

The Sino-Japanese War and Youth Literature: Friends and Foes on the Battlefield (Routledge Studies in Education and Society in Asia)

Minjie Chen



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The Sino-Japanese War (1937 - 1945) was fought in the Asia-Pacific theatre between Imperial Japan and China, with the United States as the latter's major military ally. An important line of investigation remains, questioning how the history of this war has been passed on to post-war generations' consciousness, and how information sources, particularly those exposed to young people in their formative years, shape their knowledge and bias of the conflict as well as World War II more generally.

This book is the first to focus on how the Sino-Japanese War has been represented in non-English and English sources for children and young adults. As a cross-cultural study and an interdisciplinary endeavour, it not only examines youth-orientated publications in China and the United States, but also draws upon popular culture, novelists' memoirs, and family oral narratives to make comparisons between fiction and history, Chinese and American sources, and published materials and private memories of the war. Through quantitative narrative analysis, literary and visual analysis, and socio-political critique, it shows the dominant pattern of war stories, traces chronological changes over the seven decades from 1937 to 2007, and teases out the ways in which the history of the Sino-Japanese War has been constructed, censored, and utilized to serve shifting agendas.

Providing a much needed examination of public memory, literary representation, and popular imagination of the Sino-Japanese War, this book will have huge interdisciplinary appeal, particularly for students and scholars of Asian history, literature, society and education.

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