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RE-COLONIZING SHANGHAI:
THE JAPANESE SETTLEMENT IN A CHINESE TREATY PORT, 1895-1937

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For Xiaobei

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the history of the Japanese community in Shanghai between 1895 and 1937. Situated at the intersection of the study of Japan's empire and overseas expansion, imperialism in China, the urban history of treaty ports, and the study of modern Shanghai, this project offers a fresh perspective on Japan's ascent as a colonial power and its impact on the established imperial order in East Asia. It moves beyond the simplistic portrayal of Japan as a late entrant into China's treaty-port system with an aim to subvert the "semi-colonial" or "transnational colonial" structures dominated by Western powers—a narrative that risks reading history backwards from Japan's full-scale war efforts after 1937. Instead, it explores how the Japanese integrated themselves into the treaty-port configuration while reappropriating its existing institutions. Throughout the early twentieth century, Japanese presence in Shanghai and the city's evolution as a modern cosmopolis profoundly influenced each other. Specifically, this study investigates the interlinkage of the Japanese challenge to British control over municipal governance, their response to the rise of Chinese nationalism, and their quotidian experience that was constantly shaped by the built environment of the host city. Central to my analysis is how ordinary Japanese settlers negotiated their position in Shanghai's International Settlement, and how their contestation of the treaty port's entrenched political and racial hierarchy eventually led to a stronger alignment with their state power, which ultimately compromised the Settlement's tradition of self-governance and inter-imperial cooperation.

This project employs a synthetic analysis that weaves together local, national and transnational perspectives to illuminate key aspects of East Asia's modern transformation, including the conceptualization and practice of imperial dominance, nationalist resistance,

community-building, state-society relations, and the development of urban administration, showing how these dynamics interacted with each other in shaping the political, social, and spatial fabric of treaty-port colonialism. To this end, it draws upon a diverse array of sources in multiple languages, including documents from the Shanghai Municipal Archives, the National Archives of Japan, and the archives of the British Foreign Office and the U.S. Department of State; it also combines a broad selection of newspapers and periodicals from both Shanghai and the imperial metropolises, as well as guidebooks, local gazetteers, police records, personal writings and memoirs, to provide a multifaceted and balanced view essential to understanding Japanese interaction with the treaty-port regime.

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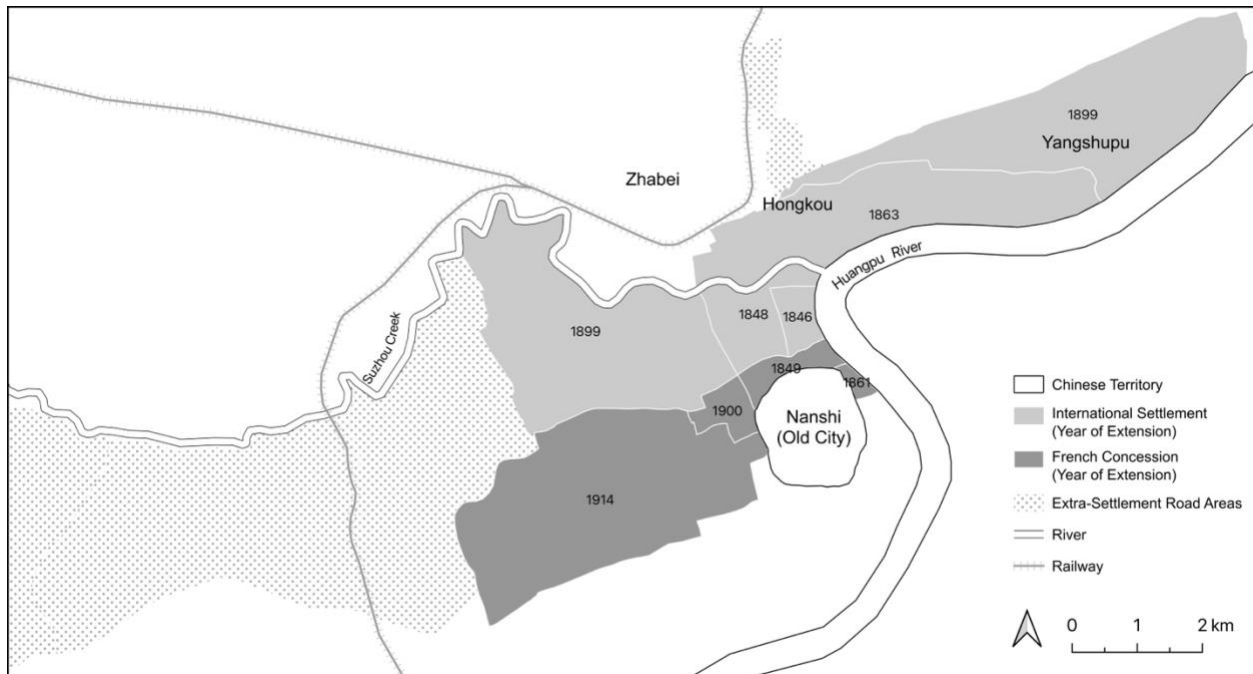
Introduction

Opening the December 1, 1934, issue of the *Shanghai nichinichi shinbun*—a leading Japanese-language newspaper in Shanghai, which had recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary—and turning to page nine, one encounters a motley collection of news stories capturing the interests and concerns of its readership at the time. Prominently featured at the top right is the ongoing debate between the Japanese and the Shanghai Municipal Council regarding the International Settlement’s public education system and municipal financial support for schools run by various national communities. Below it is a notice about an upcoming public assembly to deliberate on institutional reform of the Japanese Residents’ Corporation awaiting approval from its home government. At the center of the page is an article spotlighting the surge in anti-Japanese sentiments in Arizona, marked by intensifying land disputes and the shocking bomb attack of a Japanese home, alongside the news that two active-duty admirals would visit Shanghai to educate local settlers about the Imperial Japanese Navy’s newest policies concerning the international disarmament initiative. Adjacent to these pieces, however, is a lighthearted essay that introduces seasonal foods and flowers of December in Japanese and Chinese traditions. Further down, one finds accounts of the commendation of 746 naval officers for distinguished service in the battle of Shanghai two years earlier; Japanese diplomatic protest against Hunan provincial government’s granting of a monopoly over antimony production to a British company; and the arrest of two Taiwanese individuals by the local Japanese consular police on charges of gold smuggling. Concluding the page at the bottom right is an article

detailing the municipal traffic committee's latest efforts to revamp traffic regulations and mitigate congestion on the Settlement's streets.¹

This assemblage of topics, ranging from inter-state politics to local governance, communal affairs, and quotidian aspects of life, offers a snapshot of the layered world as seen through the perspective of the largest settler community in East Asia's foremost cosmopolitan center. By this time, twenty-five thousand Japanese lived in Shanghai, a figure dwarfed by the city's 3.5 million Chinese inhabitants but that far outnumbered any other foreign group. Since its opening to foreign trade in the mid-nineteenth century, Shanghai had experienced spectacular growth of population and wealth, transforming from a regional commercial hub to a "global city," while developing a distinctive landscape of urban administration marked by the coexistence of three separate municipalities. The majority of Shanghai's Japanese population resided in the International Settlement, an 8.6-square-mile stretch of land nestled along the banks of the Huangpu River. Renowned as the premier foreign place in modern China, this quasi-autonomous municipality was governed by the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC), a local body with an international façade yet firmly under British control from its inception. Approximately a third of the Japanese community found home outside the Settlement's northern boundary, in the extra-settlement road area, which belonged to the Chinese city but fell under the SMC's control. The remainder were scattered across other parts of the city, including the Chinese district and the French Concession (Map 0.1).

¹ *SNN*, December 1, 1934, morning edition.



Map 0.1. Treaty-port Shanghai. (Source: Made by author using QGIS)

From the moment the Japanese first made their presence in Shanghai seven decades earlier, the city had assumed a spectrum of meanings to them that continually evolved. In the early days, it stood as a “showcase of Western civilizations” (*seiyō bunmei no tenjiba* 西洋文明の展示場), a window through which late-Tokugawa and early-Meiji voyagers observed the outside world. It functioned as a crucial gateway for Japanese commercial inroads into the Yangzi Valley and the Chinese hinterland. It also served as a microcosm of the “racial competition” (*jinshū no kyōsō* 人種の競争) that was unfolding on a global scale, and earned the moniker “Demon Capital” (*mato* 魔都), replete with perils, pleasures, and prospects at once. Above all, it had been a place where tens of thousands of Japanese men and women found a home and forged their livelihoods. All these different facets of Shanghai stemmed from its status as a treaty port, a colonial contact zone where the Japanese encountered and engaged in a tumultuous interplay of regional, national, and international forces. Following its victory in the

First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), Japan acquired full treaty privileges in China, including extraterritorial rights—the legal foundation enabling the emergence of foreign enclaves on Chinese soil—and the entitlement to establish its own concessions in Chinese treaty ports. In Shanghai, the crown jewel of the treaty port system, this right remained unexercised; instead, the Japanese chose to operate within the thriving International Settlement—the “Model Settlement” in which Anglo-American Shanghailanders had taken pride—under the premise of their social and political parity with its Western constituents. Traditional narratives of Shanghai’s rise as a modern cosmopolis typically foreground the Sino-Western dynamic, a paradigm epitomized by the city’s nickname, “Paris of the Orient,” while the significant Japanese influence has been mentioned only in passing or relegated to footnotes. Previous scholarship on local Japanese presence, on the other hand, has tended to perpetuate the notion of Shanghai as a “mosaic” city, portraying the Japanese as a self-contained community existing in relative isolation from the host society.

This dissertation addresses these historiographical gaps by examining the development of Shanghai’s Japanese community with a focus on its interactions with the Settlement regime and the treaty port’s administrative infrastructure. It argues that, throughout the early twentieth century, the Japanese community and treaty-port Shanghai profoundly engaged and reshaped one another. Central to my analysis is how ordinary settlers continually negotiated their position in the treaty-port order, and how they attempted to “recolonize” the city through reappropriating and remolding, rather than subverting, its existing colonial institutions—particularly those of the Settlement—with which they shared a symbiotic relationship well into the 1930s. In the end, their perception of the Settlement’s political and administrative failure to cope with Chinese nationalism, couple with their frustration with the British-dominated racial and social hierarchy,

prompted their closer alignment with Japanese state power, which, in turn, compromised the Settlement's tradition of self-governance. This final phase, however, should not overshadow the decades of Japanese endeavor to integrate into and transform the treaty-port framework, a delicate task involving negotiation, petitioning, alliance-building, and the employment of various other strategies. Through a narrative that intertwines local, national, and transnational perspectives, this dissertation explores how the treaty-port world operated at the grassroots level as “a network of multiple overlapping imperialisms,”² and how treaty rights were exercised on the ground, and how treaty-port life was experienced in ways that often obscured the divide between the “colonizer” and the “colonized.” In answering these questions, it presents a fluid, multi-layered portrayal of power and identity that compels us to rethink colonial dominance, nationalist resistance, community-building, and urban administration as they were interconnected in the context of modern East Asia and beyond.

Locating Shanghai in the Japanese empire/diaspora

This study situates the Japanese presence in Shanghai within the broader context of modern Japan's overseas expansion, a field of study that has witnessed significant development in recent years. For a long period after World War II, colonization (*shokumin* 植民) and migration (*imin* 移民) were treated as separate and contrasting phenomena in modern Japanese history. *Shokumin* unfolded within the empire's geographical limits or its sphere of influence—namely, East Asia and Southeast Asia—where Japanese “colonizers” as an exogenous minority possessed the power to dominate, suppress, and assimilate the indigenous majority. In contrast, *imin* refers to the movement of Japanese “migrants” outside the imperial borders, to regions such as the

² Bickers and Henriot, “Introduction,” in *New Frontiers*, 2.

Americas and Hawaii, where they were subject to discrimination, exclusion, and pressures towards assimilation. This cognitive divide largely stemmed from the post-war policies implemented by the Allies to dismantle the Japanese colonial empire, notably the mass repatriation project designed to remove the human remnants of the empire and match each individual with their appropriate national territory, a process that produced a distinct demarcation between regions that were and were not former Japanese colonies.³ By the end of the twentieth century, however, Japanese historians began to move beyond this dichotomy, exploring colonial and migration activities together through a comparative or integrated framework, and uncovering the historical conflation between them in both ideology and practice.⁴ Many of them focus on the acts of “international movement/relocation” (*kokusai idō* 国際移動), a notion that transcends imperial geography, to excavate the lived experience of overseas Japanese at individual and communal levels. Shiode Hiroyuki, for example, adopts the term “border-crosser” (*ekkyōsha* 越境者)—echoing the renowned prewar Japanese scholar Yanaihara Tadao’s critique of the colonizer/migrant binary—to present a continuous spectrum of various overseas Japanese communities’ engagement with the host societies, particularly their impact on the local political landscape,⁵ which is a central concern shared by the present study.

In Anglophone scholarship, too, the *shokumin/imin* divide has largely disintegrated, primarily due to the rising popularity of the concept of “settler colonialism” over recent decades.

³ Watt, *When Empire Comes Home*. Shanghai, from this viewpoint, was unequivocally positioned on the colonization side of the binary. See Sheng, “Homeward Bound: The Postwar Repatriation of Japanese Civilians In Shanghai, 1945-1948.”

⁴ See, for example, Kimura, “Kindai Nihon no imin shokumin katsudō to chūkansō”; Ueno, *Mekishiko Enomoto shokumin: Enomoto Takeaki no risō to genjitsu*; Okabe, *Umi wo watatta Nihonjin*; Yoneyama and Kawahara, eds., *Nikkeijin no keiken to kokusai idō: zaigai Nihonjin, imin no kingendaishi*; Shiode, *Ekkyōsha no seijishi: Ajia Taiheiyō ni okeru Nihonjin no imin to shokumin*; Kimura, *Kindai Nihon no imin to kokka chiiki shakai*.

⁵ Shiode, *Ekkyōsha no seijishi: Ajia Taiheiyō ni okeru Nihonjin no imin to shokumin*. With a nearly all-inclusive scope covering Hokkaido, the Pacific world, Manchuria, Korea, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia, Shiode’s study however leaves out Shanghai and other treaty-port settlements.

Since the introduction of this notion in the 1990s, there has been a growing scholarly consensus that settler colonialism implicates a range of conditions related to yet distinct from those of colonialism and migration.⁶ Early theorists of settler colonialism like Patrick Wolfe, who defines it as a process of replacing and eliminating, rather than exploiting, the indigenous population driven by a quest for land, originally limited its usage to the conquest of the New World by white settlers.⁷ However, the past two decades have seen broadened application of the term to include a diverse range of manifestations in twentieth-century Asia and Africa, featuring new defining elements such as institutional structures of privilege that separated the settler from the native.⁸ Historians of modern Japan have been at the forefront of this academic trend, reinterpreting Japanese colonialism from settler-centered perspectives. These new narratives, which have further expanded the scope of settler colonialism as a historical phenomenon and an analytical lens, fall into two main streams. The first group of scholars, represented by Jun Uchida and Emer O'Dwyer, delve into the operational mechanism of Japanese colonialism at local and regional level—in Korea and Dalian, respectively—highlighting the pivotal roles played by local settlers.⁹ They provide crucial testing cases for the classical models of settler colonialism by underscoring the agency of local settlers (and their collaborators), their conflicts and collaboration with the colonizing metropole, and the reach and limits of the colonial authorities. The second strand is marked by a critical engagement with the transpacific frame to explore the overarching logics behind Japanese ventures abroad both inside and outside the empire: for Azuma Eiichiro, it was the notion of “borderless empire” that propelled a continual search of frontier for the Japanese to

⁶ Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*.

⁷ Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology*.

⁸ Elkins and Pedersen, eds., *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century*; Cavanagh and Veracini, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*.

⁹ Uchida, *Brokers of Empire*; O'Dwyer, *Significant Soil*.

explore and settle free from the constraints of racism and exclusion; for Sidney Lu, it was the Malthusian claim of overpopulation that motivated a relentless quest for additional space and resources.¹⁰ Taken together, both modes of research have extended the scholarly turn since the 1990s towards an emphasis on the human aspects and the social and cultural constructs of Japanese empire, and challenged conventional political categories associated with Japanese colonialism and migration.

Re-colonizing Shanghai builds on these lines of inquiry to enrich our understanding of overseas Japanese experiences in the modern era. It does not seek to define the Japanese settlement in Shanghai as any one of the paradigms mentioned above; instead, it shows how this community presents a peculiar case of overseas Japanese presence that, in terms of its power relation and modes of interaction with the host society, simultaneously displayed traits of colonial, migration, and settler colonial formations.¹¹ The unique situation of Japanese settlers in Shanghai fundamentally derived from the discrepancy between their privileged legal status and their disadvantaged social and political position within the Settlement. Extraterritorial rights shielded them from all legal regimes, Chinese or foreign, except that of their home government, and as treaty power citizens, they were a constituent element of the Settlement's political and administrative structure. In reality, however, they faced continual suppression and marginalization within this British-ruled municipality. This ontological ambiguity was especially pronounced among the middle- and lower-class settlers—petty entrepreneurs, small merchants, company rank-and-file, shopkeepers, and laborers—who made up the bulk of the local Japanese community. Whereas their socio-economic standings, everyday conditions, and more

¹⁰ Azuma, *In Search of Our Frontier*; Lu, *The Making of Japanese Settler Colonialism*.

¹¹ I use the term “settler” not to draw parallels with its meanings in other historical or scholarly contexts, but as a practical translation of the relatively neutral terms *kyoryūmin* (居留民) and *zairyū hōjin* (在留邦人) used by the settlers themselves.

importantly, their perceived position within the treaty port's racial hierarchy rendered them typical "petty urbanites" scarcely distinguishable from their Chinese counterparts, their treaty privileges fueled their aspirations for, and a sense of entitlement to, a greater share of power in the treaty port's colonial configuration. If colonization, as opposed to colonialism, designates the process of territorial acquisition and establishing control over a physical space,¹² the settler-driven Japanese enterprise to recolonize Shanghai is distinctively marked by its focus on the city's existing colonial framework and institutional built-environment. This project, as I will show, did not have a unified plan or predetermined agenda. It was rather carried out through fragmented and piecemeal approaches derived from divergent interests and competing voices within the Japanese community. Underlying this process were a long-standing ambivalence among the Japanese settlers towards the Settlement regime and their constant oscillation between two strategic choices: to integrate more fully into the Settlement structure or to carve out their own, autonomous (yet marginal) niche within it.

The discourses and practices of assimilation—whether civic, cultural, spiritual, or institutional—remain a key theme in many excellent studies on Japanese empire and diaspora produced in recent years. While the imperial boundary continues to serve as a crucial indicator of whether the Japanese found themselves on the giving or receiving end of assimilation, this demarcation has been increasingly questioned by historians who have reevaluated the effectiveness and limitation of various assimilation projects through transnational and comparative lens.¹³ Throughout their endeavor to reshape the treaty-port order, Japanese settlers in Shanghai consistently faced the pressure to conform to, if not assimilate into, its entrenched

¹² Osterhammel, *Colonialism*, 4.

¹³ See, for example, Azuma, *Between Two Empires*; Ruoff, *Imperial Japan at Its Zenith*; Fujitani, *Race for Empire*; Uchida, *Brokers of Empire*; Henry, *Assimilating Seoul*; Chatani, *Nation-Empire*; Sewell, *Constructing Empire*; Jin, *Citizens, Immigrants, and the Stateless*; Shimizu, *Overseas Shinto Shrines*.

social and political “norms,” partly due to the anxiety to set themselves apart from the Chinese populace in Western eyes. However, they consciously navigated a balance between leveraging their cultural and national particularities in colonial urban politics and promoting their image as integral members of the (“civilized”) imperial club and as adept citizens of a modern cosmopolis. By looking at these dilemmas and challenges experienced by the settlers, this study contributes to a fuller picture of the survival strategies and identity formation and manipulation of overseas Japanese communities.

Another key factor that contributed to the peculiar conditions of Japanese settlers in Shanghai was the surprisingly weak presence of the home government in their lives until the 1930s. Although Japan’s empire-builders since the Meiji era viewed expansion into the Asian continent as a core mission, Shanghai, for all its prominence as an international hub and a conduit for economic penetration into China, had never been the target of the Japanese state’s efforts to export settlers, as those witnessed in Hawaii, Americas, Korea, and Manchuria across time. This, to be sure, can be explained by the urban and commercial nature of Shanghai as a treaty port that precluded agricultural settlement. Yet, whereas the expansion of large Japanese commercial, banking, and industrial establishments in Shanghai was lauded in the metropole as a testament to Japan’s ascent on the global stage, state support for ordinary, self-made settlers remained minimal until much later. When the anti-Japanese boycotts of 1919 caused severe hardship for local businesses, Consul General Ariyoshi Akira viewed it as an opportunity to wipe out low-quality small dealers to pave way for future Japanese prosperity in the city.¹⁴ The local Japanese Residents’ Corporation, despite its close oversight by consular authorities, was repeatedly denied governmental financial aid until the 1920s. Moreover, this community was

¹⁴ Banno, “Japanese Industrialists and Merchants and the Anti-Japanese Boycotts in China, 1919-1928,” 315.

persistently beset by the potential social stigma brought to it by its “rowdy elements.” Settlers in Shanghai, like their counterparts in other colonial settings, developed a siege mentality and an enduring feeling of insecurity. This mindset, however, stemmed not solely from their location in a stronghold of Western influence and a hotbed of Chinese nationalism. It also resulted from a lasting fear of being abandoned by the imperial metropole as a result of the latter’s appeasement towards Chinese and Western interests or pursuit of other expansionist agenda. This anxiety intensified throughout the 1920s and peaked in 1931 during the Manchurian Crisis. As Japan aggressively expanded its interests and safeguarded its “lifeline” in Manchuria, sparking anti-Japanese sentiments in Shanghai and across China, the Shanghai community lamented its sufferings as the “sacrifice of national policy” (*kokusaku no gisei* 国策の犠牲). These experiences and mentalities bespoke the dubious place of the Shanghai community in the Japanese empire (or informal empire, as we will discuss soon), a vague positioning that was not so much peripheral as liminal or interstitial.¹⁵

1931-1932 indeed marked a turning point in the Shanghai community’s relations with state power as well as its self-perception vis-à-vis the empire, but it should not be understood as a sharp rupture. The Imperial Japanese Navy’s intervention into the Chinese boycott movement and the bloody war in Shanghai in early 1932 drastically shifted the treaty port’s local balance of power and East Asia’s geopolitical terrain. Thereafter, local settlers increasingly looked to military supremacy as a solution to their predicament and cooperated with the naval forces to turn part of the Settlement into a “Japanese Concession.” Mass participation in Japan’s imperial

¹⁵ In this regard, too, the experiences of Japanese settlers in Shanghai distinctly set them apart from the conventional image of colonizer, aligning them more closely with various marginalized groups operating on the geographical or social fringes of the empire, whether or not self-consciously acting as imperial agents. This topic has been explored by a number of recent studies that show the porous and fluid nature of Japan’s imperial border. See, for example, Ambaras, *Japan’s Imperial Underworlds*; Matsuda, *Liminality of the Japanese Empire*; Shirane, *Imperial Gateway*.

expansion and the militaristic/fascist turn of the Japanese society in the 1930s and wartime period have attracted enduring scholarly attention.¹⁶ During this period, Settlers in Shanghai growingly saw their fate linked to the empire's political and military penetration into China, and they became actively involved in the navy's aggressive challenge to the Settlement's status quo. However, in pursuing enhanced security and greater influence over municipal governance, their vision was primarily local, rarely framing their quests as part of Japan's "manifest destiny" of overseas adventure. Nor did they display a consistent enthusiasm for any broader imperial agenda—despite their participation in the navy's ideological campaign to promote the vaguely-defined "maritime spirit" (Chapter 5). Instead, when demanding better police protection, the suppression of Chinese "terrorists," and more seats on the municipal council, they continued to justify these demands by invoking their treaty rights to live and thrive in Shanghai, while portraying themselves as safeguarding the Settlement and foreign establishments in general from Chinese threats. It was therefore an effort to defend, rather than expand, their interests within the treaty-port framework—a rhetoric that the Japanese state had to echo to vindicate its high-handed intrusion into the local order. The settlers' paramount concern was always the potential threats from the local Chinese nationalist movement, which took on a specific anti-Japanese tone from the late 1920s and fostered in them an intensifying sense of victimhood. But throughout the prewar years, it was the (politically weakened) Settlement authorities that they consistently held responsible for this victimhood. Where they saw the Settlement regime falling short of its duty to afford their adequate protection, they sought to compensate by resorting to their state power.

¹⁶ For example, see Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan*; Young, *Japan's Total Empire*; Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*; Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms*; Wilson, *The Manchurian Crisis and Japanese Society*; Ruoff, *Imperial Japan at its Zenith*; Culver, *Glorify the Empire*; Yamashita, *Daily Life in Wartime Japan*; Chatani, *Nation-Empire*.

The China problem, the Shanghai problem

The centrality of the treaty-port framework in Japanese settlers' experiences is a manifestation of the specific manner in which foreign interference and influence unfolded in China in modern times. The classical Leninist term "semi-colonialism" saw a resurgence in scholarly interest since the 1980s with Jürgen Osterhammel's formulation of the first theoretical model to test the Chinese case.¹⁷ Thereafter, historians have critically engaged this concept to reveal the "incomplete and fragmentary nature" of China's colonial structure and, following Osterhammel's call, to map "where, when, how and to what effect" foreign forces "impinged on Chinese life."¹⁸ The definition of semi-colonialism, however, remains elusive in the Chinese context, because it was based on a "loosely interwoven web of arrangements" that collectively formed the treaty system,¹⁹ which, as Robert Bickers and Christian Henriot argue, "effectively replaced the state as the defining organisational framework for East Asia's international relations."²⁰ Thus, one of main critiques of semi-colonialism is that it risks obscuring the local nuances of foreign powers' operation. To address this, Ruth Rogaski adopts the term "hypercolony" to depict Tianjin, emphasizing how the presence of multiple imperialisms influenced both the Chinese and the imperialists.²¹ Studying the Shanghai Municipal Council, Isabella Jackson deploy the concept of "transnational colonialism" to capture the cooperation of colonial municipal staff "at a personal, professional and institutional—not an international—level."²²

¹⁷ Osterhammel, "Semi-Colonialism and Informal Empire in Twentieth Century China: Toward a Framework of Analysis."

¹⁸ Shi, *The Lure of the Modern*, 34; Goodman, "Improvisations on a Semicolonial Theme, or, How to Read a Celebration of Transnational Urban Community."

¹⁹ Bryan Goodman and David S. G. Goodman, "Introduction," in *Twentieth-Century Colonialism and China*, 9.

²⁰ Bickers and Henriot, "Introduction," in *New Frontiers*, 5.

²¹ Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*, 11.

²² Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 8.

Semi-colonialism is frequently paired with the notion of “informal empire,” which also found its distinct manifestation in China through the treaty system, with China nominally retaining its sovereignty. Shanghai is often cited as a quintessential example of the British informal imperialism. Yet, the applicability of this term is also contentious, particularly regarding the extent to which its original model—Victorian imperialism of free trade—translates to the Chinese conditions, where the significance of gunboat politics and institutional elements such as concession municipalities and the maritime customs service cannot be understated, without inflating its theoretical boundaries.²³ Moreover, if the term suggests a form of indirect or partial dominance, it might intersect with the Gramscian notion of cultural and ideological hegemony;²⁴ after all, the significant influence of foreign ideas, values, and aesthetics in the shaping of Chinese notions of “modern” cannot be denied, even though the one-sided Westernization narrative has been long discarded.²⁵ However, the framework of informal imperialisms in China remains important in at least one aspect, its “open door” characteristics that allowed the coexistence, competition, and cooperation of a pluralism of foreign forces. And this is arguably what mattered most from the contemporary Japanese viewpoint. A fundamental quest of modern Japan was to assert parity with Western powers through a mimetic project of empire-building; central to this endeavor was to claim the same rights and privileges held by

²³ See, for example, Mclean, “Finance and ‘Informal Empire’ before the First World War”; Hevia, *English Lesson*; Brunero, *Britain’s Imperial Cornerstone in China*; Brady and Brown, eds., *Foreigners and Foreign Institutions in Republican China*; Van de Den, *Breaking with the Past*. Another important critique comes from the social and cultural examination of British informal empire in China with a focus on the settler (as opposed to “expatriate”) community, which has complicated our understanding of the tensions between the imperial metropole and its local agents and collaborators. See Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*; Bickers, *Britain in China*; Bickers, “Shanghaianders: The Formation and Identity of the British Settler Community in Shanghai, 1843—1937.” As Robert Bickers points out, the post-1927 period was marked by the British state’s efforts to dismantle its informal empire in China by “nationalizing” Sino-British relations away from local settlers’ control.

²⁴ Thompson, “Informal Empire?”

²⁵ See, for example, Lee, *Shanghai Modern*; Cochran, *Inventing Nanjing Road*; Shi, *The Lure of the Modern*; Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*; Mittler, *A Newspaper for China?*; Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor*; Bergère, *Shanghai*; Roskam, *Improvvised City*.

other “civilized” nations in China. The First Sino-Japanese War not only solidified Japan’s status as a full-fledged treaty power, but also broadened the treaty system’s scope, such as the opening of additional ports and the granting of foreign rights to establish industrial facilities on Chinese territory, benefits that were extended to all powers via the most-favored-national clause, thus receiving a welcoming gesture from the Westerners; in the meantime, Japanese participation complicated the imperial balance of power in East Asia and posed a threat to the “open door” arrangement.

Historians of modern Japan were among the first to study the operation of informal empire(s) in China,²⁶ but the prevailing understanding is that Japan was forced into this system, which ran counter to its long-term ambitions for political dominance and territorial control over China.²⁷ Early expressions of these ambitions included Japan’s intention to seize the Liaodong Peninsula in 1895 and Amoy in 1900, and the thwarting of these attempts by other powers averted an all-out “Scramble for China.” In the early decades of the twentieth century, then, Japan switched to commercial and industrial means to expand its influence in China while coexisting with other foreign interests, a policy that saw considerable success. This shift occurred against a backdrop of various domestic and international contexts, including the Anglo-Japanese alliance, the US’s advocacy for Chinese territorial integrity, the growth of Japanese industry, the development of democratic politics and civic bureaucracy, and the conciliatory “internationalist” diplomacy pursued by the Japanese Foreign Ministry. However, “formal” imperial ambitions never faded away, as evidenced by Japan’s acquisition of the Kwantung

²⁶ Duus, Myers, and Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937*.

²⁷ See, for example, Jansen, *Japan and China*; Duus, Myers, and Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937*; Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism 1895-1945*; Beasley, “The Sino-Japanese Commercial Treaty of 1896”; Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention*; Paine, *The Japanese Empire*. One of the widely accepted explanations is that the geopolitical stakes concerning China were much higher for Japan, which operated in its “backyard”, than for Western powers.

leasehold in 1905, its seizure of German colonial territories in Qingdao in 1914, and then notorious Twenty-One Demands in 1915. What happened after 1931, therefore, was both a continuation and departure from previous Japanese approaches to the ever-present “China problem” (*Shina mondai* 支那問題). How do we explain the fact that just when Japan was emerging as a major economic power in China under the treaty system, it turned to an aggressive form of imperial expansion that eventually resulted in the collapse of that system? Peter Duus argues that it was because the system was already in crisis under Chinese nationalist attack.²⁸ Barbara Brooks emphasizes the institutional and ideological failure of the Japanese Foreign Ministry in retaining its jurisdiction over China affairs.²⁹ Scholars like Louise Young will likely point to the social and cultural momentum that swept across the Japanese empire.

The grand geopolitical narrative outlined above forms a crucial background of the story presented below. However, it tends to obscure an important local dimension of Japanese involvement in the treaty system: how settlers engaged and contested the treaty port as a structure of urban governance, and how they experienced treaty-port life.³⁰ This study explores these themes not only to shed new light on the “multilayeredness” of the semi-colonial conditions, but also to demonstrate how the treaty port constantly changed as a form of urban space and administration. The treaty port was inherently unstable due to the discrepancy between its legal configuration on one hand, and its political and social realities on the other. Towards the

²⁸ Duus, “Introduction,” in *Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937*, xxiv-xxv.

²⁹ Brooks, *Japan's Imperial Diplomacy*.

³⁰ The vast literature on Japanese informal empire in China has so far largely concentrated on Japanese commercial and industrial presence. Previous discussion on Japanese participation in treaty-port administration mostly focuses on exclusive concessions in Tianjin and Hankou, while Japanese roles in Shanghai's International Settlement remains underexplored. See, for example, Rogaski, *Hygienic modernity*; Ōsato and Son, eds., *Chūgoku ni okeru Nihon sokai: Jūkei, Kankō, Kōshū, Shanhai*; Singaravélou, *Tianjin Cosmopolis*; Wang and Wu, *Hankou wuguo zujie*; Cheng, *Tianjin Riben zujie yu Riben juliumintuan*. Fujita Hiroyuki's study presents a scope closest to that of this dissertation and lays down an essential groundwork upon which this dissertation builds, but his analysis primarily concentrates on the 1930s. See Fujita, *Kyoryūmin no Shanhai: Kyōdō sokai gyōsei wo meguru Nichi-Ei no kyōryoku to tairitsu*.

latter part of this dissertation, we will see how the Japanese increasingly challenged the Settlement framework through external institutions such as consular police and naval force. It might be tempting to interpret this shift as merely a local manifestation of larger geopolitical dynamics—Japan’s renewed aggression in China and its confrontation with the Anglo-American “existing order”—a prelude to Japan’s occupation of Chinese Shanghai after 1937 and its full invasion of the Settlement in 1941. However, the everyday contestation over the treaty port’s urban politics followed a different logic, entailing its own modes of interactions and a distinctive set of strategies. This study avoids reading history backwards from 1937; rather, it depicts Japanese recolonization of Shanghai as a continuous yet non-linear project that drove the involvement of both the settler community and its host society.

In doing so, this dissertation also draws on an extensive body of Shanghai studies, which has seen a booming trend in the past thirty years, allowing for an increasingly balanced and integrated perspective that considers both foreign impact and Chinese agency;³¹ however, I make an intervention by examining the overlooked Japanese influence over the city’s modern transformation. Moreover, a group of Japanese, Chinese, and Western scholars have laid down the groundwork for this project by tracing economic and social development of the local Japanese community;³² my study takes these discussions further by weaving this community into

³¹ Of particular relevance to my work is the scholarship that examines the interaction among the city’s foreign and native spaces, institutions, and communities. The most important ones include Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China*; Henriot, *Shanghai, 1927-1937*; Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*; Goodman, *Native Place, City and Nation*; Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*; Lee, *Shanghai Modern*; Bickers, *Empire made me*; Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor*; Bergère, *Shanghai*; Ma et al., *Shanghai gongong zujie chengshi guanli yanjiu*; Mou, *Cong weidi yuge dao dongfang Bali*; Zhang, *Jindai Shanghai chengshi yanjiu*; Henriot, *Scythe and the city*; Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*; Roskam, *Improvised City*.

³² See, for example, Peattie, “Japanese Treaty Port Settlements in China, 1895-1937”; Fogel, “Integrating into Chinese Society”; Kojima and Ma, eds., *Shanghai no nihonjin shakai*; Takatsuna and Chen, *Riben qiaomin zai Shanghai*; Fogel, “‘Shanghai-Japan’”; Henriot, “‘Little Japan’ in Shanghai”; Chen, *Xunfang Dongyang ren*; Chen, *Shanghai Riqiao shehui shenghuo shi*; Fogel, “Prostitutes and Painters”; Takatsuna, “Kokusai toshi” *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*; Fujita, “‘Kokusai toshi’ Shanghai ni okeru Nihonjin Kyoryūmin no ichi”; Fogel, *Maiden Yoyage*; Wada et al., *Shanghai no Nihonjin shakai to media*; Fujita, *Kyoryūmin no Shanghai*; Yokoyama, *Shanghai no Nihonjingai, Honkyū*; Yamamura, *Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai no keisei to tenkai*.

the sociopolitical fabric of Shanghai as a treaty port, a “global city,” and a nexus of local, national, and transnational dynamics. In addressing the “treaty port” conditions, I do not attempt to speak of general formations that extended beyond Shanghai. The lack of uniformity, as noted earlier, was a hallmark of the treaty port system. Shanghai, and its International Settlement alone, was distinct enough to warrant careful consideration and nuanced approaches in comparison with other contexts.³³ My objective is to analyze the experience of a singular community situated at a specific intersection of historical time and space, which is however essential to reconsidering notions such as colonial presence, foreign power, racial hierarchy, and cosmopolitanism that have been profoundly influenced by our understanding of modern Shanghai.

Chapter organization

This dissertation consists of five chapters with a mixture of thematic and chronological organization. Later chapters tend to focus on later time periods, but the history of Japanese settlement in Shanghai did not follow a linear trajectory of accepting, reshaping, and challenging the treaty-port order; instead, it was marked by the juxtaposition of these modes and frequent shifts between them, necessitating some chronological overlaps among the chapters. Chapter 1 sets the background by tracing the nineteenth-century origins of the Japanese presence in Shanghai, the formation of the settler community, and its transformation through the 1930s. It highlights how the physical location of this community shifted in tandem with the expansion and evolution of Shanghai’s colonial space, while the community developed an increasingly complex and stratified internal structure. Japanese position in Shanghai was characterized by a double marginality: geographically situated on the outskirts of the foreign municipality and

³³ Wasserstrom, “Locating Old Shanghai: Having Fits about Where It Fits.”

socio-economically distant from the privileged “colonizer” status. This marginality was especially pronounced among the *dochaku-ha* (土着派; “native faction”) settlers living in Hongkou and extra-settlement road areas, whose quotidian conditions differed significantly from those of the *kaisha-ha* (会社派; “company faction”) commercial/industrial elite, although the lines between these social categories could sometimes be blurry. The physical peripherality came with both benefits and risks: it enabled the Japanese to retain a degree of autonomy from the Settlement regime and to allude to or even act upon a separatist agenda—about which the Anglo-Americans were constantly worried—as leverage in municipal politics, but also exposed them directly to the threats of Chinese rights recovery movement from the 1920s. The final part of this chapter delves into a diverse range of local Japanese social organizations, which grew out of divergent experiences of treaty-port life and profoundly shaped the community’s internal politics and its interactions with the host city.

Chapter 2 examines the Japanese community’s integration into the political and administrative structures of the Settlement to chart its rise from a marginal actor to one of the Settlement’s major stakeholders. By analyzing their participation in municipal elections and involvement in the debate over municipal representation, this chapter reveals how the Japanese simultaneously functioned as an established party within the Settlement’s power structure and pushed for its political modernization to further their own ends—a peculiar dual role that characterized Japanese position in local colonial order. The latter part of this chapter turns to the Japanese interplay with the Settlement regime in the realms of education and public health, where their strategies to sway municipal policies exhibited a blend of collaborative and competitive approaches, along with a skillful manipulation of their multiple identities as Japanese nationals, Settlement residents, and citizens of a modern cosmopolis.

Chapter 3 focuses on a critical domain where the Japanese contested Settlement administration from “within”: policing. The 1910s and 1920s saw a sequence of Japanese attempts to renegotiate their position within Settlement, seeking to both accommodate and reform its police system through expanding the Japanese Branch of the Shanghai Municipal Police. These endeavors gained momentum after the 1918 Hongkou Riot, a crucial yet often overlooked turning point in the Settlement’s history. By the late 1920s, *dochaku-ha* settlers had initiated a well-orchestrated petition campaign against the British monopoly over municipal power, a movement that indicated both their sense of empowerment and their willingness to operate within the existing institutional confines of the Settlement. Coinciding with a period of local and geopolitical power shifts and of growing recognition of the treaty-port regime’s need for reform, the Japanese movement had yielded notable results by the early 1930s. However, the enlarged Japanese Branch was marked by a range of functional, ideological, and structural limitations—most importantly, its exclusive service to the Japanese community—which rendered it an institutional outlier in the Settlement and hindered its ability to alter the British-centric nature of municipal policing. Ironically, the development of the branch highlighted the continuation of Japanese subordination and marginalization within the treaty port’s colonial hierarchy. It also exposed a fundamental weakness of the Japanese reformist movement: its ambiguity on whether its goal was to make the current system more responsive to parochial Japanese interests or to “modernize” the Settlement’s administration and make it genuinely “international.”

The failure of the Japanese Branch deepened the mutual distrust between the Japanese community and British municipal authorities, setting the background for more overt conflicts between them in subsequent years. Chapter 4, however, shows that the Japanese continued to

depend on the Settlement regime for critical tasks well into the 1930s, for example, the surveillance over Korean nationalist activities. Yet, the paramount threat they perceived came from the Chinese. As local anti-Japanese sentiments escalated after 1931, Japanese settlers ramped up their pressure on the SMC for more stringent measures against the Chinese nationalist movement—including suppressing various daily crimes that they readily labelled as organized “anti-Japanese terrorism”—in the course of which they tried to stretch the SMC beyond its judicial and political limits. But in the meantime, they grew increasingly defiant towards the SMC’s authorities and hostile to the Settlement’s “despotic British rule.” The final section of this chapter delves into the extra-settlement roads negotiations between 1932 and 1937, which revolved around the SMC’s partial relinquishment of its administrative rights over these areas to the Chinese municipal government. This plan deeply concerned the Japanese residents and met with their fierce opposition. To fend off the advancement of Chinese municipal power and protect their extraterritorial privileges, however, they had to tone down their separatist rhetoric and to call for a “united front” among treaty powers and their respective citizens, while subscribing to the rhetoric of safeguarding the Settlement’s integrity and protecting the foreign community’s common interests. The unresolved extra-settlement roads issue reveals an uneasy symbiosis between the Japanese community and the Settlement in face of the Chinese rights recovery movement. But it also solidified Japanese perception that the Settlement regime was too weak and too conciliatory towards Chinese nationalism to protect their interests.

Finally, Chapter 5 explores how Japanese recolonization of Shanghai culminated in a challenge to Settlement governance from “without,” resorting to extra-municipal institutions such as consular police and naval forces. The expanded role of Japanese consular police in the Settlement’s law enforcement emerged in part as a response to an array of social issues,

including the rising criminality among Japanese settlers, which the treaty-port regime could never effectively cope with. The ascendancy of the Imperial Navy in Shanghai, on the other hand, laid bare the inherent fragility of imperial cooperation that had undergirded the treaty system. The 1932 Battle of Shanghai, also known as the First Shanghai Incident, dismantled the long-standing political myths of the Settlement's independence and self-governance, rendering its jurisdictional and administrative authorities ever more vulnerable to Japanese encroachment. The final years before the Second Sino-Japanese War saw a tightening settler-navy partnership in transforming Hongkou into a "Japanese Concession" at the expense of both Chinese sovereignty and the Settlement's integrity. This might be a period when settlers' agency seemed diminished, with their roles increasingly subsumed under broader imperial enterprise. But they remained an active part of recolonizing Shanghai, viewing it as a continuation of their decades-long endeavor to reshape the treaty-port framework. Ultimately, however, this endeavor inadvertently eroded the economic bedrock of their host city, a price paid by themselves. In Hongkou, Japanese settlers created a colonial enclave for the empire not as much as for their own.

Chapter One

Seeking a Place in the Treaty Port: the Rise of Shanghai's Japanese Community

On the evening of October 31, 1933, the streets of northern Shanghai became the stage for a grand procession carrying the *mitamashiro* 御霊代 (a tablet used as a “spirit proxy” for the instantiation of a deity) of three Shinto *kami*—Amaterasu Ōmikami, the divine progenitor of the Japanese imperial family, Emperor Jimmu, the legendary first ruler of Japan, and Emperor Meiji—to be installed at the newly-erected Shanghai Shrine. The procession started from the Japanese consulate by the Huangpu River, where the *mitamashiro* had been temporarily enshrined since their arrival a week earlier. These sacred objects had been carefully transported to Shanghai by Yasui Gengo 安井源吾, the chairman of the local Japanese Residents’ Corporation, after a month-long pilgrimage to their respective main shrines in Japan. Escorted by the Shanghai Municipal Police, Japanese consular police, and a contingent of Japanese marines, the procession continued for an hour, winding its way through the major arteries of Hongkou. The route was illuminated by Japanese settlers holding lanterns aloft. At eight o’clock, the procession reached the Shanghai Shrine, which was structurally modelled after the Ise Jingū and located a mile north of the International Settlement. This site, near the entrance of the Municipal Hongkou Park, was owned by the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC) and had been leased to the Japanese Residents’ Corporation for twenty years at a nominal annual rent of 250 silver dollars, since the SMC anticipated that the construction of the shrine “would preserve the present

picturesque approach to the park.”¹ By the time the procession arrived, thousands waiting to pay their respects had gathered outside the torii gateway of the shrine. In solemn observance of Shinto traditions, all electric lights were extinguished during the ensuing ceremony, and a bonfire was kindled to cast a sacred glow over the proceedings. The Japanese consul-general, the shrine’s chief ritualist, and a few other distinguished attendees each offered devotions to the *kami*, and the ceremony culminated in a spectacular display of fireworks that signified the completion of the consecration. With this, the shrine was formally opened to the public, followed by a three-day festival for the city’s “thirty thousand compatriots” to celebrate this “unprecedented splendor” of their community (Figure 1.1).²

At this time, Shinto rituals still appeared exotic to Chinese and Western observers in Shanghai. In a book published that same year, the American journalist Edgar Snow famously portrayed Shanghai as a “mosaic” city, where, despite the presence of “men of all creeds and colors... there was for the most part no mixture,” and “among the foreign races each community maintains its identity on a standard that has its counterpart in hundreds of provincial towns in the home country.”³ However, the Japanese settlement in Shanghai was not merely adding tesserae to the mosaic of its urban landscape. It was a continuous interaction with the city’s built environment and a sustained endeavor to integrate into, adapt to, and transform its physical and social spaces. By the 1920s, the Japanese community had grown from a minor presence to the city’s largest foreign group. To carve out a niche for themselves, Japanese settlers had to evolve in tandem with their host city, observing and breaching its colonial confines while weaving

¹ SMA U1-14-7181: Minutes of Works Committee, July 21, 1931.

² *SNN*, October 22, 1933, morning edition, October 23, 1933, morning edition, October 31, 1933, morning edition, and October 31, 1933, morning edition, and November 1, 1933, “Shanghai jinja senzasai kinengō 上海神社遷座祭記念号;” “Shanghai jinja enkaku ryakushi 上海神社沿革略誌,” in Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki’nenshi*, 1163-1169.

³ Snow, *Far Eastern Front*, 173-174.

themselves into the fabric of the treaty-port society and economy. This chapter begins by exploring the early development of Shanghai's Japanese community, focusing on how its physical location shifted alongside the expansion of the treaty port. It then delves into how economic diversity and social stratification both characterized this community's growth while leading to divergent lived experiences among its members. The final section investigates how a multifaceted system of communal organization grew out of and profoundly shaped the community's internal politics and its interplay with the host city.

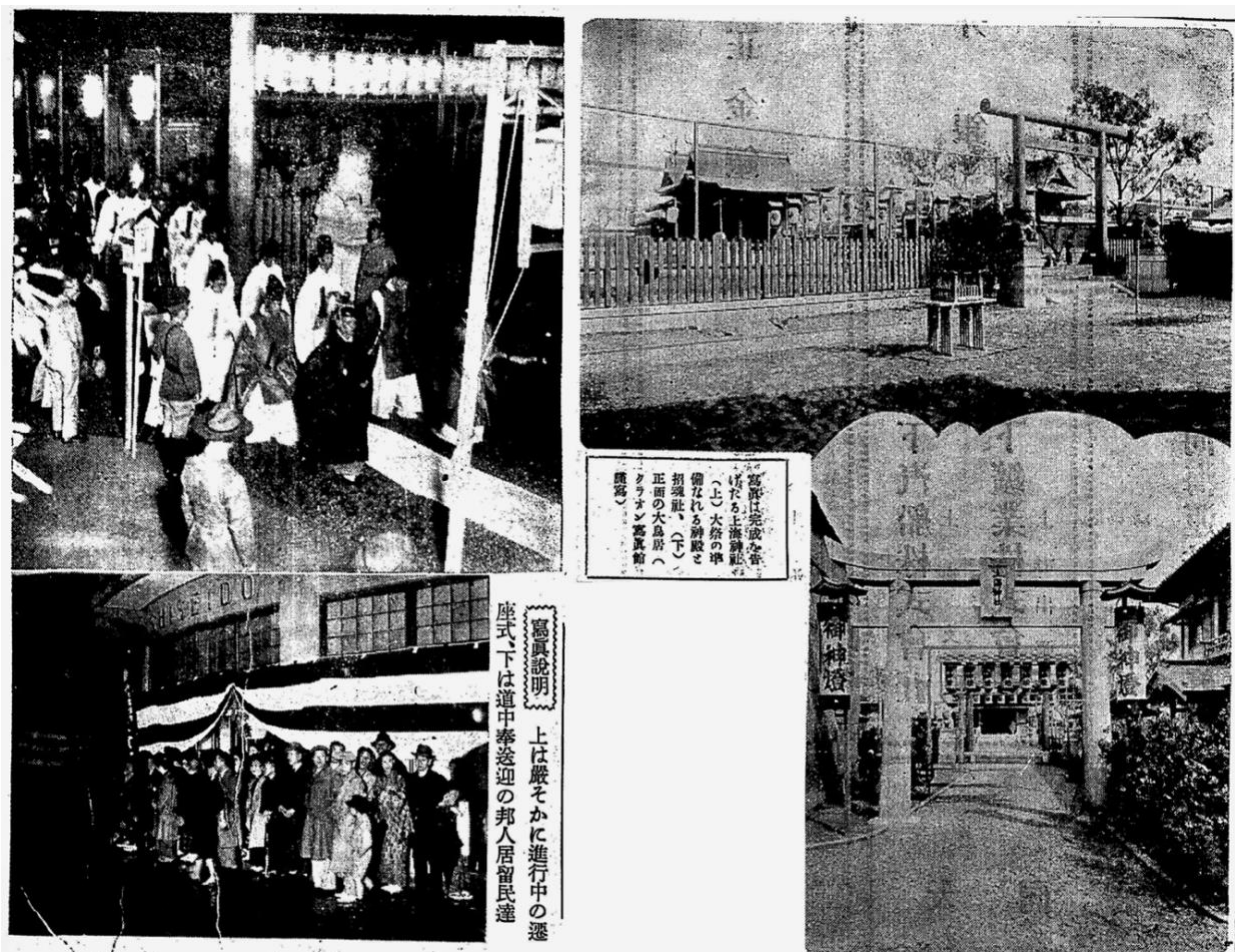


Figure 2.1. Left: Procession to Shanghai Shrine; Right: Shanghai Shrine. (*Shanghai nichinichi shinbun*, November 1, 1933, “Shanghai jinja senzasai kinengō 上海神社遷座祭記念号”)

The nineteenth-century origins of Japanese settlement in Shanghai

Despite their relatively late arrival in the treaty-port era, the Japanese impact on Shanghai's physical landscape dated back centuries. When foreign settlements started to emerge along the Huangpu River in the 1840s, they were deliberately separated from the Old City, which was enclosed by a stone and brick wall. This nine-meter-high structure, which stood until the early twentieth century, visibly demarcated the city's native past from its colonial present. Yet this barrier had originally been erected in the mid-1500s to safeguard the city against the raids by "Japanese pirates" (*wokou* 倭寇).⁴ Comprised of warriors, smugglers, and sailors of Japanese, Chinese, and Korean ethnicities, these notorious brigands had been an outstanding threat, socially and economically, to the coastal regions of southeast China since the fourteenth century; their activities intensified in the sixteenth century and sometimes operated under the aegis of Japanese daimyo with maritime ambitions. This piracy issue was both a consequence and a precipitating factor of the Ming dynasty's continuous efforts to restrict maritime activities and foreign trade.⁵ Collectively known as the *haijin* 海禁 or "sea bans", these measures continued to be perpetuated by the Qing government and gradually gave rise to a highly controlled system of maritime trade, the Canton System, as well as the problem of opium smuggling by the early nineteenth century, which formed the background of the Opium War (1839-1842) eventually resulting in the opening of China by British gunboats and Shanghai's transformation into a treaty port.

The first Japanese visitors to modern Shanghai, however, arrived in modest manner. In 1862, the Tokugawa bakufu purchased a 358-ton British-built vessel in Nagasaki, renamed it the

⁴ Roskam, *Improvised City*, 26-27 and 153-158; Tang, *Shanghai shi*, 72-75.

⁵ Kung and Ma, "Autarky and the Rise and Fall of Piracy in Ming China," 509-534; Ng, *Boundaries and Beyond*, Chapter 2.

Senzaimaru 千歳丸 (“Lasting a thousand years”), and commissioned it to travel to Shanghai with the first official Japanese embassy to China in over three centuries. The *Senzaimaru* carried a variety of cargo with which the Japanese government hoped to make headway into the Chinese market, including coal, *kombu*, agar, and lacquerware. Also onboard was a diverse crew, comprising not only bakufu officials but also young, ambitious samurai from both pro- and anti-Tokugawa domains. During their two-month stay in Shanghai, they visited local Chinese officials to discuss trading arrangements and the establishment of a permanent Japanese delegation, although these efforts were to no avail. They also engaged with foreign consuls and merchants to learn the workings of the treaty port, paying particular attention to issues like tariff duty collection and the operation of the land market in foreign settlements, as Japan itself had recently been opened to international trade under the Ansei Treaties.⁶

More importantly, the Japanese arrival during the Taiping army’s siege of Shanghai allowed them to witness how the Westerners solidified their control over the city through military supremacy. They were particularly struck by the dishevelment and demoralization of the Qing army, which stood in stark contrast with the Western troops that repelled the rebel attacks.⁷ As historian Joshua Fogel demonstrates, the *Senzaimaru* voyage, while unsuccessful as a political mission or a commercial venture, fulfilled the crucial purpose of “observe[ing] the Western world in microcosm” by offering its passengers a firsthand glimpse at the might of modern civilization juxtaposed with what they perceived as Chinese decadence.⁸

Following the *Senzaimaru*, both the bakufu and progressive domainal governments, notably those of Chōshū and Satsuma, dispatched a series of similar missions to Shanghai,

⁶ Yozenawa, *Shanghai shiwa*, 125-131.

⁷ See, for example, Mine Kiyoshi, “Seikoku Shanhai kenbunroku 清国上海見聞録,” in *Jindai Riben ren Zhongguo youji: 1862 nian Shanghai riji*. 214-230.

⁸ Fogel, *Maiden Voyage*, 188.

turning it into a crucial site for Japan's engagement with the outside world during the final years of the Tokugawa era. Among these early Japanese visitors were scholars and artists who sought to reconnect with their Chinese peers and resume face-to-face cultural exchanges after centuries of hiatus. Others were reform-minded young samurai who came, often clandestinely, to import Western ideas and state-of-the-art weaponry and ships. Many of them, such as Takasugi Shinsaku 高杉晋作 (1839—1867) from Chōshū, later played pivotal roles in the Meiji Restoration.⁹ In 1867, the bakufu lifted the ban on private overseas ventures. Four years later, in 1871, the Meiji government and the Qing court signed the Friendship and Trade Treaty (J. *Nisshin shūkō jōki* 日清修好条規; C. Zhongri xiuhao tiaogui 中日修好條規, also known as the Treaty of Tianjin), which commenced formal diplomatic and commercial relations between the two countries and was quickly followed by the opening of a Japanese consulate in Shanghai. And in 1875, the Mitsubishi corporation inaugurated regular sea lanes to Shanghai, marking not only Japan's first privately-operated international maritime route but also the end of Anglo-American monopoly over the shipping network between Japan and China. By 1880, one could easily travel to Shanghai from any major Japanese port on one of the dozens of steamships that operated on a weekly basis.¹⁰ These developments paved the way for the emergence of a permanent Japanese community in Shanghai, which saw slow yet steady growth in the late nineteenth century. While accurate demographic data from this period is lacking, the number of local Japanese is estimated to have grown from a handful in the early 1870s to approximately five hundred by the mid-

⁹ Fogel, "Japanese Travelers to Shanghai in the 1860s," in *Between China and Japan*, 276-296; Liu, *Modu Shanghai*, Chapter 1.

¹⁰ Yonezawa, *Shanghai shiwa*, 102-108; Chen Qianchen, "Seiyō bunmei no tenjiba toshite no Shanhai 西洋文明展示場としての上海," in *Shanghai no Nihonjin shakai*, 12-15.

1880s, and it doubled to around one thousand on the eve of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895).¹¹

From the outset, Shanghai attracted a diverse range of Japanese individuals and enterprises. Commercial giants like Mitsui Trading Company (Mitsui bussan kaisha) and the big merchant houses from Tokyo, Osaka and Kobe swiftly established local branches in Shanghai. However, the vanguard of modern Sino-Japanese trade predominantly comprised smaller merchants, many of whom hailed from Nagasaki and took advantage of the close distance and the cheap cost of travel between the two ports.¹² While large firms typically traded coal, textiles, and maritime products, which formed Japan's main exports then, small traders dealt in an eclectic array of commodities such as pottery, sake, medicine, books, and sundries. Moreover, an assortment of Japanese businesses—restaurants, hotels, pharmacies, and even photography studios—established themselves in Shanghai, serving not only local settlers but also Japanese travelers headed elsewhere in China or other parts of the world. For these petty businesses, securing a foothold in Shanghai often proved challenging, and most of them struggled to survive beyond three years. Nonetheless, they pioneered Japan's commercial advance on the Asian continent and laid the groundwork for Japanese settlement in the treaty port.¹³ For example, Tashiroya 田代屋, one of the earliest such establishments, was opened in 1868 by a merchant from Nagasaki. The shop specialized in selling Arita porcelain from northern Kyūshū, but it also operated an inn that hosted many early Japanese visitors to Shanghai, including members of the

¹¹ *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 39-48; Takatsuna, "Kokusai toshi" *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*, 29-30.

¹² By the mid-1870s, the travel time from Nagasaki to Shanghai had been reduced to only two days, less than half of the five-day trip from Yokohama.

¹³ See Enyama, *Shanghai*, 219-227; Ikeda, *Shanghai hyakuwa*, 3-5; Chen, *Shanghai Riqiao shehui shenghuo shi*, 20. As of 1884, more than forty various Japanese shops were in business in Shanghai.

first Meiji delegations en route to Beijing. In the early 1870s, it effectively became a community center that served as an information hub and a venue for local Japanese social activities.¹⁴

Following the merchants, several other groups made their mark in Shanghai. In 1876, the Higashi Honganji 東本願寺, a Kyoto-based temple representing a major sub-sect of Japan's Pure Land Buddhism, sent a delegation of senior priests to set up a branch temple in the city. The venture originally aimed to foster connections with the Chinese Buddhist community and extend the overseas influence of Japanese Buddhism, but the Shanghai Higashi Honganji quickly expanded beyond religious activities. Operating a variety of facilities that included an elementary school, a clinic, a nursery, and a cemetery, the temple served as the primary provider of social welfare and public services for the local Japanese community until the early twentieth century. Moreover, Buddhist priests launched a moral education campaign in response to issues such as excessive drinking and gambling among the settlers. After 1885, the Higashi Honganji officially altered the focus of its overseas missions to prioritize supporting Japanese settlers over proselytizing to the local population.¹⁵

Prostitutes, known as *karayuki-san* 唐行きさん (“women who go to China”), formed another important group. Enticed by work opportunities or trafficked by brokers, most of these women came from poverty-ridden rural areas in western Japan. In Shanghai, they joined the city's burgeoning entertainment industries, offering services in brothels, teahouses, and various other venues. By the late 1880, they numbered several hundred and predominated among the early female settlers. In fact, their presence made the Japanese the only foreign community

¹⁴ Yonezawa, *Shanghai shiwa*, 92-93.

¹⁵ For more on the Higashi Honganji's activities in Shanghai, see Takanishi, *Higashi Hongan-ji Shanghai kaikyō rokujū nen shi*; Kiba and Keika, “Higashi Honganji Chūgoku fukyōshi no kisoteki kenkyū 東本願寺中国布教史の基礎的研究,” 1-48; Xin Ping, “Jōdo Shinshū Tōzai Honganji no Chūgoku fukyō 浄土真宗・東西本願寺の中国布教,” in *Shanghai no Nihonjin shakai*, 49-82.

where women outnumbered men.¹⁶ To cater to their needs, local Japanese shops commonly sold items like combs, mirrors, and cosmetics.¹⁷ The term “prostitute,” however, obscures the heterogeneity of this group. High-end courtesans, distinguished by their refined elegance and *shamisen* skills, garnered popularity among Westerners and affluent Chinese patrons,¹⁸ while those who served middle- and low-class clients were viewed as detrimental to Japan’s national image and subject to growingly stricter consular regulations. Around 1890, when the Japanese consulate deported many of them back to the home country, it resulted in a noticeable reduction in the size of the local Japanese community.¹⁹

Furthermore, Shanghai attracted a cohort of Meiji continental expansionists who spearheaded the on-site education of Japan’s first generation of “China hands.” Initial efforts in this direction in the 1880s stemmed from the short-lived Oriental School (*Tōyō gakkan* 東洋学館) and Asia School (*Ajia gakkan* 亜細亞学館), whose names suggested an embryonic Asianist outlook that began to develop during this period. In 1890, Arao Sei 荒尾精 (1859-1896), a military man previously engaged in intelligence missions in central China for the Japanese army, founded the Japan-China Trade Academy (*Nisshin bōeki kenkyūsho* 日清貿易研究所) in Shanghai and recruited two hundred teachers and students from Japan. This institute became the forerunner of the famous East Asia Common Culture Academy (*Tōa dō-bun shoin* 東亜同文書院) established in 1900, which attracted generations of Japanese youth who aspired towards commercial or political careers in China until the end of World War II.²⁰

¹⁶ Ikeda, *Shanghai hyakuwa*, 1-2.

¹⁷ Chen, *Xunfang Dongyangren*, 19.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 31-40.

¹⁹ SMC, *Report for the Year 1890*, 17. For more on Japanese consular regulation of prostitution, see Chapter 5.

²⁰ See Yonezawa, *Shanghai shiwa*, 108-115; Ikeda, *Shanghai hyakuwa*, 8-10; Tōyama, *Shanghai*, 187-190; Douglas R. Reynolds, “Training Young China Hands: Tōa Dōbun Shoin and Its Precursors, 1886-1945,” in *The Japanese*

In search of a place in the treaty port

From the very beginning, the development of Shanghai's Japanese community closely mirrored the transformation of the treaty port, and the former's physical location shifted in tandem with the contours of the latter's colonial space. When the first Japanese commercial establishments appeared around 1870, they were mostly located in the bustling foreign town near the Bund. Tashiroya, for example, initially stood next to the British consulate at the northern end of the Bund, near the offices of major Japanese firms. Meanwhile, the "Japanese teahouses" (*Tōyō chakan* 東洋茶館—a common euphemism for brothels) first emerged on Fuzhou Road, the city's main entertainment quarter then known as the "Fourth Avenue" (Si malu 四馬路).²¹ This area—bordered by the Suzhou Creek to the north, the Huangpu River to the east, and the old Chinese city to the south—was designated as the original site of the British and French settlements in the 1840s, with their westerns boundaries subsequently expanded to accommodate the needs of military defense and the influx of Chinese refugees during the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1863). In 1848, the Americans also secured the right from local Chinese officials to establish their own settlement in the Hongkou (Hongkew) region across the Suzhou Creek. In 1863, a new agreement between the American consul and the Chinese *daotai* 道台, the circuit intendant of the Shanghai regio, reaffirmed American privileges in Hongkou, but confusion remained regarding the exact boundaries of the American Concession. A key reason for this ambiguity was that, unlike the thriving commercial hub south of the Suzhou Creek, Hongkou had largely retained its rural character until the late nineteenth century save for a few new churches

Informal Empire in China, 210-271; Fujita, *Ni-Chū ni kakeru Tōa dōbun shoin no gunzō*. The *Tōa dō-bun shoin* was originally founded in Nanjing, but quickly relocated to Shanghai due to the outbreak of the Boxer Rebellion.

²¹ Chen, *Xunfang Dongyangren*, 19 and 32-33.

and roads, while American activities were primarily concentrated in the British Concession. The American Concession, unable to independently manage and develop the area, officially merged with the British Concession in September 1863 to form the International Settlement.²²

The 1863 amalgamation established a unique cooperative governance model for the International Settlement, which was reflected in its motto of *omnia juncta in uno* (“all united as one”).²³ It also brought a vast stretch of land north of the Suzhou Creek under the governance of the SMC. However, the Suzhou Creek remained a significant geographical divide in the subsequent development and administration of the Settlement. Throughout the late nineteenth century, the term “English Settlement” remained in official usage, referring to the town south of Suzhou Creek. In contrast, the area known as the “Hongkew Settlement” held peripheral status from the British viewpoint, while the Americans still considered it their sphere of interest.²⁴ Not

²² The area formed by the former British and American Concessions was initially called the “Foreign Settlement”; its better-known name, the “International Settlement,” did not come into use until after its expansion in 1899. For clarity, I use the term “International Settlement” to refer to this area both before and after 1899. It is also important to note that, in the context of Shanghai, “concession” was not an accurate term to refer to the areas opened to foreign residence and trade—whether British, French, or American—as the original treaties had designated these areas for foreign individuals to rent/buy land from local Chinese landowners for commercial or residential purpose (defined as “settlement” or *juliudi* 居留地) rather than as territories leased in entirety by the Chinese government to a foreign government (defined as “concession” or *zujie* 租界). However, Shanghai’s foreign settlements soon became *de facto* concessions wholly governed by foreign municipal authorities who ultimately answered to the consuls—the Consular Body, in the case of the International Settlement. On these terminologies, see Xu and Qiu, *Shanghai gongong zujie zhidu*, 5-6; Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, 16-17; Wu, *Shanghai zujie yanjiu*, 18-37; Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 15.

²³ This peculiarity of the International Settlement, which set it apart from all other exclusive foreign concessions in China (with the exception of the small island of Gulangyu near Xiamen), can be traced back to earlier periods. As early as 1852, the Americans had secured the right to lease land within the British Concession by obtaining approval from their own consul and the local Chinese governor; consent from the British consular authorities was no longer required. In 1854, when Shanghai confronted the threat from a local offshoot of the Taiping Rebellion, the “Small Swords Society,” the Shanghai Municipal Council was established as the unified governing body—consisting of British, French, and American members—of all foreign settlements. This joint venture continued until 1862, when the French seceded and formed an independent *Conseil municipal* for their own settlement, but the SMC continued to serve as the municipal government of the International Settlement. On the origin of the International Settlement and the SMC, see, for example, Johnstone, *The Shanghai Problem*, 35-44; Bergère, *Shanghai*, Chapter 2; Jackson, “Who Ran the Treaty Ports: A Study of the Shanghai Municipal Council,” in *Treaty Port in Modern China*, 43-60; Yao, “‘Hezuo zhengce’ yu Shanghai gongong zujie de dansheng,” 102-106; Cong and Mégret, “‘International Shanghai’ (1863–1931): Imperialism and private authority in the Global City,” 915-933.

²⁴ In 1893, it was again the American diplomats who led the negotiation with Qing officials to determine the northern and eastern boundaries of the International Settlement.

until 1879 did Hongkou get its first municipal police station;²⁵ as late as 1890, foreign residents in Hongkou complained that the hygienic conditions of their neighborhoods were a “disgrace” compared with “the more municipally favored parts of Shanghai” and threatened to withhold their municipal rates until the SMC adequately addressed their concerns.²⁶

Nevertheless, as the site of the former British Concession became increasingly congested and its land prices soared, Hongkou offered an affordable space for new settlers, foreign and Chinese alike.²⁷ The Japanese were among the first to venture into this northern “frontier” of the Settlement. In 1873, the Japanese consulate moved to a new location north of the confluence of Suzhou Creek and Huangpu River, followed in 1876 by the construction at nearby sites of Mitsui’s warehouse and wharf as well as the Higashi Honganji temple. These developments gave rise to a nascent Japantown where Japanese residences and businesses began to cluster over the following decades. By 1890, SMC census data indicated that 297 out of the Settlement’s 386 Japanese residents lived in Hongkou.²⁸ At this time, they remained a minority within the local foreign community far outnumbered by the rapidly growing Chinese population, many of whom were recent migrants from Guangdong.²⁹ However, the appearance of Japanese shops and restaurants facilitated the rise of new residential and commercial quarters in south Hongkou during this period.³⁰ Meanwhile, Japanese settlers, mainly composed of petty merchants, shopkeepers, and company clerks, integrated smoothly into the social fabric of Hongkou, where

²⁵ SMC, *Report for the Year 1879*, 68.

²⁶ NCH, August 29, 1890.

²⁷ In 1879, the average quarterly rental assessment of a foreign-style house was 1,050 taels in the former British Concession compared to just 450 taels in Hongkou. Chinese-style houses were much cheaper but showed a similar difference—75 versus 39 taels. This pattern continued throughout the rest of the nineteenth century. See SMC, *Report for the Year 1879*, 17-20, *Report for the Year 1895*, 128-131, and *Report for the Year 1900*, 170-173.

²⁸ SMC, *Report for the Year 1890*, 19. These numbers might not be accurate—that same year, the Japanese *Shanghai shinpō* reported that the local Japanese population was 644, but it could be safely said that the majority of them lived in Hongkou. See *Shanghai shinpō*, June 5, 1890.

²⁹ SMC, *Report for the Year 1890*, 23.

³⁰ Wang and Yao, eds., *Hongkou qu zhi*, 192-193; Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation*, 17-18.

an urban culture and lifestyle of the middle- and lower-class “petty urbanites” (*xiaoshimin* 小市民) began to emerge by the turn of the twentieth century.³¹ Most of them lived side-by-side with Chinese neighbors in alleyway houses, benefiting from Hongkou’s low costs of living and typically paying no more than fifteen silver dollars in monthly rent.³²

Despite the late onset of Hongkou’s urban development, its burgeoning population necessitated a series of public work projects by the end of the nineteenth century, which in turn consolidated foreign municipal governance over this area.³³ In 1892, the SMC invested twenty-five thousand taels for the construction of an indoor market in central Hongkou to solve the traffic and sanitary problems caused by the daily gathering of food vendors and buyers.³⁴ The completion of the Hongkou Market, also known as the Sanjiaodi market for its location in an easily accessible triangular area formed by Boone, Miller, and Hanbury Roads, enabled the SMC to implement health and safety regulations through licensing and inspection. The market was later upgraded to a three-story building and became the largest of its kind in Shanghai.³⁵ By the

³¹ On the definition and composition of Shanghai’s “petty urbanites,” see Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, 61-64; Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor*, 102-103.

³² See *Shanghai shinpō*, June 20, 1890; *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki’nenishi*, 95-101; Ikeda, *Shanghai hyakuwa*, 1-4; Hasegawa, *To Shin annai*, 34-35. Before the 1935 currency reform by the Nationalist government, silver was the dominant currency in Shanghai. Until 1933, two different units were commonly used. The Shanghai tael, containing 518.512 grains of pure silver, had been adopted by the foreign community in the mid-nineteenth century and used as the standard unit by major financial institutions as well as the SMC since then. The silver dollar (*yinyuan* or *dayang*), on the other hand, was the unit for various silver coins circulating in trade and everyday transactions. The most popular silver currency in Shanghai was the Mexican silver dollar, although it was gradually replaced by Chinese-minted coins in the early twentieth century. Based on silver content and the cost of coinage, one silver dollar or *yuan* equated to 0.72-0.75 Shanghai Tael. Until the late 1920s, the exchange rate between the silver dollar and the Japanese yen, which was then based on the gold standard, generally ranged between 100:120 and 100:90, except in 1919, when the international price of silver experienced a short-term spike. See *Shanghai an’nai* (1927), 215-218; *Shanghai shijō no yen kawari to Manshū no tsūka*, Chapter 2; Young, “The Shanghai Tael”; Shiroyama, *China during the Great Depression*, 15-27. The present study, in most cases, gives the units of values and prices as they appear in the original sources.

³³ By 1895, Hongkou’s Chinese population had exceeded 100,000, more than doubling from 1890 and roughly matching that of the “British Settlement” south of the Suzhou Creek; its foreign population of 2,963 was over twice the latter’s 1,271. See SMC, *Report for the Year 1895*, 20-29.

³⁴ Ma, *Zujie li de Shanghai*, 114; SMC, *Report for the Year 1891*, 180-183, and *Report for the Year 1892*, 133-134.

³⁵ Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, 172; Chen, *Xunfang Dongyangren*, 106-110.

early 1900s, it had become a major site for Japanese groceries, featuring over a dozen Japanese stalls selling fresh vegetables, meat, and fish that arrived from Nagasaki each morning (Figure 1.2).³⁶



Figure 1.2. Photo of the Hongkou Market from a Japanese guidebook. Enyama Kagenao, *Shanghai* (Tokyo: Kokubunsha, 1907).

The late nineteenth century also saw continuous improvement and extension of the Settlement's road system. In 1889, the SMC undertook a comprehensive land survey in Hongkou, based on which it formulated and publicized a general plan for road-building.³⁷ In

³⁶ *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 97; Chen, "Seiyō Shanghai to Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai," in *Chūgoku ni okeru Nihon sokai*, 208-209. By 1925, the number of Japanese stalls in the Hongkou Market had increased to 84, most of them occupying the highly-coveted space near the entrance of the ground floor. See SMC, *Report for the Year 1925*, 152.

³⁷ SMC, *Report for the Year 1889*, 171.

1894, it developed a new plan to broaden all major thoroughfares in Hongkou and extend them by a total of 14 miles.³⁸ These projects posed various challenges and often required intricate bargaining with the owners of the land where new roads were planned. In some cases, they were further complicated by opposition from residents in other areas vying for Municipal budget.³⁹ But over time, foreign-owned property in the peripheral areas of the Settlement steadily increased, along with public infrastructure supplied by foreign municipal authorities, which spurred further population growth.

This trend of urban expansion was not confined within the Settlement; it also characterized the growth of the Settlement itself. Starting in the 1860s, foreigners began acquiring land outside the formal boundaries of the Settlement, a practice they justified by the claim that the areas initially designated for exclusive foreign use had become overcrowded due to the inflow of Chinese residents.⁴⁰ This led to the emergence of extra-settlement roads (ESR; also termed “outside roads” or “external roads”), constructed and managed by foreign authorities. By the late 1890s, this network of outside roads had spanned westward for miles along the south bank of the Suzhou Creek. In Hongkou, too, where the Sino-foreign border remained ill-defined until 1893, Municipal roads kept growing and penetrating into Chinese territory, which not only caused administrative disputes but also disrupted local agriculture and sometimes sparked violent resistance from Chinese villagers.⁴¹ In 1899, after several years of negotiations among the Chinese government, local officials, and Treaty Powers, the Settlement was formally extended to include nearly all areas reached by Municipal roads up to that point, tripling its size from 2.75 to 8.35 square miles (Figure 1.3).

³⁸ *NCH*, October 14, 1894; Ma, *Zujie li de Shanghai*, 72-73.

³⁹ *SMC, Report for the Year 1890*, 153-154.

⁴⁰ Kotenev, *Shanghai: Its Municipality and the Chinese*, 27-28.

⁴¹ Xu and Qiu, *Shanghai gongong zujie zhidu*, 68-69; Kotenev, *Shanghai: Its Municipality and the Chinese*, 29.

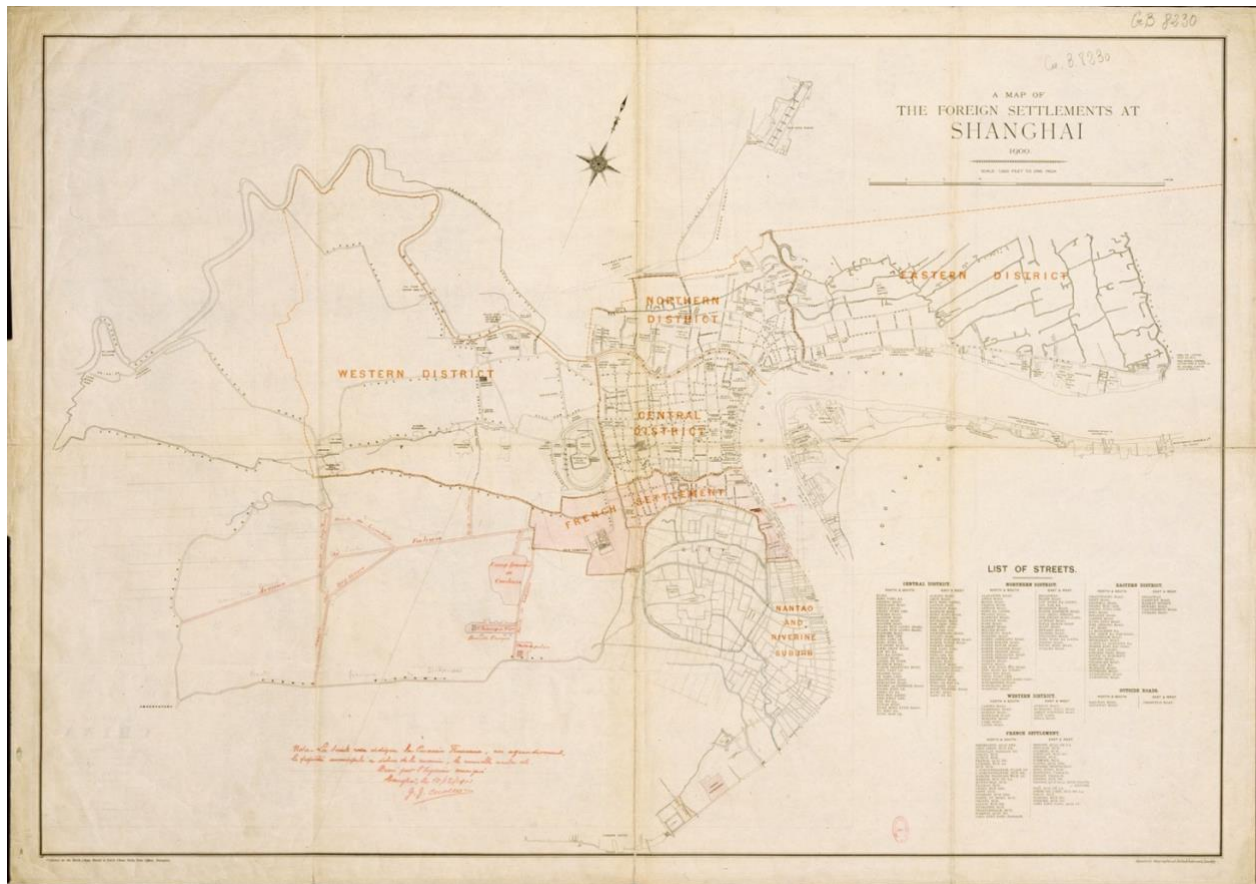


Figure 1.3. “A Map of the Foreign Settlements at Shanghai, 1900” (London: Stanford’s Geographical Establishment).

Against the backdrop of the First Sino-Japanese War, the Japanese were closely involved in the expansion of the Settlement during this period. The war had mixed impact on their local community. In the short term, it caused an exodus of settlers, of which only two hundred remained by early 1895. For small Japanese merchants, wartime repatriation often meant the permanent closure of their businesses in Shanghai. The end of the war saw no rapid growth in the local Japanese population, which recovered its pre-war level only around 1900.⁴² However, Japan’s victory over China had profound long-term implications that significantly shifted the Japanese position in Shanghai. The 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki and the 1896 Sino-Japanese

⁴² *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki’nenshi*, 76.

Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, which replaced the 1871 treaty, granted Japan unilateral extraterritoriality and the right to open concessions in treaty ports. Crucially, the most-favored nation clause in these treaties put Japan on an equal footing with the Western powers by endowing it with all the treaty privileges that China had theretofore conceded to Westerners.⁴³

That an exclusive Japanese concession never emerged in Shanghai has posed a conundrum for nearly a century. To be sure, part of the explanation lies in Japanese recognition of the commercial and financial advantage of staying in the already flourishing International Settlement.⁴⁴ But recent studies show that Japanese authorities approached local Qing officials shortly after the war to discuss their new concession.⁴⁵ One potential site under consideration was the Yangshupu area east of Hongkou. Had this plan materialized, Shanghai's situation might have resembled that of other major treaty ports such as Tianjin and Hankou, where Japanese concessions were set up next to older Western ones along the city's principal river. However, Yangshupu by this time already had numerous extra-settlement roads and hosted important foreign-owned facilities such as the Shanghai Waterworks Company, which had supplied tap water to the Settlement since its founding in the early 1880s.⁴⁶ Evidently, the Anglo-Americans saw this region as a future part of the Settlement; this led the Japanese to abandon the Yangshupu plan, perhaps wary of a Chinese strategy to exploit intra-imperial rivalry. In 1898, they proposed establishing a concession about ten miles north of Shanghai in Wusong, near the confluence of Huangpu and Yangzi Rivers. However, both Britain and Germany had craved this

⁴³ Beasley, "The Sino-Japanese Commercial Treaty of 1896."

⁴⁴ Peattie, "Japanese Treaty Port Settlement in China, 1895-1937," in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China*, 183.

⁴⁵ Xiong, "Nihon ga Shanhai ni sokai wo tsukurou to shita ken no shiryō 日本が上海に租界をつくろうとした件の資料 [Documents regarding the Japan's efforts to establish a concession in Shanghai]," in *Chūgoku ni okeru Nihon sokai*, 166-200.

⁴⁶ Ma, *Zujie li de Shanghai*, 126-127.

strategic gateway, and for the Chinese authorities, its possession by any single foreign power would be disastrous. Consequently, a year later, Wusong was opened to all nations.⁴⁷

Despite the failure of these endeavors, discussions about a Japanese concession exerted significant pressure on both the Chinese authorities and Western powers to accommodate Japanese treaty rights,⁴⁸ which informed treaty-port Shanghai's transformation at the turn of the twentieth century. The 1899 extension did not simply involve territorial enlargement but also reinforced the open-door principle of the "International Settlement"—a name formally adopted from this point onward. Rather than merely accepting Shanghai's colonial space as a given structure, the Japanese actively influenced and redefined this space. The Treaty of Shimonoseki not only marked Japan's entry into the club of treaty powers, but also broadened the scope of the treaty system and was thus welcomed by the Western powers.⁴⁹ Among other provisions, it permitted foreigners to establish manufacturing facilities in China. As a result, once Yangshupu was incorporated into the Settlement, it rapidly evolved into a new industrial zone where foreign-owned factories, including a number of Japanese cotton mills, sprang up in the following decades.

After 1899, foreign activities continued to transgress the new boundaries of the Settlement, and the construction of outside roads were carried on by the SMC through the late 1920s, often intended as the basis for future formal extensions. This ongoing expansion, from the foreign perspective, represented a "logical outcome of the growth of the town."⁵⁰ But at the same time, it led to persistent economic and political unevenness between the foreign municipality's center and the periphery. Whereas the SMC exerted the strongest administrative control in the

⁴⁷ Nield, *China's Foreign Places*, 281.

⁴⁸ Johnstone, *The Shanghai Problem*, 207.

⁴⁹ Duus, "Zaikabō: Japanese Cotton Mills in China, 1895-1937," in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China*, 66-68.

⁵⁰ SMA U1-6-146: "Memorandum by the Public Works Department on Outsides Roads," November 29, 1929.

central area,⁵¹ whose dense population and high land prices generated the most municipal revenues, foreign municipal authority had a considerably weaker presence in the outlying regions. In outside road areas, the SMC struggled to collect revenues and relied on residents' voluntary contributions. In 1905, it implemented a Special Municipal Rate and began using the supply of public utilities as leverage for taxation. In consideration of ESR residents' reduced privileges, most notably the absence of voting rights, the Special Rate was initially set at five percent of a premise's annual rent, or half of the Settlement's General Rate.⁵² But even afterwards, municipal administration in these areas continued to be troubled by the intensifying Sino-foreign clashes over taxation and policing rights.

In the early twentieth century, the Japanese were again the first foreigners to settle in the new peripheries of the treaty port. A prime example of this trend was the North Sichuan Road extension, which was completed around 1905 with a tram line that provided Settlement residents with access to the Hongkou Park recently built by the SMC about a mile outside the Settlement's northern boundary.⁵³ Over the following decades, North Sichuan Road emerged as one of Shanghai's busiest commercial streets, second only to Nanjing Road and Fuzhou Road.⁵⁴ In the 1910s, large Japanese firms started to purchase land in this area to construct housing for their employees, which in turn attracted the merchant class.⁵⁵ By 1930, North Sichuan Road alone had

⁵¹ After 1899, the International Settlement was divided into four administrative districts – the Central District (the former British Settlement), the Western District (the area of western extra-settlement roads before 1899), the Northern District (Hongkou), and the Eastern District (Yangshupu).

⁵² SMC, *Report for the Year 1905*, p. 362. See also Kim, “Seimatsu no Shanhai Kyōdō sōkai ekkairo chiiku ni okeru kazei mondai,” 1–28.

⁵³ This area was part of the Zhabei region, a geographical term that at the time broadly referred to the Chinese territory north of the International Settlement. In the early 1900s, as Zhabei experienced rapid urbanization, Chinese authorities and local elites began developing their own municipal administration in the region, a project partly aimed to contain the Settlement's further expansion. See Elvin, “The Gentry Democracy in Shanghai, 1905-1914,” in *Modern China's Search for a Political Form*, 41-65; Henriot, *Shanghai, 1927-1937*, 11-15.

⁵⁴ Wang and Yao, eds., *Hongkou qu zhi*, 196.

⁵⁵ *Shanghai Hankyū Seitō annai*, 21-23; Zai Shanhai sōryōjikan, *Shanghai jijō* (1924), 216.

over sixty Japanese shops, a number that multiplied after the 1932 Shanghai Incident. Along with the nearby Scott, Darroch, and Dixwell Roads, all constructed in the early 1910s, this area became the nucleus of a new Japanese residential and commercial district.⁵⁶ Equipped with Japanese schools and hospitals, this “new Japan town” (*shin Nihon machi* 新日本町) came to rival its older counterpart in southern Hongkou and provided additional communal space. In 1912, a restaurateur from Nagasaki built a Japanese-style garden named *Rokusan-en* 六三園 near Hongkou Park. Open to the public free of charge, it quickly became a popular site for Japanese social gatherings, especially for viewing cherry blossom in spring. The garden also hosted Shanghai’s first Shinto shrine, the *Kōjō Jinja* 滬上神社; while founded as a branch of Nagasaki’s Suwa Shrine, it was also dedicated to Konpira 金毘羅, the protector of seafarers, and Ebisu えびす, the Shinto god of good fortune.⁵⁷ Kōjō Jinja was destroyed in the Battle of Shanghai and later incorporated into the Shanghai Shrine when the latter opened in 1933, as recounted at the beginning of this chapter.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, Hongkou Park itself became a regular venue for Japanese public events such as sports meetings and celebrations of the Emperor’s birthday (Figures 1.4 and 1.5).

⁵⁶ Zai Shanhai sōryōjikan, *Shanhai jijō* (1924), 50-51; Chen, Shanghai Riqiao shehui shenghuo shi, 93-98; Wang and Yao, eds., *Hongkou qu zhi*, 172-173. However, as Takatsuna Hirofumi and others point out, the economic prosperity of this area, like the rest of Hongkou, fundamentally derived from its Chinese population. The rise of North Sichuan Road in fact owed much to the local Cantonese businesses. See Takatsuna, “*Kokusai toshi*” *Shanhai no naka no Nihonjin*, 34-36, and Wang and Yao, eds., *Hongkou qu zhi*, 196. Indeed, as subsequent chapters will show, the Japanese dominance over this area in the 1930s ultimately undermined its commercial vitality by displacing many of its Chinese residents.

⁵⁷ *Shanhai an’nai* (1927), 60.

⁵⁸ “Kōjō jinja enkaku 滬上神社沿革,” in *SNN*, November 1, 1933, “Shanhai jinja senzasai kinengō.”

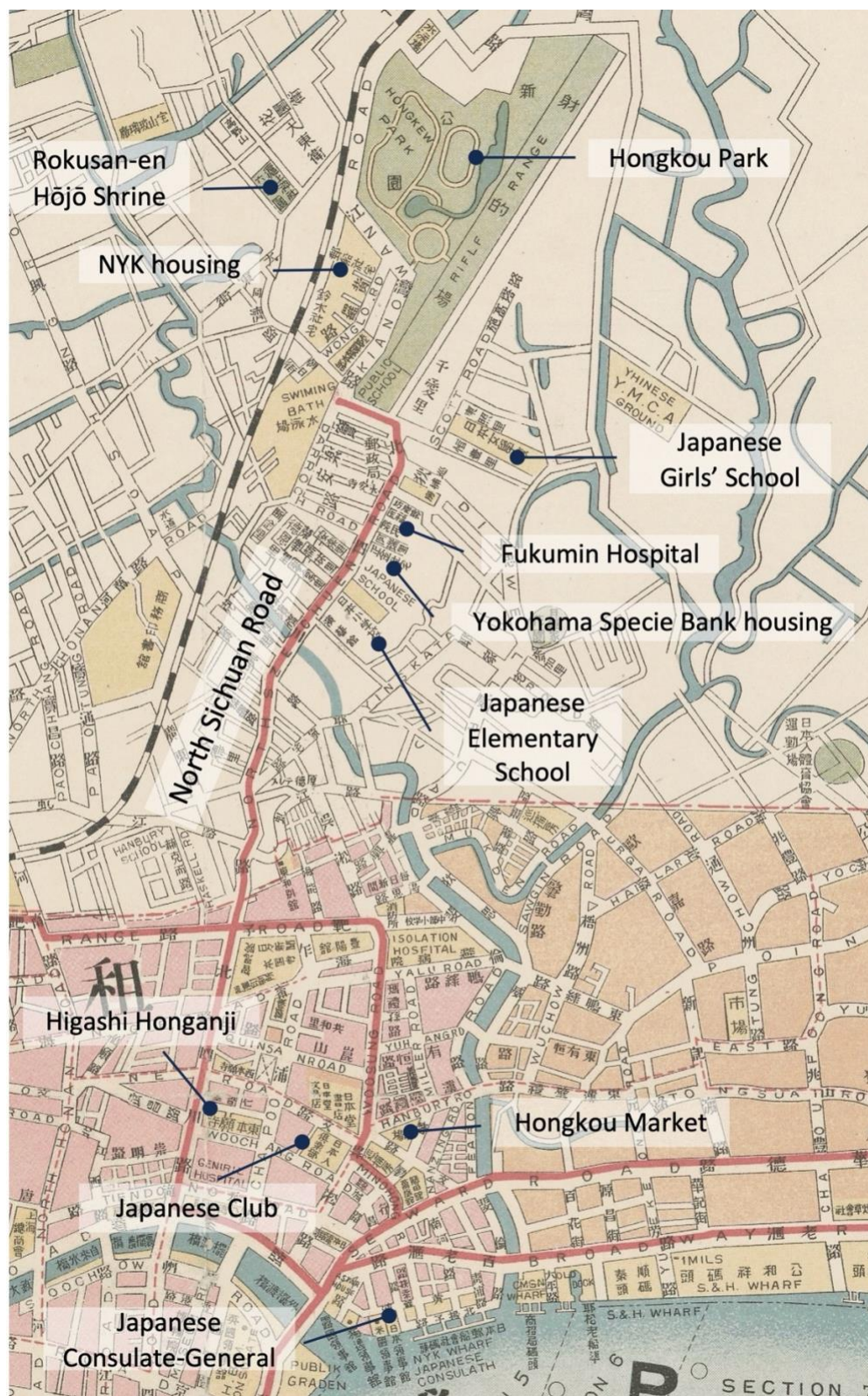


Figure 1.4. Hongkou in the late 1920s. Map adapted from Sugie Fusazō, *Shanghai shin chizu* 上海新地図 (Shanghai: Nihondō shoten, 1928).



Figure 1.5. Top left: A Japanese tailor's shop; Top right: A Japanese fish store; Bottom: Japanese company housing in Qian'ai Li, north Hongkou. Virtual Cities Project (Institut d'Asie Orientale, Lyon)

This spatial dimension played a central role in the numerical growth of the Japanese community. As demographic data often varies due to the fragmented nature of Shanghai's municipal governance and population fluidity, accurate estimations require a holistic reading of multiple sources. Foreign administrations' census records (Table 1.1) generally reflect the geographical distribution of each national group, but in the case of ESR areas, as these figures only include rate-paying residents, they tend to substantially understate the overall population. This issue was particularly pronounced in the Japanese case, since many settlers lived outside the Settlement's boundary, with avoiding Municipal taxation being a key incentive for doing so.⁵⁹ The data collected by Japanese consular authorities (Table 1.2) is of greater accuracy, especially following the establishment of the consulate's "National Census Office" (Kokusei chōsa ka 国勢調査課) in 1920.⁶⁰ However, consular information also provides an incomplete picture, because settlers frequently failed to register with the consulate, whether out of negligence or deliberate evasion.⁶¹ In any case, the first quarter of the twentieth century saw a rapid growth in Shanghai's Japanese population. Around 1910, they had surpassed the British as the largest foreign group and by the late 1920s had exceeded the combined total of all other foreign populations. However, this growth occurred unevenly across time and space. The Russo-Japanese War and World War I saw a notable influx of new settlers, while political upheavals such as the 1911 revolution, the

⁵⁹ SMA U1-6-145: Chairman of the SMC to American Consul-General, December 8, 1926; *SNN*, March 12, 1934, morning edition. From the 1920s, Chinese municipal authorities began to systematically collect and compile demographic data, but their efforts to investigate Japanese households in Chinese territory and determine their numbers were often resisted by the Japanese authorities. See *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 464.

⁶⁰ In 1920, the Japanese government commenced a nationwide census project, which was conducted every five years in order to address the inaccuracy of demographic data that so far had been based on household registration (*koseki*). From the very beginning, this project encompassed overseas settlements as well, with local consulates responsible for carrying it out in their respective jurisdictions. See Nikaidō, *Kokusei chōsa sōran*; Sōmushō tōkeikyoku, *Kokusei Chōsa 100-nen no Ayumi* 国勢調査 100 年のあゆみ,”

https://www.stat.go.jp/data/kokusei/2020/ayumi/pdf/ayumi_all.pdf, [accessed April 2, 2023].

⁶¹ *SNN*, August 3, 1934.

1915 anti-Japanese boycotts due to the Twenty-One Demands incident, and the 1919 May Fourth Movement temporarily halted the growth or reduced their numbers. Another significant increase occurred during 1926-1927, when the Guomindang's Northern Expedition caused many Japanese from the upper Yangzi region to seek refuge in Shanghai.⁶² Afterwards, the size of the community stabilized, although the intensification of Sino-Japanese hostilities in the mid-1930s again caused short-term outflows. Spatially, the community displayed an increasingly strong tendency to concentrate in Hongkou and the northern ESR area, where its growth conspicuously outpaced that of its foreign counterparts; Yangshupu also experienced a steady increase in its Japanese population, largely due to the development of Japanese industrial establishments.⁶³ In contrast, the Japanese residents of the French Concession and the former British Settlement never exceeded a few hundred; for many of those who had jobs or owned businesses south of the Suzhou Creek, it was a common practice to commute daily from Hongkou.⁶⁴

⁶² *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 477-491.

⁶³ The Western District of the Settlement had a smaller industrial section that also housed a number of Japanese establishments, most notably the factories and dormitories of the Naigai Textile Company. However, the majority of Japanese industrial concerns were located in Yangshupu because of its proximity to Hongkou and the Japanese shipping infrastructure along the Huangpu River.

⁶⁴ Yonezawa, *Shanghai shiwa*, 207.

Table 1.1. Distribution of Japanese Population in Shanghai (1905–1935)

	International Settlement						French Concession
	Central District	Western District	Northern District (Hongkou)	Eastern District (Yangshupu)	Outside Roads	Total	
1905	130 (9.0%)	62 (4.8%)	1,589 (26.4%)	261 (13.8%)	42 (8.3%)	2,157 (18.8%)	
1910	143 (10.5%)	104 (5.1%)	2,396 (36.6%)	407 (19.1%)	286 (22.7%)	3,361 (24.8%)	105 (7.1%)
1915	240 (14.6%)	419 (15.5%)	4,627 (54.9%)	807 (27.5%)	1,024 (40.4%)	7,169 (38.7%)	218 (9.1%)
1920	205 (13.0%)	784 (21.6%)	5,923 (58.7%)	1,146 (28.0%)	2,022 (55.2%)	10,215 (43.8%)	306 (8.6%)
1925	155 (9.8%)	1,348 (30.2%)	5,989 (58.3%)	2,330 (37.2%)	3,818 (53.8%)	13,804 (46.1%)	176 (2.2%)
1930	116 (6.2%)	1,456 (25.7%)	7,318 (66.8%)	3,898 (46.0%)	5,960 (62.7%)	18,478 (50.7%)	318 (2.6%)
1935	84 (5.9%)	1,715 (22.8%)	8,228 (71.6%)	4,157 (50.8%)	6,058 (58.6%)	20,242 (52.0%)	437 (1.9%)

Sources: SMC, *Report for the Year, 1905–1935*; Zou Yiren, *Jiu Shanghai renkou bianqian de yanjiu*; Henriot, Shi, and Aubrun, eds., *The Population of Shanghai (1865–1953): A Sourcebook*.

Note: The 1935 data for the French Concession is from the year 1936. Percentages in parentheses indicate the proportion of Japanese among the total foreign population. Concerning outside roads, the SMC's census records do not differentiate between the western and northern areas. In the northern area, which centered on North Sichuan Road, the proportion of Japanese was actually much higher than the numbers shown above; the numbers of Japanese residing in outside road areas and adjacent Chinese territory cannot be accurately ascertained. According to the Japanese consulate, in late 1929, over seven thousand Japanese settlers (nearly one-third of the community's total population) lived outside the northern boundary of the International Settlement.

Table 1.2. Growth of Japanese Population in Shanghai (1900–1944)

*Excluding Koreans and Taiwanese

	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total
1900	737	435	1,172	1920	7,682	6,825	14,506
1901	935	538	1,473	1921	8,218	9,384	16,701
1902	1,207	684	1,891	1922	8,898	8,723	17,620
1903	1,288	695	1,983	1923	8,404	8,355	16,759
1904	1,427	759	2,216	1924	9,654	8,124	17,778
1905	2,741	1,592	4,333	1925	11,062	8,522	19,584
1906	3,780	2,057	5,873	1926	11,622	8,904	20,526
1907	3,950	2,318	6,268	1927	14,412	11,415	25,827
1908	4,441	2,929	7,269	1928	15,787	10,790	26,577
1909	4,971	3,058	8,029	1929	15,875	10,659	26,534
1910	4,674	2,894	7,568	1930	13,012	11,170	24,182
1911	3,722	3,154	6,876	1931	13,087	11,148	24,235
1912	4,359	3,327	7,686	1932	15,006	11,718	26,724
1913	5,028	4,065	9,068	1933	15,114	11,788	26,901
1914	6,037	4,837	10,874	1934	15,022	11,789	26,811
1915	6,356	5,101	11,457	1935	12,712	11,279	23,991
1916	5,965	5,153	11,118	1936	12,365	11,048	23,613
1917	7,208	6,173	13,373	1937	5,530	2,882	8,412
1918	7,901	6,899	14,800	1938	18,582	36,359	34,941
1919	9,862	7,830	17,692	1944	48,837	43,611	92,448

Sources: Gaimushō Tsūshōkyoku, *Kaigai kakuchi zairyū honpōjin shokugyōbetsu jinkō hyō*, vols. 1–5; *Gaimushō keisatsushi*, vols. 42 and 43.

To be sure, the Japanese tendency to settle on the outskirts of “foreign” Shanghai was primarily motivated by economic reasons. However, this trend also underscored the ambiguity of their status as “a constituent element”⁶⁵ of the International Settlement. Although formal negotiations for a Japanese concession ceased after 1899, Anglo-American apprehension over potential Japanese secession from the International Settlement—as the French had departed in 1862—never dissipated. Instead, these anxieties only intensified as Hongkou’s foreign

⁶⁵ Peattie, “Japanese Treaty Port Settlement in China, 1895-1937,” in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China*, 183.

population became overwhelmingly Japanese in the early twentieth century. The Japanese generally deemed the idea of establishing a separate concession impractical, except for a few radical chauvinists in the 1930s, and even these individuals were aware of the fiscal impossibility of operating an independent municipality; however, local Japanese settlers and media frequently cited the demographic unevenness of the Settlement to gain leverage over its governance. One example of this, as Chapter 3 will discuss in detail, was the Japanese movement to enhance their influence over municipal policing, especially that of Hongkou. Furthermore, when such attempts fell flat, it was precisely Japanese settlers' peripheral position that made it possible for them to allude to or even act upon a separatist agenda as a strategy to increase pressure on municipal authorities. However, the benefits of this peripheral position came with a price. It rendered the Japanese particularly vulnerable in face of mounting Chinese challenges to the foreign rule of Shanghai from after the late 1920s, which began with efforts to restore control over outside roads. As Chapter 4 will show, it was the Japanese residents in these areas who bore the brunt of the treaty-port regime's gradual disintegration, and they were also the most anxious to defend the established colonial space against encroachment by Chinese municipal power.

Making a living in the treaty port

As the Japanese community grew in size, its socio-economic makeup became increasingly complex. In Shanghai, the Japanese were engaged in a wide range of professions and livelihoods (Table 1.3), and their standards of living diverged greatly. While occupational diversity commonly characterized Japanese settler societies in other colonies and treaty-port settlements, the Shanghai community was distinguished by the large presence of several groups, which made it more self-contained than its counterparts elsewhere. First, a significant number of

small merchants and peddlers provided all sorts of daily necessities, ranging from foodstuffs to clothes, medicines, and household supplies.⁶⁶ Second, many worked as manual laborers or in menial jobs, offering services at prices that allowed them to compete with the cheap native labor force; as of 1921, the monthly cost of hiring a Japanese maid or manservant ranged from ten to twenty-five silver dollars, only slightly higher than the wages of their Chinese counterparts, the “*amah*” and the “boy.”⁶⁷ In fact, one reason why Hongkou became a “Little Tokyo” where the Japanese could live as though they were in their home country was their ability to acquire virtually any kind of goods or services from their fellow nationals. As Fogel puts it, “the extent to which most Japanese lived in a Japanese style”⁶⁸ further explained their spatial concentration and gave rise to a subgroup that made its living by catering to the needs of other settlers.

⁶⁶ As Table 1.3 shows, in 1927, vendors/peddlers (*buppin-hanbai-gyō* 物品販売業) and domestic servants (*kaji-hiyōsha* 家事被傭者), with their families, each accounted for 9.4% and 7.2% of the local Japanese population. In comparison, these two groups comprised 5.8% and 1.7% of the Tianjin community that same year. See JACAR Ref. B10070477300: Gaimushō tsūshōkyoku, “*Kaigai kakuchi zairyū honpōjin shokugyōbetsu jinkō hyō* 1927 nen 海外各地在留本邦人職業別人口表,” October 1, 1927, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B10070477300>, [accessed May 5, 2023].

⁶⁷ Zai Shanhai sōryōjikan, *Zai Shanhai teikoku sōryōjikan kannai jōkyō* (1921), 183.

⁶⁸ Fogel, “The Japanese Residents’ Association of Shanghai,” in *Between China and Japan*, 341.

Table 1.3. Occupations of Japanese Residents in Shanghai (1927)

		Occupation holders	Family members	Total	%
Agriculture, fishery, and forestry		58	60	118	0.4
Industry and manufacturing					
Group A	Ceramics	42	53	95	4.4
	Machinery	27	68	95	
	Wood and bamboo products	57	101	158	
	Food and beverages	35	87	122	
	Clothes and accessories	190	258	448	
	Miscellaneous (chemical, paper, leather products, etc.)	79	149	228	
Group B	Laundry and dyeing	42	76	118	2.7
	Construction	30	55	85	
	Carpentry, plastering, masonry, and painting	72	140	212	
	Printing and platemaking	53	120	173	
	Miscellaneous (incl. gas, electricity, and other technical trades)	47	61	108	
Unspecified		30	74	104	0.4
Factory laborers		387	360	757	2.9
Commerce					
Group A	Trading	141	247	388	2.4
	Insurance	21	80	101	
	Brokerage	68	59	127	
Group B	Vending and peddling (food, books, medicines, sundries, etc.)	1,121	1,311	2,432	13.8
	Pawnshops	20	28	48	
	Barbershops and bathhouses	118	138	156	
	Hotels, restaurants, taverns, brothels, and entertainment venues	161	155	316	
	Geisha, prostitutes, waitresses	600	12	612	
Unspecified		234	251	485	1.9
Company employees, bank employees, shop assistants, office clerks		4,367	5,369	9,736	37.7
Transportation, shipping, and communication		154	235	489	1.9
Government officials and personnel		235	380	615	2.4
Professionals					5.3
	Religious personnel	22	35	57	
	Teachers	130	178	308	
	Lawyers	12	25	37	
	Journalists and newspapermen	99	115	214	
	Doctors and other medical personnel	305	283	583	
	Artists	57	92	169	
Domestic servants		1,584	263	1,847	7.2
Miscellaneous		975	477	1,261	4.9
Unemployed		2,265	594	2,859	11.1
Total		13,838	11,989	25,827	100

Source: Gaimushō Tsūshōkyoku, *Kaigai kakuchi zairyū honpōjin shokugyōbetsu jinkō hyō*, 1927.

Note: This table is modified from the original consular statistics of October 1927. Drawing on related research by Yamamura Mutsuo, I have divided each item under “manufacture” and “commerce” into two groups: Group A provided products or services to the general (primarily Chinese) market, whereas Group B mainly or exclusively served the local Japanese community. On this categorization, see Yamamura *Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai no keisei to tenkai*, 70–73. Since the original source separately lists factory workers (*kōjō rōdōsha*) and employees of companies, banks, and shops (*kaishain*, *ginkōin*, *shōtenin*, *jimuin*), it can be assumed that the numbers associated with specific industries primarily represent people who at least partially owned their business.

Migrating to Shanghai was often, though not always, a family endeavor. This is reflected in the relatively balanced gender ratio observed from the 1910s onward, although there was usually a surplus of males. In most families, husbands, fathers, and brothers were the main breadwinners. Among the 13,838 people the Japanese consulate identified as “occupation holders” (*hongyōsha* 本業者) in 1927, 9,791 (70.1 percent) were males, whereas two-thirds the total female population were categorized as “dependents” (*kazoku* 家族). However, although men far outnumbered women in the workforce of almost all Japanese businesses in Shanghai, the entertainment and housekeeping industries were predominately staffed by female migrants, especially those who came to the city alone.⁶⁹

Unemployed persons, consisting mostly of individuals without or unaccompanied by family, comprised another notable group. In this regard, 1927 is unusual because of the influx of refugees in that year, but throughout the early twentieth century, the percentage of jobless Japanese residents in Shanghai was consistently higher than in any other urban settlement in Manchuria and China proper,⁷⁰ an issue that, as later chapters will demonstrate, created persistent

⁶⁹ JACAR Ref. B10070477300: Gaimushō tsūshōkyoku, “*Kaigai kakuchi zairyū honpōjin shokugyōbetsu jinkō hyō* 1927 nen,” October 1, 1927.

⁷⁰ The official unemployment rates of Japanese in Shanghai in 1918, 1922, 1925, 1928, and 1935 were 8.9%, 6.3%, 6.9%, 6.1%, and 7.8%, respectively. (The actual numbers could be higher, because recent, unemployed migrants were more likely to be missing from the consular census data.) In the case of other major urban settlements such as Tianjin, Qingdao, Fengtian, and Changchun, the unemployment rate typically ranged from 1% to 4%. See, Gaimushō tsūshōkyoku, *Kaigai kakuchi zairyū honpōjin shokugyōbetsu jinkō hyō*, Volume 2 and 4.

concerns about the “rowdy elements” within the Japanese community shared by the Japanese and Settlement authorities. But the fact that many settlers stayed in Shanghai after losing or quitting their jobs, or moved there before securing a job, suggests that the city generally offered prospects for finding work.

Increasing social stratification, most notably between the “company faction” (*kaisha-ha* 会社派) and the “native faction” (*dochaku-ha* 土着派), accompanied the Japanese community’s occupational diversity. The first two decades of the twentieth century saw the rapid growth of Japanese industrial and commercial presence in China, a development spurred first by Japan’s military victory over Russia in 1905 and then by the temporary withdrawal of Europeans from the Chinese market during World War I. Large Japanese companies—established one like the Mitsui Trading Company, Japan Mail Steamship Company (NYK),⁷¹ and the Yokohama Specie Bank, and newcomers represented by textile manufacturers known as *zaikabō* 在華紡—expanded their business and staff in Shanghai. As a result, a social distinction emerged between those employed by large firms from the metropole and those whose livelihoods were locally based. This distinction roughly bifurcated Shanghai’s Japanese society into an upper echelon and a middle-and-lower class, a division that was somewhat analogous to the British community in China, which also exhibited a similar split between expatriate businessmen and settlers.⁷² “Company” people in the popular imagination were well-educated and enjoyed affluent lives. Most of them viewed their stay in Shanghai as temporary while expecting a promotion that would earn them a better position either back in Japan or elsewhere globally. Their relatively moderate political outlook made them generally cooperative with the established treaty-port

⁷¹ The Japan Mail Steamship Company (*Nippon Yūsen kaisha* 日本郵船会社) was founded in 1885 through a merger between Mitsubishi Steamship Company and another shipping company and took over the Shanghai routes previously operated by Mitsubishi.

⁷² Bickers, *Britain in China*, 69-71.

institutions and conciliatory towards the Western interests. On the other hand, “native” settlers were often long-term residents who had a tighter bond with the host city. Compared with company employees, their fortunes were more closely linked to local circumstances. Moreover, their political weakness and economic precariousness made persistently insecure, which heightened their tendency to assert their interests against Chinese and other foreign groups in militant ways. The division between the *kaisha-ha* and the *dochaku-ha* was stark and striking. Coined in the 1910s, these terms became deeply ingrained in local Japanese consciousness, reflected by the structure of their social organizations and reinforced through the community’s internal political dynamics.

However, this dichotomy is oversimplistic for several reasons. First, each faction was characterized by considerable internal disparities in social status and economic conditions. The *kaisha-ha* in fact consisted of a tiny elite class and a much larger ordinary class. The former group, which included the executives of major companies and banks, government officials, as well as industrialists and large business owners, constituted no more than three percent of the local Japanese population.⁷³ They typically lived in lavish mansions in the former British Settlement or the French Concessions, maintained strong ties and influence in the metropole, and occasionally socialized with their Western peers.⁷⁴ In comparison, the companies’ rank-and-file staff lacked such privileges, although they were generally well-provided for and fared better than they would have been in Japan. Those who worked for large employers such as cotton mills usually resided in houses built and provided by the firms (*shataku* 社宅), whereas others had to

⁷³ Takatsuna, “*Kokusai toshi*” *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*, 41.

⁷⁴ Chen, *Shanghai Riqiao shehui shenghuoshi*, 263-288.

find their own accommodations.⁷⁵ But in either case, they lived in Hongkou and Yangshupu alongside *dochaku-ha* settlers.

Their *dochaku-ha* counterparts, too, constituted a heterogeneous group that broadly fell into two categories according to their livelihoods—medium-to-small-sized traders and manufacturers whose businesses mainly targeted Chinese customers, and petty merchants and self-employed service providers who chiefly or exclusively served their own community. Among the first category was group of the successful and well-connected settler businessmen and professionals who actively represented settlers’ interests and played prominent roles in communal politics. Together with ordinary company employees, they constituted the middle class of local Japanese society. On the other hand, shopkeepers, vendors, tailors, barbers, handymen, and others in the second category formed an underclass often referred to as the “Hongkou merchants” (*Honkyū shōnin* 虹口商人).⁷⁶ These individuals, operating with minimal capital, experienced the greatest hardship during economic or political turmoil, and their living and working conditions made them hardly distinguishable from the majority of Shanghai’s populace.

A typical example of these “Hongkou merchants” is one Harayama Takashi, who arrived from Nagasaki in 1917 with his wife and five-year-old son and opened a drapery shop on

⁷⁵ Li, *Shanghai Homes*, 39-48.

⁷⁶ In discussing the social stratification of Shanghai’s Japanese community, Takatsuna Hirofumi and Yamamura Mutsuō both identify a “three-layered structure” (*sansō kōzō* 三層構造) that reflect a common pattern to overseas Japanese communities at the time. However, their categorizations were slightly different. Takatsuna divides the local Japanese society into the elite *kaisha-ha* (comprising about three percent of the population), the middle-class *kaisha-ha* (about forty percent), and the *dochaku-ha*. In contrast, Yamamura focuses on what he terms the “mainstay settlers” (*dochaku-ha chūkensō* 土着派中堅層)—locally based businessmen and professionals who played pivotal roles in settler organizations. See Takatsuna, “*Kokusai toshi*” *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*, 37-45; Yamamura, *Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai no keisei to tenkai*, 78-90, and 225-241. While both perspectives offer valuable insights, I use a more inclusive definition of the middle class: as the subsequent analysis will illustrate, the distinction between ordinary company employees and well-to-do *dochaku-ha* settlers was less obvious than it often seemed.

Wusong Road in Hongkou.⁷⁷ His shop, which also sold household items and dry goods, was located in a two-story front unit of an alleyway house facing the main street. The living room on the first floor was repurposed for business, while the family lived upstairs. This setup made it a typical “alley store” (*longtang shangdian* 弄堂商店) found in many of Shanghai’s neighborhoods where residence and commerce were commingled.⁷⁸ Due to the shop’s small size, it could accommodate no more than five guests at a time, and its entire inventory was worth about one thousand dollars. After paying a rent of twenty-two dollars, Harayama made a monthly profit between fifty and fifty-five dollars.⁷⁹ For a family of three, this income sufficed for basic living needs and positioned them well above the urban poor, but it allowed no room for luxurious spendings and made hiring a maid or an assistant, which cost ten to twenty dollars, impossible.⁸⁰

Like their more affluent compatriots, lower-class settlers such as the Harayamas tried to make their lives resemble the home as much as possible. They consumed food imported from Japan and occasionally dined out at small restaurants run by fellow prefectural natives. They attended local shrine events and socialized with other settlers. At night they would relax at a Japanese bathhouse or massage parlor. They even spent money to remodel their houses, by, for example, removing a pillar or a wall to pave the floor with tatami (which often led to disputes

⁷⁷ Harayama was accidentally killed in the Hongkou Riot of 1918 (see Chapter 3), and his wife later filed a suit against the SMC for compensation. Information about Harayama’s family was documented by a Municipal police officer after his death. SMA U1-2-792: Suye Harayama v. SMC, March–September 1919.

⁷⁸ Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, 173-185, and 243-346.

⁷⁹ This level of income was common among small shopkeepers in Hongkou and roughly equaled the earnings of Japanese artisans like carpenters, masons, and painters. In the early 1920s, a skilled Japanese laborer typically made 1.8 to 3.5 dollars a day. Zai Shanhai sōryōjikan, *Zai Shanhai teikoku sōryōjikan kannai jōkyō* (1921), 183.

⁸⁰ In Shanghai, as of 1918, eighty pounds of rice (the monthly amount needed by a family of three) cost about three dollars. See SMC, *Report for the Year 1918*, 181A; Wang, Pan, and Ge, eds., *Shanghai jiage zhi*, Chapter 1.1; Zai Shanhai sōryōjikan, *Zai Shanhai teikoku sōryōjikan kannai jōkyō* (1921), 183-185. During this period, the prices of food, particularly rice, and other daily necessities were generally lower in Shanghai than in Japan, but the former’s housing rents were more expensive and continuously increased. Consequently, average settlers had roughly the same overall living expenses in Shanghai as in Japan. See Ikeda, *Shanghai hyakuha*, 98.

with Chinese landlords).⁸¹ Beyond these aspects, however, settling in Shanghai rarely meant the comfort and ease often associated with the life of privileged colonizers. Although the Japanese community is frequently described as being “hardly in touch with Chinese realities,”⁸² being “extrinsic” to the host city was in fact a luxury many could not afford. For a housewife who had to squeeze through the crowded Hongkou Market each morning, a peddler who had to traverse the town on foot rather than riding a rickshaw, or a shopkeeper who constantly worried about a rent increase next month, making a living in Shanghai necessitated adapting to a set of daily conditions shared by the native population.

Another fact that problematizes the distinction between the *kaisha-ha* and the *dochaku-ha* is the often-fluid boundary between these two groups, especially among the salaried class, whose proportion within the local Japanese population kept increasing in the early twentieth century. By 1927, two out of every three Japanese in Shanghai were on a payroll (Table 1.3), and many commonly changed jobs or switched between self-employment and salaried work, while being affiliated with metropolitan firms or local businesses did not necessarily define one’s identity as an expatriate or settler. Consider the Nagai Textiles Company, originally founded in Osaka and later one of the largest Japanese employers in Shanghai.⁸³ Among a sample of fifty-five Japanese employees who joined Naigai’s Shanghai factories in 1923-1924, only sixteen (29 percent) had worked and lived in Japan immediately prior. Another fifteen (27 percent) were recent migrants

⁸¹ See Hasegawa, *To Shin annai*, 1905, 32-33; Zai Shanhai sōryōjikan, *Shanhai jijō* (1924), 14-15; *Shanhai an’nai* (1927), 403-404; *Shanhai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki’nenshi*, 100-101.

⁸² Henriot, “‘Little Japan’ in Shanghai,” 164; Fogel, “Integrating into the Chinese City: A Comparison of the Japanese Communities in Shanghai and Harbin,” in *Between China and Japan*, 411.

⁸³ SMA Q192-17-838: “Neiwaimian Riren zhigong lvlishu 內外棉日人職工履歷書,” 1923-1924. The original source I use here is a collection of resumes from which I selected the following sample after excluding several illegible documents. Cotton mills provided a crucial source of job opportunities for Shanghai’s Japanese community. In comparison with their Western-owned counterparts, Japanese mills like Naigai employed a far more of their own nationals to perform managerial work and supervise the Chinese laborers, and many of these Japanese employees worked in close proximity to Chinese workers on the shop floor. In 1930, Naigai’s Shanghai mills had at least 402 Japanese staff members. See Cochran, *Encountering Chinese Networks*, 113-114.

to Shanghai who had remained unemployed for two to eight months before landing a job at Naigai. The remaining twenty-four (44 percent) had settled in the city for an average of 3.5 years, and many had experience working for other employers or operating their own businesses.⁸⁴ For example, one man from Saga prefecture had come to Shanghai as early as 1909 and had worked for four different companies. Another who arrived from Osaka in 1916 had initially apprenticed at a rice store and later ran his own shop for a few years. A third from Kumamoto had operated an in-home dyeing workshop for over a decade, first in Japan and then in Shanghai, until the failure of his business compelled him to seek a company job.

On the other hand, many company men transitioned into longtime settlers, using the local knowledge and capital accumulated over years to establish their own business.⁸⁵ In this regard, the best example is Uchiyama Kanzō 内山完造 (1885—1959), arguably the most renowned Japanese settler in Shanghai, who was known for his close personal relationship with Lu Xun. Uchiyama was dispatched to China as a salesman by an Osaka-based pharmaceutical company in 1913. In the first few years, he travelled broadly in the lower Yangzi region. In 1917, after settling in Shanghai, he opened a bookstore (although he did not fully quit his company job until 1930), which, like Harayama's shop, was initially located in his own alleyway house on North Sichuan Road. The Uchiyama Bookstore grew into a vital hub of Sino-Japanese cultural exchange during the 1920s and 1930s, frequented by renowned Chinese writers such as Tian Han, Guo Moruo, and Yu Dafu, who Uchiyama introduced to their Japanese counterparts such as Tanizaki Jun'ichirō and Satō Haruo when they visited Shanghai.⁸⁶ Individual experiences like

⁸⁴ Among them, two men used to live in Dalian, and one in Jiujiang.

⁸⁵ Yamamura, *Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai no keisei to tenkai*, 225-234.

⁸⁶ For more on Uchiyama Kanzō and the Uchiyama Bookstore, see Uchiyama, *Kakōroku*; Ozawa, Uchiyama Kanzo den; Honjō, *Ro Jin no aishita Uchiyama shoten*; Takatsuna, "Kokusai toshi" *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*, Chapter 5; Zhou, "Guanyu Neishan shudian zaoqi dianzhi yiwen de bianzhen," 182-185.

Uchiyama's reveal a degree of social mobility within the Japanese community despite its seemingly rigid hierarchy. Moreover, specific occupations or livelihoods often did not form the premise for long-term settlement.

An organized yet divided community

In Shanghai, the Japanese were reputed as the most well-organized and cohesive among all foreign groups. At the Municipal Ratepayers' Meeting, Western observers were struck by how Japanese representatives "marched in as a solid bloc."⁸⁷ During military conflicts, the Chinese were horrified by their Japanese neighbors turning into volunteer soldiers overnight.⁸⁸ The Japanese community itself took pride in this strong sense of solidarity, believing that to survive Shanghai's "racial competition" (*jinshū no kyōsō* 人種の競争)⁸⁹ they had to "prioritize collective welfare over individual interests."⁹⁰ Most of their communal organizations were not peculiar to Shanghai: some were local chapters or emulations of those in the home country, while others were institutions adopted across Japan's empire to align settler activities with national interests. However, the city's unique circumstances shaped their development, and interactions with the local treaty-port regime continually molded their functions. Despite the frequent promotion of "the spirit of unity" (*icchi danketsu no seishin* 一致団結の精神) by consular authorities, settler leaders, and local media, the Japanese community was never free of internal conflicts that stemmed from differing experiences of life in Shanghai and were reflected and amplified by the coexistence of various settler organizations.

⁸⁷ Hauser, *Shanghai*, 287-288.

⁸⁸ He Tianyan, *Shanghai kang Ri xuezhān shi*, 307-310.

⁸⁹ Miyake, *Shanghai inshoki*, 18-21.

⁹⁰ SNS, January 1, 1932.

The social organizations of Japanese settlers developed slowly. Until the turn of the twentieth century, their regular communal activities were limited to a few prefectural associations (*kenjinkai* 県人会) and hobby groups, which gathered weekly at the Higashi Honganji Temple or private homes to enjoy tea and play *go* and *shogi* (Japanese chess).⁹¹ An 1891 article in the *Shanghai shinpō*—which started in 1890 as the first Japanese-language newspaper in Shanghai—described settlers as a “disorderly crowd” (*ugō no shū* 烏合の衆) incapable of maintaining a respectable appearance for themselves, let alone earning prestige for their nation.⁹² State initiatives brought about the first general settler organization. In March 1905, the Japanese government responded to rapid expansion of overseas settlements during the Russo-Japanese War and the increasing need to manage and protect its citizens abroad by enacting the Settlement Corporation Law (*Kyoryū mindan hō* 居留民団法), to provide a legal framework for consolidating settler communities through a system of self-governance. This led to the formation of the Shanghai Japanese Association (*Shanghai Nihonjin kyōkai* 上海日本人協会; SJA) in December that year under the auspices of the consulate. The SJA assumed control over existing Japanese public facilities, including the cemetery and the elementary school previously managed by the Higashi Honganji. It also took responsibility for charitable work, overseeing the Japanese Company of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps, and aiding the consular authorities in community regulation. Specifically, it was charged with reporting and restraining the “coarse behavior” (*sobō no furumai* 粗暴の振る舞い) of those who were reveling in the Japan’s recent victory over Russia.⁹³ SJA Membership was voluntary and open to all Japanese residents, both male and female, for a monthly fee of 0.2 dollars. However, by late 1906, only 632 people (about ten

⁹¹ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki’nenshi*, 55; *Shanghai shinpō*, May 23, 1891.

⁹² *Shanghai shinpō*, January 2, 1891.

⁹³ *SN*, May 15, 1906, and July 7, 1906, quoted in *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki’nenshi*, 136-137.

percent of the Japanese population) had joined, indicating a general lack of enthusiasm among local residents.⁹⁴ To address this situation, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued supplementary guidelines in 1907 to implement the Settlement Corporation Law.⁹⁵ And on September 1,⁹⁶ the Shanghai Japanese Residents' Corporation (Shanghai kyoryū mindan 上海居留民団; JRC) replaced the SJA Japanese Association and inherited all its assets and responsibilities.⁹⁷

The most significant difference between the JRC and its predecessor was its authority to levy taxes on its settler community, which not only ensured a stable financial source but effectively made membership in it mandatory for all Japanese residing and earning incomes in Shanghai. The JRC initially implemented two types of tax: *eigyō kakin* (営業課金) for business owners and *shotoku kakin* (所得課金) for salary earners. Each type comprised thirteen levels of fixed progressive rates, ranging between 0.5 and 60 dollars for businesses and up to 18 dollars for individuals per month. Over time, the JRC's taxing power expanded. From 1915, it began imposing a land tax on Japanese-owned property, similar to the SMC, with a rate set at ten percent of the amount collected by the latter.⁹⁸ In 1926, *eigyō kakin* and *shotoku kakin* were

⁹⁴ JACAR Ref. B03041037400: "Shanghai Nihonjin kyōkai ni kansuru ken hōkoku 上海日本人協会ニ関スル件報告," April 23, 1907, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B03041037400>, [accessed May 5, 2023]

⁹⁵ See "Kyoryū mindan hō shikō kisoku 居留民団法施行規則," April 23, 1907, and "Gaimushō kokuji dai jūhachi gō 外務省告示第十八号," August 1, 1907, in Shanghai kyoryū mindan, *Mindan hōki*, 3-28.

⁹⁶ On the same day, the *mindan* was established in four other Chinese cities, Tianjin, Hankou, Andong, and Niuzhuang.

⁹⁷ Interestingly, one of the first resolutions the JRC passed in September 1907 was to call itself "Shanghai Kyoriū Mindan" in English without translation, perhaps under the assumption that its functions would be mostly confined within the Japanese community. However, it soon became clear that one of its vital responsibilities was to represent Japanese interests in municipal politics and interact with the SMC and other authorities. Consequently, just three weeks later, the English term "Japanese Residents' Corporation" appeared in a JRC letter to the SMC announcing its establishment. From then on, JRC used this term as its official English name. See Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 210; SMA U1-5-3: the JRC to the SMC, September 25, 1907.

⁹⁸ Unlike the SMC, the JRC also collected land tax from Japanese-owned property outside the Settlement. In such cases, it adopted a flat rate of one dollar per *mu* (614 square meters) a month.

unified as *kobetsu kakin* (戸別課金), collected from households or corporations as a unit, which aligned JRC taxation more closely with metropolitan practices.⁹⁹ Meanwhile, the rate system grew increasingly sophisticated. By 1934, it comprised forty-five levels, with the highest tier paying 16,770 dollars annually. Tax assessments no longer depended solely on income or profit but accounted for a range of factors, including location, asset value, business or occupation type, family size, and number of employees. As all tax assignments were updated every year, this process comprised a considerable amount of the JRC's work and continuously expanded its staff, particularly in the revenue department.¹⁰⁰

However, this taxation did not go unchallenged. Settlers frequently contested their tax bills,¹⁰¹ and late payments were a common issue for which the JRC never found an effective solution.¹⁰² Some settlers deliberately concealed changes in their addresses to evade being billed.¹⁰³ In early 1931, the JRC's attempt to introduce an additional "house tax" met with significant settler resistance and ultimately failed to materialize.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, any proposal to increase tax invariably led to heated debates within the community. Although large companies shouldered the majority of tax assignments,¹⁰⁵ *dochaku-ha* settlers proved most vocal in their opposition. Two main reasons accounted for this. First, the majority of Japanese residents had to simultaneously pay municipal rates to the SMC, which made their tax burden higher relative to

⁹⁹ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 905-909.

¹⁰⁰ *SNN*, May 9, 1934, morning edition.

¹⁰¹ *SNN*, May 28, 1935, evening edition; June 23, evening edition, 1935

¹⁰² *SNN*, January 26, 1934, evening edition; March 4, morning edition, 1934; May 25, evening edition, 1934; June 21, 1934, morning edition.

¹⁰³ *SNN*, November 27, 1934, morning edition.

¹⁰⁴ *SNN*, January 1, 1931, morning edition; January 30, 1931, morning edition; February 4, 1931, morning edition.

¹⁰⁵ In 1936, for example, the thirty largest companies, banks and factories contributed a total of 175,782 dollars (57%) to the *kobetsu kakin*; 108 medium-sized firms paid 22,629 dollars (7%); and the remaining 87,303 dollars (40%) came from 4,687 households of salary earners and small business owners, with each household paying an average of 18.6 dollars. See JACAR Ref. B05015304400: "Shanghai kyoryū mindan zaisei no gaikyō to shōrai no yosō narabi kyōiku hojokin zōgaku yōbō 上海居留民団財政ノ概況ト将来ノ予想並教育補助金増額要望," November 1936, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B05015304400>, [accessed May 15, 2023].

their peers in the metropole and other treaty ports.¹⁰⁶ Second, unlike large company staff that was typically paid in Japanese yen, local business owners and their employees earned incomes in silver, making them more susceptible to the fluctuations of Shanghai's market prices and international exchange rates. The early years of the Great Depression, for example, were a particularly difficult time. Between 1929 and 1931, the heavy depreciation of silver against the yen and other gold-standard currencies severely impacted small merchants and shopkeepers who imported their commodities from Japan.¹⁰⁷

As a self-governing body, the JRC in Shanghai had relatively limited functions compared to its counterparts in other treaty ports, a fact mirrored in its financial structure (Table 1.4). In the Japanese Concession of Tianjin and Hankou, the JRC assumed comprehensive duties akin to those of municipal authorities, overseeing urban infrastructure, public utilities, and daily governance; meanwhile, they collected taxes and fees from all residents within their jurisdictions regardless of nationality.¹⁰⁸ In contrast, the Shanghai JRC's finances leaned heavily on taxes from Japanese residents, and it overwhelmingly devoted its spending to the operation of Japanese schools, the number of which increased from one in 1907 to seven in the 1930s (see Chapter 2). Despite the JRC's success in expanding its revenues over time, taxes alone grew insufficient to cover its swelling expenditures, which saw a thirty-five-fold increase between 1908 and 1935. Consequently, it became increasingly reliant on subsidies from the Japanese government and the

¹⁰⁶ *SNN*, November 29, 1935, morning edition.

¹⁰⁷ *SNN*, February 4, 1931, morning edition. On the impact of the Great Depression on Shanghai's currencies and commodity prices, see Shiroyama, *China during the Great Depression*, 141-145. It also should be noted that yen earners were not immune to the negative impacts of exchange rates fluctuations. In late 1934 and early 1935, when the prices of silver increased against the yen in Shanghai, many large company employees also protested to the JRC regarding their tax assignments. Throughout the 1930s, the JRC's tax assessment committee (*kakin satei iinkai* 課金査定委員会) constantly faced the challenge of fairly distributing taxes between *kaisha-ha* yen earners and *dochaku-ha* silver earners. See *SNN*, May 28, 1935, morning edition.

¹⁰⁸ See Chen, *Tianjin zujie yu Riben jülü mintuan*, 153-179; Wang and Wu, *Hankou wuguo zujie*, 46-48; Watanabe, "Kyoryū mindan hō no seitei katei to Chūgoku no Nihon kyoryūchi: Tenshin Nihon senkan kyoryūchi o chūshin ni;" and Fujii, "Hankyū Nihon sokai no toshi kūkan shi."

SMC, a thorny issue that strained its relationship with both authorities. Moreover, it resorted to borrowing to fund large-scale extraordinary expenses. By 1934, the JRC's debt totaled 450,000 dollars; that year, it sold 900,000 dollars of new debentures through the Yokohama Specie Bank to local settlers and companies in order to finance the construction of a new campus for the girls' high school and to repay its previous debts.¹⁰⁹

Table 1.4. Annual Budget of the Japanese Residents' Corporation for 1908, 1921, 1929, and 1935

	1908	1921	1929	1935
Revenue (in silver dollars)				
Income tax		98,752	282,641	326,199
Land tax		10,350	27,167	49,078
Special tax		16,258	10,612	23,740
Service charges and tuition		10,587	47,064	55,793
Miscellaneous		300	1,200	29,186
Subsidy from the Japanese government		3,978	45,500	80,425
Subsidy from the SMC				128,000
Surplus from the previous fiscal year		14,958	20,495	90,000
Total	22,766	155,183	434,679	772,601
Expenditure (in silver dollars)				
Administration		17,422	39,533	66,860
Education		107,918	261,847	550,586
Public health		1,260	5,440	6,095
Volunteer corps		3,500	6,500	3,922
Cemetery and crematorium		2,752	5,232	4,948
Debt repayment		18,194	83,445	33,300
Miscellaneous		4,137	32,682	106,890
Total	22,766	155,183	434,679	772,601

Sources: SMA Q192-17-767: "Ribei jūliu mintuan wenjian 日本居留民團文件," 1926–1927; JACAR Ref. B04012072600: "Zaigai Nihonjin kaku gakkō kankei zatsuken / zai-Chūshi no bu / Shanhai kaku Nihon kokumin gakkō daiikkan 3. Hojo-hi kankei 在外日本人各學校關係雜件／在中支ノ部／上海各日本国民学校 第一卷 3. 補助費關係," 1927–1929, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B04012072600>, [accessed May 15, 2023]; JACAR Ref. B02030231700: Shōwa jūnendoshi Shanhai kyoryū mindan sai'nyū sai'shutsu sōkei yosan 昭和十年度上海居留民團歳入歳出総計予算," 1935, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02030231700>, [accessed May 15, 2023].

¹⁰⁹ *SNN*, January 10, 1934, morning edition; July 19, 1934, morning edition; August 17, 1934, evening edition.

Despite the JRC's functional limitations and its close monitoring by the consular authorities—from its inception, all its major resolutions and personnel changes required consular approval—it granted settlers a measure of autonomy in managing their communal affairs through a system of representative politics, which in many ways mirrored the government of the Settlement. An Administrative Committee (Gyōsei iinkai 行政委員会) helmed its executive branch and ran a staff responsible for daily operations. This committee consisted of fifteen members elected annually at the Residents' Assembly (Kyoryūmin daikai 居留民大会). After their election, the committee members would choose a chair, a vice-chair, and a treasurer from among themselves. The Residents' Assembly, on the other hand, functioned as a legislative body endowed with the authority to approve budgets, amend JRC regulations, and deliberate on major policies; it convened once a year but also met on an ad hoc basis if necessary.

Similar to the metropole, JRC suffrage was based on property ownership and gender. Initially, only adult males paying a tax of at least two dollars a month were eligible to become representatives (*mindan giin* 民団議員) and attend the annual assembly.¹¹⁰ From the outset, the JRC's taxation system was designed to disfranchise certain groups: instead of the regular “tax” (*kakin* 課金), monthly “fees” (*tesūryō* 手数料)—later renamed as “special tax” (*tokushu kakin* 特種課金)—were applied to businesses like restaurants, bathhouses, massage parlors, and teahouses, as well as to individuals such as geisha, entertainers, and waitresses, thereby excluding them from communal politics.¹¹¹ When the first Residents' Assembly convened in 1908, only 273 individuals (3.8 percent of the population) qualified as councilors, which roughly

¹¹⁰ Females who met the tax requirement were to be represented by their husbands, if married, or other male agents, if unmarried.

¹¹¹ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 173, 177-178, and 905-906; “Shanghai kyoryū mindan jōrei dai san gō 上海居留民団条例第三号,” May 1908, in Shanghai kyōryū mindan, *Mindan hōki*, 49-52.

equaled the proportion of residents with voting rights in the Settlement at the time.¹¹²

Unsurprisingly, the JRC in its early years, much like the SMC, predominantly represented the interests of large businesses, with the *kaisha-ha* elite disproportionately comprising its electorate and leadership. The inaugural Administrative Committee chair was Itō Yonejirō 伊東米治郎, the branch chief of the NYK; until the 1920s, the positions of chair and vice-chair were held almost exclusively by managers of major companies and banks.

Nevertheless, mirroring the metropolitan expansion of suffrage in the early twentieth century, the JRC experienced a gradual process of democratization that permitted greater *dochaku-ha* input over time. In 1915, all businesses, except for the entertainment industry, began to pay regular *kakin*; following a revision of the Settlement Corporation Law by the Japanese government in 1924, suffrage was extended to all males who had paid JRC taxes for over six months regardless of amount, a development that paralleled the domestic extension of voting rights during this period.¹¹³ Both reforms significantly enhanced the representation of middle- and lower-class settlers and facilitated a degree of genuinely democratic politics within the Japanese community. The first major conflict between the *kaisha-ha* and *dochaku-ha* arose in 1921, when the Administrative Committee proposed to spend 100,000 dollars to construct a new elementary school in Yangshupu, primarily for the children of cotton mills employees. The Hongkou community strongly opposed this plan and criticized the JRC for its a “company-first” (*kaisha hon’i* 会社本位) policy. This dispute continued for nearly a year until the proposal was finally approved on the condition that another school would soon be built in Hongkou.¹¹⁴

¹¹²Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki’nenshi*, 175.

¹¹³ JACAR Ref. B02130096600: “Kyoryū mindan hō shikō kisoku 居留民団法施行規則 Kyoryūmindan-hō Shikō Kisoku,” January 1925, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02130096600>, [accessed May 15, 2023].

¹¹⁴ See Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki’nenshi*, 393-405; SMA Y4-1-801: JAASU, “Shanghai Nihonjin kakuro rengōkai enkaku 上海日本人各路連合会沿革,” June 1937, 9.

As the JRC's franchise expanded, its electoral system also transformed. The 1924 reform removed the determination of JRC representatives by tax payments; instead, representatives were elected every two years, with their number set at sixty (reduced to forty in 1935).¹¹⁵ This change stimulated competition among various interest groups and fostered greater participation of ordinary settlers in communal politics. During the first representative election in early 1925, as many as ninety candidates vied for the sixty seats, and 2,577 out of 2,981 eligible voters cast their ballots.¹¹⁶ This high turnout rate continued in subsequent years and formed a stark contrast with the SMC election, which was often non-contested and rarely attracted more than forty percent of voters. Before each election, candidates engaged in spirited debates on policy issues at public forums organized by local Japanese media, and the newspapers reproduced their opinions in full. By the late 1920s, the *dochaku-ha* and *kaisha-ha* had reached equilibrium within the JRC, as evinced by a relatively balanced split of seats, although the *kaisha-ha* maintained a slight upper hand.¹¹⁷ In the Administrative Committee, reduced in 1925 to seven members elected from among the JRC representatives, it became customary for the *dochaku-ha*, metropolitan companies, and local textile enterprises to each occupy two seats, with the remaining seat reserved for a “neutral” (*chūritsu-ha* 中立派) figure—typically a well-respected lawyer or doctor who was expected to mediate conflicts and contribute an impartial perspective.¹¹⁸

Dochaku-ha representatives were usually nominated and backed by their respective trade groups (*dōgyō kumiai* 同業組合). By the 1930s, Japanese merchants in Shanghai had formed over thirty such groups to regulate prices, ensure quality control, and most importantly, lobby for

¹¹⁵ JACAR Ref. B02130096800: “Shanghai Kyoryū mindan hō shikō saikoku 上海居留民団法施行細則,” January 1925, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02130096800>, [accessed May 15, 2023].

¹¹⁶ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 176-177.

¹¹⁷ Yamamura, *Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai no keisei to tenkai*, 89-92.

¹¹⁸ SNS, March 15, 1934, morning edition.

favorable policies such as tax reductions and government loans.¹¹⁹ Each group sponsored a candidate or two to run for JRC seats and represent the interests of their trade. Candidacy was highly coveted and often provoked intense competition among settler business owners eager to extend their influence within the community, sometimes becoming quite literally a matter of life-and-death. The most dramatic case occurred prior to the 1935 election, when Akashi Masayoshi 明石正義, a restaurant owner on North Sichuan Road and a sitting JRC representative, discovered at the new year's party of the restaurant group that his colleagues would not support his reelection bid. Overcome with frustration and disappointment, he lashed out with rude words, leading to a violent scuffle with one of his infuriated peers that ultimately cost Akashi his life.¹²⁰

Akashi's death underscores just how high the stakes of *mindan* politics had become by this period. After the late 1920s, settlers' growing dependence on financial support from the home government heightened their enthusiasm for communal affairs while fueling intra-community tension. This trend started in 1928, when the Japanese government initiated the provision of "revival funds" (*fukkatsu shikin* 復活資金) to support enterprises in Shanghai suffering from anti-Japanese boycotts. Following the Shanghai Incident, the Imperial Diet further sanctioned 5.3 million silver dollars of "reconstruction funds" (*fukkō shikin* 復興資金) to assist local Japanese businesses in recovering from war-inflicted damages and the general economic depression. These aids stemmed from orchestrated lobbying efforts in Tokyo by *kaisha-ha* and *dochaku-ha* representatives, which reached cabinet members including Foreign Minister

¹¹⁹ The largest and most influential trade group was organized by textile manufacturers, but the majority of *dōgyō kumiai* were formed by smaller business owners and manufacturers such as alcohol merchants, restaurateurs, innkeepers, shoemakers, tailors, and barbers. See *Shanghai ichiran* (1928), 292-294; "Hōjin eigyō shurui-betsu ichiran 邦人営業種類別一覽," in *Shanghai naigai kōshō annai* (1935), 80-83; *SNN*, February 22, 1937, morning edition.

¹²⁰ *SNN*, January 14, 1935, morning edition, January 16, 1935, evening edition, and February 16, 1935, morning edition.

Yoshizawa Kenkichi and Finance Minister Takahashi Korekiyo.¹²¹ However, the allocation of reconstruction funds, which was administered by the JRC and dispensed as term loans, spiked discontent among the *dochaku-ha* settlers, who condemned its policies as grossly unfair. While large companies easily obtained funds up to several times their pre-1932 capital size, small lenders faced a much stricter screening process and harsher terms, and many of them received only a few hundred dollars, which barely sufficed to help them make ends meet, let alone reconstruct their businesses.¹²²

A closely related issue concerned the JRC's institutional structure. After 1932, as the management of reconstruction funds significantly increased the JRC's workload, its leadership advocated for a more streamlined and unified administrative system. The proposed reform centered on the appointing (instead of electing) a full-time, salaried president (*mindanchō* 民団長) to replace the unpaid role of the Administrative Committee chair in leading the JRC. Meanwhile, in an effort to emulate metropolitan municipal governance, the Administrative Committee was restructured into an Advisory Council (*sanji-kai* 参事会) that served as a consultative body to the President.¹²³ In late 1934, the Japanese government sanctioned this reform through an amendment of the Settlement Corporation Law.¹²⁴ However, the reform met considerable local resistance as it coincided with a period of growing apprehensions about the

¹²¹ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenishi*, 1036-1140.

¹²² *SNN*, February 8, 1935, morning edition.

¹²³ *SNN*, August 16, 1934, evening edition, August 28, 1934, morning edition, and November 18, 1934, morning edition.

¹²⁴ *SNN*, December 18, 1934, morning edition, and December 29, 1934, morning edition. In pushing for this reform, the Shanghai JRC sought support from its counterparts in Tianjin and Hankou. But the latter displayed little interests due to concerns that such institutional restructuring would potentially lead to confusion among the Chinese population of the Japanese concessions and thus cause unnecessary disruptions to their municipal governance. Therefore, the revised *Kyoryū mindan hō* of 1934 allowed the JRCs in other treaty ports to maintain their existing structures. See *SNN*, August 21, 1934, and September 8, 1934, morning edition; JACAR Ref. B05016155000: "Gaimushō-rei nite kyoryū mindan hō shikō kisoku kaisei no ken 外務省令ニテ居留民団法施行規則改正ノ件," December 1934, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B05016155000>, [accessed May 15, 2023].

bureaucratization of the JRC. The previous year, Sasada Renpei 笹田廉平, the JRC's chief accountant, had been discovered to have embezzled a total of 80,000 dollars of public funds over the past seven years. Labelled the “greatest scandal” in the JRC's history, the Sasada incident severely marred the organization's reputation and caused widespread concerns about internal corruption.¹²⁵ The 1934 reform partly sought to restore the JRC's credibility, but the restructuring of its leadership only raised further questions about its accountability to the electorate.

In January 1935, with the new administrative system coming into effect, Yasui Gengō, a lawyer who had chaired the Administrative Committee since 1933, was named the inaugural JRC president. The introduction of the new institution sparked an “anti-JRC fervor” (*han mindan netsu* 反民団熱) among *dochaku-ha* settlers, a sentiment reflected in the outcome of the representative election in February. Although the *dochaku-ha* remained a minority in the Assembly, winning seventeen of its forty seats), the most popular candidates were almost invariably those who most vigorously criticized the JRC's current policies.¹²⁶ Among these candidates was Ikeda Anzō 池田安蔵, a freelance journalist active in Shanghai since the early 1920s. Ikeda, who garnered the second-highest vote count, railed against the new JRC presidency, which, he warned, could easily metamorphose into a “despotic regime” (*bōsei* 暴政) under the president. He particularly criticized Yasui's substantial salary package, which amounted to 15,000 dollars a year plus a 3,200-dollar housing allowance. As this sum equated to the total tax contributions of 2,500 lower-income settler households, Ikeda described the situation using the classic idiom “One general's success is built on ten thousand soldiers' bones”

¹²⁵ *SNN*, May 9, 1933, morning edition, May 10, 1933, morning edition, and May 20, 1933, morning edition.

¹²⁶ *SNN*, February 25, 1935, morning edition.

(J. *isshō kōnari bankotsu karu* 一將功なり万骨枯る; C. *yijiang gongcheng wangu ku* 一將功成萬骨枯).¹²⁷ Throughout early 1935, the controversy over Yasui's salary became a rallying point for *dochaku-ha* opposition movement and sparked extensive discussions about the widening wealth gap within the community. Supporters of JRC reform argued that full-time JRC staff should receive compensation commensurate with their professional income levels so that the organization could attract personnel qualified to handle its increasingly complex work, such as the management of reconstruction funds. Yasui's salary package, for example, was set to roughly match his earnings as a lawyer. However, critics like Ikeda contended that the JRC, as a non-profit public organization, ought to minimize its salary expenditures to prioritize the community's broader interests.¹²⁸ In an attempt to quell dissent, Yasui pledged to forgo remuneration and continue his service on a pro bono basis, but the *dochaku-ha* campaign against his presidency continued—as Yasui's law firm had maintained a close partnership with the large companies, he was widely recognized as a *kaisha-ha* figure. This eventually compelled him to step down in early March.¹²⁹

Despite Yasui's resignation, the *dochaku-ha* belligerents remained unsatisfied. Ikeda and his allies went on to form a “Kōmin Club” (交民俱樂部) aimed at “fostering camaraderie among members and improving the general welfare of Japanese residents.” The club set forth two main agendas for the upcoming JRC annual assembly in late March. First, it demanded an overhaul of reconstruction funds policies that included reducing interest rates, prolonging the repayment periods, and setting an upper limit for loans to large companies. Second, it called

¹²⁷ *SNN*, February 8, 1935, morning edition.

¹²⁸ *SNN*, February 3, 1935, morning edition; February 8, 1935, morning edition; February 9, 1935, morning edition.

¹²⁹ *SNN*, February 14, 1935, morning edition, and March 3, 1935, morning edition. The position of the JRC President stayed vacant until late 1935, when it was filled by a *dochaku-ha* leader, Amano Masusaburō, who at the time was serving as the president of the Japanese Amalgamated Association of Street Unions (see below).

curtailing the JRC's administrative expenses, primarily through a systematic reduction of staff salaries.¹³⁰ These demands, however, caused unease among other *dochaku-ha* representatives who preferred a more conciliatory approach. They worried that the club's assertive posture would not only further polarize the local Japanese society but also cause a schism within the *dochaku-ha* and undermine its negotiating power against the *kaisha-ha*. To avert such a rift, a last-minute compromise was reached: Ikeda would be recognized as the common leader of *dochaku-ha* representatives on the condition that he withdraw from the Kōmin Club.¹³¹ This agreement enabled the *dochaku-ha* to achieve a remarkable victory in the ensuing JRC assembly, which passed several resolutions that reflected a moderate version of the Kōmin Club's initial proposals.¹³²

While the JRC formed the locus of settler politics, various other organizations emerged alongside it, whose formation and development were often direct responses to key moments in early twentieth-century Shanghai that shaped the Japanese community. The elite commercial circle was the first to act in concert. In 1908, a Japanese Club (Nihonjin kurabu 日本人倶楽部) was created through the merger of several alumni associations from Tōdai (Tokyo Imperial University) and other prestigious imperial universities and a Business Club that had been founded two years ago. Modelled after the British Shanghai Club, the Japanese Club primarily served as a social networking space reserved for business leaders. However, its headquarters on Boone Road became the symbolic center of the Japanese community. This red-brick Renaissance Revival-style building, completed in 1914 at the cost of over 130,000 taels and equipped with a

¹³⁰ Yonezawa, *Shanghai shiwa*, 194-196; *SNN*, March 13, 1935, morning edition, March 16, 1935, morning edition, and March 18, 1935, morning edition.

¹³¹ *SNN*, March 19, 1935, morning edition, and March 20, 1935, morning edition.

¹³² Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 637-639; *SNN*, March 22, 1935, morning edition; March 24, 1935, morning edition.

capacious auditorium, housed the JRC's office until 1932 and regularly hosted settler assemblies (Figure 1.6).¹³³



Figure 1.6. The Japanese Club in Shanghai. Virtual Cities Project (Institut d'Asie Orientale, Lyon).

Amidst the Chinese revolution in late 1911, major trading companies and banks took the initiative of founding a more influential commercial body, the Shanghai Japanese Business Association (*Shanghai Nihonjin jitsugyō kyōkai* 上海日本人実業協会). Its immediate purposes were to protect Japanese business interests during political upheaval and maintain Japan's treaty rights after the collapse of the Qing regime. Over the ensuing decades, it played a crucial role in furthering Japanese economic expansion in central China, taking Shanghai as a vital gateway. To

¹³³ Yonezawa, *Shanghai shiwa*, 196-200; Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 1269-1270.

this end, it undertook systematic studies of Chinese economy and market trends. Its publications, represented by a comprehensive three-thousand-page survey on Chinese industry in 1919, circulated widely in Shanghai and Japan and became important references for metropolitan entrepreneurs and policy makers. And from 1915 onwards, a significant part of the Association's work involved monitoring and reporting on the development of Chinese nationalist movements and anti-Japanese boycotts. After its reorganization as the Shanghai Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Shanghai Nihon shōkō kaigisho* 上海日本商工会議所) in 1928,¹³⁴ it hosted a weekly "Friday Forum" (*Kin'yōkai* 金曜会), which convened representatives of various trade groups, consular officials, and military attachés to exchange information and discuss current events impacting Sino-Japanese economic relations.¹³⁵

At the grassroots level, ordinary settlers were organized through the *chōnaikai* 町内会 (neighborhood association) system. Shortly after the Twenty-One Demands Incident in 1915, the settlers in Hongkou founded six *chōnaikai* to protect themselves from potential anti-Japanese violence. In the next two decades, the network of *chōnaikai* grew in tandem with the local Japanese population. By 1937, Shanghai had fifty-one *chōnaikai* with a total of 13,000 members, seventy percent of which concentrated in Hongkou and the North Sichuan Road area. Their size varied greatly, with an average of fifty-seven households per *chōnaikai*.¹³⁶ In many ways, this system echoed its metropolitan counterpart, which developed in the same period. Most *chōnaikai* leaders were proprietors of small individual enterprises, and their membership theoretically encompassed all households within a specific area irrespective of social and economic status.

¹³⁴ In 1919, the Association was renamed the Shanghai Japanese Chamber of Commerce (*Shanghai Nihon shōgyō kaigisho* 上海日本商業會議所); and in 1928, it changed its name again to become the Shanghai Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry to foster a closer cooperation with the industrialists, especially the textile manufacturers.

¹³⁵ Yamamura, *Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai no keisei to tenkai*, 18-68 and 146-194; Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 1180-1194.

¹³⁶ SMA Y4-1-801: JAASU, "Shanghai Nihonjin kakuro rengōkai enkaku," June 1937, 1-5.

Their main functions included overseeing neighborhood safety and sanitation, organizing communal events, identifying those in need of help, and promoting mutual aid among the members.¹³⁷ However, the *chōnaikai* in Shanghai were distinguished by their high degree of collective action. In 1917, a *chōnaikai* league was created under the leadership of a standing committee dominated by prominent *dochaku-ha* figures. This coordination further strengthened after the May Thirtieth Movement in 1925 with the establishment of the Japanese Amalgamated Association of Street Unions (*Nihonjin kakuro rengōkai* 日本人各路連合会; JAASU). And three years later, when anti-Japanese sentiments in Shanghai heightened in the aftermath of the Jinan Incident, the Japanese consulate mandated the organization of *chōnaikai* in every area with more than twenty Japanese households and required all *chōnaikai* to join the JAASU.¹³⁸

This coordinated approach largely derived from the need for self-defense against the perceived threats from the native population. From 1925 onwards, the JAASU took an active part in every crisis, mobilizing settlers for tasks such as night patrols, food distribution, intelligence collection, medical support, and refugee accommodation. In 1927, it spearheaded the formation of a local chapter of the Imperial Military Reservists' Association (*Teikoku zaigō gunjin kai* 帝国在郷軍人会), which drew as members several hundred settlers who had military experience and routinely drilled them in preparation for potential emergencies.¹³⁹ These efforts culminated during the Battle of Shanghai in early 1932, when the JAASU offered crucial assistance to

¹³⁷ Hastings, *Neighborhood and nation in Tokyo*, 69-81; Tōkyō shisei chōsakai, *Tōkyō shi chōnaikai ni kansuru chōsa*.

¹³⁸ Shanhai kyoryūmindan, *Shanhai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 503-504. This coordination was a distinctive feature of the *chōnaikai* system in Shanghai. In Japan, residents formed and participated in *chōnaikai* on a voluntary basis. Although domestic *chōnaikai* also formed leagues in response to earthquakes and other emergencies, or during petition campaigns, until World War II they mostly functioned independently within their respective neighborhoods. See Hastings, *Neighborhood and nation in Tokyo*, 69-81.

¹³⁹ Shanhai kyoryūmindan, *Shanhai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 1081; SMA Q192-9-327: *Shanhai Teikoku zaigō gunjin kai*, "Gunji kunren seiseki hōkoku 軍事訓練成績報告," May 1934.

Japanese military operations in Hongkou and Zhabei by organizing civilian settlers to not only provide logistical support but also participate in actual combat by hunting down so-called “mufti corps” and “snipers” among the Chinese residents.¹⁴⁰

In normal times, the JAASU also wielded considerable influence through championing the interests of ordinary settlers, such as the aforementioned school dispute in 1921, where its precursor, the *chōnaikai* league, organized the Hongkou community’s protest movement. However, the JAASU should not be understood as a force that opposed the JRC. There was in fact significant overlap between *chōnaikai* leaders and the *dochaku-ha* representation within the JRC. In 1932, for instance, eight out of the sixteen members of the JAASU’s standing committee were current JRC representatives, with another three having held seats in the past.¹⁴¹ More often than not, the two organizations consciously collaborated to foster greater cohesion within the larger Japanese community, and when conflicts did arise between different social classes, they typically played out within the JRC’s political framework.

However, what distinguished the JAASU from the JRC and made the former increasingly influential was its active role in managing “external relations” (*taigai kankei* 対外関係) for the *dochaku-ha* community. Although the JAASU had been initially formed under the consulate’s auspices as a tool of social control and mobilization, it soon embarked on its own independent “diplomacy” by engaging directly with the home government as well as Chinese and foreign municipal authorities. Throughout the late 1920s and 1930s, it consistently targeted the SMC in its petition campaigns for better protection and more financial support, and the need to deal with

¹⁴⁰ For JAASU’s role in the Shanghai Incident, see Hamada, *Shanghai jihen*, 365-378; Fogel, “Shanghai-Japan,” 349-350; Takatsuna, “*Kokusai toshi*” *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*, 126-155. For more on the Shanghai Incident, see Chapter 5.

¹⁴¹ One of these eight men was Ikeda Shigeo, the manager of the Mitsui Trading Company in Shanghai, and the rest were all proprietors of locally based businesses. For a list of the JAASU’s leadership between 1927 and 1940, see Yamamura, *Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai no keisei to tenkai*, 272-273.

the Settlement regime further explains why a unified *chōnaikai* system developed in Shanghai but not in any other Japanese treaty port settlement. Compared with the JRC, which was under closer consular scrutiny and heavier *kaisha-ha* influence and hence tended towards a moderate approach in interacting with Chinese and other foreign groups, the JAASU voiced settlers' concerns with much more assertion, and in its own words, “without hindrance from any direction” (*izue no hōmen ni mo seichū wo ukezu* 何れの方面にも掣肘を受けず).¹⁴²

A central figure in this regard was Hayashi Yūkichi 林雄吉, who owned a small trading company in Shanghai and headed the *chōnaikai* system four times, for a total of seventeen years, between 1915 and 1941. Hayashi was best known for his shooting of William J. Keswick, the SMC chairman, at the 1941 Municipal Ratepayers' Meeting after failing to block a tax increase proposal.¹⁴³ Yet, by this time, Hayashi had already gained city-wide recognition for his decades-long lobbying activities in Shanghai and Tokyo. These efforts, while earning him much popularity among his fellow settlers, discomfited the municipal and consular authorities. Ishii Itarō 石射猪太郎 (1887—1954), the Japanese consul-general in Shanghai between 1932 and 1936, described Hayashi as a “right-leaning old man” (*ukei rōjin* 右傾老人) who habitually overstepped his authority by attempting to directly represent Japanese settlers before the SMC.¹⁴⁴ Interestingly, despite being arguably the most influential *dochaku-ha* settler, Hayashi never sought election to the JRC Assembly, perhaps because distancing himself from the latter afforded him more freedom to conduct “diplomacy” on behalf of ordinary settlers.

Although the JAASU originated from fear of the native populace and increasingly adopted a hardline stance as Sino-Japanese hostilities escalated, its interactions with the Chinese

¹⁴² SMA Y4-1-801: JAASU, “*Shanghai Nihonjin kakuro rengōkai enkaku*,” June 1937, 7.

¹⁴³ For a detailed account of this incident, see Wakeman, *The Shanghai Badlands*, 100-103.

¹⁴⁴ Ishii, *Gaikōkan no isshō*, 235.

community were not always adversarial. It regularly hosted round-table talks to bring together Chinese and Japanese community leaders and sponsored group visits of Chinese merchants to Japan to foster “co-existence and co-prosperity” (*kyōzon kyōei* 共存共栄).¹⁴⁵ At times, it also mobilized its members to collaborate with Chinese residents in coping with their shared challenges. In January 1934, when a city-wide rent reduction campaign arose at the initiative of several Chinese commercial and social organizations, it immediately attracted the attention of the JAASU; within a month, the latter had formed a “rent research committee” and officially joined the movement.¹⁴⁶ Although the campaign’s overall achievement in subsequent years was mixed at best, it produced some notable success when Chinese and Japanese tenants took joint actions. In March 1935, forty-one Chinese and twenty-six Japanese households in the neighborhood of Hengfeng Li near North Sichuan Road collectively negotiated a twenty percent rent reduction, a case extolled by local Japanese media as a successful example of Sino-Japanese “united front” (*kyōdō sensen* 共同戦線).¹⁴⁷ The JAASU also pressured Japanese landlords to “voluntarily” lower rent. To this end, Hayashi, who owned extensive property in Yangshupu and was the landlord to over eighty Chinese households, decided to set himself as an example by offering a twenty percent rent reduction to all his tenants.¹⁴⁸

Conclusion

Shanghai’s Japanese community was characterized by a peripherality that manifested in two interconnected aspects. Geographically, it sat on the outskirts of the International Settlement,

¹⁴⁵ SMA Y4-1-801: JAASU, “Shanghai Nihonjin kakuro rengōkai enkaku,” June 1937, 9-10.

¹⁴⁶ *SNN*, January 18, 1934, evening edition, February 10, 1934, morning edition, February 13, 1934, morning edition, and February 18, 1934, morning edition.

¹⁴⁷ *SNN*, March 29, 1935, morning edition.

¹⁴⁸ *SNN*, October 31, 1935, evening edition.

a choice that resulted from both economic reasons and the strategic decision to maintain a distance from the core of the foreign municipality. Meanwhile, their socioeconomic status distinguished them from the archetypal “colonizer” under the treaty-port context who lived in isolation from the natives. Across the Suzhou Creek, Japanese settlers discovered a “new land” (*shin tenchi* 新天地) to build a “Little Tokyo”; at the same time, they integrated themselves into a bustling world of petty urbanites. For most *dochaku-ha* settlers, it was the cramped alleyway houses and teeming markets in Hongkou, rather than the towering skyscrapers along the Bund or the opulent department stores on Nanjing Road, that formed the texture of their everyday lives.

This peripheral position did not mean a lack of interaction with the host city. On the contrary, as the Japanese acquired full treaty privileges after 1895 but failed to establish their own concession, their presence in Shanghai entailed continuous engagement with the city’s existing colonial framework and local populace. By the early twentieth century, they had emerged as a vital force that aided the treaty port’s transformation and influenced the evolution of its colonial contours. Meanwhile, as the community expanded in both size and internal complexity, it developed a multifarious system of social organization and communal politics that simultaneously reflected its internal cohesiveness and discord. These dynamics not only mirrored their diverse experiences of settling in Shanghai but also profoundly informed their efforts to recolonize the city over the next decades, a story that the rest of this dissertation will explore.

Chapter Two

Integrating into the Treaty Port: Political Participation, Education, and Public Health

By the turn of the twentieth century, Shanghai's International Settlement had emerged as a unique socio-political experiment amidst the broader context of imperialism in China. This vibrant enclave, managed by a consortium of foreign powers, stood as a highly contested ground of cultures, ideologies, and ambitions that shifted over time. The late arrival of the Japanese and their physical peripherality by no mean indicates isolation from this nexus of local, national, and imperial dynamics. Instead, to operate in a treaty-port context without their exclusive concession necessitated a deepening engagement with its existing political and administrative framework. The early decades of the twentieth century saw a continuous process of negotiation, contestation, and mutual adaptation through which the Japanese community and the Settlement society reshaped each other. While the evolution of the "Model Settlement" has been the subject of an extensive body of scholarship on modern Shanghai, the significant Japanese contributions and influence have yet to receive a close examination it warrants. The analysis below takes on this task by exploring three key aspects of the Settlement's governance that was growingly informed by Japanese involvement.

The first half of this chapter delves into the roles of the Japanese in municipal politics to illustrate how this community transitioned from a marginal actor in the Settlement's power configuration to one of its major stakeholders. Through an examination of their participation in municipal elections and involvement in the debate over municipal representation, this section demonstrates how the Japanese community functioned as an established party within the

Settlement upholding its traditional order while simultaneously pushing for its political modernization to further their own ends—a peculiar dual role that presented the Japanese with both challenges and benefits. The latter half of the chapter shifts focus to the Japanese community's interaction with the Settlement regime in the realms of education and public health, where their efforts to sway municipal policies were marked by a strategy that combined collaborative and competitive approaches, coupled with skillful manipulation of their multiple identities as Japanese nationals, Settlement residents, and citizens of a modern cosmopolis.

Municipal Politics

As the governing body of the International Settlement, the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC) had a dual meaning. On one hand, it specifically denoted the small committee that served as the highest authority within the Settlement, responsible for major decision-making and the oversight of the Settlement's governance. On the other hand, the term broadly encompassed the entire administrative apparatus, including a range of sub-committees and departments each charged with particular areas of the Settlement's day-to-day operations, all under the supervision of the aforementioned committee. The SMC in its former sense was composed of, as stipulated by the Land Regulations, up to nine members elected annually by ratepayers through open ballot. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the Settlement's electoral system had ensured that the Council predominantly represent business interests and the propertied class. The franchise was limited to foreigners who either owned property valued at no less than five hundred taels or paid an annual rent of the same amount. In the early 1900s, there were only 1,400 eligible voters;¹ as population grew and land values increased, this figure rose to nearly 4,000 by the mid-1930s, yet it still

¹ *NCH*, January 22, 1904.

accounted for less than ten percent of the foreign resident population.² In some cases, an individual could have multiple votes by qualifying both personally and as the representative of one or more businesses, which further concentrated political power within a narrow segment of the Settlement society. To stand for election, one had to meet a property qualification that was set significantly higher than that for voting rights and be endorsed by two other ratepayers. Consequently, managers of major commercial establishments such as Jardine Matheson, Butterfield and Swire, and the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation often found themselves in councilor positions, although there was a gradual shift towards greater representation of long-term settlers compared to expatriate businessmen over time.³ Meanwhile, Council seats were customarily reserved for certain national groups in a way that was believed to reflect their relative economic influence and numbers of voters. Before 1914, the Council usually contained seven British, one American, and one German. These tacit rules were accompanied by a general public disinterest in municipal elections until the early twentieth century. It was a common scenario that no more than nine candidates were nominated—due to widespread reluctance among qualified businessmen to take on this unpaid role—resulting in their automatic election; even when contested elections occurred, voter turnout was low. In 1904, for example, only 494 out of the 1,400 eligible ratepayers cast their ballots.⁴

The Japanese were absent from the Council until the mid-1910s, a situation that went largely unquestioned by the Japanese community by this time due to their relative lack of interest in Settlement politics.⁵ However, the onset of World War I in 1914 dramatically transformed the inter-imperial relations in the Settlement and led to an unprecedented surge in national feelings

² *NCH*, April 3, 1935.

³ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 81-82.

⁴ *NCH*, January 22, 1904.

⁵ Shimazu, *Shanghai annai dainanaban*, 26-27.

among the various foreign groups.⁶ This change in political climate quickly translated into a serious contest over municipal power. As the time approached for the reelection of councilors in early 1915, there was widespread anticipation, especially within the diplomatic circle, that the German seat would be ceded to a Japanese representative, to reflect Japan's status as an Allied Power and its expanding interests within the Settlement.⁷ Under these circumstances, Ishii Akira 石井徹, chairman of the Japanese Residents' Corporation's Administrative Committee and branch manager of the Japan Mail Steamship Company, became the first Japanese candidate to stand for municipal election.

Japanese participation was pivotal in fueling the most intense competition for Council seats ever witnessed up to that point. Throughout the two days of election, several important figures, including a vice consul and the chairman of the Japanese Business Association, made personal appearances at the polling stations to rally support for Ishii. The JRC organized a group of canvassers to register the names of Japanese voters and to summon those who had yet to appear, ensuring that all 150 eligible Japanese ratepayers were mobilized to vote.⁸ Japanese involvement stirred up racist sentiments among some British ratepayers on top of their national rivalry with the Germans. On the first day of the election, a man appeared on the Bund wearing a sandwich board that read, "Britons, attend to your interests. Eliminate the German and Japanese candidates."⁹ Although this slogan was deemed too offensive and instantly removed by the police, it highlighted an unprecedented level of public concerns regarding the municipal election, which ultimately saw a total of 1,300 ballots cast—a new turnout record that was not surpassed

⁶ Vandamme, "The Rise of Nationalism in a Cosmopolitan City."

⁷ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 65-66.

⁸ *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 295-296; "Shanghai shisanjikai hōjin rikkōho engi (ichi) 上海市参事会邦人立候補の沿革 (一)," in *SNN*, February 8, 1934, morning edition.

⁹ *NCH*, January 23, 1915.

until 1927. The result was narrowly decided: Ishii received 620 votes, falling 50 short of the ninth-ranked candidate, a Russian Count. Japanese newspapers were disappointed by this outcome and attributed Ishii's loss to the betrayal of the British voters,¹⁰ but British diplomats found themselves unable to force the ratepayers to vote against their will.¹¹ Meanwhile, many local British settlers expressed content with the result and condescendingly advised the Japanese to "try again." One of them suggested that while the Japanese community had recently burgeoned in the Settlement "because of our fondness for 'open doors'," it would need a greater voting power to secure a seat on the Council—"How many of the total 11,000 [Japanese] residents," he asked, "would be entitled to vote for councilors in their own cities in Dai Nippon?"¹²

Despite their frustration, the election result was not entirely unexpected for the Japanese. In the weeks preceding the election, discussions about broadening municipal voting rights were already underway among the Japanese community. Ueno Sadamasa 上野貞正, a political scholar and the vice-president of the *Tōa dōbun*, penned a lengthy article in the English-language *Shanghai Times* advocating for reforms to the Settlement's election system. Ueno presented himself not as a radical opponent of the existing institutions but argued that municipal affairs should not be solely dictated by economic power, which had rendered the vast majority of Japanese residents "as helpless as slaves under the despotic government of another nationality." He therefore suggested an "expedient" approach to the reform: retaining the current system of individual votes based on property ownership, while introducing an equal or larger number of community-based votes and allocating them among the various national groups in proportion to

¹⁰ *SNN*, January 24, 1915, morning edition.

¹¹ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 66.

¹² *NCH*, February 6, 1915.

their respective sizes. The purpose of this reform, he claimed, was to respect “the right of every individual either poor or rich.”¹³

While Ueno was among the first foreigners to propose a system akin to universal suffrage within the Settlement, the Japanese community constantly found itself facing the dilemma of balancing socio-economic considerations with the claim of individual rights when it came to the question of broadening political representation. The comment from the aforementioned British ratepayer had likely resonated among the Japanese—as noted in the previous chapter, the JRC extended its own franchise from the mid-1910s onwards, and discussions persisted into the 1930s among certain settler politicians about implementing universal suffrage within the JRC, to strengthen the Japanese case for instituting a similar system within the entire foreign society of the Settlement, which would undoubtedly place the Japanese in a dominant position in Settlement politics.¹⁴ However, these initiatives invariably failed to materialize, primarily due to the reluctance of both *kaisha-ha* and *dochaku-ha* elite to extend voting rights among the underclass of their own community. Furthermore, as we shall see shortly, the debate over suffrage was further complicated by the issue of Chinese representation in Settlement governance. Despite Japanese numerical superiority over other foreign groups, their argument for political power based on community size could risk backfiring when the Chinese population was factored into the equation.

Several months after the 1915 election, the resignation of one of the British councilors prompted the SMC to consider co-opting Ishii, a move that aligned with municipal precedent and was encouraged by British consular authorities. Despite some initial resistance within the SMC to this proposal, diplomatic considerations eventually prevailed, leading to Ishii’s invitation to

¹³ *ST*, January 16, 1915.

¹⁴ *SNN*, March 24, 1935, morning edition.

the Council and setting the precedent of reserving one Council seat for the Japanese.¹⁵ In early 1916, adhering to this new norm, the British nominated only six candidates instead of seven, which guaranteed the election of all Allied Power candidates. When Ishii resigned in March of that year upon his departure from Shanghai, his seat was taken over by Fujimura Yoshiaki 藤村義朗, the Mitsui Trading Company's branch manager and Ishii's successor as JRC chairman. Despite the Japanese call for greater popular participation in municipal politics, their selection of candidates to stand for municipal election was not a result of democratic decision-making. Ishii and Fujimura were chosen through small-circle discussions by the consul-general and a handful of *kaisha-ha* representatives, while ordinary settlers' voices were largely ignored.¹⁶ From this point until 1927, it was customary for the incumbent or former JRC chairman to sit on the Council, with the longest-serving man being Sakuragi Shun'ichi 桜木俊一, the manager of South Manchurian Railway (Mantestu)'s Shanghai office, whose tenure spanned from 1921 to 1927. This practice reflected the *kaisha-ha*'s control of Japanese communal affairs until the mid-1920s; meanwhile, it was likely a strategic choice to nominate candidates perceived as representative of the "respectable" class of the Japanese community for municipal elections to secure support from non-Japanese voters.

The Council's composition, consisting of six British, one American, and Russian, and one Japanese councilors, remained unchanged until the end of World War I, but Japanese involvement brought fresh elements to the formerly uneventful municipal elections. To mobilize their voters, the JRC adopted a range of campaigning strategies previously unseen in the Settlement's history so far. In January 1917, for example, when only 94 Japanese voters turned

¹⁵ *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 19, July 28, 1915, 285; August 4, 1915, 286; September 8, 1915, 118; October 27, 1915, 328.

¹⁶ *Kōbukyoku gyōsei kikō no kentō*, 56-58.

up at polling stations on the first day of the election, the JRC's election committee deployed five cars and one carriage to dispatch canvassers to call out every Japanese ratepayer. Moreover, agents were positioned at each polling station to assist with the voting process, including translating the ballots and instructing new voters on how to sign their names in Romaji. As a result of these efforts, 229 out of the 232 Japanese votes were cast. Although the overall Japanese voting power remained relatively small—other foreign groups accounted for about 2,000 votes that year, with more than half being British, but only 800 of those were cast—the high Japanese turnout made Fujimura the second-highest-ranked candidate, a result hailed as a monumental success by the Japanese community.¹⁷ The joining of the Japanese had an impact on how other foreign communities approached municipal elections. In 1920, the SMC established additional voting booths to facilitate the voting process and encourage greater voter turnout. The *Shanghai Municipal Gazette*—the SMC's official publication—warned Western ratepayers that “Japanese Ratepayers marching in solid phalanxes are expected to be at all the voting booths” and urged them to ensure that their votes were counted.¹⁸

Starting in 1919, the year the Russians lost their seat, the standard makeup of the SMC included six British, two American, and one Japanese members. To maintain its traditional number of seats, each national group had to rely on its own voting strength and the goodwill of others. As mentioned earlier, when all groups nominated candidates in accord with their allotted seats, all candidates would be elected by default. In competitive elections, however, voters needed to eliminate surplus candidates from their ballots to leave no more than nine names. Typically, voters supported their compatriots while striking out the names of surplus candidates

¹⁷ “Shanghai shisanjikai hōjin rikkōho engi (ni) 上海市参事会邦人立候補の沿革（二）,” in *SNN*, February 9, 1934, morning edition.

¹⁸ *SG*, February 14, 1920.

from other groups. In other words, a candidate would only receive fewer foreign votes if his community “over-nominated.”¹⁹ In most cases, only the British would do so, confident that their own voting power would secure at least six seats, while the Japanese and Americans avoided over-nominating to prevent vote splitting that could lead to unexpected loss of seats.

In theory, the British could easily dominate municipal elections with their sheer number: as of 1925, there were 1,157 British, 552 Japanese, and 388 American voters, while other smaller communities combined to account for 700 votes.²⁰ However, as Japanese voters steadily increased in the 1920s, their remarkable turnout and highly organized voting strategy allowed them to decisively influence election outcomes. Unlike other foreign communities, the JRC held pre-election meetings to decide which candidates to support, often involving strategic vote allocation to different Western candidates so that they would not surpass the Japanese candidate; throughout the election, JRC agents were present at polling stations to ensure all Japanese voters cast their ballots as planned.²¹ In 1922, the Japanese and Americans each duly nominated one and two candidates, while seven British stood for election. Among the latter was A. J. Hughes, a veteran British resident and chairman of the Shanghai Civic League, which was recently renamed the Shanghai Ratepayers’ Association.²² Hughes was a distinctive figure in municipal politics, and under his leadership, the Ratepayers’ Association had emerged as an active proponent for the Settlement’s administrative reform, including more transparency of the SMC,

¹⁹ Some Anglo-American voters tended to only vote for candidates who they personally knew or were of their own nationalities—leaving less than nine names on the ballot, but the JRC generally discouraged Japanese voters from doing so to show deference to the SMC’s “norm.”

²⁰ Consul-General Yada Shichitarō to Minister Yoshizawa Kenkichi, September 16, 1925, in JACAR Ref. B12082577000: “在支各国居留地関係雑件／共同居留地之部 1. 上海共同居留地／分割 2 Zai-Shi kakukoku kyoryūchi kankei zakken / kyōdō kyoryūchi no bu 1. Shanhai kyōdō kyoryūchi / bunkatsu 2,” April 1925—January 1926, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B12082577000>, [accessed January 15, 2024].

²¹ “Shanghai shisanjikai hōjin rikkōho engi (ni),” in *SNN*, February 9, 1934, morning edition. See also Fujita, *Kyoryūmin no Shanhai*, 209.

²² *NCH*, November 26, 1921.

revision of the Land Regulations, extension of suffrage, and greater public involvement in municipal affairs. As part of his campaign, Hughes approached Japanese consul-general Funatsu Tatsuichirō 船津辰一郎 before the election. However, overconfident in his popularity among British ratepayers, he asked for “merely 50 votes” from the Japanese community, which was considerably less than the 100 to 200 votes that the JRC planned to allocate to each of the other British candidates. Since Hughes’s political outlook apparently aligned with that of the Japanese community, Funatsu considered granting him more support and consulted the SMC chairman Brooke Smith for advice. Smith, however, recommended against doing so, cautioning that Hughes’s stance still appeared too radical to the majority of British ratepayers and that voting for him would likely alienate the Japanese from the mainstay British society. Heeding this advice, Funatsu directed the JRC to give exactly 50 votes to Hughes as he had requested, a decision that directly determined the election result. This year’s election saw a total of 800 votes cast, nearly half of which were from the Japanese.²³ In the end, Sakuragi Shun’ichi secured the top spot, whereas Hughes finished tenth place, just nine votes shy of the ninth candidate.²⁴ Prior to the election, the American consul-general also visited Funatsu. The Americans acquired two seats in 1919 but unexpectedly lost one in 1920 due to their relatively small voter base. To avoid a repeat,

²³ Consul-General Funatsu Tatsuichirō to Foreign Minister Uchida Kōsai, March 20, 1922, in JACAR Ref. B12082576900: “在支各国居留地関係雑件／共同居留地之部 1. 上海共同居留地／分割 1 Zai-Shi kakukoku kyoryūchi kankei zakken / kyōdō kyoryūchi no bu 1. Shanhai kyōdō kyoryūchi / bunkatsu 2,” February 1921—April 1925, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B12082576900>, [accessed January 15, 2024]; *NCH*, March 25, 1922.

²⁴ Hughes was unsuccessful again in his election bids in both 1924 and 1925. Whether he had sought additional support from the Japanese community during these attempts is unknown, but the outcomes indicate that he did not secure substantial Japanese backing in any case. It was only in 1930, when Hughes’ reformist agenda had gained a broader popular basis in the Settlement, that he was finally elected to the Council.

they sought a pre-arrangement with the JRC to secure the latter's support, which was duly granted and led to the election of both American candidates this year.²⁵

The 1922 election is telling of the Japanese role in Settlement politics during this period. Whereas Japanese ratepayers displayed an exceptional enthusiasm with exercising their political rights, their participation in municipal elections was a highly orchestrated behavior under the strict supervision of the JRC and Japanese consulate, which took care to align with the “gentlemen’s agreement” regarding the distribution of Council seats and ensure that the Japanese community conform to political norms of the Settlement. Meanwhile, similar to their counterparts in other foreign communities, the vast majority of *dochaku-ha* settlers remained disenfranchised, corroborating the observation of previous scholars that citizenship under the Settlement regime was determined more on socioeconomic status than on national or racial categories.²⁶ Over time, discussions about increasing Japanese representation on the Council began to surface within the community, but until the mid-1920s, these aspirations were not seriously entertained by the JRC leadership and faced suppression by the Japanese consular authorities to avoid provoking tensions with Anglo-American establishments. In 1925, when a few settler representatives, encouraged by the favorable election results in recent years, proposed nominating a second Japanese candidate, this idea was promptly vetoed by Consul-General Yada Shichitarō 矢田七太郎, who deemed that such a move would be unmistakably interpreted by the British as an open challenge to their position.²⁷

²⁵ Consul-General Funatsu Tatsuichirō to Foreign Minister Uchida Kōsai, March 20, 1922, in JACAR Ref. B12082576900: "Zai-Shi kakukoku kyoryūchi kankei zakken / kyōdō kyoryūchi no bu 1. Shanhai kyōdō kyoryūchi / bunkatsu 2," February 1921—April 1925.

²⁶ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 79; Wasserstrom, “Questioning the Modernity of the Model Settlement,” 112-113.

²⁷ Consul-General Yada Shichitarō to Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō, September 9, 1925, in JACAR Ref. B12082577000: "Zai-Shi kakukoku kyoryūchi kankei zakken / kyōdō kyoryūchi no bu 1. Shanhai kyōdō kyoryūchi / bunkatsu 2," April 1925—January 1926.

However, what significantly complicated the Settlement's political landscape after the late 1910s was the question of Chinese representation, an issue concerning which the Japanese found themselves in delicate stance from the outset. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the Settlement had been an exclusively foreign-operated municipality, with the Chinese population entirely excluded from Settlement politics. Despite the increasing contribution of Chinese ratepayers to municipal revenues over time, their presence on the Council remained nonexistent until the 1920s. Nor could they attend the Settlement's ratepayers' meeting or vote in municipal elections, a fact, as Jeffrey Wasserstrom argues, that calls into question the conventional portrayal of the Settlement as an exemplar of political modernity and its "Model Settlement" mystique.²⁸ The early 1900s saw intensifying Chinese calls for political representation, which gained significant momentum in the wake of the May Fourth Movement in 1919 and exerted unprecedented pressure on the foreign community to incorporate at least some Chinese voice into municipal governance. These circumstances led to the creation in 1920 of a Chinese Advisory Committee, consisting of five members nominated by the newly-formed Chinese Ratepayers' Association,²⁹ to provide counsel to the SMC on matters pertaining to the Chinese community, although its opinions had no binding power over the SMC's decisions.

²⁸ Wasserstrom, "Questioning the Modernity of the Model Settlement."

²⁹ Bryna Goodman and other have pointed out that the Chinese Ratepayers' Association (Nashui huarenhui 納稅華人會; CRA), which comprised Chinese ratepayers who met the same property qualifications as foreigners eligible to vote in municipal elections, deliberately modelled its membership and structure on the Foreign Ratepayers' Associations, to assert parity with the foreigners. This argument seems to have confused the Ratepayers' Meeting with the "Shanghai Ratepayers' Association." The former were formal gatherings held every April and on special occasions to deliberate on major policies, attended exclusively by qualified foreign voters. The latter, as mentioned above, evolved from the Shanghai Civic League and was a vocal critique of the SMC, whose membership was open to all foreign residents in the Settlement regardless of property ownership. Harboring a reformist vision yet maintaining a selective membership, the CRA, in fact, exhibited characteristics of both the Ratepayers' Meeting and the Ratepayers' Association. See Bryna, "Democratic Calisthenics," 89; Wasserstrom, "Questioning the Modernity of the Model Settlement," 127; Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 79.

In principle, the Japanese community sympathized with Chinese demands for greater involvement in municipal affairs, a stance that aligned with their own goals of reforming the Settlement's political structure to better reflect its demographic and economic shifts, which would no doubt amplify Japanese influence relative to other foreign groups in the long run. In early 1920, the *Shanghai nichinichi shinbun* reprinted a metropolitan newspaper article that explicitly invoked the slogan "No Taxation Without Representation" to critique the SMC's exclusion of Chinese voices. The article also highlighted the recent decision of the government of the Qingdao leasehold, which had been under Japanese control since WWI, to co-opt some Chinese representatives, and lauded it as an exemplar of inclusive politics to be emulated by the International Settlement.³⁰ However, against the backdrop of the May Fourth and the surge in anti-Japanese sentiments among the local Chinese population, the Japanese harbored concerns about increasing Chinese engagement in municipal governance at this time; moreover, they shared the apprehension of other foreigners that admitting Chinese to the Council would inevitably dilute foreign control of the Settlement.³¹ This ambivalence led to the relative silence of both Japanese settlers and consular authorities on the matter of Chinese representation throughout the early 1920s. In April 1920, the Settlement's annual ratepayers' meeting formally approved the establishment of the Chinese Advisory Committee but rejected the proposal by Edward S. Little—an unusually liberal-leaning British Shanghailanders—to add three Chinese members to the Council.³² Little attributed the failure of his proposal to the notably low Japanese turnout at this meeting, which contrasted sharply with the large attendance Japanese ratepayers at the previous meeting held in July 1919, which passed a resolution to tighten the Settlement's

³⁰ *SNN*, January 25, 1920, morning edition. Original article in *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun*, January 19, 1920.

³¹ SMC Q192-17-152: Shanghai Nihon shōgyō kaigisho, "Tai Shi seisaku ni kansuru kibō 対支政策ニ関スル希望," March 10, 1920.

³² *SG*, April 8, 1920.

censorship as a response to Chinese propaganda following the May Fourth. According to Little, the Japanese “were obviously reluctant on the present occasion to play a decisive part in the rejection of the Chinese demand for direct representation on the Council.”³³ Whether or not the Japanese have wholeheartedly supported the Chinese cause, they shrewdly avoided leading the opposition, particularly when the British were anticipated to assume this role.

When the issue of Chinese representation reemerged in the aftermath of the May Thirtieth Incident, the Japanese had subtly changed their approach and taken on a more significant role in shaping the subsequent developments. With the mounting pressure to incorporate Chinese members into the SMC by late 1925, the Japanese saw an opportunity to press for an increase in their own representation. The British Foreign Office, recognizing an urgent need to pacify the situation in Shanghai, intervened to bring about a compromise between the SMC and the Chinese community; but at the same time, it was wary of fueling political aspirations among the lesser foreign communities that could lead to a radical restructuring of the Settlement’s political landscape. In correspondence with Yoshizawa Kenkichi 芳沢謙吉, the Japanese Minister to China, the British Foreign Office expressed concerns that “the prospect of admission to the Council of representatives of foreign communities which (unlike the American, British and Japanese) have little stake in the city’s prosperity... would lead to national and political intrigues.” Therefore, it sought Japanese support in ensuring that “the two questions of Chinese and foreign representation... are kept distinct from each other.”³⁴ After 1925, with the impending inclusion of Chinese councilors potentially setting off a domino effect among the underrepresented foreign groups, the SMC and British diplomats were compelled to recognize

³³ FO 671/447: Edward S. Little to N. O. Liddell, April 22, 1920.

³⁴ Michael Palariet to Yoshizawa Kenkichi, September 7, 1935, in JACAR Ref. B12082577000: "Zai-Shi kakukoku kyoryūchi kankei zakken / kyōdō kyoryūchi no bu 1. Shanhai kyōdō kyoryūchi / bunkatsu 2," April 1925—January 1926.

the Japanese as an established party in municipal politics and enlist the latter's support in maintaining the Settlement's status quo. In 1927, a year before three Chinese members formally joined the SMC, Japanese membership was increased to two, while the British reduced their nominees to five, and American seats remained at two, with all candidates automatically elected. This reconfiguration emerged from smooth negotiations among the local consuls, who deemed it as a more accurate reflection of the latest economic power balance within the Settlement among the three principal communities.³⁵

From the late 1920s onwards, due to the inclusion of Chinese in municipal politics and a widely recognized necessity for improving the Settlement's governance system, municipal politics began to draw greater public attention and became increasingly competitive.³⁶ Each year from 1928 to 1936 saw contested elections, often including candidates like Hughes who held a progressive vision for the Settlement's political reform. At the same time, candidates representing smaller nationalities also began to vie for Council seats, which had an effect in reinforcing the Anglo-American-Japanese collaboration to uphold the "gentlemen's agreement." In 1929, when a Swiss businessman entered the race, it was believed that he would draw support from all continental Europeans. In response, all British candidates issued a joint statement urging

³⁵ "Shanghai kyōdō sokai gyōsei soshiki kaisei mondai 上海共同租界行政組織改正問題," in JACAR Ref. B13081133600: "最近支那関係諸問題摘要 第2巻 10、開埠地関係 (租界問題) / (4) 上海共同租界二関スル諸問題 Saikin Shina kankei shomondai tekiyō dai 2 kan 10, kaikochi kankei (sōkai mondai) / (4) Shanghai kyōdō Futsukoku ryō sōkai ni kansuru shomondai," December 1927, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B13081133600>, [accessed January 15, 2024]. As of 1927, out of the £52.6 million worth of foreign-registered land, £44 million was held in British names—although a significant portion of these property was actually owned by Chinese seeking extraterritorial protection; meanwhile, the Japanese and American held £4 million and £3 million, respectively. See Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, 41-42. According to a British estimate in 1930, British, Japanese, and American held £155 million, \$44 million, and £26 million in investments in Shanghai, respectively, and the three communities each contribute 13 percent, 7.5 percent, and 4.5 percent of the Settlement's General Municipal Rate. See, FO 371/19331: "Minutes of a joint meeting of the Joint Committee of the British Chamber of Commerce and China Association and the General Committee of the British Ratepayers' Association of China held in the Board Room of Messrs. Jardine, Matheson & Co., Ltd.," October 18, 1935.

³⁶ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 69-70.

嚴正中立 大衆政治を高唱する A. W. ボーモン氏を選べ!

上海市参事會は
秘密團體であり

斷じて市民大衆の公僕にあらず!

日本人諸氏の覺醒を促がすや切!

上海我等ノ家庭アリ、活動地アリ、且亦將來ノ希望ノ地ニアリマス
上海ノ發展ハ我等市民大衆ノ福利増進ニ其ノ基礎ヲ置キ可キアリ斷シテ一部少
數特權階級ノ利益ノ犧牲ニ供サル可キアリマセン
現代世界大都市ノ總ベハ大衆ノ利益ニ又大衆ニ依ル政治ヲ施シ以テ其ノ清々發
展ヲ達ス市民ノ福利ヲ計リシコトアリマスガ獨リ上海ノハ依然中世紀時代ノ舊態
ヲ脱シテ居リマセン

Shanghai's Independent Candidate!



A. W. BEAUMONT.

御承知ノ如ク我等上海ノ市政最良機關トシテハ、日本各都市ノ有スル市會ト同
ノ市參事會カアリマス其ノ市會議員即チ市參事會員歐ハ外國人九名アリマシ
テ現在

英國 五 日本 二 米國 二

ノ割合デアリマス、
何ト云フ不公平、不均衡デアリマセン!
此ノ九名制ハ市參事會設置當時ノ昔ヨリ變テ事ナク現在ニ及ビ常ニ

英國 七 日本 一 米國 一

ノ比率ヲ以テ進ミ、一九一七年ニ米國ハ初メテ二名ヲ得マシタガ、
日本人側ハ依然一名デアリマシタ、一九一七年即チ今ヨリ僅カ七年前ニ日本人ハ
初メテ二名ヲ得シ初メデアリマシタ、
英國ノ此ノ共同租界設置ノ功勞ハ勿論私認モマスガ、設立當時ヨリ數十年後ノ
今日迄モ英國ノ此ノ獨占ヲ認メテバナクモ理由ハ全ク無ク、今日ノ上海共同租界
ノ繁榮ハ全ク市民大衆ノ努力ニ依ルデアリマス、然ルニ英國ハ外人市參事會員
數九名ノ内五名ヲ擧シテ其ノ獨斷專横ヲ權ヘレ市參事會ヲ左右シ以テ自己勢力ヲ
維持シ利益擴張ニ努メシ一般市民ノ福利ヲ省ミザル現狀デアリマス、教育、衛生、
公共、警察等ニ對スル工部局ノ施設及活動ヲ見レバ、我等ハ容易ニ此ノ間、清思ヲ
知ル事ガ出來マス
斯カル專横、獨斷ヲ來シメ一部ノ責任ハ勿論一般大衆ニアリマス、何故ナク我
等ハ從來市政ニ對シ餘リニモ無關心デアラタカデアリマス

上海市政の改革は

来る二十六、七日の

貴下の清き一票より!

我等市參事會員選舉有權者ハ其ノ團結力ニ依リ其ノ覺醒セル投票ニ依リ此レヲ改革
シ以テ一部少數人ノ利益ヲ代表スル市民大衆ノ利益ヲ代表スル公平ナル政治ヲ持テ可キデ
アリマス
經濟的ニモ亦居留民數ノ於テモ決シテ英國ハ優ルモノヲ務メザル在上海日本居留民
諸君ハ、諸君ノ覺醒セル選舉權行使ニ依テ此ノ獨斷政治ヲ排シ、公平ナル市政ヲ持
テ權利ヲ行使スル可キデアリマス
私が過去數年間ニ亘リ私ノ主宰スル雜誌「スベクター」紙上ニ於テ黨
々主張シ來タ「親上海主義」ハ以上簡單ニ述ベマシタ所ノ市民ノ眞ノ福利増
進ヲ根本精神トスルモノデアリマシタ此レガ表ハレシモノ

「親上海團體」ハ現在既ニ會員數四千名ニ至ラントシ一大勢力化サントシツ
「アタマ」
私ハ親上海主義ノ實現ヲタメニ又現在ノ不公平ナル市政改革ノタメニ來ル二月廿
六七日ニ行ハル市參事會員改選ニ「親上海團體」ノ名ニ於テ立候補致シマ
シタ

私ハ上海ノ市政並ニ上海ノ欲求スル所ヲ、過去數年間ニ亘リ専心研究シ續テ來
マシタ、私ハ現在ノ上海工部局ガ市民大衆ニ決シテ満足ヲ與ヘテ居ナイコト言フ事
ヲ、有ニル通過人々カラ聞イテ居リマス此レガ多クノ例ヲ學バサレマシタ
上海ノ市政機關ニ、有權階級代表者ハ勿論必要アリマスガ、

然シ亦、全上海市民ガ公平且公正ニ遇サレル様、中産階級
ノ代表者モ亦必要デアリマス

私ハ上海デ人生ノ苦樂ヲ詳ニ嘗メテ來マシタ、デスカラ上
海ノ弊害除去ノタメニ勇氣ヲ以テ奮闘スル精神ハ、私ノ心
ノ奥底ニ深く染ミ込メデ居リマス

論ズル迄モナク、我等ノ家族ヤ我等ノ將來ハ此ノ上海ニ有リマス、從テ我等ハ凡
セル階級ヲ超越スル上海人ノ現狀ヲ改良スルタメニ、斷然奮起ス可キデアリマス
我等ハ上海ノ國運ナ基盤ノ上ニ置カサバナマラセン

私ハ以上ノ目的達成ノタメニ、今回ノ市參事會員改選ニ際
シ、貴殿ノ清き御一票ト御後援ヲ希フ次第有リマス

英文週刊雜誌
「上海スベクター」主

A. W. ボーモン

(白耳義人)

Figure. 2.1. A. W. Beaumont's campaign advertisement in Japanese newspaper (Shanghai nichinichi shinbun, March 25, 1934, morning edition)

British ratepayers to vote for the Japanese and American candidates to preserve the current composition of the Council.³⁷ Japanese ratepayers generally reciprocated by not supporting any of the “irregular” candidates, no matter how attractive their campaign platform might have appeared. The 1934 election featured A. W. Beaumont, a Belgian journalist who advocated for greater publicity of the SMC and pledged to hold personal press meeting after every Council session he would attend. Beaumont extensively advertised himself in local Japanese newspapers and sought Japanese backing by calling for “impartial popular politics” (*genjō chūritsu na taishū seiji* 嚴正中立な大衆政治) and an end to the British control of the SMC (Figure 2.1).³⁸

However, the outcome of the election indicates that he obtained minimal support from the British, Japanese, and Americans alike, as he received only 338 votes compared to over 1,300 votes garnered by each of the nine successful candidates.³⁹

Meanwhile, the Japanese continued to hold a delicate position on the issue of Chinese representation. In 1927, an agreement was reached between the SMC and the Chinese community for three Chinese members to join the Council in 1928, with a future increase to five members contingent on the success of this initial experiment. By 1930, the commendable performance of the first Chinese councilors, alongside sustained pressure from the Chinese rights recovery movement, convinced the SMC and British diplomats that it was time to proceed with the planned expansion. Consequently, a proposal for two more Chinese seats was presented at the annual ratepayers’ meeting in April 1934 for approval. However, foreign ratepayers voted against the proposal, which immediately sparked protests from the Chinese Ratepayers’ Association as well as the Chinese government.⁴⁰ To resolve the situation, the SMC, under British diplomatic

³⁷ *CWR*, March 2, 1929.

³⁸ *SNN*, March 24, 1934, morning edition; March 25, 1934, morning edition; March 26, 1934, morning edition.

³⁹ *NCH*, March 28, 1934.

⁴⁰ *Shenbao*, April 18, 1934.

pressure, proposed a special ratepayers' meeting to rediscuss the motion. According to the Land Regulations, overturning a previous meeting's resolution required the attendance of at least one-third of all ratepayers, a threshold rarely met in the past. Thus, British consul-general John Brennan urgently reached out to his Japanese counterpart, Shigemitsu Mamoru (重光葵), to request assistance in mobilizing the Japanese community. Recognizing an opportunity to improve Sino-Japanese relations—it was widely rumored within the Chinese community that the Japanese had blocked the original motion⁴¹—Shigemitsu directed the JRC to coordinate a demonstration of Japanese goodwill. These efforts resulted in an unprecedented attendance of 1,200 at the special meeting in early May, including 500 Japanese ratepayers, who unanimously supported the motion and facilitated its passage.⁴²

At this meeting, Japanese councilor Fukushima Kizōji 福島喜三次 delivered a lengthy speech in favor of the motion. He stressed that the Settlement was a foreign municipality, and its control should not be returned to the Chinese until “they can administer justice and afford due protection to foreign life and interests,” but he contended that Chinese “interests and desires are entitled to full consideration by the Council.” However, while expressing sympathy with the Chinese cause, he carefully avoided alluding to the Japanese ambitions for increased Council representation or invoking Asian solidarity; instead, he drew on Japan's historical experience of suffering under unequal treaties.⁴³ Fukushima's comments, echoed by Hayashi Yūkichi moments later—who gave the first-ever speech in Japanese at a ratepayers' meeting—reflected the general

⁴¹ *Shenbao*, April 17, 1934; Shanhai shōkō kaigisho, *Kinyōkai panfuretto*, no. 34, May 5, 1930, 5–8.

⁴² “Shanhai kyōdō sokai kōbukyoku Shinajin shisanjikaiin zōin mondai 上海共同租界工部局支那人市参事會會員問題,” in JACAR Ref. B13081207400: “Saikin Shina kankei shomondai tekiyō dai 4 kan (chigai hōken kankei shomondai, sōshakuchi, sōkai oyobi shōbochi kankei, tochi mondai) 最近支那關係諸問題摘要 第4卷 (治外法權關係諸問題、租借地、租界及商埠地關係、土地問題),” December 1930, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B13081207400>, [accessed January 15, 2024].

⁴³ SMC, *Report for the Year 1930*, 44–45.

Japanese approach to Settlement politics in the 1930s. While diplomatic considerations occasionally necessitated a display of support for larger Chinese representation, they articulated this support under the discourse of the Settlement's political modernization, while cautiously refraining from linking it to their own quest for greater influence over municipal affairs, mindful that "any possibility of a majority of Asiatic members on the Council would be bitterly opposed by the European and American communities."⁴⁴

As noted earlier, this stance was consistent with Japanese disinterest in advocating for the rights of lesser foreign groups such as the Germans and Russians. Starting in 1928, the Japanese launched a persistent campaign for a third seat, insisting that it be transferred from British or American hands without involving other nationalities to prevent complication. This strategy was partly due to the ongoing difficulties with revising the Land Regulations,⁴⁵ which had capped foreign councilors at nine; but it also stemmed from the fact that the Japanese justification for additional seats—grounded on the Settlement's demographic makeup, shifting economic dynamics, and fair national representation—offered them leverage only against the relatively static British (and American) presence but could undermine their position if the Chinese and other underrepresented groups were taken into account. In 1936, the Chinese Ratepayers' Association petitioned to increase their seats to nine, matching those of the foreigners, to reflect their growing contributions to the SMC's revenues, which had exceeded 60 percent by then. In response, American consul-general Clarence E. Gauss proposed the addition of two Chinese and two foreign seats, including a third for the Japanese and one for the lesser nationalities. Japanese

⁴⁴ FO 371/13214: Sir S. Barton to Sir. M. Lampson, December 31, 1927.

⁴⁵ These difficulties were primarily due to the ongoing negotiation between the Chinese government and Treaty Powers concerning treaty revision and the extra-settlement road issue in Shanghai, see Chapter 4. By the mid-1930s, the British government was also reluctant to engage in discussions about revising the Land Regulations, since any revision would necessitate Japanese pressure on the Chinese and thus leave the British in a weaker position vis-à-vis the Japanese. See FO 371/19331: Sir A. Cadogan to Sir Samuel Hoare, October 23, 1935.

consul-general Wakasugi Kaname 若杉要 found this proposal appealing as it would bring an end to British supremacy and establish an Asian majority on the Council. However, anticipating strong British resistance, Wakasugi sought instruction from the Japanese Foreign Ministry, which advised against backing the plan due to concerns that more Chinese members would compromise the Settlement's "integrity" (インテグリティ). But at the same time, Wakasugi was directed not to lead the opposition and leave that role to the British.⁴⁶ Between the late 1920s and mid-1930s, the Japanese found themselves in a delicate position in municipal politics, constantly having to balance their roles as challengers to the Settlement's status quo and as established members in its political configuration.

After 1927, the practice of nominating the JRC chairman to sit on the Council was discontinued, likely due to the weakening control of the *kaisha-ha* elite over the JRC. The previous year, the JRC chairmanship was assumed by a *dochaku-ha* doctor, Kawabata Teiji 河端貞次, for the first time. Nevertheless, Council seats continued to be occupied by expatriate businessmen—Fukushima Kizōji, the branch manager of the Mitsui Trading Company, and Funatsu Tatsuchirō, who had left his position as a Foreign Ministry official and become the director of the Japanese Textiles Manufacturers' Association in Shanghai. This situation quickly spurred a movement among *dochaku-ha* settlers, who had become considerably more active in both community and municipal politics by this time, to demand a third Japanese seat on the Council that would ideally be reserved for their own representative. In late 1927, the *dochaku-ha* leaders of the Japanese Amalgamated Association of Street Unions (JAASU) spearheaded the

⁴⁶ "Shanghai kyōdō sokai kōbukyoku Shinajin shisanjikaiin no zōin mondai 上海共同租界工部局支那人市参事会員ノ増員問題," in JACAR B02130135900: "Shokumu hōkoku Shōwa jūichinen-do Tōa-kyoku dai-ikka (Tōa-22) dai-nijūshō Sōkai kankei shomondai 執務報告 昭和十一年度東亜局第一課 (東亜-22) 第二十章 租界関係諸問題," December 1936, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02130135900>, [accessed January 15, 2024].

“Association for the Study of Shanghai Municipal Administration” (*Shanghai shisei kenkyū kai* 上海市政研究会), which professed to dismantle British “despotic rule” over the Settlement.⁴⁷ At the inaugural meeting of the Association, JAASU president Hayashi Yūkichi called for the implementation of “popular and fair politics” (民衆の公平なる政治) in the Settlement—a slogan that was echoed by the aforementioned Beaumont in 1934—and explicitly demanded a restructuring of the SMC to consist of four British, three Japanese, and two American members.⁴⁸

This initiative failed to gain immediate traction due to lack of support from the *kaisha-ha* and consular authorities. However, by the mid-1930s, it had garnered significant momentum. By 1934, the number of Japanese voters had reached 900, out of the Settlement’s total of 3,800, and their exceptionally high turnout rate created a seeming Japanese dominance in municipal elections.⁴⁹ From 1928 onwards, the two Japanese candidates consistently secured the top spots. In 1933, each of them received over 1,300 votes, at least 300 more than any other candidate, a victory that reinvigorated *dochaku-ha* ambitions for an additional seat.⁵⁰ Over the next two years, intense debates unfolded within the Japanese community about whether and how to advance this agenda. The relatively moderate *kaisha-ha* representatives were hesitant to breach the “gentlemen’s agreement” without first securing an accord with the Anglo-American communities.⁵¹ Consul-general Ishii Itarō was also staunchly opposed to this idea, believing that

⁴⁷ SMS, October 6, 1927, morning edition.

⁴⁸ Shanghai shisanjikai hōjin rikkōho engi (gō) 上海市参事会邦人立候補の沿革（五）,” in SNN, February 12, 1934, morning edition.

⁴⁹ NCH, February 13, 1935.

⁵⁰ Shanghai shisanjikai hōjin rikkōho engi (roku) 上海市参事会邦人立候補の沿革（六）,” in SNN, February 13, 1934, morning edition; NCH, March 29, 1933. In that year’s election, a total of 1,672 votes were cast, with approximately half of them being Japanese. The turnout rate among the Japanese was nearly 90 percent, whereas only 30 percent of other foreign ratepayers voted.

⁵¹ SNN, January 17, morning edition, and March 8, morning edition.

the past success of Japanese candidates had been possible only because of the low participation of Western voters and their acquiescence to the current Japanese share; he reasoned that the unilateral Japanese move to nominate a third candidate would surely lead to an Anglo-American backlash, offering slim prospects for success while risking further strain on the Japanese community's relations with other foreign groups.⁵²

However, *dochaku-ha* leaders insisted that the constitution of the SMC should be approached purely as a local administrative issue and be determined by the Settlement's economic realities, rather than being treated as a matter of international politics.⁵³ By late 1935, they were determined to proceed with their plan, an act that they, as ratepayers, were fully entitled to under the Land Regulations.⁵⁴ Yet, to avoid an open split of the local Japanese society and to secure the backing of the *kaisha-ha*, who still made up the majority of eligible Japanese voters, *dochaku-ha* activists forwent their original plan of nominating Hayashi Yūkichi and consented to have the third candidate also be a *kaisha-ha* man.⁵⁵ As Ishii had anticipated, this move immediately triggered a strong reaction among the Anglo-American community and led to British diplomatic intervention. In October, three major British organizations—the British Chamber of Commerce, the China Association, and the British Residents' Association—convened a joint meeting to rally their members for the next year's municipal election. Both Consul-General Brenan and the SMC chairman Henry E. Arnhold made extensive speeches criticizing “the apathy of the foreign electorate” and “the inability of the British community to

⁵² Ishii *Gaikōkan no isshō*, 246-248.

⁵³ *SNN*, September 7, 1935, morning edition, and September 11, 1935, morning edition.

⁵⁴ “Shanghai kyōdō sokai shisanjikai hōjinkaiin zōin mondai 上海共同租界参事会邦人会員増員問題,” in JACAR B02130135900: “Shokumu hōkoku Shōwa jūichinen-do Tōa-kyoku dai-ikka (Tōa-22) dai-nijūshō Sōkai kankei shomondai 執務報告 昭和十一年度東亜局第一課 (東亜-22) 第二十章 租界関係諸問題,” December 1936, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02130135900>, [accessed January 15, 2024].

⁵⁵ *SNN*, March 15, 1935, morning edition, March 16, 1935, morning edition, and March 18, 1935, morning edition.

organize.”⁵⁶ The meeting resolved to hire a paid election agent and set up an organization for “educating the British electorate to the danger of the situation and the necessity for united action to retain the five British seats on the Council,” measures that Brenan claimed to be “of a purely defensive nature forced upon us by the sinister section of other national communities.”⁵⁷

1936 saw the most fiercely contested and dramatic municipal election to date, with a record-breaking 2,500 ballots cast. Before the election, English-language newspapers raised alarms over a potential “Asiatic bloc” that would outnumber the Occidentals at the Council should a third Japanese be elected. Mirroring the Japanese practices, British and American election committees telephoned or personally visited all ratepayers, urging them to “regiment” their votes and withdraw support from the Japanese candidates entirely.⁵⁸ As a result, each British and American nominee received over 1,800 votes, while the three Japanese candidates found themselves at the bottom with around 600 votes. This outcome aroused Japanese suspicion, given that their own votes should have exceeded 800. It was later revealed that 323 votes at the Hongkou polling station, which was predominantly used by Japanese ratepayers, were somehow omitted—an incident that the Japanese press labelled the largest political scandal in the Settlement’s history.⁵⁹ The Consular Body subsequently declared the election results void and mandated a new election. However, a clear message had already been sent: instead of earning them a third seat, the Japanese campaign had only resulted in a unified Anglo-American effort to counter their political aspirations. Under Ishii’s mediation, the third Japanese candidate was withdrawn, leading to the automatic election of all candidates and the maintenance of the

⁵⁶ FO 371/19331: “Minutes of a joint meeting of the Joint Committee of the British Chamber of Commerce and China Association and the General Committee of the British Ratepayers’ Association of China held in the Board Room of Messrs. Jardine, Matheson & Co., Ltd.,” October 18, 1935.

⁵⁷ FO 371/19331: J. F. Brenan to H. M. Ambassador, Peking, October 23, 1935.

⁵⁸ *CP*, March 19, 1936; *CWR*, March 28, 1936.

⁵⁹ *SNN*, March 26, 1936, evening edition.

status quo. Ishii later remarked that this turn of events was a good lesson for the *dochaku-ha* hardliners and that the new election spared the Japanese community further embarrassment.⁶⁰ While the Japanese profoundly changed the Settlement's election culture, the racial and national consciousness deeply embedded in the treaty-port never dissipated.

Besides Council membership, the JAASU also petitioned vigorously from the late 1920s for the inclusion of more Japanese staff in the Settlement's various departments,⁶¹ a request that the SMC felt compelled to address but approached with considerable caution. As will be detailed in the next chapter, the growth of Japanese municipal staff primarily occurred within the police department, whereas the rest of the Settlement government saw only a modest increase from 15 Japanese employees in 1930 to 27 by 1936, representing merely two percent of the total foreign workforce in these sectors.⁶² The SMC carefully co-opted a few Japanese members into each department to display its international characteristics, yet it remained reluctant to make such appointments on a larger scale, citing difficulties in finding competent Japanese candidates with the necessary language and technical skills,⁶³ and possibly due to concerns about their allegiance. British consul-general Brenan was one of those who repeatedly expressed doubt about the possibility of "genuine Anglo-Japanese cooperation in the work of administration," and he once

⁶⁰ Ishii *Gaikōkan no isshō*, 247-251.

⁶¹ SMA U1-3-3344: Petitions by the JAASU, August 11, 1927; Petitions by the JAASU, March 14, 1929; Petitions by the JAASU, April 1, 1930.

⁶² "Daiichi, Chūka minkoku yōhei honpōjin jinmeiroku / (furoku) Shanhai kyōdō sōkai kōbukyoku yōhei honpōjin jinmeiroku 第一、中華民國僱聘本邦人人名錄／（附錄）上海共同租界工部局僱聘本邦人人名錄," in JACAR Ref. B02130076400: "Chūka minkoku yōhei gaikokujin jinmeiroku Shōwa 5-nen 12-gatsu matsu genzai / Asia-kyoku chōsho dai san shū no roku (A-58) 中華民國僱聘外國人人名錄 昭和 5 年 1 2 月末現在／亜細亞局調書 第三輯ノ六（亜-58）," December 1930, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02130076400>, [accessed January 15, 2024]; "Daiichi, Chūka minkoku yōhei honpōjin jinmeiroku / roku, yūmu / (furoku) Shanhai kyōdō sōkai kōbukyoku yōhei honpōjin jinmeiroku 第一、中華民國僱聘本邦人人名錄／六、郵務／（附錄）上海共同租界工部局僱聘本邦人人名錄," in JACAR Ref. B02130143300: "Chūka minkoku yōhei gaikokujin jinmeiroku Shōwa 11-nen 12-gatsu matsu genzai (Tōa-27) 中華民國僱聘外國人人名錄 昭和 1 1 年 1 2 月末現在（東亜-27）," December 1936, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02130143300>, [accessed January 15, 2024]

⁶³ SMA U1-3-3344: Commissioner of Public Works to Secretary-General, November 16, 1929.

proposed the creation of a branch of SMC staffed mainly by Japanese to manage their own residential area. This idea found partial realization in the quickly expanding Japanese Branch of the Shanghai Municipal Police, which concentrated its operations in Hongkou (Chapter 3).⁶⁴ Yet, it was evidently impractical for other aspects of municipal governance like finance and public health. Some SMC officials, like Chairman Arnhold and Secretary-General Sterling Fessenden, did not fully share Brennan's pessimism regarding Anglo-Japanese collaboration. But they insisted that Japanese staff should be engaged based on their qualification, advance through the ranks like others, and "eventually take senior positions in an Anglo-Saxon organization with English as its official language," thereby ensuring their complete assimilation into the Settlement's established institutions.⁶⁵

Consequently, the recruitment of Japanese municipal staff, similar to the nomination of councilors, was often arranged by the consular authorities and *kaisha-ha* elite through their metropolitan connections. Many candidates had weak ties with the local Japanese society and sometimes experienced tensions in their interactions with the *dochaku-ha* community.⁶⁶ In 1934, Ibusuki Hidehiko 指宿秀彦, assistant secretary-general of the SMC and one of the highest-ranking Japanese municipal officials,⁶⁷ was reported to have "hurled insults in a rude manner" (*hirei naru taido wo motte bōgen wo abisekaketa* 非礼なる態度を以て暴言を浴せかけた) at a *Shanghai nippō* reporter during an event at the Japanese Club.⁶⁸ Ibusuki's behavior, coupled with his alleged longstanding arrogance towards the local Japanese press, not only provoked widespread protests among the settler community against himself, but also aroused intense

⁶⁴ FO 371/19311: Consul-General Sir J. Brennan to Sir A. Cadogan, October 1, 1935.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ *SNN*, June 22, 1934, morning edition.

⁶⁷ Ibusuki was appointed two years ago after the SMC's appointment of Chinese assistant secretary-general.

⁶⁸ *SNN*, March 21, 1934, morning edition.

discussions about whether the SMC's Japanese personnel genuinely represented the Japanese community.⁶⁹ The JAASU issued a statement demanding Ibusuki's resignation and calling for a more democratic process in nominating Japanese municipal staff to ensure their commitment to Japanese interests.⁷⁰ This controversy compelled both the Japanese consulate and the SMC to intervene, which saved Ibusuki from being removed from his position, but he was pressured to issue an apology.⁷¹

Education

Education was an important aspect of Settlement governance where Japanese communal affairs and municipal politics became increasingly intertwined over time. Since the start of the twentieth century, the education of settler children had been managed by the local Japanese society as a highly organized communal enterprise. Upon its establishment in 1907, the JRC took over the school previously operated by the Higashi Honganji on North Sichuan Road and renamed it the Shanghai Ordinary and Higher Elementary School. By the late 1920s, as this original institution struggled to meet the needs of the rapidly growing student body, three more elementary schools were opened in Yangshupu, Hongkou, and the Western District of the Settlement. As noted in the previous chapter, this development was the outcome of careful balancing of the interests of different sectors of the settler society and reflected an effort to evenly distribute educational facilities across Japanese industrial and residential areas.⁷² By

⁶⁹ *SNN*, April 3, 1934, morning edition, and June 7, 1934, evening edition.

⁷⁰ *SNN*, June 8, 1934, morning edition, and June 20, 1934, morning edition.

⁷¹ *SNN*, June 28, 1934, morning edition.

⁷² “Shōgakkō jinjōka jidō tsūgaku kuiki seitei no ken 小學校尋常科兒童通學區域制定の件,” February 10, 1929, in JACAR Ref. B05015390000: “Shanghai kyoryū mindanritsu shogakkō ni kansuru hōkoku 上海居留民団立諸学校ニ関スル報告”, May 1931, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B05015390000>, [accessed January 30, 2024].

1931, they enrolled over 2,800 pupils, encompassing nearly all school-age Japanese children in Shanghai. Meanwhile, the 1920s also saw a steady increase of teenagers that required an expansion of secondary education, leading to the establishment of a girls' high school, a vocational school for boys, and a commercial school. By 1931, the operation of all seven schools required an annual expenditure of 340,000 silver dollars, which accounted for 70 percent of the JRC's budget.⁷³

Shanghai's Japanese schools closely adhered to the metropolitan model in terms of grade-structure and curriculum, as specified in a series of School Ordinances (Gakkōrei 学校令) promulgated by the Japanese government during the Meiji period to create a system of standardized national education. Following the 1907 amendment to Elementary School Ordinance, which mandated six years of compulsory education, the JRC's ordinary elementary schools (grade 1-6) charged a nominal tuition of one dollar a month, whereby making schooling universally affordable for settler children.⁷⁴ The curriculum included standard subjects such as reading and writing, mathematics, Japanese history and geography, sciences, arts, and physical education. There were some adaptations to local circumstances—English and Chinese language classes were introduced as electives for the higher grades in elementary schools, and the vocational school offered a range of specialized courses for conducting business in Shanghai. However, as in the home country, both primary and secondary education were characterized by a strong emphasis on “ethics instruction” (*Shūshin* 修身), which aimed at instilling a “civil

⁷³ “Shanghai kyoryū mindan-ritsu gakkō ichiran 上海居留民団立学校一覧,” May 1931, in JACAR Ref. B05015390000: “Shanghai kyoryū mindanritsu shogakkō ni kansuru hōkoku,” May 1931.

⁷⁴ “Shanghai kyoryū mindan-ritsu jinjō kōtō shōgakkō ichiran 上海居留民団立尋常高等学校一覧,” April 30, 1922, in JACAR Ref. B12081925300: “Zaigai honpō gakkō kankei zakken / Shanghai shogakkō 1. Shanghai Nihon shōgakkō no bu / bunkatsu 2 在外本邦学校関係雑件／上海諸学校 1. 上海日本小学校ノ部／分割 2,” June 1914-December 1923, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B12081925300>, [accessed January 30, 2024].

morality” in students focusing on one’s loyal service to the nation.⁷⁵ At the center of this patriotic education was the emperor’s presence: each JRC school received and solemnly enshrined the photographs of the royal couple, along with a copy of the Imperial Rescript on Education, a text that was signed by Emperor Meiji in 1890 to articulate the founding principles of national education and was required to be memorized by all school children. In addition, schools organized students for the ritualized observation of national holidays such as *Kigensetsu* (the anniversary of the legendary foundation of the Japanese empire in 660 BC) and *Tenchōsetsu* (the birthday of the reigning emperor).⁷⁶

All JRC schools were officially recognized by the Japanese government as “Overseas Designated Schools” (*Zaigai shitei gakkō*), a status that obligated them to strictly conform to the metropolitan educational system and report regularly on their operations; in return, they benefited from government support in faculty recruitment and potential financial assistance.⁷⁷ The teachers of JRC schools were all sourced from metropolitan schools or directly from normal schools in Japan. However, direct financial aid was not provided until 1920,⁷⁸ and the JRC

⁷⁵ For moral education in modern Japan and the role of the emperor, see Gluck, *Japan’s Modern Myths*, chapter 4 and 5; Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*, Chapter 5; Khan, *Japanese Moral Education Past and Present*; Duke, *The History of Modern Japanese Education*.

⁷⁶ “Shanghai kyoryū mindan-ritsu gakkō kisoku 上海居留民団立学校規則,” 1927, in JACAR Ref. B04012066800: “Zaigai Nihonjin kakugakkō kankei zakken / zaichū shi no bu / Shanghai kaku Nihon kokumin gakkō dai ikkan 1. ippan bunkatsu 1 在外日本人各学校関係雑件／在中支ノ部／上海各日本国民学校 第一巻 1. 一般 分割 1,” December 1927, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B04012066800>, [accessed January 30, 2024]. See also Chen, “Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin no shitei kyōiku.”

⁷⁷ The Overseas Designated School system launched jointly by the Japanese Home and Foreign Ministries in the late nineteenth century to promote national education among overseas settler communities. It was first experimented on in Korea and then extended globally. However, this program encountered significant challenges in Hawaii and the Americas, where it conflicted with local public education and hindered settlers’ efforts to integrate into the host societies, and in Korea, it was discontinued following the annexation in 1911. From 1906 to 1945, a total of 595 overseas schools received the designation, with the vast majority (65 percent) in Manchuria and the remaining distributed across China proper and Southeast Asia. See Kojima, *Nihonjin gakkō no kenkyū*, and *Zaigai shitei kyōiku no kenkyū*.

⁷⁸ Funatsu Tatsuchirō, “Nihonjin shōgakkō chōsasho sōfu no ken 日本人小学校調査書送付ノ件,” June 29, 1923, in JACAR Ref. B12081925300: “Zaigai honpō gakkō kankei zakken / Shanghai shōgakkō 1. Shanghai Nihon shōgakkō no bu / bunkatsu 2,” June 1914-December 1923.

consistently petitioned for increased funding, often citing the dual tax burden faced by Japanese settlers in Shanghai that compromised their ability to fully fund their children's education.⁷⁹ Moreover, Japanese educators in Shanghai argued that the insufficiency of educational facilities had undermined local settlers' will to establish permanent roots, leading them to prioritize short-term gains while neglecting their responsibility for furthering the nation's agenda of overseas expansion.⁸⁰ As a result of these lobbying efforts, government assistance increased from a modest 2,700 dollars in 1920, accounting for 3 percent of the JRC's educational expenditure, to over 80,000 dollars by 1932, covering 30 percent of these costs. Yet, the JRC continued to struggle with the rising costs due to the increasing student population and the necessity for constructing new schools.⁸¹

For the JRC, an alternative solution was to seek assistance from the Settlement authorities, but this option had been largely unavailable until the late 1920s due to the latter's education policy. The SMC had long adopted a minimalist approach towards public education, viewing it as a secondary to other municipal duties such as policing, public works, and public health. From the turn of twentieth century, pressure from the local Chinese business community compelled the SMC to devote a small portion of its ordinary expenditure—which grew from 2 in the early 1900s to 5 percent in the 1920s—to the upkeep of a limited public school system.⁸² By

⁷⁹ Kikuchi Torazō, “shōgakkōhi kokko hojo no ken seigan 小学校費国庫補助ノ件請願,” December 11, 1922, in JACAR Ref. B12081925300: “Zaigai honpō gakkō kankei zakken / Shanhai shogakkō 1. Shanhai Nihon shōgakkō no bu / bunkatsu 2,” June 1914-December 1923.

⁸⁰ Tosabayashi Isao, “Kaigai shite gakkō kyōiku kaisen ni kansuru iken 海外指定学校教育改善ニ関する意見,” April 1922, in JACAR Ref. B12081925300: “Zaigai honpō gakkō kankei zakken / Shanhai shogakkō 1. Shanhai Nihon shōgakkō no bu / bunkatsu 2,” June 1914-December 1923.

⁸¹ JRC, “Kyōiku hojo zōgaku yōbō 教育補助増額要望,” in JACAR Ref. B05015304400: “Shanhai kyoryū mindan zaisei no gaikyō to shōrai no yosō narabi ni kyōiku hojokin zōgaku yōbō 上海居留民団財政ノ概況ト将来ノ予想並教育補助金増額要望,” September 1936, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B05015304400>, [accessed January 30, 2024].

⁸² SMC, *Report for the Year 1931*, 245-246; Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, 69-70; Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 57.

the early 1920s, it had operated six schools for foreigners and four schools for the Chinese, enrolling 1,141 and 1,182 students respectively.⁸³ The SMC's policy was encapsulated in the 1922 report of the General Education Commission, which disclaimed the obligation to provide for universal schooling within the Settlement while acknowledging a role in "assist[ing] the Chinese themselves in giving a good basis of education for the purpose of making them intelligent and satisfactory citizens." As for the education of foreign children, although the SMC recognized the necessity of public schools as a last resort, it saw the responsibility primarily resting with the parents and their respective national governments and encouraged each national group to provide schooling for their own children. But at the same time, the SMC contended that since education of this kind had a national character, it should not be treated as public affairs or supported by municipal funds. Therefore, it refused to extend grants-in-aid to non-municipal schools except for those of a charitable nature.⁸⁴ In 1925, the JRC briefly considered applying for municipal subsidy, but it quickly discarded this idea wary of potential SMC interference in the management and curriculum of Japanese schools.⁸⁵ Starting in 1927, the JAASU spearheaded a vigorous campaign for municipal educational grants-in-aid. Its primary argument was that although the Settlement's foreign public schools were open to students of all nationalities, Japanese children could not benefit from this system as it exclusively used English as the language of instruction.⁸⁶ In other words, Japanese ratepayers had been excluded from a crucial municipal service to which they had financially contributed. The JAASU thus called for a

⁸³ SMC, *Report for the Year 1921*, 142A-144A.

⁸⁴ SMC, *Report for the Year 1923*, 177-192; SMC, *Report for the Year 1931*, 238-239.

⁸⁵ Consul-General Yada Shichitarō to Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō, November 26, 1925, in JACAR Ref. B12081925300: "Zaigai honpō gakkō kankei zakken / Shanghai shogakkō 1. Shanghai Nihon shōgakkō no bu / bunkatsu 4 在外本邦学校関係雑件／上海諸学校 1. 上海日本小学校ノ部／分割 4," August 1924-January 1926, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B12081925500>, [accessed January 30, 2024].

⁸⁶ That year, the enrollment in the SMC's foreign schools totaled 1,500 students, of which only 40 were Japanese. See SMA U1-3-3344: Funatsu Tatsuichirō, "The Japanese Education in Shanghai," February 1928.

fundamental reallocation of municipal educational budget, proposing that half of the annual funds currently devoted to foreign schools—about 270,000 dollars—be redirected to Japanese schools as grants-in-aid, as Japanese children constituted half of the school-age foreign population within the Settlement.⁸⁷ This bold request took many by surprise, including the Japanese members of the SMC, who claimed that the JAASU's demands did not have the backing of the JRC.⁸⁸

By the early 1930s, however, driven by the dual objectives of improving relations with the Chinese community and assuming a more proactive role in providing public services, the SMC had markedly reoriented its approach to education to assume greater responsibility. This shift began in 1928 when it approved a motion by the newly elected Chinese councilors to open three additional elementary schools for Chinese children. In 1930, the Education Department emerged as an independent administrative organ, accompanied by the creation of a new Education Board, which was tasked with conducting a comprehensive survey of the Settlement's educational facilities and reassessing the SMC's education policies.⁸⁹ Acting on the board's advice, in early 1931, the SMC unveiled an ambitious plan to construct two new Chinese schools each year until 1938, with an ultimate goal to increase educational spending to 16 percent of municipal budget and enable municipal schools to serve 7.5 percent of the Settlement's school-age Chinese children. Meanwhile, there was a growing acknowledgement that all children of ratepaying residents, Chinese or foreign, were entitled to municipal support for their education.⁹⁰ However, despite the aforementioned expansion of public education, financial constraints rendered it impossible for municipal schools to accommodate all eligible students. Therefore, the

⁸⁷ SMA U1-3-3344: Petitions by the JAASU, August 11, 1927.

⁸⁸ *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 24, February 1, 1928, 204.

⁸⁹ SMC, *Report for the Year 1930*, 263-264.

⁹⁰ SMC, *Report for the Year 1931*, 239-241.

SMC had to revise its attitude towards national education and turn to a universal GIA system to subsidize all schools meeting “the recognized educational standards of the country to which the majority of its nationals belong,” contingent upon that “no instruction likely to offend national susceptibilities or to create inter-racial animosity shall be permitted.”⁹¹

The primary purpose of this new GIA system was to encourage private Chinese initiatives to establish educational facilities within the Settlement; it also served as gesture of a goodwill to the Chinese government by promising support for all schools complying with the regulations set forth by the latter’s Ministry of Education. Yet, it was the Japanese who became the main beneficiary. After 1931, many municipal officials, including the Superintendent of Education L. C. Healey, still harbored reservations about subsidizing private Chinese schools due to concerns about their “unsatisfactory conditions” over which the SMC could exert little oversight.⁹² However, as early as 1930, after personally inspecting Japanese schools at the JRC’s invitation, Healey had reported a favorable impression of their high quality and endorsed their eligibility for municipal aid from an educational standpoint.⁹³ Shortly after the implementation of the GIA policy, the JRC secured an annual subsidy of 82,000 dollars from the SMC. By 1933, municipal aid for the seven JRC schools had increased to 95,000 dollars, while 43,000 dollars were allocated to seven other foreign schools, and 136,000 dollars were distributed among the 87 eligible Chinese schools. Taken together, these grants-in-aid represented approximately 11 percent of the total 2.5-million-dollar educational expenditure.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Ibid., 241-243.

⁹² SMA U1-4-155: Report by L. C. Healey to Secretary of the Education Board, June 8, 1934.

⁹³ SMA U1-3-3344: Comments by L. C. Healey, May 13, 1930.

⁹⁴ SMC, *Report for the Year 1933*, 251-256, and 382-397. Municipal aid for foreign schools was generally allocated based on their enrollment figures. In 1933, the seven JRC schools together enrolled 3,235 students, whereas other private foreign schools, including a Russian one and a Jewish one, had a total of 1,770 students. However, the per capita aid provided to Chinese schools, which had a total enrollment of 17,000 students, was significantly lower. A similar discrepancy, which was largely due to the considerably higher costs of hiring foreign teaching staff, was observed in municipal schools. In 1933, the operation of municipal schools for Chinese (enrolling 5,591 students)

Despite the continuous growth of municipal aid, the JRC in 1934 launched a more radical challenge to the Settlement's education policy. Echoing the JAASU's stance in 1927, it called for a complete redistribution of municipal budget devoted to foreign education to align with the number of school-age children of each national community. To ensure "parity of treatment," it demanded that the SMC entirely abandon its foreign public school system, transfer existing schools to private management, and use its educational budget exclusively as grants-in-aid to all schools according to student enrollments.⁹⁵ The SMC resisted these demands, arguing that public education was essential to upholding its credibility as a responsible government and was necessary for children of smaller national communities unable to operate educational facilities on their own.⁹⁶ Throughout these discussions, the Japanese were evasive about the issue of Chinese education, which can be explained by the same reasons for their ambivalence regarding Chinese political representation. Yet, by the mid-1930s, the Japanese and Chinese communities had found a common cause in their opposition to any increase in municipal taxes, which constrained the SMC's ability to expand municipal services, including the development of Chinese public education—the 1931 plan for constructing Chinese schools was halted after 1934 due to budgetary difficulties. Although Chinese ratepayers criticized the SMC for failing to fulfill its promises, their support for the Settlement's public education system was lukewarm at best. Like the Japanese, their primary concerns focused on the extra tax burden that would result from greater municipal spending, and they were unlikely to wholeheartedly support an expensive municipal project that would disproportionately benefit the poorer class. Therefore, they too vied

cost 650,000 dollars, while the cost of foreign ones (enrolling 1,589 students, of which only 50 were Japanese) was 628,000 dollars.

⁹⁵ SMA U1-4-155: JRC, "Memorandum submitted to the Education Board," August 7, 1934.

⁹⁶ SMA U1-4-155: "The Council's Educational System. Proposal by Japanese Residents' Corporation," November 2, 1934.

for more grants-in-aid, viewing it as a more efficient way to allocate municipal funds.⁹⁷ Under sustained pressure from both communities, the SMC in 1936 announced an official change of its education policy, which would “be directed towards an extension of the grants-in-aid system, an increase in the number of national schools, and the strict limitation of direct provision of education from municipal funds.”⁹⁸ That year, subsidies for non-municipal Japanese and Chinese schools were increased to 139,000 and 228,000 dollars respectively; together with aids for other foreign schools, they accounted for 18 percent of municipal educational budget.⁹⁹

Education was not the only realm where the Japanese sought a greater influence over municipal fundings. Throughout the 1930s, both the JRC and JAASU persistently called for reductions in municipal spendings in areas they perceived as offering limited benefits to their community, notably the Volunteer Corps (especially the paid Russian regiment) and Municipal Orchestra. Moreover, they pushed for a general salary cut among municipal staff and advocated for greater economy in Settlement administration.¹⁰⁰ These calls for austerity were not unique to the Japanese, as there was a growing consensus among both Chinese and foreign ratepayers on the need for the SMC to enhance its cost-effectiveness to cope with the general economic depression and the deteriorating conditions of municipal finance.¹⁰¹ However, positioning themselves as a leading voice in municipal reform, the Japanese capitalized on opportunities to align municipal resources more closely with their interests. By the mid-1930s, the SMC found itself under growing diplomatic and political pressure to yield to at least some of the Japanese demands. In early 1936, when the Japanese campaign for a third Council seat compelled Brennan

⁹⁷ *Shenbao*, April 17, 1935.

⁹⁸ SMC, *Report for the Year 1937*, 233-234.

⁹⁹ *CP*, October 22, 1936.

¹⁰⁰ *SNN*, October 23, 1936, morning edition; SMA Y4-1-801: JAASU, “*Shanghai Nihonjin kakuro rengōkai enkaku* 上海日本人各路連合会沿革,” June 1937, 11-12.

¹⁰¹ FO 371/19331: Sir A. Cadogan to Sir Samuel Hoare, December 17, 1935.

to seek guidance from his home government on whether British strategy should be “stiff resistance” or “timely concession,” the Foreign Office instructed him to display a “judicious mixture” of both—“For, if Japanese attempts to secure amendment of the Land Regulations or an increase in Japanese representation on the Council both meet with firm resistance on our part, it seems all the more necessary that a considerable effort should be made to meet their not unreasonable demands as regards Japanification of the municipal administration, economy and more liberal grants for education.”¹⁰²

Public Health

Unlike the parochial orientation the Japanese displayed in their insistence on national education, they showed considerably greater enthusiasm in embracing and contributing to the Settlement’s public health regime—a crucial element of colonial governance through which various foreign authorities justified and expanded their rule over Chinese territory in the modern era.¹⁰³ From the mid-nineteenth century, Japan actively engaged in the discourse and evolving practices of modern hygiene, to cultivate a healthy citizenry across its imperial metropole and colonies while proving its parity with or even superiority over Western counterparts.¹⁰⁴ In the context of treaty-port, the Japanese were particularly attentive to the scientific management of health and diseases to distinguish themselves from the Chinese in the view of Western observers. A prime example was the Japanese concession in Tianjin, which, as Ruth Rogaski illustrates, served as a Japanese showcase of “Asian modernity,” a direct avenue through which the

¹⁰² FO 371/19331: Mr. Eden to Sir. A. Cadogan (Peking), February 5, 1936.

¹⁰³ See, for example, MacPherson, *A Wilderness of Marshes*; Leung and Furth, eds., *Health and Hygiene in Chinese East Asia*; Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*; Henriot, *Scythe and the City*, chapter 5-6; Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, chapter 4; Singaravélou, *Tianjin Cosmopolis*, chapter 5.

¹⁰⁴ See, for example, Bay, *Beriberi in Modern Japan*; Henry, *Assimilating Seoul*, chapter 4; Burns, *Kingdom of the Sick*, chapter 3-7.

Japanese concept of *eisei* 衛生 influenced its Chinese counterpart, *weisheng*.¹⁰⁵ Unlike in Tianjin and other Japanese colonial holdings, Japanese in Shanghai lacked the legal authority and financial resources to implement a full-fledged hygienic regime on its own. However, they eagerly seized opportunities to participate in the management of public health to establish themselves as worthy members of the “Model Settlement.” Throughout this endeavor, their interaction with Settlement institutions was marked by a mixture of cooperation and competition.

A constant source of anxiety for Shanghai’s foreign community was the threat of infectious diseases, which it attributed to the unsanitary conditions of the Chinese population and the insufficiency of public health infrastructure in adjacent Chinese areas. From the late nineteenth century, the SMC started to assume a greater role in addressing these threats. It established a municipal isolation hospital for the Chinese in 1900, followed by a separate facility for foreigners in 1904. Meanwhile, the SMC’s Public Health Department (PHD) provided free vaccinations to both foreigners and Chinese, conducted regular campaigns to raise public health awareness, and frequently carried out house inspection and disinfection to prevent the spread of diseases. The Japanese community generally showed a collaborative stance towards these initiatives. In 1912, at the request of the SMC, the JRC recruited two English-speaking Japanese nurses to serve at the foreign isolation hospital and attend Japanese patients; their number was increased to three in the 1920s, with the JRC covering half of their salaries.¹⁰⁶ Meanwhile, the JRC appointed a full-time medical director to closely monitor the community’s health conditions and report any case of communicable diseases to the Japanese consulate, which in turn relayed

¹⁰⁵ Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*, chapter 5 and chapter 9.

¹⁰⁶ SMA U1-16-357: “Report of the Work Done by the Shanghai Japanese Residents’ Corporation on the Public Health among the Japanese Community at Shanghai, for the Period April—August 1926,” August 20, 1926.

the information to PHD. The medical director was also responsible for ensuring the transfer of infected individuals to the municipal isolation hospital and handling the required paperwork.

This system was not without friction. In 1929, for example, amid a severe outbreak of cholera—which local Japanese newspapers had labeled as a “local specialty” (*meibutsu* 名物) of Shanghai—Japanese settlers complained about the sluggish response of the SMC’s disinfection squad to cases within their community.¹⁰⁷ The SMC, however, asserted that it had acted as swiftly as possible, attributing the delay to the protracted notification process that had to go through the Japanese authorities, sometimes taking three days to reach the PHD.¹⁰⁸ To address this problem, the SMC in 1930 introduced a new notification form, drawn up in Japanese and English, to be distributed among the Settlement’s Japanese doctors to facilitate direct communication with the PHD.¹⁰⁹ While the patriarchal approach of the JRC and Japanese consulate might have hindered the efficiency of information exchange, their involvement guaranteed the PHD relatively complete records of communicable diseases from the Japanese community that were not available from other national groups. As for the Chinese and other foreign populations, due to its lack of authority to mandate compulsory registration, the PHD had to rely heavily on voluntary notifications from individual doctors or residents well into the 1930s, offering a reward of one silver tael for each reported case.¹¹⁰

Another key area of cooperation between Japanese and Settlement authorities was business regulation and food safety. The PHD enforced safety standards for establishments such as grocery stores, restaurants, bars, boarding houses through a licensing system under which businesses were subject to periodical inspections. In practice, however, foreign-owned

¹⁰⁷ SMA U1-16-357: President of JAASU to Commissioner of Public Health, August 22, 1929.

¹⁰⁸ SMA U1-16-357: Acting Chief Health Inspector to Deputy Commissioner of Public Health, August 22, 1929.

¹⁰⁹ SMC, *Report for the Year 1930*, 133-134.

¹¹⁰ SMC, *Report for the Year 1935*, 137.

businesses protected by extraterritorial privileges could operate without a municipal license as long as they registered with their respective consulates. To eliminate this loophole, in 1926, the Japanese consulate announced that it would only grant business permissions to Japanese nationals who complied with municipal requirements and obtained an SMC license beforehand.¹¹¹ It also requested reporting from the SMC on any instances where license applications by Japanese nationals were denied, to prevent potential miscommunication from being exploited by anyone.¹¹² This collaboration was crucial as it effectively extended the PHD's standards to the extra-settlement road areas, where many Japanese businesses were located and where municipal licensing had never been mandatory. In the early 1930s, as the Japanese consulate's police department expanded, it began to conduct regular inspections of Japanese businesses, with or without the company of municipal health officers.¹¹³ This period also saw an enhanced role of Japanese consular police in the regulation of prostitution and the prevention of venereal diseases, which, as Chapter 5 will detail, simultaneously reflected Japanese contribution to and interference in Settlement governance.

This active engagement of the Japanese consular authorities with local public health was partly driven by the meticulous oversight from the metropole. Beginning in 1913, the consulate was staffed with a health officer appointed by the Japanese Home Ministry, whose duties included investigating and reporting on infectious diseases in the Shanghai region, monitoring the sanitary conditions of ships, crews, and cargoes travelling between Shanghai and Japan, and identifying any potential threats to the public health of the home country.¹¹⁴ Fulfilling these responsibilities often required a close liaison with Settlement authorities, including acquiring the

¹¹¹ "Eigyō torishimari kisoku 営業取締規則," in Sugie, *Shanghai annai daijūichiban: hōjin annai*, 12-13.

¹¹² SMA U1-3-2657: Commissioner of Public Health to Secretary, September 15, 1927.

¹¹³ *SNN*, June 28, 1933, morning edition.

¹¹⁴ Zai Shanghai sōryōjikan, *Shanghai jijō* (1924), 23.

latest statistics and samples of diseases from the PHD's laboratory for transmission to the home government.¹¹⁵

Meanwhile, the local Japanese community took initiatives on its own, sometimes implementing measures ahead of Settlement authorities. Despite the PHD's provision of free vaccination and its growing reception by the public, participation was always voluntary, and there was a widespread misconception among Chinese and foreigners alike that a single inoculation provided lifetime immunity. As a result, inoculation rate within the Settlement remained low until the late 1920s.¹¹⁶ In response, the JRC started in 1920 to provide its own free syringes against smallpox and cholera twice a year to both Japanese residents and their (mostly Chinese) employees.¹¹⁷ Between 1929 and 1930, the JRC administered over 20,000 vaccinations, a significant effort compared to the PHD's 110,000 during the same period.¹¹⁸ These vaccination drives were part of broader Japanese hygiene campaigns, which included distributing handbills and organizing public lectures to educate Japanese residents on how to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious diseases.¹¹⁹ From 1926 onward, the JRC submitted detailed annual sanitary reports to the SMC to showcase its efforts and achievements in the field of public health. A particular point of pride for the JRC was its attentiveness to the health of school children. JRC schools mandated compulsory smallpox vaccinations for new pupils upon admission and ensured all pupils received regular vaccinations every two years. In the event of a reported case among pupils or their families, the school conducted thorough disinfection of the affected classroom,

¹¹⁵ SMA U1-16-270: Japanese Consul-General to Commissioner of Public Health, June 10, 1926.

¹¹⁶ "Kōbukyoku eiseisho hatten no rekishi (sono ni) 工部局衛生処発展の歴史 (其二)," in *SNN*, October 2, 1934, evening edition.

¹¹⁷ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 374.

¹¹⁸ "Shōwa gō nen chu eisei jōkyō 昭和五年中衛生状況," in *GKS*, vol. 42, 210; SMC, *Report for the Year 1929*, 156-157; SMC, *Report for the Year 1930*, 173-174.

¹¹⁹ SMA U1-16-357: JRC, "Sanitary Report," June 25, 1930.

and all classmates were required to halt attendance for five days.¹²⁰ Moreover, in contrast to the SMC's public schools, which had largely refused to take care of students' health conditions until 1933,¹²¹ each JRC school was staffed with a part-time school doctor responsible for responding to any medical emergency and conducting periodic health inspection on all students.¹²²

A crucial factor that facilitated the JRC's public health initiatives was the support from the large number of Japanese medical practitioners in Shanghai. Since the late nineteenth century, Japanese doctors, including graduates from the most prestigious metropolitan medical schools, had come to Shanghai to set up their practices. This movement was highly valued by Japanese authorities for its potential to expand Japanese influence in China and compete with Westerners in the medical field.¹²³ In 1907, with the encouragement of the home government, they founded the Shanghai Japanese Medical Society (Shanghai Nihon ishikai 上海日本医師会), which, from its inception, formed a close partnership with the JRC. Many members of the Association later rose to prominence within the local Japanese society—the aforementioned Kawabata Teiji, for example, was elected JRC chairman in 1926. In 1923, the Association opened a nursing school in Hongkou, which graduated 87 students until its closure in 1935 and significantly bolstered the ranks of Shanghai's Japanese medical personnel.¹²⁴ By 1929, the local Japanese medical community included 51 doctors, 22 dentists, 4 veterinarians, 14 pharmacists, 69 midwives, and 77 nurses, and their ratio to the local Japanese population compared favorably with those of all other national groups except the Americans.¹²⁵ That same year, when the SMC

¹²⁰ SMA U1-16-357: "Report of the Work Done by the Shanghai Japanese Residents' Corporation on the Public Health among the Japanese Community at Shanghai, for the Period April—August 1926," August 20, 1926.

¹²¹ SMC, *Report for the Year 1933*, 196.

¹²² SMA U1-16-357: "Report of the Work Done by the Shanghai Japanese Residents' Corporation on the Public Health among the Japanese Community at Shanghai, for the Period April—August 1926," August 20, 1926; Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 1194-1196.

¹²³ Zai Shanghai sōryōjikan, *Shanghai jijō* (1924), 233.

¹²⁴ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 1194-1196.

¹²⁵ "Shōwa gō nen chu eisei jōkyō," in *GKS*, vol. 42, 210.

introduced a voluntary registration system of doctors, dentists, and veterinarians in the Settlement—a move aimed to improve medical standards, control drug sales, and facilitate infectious disease report—55 Japanese practitioners registered, a figure that matched the combined total of 35 British and 20 American practitioners and demonstrated the Japanese medical community’s general willingness to collaborate with the Settlement’s regulatory framework.¹²⁶ Most Japanese doctors operated their private clinics, which by the early 1930s had exceeded 50 in number and constituted an important part of the Settlement’s medical facilities.¹²⁷

Despite the SMC’s operation of hospitals for infectious diseases and mental illness, general medical service in the Settlement relied on private facilities and often proved expensive for the poorer class. To address this gap, the JRC, in collaboration with the Japanese Doctors’ Association, inaugurated a public clinic in 1934, which charged minimal fees and provided free services to those certified by the JRC as extremely financially needy. In its first year, the JRC attended to 27,000 patients, including 1,900 Chinese, Taiwanese, and Koreans, with each patient paying an average of less than one dollar.¹²⁸ The clinic’s policy of exclusively serving those “below the middle class” (*chūsan kaikyū ika* 中産階級以下) was later questioned by the Doctors’ Association and generated significant tension between the Association and the JRC.¹²⁹ However, Settlement authorities commended this effort and viewed it as a much-needed addition

¹²⁶ C. N. Davis, “Medical Practice in the International Settlement of Shanghai”; SMC, *Report for the Year 1930*, 133. The registration was voluntary because the SMC, due to its jurisdictional limitation, could not enforce a compulsory one.

¹²⁷ “Shōwa nana nen iryō kikan 昭和七年中医療機関,” in *GKS*, vol. 42, 301-302. Two exceptions to the small-scale Japanese medical practices were the Fukumin (福民; also known as Foo Ming) Hospital on North Sichuan Road and the Shinozaki (篠崎) Hospital in central Hongkou, each employing tens of staff members. In 1930, the Fukumin Hospital formed a partnership with the SMC, providing discounted medical service to the SMP’s Japanese Branch (see Chapter 3) and receiving an annual municipal grant-in-aid of 350 taels. See SMC, *Report of the Year 1930*, 458.

¹²⁸ JRC, “Shinryōsho hojōkin zōka yōbō 診療所補助金増加要望,” in JACAR Ref. B05015304400: “Shanghai kyoryū mindan zaisei no gaikyō to shōrai no yosō narabi ni kyōiku hojōkin zōgaku yōbō,” September 1936. See also Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki’nenshi*, 1025-1027.

¹²⁹ *SNN*, March 7, 1936, morning edition; April 21, 1936, morning edition; May 5, 1936, morning edition; May 9, 1936, morning edition.

to the Settlement's medical infrastructure. Although there were some reservations among PHD officials about the clinic's conditions, they generally recognized its value in making healthcare accessible to Japanese and Chinese residents who had been underserved so far.¹³⁰ At the PHD's recommendation, the JRC clinic was exempted from municipal taxes from its inception, and from 1936 onwards, it received an annual grant from the SMC that covered 30 percent of its operational deficit.¹³¹

Conclusion

Central to the Japanese efforts to settle in Shanghai was a continuous and multifaceted engagement with the treaty port's political and administrative framework. Throughout the early twentieth century, the Japanese community and the Settlement regime mutually accommodated and influenced each other. For Japanese settlers, establishing themselves in the Settlement entailed constant readjustment of their position in its colonial configuration, an intricate task that required a combination of negotiation, lobbying, alliance-building, and various other strategies. This chapter has explored three key areas where the Japanese played pivotal roles in the transformation of the treaty-port society. In the political sphere, one of their long-held ambitions was to expand their representation in municipal governance. The introduction and increase of Japanese membership on the SMC were partly driven by the Settlement's shifting demographic and economic landscape over time; they also reflected a British strategy of enlisting the Japanese to uphold the treaty port's traditional power structure, towards which the latter exhibited a generally conciliatory stance until the 1930s. Japanese settlers' highly active and organized

¹³⁰ SMA U1-16-851: Deputy Commissioner of Public Health, "Japanese Residents' Corporation Hospital," November 25, 1935; Chief Health Inspector, "Visit to the Japanese Residents' Corporation Hospital (Known as the Mindan Hospital), November 1935; Commissioner of Public Health to Acting Secretary, November 26, 1935.

¹³¹ SMA U1-16-851: Health and Finance Committee Meeting, March 2, 1936.

participation in municipal elections had a profound impact on the Settlement's political culture. But at the same time, they had to maintain a delicate balance between their status as an established party within the Settlement and their advocacy for its political modernization—a distinctive dual role that defined Japanese presence in municipal politics. On one hand, they vigorously campaigned for the democratization of Settlement administration to reduce Anglo-American dominance; on the other hand, they displayed much caution in addressing the issue of Chinese representation and the inclusion of smaller foreign groups, sometimes leveraging these controversies to further their objectives, and sometimes distancing themselves to protect their agenda. Moreover, these varied strategies mirrored the competition among different voices within the Japanese community. When *dochaku-ha* reformists embarked on their own, more radical endeavor to challenge the Settlement's status quo in the 1930s, they encountered a racial and political configuration of the treaty port that proved to be more entrenched and resilient than they expected.

Education and public health constituted two crucial aspects of Japanese involvement in municipal affairs, where their approaches diverged markedly but both demonstrated an active interaction with the Settlement regime. Whereas Japanese settlers considered the education of their children as a communal enterprise essential to the preservation of their national identities and metropolitan ties, they also asserted their rights as municipal ratepayers deserving of fair access to public resources and influence over municipal policies. Meanwhile, Japanese engagement with the Settlement's hygienic regime was simultaneously characterized by collaborative and competitive orientations, both aimed at cementing their status as a worthy constituent of the "Model Settlement" committed to its scientific management of health and disease. These endeavors together reveal a fluid picture of power and identity in treaty-port

Shanghai within which the Japanese occupied a peculiar position. The next chapter will continue to examine this peculiar position by looking at the most critical and contentious area of Settlement administration that came under sustained Japanese pressure for reform throughout the interwar years—policing.

Chapter Three

Contesting the Treaty Port from Within: the Shanghai Municipal Police's Japanese Branch

Policing was a highly contentious matter throughout the history of treaty-port Shanghai. Debates over who had the right to enforce which laws and upon whom caused incessant conflicts not only among the city's tripartite municipalities but also within the International Settlement's multilayered colonial society. From the 1910s onward, as Chinese nationalism surged and the city's crime rates rose, a siege mentality took root among Japanese settlers and grew stronger over time. Shanghai, in their eyes, was turning into an increasingly hostile and perilous environment, and they linked their daily survival to the administrative restructuring of the Settlement. In particular, they demanded reforms that would allow them greater influence over the police system. Policing thus formed a mainstay of Japanese interaction with the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC) in the early decades of the twentieth century.

The Japanese's persistent calls for Municipal police reforms also stemmed from their profound misgivings about British dominance over the Settlement. These demands bespoke their precarious position within the treaty port, as their exercise of extraterritorial privileges had to conform to the authority and jurisdiction of the SMC—a crucial lesson they learned from the Hongkou Riot of 1918 and integrated into their petition campaigns in the late 1920s. Up to the early 1930s, the Japanese quest for security and political influence in Shanghai primarily unfolded within the traditional administrative confines of the Settlement and focused on expanding the Japanese Branch of the Shanghai Municipal Police (SMP). This agenda to bolster local Japanese police presence was shared by the state and the settlers, despite their oft-disparate

incentives and approaches. While settlers' concerns concentrated on safety issues arising from the city's distinctive urban and demographic landscape, their home government viewed colonial policing, and the protection of overseas citizens in general, as a vehicle for imperial expansion, although it discreetly wielded this strategy to avoid contravening Japan's overall foreign policy. But over time, the various sectors of Shanghai's Japanese society made a concerted push for Settlement reforms, as these efforts increasingly were increasingly aimed at undermining British monopoly over Municipal power.

Yet, the Japanese contestation of British supremacy must be distinguished from their subsequent challenge of the treaty-port framework, despite the partial chronological overlap between these two agendas. Throughout the interwar years, Shanghai's Japanese community constantly grappled with whether to seek deeper integration into the city's "transnational colonialism" or to pursue a self-contained niche of its own. As this chapter will show, the expansion of the SMP's Japanese Branch resulted from dynamic and long-standing negotiations among various stakeholders within Shanghai's political milieu. However, an array of functional and ideological constraints rendered the branch an institutional outlier in the Settlement, and it failed to change the SMP's Anglo-centric structure. Far from mitigating Japanese discontent with their underrepresentation in Municipal administration, the branch's evolution paradoxically underscored their subordinate status within the Settlement. Ultimately, this frustration with police reform would precipitate more overt Japanese challenges to the established treaty-port order during the 1930s.

The SMP and Shanghai's extraterritorial regime

To understand how police reforms became a primary concern of the Japanese, it is necessary to survey the origins of the SMP and Shanghai's extraterritorial regime. At the heart of the treaty-port system lay the practice of extraterritoriality, which shielded citizens of treaty powers from Chinese laws and placed them under the sole jurisdiction of their consular authorities. As a form of personal jurisdiction—a legal order that rules over persons rather than land—extraterritoriality was not an entirely alien institution, and as Pär Kristoffer Cassel suggests, it echoed the traditional Chinese practice of legal pluralism.¹ But the scope of the extraterritorial regime expanded continuously, as everything associated with foreigners, including land, property, and business, could be “extraterritorialized” through invoking the nebulous idea of “foreign interests.” In the treaty ports, consular jurisdiction translated into a form of territorial control, and foreign authorities—the consulates and the various municipal governments delegated by them—came to exercise wholesale administrative rights within their respective concessions, effectively turning these territories into *imperia in imperio*, even though they technically remained Chinese land.

The International Settlement stood as an exception in terms of its legal foundation. In the first place, it was a “settlement” (*juliudi* 居留地)—an area set aside for foreigners to reside and buy (i.e., “perpetually lease”) land directly from Chinese proprietors, rather than a “concession” (*zujie* 租界) that was leased to a foreign government *in toto*.² In addition, the Settlement emerged from the 1863 amalgamation of the British and American Concessions and was subsequently enlarged with a view to accommodating foreign residents irrespective of nationality. Therefore, it

¹ Cassel, *Grounds of Judgement*, 5-11 and 15-20.

² The same applied to Shanghai's French Concession despite its name. For differences between “settlement” and “concession,” see Xu and Qiu, *Shanghai Gongong zujie zhidu*, 185-187; Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, 17; Nield, *China's Foreign Places*, 3.

was not controlled by any single imperial power, including Britain; instead, it came under the collective jurisdiction of the Consular Body, an international committee composed of the consuls of all treaty powers in Shanghai, which in turn answered to the Diplomatic Body in Beijing.³ Meanwhile, the SMC perceived itself as a voluntary association of foreign residents,⁴ and drew its authority from the locally-formulated Land Regulations rather than formal treaties, which characterized it as a private entity from its inception.⁵ Amid the threat of the Taiping Rebellion in the early 1860s, foreign settlers had briefly contemplated transforming Shanghai into a “free city” endowed with quasi-sovereign status, but unsurprisingly this proposal was dismissed by diplomatic authorities apprehensive about treaty-port communities gaining excessive autonomy.⁶

Even with these constraints, the Settlement had evolved into a self-contained municipality by the late nineteenth century. As the governing body of an international commercial hub, the SMC considered safeguarding business interests through the maintenance of law and order its primary obligations.⁷ To this end, it commanded a paramilitary force called the Shanghai Volunteer Corps (SVC), which were composed of various national contingents and were mobilized during major crises such as external invasions; as a last resort, it could call on the treaty powers’ garrison troops. In normal times, however, it was the Shanghai Municipal Police that formed the Settlement’s “first line of defense”⁸ and played a central role in regulating the daily lives of its residents. The SMP was by far the largest Municipal department in terms of size and budgetary allocation—in 1930, for example, it employed nearly five thousand individuals

³ SMA U1-6-141: “Memorandum by Secretary General of SMC re. the legal status of Land regulations,” July 8, 1933.

⁴ Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, 35-36.

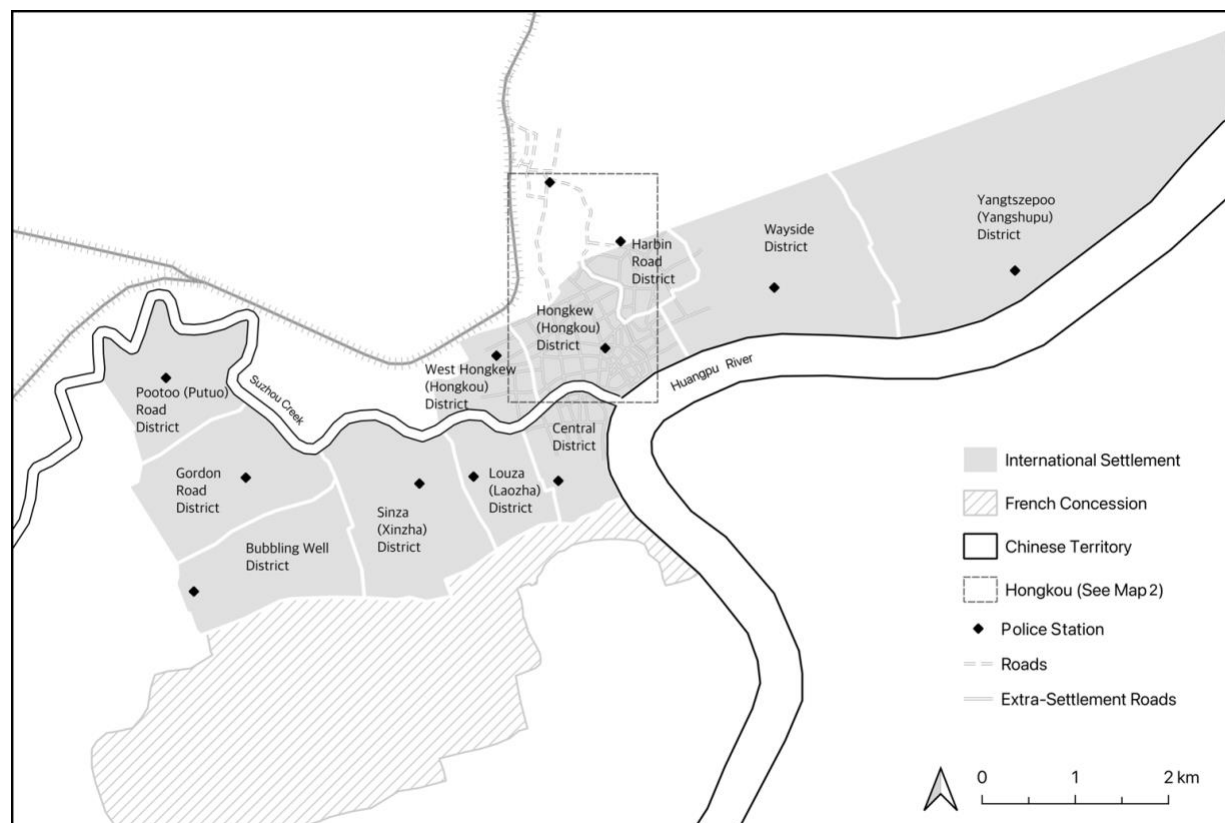
⁵ Cong and Mégret, “‘International Shanghai’ (1863-1931): Imperialism and private authority in the Global City,” in *Leiden Journal of International Law* (2021), 34, 915–933.

⁶ NCH, August 23, 1862, and August 30, 1862. See also Cong and Mégret, “‘International Shanghai,’ 927-930.

⁷ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 28.

⁸ SMA U1-1-86: Watch Committee, July 4, 1918, quoted in Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 115.

and accounted for over forty percent of ordinary Municipal spending.⁹ While suppressing crimes was surely one of its main responsibilities, it constituted a key component of Municipal governance mostly via mundane duties such as patrolling neighborhoods, inspecting business licenses, managing traffic, and enforcing by-laws.



Map 3.1. Police Districts of the International Settlement, late 1920s. (Source: Made by author using QGIS)

Dating to 1854, the SMP was modeled on the Hong Kong Police, and by extension London's Metropolitan Police, although it was considerably more militarized than these predecessors.¹⁰ The Settlement was segmented into multiple police districts, each equipped with an SMP station that conducted regular patrols and area surveillance (Map 3.1). By the early

⁹ SMC, *Report for the Year 1930*, 101-102, and 432.

¹⁰ Bickers, *Empire Made Me*, 64-68.

twentieth century, the SMP had established a permanent presence in extra-Settlement road areas as well. Functionally, the force operated through a hierarchical command structure, with a central office comprising of various departments that oversaw specific duties such as crime investigation, intelligence gathering, and traffic control. Additionally, after 1925, it kept a heavily-armed Reserve Unit on standby for responding to riots and dealing with outlaws that were particularly dangerous.

The SMP's colonial character was most starkly reflected by its racialization. Initially a modest corps composed solely of British officers, the force expanded in both scale and ethnic diversity, incorporating Chinese and Sikh recruits after 1864 and 1884 respectively.¹¹ Thereafter, it was formally organized into the Foreign¹², Sikh and Chinese Branches, whose execution of duties exhibited a raced division of labor: physically imposing Sikh policemen controlled traffic and quashed riots, while crime investigation typically relied on Chinese detectives, many of whom were former gangsters and possessed extensive local networks.¹³ Yet its leadership remained the preserve of a select cadre of British officials, predominantly ex-military men with prior service elsewhere in the British empire. This group dominated the SMP's upper ranks and occupied the majority of executive roles within the central office. In addition, the force's routine operations closely mirrored the racial hierarchy of the treaty-port society, with British sergeants at the helm directing Chinese and Indian constables on daily beats to ensure "complete

¹¹ By the end of 1915—the year before of the Japanese Branch's establishment—the SMP's uniformed force comprised 147 Foreign, 446 Sikh and 1,159 Chinese officers. In addition, the SMP employed large numbers of clerical personnel, detectives, watchmen, and other staff. By 1935, its total size had increased to 5,785. See SMC, *Report for the Year 1915*, 23A-26A; *Report for the Year 1935*, 110.

¹² In the International Settlement context, and especially in SMC documents, the terms "Foreign" and "British" were often interchangeable with each other.

¹³ See Jackson, "The Raj on Nanjing Road: Sikh Policemen in Treaty-Port Shanghai," *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 6 (2012): 1672–1704; Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, Chapters 3 and 9.

supervision of Asiatics.”¹⁴ In this way, the law enforcement within the Settlement, like other aspects of its administration, was maintained as a distinctly British-controlled realm.

Politically, the SMP served as a tool for the SMC to assert exclusive authority to govern the Settlement, which paralleled French and Chinese approaches to law enforcement in their respective territories. Excepting the French and the Japanese, consular authorities in Shanghai did not employ their own police units and entrusted the Settlement’s daily policing to the SMP.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the SMP’s power was circumscribed in significant ways, as the Settlement had no jurisdiction over its foreign residents with extraterritorial privileges. Although the SMP typically had little difficulty enforcing Municipal bylaws ratified by the Consular Body, in instances of more serious civil and criminal matters, it had limited discretion and “only acted as delegates of the Consul concerned.”¹⁶ Within the Settlement, offenders were subject to different judicial processes based on nationality: whereas Chinese and non-extraterritorial or “unrepresented” foreigners were usually tried at the Shanghai Mixed Court,¹⁷ treaty power subjects had to be handed over to their consulates and prosecuted in consular courts. In fact, the SMP had no right to arrest an extraterritorial foreigner or search their house without a consular warrant unless it caught the offender *in flagrante delicto*.¹⁸ Further complicating the Settlement’s judicial

¹⁴ SMA U102-5-406/2: R. C. Aiers to ACP Crime, August 3, 1928, quoted in Bickers, *Empire Made Me*, 65.

¹⁵ SMA U1-6-138: “Memorandum by Commissioner of SMP,” November 23, 1936.

¹⁶ SMC, *Report for the Year 1905*, 111.

¹⁷ The Shanghai Mixed Court was established in 1864 to adjudicate civil and criminal cases within the International Settlement where the accused were Chinese or “unrepresented foreigners.” In this judicial arrangement, Chinese defendants were judged by Chinese officials, while the Mixed Court, while foreign “assessors”—typically junior consular officials—were present for cases involving “foreign interests.” The upheavals of the 1911 Revolution precipitated the consular authorities’ takeover of the Mixed Court, resulting in a substantial expansion of their judicial purview to encompass nearly all Chinese and non-extraterritorial foreign cases that occurred in the International Settlement. The Mixed Court was returned to Chinese control and succeeded by the Provisional Court in 1927 and thereafter by the Special District Court of Shanghai in 1930. The jurisdictional landscape of the Settlement complicated by many other factors, including the prevalent phenomenon of “court shopping” among those who asserted multiple nationalities. For more on the Mixed Court, see Cassel, *Grounds of Judgement*, Chapter 3; Kotenev, *Shanghai, Its Mixed Court and Council*; Yao, *Shanghai zujie yu zujie faquan*.

¹⁸ W. H. Widdowson, *Police Guide and Regulations*. 1938, 18-21.

landscape was the presence of foreign military personnel, who fell outside the purview of all civil jurisdictions in the city, consular or municipal, and could be tried and punished only by their own military authorities.¹⁹ As later chapters will detail, this fact proved particularly consequential given Japan's substantial naval presence in Shanghai and its servicemen's frequent clashes with Settlement authorities during the 1920s and 1930s.

Extraterritoriality thus had a two-fold effect on the legal framework of the International Settlement. It facilitated the creation of a self-governing enclave largely free from both Chinese and foreign governments' interventions; at the same time, it precluded the Settlement from operating as a sovereign entity and exerting jurisdiction over its residents. This duality was a root cause of why the British rule of the Settlement became increasingly contested as the interests of other imperial powers grew over time. In the case of the SMP, despite its successful monopoly of Settlement policing through the early 1930s, it eventually faced mounting pressure to evolve into a truly "international" force not only in its rank-and-file but also its leading echelon.

Early relations between the Japanese community and the SMP

Up to the 1910s, Japanese appeared largely content with the British management of Municipal policing, a stance that did not change after their acquisition of full treaty rights in the wake of the First Sino-Japanese War. After 1895, this community enjoyed unilateral extraterritorial privileges, but the absence of an exclusive concession and the minimal presence of Japanese consular police meant that their daily lives remained under the aegis of existing Municipal institutions.²⁰ During this period, some confusion existed as to which authorities bore

¹⁹ SMA U-1-3-3368: British North China Command to Commissioner of SMP, September 29, 1927.

²⁰ By 1918, the police department of Shanghai's Japanese consulate-general only had five officers. See "Taishō roku nen jūni gatsu matsu ni okeru keisatsusho shōkuin 大正六年十二月末ニ於ケル警察署職員," in *GKS*, vol. 42, 137.

the responsibility and power to protect and control the Japanese community. In 1906, a *Yomiuri Shinbun* article proposed dispatching fifty Japanese policemen to Shanghai, but the author, likely unaware of the city's jurisdictional complexity, did not specify whether these officers should be attached to the consulate, join the SMP, or form a new, independent force.²¹ It was not until 1909 that the SMP hired its first Japanese staff—a total of two interpreters,²² but even so, the Japanese generally perceived it as a modern and competent force fit for the Settlement's needs. A 1907 Japanese guidebook on Shanghai, for instance, praised the Settlement's policing and highlighted the efficient allocation of duties among Chinese, Indian, and British officers.²³

In 1910, when British control of Municipal policing, for the first time, faced legal questioning, the Japanese sided with the current institution. Since British policemen first appeared in Shanghai, they were a notoriously unruly group rife with misdemeanors such as drunkenness, disobedience, and neglect of duty, largely due to the SMP's inability to mete out adequate punishment to its British employees. To remedy this situation, Settlement authorities requested the British government in 1910 to codify a set of disciplinary rules, in the form of the *King's Regulations*, to apply to the SMP's Foreign Branch. The SMC claimed the need for expediency in this act of resorting to British state power, citing the fact that only the British government held jurisdiction over the British officers who wholly comprised the Foreign Branch by then.²⁴ However, enacting the *King's Regulations* raised concerns among the representatives of other powers in Shanghai, who worried that this would set a legal precedent for deeming the Foreign Branch as a British force. The German consul-general contended that the SMP, by its international nature, should not have its rules legislated by a single nation without the consensus

²¹ *Yomiuri*, October 18, 1906, morning edition.

²² *Yomiuri*, February 18, 1909, morning edition.

²³ Tōyama Kagenao, *Shanghai*, 70-71.

²⁴ JACAR Ref. B12082521400: Chairman of SMC to American Consul-General, April 29, 1910.

of all treaty powers.²⁵ While this dispute lingered for weeks among local diplomatic circles, the Japanese consul-general Ariyoshi Akira expressly endorsed the SMC's position, deeming the adoption of the regulations as "absolutely irreproachable" and dismissing the legal debate as a meaningless formality that would only cause a "feeling of alienation" within Shanghai's international community.²⁶

However, initial signs of discord between the Settlement's Japanese community and police force quickly emerged. The Chinese revolution in late 1911 caused widespread unease in Shanghai's foreign community, with anxiety about safety particularly acute among Japanese residents in the North Sichuan Road area beyond the Settlement's northern boundary. At their request, the Japanese consulate recruited a team of watchmen to patrol Japanese premises at night and rented a house to serve as their office.²⁷ These acts instantly alarmed the Settlement authorities. Despite the absence of Municipal police in this area at the time, the SMC insisted on its exclusive right to provide police protection to residents on Municipal roads.²⁸ Shortly afterward, the SMP began patrolling the area and inaugurated a new police station at the intersection of the North Sichuan and Dixwell roads (Map 3.1).²⁹

The SMP's prompt expansion into the North Sichuan Road area showed how Settlement authorities had seized the opportunity to extend their power when responding to Japanese needs. It also displayed the SMC's intolerance of challenges to its policing rights. This assertive stance did not go unheeded by the Japanese community, which compliantly forwent the idea of extra-Municipal watchmen and thereafter turned to seek for a Japanese input into the SMP. For this

²⁵ JACAR Ref. B12082521400: German Consul-General to Chairman of SMC, April 20, 1910.

²⁶ JACAR Ref. B12082521400: Consul-General Ariyoshi Akira to Foreign Minister Komura Jutarō, April 22, 1910.

²⁷ SMA U1-2-661: Japanese Consul-General to Captain-Superintendent of SMP, December 19, 1911; *GKS*, vol. 42, 106.

²⁸ SMA U1-2-661: Chairman of SMC to Japanese Consul-General, 12/21/1911.

²⁹ SMA U1-2-661: Captain-Superintendent of Police to the Secretary of SMC, December 22, 1911, and Captain-Superintendent of Police to Chairman of SMC, January 10, 1912.

they did not have to wait long. The outbreak of World War I in 1914 severely curtailed SMP recruitment from Britain, and many officers departed for war service. Meanwhile, the rise of anti-Japanese sentiments in Shanghai, provoked by the Ōkuma Cabinet's Twenty-One Demands to the Chinese government in 1915, lent additional legitimacy to Japanese settlers' concern about safety. Acknowledging these circumstances, the SMP decided to enlist thirty new recruits from Japan in 1916, all carefully selected by the Japanese government from the Tokyo Metropolitan Police. In November that year, these inaugural members of SMP's Japanese Branch—one inspector, two sergeants, and twenty-seven constables—were honored with an elaborate send-off at Tokyo Station upon their departure for Shanghai (Figure 3.1).³⁰



Figure 3.1. Japanese police officers departing Tokyo Station. (*Yomiuri shinbun*, November 17, 1916, morning edition)

³⁰ *TA*, November 17, 1916.

The establishment of the Japanese Branch, which garnered wide press coverage in both Japan and Shanghai, partly resulted from a decade-long interaction between Japanese and Settlement police. As early as 1908, Clarence D. Bruce, the captain-superintendent of the SMP, conducted a close examination of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police on a three-week trip to Japan and came away impressed by the latter's efficiency and organization.³¹ When European recruits grew scarce, the SMP welcomed seasoned Japanese policemen as a "valuable acquisition" to the force, especially for their skills in martial arts such as jujitsu and fencing, which made them potential teachers for other branches.³²

However, the SMP clearly intended to keep the Japanese Branch in a marginal position and use it with prudence. From the outset, it was clarified that Japanese recruits were an "addition" to rather than a "replacement" for the existing *Foreign Branch*,³³ and their joining as a separate branch—an organizational measure that reinforced the SMP's internal racial divisions—went unquestioned by all parties. Despite these officers' prior service in Tokyo, they were required to complete the same three-month training as inexperienced newcomers to acclimate to the local dialect, the SMP's regulations, and various other local conditions.³⁴ Moreover, its size was kept much smaller in comparison with the rest of the SMP,³⁵ and unlike any other branch, it was assigned exclusively to the Hongkou area for the sole purpose of policing the Japanese community.³⁶ The Japanese government seemed to share this understanding of the Japanese Branch's limited functionality: its recruitment from the Home Ministry Police, instead of the

³¹ SMA U1-5-4: C. D. Bruce, "Confidential Report on Japanese Police System," September 1908.

³² *NCH*, November 25, 1916.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ SMC, Annual Report for 1916, 44A.

³⁵ C.f. Note 11.

³⁶ *NCH*, November 25, 1916; SMC, *Report for the Year 1916*, 44A.

Foreign Ministry Police that was trained to staff Japan's overseas consulates,³⁷ suggested the expectation that these officers' duties would be largely confined to serving their own nationals.

The performance of the nascent Japanese Branch drew approval. Shortly after it commenced duties in early 1917, the *North-China Herald* observed that "an efficient and capable body has been added to the police force of the Settlement."³⁸ During this initial period, the Japanese policemen proved instrumental in improving the relationship between Settlement authorities and the Japanese community. In early 1918, the SMP reached an agreement with the Japanese consulate to recruit an additional twenty-three officers from Tokyo.³⁹ However, Japanese residents perceived the branch's modest size as far too inadequate to alleviate their concerns over escalating Chinese hostilities. In Hongkou, where several thousand Japanese settlers now lived side-by-side with the Chinese, tensions were simmering. In the summer of that year, these frictions culminated in a succession of fateful incidents that profoundly reshaped the dynamics between this settler community and its host society.

The Hongkou Riot of 1918: a turning point

The Hongkou Riot of 1918 remains an overlooked chapter in the tumultuous history of early twentieth-century Shanghai, often eclipsed by the May Fourth Movement that happened a year later. Yet, it was a pivotal moment for the city's Japanese society that not only intensified its perception of growing local hostility but also prompted new approaches to the Settlement's institutional structure, particularly its police system. The riot and its repercussions—characterized by Japanese military involvement, socio-political cleavage within the Japanese

³⁷ For the Foreign Ministry Police, see Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire's Edge*, Introduction.

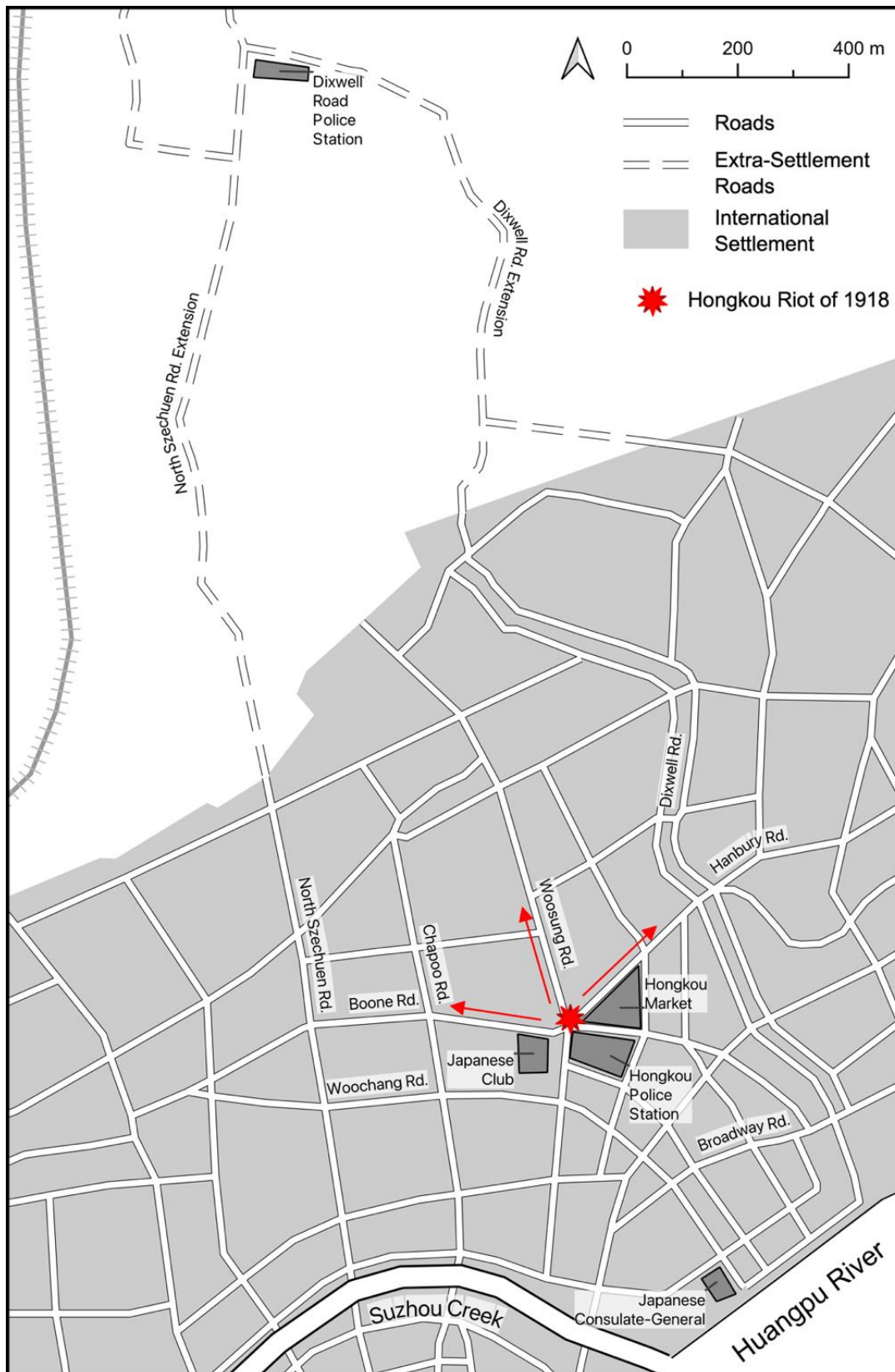
³⁸ *NCH*, April 7, 1907

³⁹ *NCDN*, July 25, 1918.

community, and Anglo-American suspicion of Japanese separatism—formed precursors to two decades of strained relations between the Japanese and the Settlement. Analyzing these events takes the focus off national historiography centered on the May Fourth movement and enables nuanced scrutiny of the contestations in treaty-port governance through the prism of local politics.

What sparked Shanghai's turbulent summer of 1918 was, in a familiar pattern, a seemingly trivial incident. On the evening of July 16, a group of Japanese sailors on shore leave went to retrieve a watch from a Chinese watchmaker on Wusong Road. Somehow dissatisfied with the repair service, they turned angry and violent, assaulted the watchmaker, and damaged his shop. While attempting to flee, two of them were apprehended by a group of Chinese SMP constables. This attracted a crowd of nearby Japanese residents who tried to obstruct the arrest; failing to do so, they accompanied the officers and detainees to the Hongkou police station. Although the sailors were swiftly handed over to Japanese naval officers who rushed to the station, their arrest sparked widespread unrest among Japanese civilians, who viewed this as a hostile provocation from the Chinese policemen. In retaliation, they attacked the watch shop again, and committed multiple acts of vandalism in the vicinity, which resulted in the arrest of two more men, both employees of nearby Japanese shops. Over the next three days, sizeable gatherings of Japanese settlers appeared at various locations in Hongkou, reportedly armed with swordsticks and daggers and seeking retribution against the Chinese constables responsible for the July 16 arrests. The entire Japanese Branch was dispatched to help consular officials quell the disturbances, but it evidently failed to do so, as the SMP continued to receive reports of Japanese aggressors assaulting Chinese policemen and civilians.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ SMA U1-2-791: SMC, "Narrative of Events," September 1918; Ariyoshi Akira, "Shanghai Honkyū ni okeru Shina junhō bōkō no ken 上海虹口ニ於ケル支那巡捕暴行ノ件," July 27, 1918, in *GKS*, vol. 42, 137-139.



Map 3.3. Hongkou Riot of 1918. (Source: Made by author using QGIS)

By midnight on July 20, tensions in Hongkou had escalated to the extent that the night-shift Chinese constables—who usually carried only wood batons—refused to go on duty without firearms. At the same time, their afternoon-shift colleagues, waiting to be relieved, started to congregate near Hongkou Market in proximity to a gathering of Japanese residents, whose agitation only heightened on seeing Chinese policemen assemble. The exact cause of the ensuing confrontation remains unclear, but according to the SMC’s report, “something extraordinary must have occurred” to cause the Chinese policemen to charge at the Japanese crowd and drive them along Wusong, Boone, and Hanbury Roads. In the following riot, Chinese policemen—joined by those in the Hongkou police station—“used batons freely on any Japanese who came within” and smashed the windows of Japanese-owned shops, resulting in a dozen Japanese injuries and a Japanese grocer being inadvertently shot to death on his own verandah by an unidentified person. The Japanese Branch too was quickly embroiled in the melee, with some off-duty members joining the flight in plain clothes. Gunfire was exchanged between Chinese and Japanese constables and killed one of the latter. The violence persisted for approximately thirty minutes until a group of senior SMP officials arrived and dispersed both parties (Map 3.3).⁴¹

Hostility remained an undercurrent in the subsequent week even as overt violence subsided. Many Chinese constables from other districts declined to report for duty until the Japanese were pacified.⁴² Meanwhile, Japanese settlers protested en masse against the SMP’s refusal to punish the Chinese constables and what they saw as inadequate protection from Settlement authorities. The Japanese Club on Boone Road, located just thirty meters from the

⁴¹ SMA U1-2-791: SMP Police Report, June 20, 1918; “Narrative of Events,” by Shanghai Municipal Council, September 1918; “Report by Captain-Superintendent of Police to the SMC,” September 30, 1918; and Watch Committee Meetings, SMC, October 7, 14 and 16, 1918.

⁴² SMA U1-2-791: SMP, “Police Report,” June 21, 1918.

Hongkou police station, became a hub of their mobilization and “inflammatory speeches” that discomfited the SMC.⁴³ On July 22, over a thousand settlers assembled at the Club for a seven-hour conference, discussing issues such as the shortfall of the Japanese Branch, compensation from the SMC for losses incurred during the riot, and restrictions on Chinese constables’ use of firearms.⁴⁴

Despite the SMC’s unease with this “very menacing” stance,⁴⁵ the Western community initially felt optimistic that Japanese agitation was limited to “certain unruly elements” within the lower classes and that their consular authorities and business elites would engineer a harmonious resolution with the SMC.⁴⁶ This impression appeared to be confirmed by a grand funeral on July 23 for the fallen Japanese constable, which was attended by the SMC chairman, Consul-General Ariyoshi, and dozens of distinguished members of the Japanese community.⁴⁷ However, Japanese disquiet quickly resurfaced and was exacerbated by rumors in local Japanese newspapers alleging that the Chinese were contemplating an act of revenge.⁴⁸

While the SMC perceived the initial Japanese assembly on July 22 as the work of some reckless individuals defying their own consular authorities—an interpretation not entirely wrong, given Ariyoshi’s worried report to Tokyo⁴⁹—the second mass meeting on July 27 challenged the notion that a sharp political line existed between the better-class Japanese and those who were

⁴³ SMA U1-2-791: SMP, “Police Report,” June 22, 1918.

⁴⁴ SMA U1-2-791: SMP, “Police Report,” June 23, 1918.

⁴⁵ SMA U1-2-791: SMP, “Police Report,” June 21, 1918.

⁴⁶ *NCDN*, July 24, 1918.

⁴⁷ SMA U1-2-791: SMP, “Police Report,” June 24, 1918.

⁴⁸ *SN*, July 26, 1918,

⁴⁹ Ariyoshi’s disapproval of the July 22 assembly is evident in his report to the foreign ministry, where he openly expressed disdain for those who incited the gathering. He stated that, by merely considering the occupational background of the main organizers, which included a kimono merchant, a moneylender, a horse trainer, a restaurateur, and an ice vendor, one could know that the meeting was “extremely improper” (甚だ面白カラザル). But he admitted that it was difficult at the time to forbid assembly of the agitated settlers. See Ariyoshi Akira, “Shanghai Honkyū ni okeru Shina junhō bōkō no ken,” July 27, 1918, in *GKS*, vol. 42, 140.

susceptible to “mob spirit and hot weather excitability.”⁵⁰ At least, such a perception proved grossly misleading in predicting the Japanese community’s actions. The July 27 meeting was officially convened by the Japanese Residents Corporation (JRC) under the consulate’s auspices. It saw even larger attendance and passed several solutions, including calls for the SMP to exclusively deploy the Japanese Branch in Japanese residential quarter and to impose stricter disciplinary measures on the Chinese Branch. A few days later, Ariyoshi conveyed these demands verbatim to the SMC despite his personal reservation and the latter’s expectation that he “do everything possible to subdue his less responsible brethren.”⁵¹

JRC chairman Ibukiyama Tokuji, who was recently elected to the Municipal Council, was similarly torn between his allegiance to the Japanese cause and his responsibilities to the SMC. His signature of the conference resolution startled those who had hitherto believed that the Japanese mob’s “preposterous demands” would never be endorsed by their community leaders.⁵² To quote one English newspaper, “the tail has wagged the dog with some vengeance.”⁵³ Ibukiyama later conceded that his position in the wake of the Hongkou Riot had been “delicate,” yet he openly challenged the SMC’s blaming of Japanese agitators for initially provoking the Chinese constables.⁵⁴

Japanese settlers’ demands stirred a flurry of worried speculation among Western observers, with the most unsettling theory being that they ultimately aimed to carve out an autonomous zone in the northern part of the Settlement. To many Municipal officials, the JRC meeting indicated “a spirit of aggression foreign to the best traditions of the Settlement...

⁵⁰ NCDN, July 24, 1918.

⁵¹ *The Shanghai Gazette*, July 30, 1918; SMA U1-2-791: Japanese Consul-General to Chairman of SMC, August 5, 1918; and Captain Superintendent of Police to Secretary, SMC, August 27, 1918.

⁵² *CP*, August 2, 1918.

⁵³ NCDN 07/31/1918

⁵⁴ SMA U1-2-792: Council Meeting, SMC, October 23, 1918.

emanating from a class of people ignorant of its past history.”⁵⁵ Within the SMC, the hardline opinion that it should by no means be “dictated to by the members of the Japanese Club as to how we should run the Settlement” prevailed.⁵⁶

Since Japan’s acquisition of full treaty rights, Westerners in the Settlement had always harbored apprehensions over Japanese separatism and Hongkou’s potential transformation into a “Japanese kingdom.”⁵⁷ These anxieties continuously grew alongside the local Japanese population and significantly intensified with their burgeoning industrial and commercial interests in Shanghai during World War I. However, 1918 marked the first time that this threat loomed large enough for many Westerners to interpret calls for SMP reforms as heralding a full-scale Japanese challenge to the Settlement’s institutional structure and territorial integrity. As one British ratepayer contended, “The Hongkou trouble has resulted not in Japanese bitterness against Chinese but in Japanese bitterness against the British community because they consider that the handling of the whole affair by the Municipal Authorities, predominantly British, has shown animus against the Japanese community.”⁵⁸

Of particular concern to Settlement authorities was the “rowdiness” among the local Japanese society, which seemed to contain many individuals with “no visible means of subsistence and appear[ing] to live on their more fortunate fellow countrymen.”⁵⁹ In his final report on the riot, Captain-Superintendent Kenneth McEuen concluded that these men “had not the smallest regard for their Consular officials” and “had decided to make trouble at all costs.”⁶⁰

⁵⁵ SMA U1-2-791: “Report by Captain-Superintendent of Police to the SMC,” September 30, 1918.

⁵⁶ SMA U1-2-791: Council Meeting, SMC, July 24, 1918.

⁵⁷ NCDN, July 31, 1918.

⁵⁸ *The Shanghai Gazette*, July 31, 1918

⁵⁹ SMA U1-2-791: “Report by Captain-Superintendent of Police to the SMC,” September 30, 1918.

⁶⁰ Ibid. It is worth mentioning that McEuen was notoriously disdainful of the “unruly crowd,” eventually sacked by the SMC in 1925 following his ill-handled response to the May Thirtieth Incident. However, he was not alone in seeing a Japanese “rowdy element” in Shanghai. Shortly before the Hongkou Riot, a Japanese researcher of Mitsui Trading Company’s Shanghai office similarly observed “the prevalence of vagrants” (*furō no to ōku* 浮浪の徒多く)

Ariyoshi repudiated both allegations. While recognizing the existence of a relatively poor class among the settlers, he refused to define them as a rowdy element or admit that they had ever rebelled against the consular authorities.⁶¹

The SMC's apprehension about "rowdies" grew out of the conviction that lower-class settlers imperiled the dignity and stability of the colonial establishment. Such anxieties, prevalent within Shanghai's foreign community and the ruling elite of other colonial societies, did not exclusively target the Japanese. Anglo-American "Shanghaianders" had long been wary of the growth of a white underclass in the city and struggled to curb "low roaders" such as seamen, discharged soldiers, prostitutes, and crooked bankers.⁶² In fact, the ranks of the SMP's Foreign Branch were largely staffed by men viewed as threats to the communal norms of the respectable classes.⁶³ Moreover, the early twentieth-century influx of Russian refugees, many of whom lived "under worse conditions than the poorest Chinese coolies," caused an unprecedented crisis for "white prestige."⁶⁴

The Japanese authorities, too, shared these concerns. Since the late nineteenth century, Japan had been proactively regulating its overseas citizens, particularly when their actions or socio-economic status threatened to compromise Japan's international standing or foreign relations.⁶⁵ In Shanghai, which had been a pivotal site of Japan's contact with modern

within the local Japanese society. See *MNS*, June 20, 1918. For more on the socio-economic conditions of the Japanese settler community, see Chapter 1.

⁶¹ SMA U1-2-792: Japanese Consul-General to Chairman of SMC, November 4, 1918.

⁶² Bickers, *Britain in China*, 103-104; Mark F. Wilkinson, "The Shanghai American community, 1937-1949," 233.

⁶³ Bickers, Bickers, "Who were the Shanghai Municipal Police, and why were they there? The British recruits of 1919," 173.

⁶⁴ Stella Dong, *Shanghai: The Rise and Fall of a Decadent City*, 131. See also Marcia R. Ristaino, "The Russian diaspora community in Shanghai," in *New Frontiers*, 192-210

⁶⁵ See, for example, Sidney Xu Lu, *The Making of Japanese Settler Colonialism*, 149-179; Jonathan Dresner, "Instructions to Emigrant Laborers, 1885-94: 'Return in Triumph' or 'Wander on the Verge of Starvation'," in *Japanese Diasporas: Unsung Pasts, Conflicting Presents, and Uncertain Futures*, 52-68; Mutsuko, *Tobei imin no kyōiku: shiori de yomu Nihonjin imin shakai*.

civilization, the Japanese government exercised particular diligence in upholding a civilized national image, accommodating the established imperial order, and demonstrating its control of local settlers.⁶⁶ Despite the JRC's obdurate stance after the Hongkou Riot, there was never an officially-endorsed Japanese movement to challenge the SMC's authority. On the contrary, the consulate remained vigilant against any settler initiatives that bucked the institutional framework of the Settlement.

In August, when a group of settlers tried to form a corps named "the Yamato Volunteers" to replace the Shanghai Volunteer Corps in protecting the Hongkou community, the Japanese consulate swiftly arrested them as political instigators. The ringleaders were each sentenced to twenty-five days of imprisonment, and two of them were subsequently banished from Shanghai.⁶⁷ The background of these "Yamato Volunteers"—including an ice-cream vendor, an unemployed broker, and two small-firm employees—once again revealed that lower-class *dochaku-ha* settlers felt most vulnerable and responded most militantly to the riot. Meanwhile, the Japanese consulate initiated an investigation into the riot and found ten more settlers guilty of escalating conflicts with SMP constables. Four of them were it exiled from Shanghai for three years, and the others were sentenced to a month in prison.⁶⁸

However, the Hongkou Riot remained unsolved. The fundamental disagreement concerned the cause of the disturbances and reflected conflicting views regarding the nature of Settlement

⁶⁶ Since the late nineteenth century, the Japanese consular authorities to deport regularly deported Japanese citizens from Shanghai for "disrupting moral order" (*fūzoku bunran* 風俗紊乱), often banning them from returning for a certain number of years. These measures were taken primarily against individuals both females and males, engaged in prostitution or pimping, occupations common among the settler community at the time. See *Yomiuri*, December 7, 1886; June 26, 1888; October 26, 1889; June 7, 1891; and June 14, 1891. For more on Japanese consular regulations, see Chapters 1 and 5.

⁶⁷ SMA U1-2-791: Captain-Superintendent of Police to Secretary of SMC, August 12, 1918.

⁶⁸ SMA U1-2-792: Japanese Consul-General to Chairman of SMC, November 4, 1918. In the Settlement, foreign offender convicted by their consular authorities typically served their terms in the municipal goal operated by the SMC, and they were confined to a special ward separate from the one for Chinese inmates.

policing and its implications for local Sino-Japanese relations. To exonerate the SMP, the Settlement authorities and most local English newspapers downplayed the watch shop incident on July 16, ascribed subsequent conflicts to longstanding animosities between local Chinese and Japanese communities, and denied any premeditation in Chinese policemen's attacks on the Japanese.⁶⁹ Furthermore, they contended that these tensions had been exacerbated by recent news about the Nishihara Loans—a series of agreements currently under negotiation in Beijing that many Chinese viewed as a Japanese conspiracy to expand influence in China through financial means.⁷⁰

The Japanese, however, refuted any linkage between the Hongkou conflict and recent political developments. Ariyoshi argued that most Japanese participants in the riot “had not the slightest knowledge of political affairs,”⁷¹ while the JRC insisted that the riot was merely a local conflict between Japanese residents and Chinese constables that did not imply national animosities.⁷² According to them, it was the Chinese constables' arrest of the sailors that provoked spontaneous acts of self-defense by the Japanese residents to safeguard their treaty rights and uphold the honor of their Imperial Navy; the core issues therefore lay in the understaffing of the SMP's Japanese Branch and the fact that Hongkou's Japanese population lived under the authority of Chinese policemen.⁷³

Chinese opinions fell in a range between the Settlement and Japanese stances. A *Shenbao* commentary agreed with the Japanese assertion that the riot had begun with the watch shop

⁶⁹ See *SEPM*, July 22, 1918; *ST*, July 25, 1918; SMA U1-2-791: “Memorandum of Members of the Commission Appointed by the Shanghai Municipal Council to Enquire into the Evidence in Connection with the Disturbance Which Took Place in the Hongkew District During the Period From 16th to 19th July 1918,” September 10, 1918.

⁷⁰ SMA U1-2-791: Watch Committee Meetings, SMC, October 7, 14, and 16, 1918.

⁷¹ SMA U1-2-792: Japanese Consul-General to Chairman of SMC, November 4, 1918.

⁷² This perception stands in a stark contrast to how the Japanese consistently interpreted crimes against them as “organized terrorism” by the Chinese during the 1930s (Chapter 5).

⁷³ *SNN*, November 1, 1918.

incident, yet it contended that widespread Sino-Japanese antagonism in Hongkou fueled subsequent violence and eventually caused the tragedy of July 20. Moreover, it drew readers' attention to clashes between the Chinese and Japanese Branches during the riot, relating the Hongkou conflict to the wider context of recurring confrontations between Chinese and Japanese police forces who functioned side-by-side in Manchuria and many other places in China.⁷⁴

This debate stirred extensive discussions about the role and purpose of the Japanese Branch. As noted earlier, the SMC had decided in early 1918 to expand the branch to fifty officers, but this decision did not go unopposed. Like Japanese settlers unnerved by the presence of Chinese policemen in what they saw as Japanese neighborhoods, American observers begrudged the deployment of the Japanese Branch in Hongkou and the “Japanization” of the area, which had been their concession before its merge into the International Settlement and continued to be viewed by them as their “sphere of influence.”⁷⁵ After the Hongkou Riot, the American-owned *China Press* claimed that the trouble originated in the introduction of the Japanese Branch; rather than fulfilling their duty to restrain their compatriots, these officers had allied with the mob against their Chinese colleagues and were now “an irritant” and “even a menace” to local order.⁷⁶ In mid-August, the American Association of China presented a formal petition to the SMC demanding the removal of all Japanese policemen from Hongkou.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ *Shenbao*, June 20, 1918, and June 21, 1918.

⁷⁵ *CP*, August 2, 1918.

⁷⁶ *CP*, August 2, 1918. In response to Japanese demands for police reform, some Americans drew a historical parallel between the Hongkou Riot and the notorious 1861 assassination of Henry Heusken, the Secretary of the American Legation in Tokyo, by a group of anti-foreign activists—“In conclusion let me recall a bit of history to our excitable Japanese friends. A few years after the opening of Japan to Western civilization, a Japanese mob burned the American legation in Tokio and murdered the Secretary of the Legation. But the US government did not find it necessary to demand a share in the policing of Tokio. Can't the Japanese now leave undisturbed the section which is America's contribution to the International Settlement of Shanghai?”

⁷⁷ SMA U1-2-791: American Association of China to the Chairman and Members of the SMC, August 17, 1918.

But Settlement authorities, whose top priority was to exculpate themselves, perceived such open attacks on the SMP as a threat akin to the Japanese agitation. In response to the American Association, Captain-Superintendent McEuen defended the Japanese Branch at length, vouching for its “exemplary” conduct and members “always amenable to discipline.” He acknowledged that the branch had a unique mandate to serve the Japanese community but stressed that its authority was respected by most local settlers. The responsibility for the Hongkou trouble, he said, solely rested with the unruly elements and the consular authorities who had failed to subdue their subjects.⁷⁸

McEuen’s apparently self-contradictory claims satisfied no one. Ariyoshi retorted that “the consulate may exhort its subjects to keep peace and good order but does not possess the necessary means to enforce direct control, a responsibility that falls upon the Municipal Council.”⁷⁹ The above exchange revealed the perennial controversy over who held the ultimate responsibility to protect and manage the Settlement’s Japanese residents during political upheavals. At the same time, it betrayed the ambivalent position of the Japanese Branch in Settlement administration. In peaceful times, it served as a valuable tool for the Settlement regime in facilitating day-to-day governance related to the Japanese community. Nevertheless, its exclusive deployment in Hongkou and service to a single national group rendered it an anomalous institution. This unique identity meant it could easily turn into a political liability for the SMC during crises, whether by fueling antagonism among the Chinese residents or by arousing American umbrage at the “Japanization” of Hongkou. Consequently, the Hongkou Riot

⁷⁸ SMA U1-2-791: Captain-Superintendent of Police to Secretary of SMC, August 27, 1918.

⁷⁹ SMA U1-2-792: Japanese Consul-General to Chairman of SMC, November 4, 1918.

led to the SMC's resolution, at McEuen's own recommendation, to indefinitely halt the recruitment of additional Japanese policemen.⁸⁰

The Japanese Branch's metropolitan ties and marginality within the SMP

The SMC's decision to postpone the expansion of the Japanese Branch frustrated Japanese pursuit of a greater representation in Settlement policing. However, the delay proved wise given the May Fourth Movement several months later, which saw the hitherto largest outburst of Chinese nationalist sentiments. Initially sparked by protest against the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, which formally recognized Japanese control of former German colonial possessions in Shandong, the movement quickly transformed into strident anti-imperial campaigns across China. In Shanghai, nationalist activists attacked the SMC's complicity with Japanese imperialism in directing its police force to suppress anti-Japanese demonstrations within the Settlement.⁸¹ Amid this charged political context, any moves to enlarge the Japanese Branch became inconceivable.

The 1919 crisis heightened awareness among the Japanese public about the plight of their compatriots in Shanghai, although domestic reactions were not uniformly sympathetic. The press in Japan extensively covered the difficulties faced by the local settler community amidst boycotts of Japanese goods, food shortages, and the looming threat of violence, yet some metropolitan commentators blamed the settlers themselves. A *Tōkyō asahi shinbun* article, for instance, suggested that the community's precarious situation was partly due to their own "disinterest in public issues and self-defense," evidenced by their lack of participation in the Shanghai

⁸⁰ SMA U1-2-791: Watch Committee Meetings, SMC, October 7, 14 and 16, 1918.

⁸¹ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 143.

Volunteer Corps and the Settlement's Special Police, a volunteer auxiliary force formed in 1918 to address wartime shortage of regular officers.⁸²

Responsible for their “self-defense” or not, Shanghai's Japanese settlers in the wake of May Fourth were seen as in urgent need of protection by their home government. By June, Japanese marines stood by on gunboats on the Huangpu River, ready to land at any time, and additional naval reinforcement were readied in Sasebo, capable of arriving within twenty-four hours.⁸³ Nevertheless, since deploying naval forces would inevitably lead to serious political consequences, the day-to-day security of Japanese residents continued to depend primarily on Settlement forces. Once the immediate effects of May Fourth subsided in 1920, the SMP was pressured to move forward with enlarging the Japanese Branch, and the Japanese government responded quickly by recruiting candidates from its domestic police.

Similar to the 1916 case, the 1920 recruitment underscores the intricate involvement of high-level Japanese government branches in the exchange of information and personnel between Shanghai and Japan. This contrasts with the SMC's recruitment practices in Britain, which were managed by its London office and primarily used commercial advertisements without engaging the British government.⁸⁴ The SMP's solicitation of Japanese officers, along with a detailed overview of the force and its Japanese Branch, was first delivered by Consul-General Yamasaki Keiichi to the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo, which then relayed the information to the Home Ministry. The latter's Police Affairs Bureau (*Keihokyoku* 警保局)—the nerve center of the

⁸² *TA*, June 12, 1919, morning edition. The “Special Police”—not to be confused with the SMP's Special Branch, which was formed in 1925 replacing the original Intelligence Office (see next chapter)—was initially organized by the SMP in April 1918 through recruiting local volunteers. It was subsequently institutionalized to support the regular police with tasks such as patrolling, conducting search operations, and executing raids. See *NCH*, June 11, 1927.

⁸³ *TA*, June 12, 1919, morning edition.

⁸⁴ Bickers, “Who were the Shanghai Municipal Police, and why were they there? The British recruits of 1919,” 178-179; Peters, *Shanghai Policeman*, 1-2.

Japanese police system that formulated general policies and overseeing prefectural police operations—disseminated the recruitment call to prefectural police chiefs, who then managed the search for potential candidates and conducted preliminary screenings in their respective locales.⁸⁵

Unlike the 1916 cohort, which was exclusively drawn from the Tokyo Metropolitan Police, the 1920 recruits hailed from various prefectural forces, reflecting a significant recent development of the Japanese police system. In the late 1910s, the ideal of professionalized policemen began to proliferate beyond Tokyo and raised the standards of recruitment and education of police officers across the country.⁸⁶ By 1920, whereas the Tokyo police was experiencing a manpower shortage, there had emerged a substantial pool of qualified prefectural officers who could serve abroad. In the end, twenty-two officers from six prefectures—Osaka, Kyōto, Kanagawa, Hyōgo, Nagasaki and Fukuoka—were handpicked by the Foreign and Home Ministries and recommended to the SMP deputy commissioner A. H. Hilton-Johnson, who personally travelled to Japan to interview them.⁸⁷ These new recruits, whose prefectural origins largely mirrored the demographic makeup of Shanghai’s Japanese society, were evidently expected to foster close ties with their respective hometown communities in that city.

⁸⁵ NAJDA 平 9 警察 00257100-053: “Shanghai kyoryūchi keisatsu-sho junsu ōbo ni kansuru ken shōkai (Ōsaka soto go fukun) 上海居留地警察署巡查応募に関する件照会（大阪外 5 府県）,” August 4, 1920, <https://www.digital.archives.go.jp/item/1029679>, [accessed December 5, 2023].

⁸⁶ Tipton, *The Japanese Police State*, Chapter 4.

⁸⁷ JACAR Ref. A05032513400: “Shanghai kyoryūchi keisatsu sho junsu ōbo ni kansuru ken shōkai (Ōsaka soto go fukun),” August 1920.

Table 3.1.
The SMP's Japanese Uniformed Branch (excluding the Criminal Investigation Department, civil staff, supernumeraries, etc.), 1916-1937

	Commissioner	Deputy Commr.	Assistant Commr.	Superintendent	Chief Inspector	Inspector	Sub-Inspector	Sergeant	Constable	Total	New Recruits
1916						1		2	27	30	30
1917						1		2	26	29	0
1918						1		2	19	22	0
1919						1		2	18	21	0
1920						1	1	6	29	37	20
1921							1	5	14	20	1
1922							1	8	22	31	12
1923							2	10	28	40	11
1924							3	14	28	45	6
1925							4	16	38	57	14
1926						1	2	20	51	74	20
1927						2	1	21	59	83	12
1928			1			2	2	24	71	100	32
1929			1			2	5	29	129	164	75
1930			1	1		3	6	31	143	185	39
1931			1	1		3	6	33	162	206	30
1932			1	1		3	8	32	194	239	49
1933			1	1		4	7	35	183	231	0
1934		1	1	1	3	4	7	34	184	235	11
1935		1	1		4	4	9	35	179	233	8
1936		1	1	2	2	6	8	41	176	237	12
1937		1	1	2	2	6	9	44	181	246	15

SOURCE: SMC, *Report for the Year*, 1916—1937.

However, the arrival of new recruits did not change the Japanese Branch's peripheral position in the SMP. Throughout the early 1920s, the actual size of the branch fell below its authorized strength of fifty men (Table 3.1). Several reasons underlay this persistent shortage. First, close ties to domestic police inadvertently led to a high turnover rate in the Japanese Branch, impeding its development in terms of numbers and seniority. In 1921 alone, eighteen members left the force.⁸⁸ The majority of the 1916 cohort, including its highest-ranked member, Inspector Ōkushi Tamehachi, resigned as soon as or even before their first five-year contract expired and mostly returned to their former positions in Japan. The SMP, when hiring them, had understood that they would sever all connections with previous employers.⁸⁹ But in reality, the Japanese government had considered the SMP's Japanese employees as serving under a "foreign government" and, following imperial ordinances issued in 1904, permitted them to retain their domestic titles and ranks.⁹⁰

Second, although the SMP officers initially received higher payments than their counterparts in Japan, the comparison soon turned to their disadvantage. During the late 1910s and 1920s, a comprehensive reform of Japan's police system saw a significant salary increase for domestic officers to attract better-qualified candidates.⁹¹ This change dampened the morale of the Japanese Branch's current members and hampered successive recruitment.⁹² By the end of 1921, this remuneration issue had become so salient that it came to the personal attention of

⁸⁸ Eleven of them resigned, six were invalided, and one was dismissed. See SMC, *Report for the Year 1921*, 40A.

⁸⁹ *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 19, November 1, 1916, 130.

⁹⁰ According to Imperial Ordinances No. 195 and No. 237 of 1904, if a serving employee of the Japanese government was appointed to a position under a foreign government, they would continue to be regarded as an employee of the Japanese government during their service abroad, allowing them to later return to original positions. See NAJDA 類 01231100-015: "Gaikoku seifu ni heiyō seraruru kanri oyobi kanri taigu-sha ni kansuru chokurei tekiyō no ken o sadamu 外国政府ニ聘用セラルル官吏及官吏待遇者ニ関スル勅令適用ノ件ヲ定ム," August 25, 1916, <https://www.digital.archives.go.jp/item/1675620>, [accessed December 5, 2023].

⁹¹ Tipton, *The Japanese Police State*, 77.

⁹² *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 21, July 7, 1920, 153; December 14, 1921, 514.

Prime Minister Hara Kei. In a joint memorandum, Foreign Minister Uchida Kōzai and Home Minister Kotonami Takejirō suggested that the Japanese government subsidize the SMP's Japanese officers—although this plan never materialized, likely due to concerns that it might complicate the institutional affiliation of these officers.⁹³

Furthermore, even with the Japanese government's enthusiastic assistance in recruitment, securing a sufficient number of suitable candidates willing to serve in Shanghai remained difficult, and not many Japanese officers succeeded in their jobs. Local conditions in Shanghai made the policing work there very different from Japan. Despite the branch's main duty towards local Japanese, daily interaction with the Chinese population was an inevitable part of their job, and the language barrier posed a formidable challenge to their effective functioning within the host society. Like their British and Indian counterparts, Japanese officers were required to learn the Chinese language and received different levels of language bonuses based on their performance in periodic exams.⁹⁴ However, most of them were never able to engage in even basic conversations with the locals, and according to a SMC report, "there is an apparent lack of readiness in speech which the several years of study should have given them."⁹⁵ To address this issue, the SMP began in 1921 to hire Japanese constables from among local settlers.⁹⁶ However, it intentionally minimized the number of local recruits until the late 1920s. Apart from criminal detectives, the SMP generally preferred to employ officers from outside Shanghai—in the Chinese case, the northern provinces of Hebei and Shandong—viewing them as more

⁹³ NAJDA 類 01384100-036: "Shanghai kakukoku kyoryūchi keisatsu ni heiyō seraretaru kanri oyobi kanri taigu-sha ni tai suru taigu-hō o kettei su 上海各国居留地警察ニ聘用セラレタル官吏及官吏待遇者ニ対スル待遇方ヲ決定ス," December 27, 1921, <https://www.digital.archives.go.jp/item/1686889>, [accessed December 5, 2023]. In 1921, when some Japanese Branch members attended a JAASU meeting, upon the latter's invitation, to discuss their payment issue, it alerted the SMP leadership as a serious disciplinary matter. See *Minutes of SMC*, vol. 31, May 11, 1921, 89.

⁹⁴ SMA U1-3-663: SMP, "Terms of Service," January 1, 1922.

⁹⁵ SMC, *Report for the Year 1921*, 266A.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 40A.

trustworthy due to their detachment from local interests, an approach that echoed the traditional British practice of “policing strangers by strangers” in the metropole and cross its colonial domains.⁹⁷

Although the Japanese Branch’s work consistently received positive evaluations in official SMC reports, its actual record was mixed at best. Even its safeguarding the Japanese community sometimes fell short. A telling example occurred in August 1921 when a Japanese woman was found strangled to death in an open field in north Hongkou. Despite the proximity of several Japanese constables to the scene, the crime went unnoticed by them until a Sikh officer reported it the following day.⁹⁸ Moreover, the branch was as fraught with disciplinary issues as other branches were. Each year there were cases of dismissal due to misconduct. In October 1920, for instance, an inebriated Japanese constable caused a commotion on North Sichuan Road by assaulting pedestrians with his baton and disrupting traffic. This case, reported to Foreign Minister Uchida by Consul-General Yamazaki, instantly drew the Japanese government’s attention. Nevertheless, Japanese authorities did not contest the SMC’s decision to discharge the constable, indicating their deference to the latter’s authority in disciplining its Japanese employees.⁹⁹

Japanese marginality in the SMP and the Settlement’s overall administrative structure was demonstrated in the May Thirtieth Movement of 1925, a watershed in the development of Chinese nationalism.¹⁰⁰ The outburst of anti-imperial sentiments in Shanghai that year stemmed

⁹⁷ Mike Brodgen, “The Emergence of the Police—The Colonial Dimension,” *The British Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 27 (Winter 1987), 11.

⁹⁸ *NCH*, August 6, 1921.

⁹⁹ NAJDA 平 9 警察 00202100-038: “Shanghai kyōdō sōkai Kōbukyoku shōhei junsu ni kansuru ken tsūchō (Nagasaki) 上海共同租界工部局招聘巡查に関する件通牒（長崎）,” November 22, 1920, <https://www.digital.archives.go.jp/item/1011675>, [accessed December 5, 2023].

¹⁰⁰ On the May Thirtieth Movement and its aftermaths, see Rigby, *The May 30 Movement*; Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, Chapter 6-9; and Gotō, *Japan and Britain in Shanghai*, Chapter 2.

from a series of labor disputes and strikes at Japanese-owned cotton mills between February and May, which had been fueled by a Japanese foreman's killing of a Chinese worker on May 15. But the movement culminated on May 30 when the Municipal police, under the command of British Inspector Edward Everson, fatally shot student demonstrators on Nanjing Road, provoking citywide strikes and boycotts that paralyzed Shanghai's economy for weeks. Fortunately for the Japanese, their minor presence in Settlement governance saved them from a larger crisis. Although the movement originated in conflicts between Japanese factory managers and Chinese laborers, its focus after May Thirtieth shifted toward British establishments in Shanghai, and in particular, targeted the legitimacy of the British rule in the Settlement.

The expansion of the Japanese Branch

The years following May Thirtieth witnessed a sequence of events that profoundly impacted the political landscape of the treaty-port system in China. Britain's new policies to accommodate Chinese nationalism, the Guomindang's Northern Expedition, and the establishment of a Nationalist municipal government in Shanghai all dramatically shifted the city's power dynamics and placed the International Settlement on defensive.¹⁰¹ As the Guomindang rose to power with a mandate to renegotiate all unequal treaties and end the extraterritorial regime in China, the SMC came under unprecedented pressure to reform itself to appease Chinese sentiments and restore the public confidence in its governing capacities, which had been seriously compromised by the May Thirtieth bloodshed. Of all Settlement institutions, the British-led SMP faced the harshest criticism; not only was it perceived as the worst

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, 60-77; Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 141-153; Bickers, *Britain in China*, 115-169; Henriot, *Shanghai, 1927-1937*, Chapter 2.

encroachment on Chinese sovereign rights, but it also served as the emblem of a colonial regime in need of an overhaul due to decades-long corruption and inefficiency.¹⁰²

The significance of this widespread clamor for Settlement reform was not lost on the Japanese community, which had been striving for years to undermine British ascendancy. By late 1927, it recognized a ripening chance to demand a larger share in municipal administration and make further inroads into its police system. In October, the JRC took a bold step in this direction, convening a mass meeting that openly attacked the SMC's "ridiculous policy... to govern a modern city with 75-year-old laws" and called for "drastic reforms in all divisions of the Police Department, which for many years has been drifting into corruption."¹⁰³

These "drastic reforms" centered on larger Japanese representation in the SMP, an ambition repeatedly thwarted since 1918. However, what was new in 1927 was that the Japanese Amalgamated Association of Street Unions (JAASU) assumed a leading role in the reform campaigns, reflecting ordinary settlers' newfound confidence in dealings with Settlement authorities.¹⁰⁴ The JAASU, as discussed in Chapter 1, was formed in the mid-1910s as a collective of Japanese neighborhood associations. Steered by middle- and lower-class *dochaku-ha* settlers, this organization initially confined its activities within the Japanese community while the elite-led JRC, along with the SMC's Japanese councilors, acted as the community's official representatives when interacting with external parties.¹⁰⁵ In August 1927, when the JAASU first directly engaged with the SMC by presenting the latter a petition for comprehensive municipal reforms, some Municipal officials questioned whether it legitimately represented Japanese

¹⁰² Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, 60.

¹⁰³ *CWR*, October 15, 1927.

¹⁰⁴ Between 1925 and 1927, the British government repeatedly requested the Japanese government to send more troops to China, advocating for joint Anglo-Japanese actions in response to the challenges posed by Chinese nationalism to the status quo in East Asia. See Gotō, *Shanghai wo meguru Nichi-Ei kankei*, 55-79.

¹⁰⁵ Takatsuna, "*Kokusai toshi*" *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*, 46-55.

interests.¹⁰⁶ But this confusion dispersed shortly as the JAASU subsequently made regular contact with the SMC.

As noted in Chapter 2, the JAASU's 1927 petition called for increased Japanese involvement across various realms of Municipal administration, including education, finance, and public health. However, its most vocal grievances concerned the police system, a focus consistently reflected by its petitions to the SMC over the following years.¹⁰⁷ When its initial petition met a tepid response, the same proposals were brought forth again in November. This time, they were articulated in greater detail and submitted under the name of the newly-formed "Association for the Study of Shanghai Municipal Administration." This revised petition contained a series of demands regarding the SMP that included:

1. An enlargement of the Japanese Branch (then comprising eighty-six members) to two hundred by 1928.
2. The appointment of a Japanese assistant commissioner and two Japanese superintendents.
3. The assignment of Japanese officers to head the Hongkou and Dixwell Road police stations.
4. The provision of Japanese-language lessons to foreign, Sikh, and Chinese constables in Hongkou.¹⁰⁸

The first demand reiterated the longstanding Japanese aspiration to enlarge the Japanese Branch, citing familiar justifications such as the rapid growth of Shanghai's Japanese population,

¹⁰⁶ SMA U1-3-3344: "Comments by Commissioner of Revenue," August 18, 1927.

¹⁰⁷ In 1937, when recounting the history of its development, the JAASU listed the expansion of the Japanese Branch as the top achievement of its "diplomacy" with the SMC. See SMA Y4-1-801: JAASU, "*Shanghai Nihonjin kakuro rengōkai enkaku* 上海日本人各路連合会沿革," June 1937, 10-11.

¹⁰⁸ SMA U1-3-3344: Association for the Study of Shanghai Municipal Administration, "Petition," November 14, 1927.

the city's rising rates of crimes and anti-foreign agitation, and the linguistic and cultural barriers that kept other branches from effectively serving the Japanese community. Demands two through four, however, broke with precedent by advocating for increased Japanese presence within the SMP's executive ranks and a reconfiguration of the entire system to align with the Settlement's demographic distribution.

The JAASU's submission of its petitions coincided with several important events between late 1927 and early 1928 that compelled the SMC to respond to the renewed Japanese demands for police reform. In September 1927, two Japanese naval patrolmen who had assaulted a Chinese boy and a SMP constable were apprehended and detained at the Hongkou police station for several hours. This incident, examined in Chapter 5, instigated vehement protests from Japanese civilians and naval command and was solved only after the SMP pledged a strict policy of non-intervention with Japanese military personnel in the future. A greater crisis arose in April and May 1928 when Tanaka Giichi's cabinet sent the second Shandong Expedition to stop the Guomindang army's northerly advance, which escalated into a military conflict in Ji'nan and a massacre of Chinese civilians. The Ji'nan Incident redirected Chinese anti-imperial sentiments to Japan and caused immediate repercussions in Shanghai, greatly disconcerting its local Japanese residents.¹⁰⁹

The fallout from Ji'nan convinced the SMC of the urgent need to appoint a high-ranking Japanese police official to signal its attentiveness to Japanese interests and alleviate settler unrest. In the summer of 1928, it engaged Tajima Akira, who was jointly nominated by the JRC and Japanese consular authorities, as an assistant commissioner of the SMP. Tajima's background seemed tailored for this role: a graduate of the Japanese *Tōa dōbun shoin* (East Asia

¹⁰⁹ Gotō, *Shanghai wo meguru Nichi-Ei kankei*, 155-157.

Common Culture Academy) in Shanghai, he had been trained as a “China hand” and was well-acquainted with the local context. At the time of his appointment, he was a consul in Nanjing with decades of diplomatic service that endowed him with the acumen and skills necessary to maneuver within the Settlement’s elite circles while advocating for Japanese interests.¹¹⁰ Two years after Tajima’s appointment, the SMP recruited another Japanese career diplomat, Uehara Shigeru, as a superintendent. Having served in London, Singapore, and South Africa, Uehara was married to a British woman and known as an Anglophile versed in English.¹¹¹

Concurrent with the recruitment of Tajima and Uehara, the Japanese Branch saw a steady growth from 1927. By 1931, it had increased to 206 officers (Table 1), warranting the construction of an eight-story dormitory in Hongkou to house these predominantly young, unmarried men (Figure 3.2).¹¹² Although the branch remained modest compared to other branches (508 British, 662 Sikh, and 3,617 Chinese officers in 1931), its growth in this period far outpaced the rest of the SMP¹¹³ and came to represent over ninety-five percent of the SMC’s Japanese staff.¹¹⁴ While this overwhelming ratio should be viewed in light of the SMP’s large size relative to other Municipal departments, it underscored the centrality of policing in the Japanese campaign for municipal reforms. The SMC, well aware of this, likely aimed to curb other Japanese aspirations concerning broader Municipal administration by augmenting the Japanese Branch.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ JACAR Ref. B13081167400: “Gaijin yōhei mondai 外人傭聘問題,” December 1928, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B13081167400>, [accessed December 5, 2023].

¹¹¹ CP, February 27, 1930. See also Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 102.

¹¹² SMC, *Report for the Year 1931*, 72; *Report for the Year 1932*, 92.

¹¹³ SMC, *Report for the Year 1927*, 34-36; *Report for the Year 1931*, 72.

¹¹⁴ JACAR Ref. B02130076400: “Chūka minkoku yōhei honpōjin jinmeiroku / (furoku) Shanhai kyōdō sokai Kōbukyoku yōhei honpōjin jinmeiroku 中華民國傭聘本邦人人名錄／（附錄）上海共同租界工部局傭聘本邦人人名錄,” December 1930, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02130076400>, [accessed December 5 2023].

¹¹⁵ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 117.



Figure 3.2. Hongkou Police Station Japanese Quarters. (SMC, Report for the Year 1930, 92)

This rapid expansion of the Japanese Branch occurred in key local and imperial contexts. First and foremost, it took place as part the SMP's reorganization in the late 1920, which itself

reflected wider reforms in British colonial policing aimed at the limited appeasement of local sentiments. For example, the Madras government in southern India made efforts to localize its police in response to middle-class demands for greater Indian involvement in administration. And in Shanghai, Major Fredrick W. Gerrard, who arrived from the Bombay police in May 1929, was appointed the SMP's new commissioner. Under his leadership, the SMP began to earnestly cope with the local surge of armed crimes since the Nationalist revolution and exhibit an unprecedented commitment to protect, rather than suppress, the Settlement's Chinese residents.¹¹⁶

Although Japanese settlers certainly did not see themselves in the same status as the Chinese or Indians in terms of colonial hierarchy, the SMC's growing amenability to their requests during this period should be situated within the broader phenomenon of British imperial concessions to traditionally disfranchised populations. Indeed, power dynamics in treaty-port Shanghai had never been characterized by the simplistic dichotomy of colonial rulers versus indigenous society. In advocating for SMP reforms, Japanese settlers found allies not only among the Chinese nationalists; they also garnered support from progressive Americans increasingly keen on challenging the British domination of Settlement governance. In marked contrast with the US's stance during the Hongkou Riot in 1918, the American-owned *China Weekly Review* openly endorsed Japanese calls for reform by 1927, lamenting that "only British subjects are ever employed for responsible positions... [even though] other interests, notably the Japanese and Americans, have come in and are constantly increasing in importance while British interests in recent years have remained stationary."¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Arnold, "The Police and Colonial Control in South India," in *Social Scientist*, Vol. 4, No. 12 (July 1976), 13-14.

¹¹⁷ *CWR*, October 15, 1927.

The second factor, as examined in the previous chapter, was the Japanese community's enhanced political influence in the Settlement. Although the SMC did not necessarily see the growing Japanese population as justifying a larger Japanese Branch, their increasing electoral power—resulting from the swell of Japanese ratepayers qualified to vote in Municipal elections—made their demands harder to ignore. This shift became evident in 1930 when the incumbent SMC chairman Harry E. Arnhold surprisingly lost his bid for re-election to the Council. Arnhold, who received merely two hundred of “the anticipated six hundred Japanese votes,” vehemently alleged that Japanese voters had “knifed” him for his recent blocking of a motion to further expand the Japanese Branch.¹¹⁸ But a Japanese ratepayer ridiculed this accusation, claiming that Arnhold, a known opponent of Japanese interests, was already fortunate in winning two hundred Japanese votes.¹¹⁹

While Japanese proprietors leveraged Municipal elections to pressure the SMC, *dochaku-ha* settlers rallied behind the JAASU's petitioning efforts that continued into the early 1930s. During this period, the *dochaku-ha* community generally adhered to the Settlement's established political norms—at least, those key to Anglo-American observers—of peaceful negotiation and international cooperation, voicing their demands through channels that Settlement authorities recognized as legitimate.¹²⁰ Taking cues from past experiences, particularly the Hongkou Riot, the JAASU eschewed public demonstrations and street gatherings, aware that the SMC could interpret these acts as “menacing” gestures. Some of its proposals were still viewed as overly ambitious by the upper echelon of the Japanese society. In 1930, for example, the JAASU's

¹¹⁸ *CWR*, March 22, 1930.

¹¹⁹ *CP*, March 8, 1930.

¹²⁰ These political “norms” of the Settlement, of course, did not stay unchanged, as the SMC in the late 1920s became more accustomed to, if not more tolerant of, strikes and organized demonstrations by the Chinese. See, for example, Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, 132-178; Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China*, 95-200. It however should be noted that the JAASU's approach in dealing with Settlement authorities indicated a conscious effort to distinguish themselves from the more militant strategies adopted by their Chinese counterparts.

demand for an additional 100 Japanese policemen within a year was deemed excessive and unrealistic by Fukushima Kisōji, Mitsui Trading Company's manager in Shanghai and a sitting member of the SMC. Fukushima informed his fellow Councilors that half this number would suffice in "the spirit of comprise and conciliation."¹²¹ But overall, the JAASU's petitions received consistent support from the *kaisha-ha* elite. The late 1920s and early 1930s witnessed a broad alignment of objectives and strategies between the upper and lower strata of the Japanese community in pressuring for Municipal reforms, a key factor that aided the relative success of their campaigns.

Negotiating with "transnational colonialism"

While the Japanese reform campaigns challenged British control of the International Settlement, they also reflected an endeavor to come to terms with and reappropriate the existing treaty-port order. The post-1927 expansion of the Japanese Branch emerged from a continuous negotiation central to what Isabella Jackson terms the Settlement's "transnational colonialism," a unique form of colonial rule based on individual- and institutional-level collaboration.¹²² This was best demonstrated by the appointment of Tajima and Uehara. Both men were chosen partly for their acquaintance with, and supposedly conciliatory attitude towards, the political structure of the Settlement—although as we will see later, Uehara eventually turned on it—and partly to display a united front between British and Japanese interests in Shanghai amid the burgeoning Chinese rights recovery movement.¹²³ In this regard, Tajima and Uehara's diplomatic backgrounds were particularly noteworthy. Whereas the British mostly viewed the SMP as their

¹²¹ SMA U1-3-3344: Fukushima Kisōji to Chairman of SMC, October 1, 1930.

¹²² Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 8.

¹²³ Fujita, *Kyoryūmin no Shanhai*, 173-174.

own colonial police force and drew its leadership from former military men, the Japanese approach was informed more by diplomatic concerns. At the state level, Tajima and Uehara's arrival coincided with the debacle of the Tanaka cabinet's heavy-handed China policies and the subsequent revival of "Shidehara Diplomacy," which centered on reconciling Japan with existing international order and a policy of non-intervention in China.¹²⁴ At a personal level, unlike most of their Foreign Ministry colleagues and despite their new positions in the SMP, both men held degrees in finance rather than law, credentials which suggested that their expected roles would focus on dealing with the Settlement's ruling commercial elite more than actual police work.

The growth of the Japanese Branch's ordinary members further reflected the balancing of Japanese aspirations for greater municipal influence and the SMC's efforts to preserve the Settlement's status quo. Overall, the JAASU's petitions achieved mixed outcomes. Although the SMC willingly incorporated a few high-ranking Japanese officials, it generally balked at assigning Japanese officers to mid-level supervisory positions such as district heads. This stance cohered with the SMC's general strategy for handling Japanese ambitions after the late 1920s: co-opting a handful of elites to nominally serve in senior municipal roles while guarding against potential Japanese "usurpation" of municipal power from the grassroots. Again, this policy likely emerged from the SMC's perception of the Japanese community being politically divided between a relatively cooperative upper stratum and a defiant lower class. Although this dichotomy tended to be overestimated, the SMC's recruitment practices did reflect and

¹²⁴ For more on Japan's China policy and general diplomacy during this period, see Gotō, *Japan and Britain in Shanghai, 1925-31*, Chapter 3-4; Gotō, "Anglo-Japanese Co-operation in China in the 1920s," in *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations*, Volume 1; Brooks, *Japan's Imperial Diplomacy*, Chapter 3; LeFeber, *The Clash*, Chapter 5; Ian Nish, *Japanese Foreign policy, 1869-1942*, Chapter 8.

exacerbate the social stratification among its Japanese employees, causing elites like Tajima and Uehara to experience troubled relations with their Japanese subordinates throughout the 1930s.¹²⁵

In this vein, the SMC repeatedly rejected the JAASU's proposals to place the Hongkou and Dixwell Road Stations under Japanese management, citing how Japanese officers' limited English proficiency had disqualified them from executive positions and confined them to beat and patrol duties.¹²⁶ The idea of teaching Japanese to Chinese and Sikh constables was never seriously considered by the SMC. In fact, the Settlement authorities brooked no challenge to keeping English the *lingua franca* of municipal administration. On the other hand, although Japanese officers were required to learn Chinese, studying English was never mandatory—perhaps because of a SMC strategy to train them for street duties while restricting their linguistic abilities for managerial roles. When a 1930 JAASU petition claimed that Japanese had now surpassed English in importance in terms of the numbers of speakers in the Settlement, it provoked a strong backlash within the SMC, compelling Councilor Fukushima to denounce this claim as “altogether mistaken.”¹²⁷

Another proposal that the SMC resisted was payment parity between Japanese and British policemen. While Japanese policemen received better compensation than their Chinese and Sikh counterparts, they earned much less than their British peers of equivalent ranks, sometimes by more than 30 percent.¹²⁸ Part of the initial rationale for establishing a Japanese Branch in the 1910s had been its economy compared to the Foreign Branch.¹²⁹ As a result, when recruiting

¹²⁵ To some extent, the SMC's Foreign Branch showed similar characteristics. As Robert Bickers shows, the British rank-and-files within the SMP were mostly marginal men in terms of their social positions within the colonial order and were “not expected either to assume senior positions or to be acceptable recruits to polite society.” See Bickers, *Empire Made Me*, 69. However, the Japanese Branch, partly due to the way it expanded after 1927, was marked by a particularly pronounced socio-political gap between its top echelon and ordinary members.

¹²⁶ SMA U1-3-3344: Commissioner of Police, “Memorandum,” November 7, 1929.

¹²⁷ SMA U1-3-3344: Fukushima Kisōji to Chairman of SMC, October 1, 1930.

¹²⁸ SMA U1-3-663: SMP, “Terms of Service,” August 1, 1927.

¹²⁹ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 117.

from Japan grew increasingly expensive in the 1920s, the SMP gradually shifted to local hires who were willing to work for lower wages. As a standard practice, it gave preference to single men who could be cheaply accommodated in barracks without extra housing or family allowances, and those who wished to marry must first obtain permission from the Commissioner;¹³⁰ but married Japanese officers were often unable to receive adequate housing and family allowances to which they were entitled.¹³¹ In 1926, a Japanese constable's starting salary was sixty taels a month, considerably lower than a Briton's eighty taels.¹³² Even so, when the SMP announced thirteen openings in the Japanese Branch that year, it received over a hundred applications from the local community.¹³³ Many of Shanghai's Japanese settlers, whose livelihoods faced constant threat amid the city's recurrent anti-Japanese boycotts, coveted even entry-level positions in the SMP for their remuneration and stability.¹³⁴

The JAASU activists, however, saw this disparity as rooted in a pejorative notion that Japanese settlers' living costs were lower than their European counterparts;¹³⁵ while not wholly erroneous, this notion perpetuated the colonial racial hierarchy that positioned Japanese below Westerners,¹³⁶ resulting in the Japanese Branch's "being treated like a step-child."¹³⁷ While the SMC paid lip service to "equal treatment of all treaty power citizens," it maintained that market forces should determine salary scales and that Municipal hiring had turned increasingly to the

¹³⁰ SMA U1-3-663: SMP, "Terms of Service," August 1, 1927.

¹³¹ SMA U1-3-663: Acting Commissioner of Police to Secretary, SMC, May 1, 1928.

¹³² SMC, *Report for the Year 1925*, 17B.

¹³³ *NCH*, April 10, 1926.

¹³⁴ In 1926, the monthly income of a Japanese constable, excluding various benefits he received being a Municipal employee, was 40 to 50 percent more than that of an average Japanese shop assistant. *NCH*, April 10, 1926. For more on the incomes of ordinary settlers, see Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

¹³⁵ SMA U1-3-3344: JAASU, "Petition," October 1929.

¹³⁶ SMA U1-3-3344: Y. Hayashi to E. B. Macnaghten, April 1, 1930.

¹³⁷ The Consul General at Shanghai (Cunningham) to the Secretary of State, August 17, 1933, in *FRUS, 1933, The Far East*, Volume III, Document 428, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1933v03/d428>, [accessed June 15, 2023].

local labor market out of budgetary concerns; therefore, no improvements were required as long as Japanese recruits could be obtained at current rates.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, despite the SMC's claims, economic reasons alone did not determine its recruitment and compensation policies. In 1930, while all thirty-nine recruits of the Japanese Branch were locals, forty-eight out of the sixty-four new members of the Foreign Branch still came from England.¹³⁹ That year, the SMC adopted a new contract system that formalized the remunerative differentiation between metropolitan and local hires. Local Japanese staff, categorized as "Class L" hires, did not receive the same benefits, including a long leave every five years and reimbursement for passage back to the home country, that their "Class A" colleagues enjoyed.¹⁴⁰ While these disparities partly derived from municipality-wide measures to cope with the financial strains in the 1930s, they suggested an underlying bias among the SMC leadership that it was more justifiable, socially and racially, to exploit cheap Japanese labor than their Western counterparts.

Limitations of the Japanese Branch

After 1927, the SMP's structure essentially remained intact even as the enlarged Japanese Branch seemingly enhanced Japanese involvement in municipal governance. Multiple intrinsic constraints restricted the Japanese Branch's influence in Settlement policing and hampered the redistribution of municipal power in the favor of the Japanese.

One of the branch's key limitations came from its longstanding functional separation from the rest of the SMP. From the outset, its primary purpose of serving the Japanese community rendered it an institutional and ideological anomaly within the Settlement's

¹³⁸ SMA U1-3-3344: Commissioner of Police to Secretary of SMC, November 13, 1928.

¹³⁹ SMC, *Report for the Year 1930*, 86.

¹⁴⁰ SMA U1-3-663: SMP, "Police Order No. 6032," December 18, 1930.

administrative framework, which aimed, at least on paper, “to consider the community at large and to provide for the general welfare of the whole without specific reference to individual national interests.”¹⁴¹ After 1927, Settlement authorities sought to normalize the Japanese Branch’s role, promote its integration into the Settlement’s police system, and place it under firmer control of the SMP headquarters. Commissioner Gerrard, for example, called for the branch’s greater involvement in broader crime prevention, taking “the fact that they can assist the Japanese community in difficulties” as “a secondary consideration.”¹⁴² At the same time, he urged Japanese residents to trust the SMP’s general patrol system, which had to “be dependent to a large extent on the Chinese police under the supervision of the foreign officers.”¹⁴³

These opinions, however, failed to resonate with the Japanese settlers or their home government. Since the late nineteenth century, Japan had been actively wielding its overseas police forces as a tool for colonial expansion. The Foreign Ministry, in particular, regularly used consular police, first in Korea and later in Manchuria, to advance its own expansionist agenda and compete with other imperial agencies such as the Kwantung Army.¹⁴⁴ In Shanghai, where the International Settlement context precluded a sizable consular police force until the early 1930s, the Foreign Ministry strategically collaborated with the SMC to expand the Japanese Branch. But akin to the promotion of consular police, these endeavors had the professed aim of “protecting Japanese nationals” and “facilitating overall development of the local settler community.”¹⁴⁵ These motivations made it unlikely that Japanese authorities ever envisioned a

¹⁴¹ SMA U1-3-3344: H. E. Arnhold to Y. Hayashi, March 1, 1930.

¹⁴² SMA U1-3-3344: “Comments by Commissioner of Police,” SMC, June 6, 1929.

¹⁴³ SMA U1-3-3344: Major F. W. Gerrard to Secretary of SMC, September 5, 1929.

¹⁴⁴ See Ogino, *Gaimushō keisatsu shi*; Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire's Edge*.

¹⁴⁵ NAJDA 平 9 警察 00257100-053: “Shanghai kyoryūchi keisatsu-sho junsu ōbo ni kansuru ken shōkai (Ōsaka soto go fukun) 上海居留地警察署巡查応聘に関する件照会（大阪外 5 府県）,” August 4, 1920.

Japanese Branch fully assimilated into the Settlement system and severed from its metropolitan ties.

The settlers themselves, although often without a grand vision of the empire, insistently highlighted linguistic and cultural barriers as impediments to non-Japanese officers' effectiveness within their neighborhoods. Under this rationale, the JAASU's petitions sought not only to expand the Japanese Branch but also to align the SMP's deployment with the city's demographic geography.¹⁴⁶ As a result, the traditional allocation of Japanese officers persisted into the 1930s. In 1933, for example, over seventy percent of them were still posted in major Japanese residential and industrial quarters in Hongkou, Yangshupu and Putuo (Map 1).¹⁴⁷

The debate concerning the Japanese Branch's *raison d'être* was intertwined with the evolution of the police-public relationship across colonial and metropolitan contexts. In England, the interwar years witnessed a reversal of traditional power dynamics, with many working-class constables now regulating the lives of "social superiors" who formerly viewed them as servants. This transformation owed much to the advent of a motorized society, the surge in private car ownership, and the increasing role of policemen in traffic control.¹⁴⁸ A parallel development took place in Shanghai, with the SMP's traffic division rapidly expanding and emulating its London model.¹⁴⁹ In 1935 alone, the SMP prosecuted 1,198 traffic offences by foreigners.¹⁵⁰ With its work increasingly devoted to inspecting vehicle licenses and regulating motor traffic, the SMP gradually ceased being an adjunct to the colonial elite a similar way too how its metropolitan counterpart had shifted its relationship to the propertied class in Britain. Perceived as a colonial

¹⁴⁶ SMA U1-3-3344: JAASU, "Petition," October 1929.

¹⁴⁷ SMC, *Report for the Year 1933*, 329.

¹⁴⁸ Laybourn and Taylor, *The Battle for the Roads of Britain*, 151-185.

¹⁴⁹ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 119.

¹⁵⁰ SMC, *Report for the Year 1935*, 95.

force, the SMP was once expected to attend to the colonist's most trivial concerns, such as a missing cat; but in its reports, it constantly berated foreign householders for neglecting to lock doors or windows.¹⁵¹

The Japanese Branch did not see a similar change in its relationship with the Japanese community or the Settlement society in general. Throughout the 1930s, the SMP's traffic division never had more than one Japanese officer. While this situation partly derived from linguistic barriers and the small number of Japanese residents who owned motor vehicles, it also underscored how the branch's expansion was more about safeguarding Japanese interests than regulating Japanese lives. As Elsie Tipton shows, Japan's modern police system since the Meiji era was defined by the political purpose of bolstering state power and suppressing political dissent, rather than the social functions of monitoring daily lives.¹⁵² In the treaty-port context, while there was a growing need for social control within the settler community, it was the consular authorities that fulfilled this role; meanwhile, the Japanese Branch primarily acted as a political tool, shielding the Japanese community from potential Chinese threats and British "despotism."¹⁵³

The branch's functional distinctiveness was accompanied by its isolation from the rest of the SMP in terms of command structure. Unlike their Chinese and Indian counterparts, who were always supervised by British officers, Japanese constables and sergeants were overseen by their

¹⁵¹ Bickers, *Empire Made Me*, 104.

¹⁵² Tipton, *The Japanese Police State*, 37.

¹⁵³ Partly for this reason, the SMP's Criminal Investigation Department was also characterized by a disproportionately small Japanese presence compared to the British. In 1929, for example, the CID comprised only 14 Japanese officers, in contrast to 100 British—see SMC, *Annual Report 1929*, 71. For more on the CID's Japanese members, see next chapter. From the 1920s onwards, there was a noticeable increase in crimes committed by Japanese nationals in the Settlement, particularly in gambling and illicit drug dealing. However, due to their extraterritorial privileges, the SMP had to defer to Japanese consular authorities for the investigation and suppression of these crimes. This issue will be addressed in Chapter 5.

higher-ranking compatriots.¹⁵⁴ This practice was not formalized until 1938, but as early as 1918, despite insisting on the Japanese Branch's allegiance to Settlement authorities, McEuen had acknowledged that it would be most effective under the direct command of Inspector Ōkushi.¹⁵⁵ The branch's relative autonomy was partly due to Japanese insistence on equal standing with the British and their aversion to being commanded by the latter, but this situation also resulted from communication difficulties that limited most Japanese officers' collaboration with other branches in routine patrols,¹⁵⁶ let alone more sophisticated raid missions;¹⁵⁷ daily communication with other branches mostly relied on a handful of middle-level officers who spoke passable English or Chinese.¹⁵⁸ As these facts suggest, the everyday operation of "transnational colonialism" in the Settlement was not as successful at the grassroots as it was at the elite level.

The appointment of Tajima and Uehara, who respectively received promotions to Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner in 1934, solidified control of the Japanese Branch by a select few. Over time, the branch increasingly functioned as their personal fiefdom, fostering corruption and abuses of power that disgruntled many of rank-and-file members. In early 1934, when Tajima's promotion was under discussion, the SMC received a letter purportedly from "Japanese residents in Shanghai," though more likely from a branch insider, claiming that, "Ever since his inauguration to his present office, it has been Mr. Tajima's practice

¹⁵⁴ Peters, *Shanghai Policeman*, 28.

¹⁵⁵ SMA U-1-2-791: "Report by Captain-Superintendent of Police," September 30, 1918.

¹⁵⁶ Richard M. Tinkler and Ernest W. Peters, both former SMP officers, left extensive accounts of their service in Shanghai, but neither mentioned their Japanese colleagues in detail. Peters's lack of commentary was particularly notable, since he was once served at the Dixwell Road station, which had a significant number of Japanese staff. He remarked that, "As far as their own nationals are concerned, they [the Japanese] are certainly good policemen; but in other respects, I have nothing much to say about them." See Bickers, *Empire Made Me*; Peters, *Shanghai Policeman*.

¹⁵⁷ Between 1927 and 1937, the Japanese Branch recorded only two injuries, and no death, among officers on duty. In contrast, the same period witnessed a total of 129 SMP casualties (89 wounded, 40 killed), mostly resulting from encounters with armed criminals. See SMC, *Report for the Year 1929*, 57; *Report for the Year 1933*, 99; and *Report for the Year 1937*, 67.

¹⁵⁸ SMA U1-3-3344: Commissioner of Police, "Memorandum" November 7, 1929.

to convene all Japanese officers... to his home... once a month to hold secret meetings to discuss various matters, both official and private, and he endeavors to aggrandize his personal influence, using every conceivable wit.”¹⁵⁹ Another complaint alleged that “only men who frequent Mr. Tajima’s residence to serve his private interests were promoted, while those who are upright and dutiful have been rejected”; this writer concluded that the cause of the ostensible good order within the branch lay not in effective management but rather in Tajima’s “autocratic control” over his subordinates.¹⁶⁰

Tajima was also accused of leveraging his authority for personal political gain. During the 1933 JRC election, he allegedly ordered the entire branch to vote for specific candidates who had promised to pressure the SMC for his promotion.¹⁶¹ Moreover, reports surfaced that he had forced all Japanese officers to contribute one percent of their salaries to a “national defense fund” without ever explaining the fund’s use.¹⁶² The Settlement authorities, likely concerned about how such scandals might damage the SMP’s reputation, ignored the documented allegations against Tajima and buried them in the archives.¹⁶³ Whenever schisms within the Japanese Branch surfaced, the SMC consistently sided with the elite officials it had co-opted while suppressing the rank-and-file it seldom trusted. Nonetheless, these internal reports of corruption doubtlessly compromised the image of the Japanese Branch and weakened the moral foundation of the Japanese push for municipal police reform.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ SMA U1-6-447: Japanese residents in Shanghai to Stirling Fessenden, January 23, 1934.

¹⁶⁰ SMA U1-6-447: Haruo Ikeda to Stirling Fessenden, February 2, 1934.

¹⁶¹ SMA U1-6-447: Tokuji Kubodera to Stirling Fessenden, April 4, 1934.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ SMA U1-6-447: Kubodera Tokuji to the SMC, June 26, 1934.

¹⁶⁴ Here, it is important to note that during the late 1920s and 1930s, police reformers in Japan endeavored to eliminate the police’s involvement in partisan politics, particularly their interference in elections. See Tipton, *The Japanese Police State*, 81-82 and 124-125. The reaction of the local Japanese community to Tajima’s alleged involvement in the JRC elections is unclear, as local Japanese media too stayed silent on this issue. However, rumors about such election-related corruption would have likely diminished the Japanese Branch’s credibility among the Japanese residents.

Authoritarian leadership in the Japanese Branch did not afford its members better protection from the racial hierarchy within the SMP, which continued to dominate inter-branch dynamics in the 1930s. From 1928, the names of Japanese officers were finally included in the municipal staff roster in SMC annual reports (though their Chinese and Sikh colleagues remained unlisted). However, starting in 1929, in part due to the expansion of the Japanese Branch, the SMP no longer assigned new British recruits as constables but started them at the rank of sergeant or higher. This policy automatically elevated even the lowest-ranking British officers above the majority of the Japanese Branch;¹⁶⁵ and unlike the British, Japanese officers did not have a fixed schedule for their promotions.¹⁶⁶ Consequently, the Japanese rank-and-file found themselves doubly subjugated not only to their superiors in the branch but also to their British counterparts, a situation exemplified by the experience of a constable named Fukushima Sanjirō.

One day in September 1933, when Fukushima entered the office of the Yangshupu station, he got into trouble with a British sergeant called Knifton, who showed him “a disdainful manner” and told him to “get away.” Fukushima’s account is evasive about how the conflict escalated, but Knifton must have interpreted his reaction as a sign of disobedience, as he later filed a disciplinary report against Fukushima. A week later, Fukushima found himself in the station chief’s office facing charge of “infringement of regulations”—a scene he described as “resembling exactly a court where a culprit was put in front of a judge and feeling as if we Japanese were a section under the yoke of England.” During the subsequent hearing, attended by Uehara and a few British officers, an indictment was read out to Fukushima through the interpretation of a Japanese inspector. Uehara’s presence initially heartened Fukushima, but he

¹⁶⁵ SMC, *Report for the Year 1929*, 57.

¹⁶⁶ SMC U1-3-663: SMP, “Terms of Service,” August 1, 1927.

soon realized that his superintendent had no intention of defending him, given his silence throughout the questioning. When Fukushima finally seized the chance to contest the charges, Uehara became angry and scolded him for “having a habit of getting into trouble with foreigners” and “causing great damage to the Japanese Branch.” Feeling “deserted even by Japanese senior officers,” Fukushima resigned several days later under pressure from Uehara.¹⁶⁷

Conclusion

The 1910s and 1920s saw a sequence of Japanese attempts to renegotiate their position within the established treat-port structure, seeking to both accommodate and reform the Settlement’s police system. In this period, they shifted their approach and rhetoric in demanding larger representation in municipal administration, while changes in local and international circumstances increased their sense of empowerment. Whereas the Japanese perceived their conflicts with Chinese constables in 1918 as spontaneous acts of self-defense, the JAASU’s petition movements by the late 1920s had been transformed into a well-orchestrated campaign against the British monopoly of municipal power. This allowed different sectors of the local Japanese society to find common cause not only with one another but also with the Chinese and liberal elements of the American community. At the same time, these calls for reforms, which centered on expanding the SMP’s Japanese Branch, largely unfolded within the traditional institutional framework of the Settlement of which the Japanese still considered themselves a constituent part; at least, they continued to view this framework as a useful tool for safeguarding

¹⁶⁷ SMA U1-6-447: “Report by Fukushima Sanjirō,” September 1933. Due to lack of testimonies from any other parties and media reports, the above reconstruction of the case is solely based on Fukushima’s own account, which appeared in an appeal letter he later sent to the SMC. Whether Fukushima habitually conflicted with foreigners as Uehara claimed is unclear, but there are reports that Tajima and Uehara often coerced resignations from subordinates they viewed as disobedient; in some cases, they collaborated with local Japanese doctors and dismissed these individuals on the pretext of illness. See SMA U1-6-447: Tokuji Kubodera to Stirling Fessenden, April 4, 1934.

their interests and treaty privileges. Therefore, even as their critiques of British ascendancy grew more vocal, they mounted no direct challenge to the legitimacy of the SMC or the treaty-port regime as a whole.

The development of the Japanese Branch exemplifies the intricate negotiations that shaped the transnational colonial rule in Shanghai. However, despite the branch's growing size, it failed to alter the SMP's British character; and its expansion was perceived as inadequate in the face of rising Chinese nationalist threats. Ironically, it underscored the subordinate status of the Japanese within Shanghai's colonial order. This outcome derived from several factors, including the spatial and demographic configuration of the Settlement, the SMC's recruitment strategies, and the resilience of the city's traditional power dynamics and racial hierarchy. More important, it stemmed from a fundamental conflict between the branch's exclusive service to the Japanese community and the Japanese call to "modernize" the Settlement's administration and make it genuinely "international." In other words, in advocating for reforms, the Japanese ultimately failed to seize the moral high ground to which they ostensibly appealed. While demanding greater input into the SMP and other municipal departments, Japanese activists always equivocated on whether this agenda merely aimed to make the current system more responsive to parochial Japanese interests or sought to advance the Settlement's professed ideal of *omnia juncta in uno*—"all united as one."

Herein lies a seeming paradox that underpinned the failure of the Japanese quest for a larger representation in municipal policing: precisely because the Japanese Branch retained its distinctive Japanese characteristics and thus remained an institutional outlier, the rest of the SMP was kept essentially British. This resulted into an ever-deepening mutual distrust in the 1930s and eroded the Japanese Branch's loyalty and effectiveness in the eyes of Settlement authorities.

In October 1931, when the Manchurian Incident provoked an outburst of anti-Japanese sentiments in Shanghai, the SMC, heeding British Minister Miles Lampson's advice, withdrew all Japanese constables from street patrols to prevent potential conflicts with local Chinese.¹⁶⁸ By the mid-1930s, there was pervasive apprehension within the SMC regarding the Japanese officer's ability to "work as a free agent of the SMC... free from interference from his own national authorities and pressure from his own nationals."¹⁶⁹ These doubts halted the Japanese Branch's further enlargement after 1932, as the SMC found itself ensnared in escalating Sino-Japanese antagonism. Meanwhile, high officials like Tajima and Uehara, despite their powerful positions within the branch, were confined to marginal consultative roles in broader SMP affairs. Uehara later lamented that his entire SMP career had been nothing more than an "alcove ornament" (*tokonoma no kazarimono* 床の間の飾り物) that merely veiled the force's British essence.¹⁷⁰

As next chapters will examine, Uehara's frustration was shared by many local settlers, who increasingly perceived the SMP as ineffective against what they saw as "organized anti-Japanese terrorism." As a result, Japanese challenges to the Settlement's police system in the 1930s—particularly following the Shanghai Incident of 1932—increasingly came from external institutions, eventually transforming the debate about municipal administration into an overt conflict over jurisdiction. To be sure, this shift unfolded against broader background of Japan's military expansion in China, its challenge to Anglo-American hegemony in world affairs, and the failure of "internationalism" in the Japanese government and society, which together gave rise to a more aggressive Japanese stance in Shanghai. But as the above analysis illustrates, the

¹⁶⁸ SMA U1-6-89: Commissioner of Police to Secretary General, SMC, October 28, 1931.

¹⁶⁹ SMA U1-6-139: Commissioner of Police, "Memorandum" November 23, 1936.

¹⁷⁰ Uehara, *Shanghai kyōdō sokai shi*, 200-201.

development and shortcomings of the Japanese Branch crucially hardened the Japanese community's sense of alienation from the established power structure of the treaty port, and this local dimension is essential to understanding the community's subsequent clashes with the SMC and the Settlement regime.

Chapter Four

Reconfiguring the Treaty Port: Political Surveillance, Crimes, and Extra-Settlement Roads

By the end of the 1920s, the traditional legal and political configurations of “Western” Shanghai were teetering on collapse, with the International Settlement facing an unprecedented crisis on two fronts. On one hand, the Chinese nationalist movement was making strides in reclaiming judicial and territorial sovereignty over treaty ports. In January 1927, a Provisional Chinese Court replaced the Shanghai Mixed Court in the Settlement, effectively ending foreign jurisdiction over Chinese residents. Later that year, when a mass riot in Hankou compelled Britain to surrender its concession in that city, a similar fate for the Settlement seemed all too possible.¹ Although the Guomindang leadership remained riven with schisms, it unanimously viewed the abrogation of “unequal treaties” as the core mission of its revolutionary agenda.² This goal was pursued vigorously by the party’s branch in Shanghai,³ a city endowed with a long tradition of student activism and labor movements that increasingly converged on an anti-imperialist course in the wake of May Thirtieth.⁴ “To any instructed and thinking foreigner,” a local British diplomat noted in early 1930, “the ‘finis’ of extraterritoriality in China must loom within the purview of the visible future.”⁵

¹ Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, 177–193.

² Bickers, *Out of China*, 54–70.

³ Henriot, *Shanghai, 1927-1937*, 37–47.

⁴ For Shanghai’s various currents of political activism and its anti-imperialist movements, see, for example, Perry, *Shanghai on Strike*; Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation*; Rigby, *The May 30 Movement*; Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China*.

⁵ SMA U1-6-145: E. A. Long, “The Extra-Settlement Road Problem: A Retrospect and a Suggested Solution,” May 1930.

On the other hand, the Settlement's established power structure faced increasing dissent from the Japanese. In 1927, SMC increased its Japanese membership to two; the following years also saw rising Japanese representation in various Municipal departments and a redistribution of Municipal resources in their favor in areas such as public education. But as earlier chapters have shown, these developments did not satisfy Japanese aspirations for greater influence in the Settlement and an enhanced role in its governance. In some cases, most notably the SMP's Japanese Branch, municipal reforms entrenched their subordinate position and deepened grievance against British rule of the Settlement.

Throughout the 1930s, these two challenges haunted the Settlement and combined to undermine the authority of the SMC. Yet, they approached the treaty-port regime in fundamentally different ways. While the Chinese movement aimed at decisively overthrowing imperialism, the Japanese continued to exhibit ambivalence toward Shanghai's old colonial framework. As much as the treaty port's racial and political hierarchy disgruntled them, their everyday exercise of treaty privileges remained dependent on the continued existence of the Settlement, whose iron gates and boundary stones stood as the last line of defense against the advancing Chinese municipality. Meanwhile, they continued to rely on the SMC and its police force to address various security issues.

To demonstrate how these challenges were interlinked, the analysis below starts with an overview of the geopolitical contexts that simultaneously shaped the Chinese nationalist movement and Japanese pursuit of power in the treaty port. It then discusses how the Japanese utilized Settlement institutions to surveil political dissidents, suppress Chinese nationalism, and curb everyday crimes that they regarded as "organized terrorism." Finally, it analyzes the extra-settlement road (ESR) controversy to illustrate how Japanese settlers' dependence on the

Settlement framework continued up to the eve of the Sino-Japanese War even as they saw the old colonial regime increasingly failing to protect them from the rising Chinese threat.

The Settlement's dual challenges

The years between 1925 and 1927 were arguably the most precarious moment for Britain's informal empire in China. The May Thirtieth Movement ushered in a new phase of Chinese anti-imperialist movement that predominantly targeted British establishments in treaty ports. When the Nationalist revolution neared Shanghai in early 1927, the British government hastily dispatched a defense force from Hong Kong to protect its citizens and assets. At the same time, it asked the Japanese government to send additional troops to China to maintain a united imperial front. But Japan's Foreign Ministry, headed by Shidehara Kijūrō since 1924, showed a lukewarm response. By this time, Shidehara's policy of economic expansion in China had achieved considerable success by taking a non-interventionist approach to China's internal affairs while capitalizing on the strain in Sino-British relations.⁶

In 1928, however, Japan and Britain experienced a drastic role reversal. The Nationalist capture of Shanghai was not followed by a much-anticipated invasion of the foreign settlements. Instead, Chiang Kai-shek bucked his Communist allies and adopted an accommodating stance towards the city's commercial elite and the Bund's foreign taipans. As the renewed Northern Expedition pushed its frontline to northern China, it was now Japan, rather than Britain, that grew anxious to safeguard its interests in the region.⁷ After the Tanaka Giichi cabinet's second Shandong Expedition in May and the Kwantung army's assassination of Zhang Zuolin in June, Japan re-emerged as the primary target of Chinese anti-imperialist sentiments, with anti-Japanese

⁶ Gotō, *Japan and Britain in Shanghai, 1925-31*, 42–66.

⁷ Ibid., 67-92.

boycotts erupting in Shanghai and elsewhere. The collapse of the Tanaka government and the reinstatement of the Shidehara line eased these sentiments in the next two years, but in 1931 and 1932, they escalated to new heights amid the Manchuria Crisis and the Shanghai War. After the Manchurian Incident, the Nanjing government resorted to the League of Nations to check Japanese aggressions in China. To this end, it temporarily shelved negotiations with Britain on abolishing extraterritoriality and pursued rapprochement with Western powers. Thereafter, despite Chiang's much-criticized appeasement policy towards Japan, Japanese aggression presented the largest external threat to the GMD and dominated the Chinese public outcry against imperial encroachment.⁸

In Shanghai, the predominantly anti-Japanese tone of Chinese agitation raised fears among local Japanese settlers. In response, they stepped up pressure on Settlement authorities for better protection. And when the Settlement failed to meet their expectations, they showed a readiness to resort to their own state power to carve out a "Japanese zone" between the Chinese and foreign municipalities. From the perspective of the SMC and Western Shanghailanders, Japanese malcontents sometimes appeared more threatening than Chinese nationalists, because their separatist tendency jeopardized the long-held belief that the Settlement derived its legitimacy and autonomy from being a "voluntary association" of its residents. In this framework, Settlement authorities were accountable only to its (foreign) ratepayers and not to any national governments.⁹ Japanese opposition thus not only disrupted the local balance of power but also called the foundational principles of the Settlement's governance into question.

It is tempting to interpret this Japanese challenge as a mere local manifestation of the broader geopolitical shifts outlined above. As previous scholars show, the 1930s witnessed the

⁸ Coble, *Facing Japan*, 39-55. See also Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*.

⁹ Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, 35-36; Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 10.

emergence of a new, more aggressive form of Japanese expansionism that accompanied the failure of “Shidehara Diplomacy,” the waning of “internationalism” in domestic government and society, the rise of military vis-à-vis civil authorities, and Japan’s clashes with the established international order and the Washington system in China.¹⁰ All these developments no doubt precipitated Japanese aggression in China and had strong repercussions in treaty-port Shanghai. But the latter’s distinctive local factors, which remain largely overlooked, significantly informed Japanese actions there, especially those of the settler community. As the rest of this chapter will show, Japanese pursuit of ascendancy in Shanghai was no simple reaction to escalating Chinese anti-Japanese activities, some of which were in fact commonplace crimes instead of political conspiracies; it was also a response to the perceived failure of the old colonial regime in handling a range of political and social problems, with Chinese nationalism being a primary, but not the sole, concern. This failure partly derived from inherent limitations in the Settlement’s jurisdictional power, which further deteriorated after 1927. Yet for many settlers, especially the long-term residents in Shanghai, the Settlement’s institutions continued to loom large in their lives and provide vital shield against the growing challenges posed by an evolving host society. Willingly or not, the treaty-port regime constantly found itself in a mediating role amid intensifying Sino-Japanese tensions.

Political surveillance

A key component of the Settlement regime that the Japanese found useful was its system of political surveillance and intelligence collection, which had constituted an integral part of the

¹⁰ See, for example, Jansen, *China and Japan*; Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*; Brooks, *Japan’s Imperial Diplomacy*; Nishi, *Japan’s Struggle with Internationalism*; Paine, *The Japanese Empire*; Nish and Kibata, eds., *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations*, Volume II; Lafeber, *The Clash*.

Settlement's governance since the turn of the twentieth century.¹¹ During the 1920s, the SMP, drawing on both local information networks and transnational connections, stepped up its efforts in identifying and suppressing various revolutionary currents—Chinese, Indian, and others—that increasingly linked Shanghai to the global surge in nationalist and anti-colonial movements.¹² These functions were primarily carried out by the SMP's Intelligence Office, which was renamed the Special Branch in 1925. Originally a subdivision of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), the Special Branch operated independently after the 1925 reorganization. But the two departments, often collectively referred to as the Crime and Special Branches, maintained close exchanges of personnel and information. This practice reflected the methodological similarity of political control and criminal investigation in the Settlement as elsewhere in Shanghai. Both activities leaned on a network of native informers who were enlisted and paid by the SMP's Chinese detectives, who, like their informers, usually had ties to Shanghai's influential underworld.¹³ More importantly, it bespoke the tendency of the city's colonial law enforcement to confuse, or purposely conflate, anti-imperialist activities with daily crimes.¹⁴ As we will soon see, this approach served as a pretext for the Japanese settlers' urging Settlement authorities to take stronger measures against crimes that the former systematically labelled as anti-Japanese conspiracies.

By the late 1920s, shared apprehensions of Communism and Bolshevik-inspired labor movements led to a degree of collaboration among the once highly segregated municipalities, and pursuit of the “reds” became a joint venture of the International Settlement, the French

¹¹ SMC, *Report for the Year 1898*, 34.

¹² Bickers, *Empire Made Me*, 86-87; Bickers, “Who were the Shanghai Municipal Police, and why there they there? The British recruits of 1919,” 173-178.

¹³ Peters, *Shanghai Policeman*, 103–104, and 120–121; Martin, *The Shanghai Green Gang*, 32–35; Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, Chapter 3.

¹⁴ Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, 60–61.

Concession, and the newly established Chinese municipality.¹⁵ However, other forms of political control and intelligence work remained unevenly conducted across the city. Although the SMP was often criticized as “an unofficial branch of the British political intelligence and propaganda service,”¹⁶ it was influenced by Japanese involvement and addressed Japanese concerns more effectively than its French counterpart in at least one area—suppressing the Korean revolution.

Following the Japanese colonial government’s crackdown on Korea’s March First Movement in 1919, Shanghai experienced an influx of Korean nationalists who made the city the headquarters of their independence movement. By the 1930s, Shanghai’s Korean population had grown to around one thousand,¹⁷ divided into an anti-Japanese wing in the French Concession—which sheltered the Provincial Government of Korea after 1919—and a pro-Japanese sector in the International Settlement. This split is often attributed to the comparatively protective stance towards political refugees adopted by the French authorities, whose tolerance of Korean émigrés was partly a response to the Japanese government’s reluctance to extradite Vietnamese revolutionaries then active in Tokyo.¹⁸ However, this division also resulted from the SMP’s proactive role in overseeing the Korean community. A key figure in this respect was a detective named Kim Hyun-sik, who the SMP initially recruited as a translator on the eve of the March First Movement. Kim showed remarkable skills in multilingual intelligence work and quickly worked his way up the ranks. By the late 1920s, he had become a core member of the Special

¹⁵ Ibid., Chapter 9.

¹⁶ *CWR*, December 29, 1928.

¹⁷ According to the Japanese consulate-general’s report, 60 percent of this Korean population resided in the French Concession, while the rest lived in the International Settlement and Chinese areas. See “Zai Shanghai Chōsen-jin jōkyō 在上海朝鮮人狀況,” November 1930, in *GKS*, vol. 42, 202-205. However, the actual number of ethnic Koreans in Shanghai could be much higher because many of them had naturalized as Chinese citizens. The Settlement’s 1930 census included 151 Koreans. But after that, it no longer listed Korean as a separate nationality. The 1935 census recorded 618 Koreans, who were subsumed under “Japanese.” See SMC, *Report for the Year 1930*, 333; and *Report for the Year 1935*, 49.

¹⁸ Ogino, *Gaimushō keisatsu shi*, 615-625; Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire’s Edge*, 66–72.

Branch, leading a team that monitored all local Korean-language publications, inquired into police cases potentially linked to the Korean revolution, and attended all Korean public gatherings throughout the city, including those outside the Settlement.¹⁹

Kim and men like him facilitated a close alliance between the Special Branch and Japanese authorities, with both parties regularly sharing intelligence and occasionally conducting joint operations to quash the Korean revolution.²⁰ In early 1933, for example, when Japanese consular agents discovered a Korean plot to assassinate Ariyoshi Akira, the Japanese Minister to China, the SMP swiftly arrested three alleged plotters found in possession of bombs and pistols and handed them over to the Japanese consulate.²¹ Meanwhile, Japanese consular police used information supplied by the Special Branch to track down Korean activists.²² The registry of lodgers, which all foreign boarding houses in the Settlement needed to periodically submit to the SMP for scrutiny, provided a particularly valuable source of information. The SMP implemented systematic surveillance over foreign sojourners in the early 1920s, initially as a measure against Russian Communist infiltration;²³ by the 1930s, this practice had become a crucial instrument for detecting Korean “terrorists” as well.²⁴

The efforts, of course, never eradicated Korean revolutionary activities from the Settlement. The most famous case was the Hongkou Park Bombing on April 29, 1932. That day, when several thousand Japanese residents and a dozen high-ranking civil and military officials had gathered at the park to celebrate the Tenchōsetsu (Emperor’s Birthday), Korean activist Yun Pong-gil threw a bomb onto the rostrum. The explosion killed General Shirakawa Yoshinori, the

¹⁹ NARA, SMP D-8/13: “Special Branch Reorganization Circular No. 7,” July 16, 1930.

²⁰ NARA, SMP D-8/13: “Special Branch Reorganization Circular No. 7,” July 16, 1930.

²¹ *SCMP*, March 20, 1933.

²² *SNN*, May 21, 1935.

²³ NARA, SMP D-8/24: “CID Office Notes,” January 18, 1929.

²⁴ NARA, SMP D-7407: “Tsang Tsoong Sing, Korean—information requested by Japanese consular police,” May 22, 1936.

commander in chief of the local Japanese naval garrison, and Kawabata Teiji, the president of the Japanese Residents' Corporation (JRC); it also severely injured Shigemitsu Mamoru, the Japanese Minister to China. This incident restaged the Sakuradamon Incident in Tokyo just four months earlier, where a group of Koreans had attempted to assassinate Emperor Hirohito with grenades. Both cases were thought to have been masterminded by the famous nationalist Kim Ku, the head of the Provincial Government of Korea, who was then operating from a hideout in the French Concession.²⁵ Consequently, the Hongkou Park Bombing caused more drastic fallout in the French Concession than in the Settlement. In the following days, the French *Garde Municipale* and Japanese consular police jointly searched hundreds of Korean houses and apprehended dozens of people. This operation raised the ire of Korean residents, who began to question whether the Concession had "become a part and parcel of the Great Empire of Japan."²⁶

After 1932, French authorities generally showed more accommodation towards Japanese requests to deal with the Koreans. Citizenship formed a crucial issue here, as many ethnic Koreans in Shanghai, particularly those in the Concession, were naturalized Chinese who had long resided in China.²⁷ This generated a heated debate over extraditing them to Japanese jurisdiction. The Japanese government maintained that Koreans, even those who had expatriated prior to Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910, could not obtain the citizenship of a third country without legally renouncing their Japanese nationality; in other words, Koreans could not lose their Korean (and thus Japanese) subjecthood without the Japanese government's approval.²⁸ The

²⁵ Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire's Edge*, 113–114.

²⁶ *CP*, May 5, 1932.

²⁷ The Chinese government generally welcomed the naturalization of Koreans. By 1931, it was reported that over 1,000 Korean residents in Shanghai had acquired Chinese citizenship. See *SNN*, June 3, 1931, morning edition.

²⁸ *SNN*, June 3, 1931, morning edition; *NCH*, June 21, 1932. Barbara Brooks's research on Koreans and Taiwanese in China reveals a persistent Japanese strategy to manipulate colonial citizenship to serve imperialist agenda. Shanghai serves as a good example of Japanese imperial expansion through the assertion of jurisdiction over colonial subjects, sometimes against the latter's will. See Brooks, "Japanese colonial citizenship in treaty port

French authorities initially resisted this interpretation, but the Hongkou bombing shifted their stance. Afterwards, French police began to hand political offenders over to the Japanese consulate even when they possessed Chinese citizenship.²⁹ The Chinese government occasionally protested against such extraditions but seemed powerless to prevent them.³⁰

But even after the Hongkou bombing, French cooperation was not always forthcoming, especially when Concession authorities discerned threats to their policing rights.³¹ In December 1932, a team of Japanese plainclothes officers, acting without French permission, attempted to abduct two of Kim Ku's confidants in the Concession. They located and seized the two men in a teahouse, but when they tried to get them into a vehicle, French police arrived to intervene, which prompted a skirmish between the two groups. Some Japanese officers fled with one of their captives, but French policemen managed to rescue the other and apprehended two Japanese officers, including the head of the operation. The Japanese consulate hurried to de-escalate tensions by returning the Korean detainee to the French authorities in exchange for their Japanese personnel. However, the gravity of the case quickly drew the attention of higher-ups, and the French ambassador in Tokyo lodged an official complaint with the Japanese government. In the end, the Japanese Foreign Ministry apologized and pledged not to dispatch consular detectives to the French Concession without the latter's prior consent.³²

In contrast, Japanese consular operations faced far less resistance in the International Settlement. A notable example of this occurred in July 1929 at the Shanghai Race Course, a

China: the location of Koreans and Taiwanese in the imperial order," 109-124. For a more recent study on this topic, see Seiji Shirane, *Imperial gateway*.

²⁹ *CWR*, June 11, 1932.

³⁰ *CWR*, March 17, 1934.

³¹ See "Shōwa shichi nen zai Shanhai sōryōjikan kesatsu jimu jōkyō 昭和七年在上海総領事館警察事務状況," in *GKS*, vol. 42, 305-318.

³² JACAR Ref. B13081233100: "Nihon kenpei oyobi keisatsukan no Shanhai Futsu-koku sokai shinnyū sōsa jiken 日本憲兵及警察官ノ上海仏国租界侵入捜査事件," December 1932, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B13081236000>, [accessed December 5, 2023].

popular venue in the Settlement, when Japanese plainclothes officers publicly arrested one W. H. Lyuh during a baseball game. Lyuh had adopted a Chinese name, but he was a prominent figure in the local Korean community, known for his association with the independence movement. The arrest caused commotion in the stadium and attracted a crowd that followed Lyuh and his captors to a nearby SMP station, but Lyuh was quickly surrendered to the Japanese consulate despite his assertion of Chinese citizenship.³³ Throughout the 1930s, Japanese consular detectives freely hunted down Korean nationalists in the Settlement, often with the acquiescence or even assistance of the SMP.³⁴ In Shanghai, a Korean individual under arrest, politically active or not, would most likely end up under Japanese jurisdiction if the arrest took place within the Settlement.

Coping with Chinese threats

The SMP, being “part of the global colonial networks of imperial control system,”³⁵ adeptly responded to Japanese concerns about Korean nationalism. However, addressing Chinese nationalist agitation was a very different task that often exceeded the jurisdictional capabilities of Settlement authorities. In the summer of 1931, the Wanpaoshan Incident—a conflict that originated from disputes between Chinese and Korean farmers in Manchuria and evolved into widespread persecution of Chinese residents in Japan and Korea—reignited Chinese antagonism towards Japan and caused citywide boycotts of Japanese goods in Shanghai that intensified over the following months. In mid-July, under the auspices of the local GMD branch and the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, the Shanghai Anti-Japanese and Protection of Overseas Chinese

³³ *CP*, July 11, 1929.

³⁴ NARA, SMP D-6577A: Report by D. S. Umemoto, March 25, 1935.

³⁵ Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, 142.

Association (Shanghai shi fanri yuanshao weiyuanhui 上海市反日援僑委員會) was established within the Settlement. This organization ordered Chinese merchants to halt the sale of all Japanese products and initiated a mass campaign of “economic breakup” (*jingji juejiao* 經濟絕交) with Japan.³⁶ Japanese exports to China in 1931 plummeted by nearly forty percent compared to the previous year, affecting all major commodities from textiles to sugar, paper, coal, machinery, and sundries.³⁷

The boycott movement also directly harmed Japanese settlers’ daily lives, as the cessation of Japanese imports caused them a scarcity of essential goods such as rice, fish, and vegetables, which had been shipped daily from Nagasaki to local markets.³⁸ Moreover, it hamstrung local Japanese industries and increased unemployment. By October, over two hundred settlers, primarily employees of small, locally-based Japanese enterprises with families to support, had lost their jobs. The consulate worried that if the current situation persisted, as many as three thousand settlers (about twelve percent of the local Japanese population) would soon have to live on governmental relief.³⁹

From the outset, the SMC and the local Western community perceived the boycotts as a threat to the Settlement’s peace and order and, in some cases, infringement of private property rights. Shortly after the Anti-Japanese Association was formed, the SMC secretary-general Stirling Fessenden publicly denounced the forcible inspection and seizure of Japanese goods as illegal, and he instructed the SMP to ban such actions by the Association’s picket teams. The

³⁶ Gotō, *Japan and Britain in Shanghai, 1925-31*, 118.

³⁷ Shanghai shōkō kaigisho, *Kinyōkai panfureto*, no. 77, January 22, 1932, 3–23.

³⁸ *TA*, October 20, 1932, morning edition. See also Fogel, “‘Shanghai-Japan’: The Japanese Residents’ Association of Shanghai,” in *Between China and Japan*, 341-342.

³⁹ Consul-General Murai Kuramatsu to Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō, October 19, 1931, in JACAR Ref. B02030197700: “Zai Shanghai kyoryūmin kankei 在上海居留民關係,” October 5–December 7, 1931, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02030197700>, [accessed December 5, 2023].

Japanese community celebrated this stance.⁴⁰ In a thank-you letter to Fessenden, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce emphasized that, due to the Chinese government's inability to rein in the anti-Japanese movement, "We are really driven to the alternative of depending on your protection within the power of the International Settlement."⁴¹

Japanese settlers viewed the SMC as holding ultimate responsibility for controlling Chinese disturbances within the Settlement. When the boycott movement strengthened after the Manchurian Incident in September, they repeatedly requested the SMC to conduct more police patrols in Hongkou and Yangshupu.⁴² Throughout the following years, they continued to call for a larger SMP and advocated for increasing all its non-Chinese branches.⁴³ However, Settlement authorities had a different set of concerns that clashed with Japanese wishes. The SMC's financial difficulties since the late 1920s had hindered the expansion of its police operations, while the SMP's disastrous mishandling of the May Thirtieth crisis remained fresh in its memory, making it reluctant to pitch its foreign officers against Chinese crowds.⁴⁴

Factors outside finances and politics further limited Settlement authorities' power. At this point, Shanghai's jurisdictional landscape had experienced significant changes. Previously, the SMP could easily arrest Chinese subjects in the Settlement by securing a warrant from the Mixed Court, which had come under foreign control since the 1911 Revolution. But this was no longer the case after the 1927 retrocession of the Mixed Court. In 1930, the newly-established Shanghai Special District Court—a branch of the Jiangsu High Court—assumed full jurisdiction over all criminal and civil cases within the Settlement except those whose defendants were

⁴⁰ SMC U1-6-89: Anti-Japanese Association to S. Fessenden, July 31, 1931.

⁴¹ SMC U1-6-89: Japanese Chamber of Commerce to S. Fessenden, August 12, 1931.

⁴² SMC U1-6-89: JAASU to S. Fessenden, September 9, 1931; and Japanese Cotton Millowners' Association to S. Fessenden, October 6, 1931.

⁴³ SMC U1-6-89: JAASU to E. Macnaghten, December 23, 1931; *SN*, November 13, 1936.

⁴⁴ SMC U1-6-89: Commissioner of Police to S. Fessenden, October 28, 1931.

extraterritorial foreigners. Thereafter, prosecuting and punishing anti-Japanese agitators required going through the Chinese judiciary, which often showed extraordinary lenience in such cases and demanded impossibly detailed evidence for convictions.⁴⁵

Consequently, Fessenden's July statement soon proved an empty threat. Later that year, the SMP apprehended a group of picketers for confiscating Japanese goods and charged them with robbery in the Special Court. Despite the Municipal Advocate's request for a seven-year prison term, the court merely fined each defendant twenty silver dollars before releasing them. After the trial, the Municipal Advocate, who was Chinese, came under siege by an enraged crowd accusing him of "treason" and had to be escorted away by the police. The SMC then appealed the case to the Jiangsu High Court, only to have the latter uphold the original judgement.⁴⁶ When it came to non-violent cases, the SMC's power was even more constrained. By late 1931, anti-Japanese posters and handbills had flooded in the Settlement. In response to Japanese demands to rein in Chinese propaganda, the SMC chairman pledged to spare no effort in tracing the culprits and remove posters as quickly as possible. But he admitted the difficulty in administering any punitive measures, as posting anti-Japanese slogans did not constitute a crime under Chinese law.⁴⁷

After 1931, the Settlement, rather than the Chinese city, became a safe haven for anti-Japanese movements. Shortly before the Manchurian Incident, Chiang Kai-shek proclaimed his famous formula of "first internal pacification, then external resistance," after which the Nanjing regime prioritized the elimination of domestic (Communist) enemies, adopted an appeasement policy toward Japan, and began to crack down boycott movements. By mid-1932, anti-Japanese

⁴⁵ SMC, *Report for the Year 1931*, 90–91; and Shanghai shōkō kaigisho, *Kinyōkai panfuretto*, no. 73, December 1, 1931, 1–5.

⁴⁶ SMC, *Report for the Year 1931*, 90–91.

⁴⁷ SMA U1-6-89: E. Macnaghten to K. Murai, October 12, 1931.

activities had largely subsided in all major Chinese cities,⁴⁸ but they continued in the Settlement. The Anti-Japanese Association reorganized as the All-Shanghai Anti-Japanese National Salvation Association (Shanghai shi fanri jiuguo weiyuanhui 上海市反日救國委員會) and remained active in the Settlement. Moreover, local Chinese guilds formed their own branches of the Association and organized pickets to inspect certain commodities.⁴⁹ Between 1932 and 1935, the SMP's Special Branch reported over a dozen cases of large-scale boycotts targeting Japanese rice, paper, and cotton products. Chinese merchants trading Japanese goods often had their merchandise seized by pickets and received intimidating letters from the Association.⁵⁰

Although the SMP closely monitored these cases, its interventions were largely limited to overt and witnessed acts of violence such as forcible seizure.⁵¹ Local Japanese media frequently aired complaints that, compared with the Chinese government, Settlement authorities countered anti-Japanese activities far less effectively.⁵² An SMP official admitted in an internal report, "So long as these [anti-Japanese campaigns] confine themselves to activities which do not contravene the Criminal Code of the Republic of China or the Municipal Bye-laws, the Municipal Police are powerless to interfere"; he further cautioned that the "arbitrary measures" expected by the Japanese "would possibly do more harm than good and would be certain to react on [sic] the SMC."⁵³ Moreover, he attributed the SMP's difficulties in suppressing these activities partly to "the lack of cooperation on the part of the victims themselves coupled with the fact that average

⁴⁸ Coble, *Facing Japan*, 75.

⁴⁹ Shanghai shōkō kaigisho, *Kinyōkai panfuretto*, no. 79, July 15, 1932, 75–84.

⁵⁰ NARA, SMP D-3753: "Anti-Japanese movement, 1932-35," December 2, 1935.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Shanghai shōkō kaigisho, *Kinyōkai panfuretto*, no. 85, October 15, 1932, 7–12; *SN*, November 2, 1932; *SNN*, July 20, 1933, evening edition, and July 23, 1933, morning edition.

⁵³ NARA, SMP D-3753: "Report by Superintendent Robertson," November 3, 1932.

member of the Chinese community is only too willing... to overlook any offense, no matter how heinous, so long as it is in the interest of the anti-Japanese movement.”⁵⁴

Besides boycotts, another venue through which Chinese nationalism found expression in the Settlement were leftist publications. After 1931, many such periodicals simultaneously took anti-Japanese and anti-Chiang stances.⁵⁵ While the Nanjing government had relative success in suppressing anti-government journalism within Chinese territories, publications based and distributed in the Settlement often escaped its control. A prime example was Zou Taofen's *Shenghuo zhoukan* (Life Weekly), known for its vocal criticism of Chiang's nonresistance policy and its leading role in the National Salvation Movement. Although Chinese press law applied to all Chinese citizens, including those living in foreign concessions, its enforcement in the Settlement required the cooperation of the SMP, which was usually withheld unless Communism was involved.⁵⁶ In Shanghai, the Guomindang relied on local gangs to counter political adversaries in the Settlement and the French Concession. However, gang bosses such as Du Yuesheng proved fickle in this context, as they often sympathized with or even supported the anti-Japanese cause.⁵⁷

As a result, the only measure the GMD government could take against these journals was to restrict their circulation outside Shanghai by denying them postal service. This strategy successfully forced the discontinuation of *Shenghuo zhoukan* in 1933, when Zou, feeling his life was in danger, exiled himself to Europe and America.⁵⁸ But Zou's associates quickly launched a new journal, *Xinsheng zhoukan* (New life weekly). In June 1935, when one of its articles

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Coble, *Facing Japan*, 76-81.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 84.

⁵⁷ Coble, "Chiang Kai-shek and the Anti-Japanese Movement in China: Zou Tao-fen and the National Salvation Association, 1931-1937," 294.

⁵⁸ Coble, *Facing Japan*, 85-87.

suggested that the Japanese emperor was merely a puppet of the militarists and capitalists, it incensed local Japanese community, who accused the journal of *lèse-majesté*.⁵⁹ Both the JRC and JAASU held emergency meetings and pressed the Japanese government to treat this matter as a top-priority diplomatic issue.⁶⁰ Under Japanese pressure, the GMD government enforced the shutdown of the journal and prohibited the reprint of the said article. But regarding the *lèse-majesté* charge, it maintained that this case fell under the jurisdiction of the Special District Court and the SMC, as the publishing house was located in the Settlement.⁶¹ The dispute was solved only after Du Zhongyuan, the journal's chief editor, turned himself in to publicly defend himself at trial and was then sentenced to fifteen months in jail.

This diplomatic crisis of Nanjing partly resulted from the Settlement police's ineffectiveness in suppressing anti-Japanese journalism. The SMP's own underground network, while successful in other criminal investigations, could not reliably target Chinese nationalists. Not until late 1936 were Zou Taofen, who had recently returned to Shanghai, and six other major leftist journalists arrested in a joint action by Chinese and Settlement police. By the mid-1930s, Special Branch detectives regularly visited bookstores to inspect politically sensitive materials, but they rarely took actions beyond "warning the owners against selling anti-Japanese literature" and confiscating such materials.⁶² In addition, since only Chinese officers could perform this task, whether they dutifully reported all violations remained a constant question.⁶³ Even within the SMC, there was an opinion that the Chinese "mosquito" press served as a safety valve for

⁵⁹ *TA*, July 3, morning edition.

⁶⁰ *SNN*, July 3, 1935, evening edition, and July 4, morning edition.

⁶¹ Wu, "Quanmian Kangzhan baofa qian Guomindang de she-Ri wei ji yingdui: yi Xinsheng zhoukan wei zhongxin," 19.

⁶² NARA, SMP D-8/7: "Remarks of D. C. Sp. Br. On Central Registry's File No. C.9985 Re Sale of anti-Japanese books by Chinese bookstore," November 22, 1935. See also SMP U1-6-138: Secretary General to Commissioner of Police, November 20, 1935.

⁶³ NARA, SMP D-6839: "Police action re bookstores in Settlement: Communication from H. B. M. Consul-General," October 14, 1935.

Chinese nationalism and eliminating it would adversely affect Municipal governance; furthermore, imposing extra press censorship would require approval by the Ratepayers Meeting, which was unlikely to be granted due to the implications it would pose to freedom of speech within the Settlement.⁶⁴

Crime or terrorism?

In addition to organized anti-Japanese activities and the SMC's constraints in subduing them, common crimes formed another source of Japanese unease. The Japanese had long perceived Shanghai, with its fragmented jurisdictional landscape, large immigrant populations, and the presence of various outlaws, as a dangerous place. This image was encapsulated in *mato* 魔都, or the "Demon Capital," the Japanese sobriquet for the city popularized through literary works in the 1920s.⁶⁵ Japanese guidebooks in the interwar period consistently portrayed Shanghai as crime-ridden and devoted pages to instructing travelers and settlers on how to protect themselves from robbery and kidnapping.⁶⁶ These depictions heightened settlers' sense of insecurity and complicated their interactions with a host city that was marked by political and social turbulence.

The incidence of crimes targeting Japanese settlers peaked before and during the Shanghai Incident in early 1932. That year, the Japanese consulate recorded a total of 382 criminal cases with Japanese (including Koreans and Taiwanese) victims, and the majority of them occurred in the Settlement and extra-settlement road areas.⁶⁷ However, this number

⁶⁴ *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 25, March 5, 1932, 266–267.

⁶⁵ Liu, *Modu Shanghai*, 87–104.

⁶⁶ See, for example, *Shanghai annai 1917*, 184–186; *Shanghai annai 1927*, 420–423; *Shanghai ichiran 1928*, 357–358.

⁶⁷ This number includes 33 murders and about 250 cases of various assaults. See "Shōwa shichi nen zai Shanghai sōryōjikan kesatsu jimu jōkyō," in *GKS*, vol. 42, 305–318.

plunged in the following years, partly because Chinese movements usually attacked “collaborators” such as merchants dealing in Japanese goods rather than settlers. By 1936, the number of recorded cases had fallen to seventy, with a significant portion committed by Japanese themselves.⁶⁸ Overall, the SMP achieved some success in curbing violent crimes after its reforms in the late-1920s. By the mid-1930s, serious offenses in the Settlement like murder, abduction, and armed robbery had declined,⁶⁹ and no evidence suggests that such crimes disproportionately targeted the Japanese community under normal circumstances.⁷⁰

However, escalating Sino-Japanese tensions left local settlers feeling constantly exposed to the threat of Chinese violence. When instances of murder or assault against Japanese individuals occurred, it was often difficult to determine whether these crimes were politically-motivated. But following the Shanghai Incident, the Japanese community consistently interpreted these acts as part of a larger conspiracy by so-called “anti-Japanese terrorist groups” (*han-Nichi tero dan* 反日テロ団), who they saw as taking advantage of the Settlement authorities’ inability to maintain peace and order.

One of the most impactful cases happened on November 9, 1935. Around nine o’clock that evening, Nakayama Hideo, a member of the Japanese Naval Landing Party, was fatally shot in a dim alleyway in northern Hongkou. The murder quickly made headlines in Shanghai and Japan and greatly agitated local Japanese residents, compelling the consul-general to warn them

⁶⁸ “Shōwa jūichi nen zai Shanhai sōryōjikan keisatsu jimu jōkyō 昭和十一年在上海総領事館警察事務状況,” in *GKS*, vol. 43, 67.

⁶⁹ SMC, *Report for the Year 1935*, 99-101.

⁷⁰ In 1936, for example, there were 6 recorded cases of murder and armed robbery targeting Japanese individuals (2 cases per 10,000 people), which was actually lower than the Settlement’s general rate—404 cases among its 1.15 million residents. See “Shōwa jūichi nen zai Shanhai sōryōjikan keisatsu jimu jōkyō,” in *GKS*, vol. 43, 67; SMC, *Report for the Year 1937*, 85-86.

against “reckless reaction.”⁷¹ Meanwhile, the case gave Settlement authorities immense pressure to demonstrate their ability to safeguard Japanese lives. The SMP announced a reward of four thousand dollars for information leading to the arrest of the murderer, but the latter was never discovered. The closest witness to the shooting was a Chinese shoemaker, who reported seeing a man fleeing the scene dressed in “dark colored long trousers and a short jacket” that resembled the Japanese naval uniform.⁷² However, both the Japanese settler community and naval authorities were convinced that the murder was a premediated act of Chinese political terrorism, and they pressed the SMC to take stronger measures against anti-Japanese conspiracies.⁷³ The Chinese media dismissed this hasty conclusion as outright unwarranted,⁷⁴ and even English newspapers suspected that the Japanese, “determined to fasten the crime upon a Chinese... without conclusive evidence,” intended to exploit the case for political purposes.⁷⁵

Nonetheless, Settlement authorities acquiesced to the Japanese stance and rushed to appease them. Four days later, a new Special Political Office formed under the SMP to take over the case and took “complete charge of the anti-Japanese political aspect and all investigation connected therewith.”⁷⁶ This new division was headed by a Special Political Officer who directly reported to the Commissioner of Police, maintained communication with the Japanese consulate, and closely collaborated with Deputy Commissioner Tajima Akira and Assistant Commissioner Uehara Shigeru to collect “any information however trivial” from the SMP’s Japanese personnel and facilitate preemptive actions against future such cases.⁷⁷

⁷¹ “Dai shichi, Nakayama suihei sasshō jiken 第七、中山水兵射殺事件” in JACAR Ref. B13081258500: “Zai-Shi chūton-gun kankei 在支駐屯軍關係,” December, 1935, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B13081258500>, [accessed December 5, 2023].

⁷² NARA SMP D-7073: “Special Branch Report,” November 10, 1935.

⁷³ *SNN*, November 11, 1935, morning edition; *Yomiuri*, November 12, 1935, morning edition.

⁷⁴ *Shenbao*, November 16, 1935.

⁷⁵ *CWR*, November 23, 1935; *SEPM*, November 25, 1935.

⁷⁶ SMA U1-6-138: “The Appointment of Special Political Officer,” November 14, 1935.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

The creation of the Special Political Office, however, failed to alleviate Japanese settlers' unease. Shortly after Nakayama's murder, the robbery of a Japanese porcelain store on Nanjing Road by a group of Chinese further reinforced their belief in a Settlement-wide plot taking place against them.⁷⁸ In a biting letter to the SMC chairman, the JRC chairman Amano Masusaburō questioned how SMP constables, who regularly patrolled near the shop's location in the Settlement's busiest commercial area, could have failed to prevent the assault; he contended that "the efficiency of the police force should be determined by its capabilities not by its appearance."⁷⁹ When the letter received no satisfactory response, the settlers initiated a public campaign to pressure the SMC. In late November and early December, JAASU representatives repeatedly visited the Japanese consul-general and Municipal officials to advocate for greater cooperation among Japanese, Chinese, and Settlement authorities in curbing anti-Japanese activities.⁸⁰

This period coincided with a renewed crisis in Sino-Japanese relations. Over the past months, the Kwantung Army had ramped up its creation of an "autonomous zone" in north China that would detach the territories of Hebei, Chahar, and Shandong from Nanjing's control. This move triggered fresh demonstrations throughout China and severely tested Chiang's appeasement policy. In Shanghai, nationalist fervor peaked by early December, when student protestors again took to the streets, now calling for an end to the civil war and a national united front between the GMD and the CCP against Japanese imperialism.⁸¹ Recognizing these circumstances, the SMC displayed understanding towards Japanese settlers' unrest and made the

⁷⁸ *SNN*, November 12, 1935, morning edition.

⁷⁹ SMA U1-6-138: M. Amano to H. E. Arnhold, November 25, 1935.

⁸⁰ *SMN*, November 29, 1935; *SNN*, December 2, 1935; *SN*, December 5, 1935; *SM*, December 6, 1935; *SN*, December 10, 1935.

⁸¹ Coble, *Facing Japan*, 267-289; Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China*, 158-161.

rare move of arranging meetings between its high officials and JAASU representatives. However, when it came to their demands for “adequate investigation” into Nakayama’s murder and the porcelain store robbery, which implied summary arrest and punishment, the SMC maintained that its actions must align with “recognized police practice,”⁸² a response that the Japanese criticized as “an evasive attitude showing no sincerity.”⁸³

In the next two years, the SMP arrested a dozen suspects in connection with the Nakayama case, bringing at least seven different persons to trial and capturing much public attention each time. But all of them were eventually acquitted due to insufficient evidence. The case turned into a household topic in Shanghai, while “newspapermen cheerfully gave themselves up to a free play of imagination.”⁸⁴ At different times, the Community Party, the GMD’s Blue Shirts Society, and several local secret societies were all suspected of being involved. Over time, rumors grew that Nakayama had been killed by a colleague over their rivalry for the affections of a cabaret dancer, but Japanese naval authorities furiously refuted this gossip as an insult.⁸⁵ For Settlement authorities, the pursuit of Nakayama’s murderer had become more political gesture than criminal investigation, a performance that had to be continued until a satisfactory conclusion was delivered to the Japanese.

While Nakayama’s death remained a mystery, a similar case occurred a year later and caused further Japanese panic. On the evening of November 11, 1936, Takase Yasuji, a seaman working for Nippon Yusen Kaisha, was shot from behind while walking towards a Japanese café in eastern Hongkou in the company of a waitress. The gunshot attracted a crowd, including many

⁸² SMA U1-6-138: H. E. Arnhold to M. Amano, November 26, 1935.

⁸³ *SMN*, November 29, 1935, morning edition.

⁸⁴ *SEPM*, April 23, 1936.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

nearby Japanese residents, but the assailant escaped, and Takase died a few minutes later.⁸⁶ This murder brought greater shockwaves on two counts: its victim was a civilian, and it happened in a densely populated neighborhood known for its Japanese restaurants and cafés.⁸⁷ Estimates showed that over a thousand Japanese lived near the crime scene.⁸⁸ The next day, the JAASU convened an emergency meeting, claiming that “the lives and property of Japanese residents in Shanghai are now exposed to unprecedented danger.”⁸⁹ Hongkou saw reports of a noticeable decrease in the number of Japanese venturing outdoors after dark.⁹⁰ Meanwhile, the local Japanese press devoted full pages to every detail of the case, and even major newspapers in the metropole released special-edition reports.⁹¹ Like the Nakayama murder, the perpetrator and motive behind Takase’s killing remained unidentified, and similar rumors arose that he had been shot by a jealous patron of the café waitress who had accompanied him that night.⁹² These speculations again enraged the Japanese community, who maintained that Takase was the latest victim of organized political terrorism.⁹³

In the following weeks, settler representatives, consular authorities, the SMC, and the Chinese government convened a series of joint meetings to discuss anti-Japanese terrorism. But Japanese authorities and settlers manifested different approaches to this issue. The Japanese Foreign Ministry blamed the GMD government for Takase’s death, viewing it as indicative of

⁸⁶ NARA SMP D-7611: “Record of Investigation,” November 12, 1935.

⁸⁷ *SNN*, November 12, 1936, morning edition.

⁸⁸ *TA*, November 12, 1936, morning edition.

⁸⁹ *SNN*, November 13, 1936, evening edition.

⁹⁰ NARA SMP D-7611: “Press Information Office report,” November 16, 1936.

⁹¹ *SNN*, November 12, 1936, morning edition, November 13, 1936, morning edition, and November 14, 1936, morning edition; *TA*, November 12, 1936, extra edition.

⁹² *SEPM*, November 13, 1936. Takase was not a permanent resident in Shanghai, but as a seaman, he had regularly visited Shanghai and frequented the cafe near which he was shot. It was rumored that that he had an intimate relationship with the waitress. This type of relationship was not unusual in Shanghai and Japan at the time, as Japanese cafe waitresses often provided sexual services—and were expected to do so—to their frequent customers. The waitress testified that she was well-acquainted with Takase. See NARA SMP D-7611: Statement of Toshiko Abe, November 12, 1936.

⁹³ *SN*, November 16, 1936.

Nanjing's loosening control over popular movements. Consul-General Wakasugi Kaname met several times with Mayor Wu Tiecheng and urged Chinese police to take joint responsibility for suppressing anti-Japanese organizations even within foreign settlements.⁹⁴ At the same time, the Japanese government seized the chance to press Nanjing to crush the resurgence of anti-Japanese sentiments across the country.⁹⁵

Japanese settlers, while similarly concerned about larger Sino-Japanese hostilities, were more intent on finding immediate, local solutions, and they directed much of their criticism at Settlement authorities. Specifically, the Takase case exacerbated their distrust of the SMP, with the *Shanghai nippō* suggesting that the assassins had chosen to carry out their plot in the Settlement, rather than the Chinese city, due to the weakness of Settlement policing.⁹⁶ The JAASU resumed its demands for SMP reforms, requesting further expansion of the Japanese Branch and appointing Japanese officers to managerial positions in Hongkou and Yangshupu.⁹⁷ "It is not sufficient," it claimed, "to increase the number of men or to have more officers on patrol... The strengthening of the force must be attained through the reorganization of its fundamental structure."⁹⁸

By this time, the settlers' outcry against the SMP focused on two main issues. First, the Special Political Office had been neither effective nor transparent in protecting the Japanese community. A year had passed since the office's establishment, but little was known about its operations other than its being led by a British officer. A *Shanghai nippō* editorial sharply questioned the office's efficiency: "How much work has it really performed? What is its

⁹⁴ *SN*, November 16, 1936.

⁹⁵ *Yomiuri*, November 13, 1936, evening edition.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *SNN*, November 14, evening edition.

⁹⁸ *NCH*, October 7, 1936; *SN*, November 15, 1936, morning edition, and November 16, 1936, morning edition.

structure? Will it ever be able to carry out its duty thoroughly?”⁹⁹ Second, the SMP as an organization was ill-designed to prevent crimes, particularly those against Japanese settlers. In the 1930s, the SMP increased Japanese participation in criminal investigations and incorporated a dozen Japanese officers into the CID and the Special Branch. This group was led by a veteran detective, Nakagawa Suezō, who had joined the force in 1909 as a translator and become one of its longest-serving members. Their duties included making inquiries into all criminal cases involving Japanese individuals, liaising with the Japanese consulate and companies, and maintaining connections with Japanese news agencies.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, in the settlers’ eyes, the SMP was always late to crime scenes and seemed “completely powerless” in preventing crimes beforehand.¹⁰¹

Japanese misgivings about Settlement policing, as earlier mentioned, were tied to the subordinate position of the Japanese Branch within the SMP, a situation partly caused by divergent understandings of Japanese officers’ role in Municipal governance. While the SMP obliged all its officers, regardless of nationality, to prioritize their allegiance and duty to the force, the settlers expected the Japanese Branch to primarily serve their own communal interests. Before the 1930s, this discrepancy posed no serious issues. But after Chinese anti-Japanese sentiments surged, the SMP found itself unable to implement the “proper measures” demanded by the Japanese, because these measures—including searching houses without warrants, dispersing peaceful political demonstrations, and making mass arrests of nationalist activists—gravely risked not only deviating from “recognized police practice” but also alienating the

⁹⁹ *SN*, November 16, 1936.

¹⁰⁰ NARA, SMP D-8/13: “Special Branch Reorganization Circular No. 7,” July 16, 1930.

¹⁰¹ *SN*, November 15, 1936.

Chinese public.¹⁰² Ultimately, this dilemma led to further marginalization of the Japanese Branch. Contrary to the settlers' expectations, as Sino-Japanese antagonism intensified, the SMP exercised greater caution in deploying its Japanese officers, as it feared that their presence on the streets would only fuel tensions.¹⁰³ Simultaneously, the SMP's British leaders increasingly questioned the loyalty of these officers. During the Shanghai Incident, many of them had actively assisted the Japanese military in searching and arresting Chinese "terrorists," and the SMP Commissioner Fredrick Gerrard viewed these actions as a serious breach of police discipline.¹⁰⁴ Over the next few years, Gerrard consistently opposed the idea of placing Japanese officers in charge of district offices. As he explained, "Having experienced myself the embarrassment of pressure from Japanese authorities which no other national authorities have ever attempted to bring, I know that the position of these officers would be very difficult if they were to act on all occasions as purely Settlement police officers."¹⁰⁵ After the Takase incident, even Tajima Akira, now technically the third highest-ranking official in the SMP, conveyed to Japanese media that his British superiors had constrained him from taking "measures he consider[ed] necessary."¹⁰⁶

The sidelined Japanese officers harbored no less mistrust towards the SMP leadership. Following Nakayama's murder, Uehara Shigeru conducted a personal investigation that mobilized his Japanese subordinates and without seeking approval or support from SMP headquarters. As noted earlier, criminal investigations in the Settlement tended to be costly, since they largely depended on intelligence bought from Chinese informants. Uehara thus turned to the

¹⁰² It should be noted that the Settlement authorities frequently bypassed judicial protocols to persecute Communists, but during the 1930s they were reluctant to employ similar measures against broader Chinese nationalist movements.

¹⁰³ SMA U1-6-89: Commissioner of Police to Secretary General, October 28, 1931.

¹⁰⁴ *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 25, February 29, 1932, 110-111.

¹⁰⁵ SMA U1-6-139: "Memorandum by Commissioner of Police," November 23, 1936.

¹⁰⁶ *SEPM*, November 17, 1936.

Japanese consulate and navy for financial backing,¹⁰⁷ which only aggravated Settlement authorities' doubts concerning the loyalty of its Japanese staff.¹⁰⁸ By the mid-1930s, the “transnational colonial rule” in the Settlement faced significant hurdles. For Japanese police officers, national identity clearly began to supersede their institutional allegiance to the Settlement, compromising the traditional cooperation among Municipal staff “at a personal, professional and institutional level.”¹⁰⁹

Indeed, Uehara himself later became a vociferous critic of the SMP. After leaving the force in 1940, he returned to Japan and published a book-length study on the Settlement's institutions. He dedicated nearly half of this text to a dissection of municipal policing. In addition to attacking the SMP's Anglocentric command structure and its over-reliance on Chinese officers,¹¹⁰ Uehara argued that the Settlement's entire governance system was ill-devised to tackle crimes and terrorism. He identified the failure to implement a household registration system as a key flaw that made it extremely challenging for police to track criminals who could easily assume pseudonyms in the Settlement. To him, this oversight reflected the SMP's general reluctance to assert control over the Chinese population, and he noted that as long as anti-Japanese agitations did not directly threaten British interests, the Settlement's British rulers tended to turn a blind eye. Furthermore, he contended that the SMC's jealous guarding of its administrative rights had impeded cooperation with Chinese authorities that was necessary for combating anti-Japanese terrorism.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Fujita, *Kyoryūmin no Shanghai*, 181-183; Uehara, *Shanghai kyōdō sokai shi*, 127-131.

¹⁰⁸ SMA U1-6-138: Secretary General to Commissioner of Police, November 22, 1935.

¹⁰⁹ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 8.

¹¹⁰ Uehara, *Shanghai kyōdō sokai shi*, 191-192.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 142-146.

The extra-settlement road problem

However, the cooperation between the Chinese and Settlement regimes was sensitive issue on which the Japanese community displayed highly ambivalent, and often self-contradictory, attitudes. On one hand, they recognized the necessity of involving Chinese authorities in the control of the nationalist movement within the Settlement, via, for example, joint actions of Chinese and Settlement police. On the other hand, they stayed vigilant against any expansion of Chinese municipal power that might expose themselves to Chinese jurisdiction. In some cases, they vigorously defended the Settlement regime against “Chinese encroachment,” adopting a stance that was even more unyielding than that of the SMC itself. This was exemplified by their approach to the extra-settlement road (ESR) controversy during the 1930s.

As Chapter 1 has mentioned, extra-settlement road was a perennial issue in Shanghai that dated back to the early days of the treaty-port era. Amid the Taiping Rebellion, the foreign communities started building military roads outside settlements for defense purpose; meanwhile, the influx of Chinese refugees, many of whom subsequently took permanent residence, made settlement space increasingly congested. As a result, the late nineteenth century saw a continuous growth of foreign-owned properties in Chinese territories and of a network of extra-settlement roads constructed by foreign municipal authorities, culminating in the formal expansion of both settlements in 1899.

In the early twentieth century, the construction of extra-settlement roads continued, and these areas increasingly came under foreign administrative control. Starting in 1905, the SMC implemented a Special Municipal Rate in ESR areas, by contracting foreign-owned utilities companies and binding the latter to supply services only to those who paid the Rate.¹¹² By the

¹¹² SMC, *Report for the Year 1905*, 362. See also Kim Seungrae, “Seimatsu no Shanhai kyōdō sōkai ekkairo chiiku ni okeru kazei mondai,” 1–28.

early 1910s, the SMP had opened offices and regularly operated in these areas. Moreover, foreign consular authorities capitalized on the political upheaval of the 1911 Revolution and the collapse of the Qing government to seize control of the Mixed court and extended its jurisdiction beyond the confines of the settlements.¹¹³ In 1914, when the French Concession acquired another vast extension that encompassed nearly all outside roads built up to that point, the International Settlement tried to negotiate a similar deal to further expand its boundaries to the north and west. However, this endeavor ultimately foundered due to the surge of Chinese nationalist sentiments in early 1915. Thereafter, the SMC increased its investment in ESR projects as an alternative method for formal settlement extension.¹¹⁴ By 1926, ESR spanned a total of 43 miles; together, they enclosed 12 square miles of land, or roughly 1.5 times the size of the Settlement itself. over 90 percent of these roads located west of the Settlement, while the rest penetrated into the smaller but more densely populated regions in Zhabei and north Hongkou (Map 4.1).¹¹⁵

The development of ESR areas during this period paralleled the growth of the local Japanese community, which, as we have seen, had tended to settle and concentrate on the outskirts of the Settlement, specifically the North Sichuan and Dixwell Road area in north Hongkou. In 1925, over 4,000 Japanese (20 percent of Shanghai's Japanese population) resided in this region,¹¹⁶ and this figure rose to 5,200 (22 percent) in 1930 and reached 8,000 (34 percent) by early 1937.¹¹⁷ This geographical peripherality offered several benefits. First, it allowed them to avoid municipal taxes—due to the SMC's lack of taxation rights outside the

¹¹³ See Stephens, *Order and Discipline in China*, Chapter 7; Cassel, *Grounds of Judgment*, 176–177; and Yao, *Shanghai zujie yu zujie faquan*, 83–84.

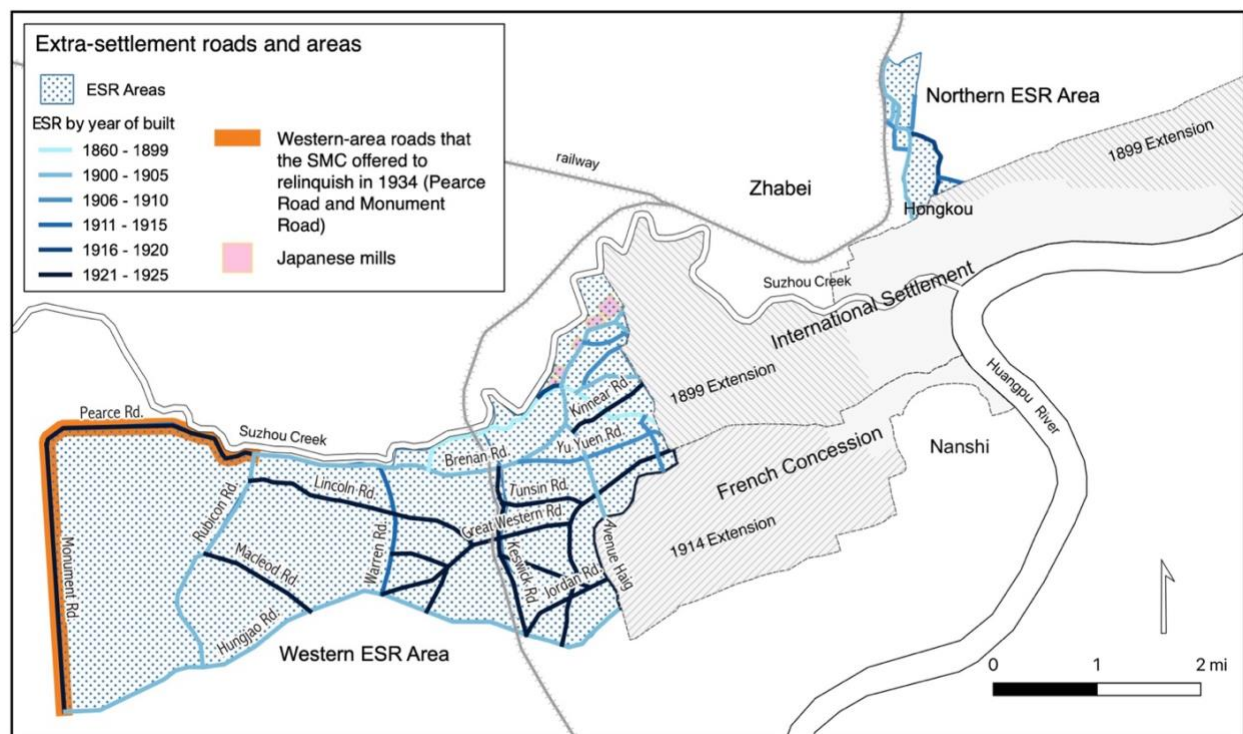
¹¹⁴ See SMC, *Report for the Year 1925*, 268–269; and Kotenev, *Shanghai: Its Municipality and the Chinese*, 58.

¹¹⁵ SMA U1-6-145: Commissioner of Public Works to Commissioner General, May 15, 1926.

¹¹⁶ SMA U1-6-145: Commissioner of Revenue to Commissioner General of the SMC, December 7, 1926.

¹¹⁷ See “Shōwa go nen zai Shanhai sōryōjikan keisatsu jimu jōkyō 昭和五年在上海總領事警察事務狀況,” in *GKS*, vol. 42, 216; and *SMS*, April 22, 1937, morning edition.

Settlement, collecting Special Rate always proved difficult, and non-payment was a common practice among both foreign and Chinese residents in ESR areas.¹¹⁸ Second, by transforming Hongkou into a “Little Tokyo,” where the foreign population became overwhelming Japanese, they gained a strong argument for enhanced involvement in municipal policing and the stationing of Japanese officers near their neighborhoods.



Map 4.1. Extra-settlement roads and areas. (Source: Made by author using QGIS)

Nevertheless, this spatial marginality rendered the Japanese particularly vulnerable to Chinese threats. Over time, the foreign control of ESR areas faced growing Chinese challenges. In Zhabei, the Chinese began to develop their own municipal administrative system in the final

¹¹⁸ SMA U1-6-145: Chairman of the SMC to American Consul-General, December 8, 1926.

years of the Qing period.¹¹⁹ To assert police rights over ESR areas, the Zhabei municipality introduced a modern police force in 1906, which frequently came into conflicts with the SMP in following decades.¹²⁰ At the same time, Chinese utilities companies emerged and attempted to extend their own infrastructure in north Hongkou, competing with foreign firms and further undermining the SMC's already fragile taxation base in that area.¹²¹ By the 1920s, ESR had become a major target of the local rights recovery movement and the Chinese efforts to reclaim "road sovereignty" (*luquan* 路權).¹²² In 1924, Zhabei residents founded a "National Land Preservation Society" (Guotu weichih hui 國土維持會), and one of its professed aims was to prevent future sale of extra-settlement land by Chinese landowners to the SMC.¹²³ During the May Thirtieth Movement, Chinese activists demanded that SMC return all existing roads to Chinese control.¹²⁴ Under the these mounting pressures, the construction of ESR ceased after 1925.

Shortly after the Nationalist municipal government was established in 1927, it unveiled plans to construct a ring road that would link Zhabei with the old Chinese city in the south, thereby erecting a physical barrier to the further extension of ESR. Regarding existing roads, the SMC grudgingly entered into a temporary "gentlemen's agreement" with the Chinese authorities to preserve the status quo—the Chinese would not interfere with the SMC's upkeep of existing roads, on the condition that no new ones would be built.¹²⁵ But this arrangement alone failed to

¹¹⁹ Henriot, *Shanghai, 1927-1937*, 11–15.

¹²⁰ Kotenev, *Shanghai: Its Municipality and the Chinese*, 66.

¹²¹ SMC, *Report for the Year 1912*, 72B-75B. Although Chinese companies were slow to build their own infrastructure, their mere presence posed a fiscal threat to the SMC. By the mid-1920s, Chinese firms were purchasing water and electricity in bulk from foreign companies for redistribution to consumers, making collection of the Special Rate even more difficult. See SMA U1-6-145: Commissioner General, 'Note on Special Municipal Rate collection in the Northern Area outside Settlement Limits,' February 14, 1927.

¹²² Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, Chapters 5 and 11.

¹²³ *Shenbao*, April 19, 1924; December 31, 1924.

¹²⁴ *Shenbao*, June 7, 1925.

¹²⁵ SMA U1-6-151: Stirling Fessenden, "Memorandum," January 19, 1934,

eliminate the serious risks posed by the ongoing “dual control” of ESR areas, where run-ins between the SMP and the Chinese police were occurring on a daily basis.¹²⁶ Meanwhile, the continuation of administrative conflicts bore grave financial consequences—due to the difficulties with Special Rate collection, ESR had become a financial liability for the SMC, as their revenues could not offset their cost.¹²⁷

In search of a more permanent solution, local British and American diplomats repeatedly approached the Chinese government after 1927, proposing to formally incorporate some ESR into the Settlement while returning the rest to full Chinese control.¹²⁸ But the Chinese authorities showed little interests in such negotiations, considering the issue an integral part of overall treaty revision and the abolishment of the entire extraterritoriality system.¹²⁹ The SMC had long justified its governance of the ESR by citing its benefits to both foreign and Chinese residents, and framed their extension as an “inexorable economic law.”¹³⁰ But by the early 1930s, it was widely recognized, at least by the consular authorities, that the SMC’s exertion of administrative rights outside the Settlement, especially concerning policing, was based on “very slender grounds.”¹³¹

¹²⁶ SMA U1-6-145: Commissioner of Police to Secretary, SMC, January 24, 1929. In June 1931, for example, a quarrel between an American resident and a Chinese tailor on Avenue Haig led to violence between SMP constables and Zhabei policemen; a foreign officer trying to prevent Chinese policemen from entering the American’s house, a foreign officer fired a shot one of the latter. See the *China Press*, June 25, 1931. On the ever-present risks of conflict between the SMP and Zhabei police, see Peters, *Shanghai Policeman*, 20–22.

¹²⁷ SMA U1-6-145: Commissioner of Revenue to Secretary, SMC, December 24, 1928. See also Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 50–52.

¹²⁸ FO 371/13945: Sir S. Barton, “Memorandum,” August 1928.

¹²⁹ The Consul General at Shanghai (Jenkins) to the Minister in China (Johnson), December 23, 1930, in *FRUS*, 1930, Volume II, Document 428, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1933v03/d428>, [accessed June 15, 2023].

¹³⁰ SMA U1-6-146: “Memorandum by the Public Works Department on Outsides Roads,” November 29, 1929; and SMA U1-6-145: E. A. Long, ‘The Extra-Settlement Road Problem: A Retrospect and a Suggested Solution,’ May 1930.

¹³¹ FO 371/13945: Edwin S. Cunningham, American Consul General and Senior Consul, to W. J. Oudendijk, Minister for the Netherlands and Senior Minister, May 23, 1929; The Minister in China (Johnson) to the Secretary of State, January 1, 1931, in *FRUS*, 1930, Volume II, Document 430, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1930v02/d430>, [accessed June 15, 2023].

A shift in Chinese stance happened in 1931-1932. During the Shanghai Incident, the Japanese military occupied the entire northern ESR area,¹³² and Zhabei came under a puppet police force under Japanese control.¹³³ When the Sino-Japanese truce negotiation began in March under international mediation, the Chinese government perceived a ‘very opportune moment’ to simultaneously address the ESR issue with Western consuls, since the “international rule” of outside roads seemed preferable to complete Japanese dominance of northern Shanghai.¹³⁴ Therefore, in June, shortly after peace was restored in Shanghai, the SMC and the Shanghai government negotiated a draft *modus vivendi* for “joint administration” of ESR areas. According to this plan, ESR areas would be policed by a Special Police Force with a Chinese chief and a foreign vice-chief, the latter to be nominated by the SMC and oversee all cases involving foreigners with extraterritorial rights; meanwhile, the SMC would assume the collection of ESR revenues, and all revenues would be channeled towards an independent budget co-managed with the Chinese government exclusively for policing and public works on outside roads.¹³⁵ Permitting the continuation of some foreign administration in ESR areas while signaling a recognition of Chinese sovereignty, this plan seemed mutually agreeable. The negotiation thus progressed smoothly, and by early August, the British and American consul-generals had given their approval.

¹³² Shortly after the start of combat, the Shanghai Municipal Police withdrew from the North Sichuan and Dixwell Roads area, and, due to Japanese resistance, it was not able to resume duties there until late February. See SMA U1-6-134: Special meeting of the Consular Body, February 6, 1932; SMA U1-6-134: Hayashi Yūkichi to Stirling Fessenden, February 11, 1932; *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 25, February 21, 1932, 88–92, and February 29, 1932, 110–113.

¹³³ Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, 196-202.

¹³⁴ “Memorandum by the Consul General at Shanghai (Cunningham) of a Conversation with the Chinese Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs (Quo),” in *FRUS, 1932, The Far East*, Volume IV, Document 704, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1932v04/d704>, [accessed June 15, 2023]. See also Lockwood, “The International Settlement at Shanghai, 1924-34,” 1042–1043.

¹³⁵ *The Consul General at Shanghai (Cunningham) to the Secretary of State*, June 11, 1932, in *FRUS, 1932, The Far East*, Volume IV, Document 707, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1932v04/d707>, [accessed June 15, 2023].

Nonetheless, just before the agreement's signing, the Japanese consul-general Murai Kuramatsu voiced objection, contending that the *modus vivendi* would infringe Japan's treaty rights by compromising Japanese residents' immunity from Chinese taxation and policing.¹³⁶ Meanwhile, the SMC's Japanese councilors protested that 'the Council only considered the convenience for the British and Americans and neglected the interests of the Japanese'.¹³⁷ The paramount Japanese concern was that, by introducing a new Special Police Force to ESR areas, the joint administration would jeopardize the current arrangement of policing; and news of the *modus vivendi* caused anxieties among settlers over the potential danger of "being left to the mercy" of a police force that would be predominately Chinese in leadership and staff.¹³⁸ In response, the JRC presented the SMC a set of demands that included the continued deployment of Japanese policemen in ESR areas, exemption from Chinese taxation, and the freedom to construct buildings without Chinese interference. Specifically, it insisted that the vice-chief of the proposed Special Police had to be Japanese.¹³⁹ The JAASU, too, reacted swiftly. Of the forty-six Japanese neighborhood associations in Shanghai at this time, only sixteen were entirely located within foreign settlements, while the remaining thirty were situated either partially or wholly in Chinese territories and ESR areas.¹⁴⁰ In late 1932, the JAASU establish a "Northern Chapter" (*hokubu shibu* 北部支部) to collect intelligence and coordinate petition campaigns concerning the ESR issue.¹⁴¹

¹³⁶ FO 371/16198: Consul-General Sir J. Brenan to Mr. Ingram, September 7, 1932.

¹³⁷ SMA U1-6-152: Report by the Press Information Office, March 19, 1935. At this time, the Municipal Council consisted of five British, two American, two Japanese, and five Chinese members. But as the British consul-general John Brenan conceded, the original *modus vivendi* was the work of the Anglo-American councilors alone. See FO 371/20988: Consul-General Sir J. Brenan to Mr. Ingram, July 8, 1932.

¹³⁸ *SEPM*, October 27, 1932.

¹³⁹ SMA U1-6-153: H. E. Arnhold, "Memorandum on the subject of the outside roads," March 13, 1935.

¹⁴⁰ *SNN*, January 18, 1931, evening edition.

¹⁴¹ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 1085-1086.

It soon became evident that ESR negotiations could not be concluded without appeasing the Japanese, but the efforts to accommodate the latter proved difficult from the beginning due to profound disagreements over the nature and publicity of the negotiations. Consul-General Murai called for a round-table conference of consular authorities to discuss the *modus vivendi*; the Japanese government required any relinquishment of foreign municipal control over outside roads to be collectively discussed by the treaty powers, and it wanted the ESR agreement signed by the Chinese government and the Powers.¹⁴² The Chinese, British, and American diplomats all opposed this proposal, insisting that the negotiation should be limited to the SMC and the Shanghai government to avoid complicating the status of the International Settlement or the larger issue of overall treaty revisions.¹⁴³ Moreover, in anticipation of backlash from the Chinese public, they wished to keep the *modus vivendi*'s details secret until it was formally ratified.¹⁴⁴

Owing to Japanese resistance, the negotiations remained at stalemate in the next two years. In early 1934, through the mediation of the British consul-general John Brenan, all parties, agreed on appointing a Japanese assistant chief and a Japanese deputy superintendent in the northern area who would both function with considerable autonomy from the Chinese chief and the foreign (i.e., British) vice-chief;¹⁴⁵ meanwhile, the force would consist of 350 Chinese, 80 Japanese, and 40 foreign officers,¹⁴⁶ roughly matching the current ratio of Chinese and non-Chinese members in the SMP while granting the Japanese higher representation.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² FO 371/16198: Consul-General Sir J. Brenan to Mr. Ingram, September 7, 1932.

¹⁴³ FO 371/16198: Consul-General Sir J. Brenan to Mr. Ingram, July 22, 1932; The Minister in China (Johnson) to the Secretary of State, August 16, 1932, in *FRUS, 1932, The Far East*, Volume IV, Document 710, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1932v04/d710>, [accessed June 15, 2023].

¹⁴⁴ In early September, Cai Zengji, the Shanghai government's Commissioner of Finance, privately conveyed to the British consul-general John Brenan that the only way to enact the joint administration plan, particularly if additional Japanese demands were addressed, "was to conclude it, and then present the Chinese extremists with a fait accompli." See FO 371/16198: Consul-General Sir J. Brenan to Mr. Ingram, September 7, 1932.

¹⁴⁵ SMA U1-6-151: "Japanese Proposal," April 3, 1934.

¹⁴⁶ SMA U1-6-153: H. E. Arnhold, "Memorandum on the Subject of the Outside Roads," March 13, 1935.

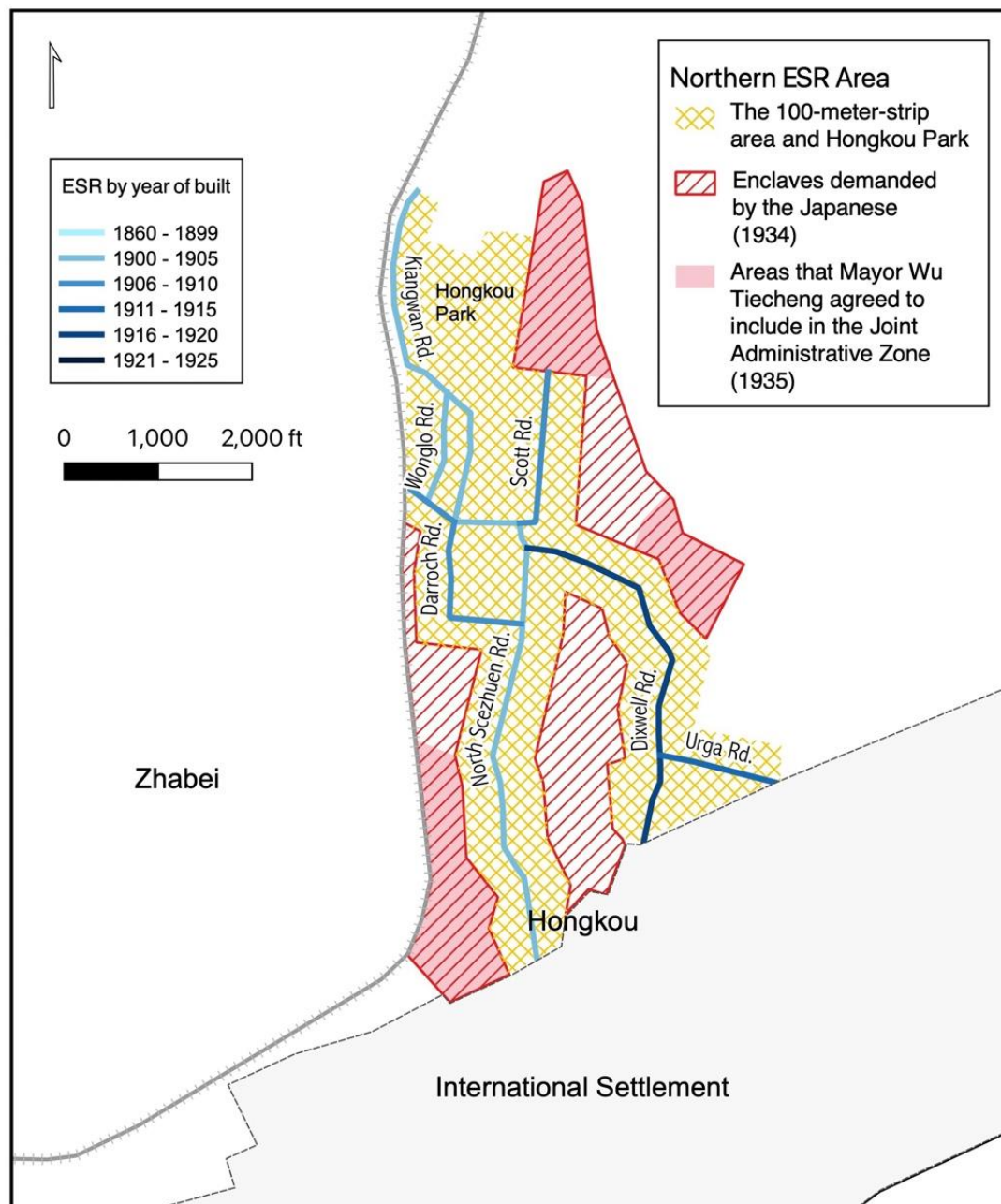
¹⁴⁷ SMA, *Report for the Year 1933*, 116.

However, a new issue quickly emerged: which areas should the new joint administrative zone include? According to the SMC's original plan, joint administration would be implemented on ESR, a strip of 200 feet on either side of these roads, and major Municipal properties such as the Jessfield and Hongkou Parks. The Japanese, however, proposed including several large territories enclosed by Municipal roads in the northern area as well as the Japanese mills in the western area, effectively creating a continuous special zone not unlike previous Settlement extensions (Map 4.2). They contended that confining joint administration to the roads' immediate vicinity would give rise to Chinese-governed enclaves and inevitably perpetuate jurisdictional conflicts. In their view, many foreign properties stood more than 200 feet from the nearest Municipal road but deserved equal access to SMC services; in addition, since Chinese residents of the enclosed areas benefitted in one way or another from foreign-built infrastructure, they should contribute to the joint administrative zone's revenues.¹⁴⁸

This stance shows a radical difference from the SMC's view. For the SMC, the ESR areas constituted the Settlement's outer perimeter, a space constantly subject to negotiation and contestation. The joint administration scheme therefore offered a two-fold defense: financially, it ensured adequate compensation for the expenditure for road maintenance and other services; politically, it created a buffer zone for the Settlement against the Chinese rights recovery movement. The Japanese, however, perceived the ongoing negotiations as an opportunity to expel Chinese municipal power from the northern ESR area. Although the Japanese community had long pursued a degree of autonomy from the British-ruled Settlement, by the 1930s, Chinese nationalism and the advancing Chinese municipal power had become a more imminent threat to Japanese extraterritorial privileges. Consequently, the ESR negotiations compelled them to

¹⁴⁸ SMA U1-6-151: Ishii Itarō, "Formula of Principles," June 17, 1934.

temporarily tone down their separatist tendencies and emphasize their status as an integral constituent of the International Settlement. Ironically, doing so led them to champion foreign control over the ESR areas with greater zeal than the SMC itself.



Map 4.2. Northern ESR area. (Source: Made by author using QGIS)

Nevertheless, the SMC evidently considered the Japanese proposal an overreach. When presenting a new draft *modus vivendi* to the Chinese that summer, it omitted the Japanese demands for enclaves and did not even specify its own 200-foot plan.¹⁴⁹ Surprisingly, the Chinese responded with a proposal to extend the joint administrative zone by 100 meters on each side of the road, or 50 percent more than the SMC had anticipated.¹⁵⁰ By late 1934, the SMC had further motivation to accept the Chinese offer and bring the negotiations to a quick conclusion. As noted earlier, foreign-supplied utilities and the associated Special Rate had been central to the ESR dispute since 1905. After negotiations commenced, both parties tacitly agreed to maintain the utilities status quo: foreign companies could continue supplying their present customers in ESR areas but could not contract new clients until the *modus vivendi* took effect. As a result, the delayed agreement held up the development of many foreign properties outside the Settlement and prevented the SMC from enlisting new ratepayers.¹⁵¹

By this time, the Japanese community also harbored their own grievance over utilities. Whereas foreign providers were expected to continue services in the western ESR area following the ESR agreement, the Chinese companies had recently installed their own infrastructure in Zhabei and Hongkou.¹⁵² The potential foreign retreat from these areas to accommodate Chinese interests discomforted Japanese residents, who worried about soon being forced to buy Chinese-supplied water and electricity of lower quality and higher price.¹⁵³ Although the SMC never overtly differentiated the two ESR areas, its actions over the course of negotiations frequently suggested an inclination to concede more ground in the north. In April 1933, with SMC

¹⁴⁹ SMA U1-6-151: H. E. Arnhold, "Memorandum Re. Outside Roads Negotiations," October 26, 1934.

¹⁵⁰ SMA U1-6-151: H. E. Arnhold to J. F. Brenan, October 26, 1934.

¹⁵¹ SMA U1-6-151: H. E. Arnhold to J. F. Brenan, October 26, 1934.

¹⁵² Henriot, *Shanghai, 1927-1937*, 173-175.

¹⁵³ SMA U1-6-151: "Aid Memoire of a Meeting on November 2, 1934," November 3, 1934.

endorsement, the Shanghai Telephone Company signed a provisional agreement with Chinese authorities to charge an additional ‘Chinese administration fee’ on ESR subscribers, which was considerably lower for western residents compared to their northern counterparts. The SMC explained this disparity by citing how, in the northern area, “the Chinese Government Telephone Administration had a good deal of line plant constructed bordering the outside roads, from which they were able to supply service to would-be subscribers on these roads... and they wanted to supply as many in that area as possible.”¹⁵⁴

Such arrangements enraged the Japanese and reinforced their perception that any concessions made by the SMC to the Chinese would invariably come at their expense. In particular, they spurned any measures that would render the northern area less “foreign” and more “Chinese” than its western counterpart. The JRC condemned the telephone pact as blatant discrimination against northern residents,¹⁵⁵ and here they were not the sole aggrieved party. A British resident on Dixwell Road claimed that “the sooner they [the Japanese] call upon me for my support the better pleased I shall be in helping them to secure the abolition of what I consider an uncalled-for injustice levelled against residents still under Municipal jurisdiction.”¹⁵⁶

In October and November 1934, the SMC chairman Harry E. Arnhold wrote to the Japanese consul-general Ishii Itarō multiple times, urging him to accept the present draft agreement. Meanwhile, he asked Brennan to endeavor to bring the Japanese into line. However, the SMC took care not to appear to be ‘acting under the instruction of any one of the Treaty Powers,’ since the Chinese had insisted on sole negotiations with the foreign municipal authorities.¹⁵⁷ Arnhold’s predicament encapsulates the dilemma constantly faced by SMC during

¹⁵⁴ *NCDN*, June 6, 1934.

¹⁵⁵ *SNN*, May 5, 1934, morning edition; May 10, 1934, morning edition.

¹⁵⁶ *NCDN*, May 23, 1934.

¹⁵⁷ SMA U1-6-151: H. E. Arnhold to J. F. Brennan, October 31, 1934.

this period in balancing its relations with the Chinese and the Japanese. Given the British government's conciliatory stance toward Chinese nationalism and the SMC's weakened political position, Japanese pressure could sometimes be used to leverage better terms with the Chinese. But this strategy required great caution, as it risked alienating the Chinese while further compromising the SMC's projection of independence. In this vein, ESR negotiations meant an impossibly delicate task of simultaneously appeasing Chinese nationalism and Japanese ambitions. They also illustrate how Sino-Japanese confrontation ensnared the SMC and treaty-port reform in Shanghai during the 1930s. Upset by Japanese intransigence, Arnhold once suggested "keep[ing] them in the dark" until the agreement was concluded; but Brennan, who bore no illusions of the joint administration succeeding without Japanese goodwill, dismissed this as "most unwise."¹⁵⁸

On November 14, Chinese and SMC representatives convened another meeting to discuss the Japanese demands. The Chinese made a few more concessions, mostly importantly pledging to use the Special Force's Chinese officers to police the enclosed areas so as to avoid introducing Chinese municipal policemen from outside and having them traverse the ESR. However, they vetoed including the enclaves into the joint administration zone, asserting that this amounted to "a virtual extension of the Settlement." Arnhold, striving to get the Japanese demands accepted, offered to return Pearce Road and Monument Road in the western area to full Chinese control as a quid pro quo for the northern enclaves. But Chinese representatives rejected this proposal, objecting that it bucked the negotiation's general principles.¹⁵⁹ Arnhold's frustration is evident in a complaint he penned to Brennan on November 19:

As the Chinese have gone a considerable way towards meeting Mr. Ishii's wishes... it was therefore disconcerting to hear from him on Saturday that although he had not heard from Tokyo

¹⁵⁸ FO 371/18088: Chairman, SMC, to H. M. Consul-General, Shanghai, October 30, 1934.

¹⁵⁹ SMA U1-6-151: Minutes of Meeting at Cathay Hotel, November 14, 1934.

he knew that his government would press for the inclusion of a larger area... I had worked so hard since last February to induce the Chinese to accept most of his requirements, and thought that I had not been unsuccessful in that request.¹⁶⁰

That same day, Arnhold wrote to Ishii to remind him of the difficulties that foreign developers faced in the western area due to the utilities dispute, claiming that “the Council has shown the desire to consider the views of the Japanese community as much as possible,” but “the interests of the rest of the community must not be allowed to suffer by indefinite delays.”¹⁶¹ In response, Ishii stressed that petty disputes would inevitably arise from having two municipal administrations operating side-by-side in a densely populated area, and he championed a “distinctly clear boundary line” to ease everyday governance.¹⁶² In the 1910s the Western community once used these same arguments to advocate for settlement extensions, but now the Japanese were recycling them to demand the enclaves.¹⁶³

Ishii’s role in the negotiations was an awkward one. Immediately after his arrival in Shanghai in September 1932, he found himself embroiled in the ESR conundrum and torn between his aspiration to facilitate peace in Shanghai and his duty to communicate Japanese demands, no matter how aggressive, to Chinese and foreign authorities. Fessenden later portrayed him as a “strong protagonist of the rigorous policy Japan was then pursuing towards China... [who] insisted upon taking a prominent part in the [ESR] negotiations.”¹⁶⁴ While this comment may not justly reflect Ishii’s personal aspirations for Sino-Japanese reconciliation, it bespeaks his struggle to rein in local hardliners, who, from the outset, opposed relinquishing any

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ SMA U1-6-151: H.E. Arnhold to Ishii Itarō, November 19, 1934.

¹⁶² SMA U1-6-151: Ishii Itarō to H.E. Arnhold, November 27, 1934.

¹⁶³ The American consul-general Edwin Cunningham once indicated that the Japanese proposal would benefit administration of ESR areas, but he refused to associate himself with the Japanese demands by directly pressing the Shanghai government. See The Chargé in China (Gauss) to the Secretary of State, December 6, 1934, in *FRUS, 1934, The Far East*, Volume III, Document 519, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1934v03/d519>, [accessed June 15, 2023].

¹⁶⁴ SMA U1-6-152: Stirling Fessenden, “Précis on Outside Roads Negotiations,” May 26, 1937.

foreign municipal power to the Chinese.¹⁶⁵ Although Ishii's postwar memoir looks on his tenure in Shanghai with general contentment, his frustrations with the protracted ESR standoff left him "no enthusiasm to recount it in detail."¹⁶⁶ Throughout the negotiations, Ishii mostly framed Japanese demands as directives from his home government. Yet, he clearly faced sustained pressure from the settler community, particularly the JASSU, whose stance seemed fully backed by Tokyo as well as the Japanese navy. In early 1935, extremist settlers even sent him a threatening letter over his "weak policy" on the ESR issue.¹⁶⁷

Arnhold, on the other hand, tried to mobilize the local British community to pressure the Japanese. But like Ishii, his compatriots gave him little support.¹⁶⁸ Amid the Manchurian Crisis, no small number of British settlers, harboring the perennial "teach-them-a-lesson" mentality, sympathized with Japan's strong-arm actions in China, and they felt betrayed by their own diplomats' seeming intent to dismantle Britain's informal empire in China.¹⁶⁹ In Shanghai, Japanese hard-liners proclaimed that they alone had 'saved the Settlement from the results of a policy of compromise and surrender under which foreign rights and safeguards would have steadily whittled away" and "prevented a weak surrender on the question of control of the outside roads."¹⁷⁰ Such words surely resonated with many British settlers who still believed in the need for a 'united front' of the treaty powers in China.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁵ *SNN*, August 11, 1934, morning edition; and August 14, 1934, morning edition.

¹⁶⁶ Ishii's memoir also reveals his perplexity regarding the Japanese Foreign Ministry's immense interests in the ESR problem; he generally concurred with his Western colleagues that the issue could and should be settled locally, and it evidently distressed him that being the consul-general obliged him to take a proactive role in the negotiations. See Ishii, *Gaikōkan no isshō*, 237.

¹⁶⁷ US National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency Record Group 263–Document 6456: "Agitation among the Japanese Community against the Japanese Consul-General," January 30, 1935.

¹⁶⁸ SMA U1-6-151: H. E. Arnhold to Brigade-General E. B. Macnaghten, November 22, 1934.

¹⁶⁹ Bickers, *Britain in China*, 146–151.

¹⁷⁰ Quoted in Brooks, *Japan's Imperial Diplomacy*, 104.

¹⁷¹ Bickers, *Britain in China*, 150.

How Brennan responded to Arnhold's request is unclear, but it is improbable that he readily assented to pressuring the Japanese. Unlike Fessenden, Brennan had a personal rapport with Ishii, who lauded him as "a seasoned diplomat with the grace of a typical English gentleman."¹⁷² Brennan's own clashes with the local British community probably gave him intimate insight into Ishii's dilemma. Moreover, since 1934-1935 is widely regarded as a period of Anglo-Japanese rapprochement, if not outright British "appeasement" of Japan,¹⁷³ this context made it unlikely that the British Foreign Office would have pressed for an ESR agreement in favor of the Chinese at the risk of alienating the Japanese.

After the November 14 meeting, Ishii continued calling for concerted efforts by the Japanese and the SMC in pressuring the Chinese, but Arnhold told him that the SMC had already committed to the previous *modus vivendi* and advised him to approach the Chinese mayor directly.¹⁷⁴ However, subsequent Sino-Japanese discussions apparently put Arnhold and the SMC in an awkward position. While the SMC felt "no obligations to obtain further concession for the Japanese community," it was wary of being sidelined and insisted that any forthcoming Sino-Japanese agreement be subsumed into the present negotiations between itself and the Shanghai government.¹⁷⁵

The following two years saw an incessant tug-of-war regarding the enclave issue.¹⁷⁶ Although the Chinese were initially reluctant to engage directly with the Japanese, they soon perceived an opportunity to employ the time-honored tactic of "barbarians-against-barbarians" by pitting the Japanese against the SMC. In mid-1935, Mayor Wu Tiecheng agreed to grant a part

¹⁷² Ishii, *Gaikōkan no isshō*, 251.

¹⁷³ See Nish and Kibata, eds., *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1600-2000 Volume II: The Political-Diplomatic Dimension, 1931-2000* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), Chapters 1 and 2.

¹⁷⁴ SMA U1-6-151: H. E. Arnhold to J. F. Brennan, November 19, 1934.

¹⁷⁵ SMA U1-6-151: "Minutes of Meeting at the Cathy Hotel," December 17, 1934.

¹⁷⁶ Murada, "1930-nendai ni okeru Shanhai yūkai chikuro chiiki no kakutei to chōzei mondai ni tsuite," 295–313.

of the enclaves, and hinted to Ishii that the rest Japanese demands might be met if he could persuade the SMC to surrender ‘certain better and more valuable roads’ in the western area.¹⁷⁷ But this exchange never materialized. Pearce Road and Monuments Road, which Arnhold offered to give up in 1934, were both recently built and remote from the Settlement, making them expendable from the SMC’s standpoint, but the ‘better and more valuable roads’ requested by the Chinese had many more tax-paying foreign property owners whose opinions the SMC could not afford to ignore.

For the Chinese government, too, such bargains were a tight rope to walk. When negotiations again verged on breakdown in late 1935, Ishii indicated that the Japanese navy might intervene with “stronger measures” and nullify all diplomatic endeavors heretofore. The Chinese countered that any military actions would only “deepen Chinese people’s misunderstanding of Japan” and foreclose any agreement.”¹⁷⁸ Indeed, the political backdrop surrounding the enclave negotiations predestined them for failure from the outset, as they coincided with a period of intense public sentiments against Japan, fueled by disappointment at Nanjing’s appeasement of recent Japanese aggression in north China. Over the years, Nanjing had masterfully concealed its dealings with Japan to shield its public image.¹⁷⁹ However, catering to Japanese ambitions in Shanghai proved far trickier than in Chahar or Hebei. The ESR issue significantly impacted daily life in China’s largest metropolis and was too imbricated with the Guomindang’s power center to escape scrutiny; any finalized agreement would surely capture domestic and international headlines. Throughout these deliberations, the Chinese municipal government acted in concert with Nanjing. Wu Tiecheng, Shanghai’s mayor since 1932 and

¹⁷⁷ SMA Q1-5-530: Xu Mo to Wu Tiecheng, May 10, 1935.

¹⁷⁸ SMA Q1-5-531: “Tanhua jilu 談話紀錄,” June 17, 1935.

¹⁷⁹ Coble, *Facing Japan*, chapter 3-4.

Chiang Kai-shek's loyal ally, acutely realized the central government's precarious position.

While dutifully carrying on discussions with Ishii, he eventually found it impossible to please the Japanese without causing Nanjing political embarrassment.

As Sino-Japanese talks dragged after 1935, the SMC grew impatient due to its worsening financial strain.¹⁸⁰ To increase revenues while circumventing the enclave conundrum, it made multiple proposals for a provisional pact with the Shanghai government focusing solely on the taxation in the western area. These efforts proved futile, partly because the Chinese wanted to keep the SMC engaged in the negotiations for leverage against the Japanese.¹⁸¹ In early 1937, the desperate SMC petitioned again for a stand-alone taxation pact, even conceding its collection rights to Chinese authorities in exchange for a share of the revenues as compensation for maintaining the utilities infrastructure.¹⁸² Rumors about this secret deal incensed the Japanese community. The JAASU convened an emergency meeting and declared that, without proper advance communication, this “discreditable” deal equated to “disregard of the Japanese community.”¹⁸³ Local Japanese media lambasted the SMC's prioritizing of the tax problem, arguing that its neglect of key issues such as policing, utilities, and public health betrayed their enduring efforts to create “an ideal residential zone” in northern Shanghai.¹⁸⁴ Furthermore, they attributed the prolonged ESR negotiations to “the weak attitude of the SMC... from its negativism and the rush of the Shanghai government on the recovery of sovereign rights.”¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁰ In 1929, the SMC divested its electricity department for 81 million taels, with payments spread over five years, which constituted a major source of its income during those years. After the final payment in 1934, the SMC's financial situation quickly worsened. See Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 55–59.

¹⁸¹ SMA U1-6-152: O. K. Yui to H. E. Arnhold, April 15, 1935.

¹⁸² FO 371/20988: “Extra-Settlement Roads Taxation,” April 13, 1937.

¹⁸³ *SNN*, April 19, 1937, morning edition.

¹⁸⁴ *SMN*, April 17, 1937, morning edition.

¹⁸⁵ *SMN*, April 22, 1937, morning edition.

From the Westerners' perspective, Japanese obstinacy not only hindered peaceful resolution of the ESR dispute, but also endangered the Settlement's long-cherished tradition of international cooperation.¹⁸⁶ In particular, English newspapers criticized the direct involvement of the Japanese government as "distinctly embarrassing," since it compromised the SMC's authority as a self-governing institution of the treaty-port community.¹⁸⁷ Yet, the SMC found itself with no choice but to succumb again to Japanese pressure, and it never submitted the tax deal to the Ratepayers' Meeting for approval. A few months later, the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out, and Japan's seizure of Chinese Shanghai along with the northern part of the Settlement by late 1937 ultimately negated all five years of ESR negotiations.

Conclusion

Japanese settlers' stance on the ESR controversy encapsulated their ambivalence about the Settlement regime. Throughout the prewar period, they had used the preservation of the treaty port's status quo as an argumentative strategy, sometimes their only legitimate one, to fend off the advancement of Chinese municipal power. In defending foreign control over ESR areas, which lacked a legal foundation in original treaties and which the SMC justified on the basis of "a prescriptive right" earned through "a sufficient number of years of control,"¹⁸⁸ they inevitably found themselves aligned with the Settlement's ideological and political traditions. To oppose the joint administration plan, they thus had to call for a "united front" among treaty powers and their respective citizens, while subscribing to the rhetoric of safeguarding the Settlement's integrity and protecting the foreign community's common interests. But the ESR negotiations

¹⁸⁶ *CP*, April 21, 1937.

¹⁸⁷ *NCDN*, April 22, 1937.

¹⁸⁸ SMA U1-6-146: "Memorandum by the Council's Legal Advisor," 1926.

simultaneously deepened their mistrust of the Settlement authorities. After decades of endeavor, the Japanese carved out a niche in Hongkou protected by yet partially autonomous from the Settlement regime. But at the same time, they became increasingly worried that the Settlement's British rulers, who seemed anxious to appease the Chinese, now viewed their "little Tokyo" as dispensable.

In the 1930s, this conflicted mindset translated into a seemingly paradoxical approach to Settlement governance. On one hand, Japanese settlers tried to push the SMC to its judicial and political limits in suppressing Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese activities. On the other hand, they grew increasingly hostile and defiant towards Settlement authorities. In September 1935, an SMP search party, unaware of a recent change in house numbers, mistakenly broke into a Japanese domicile in Hongkou and provoked an avalanche of Japanese complaints. The Japanese press highlighted how the policemen had entered the house "without taking off their muddy shoes," thereby disrespecting Japanese customs of household cleanliness and additionally insulting their community.¹⁸⁹ The *Shanghai nippō* went so far as to claim that "to eliminate the possibility of further humiliation, the Japanese have but one alternative... that is, to organize an independent settlement, where order would be adequately maintained by Japanese police and troops."¹⁹⁰ But in fact, this case humiliated Settlement authorities more than the Japanese. The SMC was compelled to publicly apologize and permit the JRC to distribute distinctive plates engraved with cherry blossom to Japanese residences for easy identification by police.¹⁹¹

Japanese settler also aimed to "liberate" Koreans from the "despotic British rule." In September 1932, when thirty-one Korean municipal bus inspectors went on strike, the SMP used

¹⁸⁹ *CWR*, September 21, 1935.

¹⁹⁰ *SN*, September 20, 1935.

¹⁹¹ *SNN*, November 23, 1935, morning edition; *CWR*, November 30, 1935.

its riot squad to arrest the entire group, seriously wounding eight of them. This sparked outrage from the JAASU, which called for punishing the British officers responsible for this “bloody violence.”¹⁹² So intense was the outcry was that the Japanese consulate prohibited local newspapers from reporting the incident. Shortly thereafter, the SMP returned the arrested Koreans to the Japanese consular police and pledged that future police actions against Korean strikers would first be communicated to Japanese authorities.¹⁹³ By late 1936, as the *China Weekly Review* observed, “Today no British or Chinese policemen employed by the International Settlement dare arrest any Japanese subject in Hongkew district and as a result the Settlement’s normal protective forces in that area have become so demoralized as to be of little use.”¹⁹⁴ Japanese settlers, assessing the SMC’s failure to govern the Settlement, embraced cooperation with their own state. By the mid-1930s, as the next chapter will show, an autonomous Japanese zone policed and ruled by its Japanese consular authorities and naval force—as envisioned by the chauvinistic *Shanghai nippō*—was gradually turning into a reality in Hongkou and adjacent areas.

¹⁹² *SNN*, September 17, 1932.

¹⁹³ NARA SMP D-4050: “Disturbance at the Office of the China General Omnibus Company by Korean Ex-inspectors on 14.9.32,” November 1932.

¹⁹⁴ *CWR*, October 31, 1936.

Chapter Five

Contesting the Treaty Port from Without: Consular Police and Imperial Navy

A visitor to Hongkou in 1936 might have felt surprise on seeing a full-blown “Japanese concession” in place of what was once called “Little Tokyo.” Strolling along North Sichuan Road, they would have easily recognized the imposing naval barracks as a new landmark. A trip to Hongkou Park often meant stumbling upon a Japanese military review drawing thousands of onlookers. Throughout the area, from bustling thoroughfares to quiet alleyways, he would have found Japanese consular policemen and naval patrols ubiquitous sights. By the 1930s, a confluence of factors—settlers’ longstanding frustrations with Municipal reforms, their growing sense of alienation from the British-dominated SMC, the rise of Japanese military power in Shanghai, and the shifting balance of local and imperial politics—had set the stage for overt conflicts between the Japanese community and the Settlement’s framework of governance.

While the term “Japanese concession” is somewhat of a misnomer, since the Japanese neither aimed to nor could fully take over municipal functions, its frequent appearance in media and public discourse during the 1930s underscored the extent of Japanese encroachment upon the Settlement’s jurisdiction and administration. For both Chinese and Western observers of Shanghai, the Japanese takeover of Hongkou realized their worst fears. The Chinese saw themselves subject to a “double slavery” under imperial dominance that rolled back decades-long efforts to reclaim national sovereignty. Anglo-American Shanghailanders, on the other hand, viewed Japanese aggression as “sacrilege” against the founding principles of their “Model Settlement” and the treaty-port system tenets of an open-door policy and imperial solidarity.¹

¹ Hauser, *Shanghai*, 217.

This chapter analyzes how the Japanese increasingly resorted to external institutions to challenge the Settlement regime towards the close of the treaty-port era. It begins by examining the transformation of their consular police from a modest force into a crucial component of the Settlement's law enforcement during the interwar years. This expansion was partly driven by empire-wide intensification of political surveillance; simultaneously, it occurred in response to the growing need to discipline settlers and maintain social order in Shanghai. But consular authorities' attempts to manage the settler community gradually estranged them from the latter, who subsequently forged a closer alliance with the Imperial Navy to protect themselves against Chinese threats while overtly contesting the treaty port's established order. The 1932 Shanghai Incident, a watershed moment in this dynamic process, dismantled the longstanding political myths buttressing the Settlement and rendered its administrative and judicial authorities ever more vulnerable to Japanese incursion.

State power drove Japanese ascendancy in Shanghai, but local settlers were the central figures throughout. Like its imperial peers, the Japanese state could justifiably expand its operations in Shanghai only by mobilizing settlers' sentiments and ostensibly responding to their concerns. In many cases, particularly when conflicts arose between Settlement authorities and the Japanese navy, settlers rallied themselves behind their state with a cohesion unparalleled by other foreign communities in the city. This active collaboration blurred the boundary between the state and society, mirroring a broader phenomenon that historians have observed across the Japanese metropole and its other colonies in the 1930s.² Yet, settlers remained an independent force, wielding considerable agency in shaping and calibrating their relations with various authorities according to their own interests. However, their alignment with the Japanese state's

² See, for example, Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*; Young, *Japan's Total Empire*; Ruoff, *Imperial Japan at its Zenith*; Uchida, *Brokers of Empire*; O'Dwyer, *Significant Soil*.

expansionist agenda came at an eventual cost of eroding the economic bedrock of the treaty port, a cost borne directly by themselves.

The emergence of consular police

Japanese consular police first appeared in Shanghai in 1884. That year, the consulate borrowed two constables from the Nagasaki prefectural police and hired a few Chinese patrolmen to assist their work. Unlike the consular police department that developed later, which was staffed by specially-trained Foreign Ministry police (*Gaimushō keisatsu* 外務省警察), this early force was hastily assembled in response to the growing local Japanese population, and its members did not serve on fixed terms. Its primary function was to regulate settlers' behavior and restrain them from "acts of impropriety" (*futeisai no gi* 不体裁の儀) such as reckless driving, public nudity, excessive drinking, improper attire, and bearing weapons in public.³ These regulations echoed the Meiji government's broader campaign to modernize its citizenry and eliminate "backward" customs,⁴ but in an international hub like Shanghai, they took on the additional significance of enhancing Japan's reputation as a civilized nation. Overseas prostitution formed a major concern during this period for both the metropolitan government and consular authorities.⁵ By the early 1890s, as discussed in Chapter 1, Shanghai had a large number of Japanese prostitutes catering to guests of all nationalities. To address this problem, consular police routinely inspected Japanese hotels, restaurants, and teahouses, searching for women (and men) involved in the "shameful business" (*shūgyō* 醜業) and repatriating them to the home

³ Ogino, *Gaimushō keisatsu shi*, 573-579.

⁴ Howell, "Civilization and Enlightenment: Markers of Identity in Nineteenth-Century Japan."

⁵ Lu, "The Shame of Empire: Japanese Overseas Prostitutes and Prostitution Abolition in Modern Japan, 1880-1927."

country.⁶ Throughout the late nineteenth century, these operations went unchallenged by other local authorities. The 1871 Sino-Japanese Treaty of Tianjin provided for mutual consular jurisdiction, and the Qing government had traditionally taken personal jurisdiction for granted, seldom intervening in cases where only foreigners were involved.⁷ The SMC, too, never opposed to the Japanese consulate's disciplinary measures over its constituents.

After Japan's acquisition of treaty power status in 1895, it expanded its consular police force in China. This growth was particularly rapid in southern Manchurian following the Russo-Japanese War, where roughly one hundred consular policemen had been stationed by the end of 1907,⁸ and where their deployment soon sparked diplomatic disputes. Whereas the Chinese now viewed consular police operations, especially those outside designated treaty ports, as unwarranted by treaties provisions, the Japanese maintained that local Chinese authorities' inability to maintain peace and order necessitated the use of consular police for safeguarding and managing local Japanese communities and asserted this as a right inherent to extraterritoriality.⁹ As Erik Esselstrom shows, Japanese consular police developed partly in response to settlers' demands for protection; at the same time, the Japanese Foreign Ministry—despite its reputation as a relatively “liberal” or “progressive” branch of the Japanese government—also used it as a strategy to promote its own expansionist agenda and buttress the power of consular authorities vis-à-vis other imperial agencies such as the Kwantung Army and the Kwantung Government-General.¹⁰ A notable case is the Sino-Korean border region of Jiandao, where the Foreign Ministry, under the pretext of overseeing the large Korean population living there, had stationed

⁶ *Yomiuri*, June 7, 1891, morning edition; June 14, 1891, morning edition.

⁷ Cassel, *Grounds of Judgement*, 130.

⁸ Ogino, *Gaimushō keisatsu shi*, 147-191.

⁹ Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire's Edge*, 41.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4-5, and 27.

a substantial force of 128 officers by 1918.¹¹ In China proper, too, Foreign Ministry police were attached to the consulate in every major treaty port to protect Japanese lives and facilitate the governance of Japanese concessions. In Tianjin, for example, this practice started after the Boxer Rebellion, when Japan started developing its concession in earnest, partly to counter remaining threats from the rebels;¹² the local Japanese Residents' Corporation recruited Chinese, Taiwanese, and Korean patrolmen to assist Japanese officers in a force that grew to a hundred men by the end of the 1910s.¹³

In Shanghai, however, the growth of consular police was remarkably slow until the 1920s. In 1905, the consulate had only three police officers who rotated on eight-hour shifts each day. Their responsibilities included inspecting commercial establishments, managing household registrations, and occasionally offering escort services to important figures, but overall, they worked at a pace described as “extremely idle” (*sukoburu kansan* 頗る閑散) compared with metropolitan policemen.¹⁴ By the Hongkou Riot in 1918, their number had crept up to five.¹⁵ This slow development was largely due to the lack of an exclusive Japanese concession. Unlike in Tianjin, the SMC did not allow the Japanese community the Settlement to hire their own patrolmen; as discussed in Chapter 3, a failed attempt to do so in 1911 led them to focus on establishing a Japanese Branch in the Shanghai Municipal Police.

The 1920s saw a global expansion of Japanese consular police and their assumption of a new function. This period witnessed the emergence of what Elise Tipton terms the “Japanese

¹¹ Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire's Edge*, 50-53; Brooks, “Japanese colonial citizenship in treaty port China”; Ogino, *Gaimushō keisatsu shi*, 395-424.

¹² Singaravélou, *Tianjin Cosmopolis*, 298-299.

¹³ Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire's Edge*, 42.

¹⁴ Consul-General Eitaki Hisakichi to Foreign Minister Komura Jutarō, November 2, 1905, in *GKS*, vol. 42, 85-86.

¹⁵ “Taishō roku nen jūni gatsu matsu ni okeru keisatsusho shokuin 大正六年十二月に於ケル警察署職員,” in *GKS*, vol. 42, 137.

police state” and the development of the Special Higher Police (Tokkō 特高), which closely connected domestic and overseas policing in the empire’s efforts to suppress political dissent.¹⁶ In China, consular authorities increasingly turned to tracking down both Korean nationalists and Japanese leftists.¹⁷ Tokkō agents were first dispatched to Shanghai in 1921, and the subsequent decade saw the steady expansion of local consular police and the establishment of a permanent Tokkō office.¹⁸ After the Hongkou Park bombing in 1932, the consulate’s police department was expanded to 106 officers and was divided into two sections. Section One included eighty-six officers and managed general policing, while their twenty-two counterparts in Section Two specialized in political surveillance.¹⁹

Disciplining settlers

Throughout the interwar period, as Ogino Fujio, Erik Esselstrom and others demonstrate, overseas political surveillance formed a primary concern for Japanese consular authorities around the world, driving the expansion of consular police forces in regions wherever local circumstances permitted.²⁰ However, maintaining social control over the settler community remained a vital duty of the Japanese consul and his police force.²¹ Since the late nineteenth century, this had been accomplished through two primary methods. The first involved close oversight of various settler organizations, especially the Japanese Residents’ Corporation, whose

¹⁶ Tipton, *The Japanese Police State*.

¹⁷ Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire’s Edge*, 65.

¹⁸ JACAR Ref. B13081234700: “Zai shanghai soryōjikan keisatsu bu secchi 在上海総領事館警察部設置,” December 1932, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B13081234700>, [accessed December 12, 2023].

¹⁹ “Zai Shanghai sōryōjikan keisatsu sho keisatsu kan ruinen betsu haichi hyō 在上海総領事館警察署警察官累年別配置表,” in *GKS*, vol. 43, 193-194; JACAR Ref. B13081234700: “Zai shanghai soryōjikan keisatsu bu secchi” December 1932.

²⁰ Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire’s Edge*; Ogino, *Gaimushō keisatsu shi*.

²¹ Brooks, 93-105.

membership was mandatory for local residents. The second was the enforcement of the “Regulations for Imperial Subjects Resident in China and Korea” (*Shinkoku oyobi Chōsenkoku zairyū teikoku shinmin torishimari hō* 清国及朝鮮在留帝国臣民取締法). Initially implemented in 1883 as a Great Council of State proclamation (*Daijō-kan fukoku* 大政官布告), these regulations empowered consular authorities to penalize—primarily by deportation—a wide array of actions held to “disturb local peace and order” (*gai chihō no annei o bōgai* 該地方の安寧を妨害);²² two years later, in response to prostitution, they additionally targeted behaviors that “disruptive to public morals” (*fūzoku o kairan* 風俗を壊乱).²³ In 1896, these regulations were expanded further and became official law.²⁴

In the early twentieth century, concerns grew over this law’s vaguely defined clauses granting consuls excessive power over settlers. Between 1914 and 1925, some Imperial Diet members repeatedly attempted to repeal the law, contending that it had obstructed the development of overseas communities and inflamed considerable tensions between them and consular authorities. But these efforts invariably failed. The consuls, particularly those in Manchuria and China, unanimously opposed these proposals; instead, they called for even harsher regulations on settlers and believed that they bore the responsibility of controlling and disciplining “delinquents” (*furyō no to* 不良の徒) who could otherwise evade legal restraints by

²² JACAR Ref. C04017616500: “Shinkoku oyobi Chōsenkoku zairyū Nihonjin torishimari kisoku seitei 清国及朝鮮国在留日本人取締規則制定,” March 10, 1883, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/C04017616500>, [accessed December 12, 2023]

²³ JACAR Ref. A01100282100: “Meiji jūroku nen dai kyū gō fukoku Shinkoku oyobi Chōsenkoku zairyū Nihonjin torishimari kisoku dai ichijō kaisei no ken 明治十六年第九号布告清国及朝鮮国在留日本人取締規則第一条改正ノ件,” July 13, 1885, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/A01100282100>, [accessed December 12, 2023]

²⁴ JACAR Ref. A03020222500: Go-shomei genpon Meiji nijūkyū nen hōritsu dai hachijū gō Shinkoku oyobi Chōsenkoku zairyū Teikoku shinmin torishimari hō seitei Shinkoku oyobi Chōsenkoku zairyū Nihonjin torishimari kisoku haishi 御署名原本・明治二十九年・法律第八十号・清国及朝鮮国在留帝国臣民取締法制定清国及朝鮮国在留日本人取締規則廃止,” April 11, 1896, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/A03020222500>, [accessed December 12, 2023].

exploiting their extraterritorial privileges.²⁵ In Shanghai, the necessity of socially and legally controlling settlers gained urgency from the 1920s onward. The deteriorating economic conditions of the local community, coupled with the influx of “delinquents” from the home country, generated a range of social and moral challenges that the Chinese and Settlement authorities, due to their jurisdictional constraints, could not effectively cope with. In response to these circumstances, the Japanese consulate began to take a more proactive role in regulating settlers’ lives and placing them under tighter consular jurisdiction; in some cases, it was settler leaders who urged consular authorities to adopt a more interventionist approach.

One example is gambling. Prevalent among both Chinese and foreign residents, public gambling was recognized as Shanghai’s trademark social vice and a cause of poverty and myriad other crimes. In the 1920s, Chinese and Settlement (excepting the French) authorities began to take actions that included periodic raids on gambling houses and arrests of operators.²⁶ In 1929 alone, the SMP charged 2,663 individuals, predominately Chinese, for gambling-related offences.²⁷ Despite some success with this campaign, commercialized gambling continued, particularly in the form of greyhound racing. By 1930s, the two major dog tracks in the Settlement, “Stadium” and “Luna Park,” were drawing thousands of visitors every night and reportedly making an annual profit of \$322,000.²⁸ Many critics argued that the SMC had taken a “pachyderm-like attitude” for a simple reason: these tracks were co-owned certain some municipal councilors and high officials, including the brother of Harry E. Arnhold, the former SMC chairman.²⁹

²⁵ Lee, “Shokuminchi • Seiryokuken ni okeru 'Teikoku shinmin' no zairyū kinshi shobun: 'Shinkoku oyobi Chōsenkoku zairyū Teikoku shinmin Torishimari hō' o chūshin ni.”

²⁶ Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, 97-115.

²⁷ SMC, *Report for the Year 1929*, 87.

²⁸ *CWR*, January 10, 1931.

²⁹ *CWR*, November 1, 1930; January 10, 1931.

By this time, gambling had also become widespread among local Japanese. In a report to the Foreign Ministry in late 1930, Consul-General Shigemitsu Mamoru estimated that Japanese residents had annually lost three million silver dollars over the past few years—an amount tenfold the JRC’s taxation revenue—leading to a surge in embezzlements, frauds, tax evasion, and various other offences.³⁰ Concerned settler leaders stepped up to combat this issue and urged the consulate to implement stricter measures. In October, they inaugurated the “Shanghai Self-Preservation Society” (Shanghai jiseikai 上海自制会) to “restore morality” and “awaken conscientiousness” within the Japanese community.³¹ This movement received enthusiastic support from Shigemitsu and the consular police chief Hanazato Hatsutarō 花里初太郎, who applauded it as an outstanding achievement when delivering his 1931 New Year’s message to the settlers.³² In response to the Self-Preservation Society’s request and with its assistance, the consular police dispatched plainclothes officers to the dog tracks to identify Japanese attendees for subsequent prosecution in the consular court. Within a month, the number of Japanese visitors to Luna Park, which was conveniently located in Yangshupu, plummeted from six hundred to forty per night.³³ Although the consular police’s jurisdiction was limited to Japanese citizens, their actions exerted significant pressure on the SMC and the British consulate, where the major gambling establishments were registered.³⁴ Before the Municipal election in March 1931, the JAASU announced that its members would boycott any candidates who endorsed dog-racing.³⁵ When the SMC finally declared the permanent closure of the dog tracks later that

³⁰ Consul-General Shigemitsu Mamoru to Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō, November 14, 1930, in *GKS*, vol. 42, 206-210.

³¹ *Ibid.* See also *CWR*, October 25, 1930.

³² *SNN*, January 1, 1931.

³³ Consul-General Shigemitsu Mamoru to Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō, November 14, 1930, in *GKS*, vol. 42, 206-210.

³⁴ *CWR*, November 1, 1930.

³⁵ *SNN*, March 13, 1931, morning edition.

month, the Japanese proclaimed victory for their campaign and deemed it a boost to their community's prestige.³⁶

Prostitution was another area of Settlement governance in which Japanese consular authorities assumed a growing role. While the SMC outlawed unlicensed brothels in the early 1920s, individual prostitution remained legal, and the regulation of foreign prostitutes required cooperation from various consular authorities.³⁷ As noted earlier, this task was familiar to the Japanese consulate, which undertook it with enthusiasm. In 1929, the consular police enacted a registration and inspection system that targeted not only high-end courtesans but also several hundred other prostitutes who they categorized as “Class B geisha” and brought under official scrutiny, confining their services to Japanese restaurants and bars with special permits from the consulate. At the same time, the consular police renewed their campaign against illicit prostitution, homing in on women engaged in commercial sex under the guise of taxi dancers, masseuses, café waitresses, and tour guides; officers periodically summoned females of these occupations and lectured them on morals and public health. Special attention was given to Japanese women who served the Chinese underclass and foreign servicemen, as this type of sex trade was believed to be closely associated with the transmission of venereal diseases.³⁸ Between 1925 and 1931, the consulate charged a total of 154 women with unlicensed prostitution. Those found guilty for the first time usually received “moral rectification” on-site, while repeat offenders, like their Meiji-era predecessors, were deported from Shanghai.³⁹

³⁶ “Shōwa roku nen shi gatsu muika fu zai Shanhai sōryōji hasshin Shidehara Gaimu daijin ate hōkoku tekiryoku 昭和六年四月六日附在上海重光総領事発信幣原外務大臣宛報告要旨,” in *GKS*, vol. 42, 228-229.

³⁷ Hershatler, *Dangerous Pleasures*, 271-303.

³⁸ “Shōwa roku nen chū ni okeru zairyū hōjin sono hoka no tokushu fujin no jōkyō oyobi sono torishimari 昭和六年中ニ於ケル在留邦人其ノ他ノ特種婦女ノ状況及其ノ取締,” in *GKS* vol. 42, 235-237.

³⁹ *Ibid.* It however should be noted that the issue of illicit prostitution had a racialized facet, as consular reports consistently emphasized that many of the prosecuted were of Korean origins.

Besides gamblers and prostitutes, the consular police became increasingly involved in suppressing drug trafficking, which an empire-wide smuggling network had supported since the early twentieth century. Specifically, the Japanese concession in Tianjin had emerged as an entrepôt for drugs brought in from Siberia, Manchuria, and North China for distribution across other parts of China. A substantial portion of these narcotics found their way into Shanghai for local consumption, processing, or further shipment. Opium smoking had been a longstanding issue in Shanghai since the nineteenth century; from 1910s onwards, Japanese smugglers fueled the use of refined narcotics such as morphine.⁴⁰ As previous scholars have shown, the Japanese government, particularly its military branch, systematically sponsored the drug industry to facilitate colonial governance and fund the empire.⁴¹ By the early 1930s, Japan faced mounting international censure for remaining one of the few countries that still openly allowed drug trafficking.⁴² However, this did not mean that local consular authorities sat completely idle. Between 1933 and 1935, the consular police in Shanghai reported and prosecuted 56 drug-related cases, and this number skyrocketed to 184 in 1936.⁴³ Social and diplomatic pressures Japanese involvement in drug control within the Settlement. Heroin use was becoming rampant among local settlers, especially the younger generation. In 1935 alone, the consular police detained 658 persons for using heroin and identified 35 as addicts.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, since drug businesses in the settlement were often joint Sino-Japanese ventures, the SMP frequently requested the assistance of Japanese consular police in arrests and prosecution. In May 1936, for example, they jointly

⁴⁰ Motohiro Kobayashi, “Drug Operations by Resident Japanese in Tianjin.”

⁴¹ Brook and Wakabayashi, eds., *Opium Regimes*; Driscoll, *Absolute Erotic, Absolute grotesque*.

⁴² Brook and Wakabayashi, “Introduction,” in *Opium Regimes*, 1-27.

⁴³ “Shōwa jū nen chū mayaku rui fuseitō hikitori oyobi shakō kōi no jōkyō narabi ni sono torishimari 昭和十年中麻薬類不正引取及射倖行為ノ状況並ニ其ノ取締,” in *GKS*, vol. 43, 36-37; “Shōwa jūichi nen chū mayaku rui mitsubai no jōkyō oyobi sono torishimari 昭和十一年中麻薬類密売ノ状況及其ノ取締,” in *GKS*, vol. 43, 57.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

raided a drug workshop on North Sichuan Road, apprehending one Japanese, two Koreans, and fifteen Chinese, who were promptly turned over to their respective authorities.⁴⁵

Drug dealers were perceived as a quintessential type of Japanese “continental adventurers” (*tairiku rōnin* 大陸浪人), a well-known character that originated in the Meiji era and gained notoriety in the interwar period. Early *tairiku rōnin* comprised intellectuals and political activists who journeyed to the continent with various aspirations; they played a crucial role in Japan’s colonial expansion in Korea and became actively involved in the reforms and revolutions of late-Qing and early republican China.⁴⁶ In the twentieth century, the term increasingly came to denote vagrants and outlaws seeking fortune overseas by exploiting imperial networks. A typical continental adventurer was a jobless young man who ventured to China or Korean to act imperial agent while simultaneously pursuing personal profit: for the former, he might be recruited by Japanese secret agencies or right-wing political groups; for the latter, he would engage in various illicit businesses. As Chapter 3 has mentioned, concerns about Japanese “rowdyism” in Shanghai surfaced among Chinese and Western observers in the 1910s. This apprehension intensified over the next decades and spread among the Japanese themselves.

The *rōnin* issue peaked during the Shanghai Incident in early 1932. There was a widespread belief among both the Chinese and Westerners that many of these adventures were brought in and mobilized by the Japanese military to provoke conflicts and aid in Japan’s occupation of Hongkou and Zhabei (see below).⁴⁷ The the five weeks of fighting saw Japanese civilians implicated in numerous atrocities, including the murder and abduction of Chinese

⁴⁵ CP, May 9, 1936.

⁴⁶ For early *tairiku rōnin*, see, for example, Zhao Jinyu, *Riben langren yu Xinhai gemin*; Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword*, Chapter 9; Fogel, “Confucian Pilgrim: Uno Tetsuto’s Travels in China,” in *Between China and Japan*, 459-478; and Uchida, *Brokers of Empire*, Chapter 1; Zhao Jun, *Riben "dalu langren" yu qin Hua zhanzheng*, Chapter 2.

⁴⁷ CP, April 2, 1932; Hauser, *Shanghai*, 208.

civilians under the pretext of eliminating “mufti corps” (*ben'itai* 便衣隊).⁴⁸ The consulate had to repeatedly admonish the “irresponsible elements” against “imprudent behaviors” and urge settlers to observe Municipal regulations while avoiding confrontation with the Chinese.⁴⁹ By early March, the consular police had repatriated six-seven individuals for disturbing peace and order., which the settler community cheered. The *Shanghai mainichi shinbun* commented that, “the acts of these undesirable members of the local community are a blot to the excellent record which has been made by the local residents before the outbreak of the incident, as well as during the one-month period of the hostilities. The Japanese consular police have exerted their best efforts in rounding up these undesirables and in preventing cases which tend to detract from the honorable record established by the Shanghai Japanese community. The consular police have been prompt in putting a stop to any excesses committed by these people during the confusion which prevailed for a time.”⁵⁰

However, anxieties about *rōnin* persisted in the following years, and their activities in Hongkou alarmed the Americans in particular. According to a 1934 article in the *China Weekly Review*, “In recent months dozens of Japanese beer-halls have sprung up in the Hongkew district and in most of them the customers are Japanese “*ronin*” or rowdies who sit around and drink beer and appear to have no regular occupations. Actually, most of them live off the earnings of the Japanese women, or the illicit dope trade, or receive support from reactionary groups in Japan. Whenever anything happens in Hongkew... these *ronin*, pimps and rowdies are

⁴⁸ Fogel, “‘Shanghai-Japan’: The Japanese Residents’ Association of Shanghai,” in *Between China and Japan*, 346-350; and Takatsuna, “*Kokusai toshi*” *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*, 145-153.

⁴⁹ Consul-General Murai Kuramatsu, “*Yukoku* 諭告,” March 8, 1932, in JACAR Ref. B02030198300: “Zai Shanghai kyoryūmin kankei 在上海居留民關係,” March 12—May 22, 1932, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02030198300>, [accessed December 12, 2023].

⁵⁰ Quoted in CWR, March 19, 1932.

immediately summoned to action and provide the material for the Japanese mobs...⁵¹ Many Japanese settlers were also concerned about the social and political stigma associated with the *rōnin*, and they called for the consular authorities to take decisive measures against them to preserve the reputation of their community. A 1936 *Shanghai nippō* editorial furiously blamed the *rōnin* for causing troubles to decent settlers: “Masquerading as loyal sons of the emperor and taking advantage of their Japanese citizenship, they go on a rampage in Nippon’s colonies... They are national bacilli, thriving on acts of malice. Because of the existence of a few such idlers, who do not live up to their name of Japanese, China’s sentiment towards Japan has been aggravated.”⁵²

However, it is important to note that the category of *rōnin* was partly constructed by the Japanese themselves and reinforced to exculpate the rest of the community (blaming the Koreans being another oft-used strategy in this vein). Many of the atrocities during the Shanghai Incident were actually perpetrated by long-term settlers, not just the so-called carpetbaggers.⁵³ Even in times of peace, the distinction between *rōnin* and law-abiding settlers could be rather blurry, and the recent influx of fortune-seekers only partially explained the marked increase in criminality within the Japanese community in the late 1920s and 1930s. A more important reason was the deteriorating conditions of local Japanese businesses as results of Sino-Japanese tensions and worldwide depression.⁵⁴ Shortly after the Shanghai Incident, a judicial officer from the Japanese consulate publicly voiced concerns that unemployment and economic hardship might drive more settlers towards criminal activities as a means of survival.⁵⁵ In 1927, the consular

⁵¹ *CWR*, July 7, 1934.

⁵² Quoted in *CP*, August 2, 1936.

⁵³ Takatsuna, “*Kokusai toshi*” *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*, Chapter 3.

⁵⁴ Yamamura, *Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai no keisei to tenkai*, Chapter 5 and 6.

⁵⁵ *CP*, August 5, 1932.

police recorded 106 thefts, 7 frauds, and 2 robberies committed by Japanese citizens: by 1933, these figures had respectively increased to 159, 34, and 4, while the city's total Japanese population remained constant during this period.⁵⁶ In June 1933, the chief police officers from all Japanese consulates in central China convened at a conference of consular police in Shanghai. Consul General Ishii Itarō, presiding over this event, reminded attendees of consular policing's delicate nature and its impact on Japan's foreign relations. Regulating local Japanese residents, he reiterated, should always be a primary objective of the consular police.⁵⁷

In response to the treaty port's growing need for social control, Japanese consular police operations sometimes expanded at the request of Settlement and Chinese authorities. The regularization of Japanese restaurants in Hongkou, for example, required administrative cooperation of the Japanese authorities.⁵⁸ In the early 1920s, in line with the SMC's efforts to control alcohol sales and consumption, the Japanese consulate implemented a new registration system that categorized Japanese establishments into "restaurants" (*ryōriten* 料理店) and "eating houses" (*inshokuten* 飲食店) with the former permitted to sell alcohol and the latter forbidden to do so.⁵⁹ This initiative eventually led to the Japanese consulate's full participation in the Settlement's unified licensing regime (see Chapter 2). In the 1930s, in response to the growing concerns about the drinking issues within the Settlement, the consular police reached an

⁵⁶ "Zai Shanhai sōryōjikan keisatsusho hanzai kenkyo ruinenbetsu hyō. 在上海總領事館警察署犯罪檢舉累年別表," *GKS*. vol. 43, 196-201; *SNN*, March 9, 1934, morning edition.

⁵⁷ "Shōwa hachi nen hachi gatsu jūku nichi fu zai Shanhai sōryōji hasshin Uchida Gaimu daijin ate hōkoku tekiryoku 昭和八年八月十九日附在上海總領事館信內田外務大臣宛報告摘錄," in *GKS*, vol.43, 3-10.

⁵⁸ As early as 1908, the rapidly growing number of Japanese restaurants had attracted the attention of the SMP, which requested the newly-formed JRC to assist in overseeing these establishments. That year, there were a total of 43 licensed and unlicensed Japanese restaurants in Hongkou, averaging one restaurant per 115 residents, a ratio significantly higher than in any other national communities. See SMA U1-5-3: Captain Superintendent of SMP to Secretary of JRC, May 11, 1908.

⁵⁹ Kōnan, *Shin Shanhai tsuki Soshū Kōshū Nankin annai*, 138.

agreement with the SMC to oversee and restrict the late-night operations of Japanese restaurants.⁶⁰

The 1930s saw various other challenges. As a side effect of the GMD government's currency reform in late 1935, the price of silver in China plummeted relative to the Japanese yen. Nanjing imposed an embargo but had to request the Japanese consulate's assistance in preventing the outflow of silver. By late November, hundreds of smugglers were shuttling daily between Shanghai and Nagasaki in a "silver rush."⁶¹ One man even reportedly sold his nineteen-year-old daughter to a geisha house to invest in silver.⁶² Ishii took the matter seriously, viewing such speculative ventures as detrimental to settlers' "honest work ethic" (*seigyōshin* 正業心).⁶³ Under his directive, the consular police began searching the belongings of passengers boarding Japanese ships. By mid-December, they had apprehended and prosecuted over 150 smugglers and confiscated a total of 250,000 silver dollars.⁶⁴

Around the same time, Japanese consular authorities also came under greater pressure to clamp down on the drug trade. Chinese and Westerners had criticized the penalties for drug-dealing under Japanese law—ranging from a hundred-yen fine to three years of labor—as too lenient to deter traffickers. In response, the consulate announced the higher use of deportation as additional punishment and circulated mugshots of offenders showing them holding their deportation order under their chin to other Japanese consulates in China. According to the consular police chief, this measure "appeared to hit the convicted peddlers much more vigorously, as they not only lost their 'territory' and their connections but were barred from all

⁶⁰ *SNN*, July 22, 1933, morning edition.

⁶¹ *NCH*, December 11, 1935.

⁶² *SNN*, December 4, 1935, evening edition.

⁶³ *SNN*, December 2, 1935, morning edition.

⁶⁴ *SNN*, December 15, 1935, evening edition.

China.”⁶⁵ That deportation was viewed as a particularly effective punishment again attests to the fact that many offenders were long-term settlers rather than sojourners or newcomers.

Moreover, the consulate found itself increasingly occupied with civil suits as well. As noted in Chapter 1, residents of Shanghai had voiced complaints about high rents for years; when a citywide rent-reduction movement arose in 1934, the Japanese community joined too. By this time, many Japanese settlers had been so hard hit by economic depression that rent default had become a widespread issue. Although the consular authorities expressed sympathy to settlers’ grievances against high rents, they were resolute in penalizing non-payment. In 1935, the consulate dealt with 114 cases of rent disputes involving Japanese tenants and (mostly) Chinese landlords, a significant increase from the 42 cases in 1933. The majority of these disputes were decided in favor of the landlords, often leading to the eviction of the tenants.⁶⁶ Observers concerned about the Japanese community’s good standing celebrated these rulings, and local Japanese newspapers commended the consular authorities for “upholding Japan’s national honor” by ensuring rent payments.⁶⁷

In short, Japanese consular authorities’ role in Settlement law enforcement grew during the 1930s. Consular police ramped up crime control, suppressed social evils, and enforced Municipal regulations. These developments largely resulted from Settlement authorities’ lack of jurisdiction over the Japanese community, which had grown in both size and criminality. Meanwhile, although the consulate’s judicial power was, in theory, limited to Japanese nationals, settlers’ social, economic, and spatial intertwinement with the rest of the city—forged through business partnerships, rental leases, employment, and other daily interactions—gave its

⁶⁵ *CP*, May 30, 1936; *SNN*, June 1, 1936, morning edition.

⁶⁶ “Shōwa jū nen zai Shanhai Sōryōjikan keisatsu jimu jōkyō 昭和十年在上海総領事館警察事務状況,” in *GKS*, vol. 43, 37-52.

⁶⁷ *SM*, August 7, 1935.

expanding operations an impact that extended far beyond the Japanese community. By late 1936, some Western diplomats acknowledged that the Japanese consular police had become essential to maintaining local peace and order not just within the Settlement but across the entire city.⁶⁸

Settler-consulate tensions

Despite the consulate's growing influence, Japanese settlers remained dissatisfied with their achievement, making interactions between both parties rife with frictions. The expanded operations of consular police, though generally welcomed by the settlers, did not alleviate their concerns about the threat posed by Chinese nationalism. For the consular authorities, the dual responsibilities of protecting (*hogo* 保護) and regulating (*torishimari* 取締) settlers formed two sides of the same coin. During periods of heightened anti-Japanese sentiments, the consulate repeatedly cautioned settlers against behaviors that might fuel hostilities and sometimes restricted their freedom through implementing measures such as curfews. After the Nakayama murder in 1935, the consular police began regular patrols in Hongkou, Zhabei, and Yangshupu, which had a twofold purpose of preventing anti-Japanese crimes while curbing unlawful activities on the part of the settlers.⁶⁹ Throughout the 1930s, a message that the consulate frequently relayed to the settlers was *jijū* 自重 (prudence or self-control)—from the former's perspective, an effective means of protecting the settlers was to restrain them from conduct that could put themselves in danger.⁷⁰

However, this approach reinforced settlers' years-long perception that the consular authorities and the entire civil branch of the Japanese government were too feeble to afford them

⁶⁸ SMC U1-6-139: J. F. Brenan, "Confidential Minute," November 24, 1936.

⁶⁹ CP, December 22, 1935.

⁷⁰ SNN, December 5, 1935, evening edition.

adequate protection and were apathetic to their suffering. This perception can be traced back to 1919, when Consul General Ariyoshi Akira opposed the idea of providing governmental assistance to local Japanese merchants; the boycott, in his view, would facilitate future Japanese commercial success by wiping out the poor-quality small dealers.⁷¹ During the May Thirtieth Movement in 1925, Ōtani Kōzui 大谷光瑞 (1876-1948), a prominent figure in local Japanese society and the former abbot of the Nishi Honganji temple, penned a lengthy article in domestic newspapers criticizing his government's non-interventionist stance. He contrasted the metropole's slow response to the Shanghai crisis with its proactive policy in Manchuria, arguing that settlers Shanghai and the Yangzi Valley were suffering discrimination and neglect by their home government, which viewed them as "disloyal citizens detrimental to Japan's national interests" (*fuchūjitsu yūgainaru kokumin* 不忠実有害なる国民) as opposed to their counterparts in Manchuria, who were regarded as valuable assets of the empire.⁷² When anti-Japanese boycotts revived in 1928-1929, settlers were again disappointed by the lukewarm reaction of the Foreign Ministry, which optimistically assumed that the movement would wane without external intervention.⁷³ The 1930s saw a widening rift between the Japanese society and the Foreign Ministry, with the latter's public prestige declining in tandem with its diminishing control over Japan's China policy.⁷⁴ This general mistrust towards diplomats was especially pronounced among overseas settlers, who came to view the Foreign Ministry and its consulates

⁷¹ Banno, "Japanese Industrialists and Merchants and the Anti-Japanese Boycotts in China, 1919-1928," 315.

⁷² Ōtani Kōzui, "Shanghai bōdō 上海暴動," in *OMS*, June 15-17, 1925. At this time, Ōtani also criticized the inaction of the Imperial Navy and went so far as to suggest that it was an intentional policy of the Japanese government to allow settlers to be killed by the Chinese.

⁷³ Gotō, *Shanghai o meguru Nichi-Ei kankei*, 196-198.

⁷⁴ Brooks, 117-208.

as being dominated by an insular elite circle indifferent to “trivial events” such as the confiscation of Japanese goods by Chinese pickets.⁷⁵

One of the diplomats distrusted by local settlers was Ishii Itarō, the consul general in Shanghai from September 1932 to July 1936. A proponent of the conciliatory diplomacy championed by Shidehara Kijūrō, Ishii was among the figures that historian Ian Nish terms Japan’s “internationalists.”⁷⁶ He had spent his college years in Shanghai at the Tōa Dōbun Shoin and felt a personal affinity with the city. This experience, coupled with his lengthy service in Tianjin and Manchuria, made him a typical “China hand” whose expertise and local knowledge the Foreign Ministry heavily relied upon in managing China affairs.⁷⁷ During the Manchuria Incident, he came to loggerheads with the Kwantung Army, which cost him the position of consul general in Jilin. Upon his return to Shanghai, he declared his mission to “make Shanghai windless” (*Shanghai wo mufu jōtai ni* 上海を無風状態に).⁷⁸ Throughout his four-year tenure, Ishii generally maintained good relations with his diplomatic peers like the Chinese mayor Wu Tiecheng and the British consul general John Brenan.⁷⁹ However, he frequently clashed with *dochaku-ha* settlers, viewing the latter’s chauvinistic propensity as a destabilizing factor in both local politics and Japan’s foreign relations.⁸⁰ When the 1936 campaign for increased representation in the SMC failed, he regarded this outcome as a “good lesson” for the radicals. He was particularly vexed by Hayashi Yūkichi, the JAASU’s long-serving president, whom he labelled as a rightist whose unilateral actions often complicated his dealings with Chinese and Settlement authorities. To settlers, diplomats like Ishii appeared fundamentally unsympathetic to

⁷⁵ Gotō, *Shanghai o meguru Nichi-Ei kankei*, 231-233.

⁷⁶ Nish, *Japan’s Struggle with Internationalism*, pp. 8-13.

⁷⁷ Brooks, *Japan’s Imperial Diplomacy*, Chapter 2.

⁷⁸ Ishii *Gaikōkan no isshō*, 233.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 251-254.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 210-212, 234-236; See also Brooks, *Japan’s Imperial Diplomacy*, 103-105.

their concerns. As noted earlier, when extra-settlement road negotiations reached an impasse in early 1935, hardline settlers criticized not only the SMC but also their consular authorities for showing weakness to the Chinese. Ishii himself received a letter threatening that “drastic steps” that “would be taken against him should he not modify his policy.”⁸¹ In response to surging anti-Japanese activities, the consular police kept a watchful eye on local political situations and operated an intelligence network in collaboration with the SMP. However, like Settlement authorities, it lacked the judicial capability and manpower necessary to suppress the Chinese movement.

The alienation of local settlers from consular authorities was not a phenomenon unique to the Japanese. From the late 1920s onwards, Shanghai’s British community similarly experienced growing estrangement from their home government. As historian Robert Bickers shows, this was a period when the British state began to “dismantle” its informal empire in China and “nationalize” Sino-British relations, both of which had so far been dominated by the treaty port’s commercial elite.⁸² In face of Chinese nationalism, the stance harbored by, in Nicholas Clifford’s words, the “spoilt children of empire,” increasingly hindered Britain’s response to the rapid changes taking place in the Far East.⁸³ However, Japanese settlers, especially the *dochaku-ha*, differed from British Shanghailanders in at least two key respects: while they were politically remote from the domestic center of power and had limited influence on the metropolitan government, they were protected by a large naval force stationed on-site that increasingly shared their discontent with the civil authorities.⁸⁴

⁸¹ NARA SMP D-6456: Report by D. S. Umemoto, January 30, 1935.

⁸² Bickers, *Britain in China*, Chapter 4.

⁸³ Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, 35.

⁸⁴ Gotō, *Shanghai wo meguru Nichi-Ei kankei*, 231-233.

Over time, these two factors converged to foster solidarity between the settlers and the military. This alliance began to take shape in the late 1920s, solidified during the crises of 1931-1932, and strengthened in the following years. The consular authorities bore the brunt of this development; Ishi in his postwar memoir accused the military of routinely inciting anxieties and agitations among settlers to serve its own agenda. When the settlers vocally opposed his “weak policy” in early 1935, he suspected the navy and the consulate’s military attachés of secretly orchestrating these protests. But Ishii was not alone in being disturbed by the tightening settler-military partnership. Intensifying concerns over Chinese nationalist threats and growing disenchantment with the capability of civil authorities, Japanese, British, or Chinese, to address these threats, drove the settlers to eagerly support the expansion of Japan’s naval presence in Shanghai. Among all the contenders in Shanghai’s intricate political landscape, the Imperial Navy stood out as the most ambitious in vision and audacious in action. The settler-navy collaboration ushered in the final phase of the Japanese “recolonization” of Shanghai, which was marked by the emergence of a zone of Japanese jurisdiction that simultaneously challenged Chinese sovereignty and the integrity of the International Settlement.

The Imperial Navy in Shanghai

A permanent Japanese naval garrison was first established in Shanghai in 1917 with the arrival of a fleet consisting of the flagship 2,500-ton cruiser *Chiyoda* and five other gunboats. Anchored in the Huangpu River, its mission was to protect Japanese interests in the Yangzi Valley. Japanese sailors in Shanghai quickly gained notoriety as troublemakers who frequently clashed with other communities and authorities in the city. An early incident, as detailed in Chapter 3, occurred in the summer of 1918 and led to the Hongkou Riot. In May 1921, a brawl

erupted between American and Japanese bluejackets in Hongkou, reportedly sparked by the Americans throwing firecrackers at the Japanese and resulting in injuries on both sides. This clash mirrored a similar violent encounter between the soldiers of both countries in Tianjin two years ago, but it also stemmed from longstanding American-Japanese tensions over Hongkou.⁸⁵ A large group of Japanese civilians under the influence of alcohol, according to Consul General Yamazaki's report, rushed into the fray to help the sailors,⁸⁶ but prompt intervention by the SMC and consular authorities restored peace and contained the confrontation.

After 1925, the growth of settlers' demand for military protection, coupled with that of Britain's increasing need for Japanese military assistance in China, emboldened the local Japanese navy in challenging the established pattern of the Settlement's cooperation with imperial military forces. A watershed event occurred in 1927, shortly after the navy had set up its own patrol system in Hongkou. On the evening of September 24, the SMP apprehended two naval patrolmen for assaulting a Chinese boy.⁸⁷ When it brought them back to the Hongkou police station, a naval officer stormed inside, accompanied by two marines with bayonets, and another squad of marines were stationed at the gate. This display of force horrified Settlement authorities. The SMP commissioner later remarked, "Never in my recollection have the troops of a Foreign Power attempted in such a manner as this to override the civil power."⁸⁸ Although the patrolmen were promptly released to their naval authorities, the latter claimed that Municipal constables had pointed pistols at the patrolmen and treated them like criminals by placing them

⁸⁵ Ying, "1921 nen Shanghai Hongkou Mei Ri chongtu shijian yanjiu."

⁸⁶ Consul-General Yamasaki Keiichi to Foreign Minister Uchida Kōzai, May 23, 1921, in JACAR Ref. B03040759900: "Gaimushō Jōhōbu jōhō / Jōhōbu shukan jōhō denpō zassan / Naichi jōhō daiikkan 外務省情報部情報／情報部主管情報電報雑纂／内地情報 第一巻," May 14—October 14, 1921, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B03040759900>, [accessed December 12, 2023].

⁸⁷ SMA U1-3-3368: SMP, "Police Report," September 25, 1927.

⁸⁸ SMA U1-3-3368: Commissioner of Police to Secretary, September 27, 1927.

behind the bar at the station. The naval headquarters demanded thorough investigation into the case and demanded disciplinary measures against SMP officers responsible.⁸⁹

The settler community also exploded in protest. By the time the aforementioned naval officer arrived to storm the Hongkou police station, it had already been surrounded by a large crowd of agitated Japanese civilians.⁹⁰ The next day, several hundred settlers convened at the Japanese Club to. One speaker claimed that the municipal police had greatly humiliated the Imperial Navy in a matter too serious to be overlooked by Japanese residents; another bluntly stated that Settlement authorities could not be trusted and that the present case was an instance of the “injustice regularly committed by the SMC”; a third advocated for closer collaboration between local settlers and the navy and called on his compatriots to “bear the responsibility for the maintenance of his country’s national dignity.”⁹¹ The meeting lasted over three hours and concluded with three cheers of *banzai* for the Japanese empire and the local community. According to the *Shanghai nichinichi shinbun*, “not a single person absented himself from the intense interest and deep concern displayed by the Japanese citizens for the welfare of their nation.”⁹² Following the meeting, a settler delegation visited the naval headquarters and urged the latter to take a more assertive stance; concurrently, they presented a resolution to the SMC with a demand for swift resolution of the incident.⁹³

This upheaval was significant for several reasons. First, it intensified settlers’ dissatisfaction with the SMP and, as noted earlier, fueled the ongoing Japanese campaign for municipal police reform. Second, it set a precedent for direct communication between the settlers

⁸⁹ SMA U1-3-3368: “Inquiry by Japanese Naval Landing Party,” September 25, 1927.

⁹⁰ SMA U1-3-3368: Extract from police daily report, September 25, 1925.

⁹¹ *SNN*, September 27, 1927, morning edition.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

and naval authorities that circumvented the consulate, a practice that would become common in the following decade. Third, as the first open clash between Settlement authorities and foreign troops, it aroused a heated debate about the relations between the Settlement and the military forces of the Treaty Powers. It was no coincidence that this debate happened precisely when the Settlement was most in need of military protection from the Powers to guard against a potential Chinese invasion.⁹⁴ A key question in this regard was whether in any circumstances the SMP had the prerogative to arrest foreign servicemen. The SMC consulted the British North China Command on this, but the latter denied any legal basis for the SMP to exercise jurisdiction over “formed bodies of troops or patrols.”⁹⁵ This response was unsurprising, as acknowledging such authority would not only undermine the autonomy of local British forces but also impair British efforts to enlist Japanese military assistance. Consequently, the SMC found itself compelled to yield to Japanese demands: it dismissed the two Chinese constables involved in arrest, replaced the chief of the Hongkou police station, and crucially, issued an order stating that “foreign naval and military patrols are not to be interfered with by the Municipal Police in future.”⁹⁶

Towards settler-navy partnership

Between 1927 and 1931, the Japanese navy kept a relatively low profile, while the settlers focused on expanding the SMP’s Japanese Branch. However, the situation transformed amid the turmoil of mid-1931. Frustrated with Municipal police reforms and disenchanted by their consular authorities’ lukewarm policies, settlers increasingly turned to the navy for protection from the revived anti-Japanese movement. By this time, the navy had become more

⁹⁴ SMA U1-3-3368: Report by the Board of Inquiry, September 28, 1927.

⁹⁵ SMA U1-3-3368: North China Command to Commissioner of Police, September 29, 1927.

⁹⁶ SMA U1-3-3368: SMC Chairman to Japanese Consul-General, September 30, 1927.

than ready to respond to, and capitalize on, the settlers' unrest. A key context for this development was the London Naval Treaty concluded a year earlier in 1931. The Japanese government's participation in this international disarmament initiative had sparked intense domestic criticism. Particularly controversial was the accusation that, by agreeing to limit Japan's capital ship tonnage to seventy percent of that of British and the US, Hamaguchi Osachi's cabinet violated the Emperor's "supreme command" over the navy. This dispute further strained the relations between the Japan's civil government and navy and strengthened the latter's propensity to pursue its own policies when they were at odds with those of the cabinet and the Foreign Ministry.⁹⁷

On August 3, 1931, Rear Admiral Shiozawa Kōichi 塩沢幸一 (1881-1943), the Japanese naval commander-in-chief at Shanghai, ordered his force to take actions against anti-Japanese boycotts and declared that Japanese civilians would receive military protection upon request even without directives from the consulate. The Foreign Ministry filed a complaint with the Navy Ministry regarding Shiozawa's unilateral decision, but his order remained in effect, and the navy began to directly respond to settlers' requests. Over the next few weeks, it deployed a landing party multiple times and successfully recovered some Japanese goods that Chinese pickets had confiscated.⁹⁸ These actions impressed not only the Hongkou community but also the business elites. After the Manchurian Incident, direct telephone lines were set up between the naval headquarters and major Japanese corporations;⁹⁹ when troubles broke out at Japanese

⁹⁷ Pelz, "Rondon gunshuku kaigi to yoron;" and Hattori, *Japan at War and Peace*, 173-223.

⁹⁸ *TA*, August 15, 1931, Morning edition.

⁹⁹ SMA U1-6-89: Secretary General of the SMC to Director of Japanese Cotton Millowners' Association in China, October 29, 1931.

factories, the navy was always first summoned for assistance, and it invariably arrived on the scene before the consular police and SMP.¹⁰⁰

At the same time, the settlers grew impatient with the Foreign Ministry's pursuit of "diplomatic solutions."¹⁰¹ By late 1931, they began to openly question the Japanese government's policies concerning Shanghai. Prior to and amid the Manchurian Incident, a nationwide war fever swept across Japan and affirmed the centrality of Manchuria in the empire. As Louise Young and others have shown, the popular image of Manchuria (and later Manchukuo) as Japan's "lifeline" (*seimeisen* 生命線) became ingrained in Japanese society during this period and profoundly impacted the official and mass cultures of Japanese imperialism in subsequent years.¹⁰² But Manchuria's ascent as the crown jewel of Japan's "total empire" stoked apprehension among local settlers in Shanghai that their interests had become a "sacrifice for national policy" (*kokusaku no gisei* 国策の犠牲).¹⁰³ In early November, the *dochaku-ha* leaders organized a conference and invited settler representatives from fifteen other cities in central China. The conference passed a resolution demanding that the Japanese government take "decisive measures" (*danko taru shudan* 断固たる手段) to address the boycott movement throughout China proper.¹⁰⁴ Consul General Murai Kuramatsu described this stance as "rather radical," and following the directive of the Foreign Ministry, he instructed the *kaisha-ha* group to stay aloof.¹⁰⁵ Although entrepreneurs and industrialists were believed to have generally

¹⁰⁰ SMA U1-6-89: Commissioner of Police to Secretary General of the SMC, October 28, 1931.

¹⁰¹ Gotō, *Shanghai wo meguru Nichi-Ei kankei*, 225-230.

¹⁰² Young, *Total Empire*.

¹⁰³ Miyachi Kandō, "Shina no hōkai to Shanghai no zento (hachi) Shanghai wa kokusaku no gisei ka 支那の崩壊と上海の前途 (八) 上海は国策の犠牲か," in *SNN*, June 2, 1933, evening edition.

¹⁰⁴ *TA*, November 2, 1931, morning edition; *Yomiuri*, November 2, 1931, morning edition.

¹⁰⁵ Consul-General Murai Kuramatsu to Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō, November 24, 1931, in JACAR Ref. B02030197700: "Zai Shanghai Kyoryūmin kankei 在上海居留民関係," October 5—December 7, 1931, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02030197700>, [accessed December 12, 2023].

shared the Foreign Ministry's reservation about direct military intervention,¹⁰⁶ by this time, they also voiced concerns about their civil government's paltry response to escalating Sino-Japanese tensions and fears that Japanese business interests in central China would keep becoming collateral damage in the empire's defense of its Manchuria "lifeline."¹⁰⁷ The Shanghai Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, many of whose members ran businesses in other areas of the Yangzi Valley, protested against the Foreign Ministry's traditional "repatriationist policy" (*hikiage shugi* 引揚主義) and advocated for stronger measures of "on-site protection" (*genchi hogo* 現地保護). It sought assurances from the Japanese government for its citizens' right to live and do business across the Yangzi Valley and opposed evacuating Japanese settlers from these regions, which would "erase the commercial fruits that [they] had built up over long years of endeavors."¹⁰⁸

On December 6, a large-scale "All-China Japanese Residents Conference" (*Zenshi Nihonjin kyoryūmin daikai* 全支日本人居留民大会) convened in Shanghai. This time, it was held under the auspices of the JRC, and the consulate advised the *kaisha-ha* to participate and moderate the proceedings' tone.¹⁰⁹ By this juncture, however, the business elites evidently lacked the intention and influence to mitigate the prevailing hardline atmosphere. *Dochaku-ha* leaders once again dominated the conference, for which Hayashi Yūkichi served as the president and delivered the opening speech.¹¹⁰ Although the conference attendees expressly supported the

¹⁰⁶ Yamamura, *Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai no keisei to tenkai*, 174-181.

¹⁰⁷ *Chūgai shōgyō shinpō*, November 7, 1931.

¹⁰⁸ Shanghai shōkō kaigisho to Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō, September 29, 1931, in JACAR Ref. B02030197600: "Zai Shanghai Kyoryūmin kankei 在上海居留民關係," September 19—September 30, 1931, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B02030197600>, [accessed January 20, 2024].

¹⁰⁹ Consul-General Murai Kuramatsu to Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō, December 7, 1931, in JACAR Ref. B02030197700: "Zai Shanghai Kyoryūmin kankei 在上海居留民關係," October 5—December 7, 1931.

¹¹⁰ *SMS*, December 7, 1931, special edition; *SN*, December 7, 1931; Shanghai shōkō kaigisho, *Kinyōkai panfuretto*, no. 74, December 9, 1931, 15-18.

Manchuria agenda as the central mission for the empire, they also called for a holistic solution that would address both the Manchuria problem and China problem; specifically, they urged their home government to adopt a more interventionist policy regarding anti-Japanese activities in other parts of China.¹¹¹ The conference's manifesto was delivered to various government branches, political parties, and major newspapers in Japan; it was also translated into English and disseminated to the English- and Chinese-language press.

The Shanghai Incident

By 1932, escalating Sino-Japanese hostilities and settlers' calls for state protection had set the stage for all-out military confrontation. On January 18, a violent altercation erupted at the San You Towel Factory in Yangshupu between Chinese workers and a party of Japanese Nichiren monks, who were believed to be disguised *rōnin* seeking to incite trouble, resulting into the death of one of the latter. The next day, a Japanese mob retaliated by attacking the factory's Chinese workers and setting its premises on fire. Rear Admiral Shiozawa, in conjunction with the consulate, used this incident as a pretext to demand that the Chinese government eliminate anti-Japanese organizations, compensate the Japanese victims, and issue a formal apology. An ultimatum with a deadline of January 28 was issued to Mayor Wu Tiecheng. The settler community echoed these demands and further seized the chance to criticize Settlement authorities. The *Shanghai nippō* remarked that the SMP had failed to intervene into the January 18 conflict because its constables had been prohibited from firing on Chinese crowds under any

¹¹¹ “Zen Shi Nihonjin kyoryūmin daikai ketsugi 全支日本人居留民大会決議,” December 6, 1931, in JACAR Ref. B02030197700: “Zai Shanhai Kyoryūmin kankei 在上海居留民關係,” October 5—December 7, 1931.

circumstances, which had been an official policy of the SMP since May Thirtieth to avoid clashes with the Chinese population.¹¹²

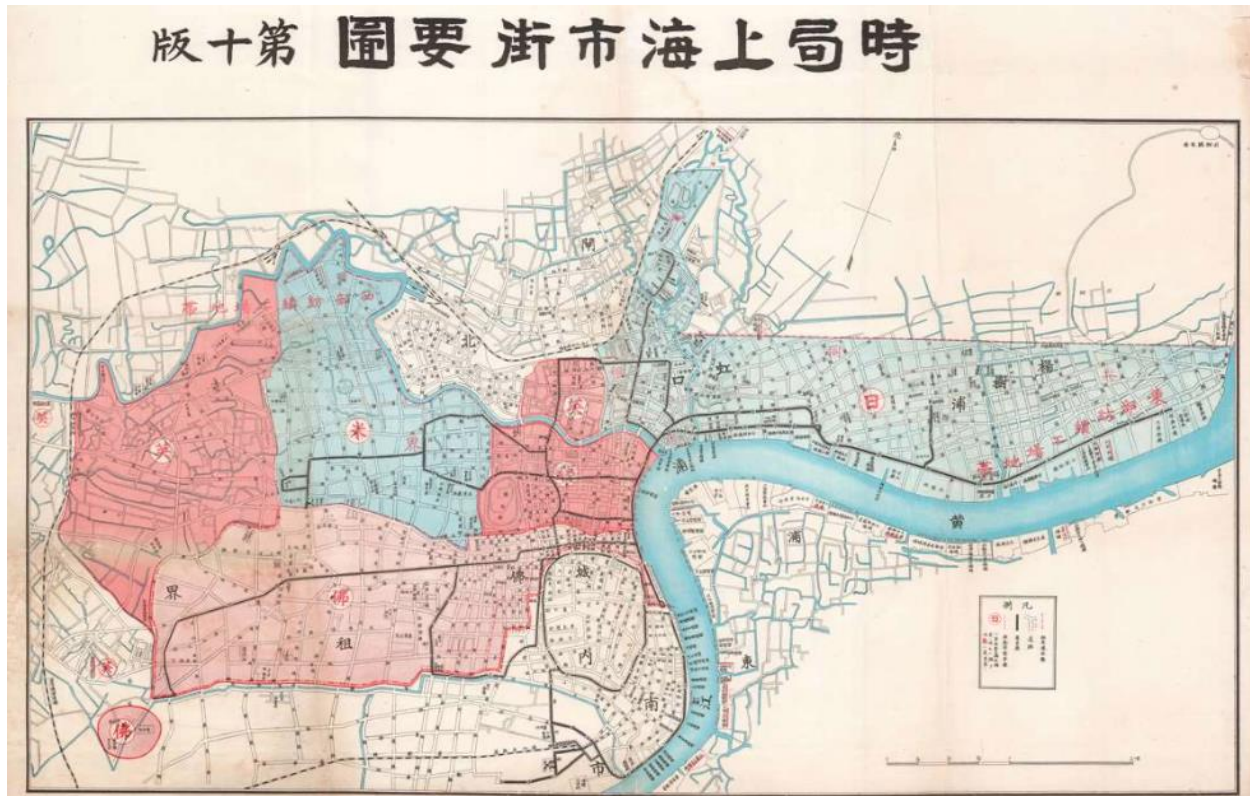


Figure 5.1. A Japanese map of the Settlement showing the defense zones. (Shanghai: Shanhai teikoku zaigō gunjinkai 上海帝国在郷軍人会, 1932)

Tensions built in the following week as Chinese authorities wavered over their response to the Japanese demands. On the morning of January 28, when a bomb exploded outside the Japanese consulate, the SMC declared a state of emergency effective from 4:00 p.m. According to the Settlement's defense plan formulated in late 1931, this decision entailed the mobilization of each Treaty Power's garrison troops to guard specific districts within the Settlement, with the Japanese assigned to Hongkou (Figure 5.1).¹¹³ That same afternoon, Mayor Wu, following the

¹¹² SN, January 24, 1932.

¹¹³ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 154-155.

directive of Chiang Kai-shek, agreed to the Japanese ultimatum just hours before its expiration. Consul General Murai expressed satisfaction, but Shiozawa was determined to go with his own plan, which aimed for the complete removal of Chinese forces from the Shanghai region. Once the state of emergency came into effect, he landed his troops and began to deploy them not only in Hongkou but also the adjacent Chinese territory in Zhabei, justifying this move by the need to protect the large number of Japanese residents in that area. Just before midnight, an exchange of gunfire occurred between the landing party and the Chinese Nineteenth Route Army station in Zhabei, marking the beginning of a war that continued until early March.¹¹⁴

The five-week Battle of Shanghai had catastrophic consequences for the Chinese section of the city: approximately 30,000 casualties, including the deaths of over 10,000 Chinese civilians, and the demolishment of Zhabei. The war also had enormous impact on the International Settlement, whose northern half effectively came under Japanese occupation from February to early March. Despite a consular warning that Japanese civilians “must not override their proper sphere” by participating in any military operations,¹¹⁵ settlers organized an “Emergency Board” (*Jikyoku iinkai* 時局委員会) to actively collaborate with the navy and later, the army’s reinforcement troops that continuously arrived from Japan. Hongkou and Yangshupu was turned into a huge military camp, with Japanese factories and schools serving as temporary barracks for the Japanese troops. In addition to pursuing the Chinese “mufti corps” mentioned earlier, settlers were also mobilized to provide all kinds of logistical support: they prepared

¹¹⁴ Historians now largely agree that the Shanghai Incident was instigated by the Japanese navy, in a similar manner with the Kwantung Army in the Manchurian Incident. This move was partly a strategy to shift international attention away from Manchuria; at the same time, it was also a result of the inter-service competition between the Imperial Navy and Imperial Army. See Kageyama, *Daiichiji Shanhai jihen no kenkyū*, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. For more on the Shanghai Incident, see Yu, *Dikang yu tuoxie de liangchongzhou*; Coble, *Facing Japan*, 39-50; Nish, *Japan’s Struggle with Internationalism*, 90-106; Gotō, *Shanghai wo meguru Nichi-Ei kankei*, 236-248; Takatsuna, “*Kokusai toshi*” *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin* 136-153; Fujita, *Kyoryūmin no Shanhai*, 150-154; Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 154-158; Henriot, “The Battle of Shanghai (January-March 1932): A Study in the Space-time of War.”

¹¹⁵ NARA SMP D-3221: Communique, Japanese Consulate-General, February 16, 1932.

meals, drove trucks, tended to the injured, and worked as translators and guides for the soldiers.¹¹⁶

These activities threw the Settlement into a crisis by contravening its declared principle of military neutrality. The fact that the Japanese were using Hongkou as a military base drew vehement protests from both the Chinese government and the Settlement's Chinese Ratepayers' Association while arousing intense discussion within the SMC. Meanwhile, some Western diplomats, like the British minister Miles Lampson, expressed concerns that this situation had compromised their credibility as "neutral middlemen."¹¹⁷ In response to Chinese allegations that the Settlement was effectively aiding Japan's war efforts against China, the SMC asserted that its neutrality could "only be maintained and guaranteed by the interested Powers, including Japan,"¹¹⁸ and that any Power who breached this neutrality with its forces bore sole responsibility for doing so.¹¹⁹

These disclaimers, issued shortly after the war began, failed to absolve the SMC in the eyes of the Chinese, but they revealed the political predicament of Settlement authorities at this time. On February 10, the SMC secretary-general Stirling Fessenden wrote to Mayor Wu, "The political status of the Council is not that of an independent State or sovereign Power... it is therefore not in a position to take any direct measures, either forcible or diplomatic, against the action of the armed forces of the Powers."¹²⁰ The next few days saw heated debate within the Council about the public disclosure of Fessenden's letter. Some Council members worried that Fessenden's clarification would further undermine the Settlement's political position and be used

¹¹⁶ SMA Q42-1-866: "*Shōwa shichi nen Meika nikki* 昭和七年明華日誌," July 1932; Hamada, *Shanghai jihen*, 365-378.

¹¹⁷ Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*, 103.

¹¹⁸ SMA U1-5-15: SMC, "Correspondence," February 6, 1932.

¹¹⁹ *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 25, February 6, 1932, 29.

¹²⁰ SMA U1-5-15: SMC, "Correspondence," February 10, 1932.

by “ill-willed” people to embarrass the SMC. But in the end, Fessenden’s opinion prevailed. According to him, many ratepayers and even some local diplomats had never accurately understood the limitation of the SMC’s authority, and it was necessary to “remove this erroneous impression from the minds of responsible members of the community.”¹²¹

For over half a century, Western Shanghailanders had taken pride in their “Model Settlement.” They believed that the Settlement’s prosperity grew out of its tradition of self-governance, which the treaty powers had respected and sustained through their military cooperation. But in 1932, this military cooperation was precisely what endangered the Settlement’s civic traditions and laid bare its political vulnerabilities. The collective defense scheme proved self-defeating from the outset: rather than safeguarding the Settlement from external threats, it provided a pretext for the Japanese military to take over municipal functions in Hongkou. Virtually overnight, Japanese naval pickets ramped up their patrol in Hongkou, Zhabei, and Yangshupu, setting up checkpoints, reviewing people’s identifications, and detaining anyone deemed suspicious—all in the name of preserving local security. Within a week, they had apprehended over six hundred Chinese civilians suspected of being “snipers” or “undercover agents,” and even Westerners, including an American consul, were stopped, searched, and harassed.¹²²

The SMC lodged protests through the Consular Body, which formed an international investigation committee to intervene and demand the release of some Chinese detainees.¹²³ But throughout February, the SMC’s attempts to resume control over the northern part of the Settlement were repeatedly thwarted by the Japanese military and settler community. The

¹²¹ *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 25, February 13, 1932, 59-60.

¹²² Hauser, *Shanghai*, 209-210.

¹²³ SMA U1-6-134: Special meeting of the Consular Body, February 6, 1932.

JAASU accused SMP officers of deserting their posts in Hongkou after the outbreak of hostilities, which, they argued, had compelled their naval forces to assume the responsibility of maintaining peace and order.¹²⁴ Meanwhile, Japanese naval authorities refused to return policing rights to Settlement authorities, contending that suspects arrested by the SMP would be taken to the Chinese Special Court and thus likely to be acquitted.¹²⁵ At one point, the SMC discussed inviting third-nation (i.e., British or American) forces to enter Hongkou and force the evacuation of Japanese troops. But this suggestion was quickly quashed, as such actions would not only risk military conflict and but further convince the Japanese of the Settlement's incapacity for law enforcement.¹²⁶

Not until the end of February did municipal administration begin to be gradually restored in Hongkou and Yangshupu, when ceasefire negotiations commenced with the mediation of League of Nations representatives (a process in which the SMC played a minimal role).¹²⁷ A key condition of the truce, finalized in early May, mandated the withdrawal of all Chinese military units within a twenty-kilometer radius of Shanghai. While this resolved the short-term crisis, the enhanced presence of Japanese armed forces irreversibly altered Shanghai's power dynamics and the Settlement's political climate. Shortly afterwards, the Japanese naval garrison formed a Special Landing Party (Tokubetsu rikusentai 特別陸戦隊; SLP) that was permanently stationed ashore. The SLP's official strength was two thousand men—roughly on par with the respective size of British and American garrison troops—but by 1935, common speculation put the true number of its personnel as high as five thousand, which could be further augmented by

¹²⁴ SMA U1-6-134: Hayashi Yūkichi to Stirling Fessenden, February 11, 1932.

¹²⁵ *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 25, February 29, 1932, 110-113.

¹²⁶ *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 25, February 21, 1932, 88-92.

¹²⁷ Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 157-158.

reinforcements from the home country at a moment's notice.¹²⁸ To accommodate this force, the SLP's headquarters on North Sichuan Road underwent significant upgrades in late 1933 with the erection of an imposing four-story barracks spanning two blocks, which was described as a scene of grandeur and power by the Chinese and Western journalists invited to its unveiling ceremony (Figure 5.2).¹²⁹



Figure 5.2. Special Landing Party headquarters and barracks. *Virtual Cities Project* (Institut d'Asie Orientale, Lyon).

The “Japanese concession” in Hongkou

The Japanese government's approach to the Shanghai problem differed markedly from its strategy in Manchuria. Throughout February, its representatives at the League of Nations repeatedly claimed that Japan harbored no political ambition in Shanghai and asserted that its military actions aimed to protect all foreign interests in the area.¹³⁰ When ceasefire negotiations started, it sought to “internationalize” the issue and proposed a roundtable conference for all

¹²⁸ *CWR*, March 9, 1933.

¹²⁹ *Shenbao*, September 16, 1933.

¹³⁰ Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*, 100-101.

relevant powers to discuss how the future maintenance of law and order in the Shanghai area; these proposals were evidently intended to draw Western endorsement for Japanese military ascendancy in the region as a long-term outcome of the war.¹³¹ In April and May, the Japanese even revisited the idea of transforming Shanghai into an “independent city-state,” echoing the “free city” proposal that Western settlers had briefly entertained in the 1860s and again in 1927.¹³² However, this idea outraged the Chinese and was opposed by other powers, particularly the US, which viewed it a flagrant violation of the Nine-Power Treaty of 1932 guaranteeing China’s territorial integrity.¹³³

During the Shanghai Incident, a significant sector of the Western community exhibited more sympathy towards Japan than China, reflecting the lingering imperialistic mindset among Shanghailanders who hoped that “the Japs will teach the cocky Chinese a good lesson.”¹³⁴ However, it soon became evident that Western Shanghai was just as much a victim of Japanese dominance as the Chinese city. After 1932, Japanese military reviews became a regular occurrence in the Settlement, attracting large numbers of civilian spectators and often occupying streets and parks for hours (Figure 5.3).¹³⁵ The SLP frequently staged so-called “night maneuvers” that paraded tanks, armored cars, and infantry through the Settlement and positioned machine-gun squads at key intersections. These operations terrified foreign and Chinese residents alike, as they appeared to be rehearsals for Japan’s future occupation of the Settlement.¹³⁶

¹³¹ Ibid., 105-106.

¹³² *CP*, May 11, 1932, and May 15, 1932.

¹³³ *CP*, April 9, 1932; SMA U1-6-94: Press Information Office, “Report,” May 23, 1932.

¹³⁴ Gotō, *Japan and Britain in Shanghai*, 141.

¹³⁵ See, for example, *SNN*, September 21, 1933, morning edition, January 4, 1934, evening edition January 20, 1934, evening edition, July 19, evening edition; *CP*, October 4, 1933.

¹³⁶ *CWR*, July 7, 1934, and March 9, 1935.

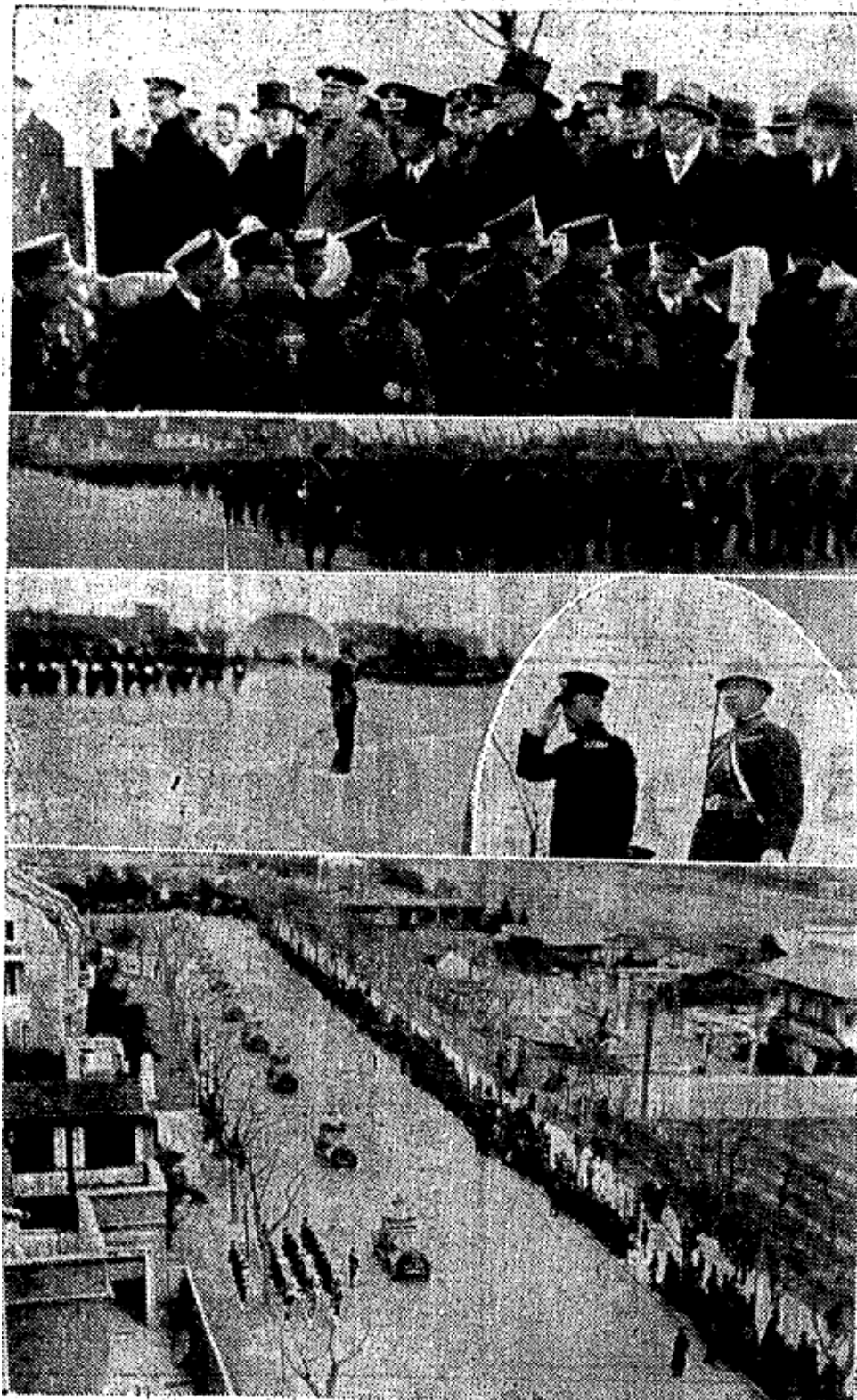


Figure 5.3. Japanese military review at Hongkou Park. (*Shanghai nichinichi shinbun*, January 4, 1934, morning edition)

The years following the Shanghai Incident saw the Japanese taking a gradual, piecemeal strategy in encroaching on the Settlement's administration and jurisdiction, exploiting every minor incident to extract as substantial a concession as possible. The "insolence" of the Imperial Navy, which many Shanghailanders complained about,¹³⁷ was encouraged by local settlers, some of whom displayed even greater militancy. In September 1932, a truck carrying Japanese marines ran a red light at the intersection of Nanjing Road and the Bund, narrowly missing a Chinese boy. A heated exchange in Shanghai dialect ensued, with the marines shouting "*chilao*" (bastard) and the boy responding with "*dongyang chilao*" (Japanese bastard). The marines then forced the boy onto their truck, leading to a confrontation with several SMP constables who attempted to intervene.¹³⁸ The SLP headquarters downplayed this conflict as "a very trivial event,"¹³⁹ but the settlers protested this lukewarm response to what they perceived as "a great loss of prestige for the Imperial Navy."¹⁴⁰ In the end, even the naval authorities had to urge the settlers not to "indulge in unnecessary agitation without an accurate knowledge of what had actually happened."¹⁴¹

The peaceful settlement of this case was partly due to its occurrence in the heart of the Settlement, where the Japanese were not yet prepared to confront the taipans. In Hongkou, however, they were far more aggressive in shoring up what appeared to many as an "independent kingdom." In August 1933, the American consul general Edward S. Cunningham submitted a lengthy memorandum to the US Secretary of State on what he discerned as "a fixed and

¹³⁷ CP, October 4, 1933.

¹³⁸ SMA U1-3-3368: SMP, "Police report," September 3, 1932; and "Commissioner of Police, "Report," September 9, 1932.

¹³⁹ SMA U1-3-3368: Captain S. Kikuno to A. D. Bell, September 19, 1932.

¹⁴⁰ JACAR Ref. C04011416300: "Shanghai Kōbukyoku junsu no Nihon Rikusentaiin bukyoku ni kansuru ken 上海工部局巡査の日本陸戦隊員侮辱に関する件," October 1932, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/C04011416300>, [accessed December 15, 2023].

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

determined policy” of Japanese aggression in Shanghai, citing as evidences their opposition to the ESR *modus vivendi*, settlers’ demands for Municipal reforms, the expansion of consular police, and various SLP operations. Cunningham did not explicitly define this “fixed” policy, but he suggested that Japan ultimately aimed to fully control Settlement area north of Suzhou Creek and justify this control by invoking their right to establish an exclusive concession as provided for in the treaty of 1896.¹⁴²

Particularly alarming to Cunningham and others was the growing Japanese tendency to question the Settlement’s legal foundation. This apprehension heightened in late 1932 with the publication of a 500-page book titled “The Shanghai War and International Law” (*Shanghai sen to kokusai hō* 上海戦と国際法). Its author, Shinobu Junpei 信夫淳平, held a doctoral degree in law from Tokyo Imperial University and had served as the legal advisor to the Japanese Navy during the Shanghai Incident. The monograph was therefore widely perceived as reflecting the Japanese government’s official stance, and it quickly drew international attention.¹⁴³ Shinobu’s central argument was that the Battle of Shanghai was not a war between two nations but rather a Japanese military operation to suppress regional Chinese forces and terrorists defying their national government.¹⁴⁴ On whether or not this operation constituted a breach of international law by violating the Settlement’s military neutrality, Shinobu contended that none of the SMC’s policies and rules, including the Land Regulations, constituted formal compacts between sovereign nations and therefore held no binding power over the Japanese government or its citizens.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² The Consul General at Shanghai (Cunningham) to the Secretary of State, August 17, 1933, in *FRUS, 1933, The Far East*, Volume III, Document 428, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1933v03/d428>, [accessed June 15, 2023].

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Shinobu, *Shanghai sen to kokusai hō*, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 199-214.

In response to these arguments, Cunningham admitted that the greatest vulnerability of Settlement administration was its reliance on various consular courts for law enforcement, but he criticized the SMC's "timidity" towards Japanese demands and urged it to "do all in its power to assert its rights."¹⁴⁶ However, Municipal officials such as Fessenden struggled to counter Shinobu's claims from a legal standpoint, particularly his views on the Land Regulations. Shinobu asserted that these regulations were a mere conventional agreement between the Settlement's ratepayers and the foreign diplomats in Beijing who approved them; he thus concluded that Japan was not signatory to this convention, as it had not participated in formulating the original set of regulations in the mid-nineteenth century. In practice, the Japanese government had recognized the Land Regulations and enforced them against Japanese nationals for many years, which could be understood as a *de facto* accession to this convention. But the Regulations, unlike formal treaties, had no specified term of duration, allowing Japan to withdraw its recognition of them at any time.¹⁴⁷

As a result, when Municipal law enforcement increasingly came under Japanese challenge in the Hongkou and Yangshupu areas by the mid-1930s, Settlement authorities found themselves with scant legal ground to resist this encroachment. This power shift was epitomized by a watershed event in the summer of 1934. On June 27, a British police sergeant, J. W. Bellamy, attempted to apprehend a drunk Japanese marine who was assaulting a Chinese woman on Zhapu Road. He soon found himself surrounded by a crowd of Japanese marines and civilians. He was then taken to a nearby naval patrol station and was then detained for several hours until Commissioner Gerrard personally came to retrieve him.¹⁴⁸ Overnight, the Bellamy

¹⁴⁶ The Consul General at Shanghai (Cunningham) to the Secretary of State, August 17, 1933, in *FRUS, 1933, The Far East*, Volume III, Document 428.

¹⁴⁷ SMA U1-6-141: Stirling Fessenden, "Conf. Memo. re. Land Regulations and Dr. Shinobu's view," July 8, 1933.

¹⁴⁸ SMA U1-6-137: Commissioner of Police, "Report," June 28, 1934.

case instigated city-wide debate about the status of the Settlement vis-à-vis Japanese military forces. For the Japanese naval authorities, Bellamy's attempt to arrest a marine and his use of force in doing so constituted a clear breach of the SMP's 1927 policy of non-interference with Japanese military personnel; they thus demanded a formal apology and punitive measures against Bellamy.¹⁴⁹ The English-language press rallied behind Bellamy and strongly opposed any further concessions to the Japanese. The *China Press* bemoaned that a "Japanese reign of terror" was emerging in Hongkou, where "non-Japanese residents...have lost the sense of security that they formerly possessed. They do not know at what moment they may be assaulted by a Japanese mob on suspicion that they are unfriendly and maltreated without the municipal police being allowed to afford them the protection for which they directly pay."¹⁵⁰ Regarding the 1927 agreement, which had never been fully disclosed to the public, it demanded an official SMC clarification on "whether it was a correct interpretation... that the municipal authorities had surrendered... the power of preserving peace and order... in Hongkew."¹⁵¹ Chinese newspapers, while showing sympathy towards Bellamy, warned their readers of an imminent Anglo-Japanese conflict that would might divide the Settlement into separate British and Japanese zones of influence. A *Chenbao* editorial even prophesized that if the Chinese cannot take back the Settlement, "they will soon be subject to British control plus a super-control by the Japanese – a double slavery!"¹⁵²

This public outcry convinced the SMC of the urgent need to clarify the extent of its jurisdictional authority. In a public letter to the press, Fessenden noted that, "Very few of the newspaper gentlemen to whom I refer appear to have any knowledge whatever of the rights and

¹⁴⁹ *SN*, June 28, 1934, morning edition; *SNN*, June 28, 1934, morning edition.

¹⁵⁰ *CP*, July 3, 1934.

¹⁵¹ *CP*, June 30, 1934.

¹⁵² *Chenbao*, June 30, 1934.

powers of the Shanghai Municipal Police. They do not appear to know that the SMP, at least in so far as foreigners having extraterritorial rights are concerned, have no power to make an arrest without a warrant unless the offense is committed in their presence, or the circumstances are such that they would be justified in law in making an arrest without a warrant.”¹⁵³ Concerning the “widespread misconception... that control over Japanese civilians in the Hongkew District as elsewhere is vested in the Municipal Police and in no-one else,” Fessenden claimed that “nothing could be further from the truth.” However, he denied that the SMC had granted the Japanese navy any special privileges, insisting that the municipal police had adhered to its longstanding practice of non-interference with the patrols of any foreign powers.¹⁵⁴

In late July, the SMC announced Bellamy’s suspension from duty, citing his attempt to arrest a Japanese marine as a breach of police discipline. Anticipating public backlash, it had kept secret its negotiations with Japanese authorities, but this strategy only further eroded its credibility. Even the *North China Daily News*, which had traditionally functioned as the mouthpiece for the Settlement regime, criticized the SMC’s lack of transparency, likening it to “the willful blindness of the ostrich.”¹⁵⁵ During this period, Japanese consular authorities busied themselves with containing unrest among the settlers. They arrested twenty-six people for participating in the mob violence on June 28, deported three ringleaders and banned them from entering China for two years, and sentenced others to detention ranging from seven to twenty days.¹⁵⁶ Due to the secrecy of these negotiations, rumors circulated that Consul General Ishii and the SMC chairman Macnaghten had struck a deal to exchange Bellamy’s suspension for the punishment of the Japanese rioters. The SMC and the Japanese consulate, however, denied such

¹⁵³ SMA U1-6-137: Stirling Fessenden to E. T. Peyton-Griffin, July 3, 1934.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ *NCDN*, July 28, 1934.

¹⁵⁶ *SNN*, July 27, 1934, evening edition.

politicking, insisting that the respective measures taken against Bellamy and Japanese rioters were purely judicial decisions.¹⁵⁷

But to most observers, Bellamy was evidently a victim of the SMC's appeasement policy towards the Japanese. In an essay titled "Good-Bye Shanghai," a British resident lamented that Bellamy's fate was "only proof that the SMC has yielded to every demand of the insatiable Japanese... China may be weak, but the Shanghai Municipal Council is weaker."¹⁵⁸ But much more stood at stake—if the Shanghai Incident exposed the wartime vulnerability of the Settlement, the Bellamy case shattered any remaining political myths about the old treaty-port regime. One such myth, long propagated by the SMC itself among the local expatriates, was that the Council and the Settlement's governance were accountable solely to the ratepayers. In 1927, when defending the Settlement in face of the Chinese revolution, Fessenden emphasized its unique international nature that set it apart from other foreign concessions in China. The Settlement had been and could only be governed by its own laws, he contended, because it was a voluntary association of residents of various nations.¹⁵⁹ However, the biggest weakness of Fessenden's "social contract theory" lay in his seeming failure to anticipate internal challenges to this "voluntary association." By the mid-1930s, as Japanese separatism relentlessly gained momentum, Fessenden himself had to repudiate the myths to which he had personally contributed.

To rescue itself from the disgrace of bowing to Japanese might, the SMC was forced to forsake the "noble traditions" of the Settlement. This ideological retreat, in turn, paved the way for the Japanese navy's further usurpation of municipal policing, starting with a self-proclaimed

¹⁵⁷ *NCDN*, August 6, 1934; and *CP*, August 9, 1934.

¹⁵⁸ *CP*, July 28, 1934.

¹⁵⁹ Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire*, 35-36.

role in local “peace preservation” (*chian iji* 治安維持) and the suppression of anti-Japanese activities. After the murders of Nakayama and Takase, for example, the SLP quickly stepped in by dispatching investigators to the crime scenes, deploying sentries in neighboring areas, and arresting and interrogating suspects on its own.¹⁶⁰ Simultaneously, it ramped up regular street patrols to handle minor incidents involving Japanese residents, such as assaults and thefts—in one case, a Japanese woman even reported to the marines that she had been peeped at while taking a bath!¹⁶¹

As local settlers cheered the SLP’s expanded role, they also became actively involved in the Imperial Navy’s propaganda campaign to enhance its ideological and cultural influence across the Japanese society after 1932. On May 15, 1932, eleven ultranationalist naval officers assassinated Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi in an attempted coup d’état of the party government; in late 1933, shortly after the trial for these perpetrators started, the Shanghai community joined the petition movement for clemency in the metropole and sent an appeal signed by over three hundred individuals.¹⁶² In November that year, the Japanese Navy League (Nihon kaigun kyōkai 日本海軍協会) established a local chapter in Shanghai. This semi-official body aimed to cultivate “the spirit of a maritime nation” (*kaikoku seishin* 海國精神) among the public and advance navy’s mission and traditions through print materials, public lectures, movie screenings, and warship tours. Originally founded in 1917 as the naval counterpart to the Imperial Military Reservists’ Association, its impact remained limited until the 1930s, when the navy began to develop it nationwide as a mass mobilization tool. A key objective of this movement was to rally the Japanese public support for the navy’s efforts to abrogate the London

¹⁶⁰ NARA SMP D-7073: SMP Special Branch, “Report,” November 10, 1935; *CP*, November 14, 1936.

¹⁶¹ *SNN*, January 29, 1937, morning edition.

¹⁶² *Yomiuri*, September 22, 1933, morning edition.

Naval Treaty and achieve tonnage parity with Great Britain and the United States,¹⁶³ but it was also marked by a broader goal to promote the navy's vision of maritime defense and expansion that occasionally conflicted with the army's continentally oriented policy.¹⁶⁴ During this period, the navy's expansionist agenda resonated particularly strongly within the Shanghai community, which helped build the League's first and one of its largest overseas branches. Upon the Shanghai chapter's inauguration, Prime Minister Saitō Makoto, a retired admiral and the League's president, sent a personal congratulatory message in which he claimed that Shanghai had historically been the foreign location most tightly linked to the Imperial Navy and that safeguarding Japanese interests in this area was a locus of its policies.¹⁶⁵ Saitō's remarks apparently found a receptive audience among local settlers, as the League had enlisted 1,600 members in Shanghai within a month.¹⁶⁶ This figure grew continuously in the following years, making Shanghai chapter larger than many prefectural ones in the home islands.¹⁶⁷

Besides the Navy League, daily interactions between the navy and the settler community solidified the bond between the two during the 1930s. Female high school students visited SLP barracks and cared for the wounded.¹⁶⁸ Business school students celebrated their graduation with a three-day stay at the naval encampment.¹⁶⁹ The JRC frequently organized entertainments for naval officers. Moreover, it became a regular practice for settlers to present gifts to the navy.¹⁷⁰ Members of the local Japanese Women's Association knitted sweaters for the marines as thanks

¹⁶³ Pelz, "Rondon gunshuku kaigi to yoron."

¹⁶⁴ Tsuchida, "1930-nendai ni okeru kaigun no senden to kokuminteki soshiki seibi kōsō: Kaigun kyōkai no hattatsu to sono katsudō."

¹⁶⁵ *SNN*, November 12, 1933, morning edition.

¹⁶⁶ *SNN*, December 3, 1933, morning edition.

¹⁶⁷ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 1176-1179; Kaigun kyōkai, Kaigun kyōkai yōran *Shōwa 14-nen ban*, appendixes.

¹⁶⁸ *SNN*, November 12, 1933, morning edition.

¹⁶⁹ *SNN*, October 13, 1935, morning edition.

¹⁷⁰ *SNN*, August 14, 1934, morning edition.

for their “dedicated service in the harsh winter.”¹⁷¹ In 1936, various Japanese bodies in Shanghai, including the SMP’s Japanese Branch, collectively donated an armored truck to the SLP, which was christened “Hōkoku-gō 報国号” (“Patriotic service”) at a ceremony held on the sports field of a JRC school.¹⁷²

Under the support of the settler community, the everyday presence of Japanese naval power in Hongkou extended beyond the jurisdictional confines of the old treaty-port regime and became a territorial control that rendered both Chinese and foreigners its subjects. In December 1934, Alexander Buchman, an American reporter who photographed the interior of a Japanese armored truck, was detained by the SLP at its headquarters for hours until he surrendered the films under the “persuasion” of an American consul.¹⁷³ In October 1936, a British man named John Thompson was arrested by a SLP patrolman after declaring, “This is China, not Japan,” which a Japanese passerby translated for the latter.¹⁷⁴ In numerous other cases, the Japanese navy took justice into its own hand. Buchman and Thompson shared the same fate with, for example, a German photographer who pointed his camera at a group of marines,¹⁷⁵ a Danish businessman who parked his car at the gate of the Japanese Navy Club,¹⁷⁶ and a Jewish boy who stuck his tongue out at an SLP sentry.¹⁷⁷ In all these cases, neither Western diplomats nor Settlement authorities displayed stood up to defend the extraterritorial rights of foreign citizens as they had done so against Chinese nationalism; they sometimes faulted victims for their “anti-Japanese

¹⁷¹ *SNN*, November 8, 1936, morning edition.

¹⁷² *SNN*, July 16, 1936, morning edition; *NCH*, July 22, 1936.

¹⁷³ *CP*, December 15, 1934; *SNN*, December 15, morning edition, 1934; “Bakkuman jiken 「バックマン」 事件,” in JACAR Ref. B13081258500: “Zai-Shi chūton-gun kankei 在支駐屯軍関係,” December, 1935, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/B13081258500>, [accessed December 5, 2023].

¹⁷⁴ NARA SMP D-7546: SMP, “Record of Investigation,” October 2, 1936.

¹⁷⁵ NARA SMP D-7546: SMP, “Record of Investigation,” October 3, 1936.

¹⁷⁶ NARA SMP D-7546: SMP, “Record of Investigation,” October 7, 1936.

¹⁷⁷ NARA SMP D-7546: SMP, “Record of Investigation,” April 25, 1937.

manner” and advised them to avoid trouble with the Japanese.¹⁷⁸ As the *China Weekly Review* bewailed in late 1936, “While the Imperial Japanese sea and land forces failed to defeat the Chinese, they have had better luck since 1932 in their drive against the Occidental, chiefly British, controllers of the International Settlement.”¹⁷⁹

The Imperial Navy sometimes extolled its post-1932 occupation of Hongkou as a joint Sino-Japanese effort to oust British influence from Chinese soil,¹⁸⁰ a narrative that anticipated Japanese wartime propaganda for Pan-Asianist solidarity against Western imperialism. In practice, the Chinese formed the vast majority of casualties to Japanese military rule. A telling incident occurred in September 1936, when a member of a naval patrol marching down North Sichuan Road was hit by a pear core thrown from a cabaret window. Unable to pinpoint the culprit, they apprehended the cabaret’s owner, Mr. Hu, who they released only after he pledged to “call daily, as long as he lives, at the naval headquarters to report on the progress of his search for the culprit.”¹⁸¹ Fortunately for Mr. Hu, his “life sentence” was lifted several days when the actual “pear tosser” was found.¹⁸²

Conclusion: whose Hongkou?

Newspaper readers might have found the “Pear Core Case,” so dubbed by the press, an amusing anecdote. However, the SLP’s reign of terror brought a slew of grave consequences. After the Nakayama murder, as the SLP multiplied its patrols and sentries in Hongkou and Zhabei, daily arresting and interrogating tens of suspects, it was widely rumored that the

¹⁷⁸ NARA SMP D-7546: SMP, “Record of Investigation,” March 7, 1937.

¹⁷⁹ *CWR*, October 31, 1936.

¹⁸⁰ SMA U1-6-141: Stirling Fessenden, “Conf. Memo. re. Land Regulations and Dr. Shinobu’s view,” July 8, 1933.

¹⁸¹ NARA SMP D-7040: SMP Record of Investigation, September 21, 1936.

¹⁸² *SEPM*, September 26, 1936.

Japanese navy planned to provoke another Shanghai incident. Within a few days, forty thousand Chinese residents had temporarily fled these areas to seek refuge in other parts of the Settlement.¹⁸³ The economic toll alongside the recurrence of such unrest ultimately impacted Japanese settlers themselves. Shortly after the Shanghai Incident, property values in Hongkou plunged: many proprietors wanted to sell, but buyers were scarce.¹⁸⁴ Between 1931 and 1935, total municipal land tax—assessed at 0.7 percent of property value—collected in Hongkou increased only by 11.6 percent, a growth much slower than the Central District’s 26.7 percent and the Western District’s 43.6 percent.¹⁸⁵ By 1936, Hongkou’s realty market had become so depressed that the Shanghai Land Investment Company, one of the city’s largest developers, sold no property this area.¹⁸⁶ Later that year, Hongkou’s Chinese residents’ unions issued a “statement to Japanese nationals” (*gao Riqiao shu* 告日僑書) that first emphasized the shared cultural traditions between China and Japan and appealed to Sun Yat-sen’s vision of Greater Asianism, but it continued:

The foundation of Sino-Japanese friendship is now shaken due to the unilateral and preferential policies of your government (*guiguo dangju duzun duhui zhi zhengce* 貴國當局獨尊獨惠之政策)... Since the September 18 Incident, it is indisputable that China’s sovereignty has been compromised. As for what your nation’s citizens have gained from this, if anything, it has resulted in attracting international criticism and a surge in domestic spendings, with little benefits in return. We do not know the living conditions of your people in the home country, but we observe that... the business conditions of those of you in Shanghai, particularly those of the middle and lower classes, have deteriorated. Who is responsible for this? Recently the Japanese garrison in Shanghai has intensified patrols and set up outposts as if preparing for a major conflict, leading to heightened tension. The industrial and commercial sectors in areas like Zhabei and Hongkou are suffering immensely. We earnestly appeal to Japanese compatriots to advise your authorities to pull back from the brink and avert this crisis. We particularly urge a halt to Japanese military actions in Shanghai to ensure the stability of business operations.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ SMA U1-6-138: Special Political Officer, “Diary,” November 15, 1935; *Shenbao*, November 16, 1935.

¹⁸⁴ *SNN*, October 1, 1933, morning edition.

¹⁸⁵ SMC, *Report for the Year 1931*, 379; SMC, *Report for the Year 1935*, 285.

¹⁸⁶ *CP*, May 14, 1937.

¹⁸⁷ *Shenbao*, November 5, 1936, and November 9, 1936.

The Japanese community dismissed this statement as nonsensical,¹⁸⁸ but it was corroborated by a *Tokyo asahi shinbun* journalist who visited Shanghai in 1936. He too lamented Hongkou's decline into an economic backwater due to the exodus of wealthier Chinese and foreign residents; particularly striking to him was the bleak quietude of the once bustling North Sichuan Road—"a view of *aware*" as he put it.¹⁸⁹ These observations bespoke the central dilemma that confronted the Japanese settlers in Shanghai throughout the 1930s: how to secure a zone of political and military dominance without destabilizing the social and commercial fabric of the treaty port. Reconciling these objectives became increasingly difficult with the rise of chauvinistic sentiments among *dochaku-ha* settlers, who felt that the mounting threat from Chinese nationalism, the SMC's ineffectiveness and the untrustworthiness of their own diplomats combined left them no choice but to partner with the navy for self-protection.

While the settlers fervently supported their navy's aggressive bucking of the Settlement's established order, the economic damage this caused hit them the hardest. By the mid-1930s, Japanese exports to China began to recover, and large Japanese commercial establishments sought to resume expansion. But escalating Sino-Japanese hostilities, exacerbated by worldwide depression, prolonged the hardship of local Japanese enterprises including restaurants, shops, and inns, which fell into operational difficulties one after another.¹⁹⁰ The *tanomoshikō* 頼母子講, a traditional practice of rotating savings and credit, revived among merchants and shopkeepers in Hongkou as a vital means of mutual aid.¹⁹¹ *Fukeiki* (不景気; "hard times") became a recurring newspaper headline, consistently capturing the forefront of local press. In late 1934, the restaurant and barber *kumiai* fiercely protested against the plans of Japanese department stores to

¹⁸⁸ *SNN*, November 6, 1936, evening edition, and November 10, 1936, evening edition.

¹⁸⁹ *TA*, January 15, 1936, morning edition.

¹⁹⁰ *Shōwa jū nen zai Shanhai Sōryōjikan keisatsu jimu jōkyō*, in *GKS*, vol. 43, 37-52.

¹⁹¹ *SNN*, March 6, 1934, morning edition.

introduce new food courts and hairdressing service, which they thought would further exacerbate their difficulties.¹⁹²

Moreover, as mentioned in Chapter 1, small businesses became heavily reliant on reconstruction funds from the metropolitan government after the Shanghai Incident. Initially, these funds were offered as loans to qualified applicants with a repayment term of three years. By 1935, these loans had reached a total of five million yen, but almost no recipients could make timely repayment. JRC and JAASU leaders persistently lobbied in Tokyo to extend repayment deadlines and reduce interest rates, and in 1936, they persuaded their home government to grant a five-year extension.¹⁹³ Settlers responded to their economic insecurity by pursuing greater autarky. Shortly after the GMD government's 1935 currency reform, Japanese shops in Hongkou announced their adoption of a "yen standard" that set prices in yen and adjusting the Chinese currency equivalent daily to avoid losses incurred from exchange rate fluctuation.¹⁹⁴ This move, however, appeared to the Chinese as the newest sign of Japanese economic intrusion and did little to improve local business conditions. Upon his departure in mid-1936, Ishii Itarō expressed pessimism in his farewell speech to the local Japanese community, confessing that there is no telling when this would improve and urging settlers to find a solution through "self-help" (*jiryoku kōsei* 自力甦生).¹⁹⁵

While consular authorities showed some concern about settlers' economic predicament, as it led to issues like unpaid rent, tax evasion, and a myriad of crimes, it was largely disregarded by the navy. By this time, the navy had secured a Japanese-controlled Hongkou alongside a

¹⁹² *SNN*, November 26, 1934, morning edition.

¹⁹³ *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 565-568, and 1135-1146. For more on the reconstruction fund, see Yamamura, *Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai no keisei to tenkai*, 259-266.

¹⁹⁴ *SNN*, December 10, 1935, morning edition, and January 14, 1936, morning edition; Shanghai shōkō kaigisho, *Kinyōkai panfuretto*, no. 158, December 10, 1935, 13-15.

¹⁹⁵ *SNN*, July 5, 1936, evening edition.

demilitarized Chinese Shanghai, a strategic foothold to station a substantial force close to the GMD's power center and ready for deployment in the Yangzi Valley—similar to what the army had acquired on the Liaodong Peninsula after the Russo-Japanese War. However, the Japanese community failed to recognize the crucial divergences between their interests and those of the state and between Shanghai and Manchuria. As Fessenden had once marked, Shanghai's international character set it apart from other treaty ports. This claim might have seemed anachronistic against the background of the burgeoning Chinese rights recovery movement, but it should not have gone unnoticed by local Japanese settlers, whose livelihoods hinged on the city's economic vibrance and political stability as an international commercial hub. Yet, in aiding the Imperial Navy to transform Hongkou into an effective "Japanese concession," they created a colonial enclave for the empire not as much as for their own.

Conclusion

On August 14, 1937, Nationalist troops launched a campaign against Japanese forces in Shanghai, starting with an aerial strike on their flagship, the *Izumo*, docked in the Huangpu River. The bombs badly missed the target and hit the corner of the Bund and Nanjing Road instead, causing over a thousand Chinese and foreign deaths. Thereafter, Chinese forces began to attack Japanese positions in Yangshupu and Hongkou, including the SLP's headquarters, from multiple directions. Chiang Kai-shek had decided to manifest Chinese determination and capability of fighting the Japanese and to do so in close view of the Westerners. He also wanted to divert Japanese attention from the North China Plain, drawing them into the urban maze of Shanghai and its surrounding mudflats.¹ Shanghai, again, became a "hostage to politics."² Continuing until mid-November, the battle saw deployment of over a million troops from two sides and resulted in half a million military and civilian casualties. It concluded with Chinese retreat and Japanese occupation of the Chinese municipality as well as the northern half of the International Settlement.

During the early months of the conflict, foreign residents did not foresee a long, drenching war that would be markedly different from the upheavals Shanghai had experienced in the past, although this time their sympathies were mostly aligned with the Chinese.³ They continued to expect safety within the Settlement shielded by its long-nurtured "neutrality." The influx of refugees, despite its unprecedented scale, was not a novel scene. Shortly after the start of conflict, similar to its response in 1932, the SMP ordered the evacuation of its staff in

¹ Van de Ven, *China at War*, 78-80.

² Barnett, *Economic Shanghai*, 41.

³ Bickers, "Settlers and Diplomats: The End of British Hegemony in the International Settlement, 1937-1945," 234.

Yangshupu and north Hongkou and transferred them all to the Hongkou police station.⁴ The Japanese officials, who found themselves “between a rock and a hard place” (*shintai ryōnan no kujō* 進退兩難の苦境), followed the order, but they continued to venture into the battle zone to protect Japanese nationals with “a resolve to face death” (*kesshiteki kakugo* 決死的覚悟); in the subsequent weeks, they worked closely with the Japanese military, acting as translators and guides, conducting searches of “mufti corps,” and performing intelligence work.⁵ Unlike in 1932, the SMP was never able to restore its presence north of the Suzhou Creek. By the end of 1937, municipal police stationed began to be reoccupied, but Hongkou and Yangshupu had come under firm Japanese military control, with sentries posted at all entry points and entrance for Chinese individuals restricted to those holding Japanese-issued passes. In the following year, the SMP managed to resume some of its operations, but these were limited to traffic duty and patrolling a few small areas designated by the Japanese authorities.⁶

Between 1938 and 1940, there was a seeming return to “normalcy” in Shanghai’s foreign enclaves, now rendered a “lone islet” (*gudao* 孤島) under Japanese siege. Anxieties over acute food shortage were temporarily lifted; industrial activities began to recover; and there appeared to be a wartime boom of culture and commerce.⁷ Moreover, for the Shanghailanders, the detachment of Hongkou, which was already deemed a “Japanese kingdom” before the war, from the “Model Settlement” might have registered as particularly significant. The veneer of this “normalcy,” however, belied Settlement authorities’ continuous bowing to Japanese pressure. The thriving commercial radio in *gudao* Shanghai, for example, was facilitated by the SMC’s

⁴ SMC, *Report for the Year 1937*, 76.

⁵ Uehara, *Shanghai kyōdō sokai shi*, 162-173.

⁶ SMC, *Report for the Year 1937*, 76-77; SMC, *Report for the Year 1938*, 21.

⁷ Henriot, “Shanghai and the Experience of War: the Fate of Refugees”; Henriot, “Shanghai Industries under Japanese Occupation”; Carlton Benson, “Back to Business as Usual: the Resurgence of Commercial Radio Broadcasting in *Gudao* Shanghai”; Kikuchi, “Senji Shanghai no hyakkaten to shōgyō bunka.”

compliance with Japanese demands for censoring nationalist propaganda and war-related content,⁸ which, as we have seen in Chapter 4, was not the case in the prewar years. Indeed, the Settlement was deprived of much of its autonomy in dealing with the Japanese. The years 1938 and 1939 saw no municipal elections and no Japanese attempts to gain more representation on the Council. This was not because of the relenting of local Japanese settlers' political aspirations; instead, it resulted from the fact that much of the SMC-Japanese interaction was now carried out as diplomatic exchange in Tokyo between the British embassy and the Japanese government.⁹ However, Chinese resistance against Japan and its puppet regimes continued in Shanghai, often using the Settlement as a safe haven; political terrorism constantly placed the *gudao* under the shadow of violent crimes.¹⁰ This led to intensifying Japanese efforts to align Settlement policies with its war objectives, and a continual discussion of the Settlement's "animosity" (*tekisei* 敵性) among Japanese militarists, diplomats, and political scholars.¹¹

The war transformed the local Japanese community too. During the weeks after the Marco Polo Bridge incident in July 1937, as Sino-Japanese tensions built, Japanese evacuees from upper Yangzi Valley started to arrive in Shanghai, necessitating the undertaking of tasks such as food distribution and shelter arrangement by the JRC and the JAASU. The initial repatriation after the onset of hostilities temporarily reduced local Japanese population, but by the end of 1937, many had returned, joined by tens of thousands of newcomers who continued to flock into Shanghai throughout the war. By 1939, the Japanese population in Shanghai had swelled to over 50,000; this figure peaked in 1943 when it reached 104,000. The wartime

⁸ Carlton Benson, "Back to Business as Usual."

⁹ Bickers, "Settlers and Diplomats," 234; Fujita, *Kyoryūmin no Shanhai*, 238-239.

¹⁰ Wakeman, *The Shanghai Badlands*.

¹¹ See Ueda, *Shina jihen to Shanhai sokai mondai*; Ueda, *Shina sokai ron*; Sugiyama, *Mato Shanhai chika kōnichitero no zenbō*; Kōa-in kachū renrakubu, *Shanghai sokai no tekisei chōsa*; Takatsuna, "Kokusai toshi" *Shanhai no naka no Nihonjin*, chapter 4.

arrivals, often dubbed the *shinkō-ha* (新興派; “new-rising faction”), included large numbers of bureaucrats, large-firm employees, and those associated with state-sponsored enterprises such as the Central China Development Corporation (Chū Shina shinkō kabushiki kaisha 中支那振興株式会社), a semi-government company tasked with harnessing economic resources in occupied China.¹² However, many more were self-made, small-time “fortune-seekers” (*hitohatagumi* 一旗組) not much different from prewar *dochaku-ha* settlers, who primarily competed among themselves for space and business opportunities in Hongkou.¹³ To cope with the rapid growth of the local Japanese society, the JRC underwent considerable expansion in personnel and institutional capability, including the creation of a new Society Department (Shakaika 社会課), which provided basic social welfare, offered employment and housing support for settlers and newcomers, and organized various logistical supports for the Japanese troops (*gunji engō jig'yō* 軍事援護事業).¹⁴ Meanwhile, the influx of newcomers led to renewed concerns about the potential moral degeneration of the settler community. In August 1938, the JRC initiated a Self-Restraint Society (Shanghai jishuku kai 上海自肅会), echoing the anti-gambling campaign in 1930 discussed in Chapter 5, to curb behaviors that could tarnish Japan’s national image and to promote rapport with the local Chinese populace.¹⁵

The JRC increasingly functioned as a quasi-municipal government over time, with its 1941 expenditures reaching nearly four million dollars, a significant growth from the 1936 figure

¹² Takatsuna, “Senji Shanghai no keizai • shakai henyō to Chū Shina shinkō kabushiki kaisha ni kansuru kisoteki kenkyū.”

¹³ Yamamura, “Ajia Taiheiyō sensōki ni okeru Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai (jō): Nihonjin kyoryūmin to Kajin shakai.”

¹⁴ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 986-992; Fogel, “‘Shanghai-Japan’,” 351-354.

¹⁵ Takatsuna, “‘Yōsūkō’ ni miru Shanghai nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai,” 27-29.

of 770,000, even considering the threefold general inflation during this period.¹⁶ This, however, did not mean that the Settlement regime had become irrelevant in Japanese lives. In 1938, the central China Urban Bus company, a Japanese-sponsored firm, took over tramway and omnibus services in Hongkou and Yangshupu, but basic utilities in these areas still came from foreign-operated facilities like the Shanghai Waterworks Company and Shanghai Power Company. When the Shanghai Shrine was cut off from water supply in November 1937 amid the battle, the JRC rushed to contact the SMC's Public Works Department (PWD) for repairs.¹⁷ In subsequent years, the PWD continued to provide essential services such as road upkeep and refuse collection in the Northern and Eastern Districts, while the JRC kept demanding more municipal aids for its schools and clinic. By 1939, the SMC was also resuming its licensing powers north of the Suzhou Creek in cooperation with Japanese authorities.¹⁸ For these reasons, Japanese residents were urged to continue paying municipal rates, which they largely did.¹⁹ In 1940, as the number of Japanese voters multiplied—owing partly to the increase of Japanese ratepayers and partly Japanese companies' strategic splitting of their holdings to create more votes—they resumed the campaign for additional seats on the Council, nominating five candidates for this year's election to achieve parity with the British. This move, again, was countered by a similar strategy of the Anglo-American community, resulting in the maintenance of the status quo.²⁰ Unsurprisingly, this defeat caused strong indignation among the Japanese settlers, leading to the formation of the Japanese Ratepayers' Association (Nihonjin nōzeisha kai 日本人納税者會) just a week later,

¹⁶ Shanhai kyoryūmindan, *Shanhai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 926-930.

¹⁷ SMA U1-14-3331: M. Amano, Chairman of JRC to G. G. Philips, Secretary of SMC, November 15, 1937.

¹⁸ SMC, *Report for the Year 1939*, 27.

¹⁹ SMA U1-14-3328: G. Hashimoto, Vice-Chairman of JAASU to Public Works Department, SMC, March 7, 1941.

²⁰ Fujita, *Kyoryūmin no Shanhai*, 238-239; Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 89-90.

whose inaugural president was none other than Hayashi Yūkichi, the familiar veteran “diplomat.”²¹

Whatever ambitious plans Hayashi had in mind for the 1941 election were cut short by a shocking event at the special ratepayers’ meeting held in January of that year. The meeting was convened to discuss a motion that included increasing municipal land tax rates by forty percent, which was considered necessary to alleviate the SMC’s dire financial straits but was strongly opposed by Japanese settlers who wanted no extra tax burden. After Hayashi’s proposal to resort to commercial loans was met with loud laughter from the audience and rebutted by the SMC chairman William J. Keswick as “unsound,” he ascended the podium and shot Keswick with a pistol.²² The seventy-year-old Hayashi was later tried at Nagasaki for attempted murder and sentenced to two years of hard labor, suspended for five years.²³ Local tensions had reached a degree that the British consul and the SMC had to work out a Provisional Council Agreement, which suspended the Land Regulations and the electoral process. A consular-appointed Council, which reflected a balance between the Axis and Allied nationals, was formed to uphold the Settlement’s “neutrality.”²⁴ After Pearl Harbor, the SMC remained in place under Japanese permission. All Allied councilors resigned in early 1942, but they continued to sit on various municipal committees, and so did most of the foreign staff in the rest of the SMC, whose service was deemed necessary by the Japanese authorities to keep the Settlement running. In May 1943, the Allied Powers relinquished their extraterritorial rights in China and returned all settlements to

²¹ Shanhai kyoryūmindan, *Shanhai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki’nenshi*, 1261-1269.

²² Wakeman, *Shanghai Badlands*, 100-103.

²³ *CWR*, May 17, 1941.

²⁴ Bickers, “Settlers and Diplomats,” 239; Fujita, *Kyoryūmin no Shanhai*, 256-261; Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai*, 80. The 1941 Council consisted of three British, three Americans, three Japanese, four Chinese (two associated with Chongqing and two with Nanjing), one Dutch, one Swiss, and one German.

the Nationalist government, a move anticipated by the Japanese government, which made a similar arrangement with the Wang Jingwei regime earlier that year.

This marked the end of a century of Western dominance in Shanghai, yet it was hardly a triumph for Japanese settlers. During the wartime period, the local Japanese community remained under the watchful eyes of the metropolitan government, and it was increasingly subjected to state regulations and mobilization. As early as 1939, all settler-run newspapers in Shanghai were discontinued and merged into the newly founded *Tairiku shinpō* 大陸新報, co-sponsored by Japanese military and civil authorities as “the only Japanese policy newspaper in central China.”²⁵ The Japanese consular police strengthened measures against “delinquent” settlers who were now labelled as “the pests of Asian Prosperity” (*Kō-A no mushi* 興亜の虫).²⁶ In late 1940, the JRC was reformed according to the revised Settlement Corporation Law; half of its fifty representatives (*giin*) were now appointed directly by the consulate.²⁷ In early 1941, shortly after the enactment of the National Citizens School Ordinance (*Kokumin gakkōrei* 国民学校令), all JRC elementary schools, enrolling over ten thousand pupils by then, were renamed accordingly and updated their curriculum to underscore the students’ loyalty and patriotic service as imperial subjects; moreover, the JRC established a Social Education Section (*Shakai kyōiku ka* 社会教育課) to exercise closer oversight of students’ activities outside the school.²⁸ These developments culminated in the disbandment of the JAASU in mid-1942 by consular decree. Individual *chōnaikai* continued to function, facilitating mutual help among neighbors and

²⁵ Yamamoto, “Shanghai kyoryūmin wo sendō suru media 'Tairiku shinpō'”; Takatsuna et al., *Senji Shanghai no media: bunkateki poritikusu no shiza kara*.

²⁶ Takatsuna, “'Yōsūkō' ni miru Shanghai nihonjin kyoryūmin shakai,” 30.

²⁷ Ibid., 31-33.

²⁸ Shanghai kyoryūmindan, *Shanghai kyoryūmindan sanjū shūnen ki'nenshi*, 935, and 981-983. See also Chen, “Shanghai Nihonjin kyoryūmin no shitei kyōiku”; Kojima, “Shanghai no Nihonjin gakkō no seikaku.”

overseeing neighborhood security, but they came under the supervision of the JRC's newly established Citizens Department (Shimin bu 市民部) to ensure the “unification” (*ichigenka* 一元化) of settler organizations.²⁹ Settlers were thus deprived of the most important venue that had allowed them considerable agency in dealing with the foreign municipality and the native society, as both needs had now disappeared.

Whether voluntarily or by force, the incorporation of settlers into the Japan's wartime empire directly translated into their postwar fate. After the GMD takeover of Shanghai in September 1945, it worked with the US to repatriate all Japanese nationals in “former colonies,” including those who were born or had spent most of their lives in Shanghai, back to the home islands. This project began by relocating them to the concentration zones (Riqiao jizhong qu 日僑集中區), where they awaited their “homeward” journey for weeks or months. The repatriation process revived some of the prewar dynamics of the local Japanese society, as *kaisha-ha* elites once again assumed prominent roles in managing the concentration zones, which operated based on a degree of self-surveillance and self-governance; *dochaku-ha* settlers, on the other hand, challenged this setup and called for “democracy,” while distancing themselves from the *kaisha-ha* and *shinkō-ha*, whom they tried to hold responsible for Japanese aggression in Shanghai. In any case, by mid-1946, nearly all Japanese civilians, irrespective of age, gender, social status, or political outlook—except for a few technologists that the GMD retained—had been repatriated.³⁰ The “Little Tokyo” was no more.

²⁹ Ibid., 1047-1058, and 1088.

³⁰ On postwar repatriation, see Chen, *Shanghai Riqiao shehui shenghuo shi*, chapter 11; Takatsuna, “*Kokusai toshi*” *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*, chapter 7; Sheng, “Homeward Bound: The Postwar Repatriation of Japanese Civilians In Shanghai, 1945-1948.”

This dissertation has traced the Japanese efforts to recolonize Shanghai, not from the vantage point of its seemingly overdetermined finale after 1937. Nor do I interpret the rise of Hongkou's "Japanese Concession" in the mid-1930s as a precursor to the subsequent military occupation. Japanese settlers came to Shanghai well aware of the opportunities and challenges the city had to offer. More importantly, they knew what to expect and what to aspire to as treaty-protected citizens. They demanded more representation in Settlement governance, lobbied for school grants-in-aid, and campaigned for municipal police reform, all without anticipating the Imperial Navy and Army's march into Hongkou and the rest of the Settlement, much less foreseeing their fate of postwar repatriation. These efforts rather represented a decades-long yet fragmented endeavor to adapt to and reshape, while simultaneously preserving, the Settlement and the treaty-port order; meanwhile, this process transformed themselves as an urban community and distinguished their experience as a unique case on the colonial settlement-migration spectrum of Japanese overseas presence in modern times. In the latter half of the interwar period, growing fears of Chinese threats certainly served as a key catalyst for Japanese adoption of more aggressive approaches, but it was still within the treaty framework that Japanese settlers staked and justified their claims to security and prosperity. It was also the Settlement regime that they held accountable for these assurances. Recolonizing Shanghai, in this sense, was much more targeted on the city's existing colonial institutions than on its native space.

This project, as we have seen, had profound impacts on the long-term evolvement of the Settlement as well as its everyday operations, but insofar as one of its main agenda was to end British dominance over municipal power, it failed. This failure partly stemmed from an enduring

dilemma that confronted Japanese settlers throughout the early twentieth century: how to integrate themselves more fully into the Settlement municipality while carving out a relatively autonomous sphere of their own in Hongkou. Underpinning this dilemma was their persistent quandary over whether to appeal to the Settlement's ostensible cosmopolitanism and follow the "norms" of "transnational colonialism," or to act as a cohesive national group and assert their collective rights as a distinctive community. These two strategies were not always mutually exclusive, but in many cases, they required different sets of rhetoric and tactics, and the Japanese were often compelled to choose the latter. Just as "the colonizer's isolation from the native society" proved too luxurious for Japanese "petty urbanites," cosmopolitan rhetoric alone was often too weak a tool for *dochaku-ha* activists, who had neither the socio-economic privileges nor adequate diplomatic resources (sometimes due to lack of support from the *kaisha-ha* elite and consular authorities) to compete in municipal politics on an equal footing with their Anglo-American peers.

The Settlement's cosmopolitanism, of course, was a fragile myth, so too was its long-cherished tradition of local self-governance. The self-proclaimed "Model Settlement," due to its uneven distribution of foreign interests, the diverse and multilayered quotidian experiences it offered, the disparity between its legal configuration and social realities, and its position in a swirling vortex of geopolitical forces, was inherently unstable—both politically and administratively—even without the attack from Chinese nationalists. Yet, its anachronistic racial and political hierarchy was too entrenched to permit a redistribution of municipal power that accurately reflected the shifting imperial balance of power and evolving local socio-economic landscape, let alone to allow for genuine "modernization" of its administrative apparatus. By the time the war broke out, the Settlement was already hopelessly caught between the dual

challenges from Chinese nationalists and Japanese malcontents. The SMC's embarrassment in face of the settler-navy partnership derived from this: the treaty-port traditional order proved too weak against both Chinese nationalism and Japanese military aggression, yet it remained too resilient for Japanese settlers to overcome by themselves.



Figure 6.1. The former Special Landing Party headquarters. (Photograph by author, taken on October 25, 2020)

This compound (No. 2121 North Sichuan Road) still stands in Hongkou and has been used as an office building by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) since 1949. It was recognized as one of Shanghai's "immovable cultural relics" (*buke yidong wenwu* 不可移動文物) during the Third National Cultural Relics Survey conducted between 2007 and 2011. A brief description of the building, inscribed near its entrance, notes that this site was where Japanese militarists provoked the "January 28" and "August 13" Wars.

In present-day Shanghai, remnants of prewar Japanese presence have mostly vanished. While the Western legacy has been viewed through a new, sometimes rosy lens since the reform era, and the skyscrapers along the Bund still stands as monuments to the grandeur of “Old Shanghai,” Chinese memories of Japanese influence in the city have been largely overshadowed by the two Shanghai battles and wartime suppression (Figure 6.1), with a few exceptions like the favorable remembrances linked to Uchiyama Kanzō and other “old friends” (*lao pengyou* 老朋友) of the Chinese people. In Japan, meanwhile, there has been a lasting postwar nostalgia among former settlers, who portrayed Shanghai as a once-beloved *furusato* (“hometown”) now out of reach.³¹ This dissertation has tried to rediscover Japanese position in prewar Shanghai, not as a marginal note to the Bund or as merely a prelude to wartime occupation, but as an integral component of the treaty port’s ever-changing socio-political fabric.

³¹ Takatsuna, “*Kokusai toshi*” *Shanghai no naka no Nihonjin*, chapter 8.

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JACAR	Japan Center for Asian Historical Records, National Archives of Japan 国立公文書館アジア歴史資料センター
NAJDA	National Archives of Japan Digital Archives 国立公文書館デジタルアーカイブ
NARA-SMP	Records of the Shanghai Municipal Police, 1894-1949, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency Record Group 263, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, United States
SMA	Shanghai Municipal Archives 上海市檔案館

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