

The Battle of Wuhan Revisited: The Nationalist Government's Military Leadership in the Escalation Stage of the Second Sino-Japanese War

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Abstract

This paper mainly discusses the war leadership of the Nationalist Government of China during the stage of the Second Sino-Japanese War when there was a transition from expansion to a stalemate, and a focus is placed in the war situation from the fall of Nanjing in December 1937 up to the fall of Wuhan in October 1938. Studies to date have stated that China at that time deployed a protracted war based on a long-term strategy, and brought about a stalemate through systematically avoiding decisive battles with Japanese forces, and the battles in Shanghai, Xuzhou, and Wuhan have been positioned as a part of such an approach. Nevertheless, studies in recent years have revealed that the Nationalist Government was forced into retreating due to operational failures.

Moreover, this paper sheds light on the process that led the Nationalist Government to ultimately withdraw from Wuhan during the war situation from the Battle of Xuzhou up to the Battle of Wuhan, and it reveals the truth behind the Nationalist Government's operational leadership through looking at the personal perceptions and instructions of Chiang Kai-shek and actions of his close advisors and top military officers. Based on this, it is verified how the Nationalist Government responded to the expansion of the war, and whether it had a long-term strategy and plan. It is especially important to look at the Nationalist Government's decision to withdraw when verifying the historical impression that it engaged in "strategic leadership based on a long-term strategy."

Through the abovementioned arguments, this paper reveals that the Nationalist Government, and in particular Chiang Kai-shek, provided leadership regarding the Battle of Wuhan based on a decisive battle-type perspective rather than a strategy of long-term endurance, and that the Nationalist Government carried out a war of attrition based on stubborn resistance with the aim of making Japan abandon continuation of the war, in conjunction with moving forward with the peace initiatives that it had already been implementing. Furthermore, this paper points out that, taking into account factors such as the negotiations with Japan and the war situation in

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Guangdong, the decision to withdraw was made in the short term, and thus urban warfare based on popular mobilization was a possibility.

The Reality and Background of Motor Torpedo Boat Transfers
to Taiwan in the 1950s

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Abstract

During the 1950s, a transferring of Fuchou-class torpedo boats was carried out, and this marks the only post-war example of the transferring of combat ships.

It was envisioned that Fuchou-class torpedo boats would be operated by the Republic of China Navy in torpedo boats fleets in the same manner as boats that had been donated from the United States, and thus these boats had 1940s specifications with the exception of their advanced hull materials. Thus, the specifications were clearly different from those of torpedo boats for the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force of the same era that had been developed in accordance with the national circumstances of Japan.

What led to the building of these boats was the loss of capital ships of the Republic of China Navy during the First Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1954. The loss of capital ships due to attacks from enemy torpedo boats was an event that overturned the maritime superiority that the Republic of China Navy had maintained since the Chinese Civil War. Thus, since the Republic of China Navy was not in possession of torpedo boats, it was forced to quickly acquire torpedo boats as a force for countering enemy torpedo boats.

Accompanying the restoration of sovereignty in 1952, Japan moved forward with rearmament, and resumed domestic ship construction. Japan's public and private sectors were motivated to accumulate experience regarding the construction of boats with lightweight-alloy hulls, which were a new technology that had been applied to torpedo boats. Although the security export control system at that time was looser than it is today, the Japanese government had a restrictive attitude regarding the transferring of defense equipment. In response to this, the promotion of the transferring of defense equipment tended to be led by the Japan Business Federation and other private corporations.

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Although there was never any organized promotion of such transferring by the Japanese government, there were exchanges between the Republic of China Navy and Mitsubishi Shipbuilding at the level of practical personnel based on ship construction & repair contracts. Furthermore, within Japan, a framework for communication between the public and private sectors existed that was based on the personal connections between former military personnel in the two sectors, and there were even former military personnel serving as instructors within the military of the Republic of China.

It was against this backdrop that the transferring of Fuchou-class torpedo boats was realized.

Research of the Relationship of the Local Community with the
Maneuvering Ground Range of GSDF

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Abstract

This paper is a study regarding “the armed forces and local communities.” In regard to the relationship between “the armed forces and local communities,” an attempt is made to analyze this type of relationship based on the perspective of maneuver areas. This study looks at the example of the two large maneuver areas in the Fuji district (East Fuji Maneuver Area and North Fuji Maneuver Area), which are the two largest maneuver areas in Honshu. This paper engages in historical research from the two perspectives of military organizations (mainly the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force) and local communities (mainly municipalities) regarding the types of negotiations that have been taking place and the types of efforts that the two sides have been making in order to gain mutual understanding regarding the following: the former needs the stable use of maneuver areas since they are essential for maintaining and improving military functions, and latter possesses rights concerning “commonage” property that are rooted in the ancient customary practices of communities.

Based on experience that extends to before World War II, villages and towns associated with the East Fuji Maneuver Area have succeeded in becoming a unified local community, and have succeeded in getting the government and related government agencies to accept their requests during negotiations thanks to unity among their personnel. Meanwhile, villages, towns, and so on associated with the North Fuji Maneuver Area have failed to organize requests from related villages, towns, and organizations, and thus have been engaging in negotiations independently, leading to such negotiations becoming prolonged. As for the former Army, the Special Procurement Board, the Procurement Agency, and the Defense Facilities Administration Agency, which have been on the other side of the negotiations, proactively engaging the negotiations in the same manner as during the era of the former Army, has been difficult. Furthermore, due to factors such as the fact that orders from the occupation forces were

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hasty, during the occupation, it seems that there were often cases in which negotiations with residents failed due to orders from the military being one-sided, and this caused a great deal of dissatisfaction. Looking at negotiations following the restoration of independence, relationships with stationed forces of the United States, and views on the commonage rights of the government changed. This resulted in it taking a lot of time to gain the trust of the local communities (residents) and gain their understanding regarding the operation of maneuver areas. It seems that during negotiations, it has not been possible to resolve differences in understanding with local communities (residents) regarding the practice of “commonage,” which originates from customs, and this has caused negotiations to become prolonged.