

URC RESEARCH REPORT

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Project Title: Education and China's Search for Modernity at the Turn of the 20th Century: The Japanese Connection
RMOL#: RIO8221

1. What is(are) the research question(s)?

In what way did Japan help to produce the so-called first generation of modern educators in China? What exactly did the Chinese learn from the Japanese? And in what way did the Japanese environment of the late Meiji era help to trigger the revolutionary impulses of the first generation of Chinese social and political reformers?

2. Rationale

While there is much writing on the impact of Japan on China's search for modernity, considerably less attention has been paid to the questions of how, when, where, and why Japan played a crucial role in the beginning of modern education in China. My research aims to fill this gap by providing a detailed study of the rise of a Western-style modern school system in the last years of the Qing and Japan's involvement in it. One of the themes I explore in this research is how in the aftermath of the 1894-95 Sino-Japanese War, Chinese reformers, radicals, and revolutionaries turned to Japanese and Western school songs as an educational weapon to combat the perceived backwardness of China.

3. Methodology

In this study I look at the programme of "learning the West through Japan" from a historical perspective informed by the insights of contemporary postcolonial criticism and cultural studies. I consult previously untranslated Chinese sources for a broader sense of what Qing court officials understood and aimed to achieve. I also re-examine the more familiar scholarly treatments of the programme in the context of recent critiques of orientalism. Thus a cross-disciplinary approach combining methodologies and perspectives developed in the disciplines of history, cultural studies and literary criticism is used.

4. Outcomes / findings

The research grant has enabled me to produce a number of outcomes. To date, three quality-assured journal articles have been published and one conference paper has been presented. In addition, one paper has been submitted to a European journal and another one is in its final draft.

5. Publications and dissemination

1. “Du Jiade de yuelishu xilie yu xiyang yueli zhi dongchuan” (Carstairs Douglas and the Introduction of Music Pedagogy in Late Qing China), *Yinyue yanjiu* (Music Research), No. 1 (Spring 2009), pp. 24-38.
2. “Wang Guangqi yu Wu Ruoying” (Wang Guangqi and Wu Ruoying), *Zhongyang yinyue xueyuan xuebao* (Journal of the Central Conservatory of Music), No. 4 (Winter 2008), pp. 49-56.
3. “Jin ershi nian lai haiwai youguan Zhongguo yinyue yanjiu zhi fazhan yu dongxiang” (Trends in recent Western scholarship on Chinese performing arts), *Yinyue yanjiu* (Music Research), No. 3 (Winter 2008), pp. 83-99; No. 4 (Spring 2008), pp. 103-114.
4. “The Portrayal of Japanese in Contemporary Chinese Films” presented at the international conference “Locality, Translocality, and De-Locality: Cultural, Aesthetic, and Political Dynamics of Chinese-Language Cinema” (Shanghai, China, July 12 – 13, 2008)