

# An Analysis of “Victory over Japan Day” Reporting in Chinese Newspaper Media

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## Introduction

The aim of this paper is to show how newspaper media in the Republic of China depicted “Victory over Japan Day”, or VJ Day, right after the end of its war with Japan that lasted for 8 years, and to clarify the message they attempted to convey.<sup>1)</sup>

Directive No. 270 of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, “Order Regarding National Holidays, Commemoration days, and Days Off,” which was modified and promulgated on September 18, 1999, states that September 3 has special significance, as it is the day that is legally designated as the commemoration of the Second Sino-Japanese War.<sup>2)</sup> However, for ordinary people today, especially for the young people, September 3 is little more than empty formality. Some Chinese intellectuals who are knowledgeable about Japan argue that August 15 should be set as “the commemoration day of the Second Sino-Japanese War”. As a matter of fact, August 15 is marked as VJ Day by the Allies, and it is also regarded as the end of the World War II, because it was on this day that Japan, the last Axis Power, surrendered. In 2005, as the sixtieth anniversary of the victory in the anti-Japanese war approached, the State Council issued “Some Opinion Concerning Further Strengthening and Improvement in the Ideological and Moral Formation of the Juveniles,” and a campaign was carried out to emphasize that September 3 should be the day for the commemoration of the Second Sino-Japanese War.<sup>3)</sup> This indicates the chaos over the issue of the commemoration of the Second Sino-Japanese War.

### (1) On What Date was the Second Sino-Japanese War to Be Commemorated?

As it is known, on September 2, 1945, the Japanese government signed aboard USS Missouri the instrument of Surrender of Japan, in which the Japanese government agreed to Japan’s unconditional surrender to the Allies, including the Republic of China. Xu Yongjing, who was present aboard USS Missouri as a representative of the Republic of China, confirmed Japan’s signing of this instrument. On September 3, Japan handed over the instrument of Surrender to the government of the Republic of

China in Nanjing. The government of the Republic of China designated the three days starting from that day as holidays. Many of the arguments that advocate September 3 as the commemoration day of the Second Sino-Japanese War point out that September 3 was the day on which the instrument of Surrender was handed over to the Chinese side, and that it was the first day of the Commemoration holiday. From the following year on, September 3 was set aside as the commemoration day of the Second Sino-Japanese War. However, the policy-making process that led to this decision is not clear.

While September 3 was designated as the commemoration day of the Second Sino-Japanese War, “Order Regarding National Holidays, Commemoration Days, and Days Off,” enacted by the State Council on December 23, 1949, shortly after the establishment of People’s Republic of China, stipulated that August 15 should be the commemoration day of the Second Sino-Japanese War. And, this lasted until late-1950. However, on August 1, 1951, commenting on Hu Qiaomu’s report concerning the commemoration day of the Second Sino-Japanese War, Mao Zedong instructed that September 3 was the nationwide commemoration day for victory in the war. Based on this instruction, the State Council notified the following amendments on August 13:

The Order Regarding National Holidays, Commemoration Days, and Days Off, promulgated by the State Council on December 23, 1949, designated August 15 as the day of China’s victory in the War of Resistance against Japan. However, Japan executed its surrender on September 2, 1949, that is after it signed the instrument of Surrender. Therefore, the day for commemoration of China’s victory in the War of Resistance against Japan will be amended to September 3.

The modified rule that was promulgated by the State Council in 1991 accepted this modified commemoration day, and September 3 was regarded as both the Day of Victory in the War of Resistance, and as the day of liberation of the Northeastern Region by the Soviet Forces.<sup>4)</sup>

However, in the Chinese War Zone, it was on September 9 that the Japanese Army surrendered. As is well known, the ceremony of Japanese Army’s surrender took place in the auditorium of the Central Military Academy in Nanjing. He Yingqin, Commander in Chief of the Chinese Army, represented the Chinese side to accept the surrender of the Japanese Army. The Japanese delegation which submitted the instrument of surrender consisted of seven people including General Okamura Yasuji. Following the ceremony of Japanese surrender held from 9 o’clock in the morning, 1,280,000 Japanese troops in China surrendered to the Chinese side. However, ceremonies of surrender continued to be held in other areas of China, as in the Beijing and Tianjin districts on October 10.<sup>5)</sup> For this reason, in later years, no particular ceremony was held on September 9; rather, September 9

was considered important as the Athletic Day.

From the above, we can see that whether August 15 or September 3 should be designated as the commemoration day of the Second Sino-Japanese War was a highly sensitive political issue, and that the "proper" date of the commemoration changed along with the changes in political regimes in China.

## (2) Tianjin Versions of *Dagongbao* (大公報) and *Yishibao* (益世報)

In this article, Chinese newspapers *Dagongbao* and *Yishibao* are selected as the materials on the basis of which to examine the media depiction of the commemoration day of the Second Sino-Japanese War. Especially these two newspapers which had been issued in the Japanese occupied Area can be characterized the both sides of patriotism and occupation, Together with *Shenpao* and *Mingguoripao*, these newspapers were regarded as the four largest national newspapers during the pre-war era. In 1937, with the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, *Dagongbao* and *Yishibao* were forced to cease their publication respectively on July 25 and on July 31. The journalists who had worked for these two newspapers moved to different places such as Shanghai, Hankou, Kunming, Chongqing, Hong Kong and many of them continued their journalistic activities.<sup>6)</sup>

After the war, the Tianjin versions of these two newspapers were reissued on the same day, December 1, 1945.<sup>7)</sup> The reissue of *Dagongbao* was made possible by the effort of Cao Gubing, the President of *Dagongbao*, and Kong Zhaokai, the chief editor. In the following year, 1946, Hu Zhengzhi, quite capable in management, and Wang Yisheng, who became famous as an editor, went to Shanghai and opened there the main bureau of *Dagongbao*. Zhang Qinnang, who used to teach at Yangjing University, returned to Tianjin. There he guided the editorial works of the Tianjin version of *Dagongbao* and started to teach in the Department of Journalism at Yangjing University again. Zhang wrote most of the editorials in the Tianjin version of *Dagongbao* except for the ones coming from the Shanghai main bureau.<sup>8)</sup> Compared with the *Dagongbao* of the pre-war period, the Tianjin version of *Dagongbao* did not have as many articles on local issues, and focused mainly on political trends and incidents. Also, there were not many articles with graphics and the newspaper gradually lost its unique character. By the end of 1948, circulation dropped from 20,000 to 4000 per day.<sup>9)</sup> Despite this, the company's policy, "never belong to political factions, never to be bribed, be fair and seek the truth," was still maintained. This policy was originally announced on September 1, 1926, on the occasion of the reissue of the newspaper. On that day, the front page of the newspaper carried sections such as "announcement from the editor," "on the occasion of the reissue of *Dagongbao*," and "the principle of our company," where these principles were announced.<sup>10)</sup>

At the *Yishibao* newspaper, the Director Yu Bin recommended Liu Yizhi as the President of the Company, to take charge of the reissue. Liu Yizhi secured the assistance of Zhang Ting, the mayor

of Tianjin and a friend of his father, Liu Junqing, and opened the newspaper company on Heping Road of the first district in Tianjin, (which is Asahi Street number 1 of the former Japanese concession). In reissuing *Yishibao* Liu was able to utilize the facilities of the former East Asia Printing Office. Liu further asked his uncle, Liu Huoxuan, who was the Director of the Department of Journalism at Yanjing University to take the post of both the President of the company and the Chief Editor.<sup>11)</sup> Many of staff members involved with the reissue had three common characteristics: 1) like Liu Huoxuan and Liu Junqing, they were from Su prefecture and Baodi prefecture within the Greater Tianjin City; 2) they were Catholics; and 3) they were graduates of Yanjing University.<sup>12)</sup> Huang Gongwei, who was the editorial writer of *Yishibao* after the reissue, was also a graduate of Yanjing University. Expecting that the letters from the subscribers would increase, *Yishibao* expanded the section of “the stories of subscribers” from August 1, 1946, and made it a regular feature of the newspaper. *Yishibao* decided to publish special issues of the paper, called “Weekly,” which had been planned already in the pre-war period, and to publish all the letters from subscribers there. By doing so, the editors hoped to differentiate the newspapers from its competitors. The letters from subscribers were limited to 1500 characters, and had to be submitted with real names and addresses. Slandering other people was not accepted.<sup>13)</sup> These special issues, “Weekly,” covered a wide range of fields in humanities and social sciences. It included a section on “Literature” edited by Shen Congwen, “Art Weekly” edited by Xu Beihong, and “Social Studies” edited by Sociology Department of Jinhua University. In addition, it included “Friends of Business,” “Economic Weekly,” “Books Weekly,” “History Weekly,” “Religion and Culture,” “Readers Digest,” “Humanities Weekly.” In some cases, there was reward for letters accepted for publication. For instance, in the “Books Weekly” section, the reward was 2000 yuan for every 1000 characters and in the “Economic Weekly” section, 3000 to 5000 yuan for 1000 characters.<sup>14)</sup> This indicates that *Yishibao* was not a mere newspaper but had the characteristics of a general interest magazine, as it included articles on various aspects of cultural life. For this reason, the newspaper was quite popular among the intellectuals.

## 1. Victory Day and Victory Commemoration as Seen in Media Reports

### (1) Victory in 1945 and Commemorative Events in Chongqing

Chinese language newspapers reported on Japan's intention to surrender as early as August 10. The final answer from Japan was delayed due to the issue of the status of the Japanese Emperor. On August 15, the Central Broadcasting Agency in Chongqing broadcasted special news, announcing Japan's acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration.<sup>15)</sup> On the same day, the Chongqing version of *Dagongbao* made an official report on Japan's surrender, carrying on its second page a big headline proclaiming, “Japan Surrenders!”

To celebrate Japan's surrender, the government of Republic of China, following its rules for celebrations, carried out (or planned to carry out) the following events. 1) Hoisting the Chinese national flag for three days, and also, the hoisting of the flags of either the United Nations, the United States, Britain, the USSR, or France; 2) designating August 16 as a holiday; 3) official visits to the graves of founding fathers of the Republic including Sun Yat-sen. Also, celebrations hosted by the Department of Social Affairs and by Municipal Governments; 4) gun salute at noon of August 16 organized by the Military Commission; 5) a national celebration events on August 16; 6) a tea party hosted by President Jiang Jieshi; 7) radio address by Jiang Jieshi; 8) marches of representatives of various professions. Celebrations were planned also in Chongqing, the alternate wartime capital where the government, major organizations, and the elite took refuge during the war years. By the decision of the Second Standing Committee, issued on August 16, it was announced that celebrations were to be held for three days starting on that day, that a celebration event would be held at 6:00 pm that evening. Plans were also announced for the following events: 1) a celebratory procession; 2) free admission to theaters and other places of entertainment; 3) free showing of movies; 4) music festivals and amateur entertainment performances; 5) showing appreciation to members of the Chinese Army; 6) a party for the guests from the Allied forces.<sup>16)</sup>

Further, after Japanese signing of the instruments of surrender aboard USS Missouri on September 2 was confirmed, Jiang Jieshi announced the following special measures to celebrate the victory: 1) reward for the officers and soldiers, and relief for ordinary people; 2) the abrogation of all wartime legislations that restricted people's freedom, freedom of economic activities, and freedom of organization and speech; 3) exemption of land tax (for 1945 in the enemy-occupied area, and for 1946 in the rear area provinces); 4) nationwide one-year moratorium on conscription of new soldiers; 5) reduction in taxes and interests to be paid in 1945. This was reported in the Chongqing version of *Dagongbao*. The Republican Government, too, carried out similar events around September 3: 1) September 3 was designated as a holiday; 2) the Chinese National flag was to be hoisted for three days starting from that day; 3) Visit to the grave of the founding father of the Republic Sun Yat-sen on September 3; 4) The "Voice of Peace" Event (the simultaneous sounding of sirens, whistles, bells, gongs, firecrackers in temples and churches, schools, factories, shops and homes for 10 minutes starting at 9 o'clock on September 3); 5) 101 gun salutes, plus the same sort of events as on August 15. Regional governments, too, carried out similar events. In Chongqing, the alternate capital, the Chinese national flag was hoisted all over the city on September 3, and a celebration event with the participation of representatives of various professions was held at Jiaochangkou plaza from 9 o'clock in the morning. Around the plaza, the national flags of the Allies were hoisted and a V-shaped ornament was decorated on the speech table. The celebration parade took place in the city, and the streets were blocked for 6 hours, as the whole city was filled with frenzied people celebrating the

victory. In addition, there were various events such as a festival procession, entertainment performances, a celebratory entertainment event by the young men's association, a massive church service provided by the All-China Christian Association.<sup>17)</sup> Advertisement columns of the Chongqing version *Dagongbao* indicates that various pictorial magazines such as "Commemoration Photos for Japan's Surrender" (by Good Friends Publishing Company), "The Photos of 4 Leaders of China, America, England, and the Soviet Union" (by Chongqing Publishing Company), and "Commemoration Photo of President Jiang Jieshi's Victory" (Yifeng Printing Office), were on sale. In addition, there were bargain sales to celebrate the victory of China at some companies and stores such as Chongqing Home Products Company, Huahua Company, Hengyisheng Machine Unlined Upper Garment Factory and Qiuzhi Bookstore.

As mentioned before, on September 9, General Okamura Yasuji signed the instrument of surrender for the Chinese war zone. Following this, the Commander in Chief, He Yingqin, went on radio and broadcast to domestic and international audiences the information about Japan's signing of the instrument of surrender.<sup>18)</sup> After this ceremony of surrender, we can discern some signs of change in Chinese public opinion can be discerned. For instance, the editorial column of the Chongqing version *Dagongbao* which was entitled "From Resistance to Constructive Work" and published on September 10, stated as follows:

We won the war of resistance. We are now moving on to the phase of construction from the phase of the war of resistance. Victory in the war of resistance does not mean the end of our struggle. In order to achieve successful construction, we must utilize the fruit of the war of resistance...When thinking about the future of our nation, we, as a matter of fact, cannot be optimistic unconditionally. For the construction of our country, vigorous action and enthusiastic attitude are important. We should not pursue this task halfheartedly. Lack of devotion inevitably undermines the task of nation-building.

As this editorial shows, during this period, many Chinese people shifted their attention from celebration to nation-building and to the resumption of production tasks that they were facing. In fact, during this period, the Republican government was carrying out at a fast pace such urgent tasks as requisitioning of enemy-occupied areas that had been under Japanese occupation, and recovering the Northeastern region of China. The celebration events for China's victory in the war of resistance were held only around the alternate capital, Chongqing. At this point, September 3 had not been formally designated as the commemoration day of the Second Sino-Japanese War, and any commemoration ceremony was not conducted throughout China. However, the attitude toward nation-building in general was anything but pessimistic. In fact, people held rather enthusiastic, optimistic, and positive

attitude toward such tasks, due to their contentment for their victory in the war. The warning seen in the editorial that was mentioned above was perhaps sounded as a precaution against complacency.

## (2) Positive Message Conveyed at the Commemoration Ceremony of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1946

August 15 was designated as "the commemoration day to show appreciation to the members of the Allied Forces," and ceremonies to celebrate the first anniversary of this day were held in various places in China. In addition to this, in the capital Nanjing and also in Beijing, there were big celebrations of the Air Force Day. Prior to this day, President Jiang Jieshi issued his "Address to Our Compatriots" in order to express his view on the current situation. The Address began with the following introduction:

Dear compatriots, it has been exactly one year since Japan declared its unconditional surrender to our Allies. On this day last year, I pointed out that "for reconstruction and nation-building of China in the post-war period, we would probably need to go through hardship that is several times more painful than that of wartime period." At that time, I thought it necessary to achieve both peaceful unification and stabilization of the country first, and then to provide the exhausted nation with rest and (stable) life. This, I believed, would ensure the success of demobilization and nation-building. It has been one year since that time, and the government has maintained this immutable principle. However, there is a wide gap between our hopes and the reality, and the suffering of this country and the pains of the people have not been reduced. The only way to keep our hopes for the future is to review our past conducts. Although I feel the great responsibility (for the future of this country), I cannot organize my thought well. Therefore, I would like to review our experiences of the past year, point out the causes of current chaotic situation to my compatriots, achieve a common understandings with them, and to strive together for the betterment of the situation.<sup>19)</sup>

Responding to this Jiang Jieshi's expression of his frank opinion, *Yishibao* commented in its editorial, entitled "the Issues of Commemoration of Victory in the War," published on August 15. There the newspaper implicitly criticized the government policy by arguing that such cooperative relationship with the Chinese Communist Party as Jiang Jieshi suggested "would not result in any positive outcome. Even if it does, it would only be so merely on paper."

On that day, as the capital city had already moved from Chongqing to Nanjing in May of that year, every house in Nanjing hoisted the national flag and celebrated the commemoration day. For instance, an evening party to commemorate "August 15" victory in the war of resistance and to show

appreciation to the members of the Allied Forces took place at the Wuzhou park in the Xuanwu Lake from 8 o'clock in the evening. At this evening party, paper lanterns were hung around the Xuanwu Lake, and garden lanterns were lit up. For the Allied Military soldiers, there were free service of the boat-ride and free admission to one movie from 3 o'clock in the afternoon. In addition, a cocktail party and a dance party were held and officers and men from the Allied Military and the Chinese Military were invited. At the commemoration party, Mayor Ma Chaojun expressed appreciation to the guests. In Beiping, where these ceremonies were going on since August 1945, an "August 15" commemoration party was held at Beiping Hotel from 8 o'clock in the evening. There Hu Shi declared opening of the party and also expressed his appreciation to the U.S. Military, representing the citizens of Beiping. In addition, Wang Aifen handed over the national flag and a reward money for their service to Li Zongren, the representative of the Chinese Military, and the letters from Beiping citizens and a reward money to the Allied Forces. A cocktail party hosted by the U.S. newspaper companies was also held and 50 guests from both home and abroad including Hu Shi, Yuan Dunli, an administrator of Beiping Normal University, Ma Heng, the former Principal of Beijing University, were invited. In Tianjin, the public organs were closed for the commemoration, and a dinner party was held at Lishunde Hotel from 7 o'clock. Together with this party, there were other events such as free admission to Daguangming and Pingan movie theatres at 2pm and at 7pm, dance parties and magic shows at Shenganna and other places. Also, appreciation to the Chinese Military was expressed through the offering of national flags and flowers. The cost of all these events amounted to 12 million yuan.<sup>20)</sup>

As all the examples illustrate, the ceremonies to commemorate the victory and the celebration parties were held both by the local people and by the Allied Military officers and men. The purposes of these events seem to have been to show appreciation to the support of the Allied Military and to the service of the Chinese Military, rather than to celebrate their victory over their common enemy, Japan.

On September 3, a commemoration ceremony was held at the Big Assembly Hall of National Government in the capital city, Nanjing at 9 o'clock, and more than 200 people including the members of the Party Central Committee, civil servants, and military officers attended. The main points of the speech made by Jiang Jieshi at this ceremony were as follows: 1) The purpose of the revolution is not only to defeat enemies but to build a new China based on Three People's Principles of Sun Yat-sen.; 2) The ideal of the National Revolution were both democratic rule and the government of all people; 3) Unification of China is an indispensable element to build a modern nation and such unification after the end of the war of resistance could only be realized with the cooperation of the nation as a whole. As this speech indicates, a year after the victory in the war of resistance, the main concern of Jiang Jieshi was to achieve the unification of China under the Three



People's Principles of Sun Yat-sen.

On the same day, every house in Tianjin hoisted the national flag for the commemoration as early as 7 o'clock. On this day, the Hero Shrine was open with free admission the whole day. From 10 o'clock, "September 3 Victory Day Commemoration Event" was held at the Chinese Big Theatre, and 2000 people from various fields and organizations attended this event. In his speech delivered at this event, Mayor Du Jianshi argued that people's understanding about hardship of the government during the war of resistance and their trust in the government are indispensable for the achievement of an arduous task of nation-building. In Beiping, too, a commemoration event was held at the square in front of Taihe Palace and 50,000 representatives of the citizens attended. Representatives of various corporate organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Peasant Organizations became the chief organizers and Li Zongren, the chief of Beiping field operations headquarters, Song Lianzhong, the chief of 11 war zone, and Xiong Bin, the Mayor of Beiping, attended at this event and made speeches. This event was broadcasted on the spot through Beiping Radio Station. Similar ceremonial events were held in other major cities such as Shanghai, Chongqing, Hangzhou, Hankou, Guanzhou, and Changchun.<sup>21)</sup> At these events that celebrated the first anniversary of the victory in the war of resistance, people what was mostly talked about was their ambition to work with the government for the achievement of unification of China and nation-building.

However, some newspaper articles sounded alarm. An example of this is a September 9, 1946 editorial of *Yishibao* entitled "The First Anniversary of Japan's Signing the Instrument of Surrender." According to the article, on this day a year before, people around China were in a state of frenzy, filled with voices of joy and sounds of firecrackers and drums. However, the article reports as follows:

How is the situation today, a year after that joyous day? Every hope of ours has now turned into disillusionment. Rosy dreams have been shattered. Thick-curtains of the new world seemed to have been hung in front of us suddenly, but they were not gifts from the God of Luck. People felt that they had no where to go and their emotions changed from fear to grief. We wonder where the victory is? The victory is, of course, the ultimate result of the war, but this feels like only an intermission during which the stage is prepared for new actors.

The editorial proved prophetic. Public opinion a year after this showed a turn for a more pessimistic view.

### (3) Changing Public Opinion over Victory Commemoration in 1947

The *Yishibao* editorial, entitled "Looking at China Two Years after the Victory in the War,"

published on August 15, 1947 concluded in a severe tone as if to symbolize the sufferings of China in post-war period:

Victory is like a tasty sweet and it must taste sweet. But, the one in our hands has already been rotten and is not edible. This day, two years ago, people around the country had sweet dreams, but such dreams turned out to be mere illusions. We can hear the sound of gunfire of the civil war, and relief work is carried out all over this country. No one attempts to create a beautiful world after the victory. On this great day, no one looks straight at this nation that won the war. The result is that we have misery in society, and the people are indifferent to the day of victory. How on earth can we not feel sadness?

A Similar tone characterized the editorial of *Dagongbao* “the Second Anniversary of Japan’s Surrender,” which was published on September 3:

These past two years, China and Japan switched positions as winners and losers. Today, we feel a great sense of shame. Two years ago, we were filled with joy as we defeated the enemy. When thinking about such glorious days in the past, the current gloomy situation of China makes us collapse in tears. Especially, today is a day to hold memorial services for the soldiers who died in the war of resistance, but all over the country, people’s sorrow seems to be mounting. Our soldiers won this victory at the cost of their blood and flesh. If they knew that this is the outcome of their victory, their soul would not be able to rest in peace. We, the ones who survived, feel extremely sorry for them. The nation should apologize to the deceased soldiers and the orphans and the widows who have been left behind! Today, on this second anniversary of the victory in the war, let us clear off everything thoroughly; make a strong resolution to build this country into a prosperous, strong, healthy, and joyful place. Only then can we truly comfort the spirits of the deceased soldiers.

This editorial illustrates that Chinese people, rather than being drunk with the joy of victory two years before, were filled with anxiety and fear due to turmoil of China at that time. It depicts how China could not even have a hope of recovery due to its chaotic situation of the civil war, while their surrendered enemy, Japan, clearly showed a sign of recovery.

All the public offices and schools in Tianjin were closed on this day and swimming competitions and art exhibitions were held. From 9 am, representatives of the Kuomintang Party, the government, military, and social organizations gathered at the Hero Shrine and the second enshrinement ceremony for heroes such as Jin Wenqing was held, presided by the Mayor Du Jianshi. At the Minyuan, just as a

year before, a joint celebration by representatives of various professions was held from 10 am and about 2000 people attended, including members of different public organs, police, and students. Speaking as the host of this ceremony, the Mayor of Tianjin, Du Jianshi, delivered "an address to the people" just as the year before. In this address, he stressed that "while the task of nation-building of China is hampered by subversive activities of the Chinese Communist Party, Japan, having surrendered, takes advantage of the conflicts among the Allies to persevere through hardship, to concentrate on political work, and to increase its production output; Taiwan, too, is becoming stabilized day by day." He also argued that "in order to maintain the outcome of the victory, China must concentrate the whole nation's ability and suppress rebels domestically, while playing an active role in diplomacy to prevent Japan from exerting pressure on China again."<sup>22)</sup> The government of the Republic of China did not acknowledge the basic problems in its policies, but they did recognize that nation-building and stabilization of society in China were far from successful. Even leaders of some local governments were frustrated. Besides this ceremony, the following events were conducted in the Tianjin city: an evening party held by the police headquarters, Peking opera performance at the Army Hospital to comfort injured soldiers, a performance at the swimming pool in public gymnasium No. 2, music concert performed by the Joint Youth Chorus of the police headquarters, a performance contest at the no.1 people's education center on the Wanquan street of the first district in Tianjin, and an amusement event at the YMCA.<sup>23)</sup>

A Commemoration ceremony also took place at the Zhongshan Hall in Beijing. The chairperson of the ceremony, Gu Yuxiu, also delivered the following speech and expressed a gloomy view of the situation: "Victory in the war of resistance is the result of the entire Chinese nation, government and people, regardless of rank, but the people have not received the benefit of the victory and have neither comfortable houses nor secure life. Although the defeated enemy is gradually recovering its strength, our military discipline is in shambles, and bureaucrats are corrupt, as the military officers and bureaucrats are not compensated sufficiently." Commemoration ceremonies also took place in Shanghai, Chongqing, Jinan, and Hankou.<sup>24)</sup> Although the purpose of holding such ceremonies was to enshrine the soldiers who lost their lives in the war of resistance, one cannot but notice growing criticism toward the current situation.

#### (4) 1948 - Growing Sense of Frustration

As in the previous year, the September 3, 1948 issue of *Dagongbao* gave a rather pessimistic account of the situation in an editorial entitled "Three Years After Victory."

This year, the Japanese people appear to have greeted August 15 in a cheerful mood. By contrast,

we are sunk in a gloomy mood, faced with a mountain of problems, both internal and external, and suffering from disasters both man-made and natural... Three years have passed by, just like flowing water. When we heard of our victory, we were all overjoyed, and we all thought that the future of China is bright. We cannot hold such belief now. Yet we still are the victors. If we hold on to our rights as a victor, and if we use our rights to its full extent, we can still end up being the ultimate victor. What we need is for the government and the people to get together, to refresh our will, and to make further efforts. Then the fruits of our victory would not have to be spoiled!<sup>25)</sup>

On this day, in Tianjin, a variety of celebrations were held to commemorate the third anniversary of the victory. Houses and stores raised the national flag, and at the Minyuan, a joint celebration by representatives of various professions was held from 10 am. According to the September 4 issue of *Dagongbao*, this celebration was attended by many residents, in addition to about 2000 representatives of various professions. As the celebration began, music was played, the national anthem was sung, and after three bows done according to traditional ritual, the Mayor of Tianjin Du Jianshi made the following speech.

Today is September 3, the Victory Day. All of you must be very happy and excited. This is the third time we are celebrating this day in Tianjin. Each time, our feelings are different. Our first celebration was right after the war, and all of you must have been happy that the war had ended, and looking forward then to a more stable life and work. Our second celebration was in a pretty bad mood, for we did not achieve any results in the first year, and we prayed for a better future. This year, needless to say, the situation is turning better. We are pleased and excited, for we are now preparing for a new war.<sup>26)</sup>

In spite of this empty speech, many commemoration events were held in Tianjin. These included 1) sending telegrams to former officers and soldiers in the name of this celebration gathering; 2) publication of "Address to the Tianjin Residents"; 3) publication of special commemorative issues of the newspapers; 4) spreading slogans on radio and in movie theaters; 5) street propaganda and hoisting of national flags; 6) visits to families of soldiers and war heroes; 7) presentation of flags to the military by the students; 8) free treatment at hospitals; 9) holding an evening party from 8 pm at the Hall of Culture; 10) running flower trains. The "Address to the Tianjin Residents" for this year, as in the previous year, spoke of the "destruction" of public peace by the Communists. It also pointed out that the people have been constantly suffering from inflation since the victory, but that this difficulty can be overcome by carrying out monetary reform. That the Mayor talked about monetary reform on the occasion of celebration of victory indicates the central importance of monetary reform

in government policy of the time. Also, at 9 am, representatives of the Party, the government, and the military held the ceremony of enshrining of the war-dead and the autumn festival at the Hero Shrine. At 7:30, the Youth Association held the celebration of Victory. Representatives of various occupations organized eight contingents of "thank you" missions, and showed appreciation to the former officers and soldiers.<sup>27)</sup>

In the capital Nanjing, on the same day, a commemorative event was held in the Central Grand Theater, with the attendance of more than 1000 people from various occupations. At 10 am, at the Shrine of the Fallen Heroes of the National Revolution in the Linggu Temple, Jiang Jieshi himself presided over the autumnal ceremony in honor of the war dead. In Beijing, the celebration was held in front of the Taihe Palace, as in the previous year. There, Field Commander Fu Zuoyi, made a speech, rejoicing in the defeat of the external enemy, and calling on the residents to observe the laws, and to join in with the city government to carry out its policies. "September 3 Victory Celebrations" were held also in Jinan, Baoding, Shanghai, Qingdao, Chongqing, Guilin, Changchun, and Hankou.<sup>28)</sup> In addition to these big cities, celebrations were held also in small provincial cities. For instance in the Xinhe County in the Hebei Province, a celebration was held on the square in front of the Xinhe Central National School from 12:00 noon. The program included the following: 1) singing; 2) songs and dances from Peking opera; 3) concert with Chinese violin and lute; 4) percussion concert; 5) solo Jew's harp concert; 6) martial arts; and 7) movies.<sup>29)</sup> The program basically consisted of open air entertainment, and did not include political activities designed to raise the spirits of the people. Thus, in the Republic of China three years after victory, the newspaper reports indicated that victory was already a thing of the past, as the country was faced with urgent tasks such as stabilization of the economy and restoration of order.

## Conclusion

As we have seen above, big celebrations of the Victory Day were held in the Republic of China, both on August 15 and on September 3, both nationally, and in provincial cities like Tianjin. However, as time passed, light-hearted celebration of the day as the day of victory, political independence, and escape from dependency became a thing of the past. Instead, what came to occupy the central position were religious ceremonies honoring the war-dead, and entertainment featuring songs, dances, and music. At the same time, it is evident that the harshness of the real situation came to be felt with increasing urgency. In a number of articles on the celebratory events published in *Dagongbao* and in *Yishibao*, we can discern an increasing sense of difficulty.

I would like to conclude this article by describing how these newspapers were closed down. On January 15, 1949, after Tianjin was liberated by the Communists, the CCP's Military Control

Commission took control of the newspapers, and examined the situation at each company. The Chinese Communist Party embarked on the nationalization and systematization of the mass media, having placed the Xinhua News Agency and the Broadcast Enterprise Bureau under the Party's Main News Administration. As a result, Chinese mass media were turned into instruments of mass education and guidance, based on the Party's "instrument theory" of the mass media. In February of 1949, it was decided that *Dagongbao* was to continue publication under a new title, "Jinbu Ripao (Progress Daily)." This was the first private newspaper to be issued in the new China. The reorganization of the management of *Dagongbao*, carried out under the guidance of the Tianjin City Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, resulted in a complete change in the staff, and the newspaper itself went through a major change. The journalists were forcibly replaced, and news reporting also changed dramatically.<sup>30)</sup>

As for *Yishibao*, the newspaper was given back to the *Yishibao* Company, for it was not regarded as a Kuomintang-affiliated newspaper. However, as a result of negotiation between the employers and the workers, it was concluded that continuation of the newspaper under the current management would be difficult. As a result, the company was liquidated on June 1, having sold off all facilities to the Knowledge Book Store.<sup>31)</sup> Liu Yizhi and Liu Huoxuan moved to Taiwan between 1949 and 1950, and published *Yishibao* there, but this ended in failure due to small circulation. Later attempts to reissue the paper in Hong Kong did not meet any success. In June 1952, they sought to re-issue the paper again, in Singapore this time, but due to financial problems, the newspaper stopped publication after only 4 months.

## Notes

- 1) The theme of this paper is inspired by Sato Takumi(2005), pp.91-93, 220-223. However, Sato seems to put too much stress on the influence of the Soviet Union as a reason for the choice of September 3 as the day for the commemoration of the Second Sino-Japanese War in China.
- 2) In this directive, "July 7 Commemoration of the Second Sino-Japanese War, September 9 Commemoration of the Second Sino-Japanese War, September 18 Commemoration of the Second Sino-Japanese War" were listed as the commemorative dates for the Second Sino-Japanese War. However, none of them were set aside as a holiday(*People's Daily*, 22 September, 1999) Needless to say, July 7 and September 18 are the days to commemorate the outbreak of Marco Polo Bridge Incident and Manchurian Incident respectively. And September 3 is the commemoration day of the Second Sino-Japanese War. July 7 is also they Army day and August 14 is Air Force Festival day in China.
- 3) See, for instance, Wang Chong, "Is commemoration of the 2nd Sino-Japanese War in September 3 or August 15? Its date causes the dispute", *Zhongguo Qingnianbao*, August 12, 2004. ([http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2004-08/12/content\\_1764525.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2004-08/12/content_1764525.htm))
- 4) At present, September 3 is commemorated as the day of the victory in the war of resistance in Taiwan

as well.

- 5) Ling Tongfa(1997), pp.70, 73.
- 6) When the Tianjin version of "*Dagongbao*" was forced to cease their publication, many of the workers moved to Shanghai, as the Shanghai version of "*Dagongbao*" continued to be published. Also, as the Hankou version started to be published on September 18 of that year, some people moved there, too. However, the Shanghai version of "*Dagongbao*" was discontinued on December 14, 1937 and the Hankou version was also discontinued on October 18, 1938. The Shanghai version started to be reissued as the Honkong version on August 13, 1938, though it stopped its publication with the fall of Honkong in December, 1941. The Hankou version started to be reissued as the Chongqing version on December 18 of the same year and the Guilin Version started to be published, too on March 15, 1941(the Guilin version stopped its publication with the fall of Guilin on September 12, 1944). "You kangzhan dao shengli banian lai zhi benbao" (The Eight Years of Our Newspaper - From the war of Resistance to Victory), *Dagongbao* (Tianjin Version) December 1, 1945.
- 7) "*Dagongbao*" was published by People's Publishing House in 1983 (They did so by taking pictures of originals and printed them) There are 164 volumes as a total. These volumes include the Hankou version (from September 18, 1937 to October 17, 1938) and the Chongqing version (from December 1, 1938 to November 30, 1945). "*Yishibao*," on the other hand, was published in August, 2004 as a joint-work of Nankai University Publishing House, Tianjin Ancient Books Publishing House, and Tianjin Educational Publishing House. (For this publication, they took pictures of original "*Yishibao*" stored at Tianjin Municipal Library and printed them out.) There are 136 volumes altogether. In this newly printed version, the issues from August 1938 to November 1945 are lacking. I have not examined the Chongqing version of "*Yishibao*". The Shanghai version of "*Dagongbao*" started to be reissued a month before the Tianjin version was reissued.
- 8) On these three people, see Tianjin City Committee Wenshi Ziliao Committee of Chinese Peoples Political Conservative Conference(2001).
- 9) Zhou Yu(1993) , p.60.
- 10) Kishi Toshihiko(1999), p.218.
- 11) Liu Huoxuan accepted the offer from the editorial department of *Yishibao* and started to work after he graduated from Nankai University in 1928. With the reform Liu Huoxuan conducted, *Yishibao*'s circulation dramatically increased to 35,000 in 1931, and *Yishibao* became a joint-stock company. In 1934, with the death of the first president of this company, Liu Jingqing, Liu Huoxuan succeeded his post as the President and also became the chief of the editorial board. However, in 1936, he resigned from the company and became both the professor of Yanjing University in Beiping and the director of Journalism department. In 1942, He was sent by Kuomintang Central Propaganda Department to the United States and Europe to study Western newspaper company, and he succeeded in reissuing "*Yishibao*" in 1946, after he returned from abroad. However, he left the company a year after that and moved to Shanghai.
- 12) Yu Zhihou(2003), p.103.
- 13) *Yishibao*, 30 July, 1946
- 14) *Yishibao*, 3 August and 4 August, 1946

- 15) Toshihiko Kishi(2006), pp.84-85.
- 16) *Dagongbao(Chongqing version)*, 17 August 1945
- 17) *Dagongbao(Chongqing version)*, 2 September, 3 September, 4 September, 1945
- 18) *Dagongbao(Chongqing version)*, 10 September, 1945
- 19) *Dagongbao(Tianjin version)*, 14 August, 1946
- 20) *Dagongbao(Tianjin version)*, 15 August and 16 August, 1946
- 21) *Yishibao*, 3 September and 4 September, 1946
- 22) *Dagongbao(Tianjin version)*, 3 September, 1947
- 23) *Dagongbao(Tianjin version)*, 3 September, 1947
- 24) *Dagongbao(Tianjin version)*, 4 September, 1947
- 25) *Dagongbao(Tianjin version)*, 3 September, 1948
- 26) *Dagongbao(Tianjin version)*, 4 September, 1948
- 27) *Yishibao*, 3 September and 4 September, 1948; *Dagongbao(Tianjin version)*, 3 September, 1948
- 28) *Yishibao*, 4 September, 1948
- 29) *Yishibao*, 3 September, 1948; *Dagongbao(Tianjin version)*, 4 September, 1948
- 30) Kishi Toshihiko(1999), p.223.
- 31) Yu Zhihou(2003), p.104.

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