chinese history between central unity and provincial autonomy.

By 1932, with the threat of conflict with the Japanese military brewing, there were Chinese central forces around Nanking, the German-trained modern National Guard divisions created by Chiang Kai-shek. The new Central Military Academy, moved from Whampoa, Canton, to Nanking, fed modern-trained officers into several National Guard divisions. The dean of the academy, General Chang Chih-chung, was to play a major role in the coming war. At Shanghai there were the three Cantonese-speaking divisions of the Nineteenth R.A., the Sixty-first, Sixty-second, and Seventy-eighth, recently arrived from the campaigns against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) insurgents in Kiangsi. Their transfer exemplifies how the anti-Chiang KMT squabble gave respite to the CCP, as did Nanking's distraction with Japan. Elsewhere in China there remained the numerous divisions under Chang Hsueh-liang that had retreated out of Manchuria, as well as various provincial forces of Feng Yu-hsiang, Yen Hsi-shan, and Li Tsung-jen, whom the Japanese relished calling warlords. In China of 1932, millions of soldiers were ubiquitous and expensive but seemingly effective only in fighting each other. Nanking's central forces were somewhat better equipped and trained under German guidance than the more numerous provincials. Chinese

naval forces were mainly river gunboats and several destroyers. Airpower was in its infancy—still in the planning stage with a hundred some aircraft of various vintages. None of the Chinese components, however, came near the level of the Japanese with their superior cannon and aircraft, their national army, and their world-class navy offshore—all supported by a well-developed industrial base that had come to include Shanghai and now Manchuria.

Since this brief war took place at Shanghai, it is necessary to highlight the Japanese civilians who played a role in starting the conflict. By early 1932 the Japanese community of between twenty thousand and thirty thousand was the largest overseas and spilled out from the Hengk'ou district of the Settlement, nicknamed "Little Tokyo." To the north of the confluence of Suchou Creek and the Huangp'u River, Little Tokyo with the large Japanese consulate was crowded with Japanese shops, apartments, prosperous cotton mills, and warehouses strung out along the waterfront. Branches of Japanese banks loomed above the nearby Bund downtown. Such large overseas communities were organized through the consulates into Japanese Residents' Associations (J.R.A.s) with representatives from the various economic circles and neighborhood street unions. The Japanese elites involved in the war included Japan's consul general at Shanghai, Murai Kuramatsu, who had the challenging responsibility of speaking for the local Japanese residents with their many complaints about the anti-Japanese activities, the seizure of Japanese goods, and the nationwide boycott headquartered in Shanghai in the Settlement. Shanghai's many consulates rivaled the diplomatic "embassies" located in Nanking and Peking for the various countries with ministers to China. Shanghai was where most international traders and diplomats preferred to operate. Also working out of the Japanese consulate were the intelligence experts of the military, naval attaché Captain Kitaoka Haruo and Assistant Army Attaché Tanaka Ryukichi of Special Services. Kitaoka authored daily situation reports to Tokyo on Chinese politics in Shanghai and, later, the conditions of the warfare there. The controversial Major Tanaka, a larger-than-life dynamo with a Manchurian princess as his mistress, became a major player in the unfolding Sino-Japanese conflict. A protégé, via a military prep school, of Colonel Itagaki Seishiro, Tanaka had been invited in October 1931 into the circle of the conspirators of the Manchurian Incident. Tanaka was assigned to turn the combustibles at Shanghai into a diversion of major proportions.² An escalation into a military intervention by the navy

would distract the eyes of the world from the Kwantung Army as it quickly moved north to conquer the last Manchurian province still independent in January 1932.

Another frequent visitor to the Japanese consulate was Minister to China Shigemitsu Mamoru, who traveled by train from Nanking to Shanghai with T. V. Soong and other official elites seeking weekend diversion and contacts that were greater than those of the new capital city of Nanking. Minister Shigemitsu maintained a villa on the posh Route Pichon in Shanghai's popular French Concession, where Soong was a neighbor. The two had hoped to take personal diplomacy to Manchuria in September to settle Sino-Japanese differences but had been too late to stop the young colonels. Shigemitsu would have another chance as peacemaker as the Shanghai War wound down in the spring. The Japanese diplomats in China were under Foreign Minister Yoshizawa Kenkichi, who in December replaced the more conciliatory and internationalist Shidehara Kijuro when the Minseito Party fell and the Seiyukai Party ascended with its tough policy toward China. Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi, elder statesman and "god of constitutional government" (*kensei-no-kami*), had to face the Shanghai crisis and the army with its dreams of dominating the civilian government. Both Inukai and his minister of finance, Takahashi Korekiyo, would fall as they became obstacles to military ambitions.

In Shanghai the Japanese struggle between the civilian and military for control included Rear Admiral Shiozawa Kiochi, commander of the Yangtze Patrol or First Squadron of the imperial navy. Admiral Shiozawa had the responsibility of protecting Japanese nationals in central China and gave orders to the Japanese marines stationed within the Settlement territory since revolutionary China had threatened the concessions in 1927 during the KMT's Northern Expedition. By 1932 the Japanese navy had become jealous of the acclaim that the army had gained at home over its successful coup in Manchuria. Their solution to Shanghai's continuing anti-Japanese activities would be based on the generally low opinion of the Chinese shared by most Japanese and the assumption that the threat of force and its quick application would press the Chinese to change their ways.

Since the Japanese in East Asia were so obviously the superiors, they tended to treat Chinese with disdain. Toughness with juniors was common in many Japanese circles and included individuals such as army enlistees, sumo and geisha trainees, and anonymous persons in public.

The Chinese on their side had long been sinocentric and xenophobic—poor candidates for Japanese lessons in subservience. Although there were examples of Sino-Japanese friendships, such as T. V. Soong and Shigemitsu, or writer Lu Hsun and his Japanese neighbors in Hengk'ou, they were far fewer than the Japanese at Shanghai who had as little to do with Chinese as possible.³ Commonalities in culture and written language did not seem to ease the way to Sino-Japanese understanding. Friction between Chinese and Japanese at Shanghai had reached a critical point by January 1932.