

Interview with Ara Kenichi, researcher of modern and contemporary history

After All, the Nanking Incident Was Propaganda Warfare

**Communist China didn't mention "Nanking" for over forty years
Who really were those American missionaries that made up the massacre picture?**

Interviewer: December this year marks the 70th anniversary of the fall of Nanking which took place in 1937, and subsequently there has been much talk about the "Nanking Incident". As to what really happened then in Nanking, historical facts have been largely verified and a recent movement to reexamine the Nanking Incident in the light of intelligence and propaganda warfare has become a new trend.

Mr. Ara, your new book entitled *Saikensho: Nankin De Hontowa Naniga Okottaka* (*Reexamination: What Really Happened in Nanking*) was published at the end of this October (publisher: Tokuma Shoten), and in the book you seem to present the whole picture of the Nanking issue from the viewpoint of wartime propaganda. Now, we would like to ask you to speak once again about the major aspects of propaganda warfare in regards to the "Nanking Massacre" on this special occasion of the 70th anniversary of the fall of Nanking.

After seventy years, the whole picture of the propaganda warfare has come to light

Ara: I think the 70th anniversary of the fall of Nanking is a very good opportunity to look back upon the Nanking Incident. In the past, I think efforts to explain the Incident were mostly makeshift, as whenever the "Nanking Massacre" proponents in China and Japan alike claimed this and that, we opponents would refute back accordingly. However, as many years have passed, the truth seems to have come out by itself. So, as I just mentioned, the passage of seventy years is a good occasion to reexamine the whole picture of the Incident, or to have a bird's-eye view of the Nanking Incident.

With this in mind, I wrote the book *Reexamination: What Really Happened in Nanking*, and the process made me particularly aware of some interesting facts, such as that during the past seventy years, it was as late as about fifteen years ago that the Chinese Communist Party began mentioning the "Nanking Massacre." For the previous forty years or so, the Chinese Communist government scarcely spoke a word about the "Nanking Massacre." Today, whenever controversies arise between Japan and China over historical matters, the "Nanking Massacre" is taken up as the staple and symbolic issue, which gives the impression that the Chinese Communist Party has been claiming since the beginning that a massacre was committed. However, that is not true. Rather, it is Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Party that first mentioned the "Nanking Massacre" and continued to unwaveringly assert it after the War.

In particular, it has been verified over the past ten years that the allegation condemning Japan for a great massacre in Nanking first started as propaganda warfare contrived by Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Party. This is another example of how the passage of time will lead to new evidence. The most convincing fact is that though the book entitled *What War Means: Japanese Terror in China* had long been considered powerful proof of the massacre in Nanking, it turned out to be merely a propaganda book of the Nationalist Party.

As I presume many people already know that, I'll just briefly explain the book. This book, *What War Means*, was edited by a Shanghai correspondent named Harold Timperley for the *Manchester Guardian*, a famed British paper, and published in London in July 1938, the year following the fall of Nanking. The book is composed of various reports by anonymous Europeans and Americans residing in Nanking at the time Nanking surrendered. The contents describe how the Japanese Army randomly committed slaughters and other violent crimes when they occupied Nanking. The fact that the book was published in the year following the battle of Nanking and that a journalist compiled what third-party Europeans and Americans, neither on the Chinese nor Japanese side, witnessed in the city gave the book credence. It had been highly esteemed as a source of objective historical material for a long time. By the way, through an examination conducted in the postwar years, it was determined that the anonymous European and American witnesses turned out to be real Americans, Professor Miner Searle Bates of Nanking University and a missionary named George Fitch, both of whom were in Nanking at the time.

On the other hand, among scholars who have some doubts about the claim that a great massacre

took place, *What War Means* has been a dubious book, for the book's contents greatly differ from other primary source materials and testimonies made by Japanese witnesses. And correspondent Timperley also has been a somewhat questionable figure.

About twenty-five years ago, I myself tried to interview Japanese military personnel, journalists and diplomats in order to learn first-hand what they actually saw in Nanking at the time and wrote their accounts in my book entitled *Kikigaki Nankin Jiken (Interviews with Witnesses to the Nanking Incident)*. None of the interviewees witnessed the Japanese military randomly killing Chinese soldiers and civilians or raping Chinese women. So, I found out that *What War Means* describes events quite differently from what the Japanese witnessed and I could not help but think that this correspondent Timperley was far from reliable, but I had not yet gathered enough proof to say he was wrong.

Later on, little by little, it was revealed that Timperley had something to do with the Central Propaganda Department of Chiang Kai-shek's government and it also turned out that the Central Propaganda Department had had a hand in the publication of the book, according to Suzuki Akira's *Shin "Nankin Daigyakusatsu" No Maboroshi (New Edition, The Illusion of the "Nanking Massacre")* and other sources.

The most decisive of all is the discovery by Professor Kitamura Minoru of Ritsumeikan University of the book *Autobiography by Zeng Xubai*, head of the International Propaganda Office of the Nationalist Party's Central Propaganda Department. In the autobiography, Zeng describes that he provided funds to Timperley to write the book. This makes it clear that Timperley was anything but a neutral journalist, that he was an advisor to the Central Propaganda Department of the Nationalist Party, and that this particular book was published for the purpose of spreading propaganda worldwide with funds provided by the Nationalist Party (*Nankin Jiken No Tankyu*, 2001, *The Politics of Nanjing*, 2007).

According to the documents discovered by Professor Higashinakano Shudo of Asia University, it has been confirmed that *What War Means* was, in fact, an anti-enemy propaganda book, produced by the Central Propaganda Department (*Nankin Jiken—Kokuminto Gokuhai Bunsho Kara Yomitoku, Top-Secret Chinese Nationalist Documents Reveal the Truth About the Nanking Incident*, 2006).

Interviewer: So, the dominant source material hitherto of the "Nanking Massacre" finally turns out to be a product of propaganda warfare.

Ara: Exactly. In fact, this was especially impressive to me. Ever since I began to doubt Timperley's credibility, I interviewed three Japanese who had had actual contact with Timperley at that time. They were Matsumoto Shigeharu, Shanghai branch chief of the Domei News Agency; Hidaka Shinrokuro, diplomatic attaché at the Japanese Embassy in Nanking, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Utsunomiya Naotaka, press officer of the Japanese Army's Shanghai Special Mission Department. I asked them about Timperley and what they thought of him. The three of them were perfect gentlemen themselves and all of them firmly commented that Timperley was not a villain at all, but a well-mannered gentleman.

After all, even men of high characters and intelligence failed to really see who Timperley was. Was Timperley so good at masquerading? Or, were the Japanese so poor at handling propaganda wars as they are now? Honestly, I cannot help but feel perplexed.

Propaganda is heavier than politics

Ara: For all that, however, we cannot simply conclude that in the Nanking Incident, Timperley and the Nationalist Party's propaganda department deceived three respectable Japanese. The Nanking Incident is an all-out propaganda operation conducted not only by the propaganda organ but also the entire Nationalist Party, including Chiang Kai-shek himself. My latest book, *Reexamination: What Really Happened in Nanking* reviews the Incident with the focus on this point, as one of the major factors.

Let me put it this way. After the fall of Nanking, the Nationalist government moved to Hankou, and resorted to the power of propaganda now that the Chinese had lost the capital of Nanking. Their propaganda method was first to proclaim the valor of the Chinese military personnel and then to condemn the Japanese military as atrocious.

My research this time has revealed that on a very timely occasion, in January 1938, Timperley was called to Hankou and met with Chiang Kai-shek. In February, after the meeting, Chiang Kai-

shek established the political department and in April, the anti-enemy propaganda office was created, thereupon propaganda activities were well under way.

After all, it was a propaganda operation in which the Nationalist Party was fully involved and Chiang Kai-shek was also closely involved. In fact, Chiang Kai-shek once commented, "Politics is heavier than military, and propaganda is heavier than politics." To Chiang Kai-shek, the Sino-Japanese Incident was nothing more than propaganda warfare.

Interviewer: In your book, examples of reporting lies and fabrications on the part of the Nationalist Party abound, such as the battle of Shanghai prior to the battle of Nanking, and later the battle at Taierzhuang, the incident of the destroyed embankment at the Huang He (the Yellow River), the battle at De'an and so on.

Ara: Briefly speaking, first, on the day after Japan and China clashed in Shanghai, that is, August 14, 1937, an incident occurred in which two leading Shanghai hotels, the Cathay Hotel and the Pacific Hotel, and an amusement hall called Da Shijie (The Great World) were bombed and some Europeans and Americans as well as many Chinese were killed. At the time, the Chinese news agency reported that Japanese fighter planes attacked downtown Shanghai and caused numerous casualties among Chinese citizens, Europeans and Americans. This news reached the U.S. and France.

However, the fact was that Chinese fighter planes attempted to attack a Japanese warship anchored on the bank of the Huang Pujiang, which the hotels faced. The Japanese warship then returned fire, and taken aback by this counterattack, the Chinese fighter pilots blindly dropped bombs on the hotels and the amusement hall. The bombardment was eye-witnessed by a United Press correspondent, since the American news agency UP had its branch office in the bombed Cathay Hotel.

On August 28, two weeks after the disastrous bombing, Japanese fighters bombed Shanghai South Station in an attempt to shut down Chinese logistic routes. A moving episode was then reported. A picture of a baby, having miraculously survived the bombing and crying all alone in the debris, was shown in a newsreel throughout the United States. The image was seen by 25 million Americans and was then spread to the rest of the world. Such Japanese atrocity, victimizing a tiny, helpless baby, instantly gave a profound impression on viewers worldwide.

But this newsreel image, again, turned out to be a product of propaganda. Chiang Kai-shek's favorite photographer named Wang put an abandoned baby on the railroad track at the station right after the bombing and took a picture of it. It was a staged photo.

After the battle of Nanking took place in December 1937, the Chinese propaganda campaign went on. On April 10, 1938, at Taierzhuang in the Shandong province, the Japanese Army encountered a large segment of the Chinese Army and temporarily retreated. The Chinese Nationalist Party advertised this as their glorious victory and subsequently a colorful celebration, including a grand civil parade and fireworks, was held in the new capital of Hankou. This "glorious victory" was also reported in *Time* magazine in the U.S. However, this is sheer demagoguery. On June 9, the Nationalist Party announced that the de-embankment on the Yellow River was attributed to random bombing by the Japanese Army, which was actually done by the Chinese Army. On October 10, the Nationalist Party reported that the battle fought around De'an had been won by the Chinese Army. The report was another piece of demagogic propaganda.

For example, regarding the de-embankment of the Yellow River, Guo Moruo, who was at the time in charge of the Third Department (department chief) operating the anti-enemy propaganda mission, recalls in his memoir that the destruction of the Yellow River banks was done "according to our anti-enemy propaganda, by the enemy's random bombing, but in reality, our front commanders destroyed the banks following an order from the top brass", and thus confessed that the incident was demagoguery. Moreover, he added, "the damage inflicted upon the enemy by the flooding was only limited, while far more civilian lives and property were lost than we had anticipated," and thus he admits that the whole operation was a failed strategy.

Interviewer: In short, both before and after the battle of Nanking, wartime propaganda was consistently conducted, advertising Chinese victories and Japanese military atrocities. Is that right?

Ara: That's right. The battle of Nanking was not the first time the Chinese began to assert demagogic propaganda. Saying that white is black is consistent Chinese strategy. If you put the

battle of Nanking in this context, it is almost impossible for once to believe that the Chinese assertion is based on historical facts, as far as Nanking is concerned.

The true identities of the missionaries

Interviewer: To summarize the story, at that time of the fall of Nanking, those who were in Nanking were Chinese, Japanese military personnel, and hundreds of Japanese newspaper reporters, besides, also a few foreign missionaries and correspondents. Among them, the one journalist that made a book out of the letters of foreign missionaries was far from being a good-willed third person, but was in fact an advisor to the Nationalist Party's Propaganda Department, and *What War Means* was published as a propaganda book for the Nationalist Party. If so, the missionaries who wrote those letters which are found in the book cannot have been innocent outsiders.

Ara: Some Japanese are apt to think of foreigners and missionaries as naturally neutral, "third persons with good intention". But that is wrong. They were clearly on the side of the Chinese.

Rather, the missionaries living in Nanking fully cooperated in the Chinese propaganda war waged by the Nationalist Party between 1937 and 1938. Moreover, it was none other than these missionaries who stood up in the court of the Tokyo Trials and testified that a massacre did actually take place. In that sense, it is justifiably concluded that the American missionaries were the greatest contributors to the Nanking Massacre propaganda campaign contrived by the Nationalist Party.

Regarding Professor Bates of the University of Nanking and Rev. Fitch, who contributed reports to *What War Means*, Bates served as an advisor to the government of the Republic of China and was very closely related to the Central Propaganda Department of the Nationalist Party. Fitch was a close friend of the Nationalist Party top brass, and he went back to the U.S. in the spring of 1938 with the photographs which a clergyman named Rev. John Magee had filmed, and during his six-month-long propaganda activity at home, persisted in persuading Undersecretary of State Hornbeck, the U.S. Congress and newspapers into believing that the Japanese Army had committed atrocities.

Furthermore, Fitch was an ultra-anti-Japanese proponent. Take Korean independence fighter Kim Gu, for instance. Kim was the mastermind behind two terrorist attacks, namely, a failed attempt to assassinate Emperor Showa in 1932 and a bombing incident in Shanghai. After the Shanghai attempt, Kim escaped and hid himself in Fitch's house which was located in the French concession. Fitch let Kim stay in this sanctuary for over a month, while Kim sent out a statement to news agencies from this safe hiding place.

Incidentally, besides missionaries, there were also American newspaper reporters who were anti-Japanese journalists. For example, a reporter named Archibald Steele of the *Chicago Daily News* became a target of arrest, ordered by the Manchurian police, for having contacted a Chinese military-man named Ma Zhanshan, who had changed allegiance against Japan after the Mukden Incident. Another reporter named McDonald of the *Times* stood in the front row of an anti-Japanese demonstration held in Beijing, a year before the Nanking Incident. Famous *New York Times* correspondent Tillman Durdin was also so extremely biased toward the Chinese side that in his actual reporting he defined the Japanese Army as "aggressors" from the very start of his articles. Many people met Durdin after the War and most felt that he was not so prejudiced against the Japanese, but he actually reported such a bias.

The missionaries provided these reporters with much information. So, although the reporters partly wrote their articles from first-hand coverage, most wrote down just what the missionaries told them. American reporters would certainly double-check, at least, what they had heard from some Japanese before writing articles, but when it came to Chinese and missionaries' accounts, the Americans would blindly accept the secondhand information as true.

The Nationalist Party and the missionaries shared mutual interests

Interviewer: They played a crucial role not only during the battle of Nanking, but also at the Tokyo Trials.

Ara: As popularly known, those who stood at the witness stand and testified in the court of the Tokyo Trials were clergyman Rev. John Magee, Professor Miner Searle Bates and Dr. Robert

Wilson. Although they were introduced by titles, like professor and doctor, they used these designations for the sake of missionary activities, and their true callings were missionaries. And it would be appropriate to say that these three made-up the horrible massacre image.

In the Tokyo Trials court, as described in *What War Means*, most disastrous situations were told and the atrocities of the Japanese Army were all the more emphasized. Of course, their testimonies, under close examination, may reveal a far less violent situation. For instance, Dr. Wilson testified that he himself saw two women who were about to be raped actually escorted away to a safe camp.

However, as a general impression, the horrifying situations in Nanking described by the three missionary witnesses, who had gone all the way to Tokyo to testify, were convincing enough to make the tribunal accept their accounts as facts, although some exaggerations and misconceptions were present here and there. In that sense, the missionaries eagerly played a crucial role in creating the “massacre” image.

Interviewer: Why, then, were the American missionaries so eager to cooperate with the Chinese?

Ara: That is the most puzzling aspect to the Japanese. As I mentioned previously, the missionaries were anti-Japanese personally, but difficult financial circumstances obliged them to further engage in propaganda activities, for donations from America had dwindled. In those days, among overseas missionary activities, U.S. Christian churches spent the largest amount of money in China and, accordingly, sent the largest number of missionaries to China. Americans felt that China lagged behind times and was being bullied by Japan and that the Chinese people needed to be enlightened through the Christian faith.

However, despite vigorous efforts on the part of American Christians, the number of enlightened Chinese Christians hardly increased. As a result, the dominant opinion voiced at home in the U.S. was to bring those missionaries home, while the donations to the missionaries from America peaked in 1935 and began to decline thereafter. So American missionaries working in China had an urgent need to send home a good message, stressing that the missionaries in China firmly stood for the poor Chinese being bullied by the ‘atrocious Japanese’. This is not my original analysis, but Japanese diplomats in those days would see the situation in this context.

For American missionaries, war was a good opportunity to expand the Chinese Christian population. They tried to look like good and sympathetic friends of the Chinese people, offering food to Chinese refugees and providing sanctuaries to former soldiers hiding from the Japanese troops.

Eventually, the missionaries with such a need and purpose on one hand and the Nationalist Party on the other hand came to share mutual interests, which prompted them to conduct the propaganda campaign known as the “Nanking Massacre.”

Interviewer: Seeing things in this perspective, it is easily understood why American missionaries were so cooperative in the Nationalist Party’s propaganda operations, providing false information to American reporters and taking the trouble to go back home to spread the Nanking Massacre propaganda in the U.S.

Ara: Moreover, America at that time, the American mass media in particular, was anti-Japanese and pro-Chinese. Among them, Henry Luce, publisher of the weekly photo magazine *Life*, with a circulation in the hundreds of thousands, was an ardent Sinophile who never hesitated to say that he would do anything in his power for Chiang Kai-shek. He favored Chiang Kai-shek to such an extent that he was referred to as Don Quixote by puzzled fellow Americans. As a consequence, the image of the Nanking Massacre portrayed by the missionaries and newspaper reporters in *Life* and other media effectively permeated the American community.

After Japan and the U.S. eventually entered war, the Nanking Massacre became a major propaganda tool as a good example of the Japanese atrociousness, together with such popular phrases as “Remember Pearl Harbor” and “Bataan Death March”. In addition to the allegedly despicable cunningness behind the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the “Nanking Massacre” described by the missionaries was typically used to illustrate the Japanese cruelty.

Furthermore, even after the U.S. Army occupied Japan, this American-bred image of the Nanking Massacre was used in Japan as “war-guilt” propaganda and told as a true story to promote as to what had really happened. So, I should say that particular American missionaries and reporters had played tremendously effective roles in the “Nanking Massacre” propaganda

campaign.

The Nanking citizens did not know about the “Massacre”

Interviewer: By the way, in your new book, a lot of pages are devoted to explain how the “Nanking Massacre” has been addressed in the postwar years.

Ara: Well, that is because if you examine how the “Nanking Massacre” was dealt with after the War, you will clearly see that the “Nanking Massacre” was propaganda warfare.

The Nanking Incident came to be seen as the “Nanking Massacre” ever since the Tokyo Trials took it up. Most interestingly, at the time when the war finally ended and before the Tokyo Trials were held, the very citizens of Nanking did not know about the “massacre”.

To be specific, on August 29, 1946, the Chinese Nanking District Court Prosecutors Office submitted to court an investigational report titled *Crimes Committed by the Enemies*, in which were written “340,000 victims of killing” and as evidential proof for this, “Chinese testimonies regarding five mass murder incidents” and “Burial records by two charity organizations.” In other words, it was not until nearly 8 years after the battle of Nanking of December 1937 that the allegation of 300,000 massacre victims sprang up for the first time.

For that matter, when the Nanking District Court began the investigation to make this report, that is, at the end of 1945, none of the citizens of Nanking reported that they were victims of the atrocities committed by Japanese troops. According to the report, very few citizens voluntarily filed a case of killing by the Japanese Army, and some even denied the occurrence of such a matter.

The report of the Nanking District Court maintains that the scarcity of witnesses was due to harsh hindrance on the part of the Japanese Army, but this is a sheer lie. Let me explain why. On August 10, just before the War ended, as soon as news spread that Japan would accept the Potsdam Declaration on the condition that Japan should retain its statehood, joyful celebration occurred in Nanking on the following morning of the 11th, with loud bursting firecrackers and jubilant citizens crowding every street. This was only four days before the armistice. That’s how the Nanking citizens were. Similarly, then, if there had been a massacre, they could not have been unwilling to testify against the hated enemy after the Japanese Army had surrendered and the Nationalist Party had come to re-take the city.

However, the reality was that there was no massacre committed in the first place and so, the citizens of Nanking could only describe Nanking as they actually saw it. The citizens of Hankou or Chongqing would have testified in accordance with the massacre story then detailed in the Nationalist Party newspapers. Fortunately, Nanking was under control of the Japanese Army, and the information from Chinese newspapers did not reach Nanking. In other words, since the citizens of Nanking were free from the Nationalist Party propaganda operation, and based on their own experiences, all they could answer was “there was no massacre”.

Of course, the Chinese did not just sit and wait. Seeing that there was no witness of massacre coming forth whatsoever, the Nationalist Party sent a memorandum to various organizations, pressing them to speak up in its favor. Finally, some came up as witnesses and their accounts became “the testimonies by Chinese people regarding five mass murder incidents”, which were also presented at the Tokyo Trials.

Why didn’t China touch upon “Nanking”?

Ara: Equally in Japan, the “Nanking Massacre” appeared in newspapers at the time of the Tokyo Trials, but after the Trials were over, not one article was written about the Nanking Massacre for 23 years, until reporter Honda Katsuichi mentioned it in his serialized article titled *Travels in China* in the *Asahi Shimbun* in 1971.

At the time of the battle of Nanking, many on-the-spot newspaper reporters were covering Nanking, seeing with their own eyes what was going on and what did not happen. The *Asahi Shimbun* sent a staff of more than 90 reporters, photographers and liaison officers, while there was a crew of over 80 from the *Mainichi Shimbun*. Those veterans still worked in the news offices of the Japanese mass media (after the war) and I guess that if some inexperienced young reporter happened to write something unrealistic about the Nanking Massacre and handed it to the editors, the old hands would immediately spot the incongruity of the article and would admonish the junior reporter, saying “You should be ashamed of writing such stuff, son.” However, from 1965

onward, those experienced journalists retired one after another, and Honda's *Travels in China* triggered a new trend of writing articles about the "Nanking Massacre" in Japanese newspapers.

It was not in Japan alone that the "Nanking Massacre" ceased to be discussed in the postwar years. In fact, the situation was almost the same in the People's Republic of China. Or rather, the Chinese Communist Party hardly said anything for more than forty years since the Nanking Incident occurred. Naturally, the Chinese Communists kept denouncing militarist Japan, using the term of "three-all" operation, meaning to plunder all, to kill all and to burn all. This term was originally used to blame the Nationalist Party for its brutal operation.

One of the symbolic examples of this is the Chinese reaction to the visit by a group of ten or so former Japanese military personnel to China in 1956. The visiting Japanese met with Mao Zedong and other Chinese dignitaries, talked with the very person that prepared the operational plan for the battle of Nanking and also discussed the fall of Nanking with the man who had fled from Nanking with Chiang Kai-shek. They actually visited Nanking. But during their entire visit, the Nanking Incident was never mentioned.

In 1971, reporter Honda of the *Asahi Shimbun* went to China to write *Travels in China*, and at long last, he mentioned the "Nanking Massacre" in it. But for nearly 10 years after that, the Nanking issue was not touched upon. It was not until 1981 that the Chinese began to substantially refer to it. In a Chinese history textbook for middle schools (equivalent to Japanese junior and senior high schools) titled *Chinese History* and published in the same year, 1981, the description of 300,000 victims of the massacre appeared.

Interviewer: Why, then, did the Chinese Communist Party suddenly start to claim that "there were 300,000 massacre victims"?

Ara: After all, I think it was the Japanese themselves who brought the issue to the surface. In September 1966, Oya Soichi, Omori Minoru and some other critics and journalist visited China, and Omori Minoru himself brought up the Nanking Incident and asked the Chinese whether they could discuss it. In March 1967, Nijima Atsuyoshi, an assistant professor at Waseda University, visited China and asked the Chinese authorities if he could interview survivors of the Nanking Incident. Of course, in either case, the Chinese Communists were most reluctant and the negotiations never went any further.

At the end of 1970, the *Asahi Shimbun* conveyed its wish to walk around the real sites of the alleged atrocities committed by the Japanese Army and to interview some of the surviving victims. The request, this time, was granted six months later. Consequently, several witnesses were available in Nanking, and their stories were to appear in Honda's *Travels in China* as testimonies of the Nanking Massacre. Much more confirmation is still needed regarding this matter. But I can say this much: it is the Japanese side that brought the "Nanking Massacre" to the center stage.

Interviewer: It is a very significant fact that the Chinese side did not say a word about "Nanking" for over forty years.

Ara: On the other hand, it is not true that the Chinese Communist Party knew nothing about the battle of Nanking. Mao Zedong was in Yanan at the time when Nanking fell, but he was fully aware that Nanking was under siege by Japanese troops and that soon after the fall of Nanking, Japanese troops reportedly committed atrocities. Although Mao criticized that the Japanese attack of Nanking lacked sternness in annihilating the enemy, he did not comment on a "Nanking Massacre" at all. Zhou Enlai, having been involved in the propaganda activities managed by the Nationalist Party as part of the United Front Nationalist-Communist coalition, must have fully understood what was actually going on, and yet he did not say a word either.

Both Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai probably were familiar with the nature of the Nationalist propaganda operations, and they most likely conceived the Nanking Massacre as demagogic propaganda, just as in the cases of Shanghai, Taierzhuang, the Huang He (Yellow River) and De'an. To sum up, the reason why the Chinese Communists did not touch upon the "Nanking Incident" for more than 40 years after the War is that they fully understood that it was after all Chiang Kai-shek's propaganda.

(Interview held on November 5. The editorial department is responsible for the wording of this interview.)

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