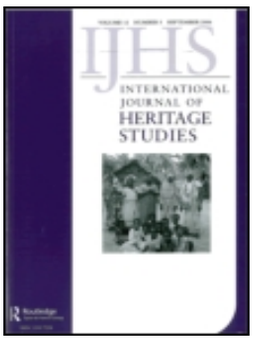

International Journal of Heritage Studies

ISSN: 1352-7258 (Print) 1470-3610 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjhs20

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To cite this article: James A. Flath (2004) Setting Moon and Rising Nationalism: Lugou Bridge as Monument and Memory, International Journal of Heritage Studies, 10:2, 000-000, DOI: 10.1080/13527250410001692886

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/13527250410001692886

Published online: 17 Feb 2007.

International Journal of Heritage Studies
Vol. 10, No. 2, May 2004, pp. 175–192

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Setting Moon and Rising Nationalism: Lugou Bridge as Monument and Memory

James A. Flath

This paper examines Beijing's Lugou Bridge (Marco Polo Bridge) in terms of monument and memory. With 800 years of history to its credit, this structure carries with it a select set of textual memories passed down from one dynasty to the next, and finally into the 20th century when its traditional associations of architectural and natural beauty were supplemented by its modern association with the beginning of the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance (Second World War in China). With the opening of Sino-Japanese diplomacy in the 1970s, the Chinese authorities began to accredit further significance to the bridge as a site of Chinese indignation over Japan's perceived refusal to take responsibility for its wartime aggression. This point was driven home most forcefully through the construction of the Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall in 1985, and the continuing use of the site as a tool of diplomacy. Lugou Bridge, therefore, serves to demonstrate how political authority and cultural nationalism are constructed through the continuing appropriation of monumental artefacts and traditions.

Keywords: Marco Polo Bridge; Anti-Japanese War of Resistance; Monument; Chinese Heritage; Nationalism

On a summer's day in 1985 one last bus trundled over the elegant arches of Beijing's Lugou (Marco Polo) Bridge, and after 793 years of service the span was sealed off to begin a new career as a national monument. This act of bureaucratic finesse did not create the monument, nor did it create the concept of monumentality by which concrete objects are given extraordinary historical significance. The process of designation, however, does mark an important development in China of how historical artefacts are treated by the state.

Lugou Bridge has long been appreciated for its beauty and antiquity, but in the 20th century it was destined to play a strikingly different role in China's grim struggle

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ISSN 1352–7258 (print)/ISSN 1470–3610 (online)
DOI: 10.1080/1352725040001692886

against Japan in the war of 1937–1945, thus creating an alternative national identity as a modern symbol of anti-imperialism. The combination of explicit narratives of heritage and nationalism in one site thus offers an opportunity to study how the two interact in the production of the modern historical site. Having said that, however, it must be recognised that terms like heritage, nation and nationalism are problematic and widely contested concepts. Recent publications such as *Chinese Nationalism* edited by Jonathan Unger (1996), and the more recent *Exploring Nationalisms of China* edited by Xiaoyuan Liu and C. X. George Wei (2002), have begun to untangle some of the many complexities of Chinese nationalism, but they have also made it clear that with its constantly evolving dimensions, Chinese nationalism can never be reduced to a simple or standard definition.

Some generalisations about Chinese nationalism, however, are relatively useful. In particular, the 'culturalism–nationalism' thesis has been influencing discussions of Chinese nationalism ever since it was revised and published by Joseph Levenson in the late 1950s. Levenson's idea, greatly simplified, was that China's traditional polity operated under a system in which the elite owed its allegiance not to a particular territory but to a more abstract belief in the superiority of Chinese culture—i.e. 'culturalism'. In the late 19th and early 20th century this worldview came into conflict with the emerging system of nation-states and its imperative of territorial sovereignty. The response, Levenson argued, was for the Chinese elite to adopt nationalism through which territorial claims could be asserted. The cultural past was not exactly abandoned in the process, but it was reduced to the function of traditionalism.[1]

This thesis, with its overtones of modernisation theory, does contain problematic assumptions about the dichotomy between culture and nation, and the absence of any sense of nationalism in pre-modern China. The culturalism–nationalism thesis, however, remains a useful starting point for the discussion of changing concepts of monumentalism because, as the following discussion will argue, pre-modern Chinese regimes essentially treated their monuments as culturalist artefacts. That is to say, monuments were used by cultural/political elites to legitimate authority not over a geographic space but over a universal culture. This began to change in the 20th century when monuments and other cultural artefacts began to reflect the heightened concerns over the territorial integrity of the nation. Where this discussion departs from the culturalism–nationalism thesis, however, is in the observation that those artefacts never ceased to represent culturalism, and now serve to legitimate authority over both culture *and* national space. By situating the historical monument within nationalist discourse it can be shown that culturalism, or more specifically the cultural monument, is thoroughly embedded in what Wang Gungwu has referred to as 'restoration nationalism'. The monument, in other words, is not a remnant of sentimental traditionalism, it is a concrete structure of authority.

In the post-Mao era the PRC has had to deal with multiple challenges to its identity, ranging from the loss of its primary icon (Chairman Mao) to rapid modernisation, the end of the Cold War and the 1989 Tiananmen uprising. In response, Wang Gungwu suggests, China has become engaged in a soul-searching form of nationalism that 'combines elements of both preservation and renewal, but ties in the faith in a glorious

past more directly with a vision of a great future'.[2] In that sense the monumental conception of the nation, too, is built on the appropriation of earlier forms of monumental narratives which themselves were constructed in the interests of power. In this way the monument becomes part of a structure of power that follows the logic of genealogy, depending on the selection and superscription of authoritative and monumental inscriptions of the past to create authority in the present. The construction of a modern monument, or the reconstitution of an ancient monument, does not invalidate past inscriptions as negative examples, but rather manipulates them as positive tools of legitimacy. Successful use does now depend, and has always depended, on channelling representations into specific forms of memory that support the interests of those having authority over the site. The glorious past, like the glorious future, has its primary application in supporting authority in the present.

While concentrating on the nation as an expression of monumentality, it is also important to note the diversity of monuments in China and the fact that many are only problematically connected with this national meta-narrative. I have argued elsewhere that provincial museums and monuments show significantly more scope for alternative narratives, and thus work at cross-purposes to the establishment of a monolithic national heritage structure (2002). But in turning attention to Beijing, one cannot help but recognise the powerful impression that the Chinese state has made on the public spaces under the jurisdiction of its capital city. This impression has appeared in other studies of Beijing monuments and museums, including Wu Hung's examination of Tiananmen Square in the wake of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre,[3] which focuses on the process of destruction and construction by which the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) remoulded the space in its own image. Rubie Watson's expanded view of Beijing considers how the city has been spatially organised to reflect a national narrative,[4] and in a more focused evaluation of a single site Tamara Hamlish argues that the Palace Museum has become an ideal venue for the assertion of state hegemony.[5]

Although Lugou Bridge has much in common with each of these sites, it is also a unique historical experience. The structure is not as awesome as the Great Wall, nor does it possess the grandeur of the Palace Museum or the architecture of Tiananmen Square. But few heritage sites can match Lugou Bridge in its ability to draw the visitor into an imaginary teleology or evolutionary chronology that begins over eight centuries in the past, and progresses inexorably toward the modern nation-state. It is the power literally to bridge past and present that makes this site so emotive of the continuing relevance of monumentalism.

Lugou Bridge in Imperial China

Lugou Bridge was completed in 1192 under the direction of the Jin, a dynasty founded by the Jurchen people of Manchuria who conquered north China and established their capital on the site of Yanjing, where Beijing stands today.[6] With 11 spans stretching 266 m over the Lugou River, and its virtually countless stone lions,[7] the bridge immediately attracted admirers, including the Zhangzong emperor (r.1190–1208).

Although the Jurchen had once been culturally distinct, the Jin is widely cited in Chinese history as a model case of sinicisation—a foreign dynasty that gave up its militaristic traditions and adopted settled Chinese ways.[8] The Zhangzong emperor, in particular, is remembered as one of the emperors who presided over this cultural transition, and it seems fitting that it was he who gave up the practice of hunting and began to seek the finer points of nature in the hills outside the capital. The best vistas he summarised as the 'Eight Sights of Mount Yan' (*Yanshan bajing*), and among them he included the vision of a full moon setting over the Lugou River.[9] This, along with the bridge that defined that view, would become the most enduring part of the Jin cultural legacy, and while other sights were forgotten or altered over the subsequent dynasties, the 'Moon Over the Lugou at Dawn' (*Lugou xiaoyue*) has persisted into the present as a widely celebrated vista.

The Jin had only a few years to enjoy the view over the Lugou before their capital fell to Genghis Khan in 1215. The bridge, however, stood firm and when Kubilai Khan returned to establish the Yuan dynasty in 1279, it continued to serve as an inspiration to those who crossed it, including Marco Polo who described it in his memoir as 'a very handsome bridge of stone, perhaps unequalled by another in the world', and thus lent the bridge his name in later Western accounts.[10] More relevant to the Chinese conception of the bridge are the poets and artists who captured the structure in word and image not as a singular monolith but as complement to nature.

This understanding of the place of Lugou Bridge within the grandeur of nature continued to develop through the Yuan dynasty,[11] but was carried forward with greater articulation in the subsequent Ming dynasty when the bridge and its environs were again grouped together with other scenic wonders as the 'Eight Scenes of Yanjing' (*Yanjing bajing*). As Susan Naquin suggests, the artistic development of the 'Eight Scenes' should not be taken merely as a flight of artistic enterprise but as a concerted effort to lend scenic and historic legitimacy to the region as it was prepared to accept the renewed designation as capital of the Ming dynasty.[12]

Liu Tong's descriptive Ming dynasty text *Dijing jingwu lue* (1635), in addition to outlining the history of the bridge, devotes considerable space to transcribing poems that pay homage to it. Certainly the most eminent of those poets was Hu Guang (1370–1418), a scholar who rose in the early Ming to obtain, among other appointments, the positions of Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy, and the highest court position of Grand Secretary of the Wenyuan Hall. Unofficially Hu Guang was also a close confidant of the third Ming emperor Yongle, under whose authority the capital would be officially moved from Nanjing to Beijing in 1420.[13] Hu accompanied the emperor on a number of his journeys to and from his home base in Beijing, and it may have been on one of those occasions that he stopped at Lugou Bridge to compose the following lines:

Lugou Bridge
Broken cloud, a tilted pale moon,
The waters of the Sanggan [Lugou] River shine yellow.
A man in a thatched cottage dreams peacefully,
The travellers on the stone bridge alert to the twilight.

> The distant city is illuminated flame-red,
> Frost on the plain as far as the eye can see.
> Attendants to the emperor stationed upon the bridge,
> The flags are soughing; the horses neighing long.
>
> Hu Guang

Wang Fu (1362–1416) was both a contemporary and colleague of Hu Guang, and it was owing to his skill as a calligrapher that Wang found an official position as a draftsman. Beyond the confines of his day job, however, Wang was recognised as perhaps the finest painter and calligrapher of the early Ming dynasty. Following in the style of the great Yuan dynasty master Ni Zan, Wang Fu was described by his contemporaries as

> particularly skilled in painting landscapes, bamboos, and stones. Whenever he got drunk he used to put on a yellow hat and robe and took on a haughty mien. He spread out some paper, rolled up his sleeves, waved the brush and went on splashing and scattering, doing the strangest things which are quite impossible to describe.[14]

In 1413 and 1414 Wang Fu also accompanied the emperor on his journeys to Beijing, and it was on the second trip in 1414 that he composed the hand-scroll 'Picture of Eight Scenes'.[15] This imagined landscape included, naturally, 'A Picture of the Moon Over the Lugou at Dawn', which he also described in an associated poem *Crossing Lugou Bridge in the Emperor's Retinue*:

> The emperor's retinue dons its morning clothes,
> Cock's crow; setting moon; trees in mist.
> Clouds cast shadows across the expanse of mountain peaks,
> A light shimmers across the horizon.
> Whispers are heard from the lonely garrison fire,
> Horse hooves clatter across the frost covered bridge.
> The landscape inspires the imagination,
> And the towers are the hometown of the emperor.[16]
>
> Wang Fu

While it is notable that individuals as powerful as Hu Guang or as talented as Wang Fu chose Lugou Bridge as their artistic subject, it is more important to our understanding of their concept of monumentality that in doing so their descriptions diminish or even ignore the physical structure of the bridge itself. This is best explained through reference to contemporary artistic values, where the mastery of landscape painting, poetry and calligraphy were recognised as the peak of civility. In the pursuit of an art form that could give full rein to the individual's emotional expression there was little call for the technical accuracy or frank description that the manufactured object demanded. For that reason objects such as bridges were seldom included as more than a supporting text to the soaring mountains, stately trees, or in this case setting moon that could represent the spirit of the artist. In the context of the Ming dynasty, therefore, an object like Lugou Bridge is best understood not as a singular monument but as a prop to a grander and more abstract form of monument found in the natural surroundings, and authorised by celebrity recognition in past and present. That was also the impression that would be retained in the text-based memory.

With the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644, Lugou Bridge once again passed into the hands of an alien dynasty, and one that perceived itself to be heir to the earlier Jin.[17] As the sole physical reminder of the earlier dynasty, Lugou Bridge was a living statement of Manchu legitimacy. Repairs to the bridge were conducted repeatedly throughout the dynasty, beginning with the reign of the Kangxi emperor (r.1662–1722), who was a frequent visitor to the site. In 1698 he renamed the river Yongding (Ever Stable), in the apparent hope that the new nomenclature would help control the river's unpredictable behaviour. Three years later he marked the occasion with a poem and stele bearing the title 'Perusing the Yongding River'.[18] The real boost to the bridge's image, however, came in the Qianlong reign (r.1736–1795) when the emperor renewed its status as one of the 'Eight Sights of Beijing', and offered his own views of 'Moon Over the Lugou at Dawn' in 1751.[19] The Qianlong emperor, however, bettered his predecessors by having his calligraphic interpretation of the Zhangzong emperor's 550-year-old words inscribed on a 3.6 m tablet mounted on a granite tortoise at the eastern approach to the bridge.[20] Given the perceived lineage of the Manchu, and the real lineage of the bridge, the Qianlong emperor's attention to the structure might be interpreted as an act of piety toward his alleged ancestors, and a potent claim for Manchu legitimacy.

What the Qianlong emperor had accomplished in the process was not simply to stake a claim to territory but to legitimate that claim by appropriating the literary authority of the past and delivering that idea into the common realm by fixing it in

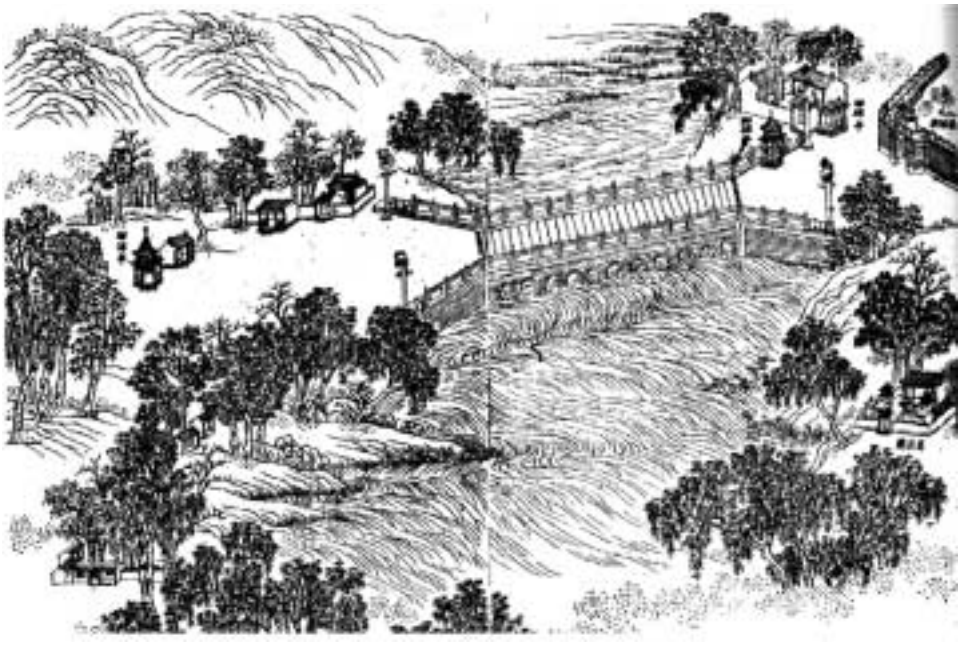

Figure 1 Lugou Bridge in 1771. *Nan xun shengdian* 95: 5226–27; reproduced from Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Figure 2 'Moon Over the Lugou at Dawn'. Stele in calligraphy of the Qianlong emperor, 1751. Author's photo.

stone. Whether or not most people understood the reference to the Jin dynasty, the idea of 'Moon Over the Lugou at Dawn' was no longer just a poetic allusion by which an educated elite could contextualise the past; it was now on public display as a physical link to the past for all who crossed the bridge. That display, however, was not for the purpose of honouring the past or being remembered in the future; it was about sustaining political legitimacy in the present. The Qianlong emperor had created and patronised a concrete link to past authority as an element of political authority in his present; the bridge had become a monument.

Lugou Bridge in the Age of Nationalism

The reputation of Lugou Bridge as a venerable antique and object of beauty began to undergo a radical transformation in the 20th century. Travel guides to Beijing from the late Qing and early Republican years continued to portray the bridge as an interesting artefact, although the construction of a railway bridge several hundred metres from the original meant that the original was no longer the primary passage in the south-western approach to Beijing.[21] The bridge continued to serve local traffic, but for long-distance travellers the structure had become an object more likely to be observed in passage from the speeding train. In any case, the deteriorating international situation and the

growing threat of war with Japan increasingly overshadowed preoccupations such as tourism. Far from being forgotten amid the turmoil, however, Lugou Bridge was to become one of the greatest symbols of anti-Japanese resistance.

The emergence of a strong Japanese military in the late 19th century posed a continuing threat to China, beginning with defeat and the loss of territory in the First Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, and continuing through Japan's ever-increasing encroachments on Chinese sovereignty as spelled out by the infamous '21 Demands' of 1915, and the 1919 Treaty of Versailles which gave Japan control over former German holdings in Shandong province. Tensions had been heightened in the 1930s with the occupation of Manchuria by the Japanese Kwantung army, and the establishment of the puppet-state Manchukuo.

According to treaty, Japan had also obtained the right to exercise troops in the vicinity of Lugou Bridge and the neighbouring railway bridge, which now appeared as strategically important to the control of rail traffic throughout the region. It was during one such manoeuvre on 7 July 1937 that a Chinese military detachment on the opposite side of the river lobbed a shell into the Japanese camp, and although this produced no casualties the failure of one Japanese soldier to appear for role-call prompted an abortive attack on the Chinese position in the town of Wanping. From that point the diplomatic and military situation deteriorated, and by the end of the month Japan had occupied the entire Beijing–Tianjin region in what was effectively the first offensive of the Second World War, better known in China as the Anti-Japanese War (*kang-Ri zhanzheng*).[22]

The recognition of Lugou Bridge as a symbol of resistance was immediate. It took only three days for a collective of Shanghai dramatists to write a three-act play titled *Protect Lugou Bridge*.[23] Within weeks, other poems and memorials began to appear with titles such as 'Battle Anthem of Lugou Bridge' (*Lugouqiao zhange*) by Huo Songlin, and 'July Seventh Incident' by Tang Runmin.[24] Popular songs also emerged and were taken up as marching tunes by the Chinese military, including the following known simply as *Lugou Bridge*:

> Lugou Bridge, Lugou Bridge,
> Where our men laid down their lives,
> We will avenge their sacrifice.
> No fear when planes and tanks attack,
> We lift our swords and drive them back.
> Lugou Bridge, Lugou Bridge,
> This is where our nation lives or dies.[25]

The battle also coincides with the early development of Chinese journalistic correspondence, and it was largely through the medium of the newspaper that Lugou Bridge began to develop its status as an icon of resistance. The leading Tianjin newspaper *Dagongbao*, for example, began to cover the story on 9 July and continued to do so in subsequent days as the details unfolded. In the heat of war the reports naturally focused on problems of immediate importance rather than any sentimentality about the history or scenic beauty of Lugou Bridge. Many of those reports, however, did carry with them a visual reminder as photographs began to juxtapose the arches and stone lions of

Lugou Bridge with the headlines of Japanese aggression.[26] These were supplemented after 23 July by the stirring editorials of Fan Changjiang, one of China's more celebrated correspondents, who illustrated the first instalment of his three piece series on the Lugou Bridge Incident with a photograph of the Qianlong emperor's setting moon stele.[27] Another contemporary newspaper, *Shibao*, took a more traditional approach to Lugou Bridge, reproducing ancient poetry to commemorate the situation on 9 July 1937, and on 13 July printing an ode to the stone lions that had been witness to the battle a week earlier.[28] Although the bridge never again figured prominently in battle, the media had played their role in securing the place of the bridge as a definitive symbol of the war.

Popular as the bridge was as a symbol of resistance, it nonetheless took a remarkably long time for it to acquire official recognition. The 10th anniversary of the 7 July incident might have been an appropriate moment to commemorate the site, and indeed *Dagongbao*'s Wang Lingqi did return to the scene on 8 July 1947, where he reported that the stele 'Moon Over the Lugou' still stood erect—its lettering now coloured red as if to symbolise 'the bloodbath of the Anti-Japanese War'.[29] When the communists came to power in 1949, Lugou Bridge continued to appear in newspapers on important anniversaries, including 7 July 1957 when it was acknowledged in *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*, the official voice of the CCP) with an article going by the title of 'Remembering this Day Twenty Years Ago'.[30] The tone of the article, however, was set by its opening phrase '9/18', referring not to the Lugou Bridge Incident but to the Mukden Incident on 18 September 1931—a date that is regarded in PRC historiography as the real beginning of the Japanese invasion, which Chiang Kai-shek had supposedly declined to resist until that fateful day in 1937. The recognition of the event was thus not without its political implications, and these had to be handled with care lest the authors appeared to sanction a rival that still posed a significant threat from Taiwan. The appropriation of GMD glory, therefore, required that the incident be framed within the wider 'people's war' that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) had patronised. A following article in the same newspaper, using the prevailing tone of socialist romanticism, squeezed further significance out of the anniversary by contrasting the violence of 20 years past with the present peaceful scenery, and promised to return in 20 more years to report on how things had turned out.[31]

In terms of physical protection and preservation, only in 1961 did the National Representative Committee designate the bridge and adjacent walled town of Wanping as national historic sites.[32] This in itself should be regarded as a departure from policy in a state where what little had been done to preserve historical artefacts had been left to local and provincial authorities.[33] The timing of 1961 corresponds to the more significant, although temporary, political departure of Mao Zedong from the apex of power, and his replacement by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. The creation of a state-sponsored programme of heritage conservation under this rival administration suggests the intent to diversify state iconography, and draw attention away from Mao himself. But even with that level of recognition there was no attempt physically to interpret the bridge as a symbol of nationalism or anti-militarism through any form of public facility.

Whatever intentions the Deng/Liu administration may have had for developing a system of state-protected historical artefacts, all such policies went into abeyance with the return of Mao and the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, when far beyond simply ignoring objects of antiquity the state and its radical adherents actively demolished them. Although Lugou Bridge survived this period, the *People's Daily* of 7 July 1967 demonstrates its diminished reputation. As in previous decennial anniversaries, the editorial returned to the subject of the Anti-Japanese War, but not to Lugou Bridge, focusing exclusively on the evils of Japanese imperialism and the brilliance of Mao Zedong thought.[34] Likewise, in 1977, if anyone had actually been lured back by the promise of 20 years earlier, they would have been disappointed to find that the 40th Anti-Japanese War anniversary issue of *People's Daily* contained not a single reference to either the war or the bridge.[35]

China is by no means the only country to have neglected its memories of the Second World War during this timeframe, but it is worth considering why the memory of Lugou Bridge and other notable battle sites were languishing after four decades. An obvious reason relating especially to Lugou Bridge is the fact that the bridge had originally been defended not by the communist PLA but by the Kuomintang (KMT) military, with which the communists had engaged in a long and bloody civil war. A more subtle reason concerning wartime memories in general may be, as Diana Lary and Stephen MacKinnon suggest, that the society had simply been too traumatised by continual warfare to have any desire to preserve it in memory.[36]

A less emotional but equally relevant factor in the underdevelopment of monuments and museums of all sorts concerns the nature of recreation under the PRC. The development of tourism has had a profound effect on the development of museums and monuments elsewhere in the world, and a consideration of this dynamic in China also helps to explain why they were slow to develop before the 1980s. China had always upheld a tradition of pilgrimage to well-known temples and scenic mountains, and while this was curtailed under communist rule it was in part replaced by pilgrimages to sites of political interest, such as Chairman Mao's hometown of Shaoshan, the revolutionary base of Yan'an and the model commune of Dazhai. Mao personally inspired the first real wave of popular interest in the Great Wall with his statement 'He who has not been to the Great Wall is not a real man.' And as the place where one could most likely catch a glimpse of Mao himself, Beijing's Tiananmen Square attracted enormous crowds, especially during the high tide of the Cultural Revolution. It was also at Tiananmen that the new National Museum of History and the central Monument to the People's Martyrs had been constructed in the late 1950s.[37] Outside of this small selection of mass-tourist destinations, however, there was little encouragement for people to travel to historic sites such as battlefields, and nothing for them to do or see should they make the effort. The nature of Mao-era tourism, however, also highlights the primary reason why Lugou Bridge and past wars in general were largely overlooked during Maoist China—the monolithic nature of Mao himself. From the mid-1950s through to the mid-1970s it was the Great Leader alone who stood as the symbol of the nation, and virtually all other developments were explicitly designed to support his further aggrandisement.

The Awakening Lion and the War of Memory

The passing of the Mao era, following his death in 1976, and the final return of Deng Xiaoping ushered in the so-called Reform Era in the late 1970s, bringing about a gradual diversification in the previously monolithic national culture. Official attitudes toward Lugou Bridge began to change in 1979 when the Beijing Planning Committee announced its intention to establish a Lugou Bridge Artefact Preservation Institute (*Lugouqiao wenwu baoguan suo*), inaugurating it on 7 July 1981—the 44th anniversary of the Lugou Bridge Incident. Accompanying this Institute was a small exhibit hall near the eastern approach to the bridge. This was initially divided into two sections—the first being a general history of the bridge and town of Wanping, the second dealing with the struggle against Japan.[38]

This shift in policy can be attributed to several factors. First, the 1980s saw the maturity of the first modern generation to have grown up without protracted war, and consequently the first generation in need of concrete reminders that the CCP had been forged during the Anti-Japanese War, and that the PLA had liberated the country from its enemies. More significantly, this same period marks the final rise to power of Deng Xiaoping and the implementation of his policy of economic development and opening to the outside world. Tourism, both domestic and international, was to become a key element in promoting China's economic growth and international stature, and as part of that promotion the country would begin to develop its battlefields as potential tourist sites.

Figure 3 Lugou Bridge. Author's photo.

The commemoration of the Anti-Japanese War must also be read in connection to continuing anti-Japanese sentiments that have been piqued repeatedly since the re-establishment of official ties in the 1970s. Foremost among these issues is the question of Japanese war responsibility. With some justification, China regularly charges Japan with distorting the circumstances of the war, especially through high-school textbooks that ignore such incidents as the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, which Chinese historians believe to have claimed some 300,000 civilian lives.[39] Although Japan and China re-established diplomatic ties in 1972 and signed a friendship pact in 1978, relations continue to be tainted by China's demand for a formal apology, and Japan's reluctance to comply. High-level diplomatic visits from Japan to China tend to be prefaced by a recapitulation of the Chinese evaluation of Japanese atrocities and the call for an apology, and conclude with a Japanese expression of 'regret' for any mistakes it may have made in the past. It may be an exaggeration to say that the Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall functions as a branch of foreign affairs, but because of the nature of Sino-Japanese relations, edifices like this are international in scope and must be evaluated in those terms.

On the 10th anniversary of the normalisation of relations between China and Japan the two countries became embroiled in the 'textbook controversy'. In June of 1982 the Japanese Ministry of Education publicised the results of its recent textbook screening process, and by the end of the month the Japanese press had begun to describe textbook language as having reverted to an aggressive 'prewar' tone.[40] These reports were quickly picked up by the Chinese press, which began a media campaign that marked the 15 August anniversary of the Japanese surrender with the *People's Daily* headline 'Past experience, if not forgotten, is a guide to the future.'[41] Before the year was out it had been determined that there would be an Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall, and in December 1982 the Cultural Artefact division of the Department of Culture ratified the decision to repair the city walls of Wanping town, and to establish the memorial hall.[42]

The Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall Committee was established in 1985 under the direction of the Departments of Propaganda and Culture, and chaired by Minister of Culture Zhu Muzhi. At the opening meeting it was determined that the hall would be under the jurisdiction of the city of Beijing, and exhibits were to be managed by the Political Department of the PLA and the Chinese People's Military Revolution Museum.[43] The National People's Congress joined the effort in April 1986 by confirming that the Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall was to be a key construction item of the 7th Five Year Plan. Shortly thereafter the Beijing People's Government established the Lugou Bridge Historical Renovation Committee and a Bridge Repair Steering Department staffed by a Who's Who of high-end political leaders, such as Beijing vice-mayors Bai Jiefu and Chen Haosu.[44] In 1987 the Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall was finally opened with due ceremony, and the curtain was raised by senior General Yang Shangkun on 7 July—the 50th anniversary of the Lugou Bridge Incident.[45]

The Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall, described in detail elsewhere by Rana Mitter, is defined largely by its architecture.[46] The emphasis throughout is on creating a

monument, but despite the grandiosity of its implementation the hall itself is certainly less than monumental. In lieu of that, organisers make every effort to connect the site to the true national monuments, myths and myths in the making. Standing a short distance from Lugou Bridge in Wanping town, the hall is enclosed by a traditional courtyard that both blocks any outside view of the interior and preserves the historical appearance of the town. On entering the courtyard the visitor is greeted by 'The Awakening Lion', a massive sculpture that ties the museum to the historical site by invoking the bridge's most famous attribute, while giving expression to the popular idea that the modern Chinese 'sleeping giant' is becoming a world power. Cheng Yunxian, one of three collaborators on the project, indicated that the sculpture had also been designed to incorporate elements of the Great Wall in order to create the 'sense of a historic remnant' and gunshot marks 'to let the people feel the history'.[47] A less obvious reference is to a form of the festive 'lion dance' in which the term 'Awakening Lion' refers to General Guan Yu (ca AD 220), regarded throughout East Asia as one of China's greatest military heroes, ultimate model of honour and loyalty, and God of War to the Qing dynasty. Inside the main entrance, which is itself decorated by the calligraphic inscription of Deng Xiaoping, a second sculpture provides an equally resounding statement of the museum's message through reference to another of China's proudest

Figure 4 'The Waking Lion', by Pan He, Lian Mingcheng, and Cheng Yunxian. Author's photo.

representatives. Standing some 20 feet high and 100 feet across, the sculpture presents row upon row of stolid soldiers and citizens as living stone—the title is borrowed from a verse of China's militaristic national anthem (which is itself inscribed on an adjacent wall), and makes the intent of the piece apparent to all: 'Build a New Great Wall with our Flesh and Blood'.

One of the key functions of the Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall has been to wage the war of memory and hold Japan to historical account. Following its opening in 1987, Lugou Bridge and the Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall stood again at the front lines when China and the world marked the 50th anniversary of Japan's unconditional surrender and the conclusion of the Second World War. To mark the occasion, Japan's Prime Minister Tomiichi Muruyama chose this time to pay an official state visit to China, and on 4 May 1995 toured the memorial hall and bridge where the *People's Daily* photographed him beside the Qianlong emperor's memorial to the setting moon. The editorial board of the *People's Daily* returned again the following 22 June with another article 'Gunshots Awaken the Ferocious Lion: A Sketch of the Resistance War Memorial of the Chinese People', and again on 7 July to mark the 58th anniversary of the Lugou Bridge Incident. A final editorial appeared on the armistice anniversary of 15 August, when Jiang Zemin visited the memorial hall and bridge where he repeated the now-familiar line 'the past, if not forgotten, can be a guide to the future'.[48]

If the Chinese authorities had felt they were making progress in negotiating the memory of the Anti-Japanese War, they received affirmation six years later when on 8 October 2001 Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi raised the political stakes set by his predecessor by placing a wreath at the sculpture 'Build a New Great Wall of our Flesh and Blood'. But if anyone had thought that this constituted the long-sought apology they were sorely disappointed when Koizumi negated the goodwill after seven months by visiting the controversial Yasukuni Shrine to Japan's war dead on 21 April 2002, and again on 14 January 2003. Fulfilling its role as critic, the Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall rose to the occasion two days later by hosting a historical seminar to reiterate the Chinese position on the war, condemn the Japanese Prime Minister's actions as 'absurd' and 'notorious', and to remind Koizumi that he 'cannot change historical facts'.[49]

There may not be a direct causation between politics and the production of monuments in modern China, but an overview of the connection between Anti-Japanese War memorials and the development of Sino-Japanese relations makes it clear that the two are intimately connected. The development of Lugou Bridge and the Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall had been conceived as part of China's response to the 1982 textbook crisis, and the museum has ever since played the role as arbiter of truth from the Chinese perspective. But in terms of diplomacy, truth and memory are not the only issues on the table. Indeed, with the high-stakes negotiation of trade and investment, truth and memory may not even be the key issues. But the negotiation of memory is nonetheless the one issue that precedes and contextualises all else. By extension, Lugou Bridge and the Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall are the venue of political theatre in which the ritual of Sino-Japanese relations is increasingly performed.

Conclusion

Nothing seems to represent the past so concretely as the concrete object itself. Armed with a little information and imagination any visitor to an historic monument can perceive the venerable physical construction not merely as the arrangement of brick, stone or concrete that it technically is, but as a profound statement on the past in which it was made, or made to represent. The logic of the monument is simple, and it is the ease of association between the tangible object and the abstract past that makes the monument so compelling as a concrete historical text, and so inviting as a venue for partisan historical interpretation. Of course, the problem is seldom as simple as it appears and the historian might point out that the relationship between the object and the past is infinitely more complicated, or perhaps depressingly more mundane than it first appears. Such opinions, however, are peripheral to the process of monumentality, which is less about examining the complications of actual history than it is about creating social memory by which the object is reduced to a simple and effective monumental identity.

Prasenjit Duara has argued that historical narratives create a linear history that supports a 'self-same, national subject evolving through time'.[50] I agree with this observation, at least in respect to Lugou Bridge, but would add that in historicising a monument such as Lugou Bridge it is apparent that these objects have been involved in an ongoing process of legitimating their present through reference to the past. The constitution of present legitimacy (i.e. the 'national subject') depends not just on contemporary authorisation but also on the continuing appropriation of the authoritative lineage. In other words, the monument and museum have a strong potential to encode past authorisations in the present not through pure imagination but through recognition of the patterns of authority that have always been present in the authoritative texts that form the basis for the modern museum or ancient monument.

While the Zhangzong emperor staked his own political/cultural claim to Lugou Bridge by coining the poetic phrase 'Moon Over the Lugou at Dawn', that stake was appropriated by later generations of literati who wished to establish the bridge as a symbol of antiquity by which their present, and the political structure that employed them, gained relevance. During the Qing dynasty the Qianlong emperor took that same textual fragment, but fixed it in concrete form and made it the defining element of the bridge for all to see. The Zhangzong emperor's setting moon, as appropriated by the Qianlong emperor's stele, still makes up a dominant component of the bridge's identity, so that photographing a Japanese Prime Minister standing beside that stele in 1995 still has the effect of invoking that 800 years of history. But in much the same way as the Qianlong emperor inscribed his interpretation on the bridge in 1751, present-day political leaders draw on past legitimacy while selecting other historical fragments to be monumentalised under the weight of their own authority. The subtle forms of the past are now embedded in the modern and expanded historical site, and serve to authorise the modern message of nationalism and internationalism that is delivered through the interpretation of the modern museum.

Notes

[1] J. Levenson, *Confucian China and its Modern Fate*, 1958, 95–108.
[2] Cited in Zheng Yongnian, *Discovering Chinese Nationalisms in China*, 1999, 15.
[3] Wu Hung, 'Tiananmen Square: A Political History of Monuments'.
[4] Rubie Watson, 'Palaces, Museums, and Squares: Chinese National Spaces'.
[5] Tamara Hamlish, 'Global Culture, Modern Heritage: Re-membering the Chinese Imperial Collections'.
[6] The original name used by the Jin was Guangli. The name Lugou ('Reed Ditch') was adopted in the Yuan dynasty. Beijing bowuguan xuehui, *Beijing bolan* (Beijing exhibits), 1987, 146–47.
[7] Technically there are 485 stone lions on the bridge, but folklore holds them to be defiant of attempts at enumeration. See Luo Zhewen et al., 'Luetan Lugouqiao de lishi yu jianzhu' (Remarks on the history and architecture of Lugou Bridge), 1987, 44–45.
[8] See, in particular, the discussion by Tao Jing-shen, *The Jurchen in Twelfth-century China*, 1976.
[9] Luo Zhewen, *Lugou qiao wenji*, 1987, 16.
[10] Thomas Wright, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, 1854, 238.
[11] For examples of relevant Yuan dynasty poetry see Liu Tong, *Dijing jingwu lue* (A record of the scenery of the capital), 2000, 144; and Luo, *Lugou qiao wenji*, 1987, n.p., for samples of relevant Yuan dynasty graphic art.
[12] Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900*, 2000, 112.
[13] Carrington Goodrich, *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 1976, vol. II, 627.
[14] *Wusheng shishi*, cited in Osvald Siren, *A History of Later Chinese Painting*, 1938, vol. I, 31–32.
[15] Goodrich, *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, 1976, 1374.
[16] Hu Guang and Wang Fu are both reproduced in Liu Tong, *Dijing jingwu lue*, 2000, 145. Translated by Jianmeng He, University of Western Ontario.
[17] On the topic of Jin heritage see Evelyn Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 1998, 295.
[18] Luo, *Lugou qiao wenji*, 1987, 59. The name of the river had earlier been changed from Lugou to Wuding (Never Stable). Repairs were conducted in 1662, 1668, 1752, 1785 and 1787 (Luo, ibid., 1987, 36).
[19] The other sites were 'Layered Shades of Green at Juyong Pass'; 'Cascading Rainbow at Jade Spring Hill'; 'Crystal Clear Waves on Taiye Pond'; 'Spring Clouds on Jasper Flower Island'; 'Misty Trees at the Gate of Jizhou'; 'Clearing Snow in the Western Hills'; and 'Sunset at the Golden Terrace'. Sun Chengze, *Tianfu guangji* (Extensive records on the Celestial Capital), 2000, 564; translations based on Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900*, 111–12.
[20] Luo, *Luguo qiao wenji*, 1987, 70.
[21] See, for example, *Beiping zhinan* (Guide to Beiping), 1929, 61.
[22] For a full account of this stage of the war, see Marvin Williamsen, 'The Military Dimension, 1937–1941', 1992, 135–56.
[23] Leo Ou-fan Lee, 'Literary Trends in the Road to Revolution', 1985, 470.
[24] Xiong Xianyu et al., *Lugou qiao kangzhan shici xuan* (Collected Poems Concerning the War of Resistance and Lugou Bridge), 1997, 8, 11.
[25] Ibid., 15; author's translation.
[26] See *Dagongbao*, 9 July 1937, 10 July 1937, 17 July 1936.
[27] See Fan Changjiang's reports in *Dagongbao*, 23 July 1936, 24 July 1936, 25 July 1936.
[28] *Shibao*, 9 July 1937, 13 July 1937.
[29] *Dagongbao*, 8 July 1947.
[30] *RMRB*, 7 July 1957.
[31] Ibid.
[32] *BBN 1912–1987*, 255. The Beijing City Government had extended protected status in the late 1950s.

[33] On provincial artefact preservation policies during the 1950s see James Flath, 'Managing Historical Capital in Shandong', 2002, 47–50.
[34] *RMRB*, 7 July 1967.
[35] *RMRB*, 7 July 1977.
[36] Lary and MacKinnon, *Scars of War*.
[37] On the modern development of tourism at the Great Wall see Arthur Waldron, *The Great Wall of China*, 1990, 194–226. On the construction of Tiananmen Square see Wu Hung, 'Tiananmen Square', 1991, 84–117.
[38] *BBN 1912–1987*, 1987, 255.
[39] Recent protests have focused on the textbook by Nishio Kanji et al., *Atarashii rekishi kyokasho*, Fushosha, 2001, which was approved for school distribution in 2002. See report by the Center for Research and Documentation on Japan's War Responsibility (JWRC) at http://www.jca.apc.org. Chinese high-school textbooks, on the other hand, use increasingly strong language to portray the Nanjing Massacre as 'hell on earth', explaining variously that Chinese citizens were 'buried alive', 'burnt to death', 'had their intestines removed', and were 'killed after being raped'. Students are also reminded 'the debt of blood caused by the Japanese aggressors will never be forgotten by the Chinese people'. Chang Jui-te, 'The Politics of Commemoration', 2001, 152.
[40] Caroline Rose, *Interpreting History in Sino-Japanese Relations*, 1998, 80–82.
[41] *RMRB*, 15 August 1982.
[42] *BBN 1912–1987*, 1987, 255.
[43] *BBN 1988–1991*, 1987, 75.
[44] *BBN 1912–1987*, 1987, 255–57.
[45] *BBN 1912–1987*, 1987, 105–8.
[46] Rana Mitter, 'Behind the Scenes at the Museum', 2000, 286–90. Mitter uses the translation of 'Memorial Museum of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japan', which is one of the memorial hall's own translations of *Zhongguo kang-Ri zhanzheng jinianguan*. The institution also translates its title as 'The Museum of the War of Chinese People's Resistance against Japan', and 'The Memorial Hall of the War of Resistance against Japan'. In light of the inconsistencies I use my own translation of 'Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall of the Chinese People', abbreviated hereafter as 'Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall'.
[47] John T. Young, *Contemporary Public Art in China*, 1999, 32.
[48] *RMRB*, 4 May 1995, 22 June 1995, 7 July 1995, 15 August 1995.
[49] *RMRB*, 16 January 2003.
[50] Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation*, 1995, 4.

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[Abbreviations: *BBN 1912–1987: Beijing bowuguan nianjian, 1912–1987*; *BBN 1988–1991: Beijing bowuguan nianjian, 1988–1991*; *RMRB: Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*).]

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