Forming an Anti-Imperialist National Identity in Republican China: The Finnish Interpretation

Airaksinen, Tiina H.

2022-11-20
Wiley Blackwell
http://hdl.handle.net/10138/353930
Airaksinen, T H 2022, 'Forming an Anti-Imperialist National Identity in Republican China: The Finnish Interpretation', Nations and Nationalism, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 364-379. https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12906

Received: 16 November 2021 | Revised: 13 June 2022 | Accepted: 22 July 2022

DOI: 10.1111/nana.12906

ARTICLE

WILEY

Forming an anti-imperialist national identity in Republican China: The Finnish interpretation

Tiina H. Airaksinen

Department of Cultures, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

Correspondence
Tiina H. Airaksinen, Department of Cultures, Box 59, 00014-University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland.
Email: tiina.h.airaksinen@helsinki.fi

Abstract

This article focuses on Finnish national identities because they expressed the shared experiences of newly established Finnish communities, and they were crucial in constructing a new nation. It also explores created images of the Finnish and Finland, as well as community construction in Republican China, especially after Finland gained independence in 1917. Another aim is to examine those Finnish political, cultural and economic activities that supported their identity construction in China. The specific emphasis will be on analysing the largest and sometimes cross-functioning Finnish groups in China: the governmental officials and the commercial community. By using qualitative methods, namely, discourse analysis and historical analysis, this study shows how the Finnish community created alternative, sometimes imaginative and frequently anti-imperialist national identities in the new Republican China. Indeed, by signing the Treaty Principles of Reciprocity and Equal Treatment, it was agreed that Finland and China 'shall enjoy same rights, privileges, favours, immunities and exemptions which [might] be accorded to similar foreign agents in accordance with the principles of international law'. This article argues that Finnish aspirations were positively regarded by many Chinese, and they respected this quite unique national connection with Finland.

KEYWORDS
anti-imperialism, national identities, nationalism, post-independence Finland, Republican China

1 | INTRODUCTION

Western Europe's industrial and later commercial revolution brought increased industry and more trade and larger banks. The urgency to create markets and the constant pressure for new materials and food were eventually reflected in colonial policies and practices. Many Europeans perceived China as good territory for trading and investment. By the beginning of the 20th century, more than 80 treaty ports of various sizes were forcefully opened in China for foreign residence, trade and missionary work. China was subjected to multiple formal and informal imperialisms. European, American, Russian and Japanese political, cultural and economic ambitions were transmitted to China via semi-imperial and imperial outposts stationed in the treaty ports. This treaty port system and a series of unequal treaties[1] dominated Chinese society from 1842, when the Treaty of Nanjing was signed, until the 1940s. By far, the most important of these treaties involved extraterritorial laws. According to new extraterritoriality rights, foreigners engaged at the treaty port were subject to their own national authorities, and legal cases were to be tried via their own consular jurisdictions. These privileges included an exemption from the jurisdiction of local Chinese courts, freedom from arrest by local officials and the right to be judged in a criminal or civil trial by consular or national courts. Prior scholarly accounts have focused particularly on how the Westerners, Russians and Japanese viewed Chinese people and cultures in terms of racial otherness, which directly contributed to the unequal treaty arrangements with China (Airaksinen, 2005: 34–40; Bickers, 1999: 68–73). Even Finland's Nordic neighbours, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, had all signed unequal treaties with China (Airaksinen, 2011: 147–163). Finland never signed an unequal treaty with the Republic of China (1912–1949); instead, it attempted to establish more equal relations with the country. While the Finnish certainly benefitted from the privileges that other foreigners had achieved, it did not seek to perpetuate the role of coloniser since the nation was sensitive to its own colonial history of having been ruled by the Russian Empire and before that, the Swedish Empire for many hundreds of years.

The powers that had endorsed unequal treaties included several European countries, and moreover, the United States had special contracts with China as well. In addition, the neighbouring countries of Russia and Japan had established imperialist settlements in China. By 1918, a total of 19 states had signed unequal treaties with China, but this number had diminished to 14 by the 1930s. The semicolonial treaty port system (1842–1943) consisted of areas identified as treaty ports, settlements, concessions, colonies and leased territories according to their administrative position within the Chinese government. The most general term, 'treaty port', applied to all cities or towns, usually on the coast or navigable waterways, opened to foreign commerce. The treaty port system had been fully dismantled by 1943, when the last contracts were terminated.[2]

The treaty port system and particularly Shanghai's International Settlement was a legal and political experiment perceived to be part of a broader British project to construct a coherent imperial legal system in China and further strengthen the British global order.[3] The settlement prototype of municipal administration had been reproduced by the British since the 1860s, and thus, it operated as a model settlement. Even though Beijing was the administrative capital of China, foreign influence was more dominant and visible in Shanghai and Hong Kong. Hong Kong had received its own status as a Crown Colony of Great Britain after the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842. Shanghai was divided into three different jurisdictions: the International Settlement, the French Concession and the area of the Chinese municipality. British dominance over the International Settlement was strong, but numerous other foreign groups lived under the settlement's protection and shared administrative responsibilities with the British. Gradually, Shanghai became an international centre of trade, industry and banking. It was the only metropolis in China at the time, as it had long been the centre of China's internal trade in tea, cotton, silk, silver and

opium. In the 1930s, Shanghai had over two and half million inhabitants, more than 56,000 of whom were foreigners (commonly known as Shanghailanders) (Bickers & Henriot, 2000: *passim*). Persons from Japan constituted the largest group living within the foreign area, with 20,000 inhabitants, followed by 15,000 Russian, 10,000 British and approximately 2500 French residents. Shanghai in the 1930s had representatives from over 30 nationalities; the 'right' Western national identity and passport were crucial keys to success in such an environment (Bickers, 2014: 828–856; Shanghai Municipal Council Censuses, 1865-1942: 333). Since the 1840s, privileged Western foreigners predominated among the Shanghailanders, and the ultimate punishment for its members was exclusion from it. Although the Finns did not reach the highest category of secluded Shanghailanders, they still enjoyed the same privileges due to the series of unequal treaties signed by signed by other Western countries, including the ability to reside in modern and exclusive foreign settlements, to travel around the country, to engage in missionary work and to conduct business.

Customs authorities estimate that by 1931, approximately 370,000 foreigners were living in China as a whole, including approximately 89 Finnish nationals, 229 Norwegians and 242 Swedes. As in Shanghai, the largest population groups were the Japanese, Russians, British and Americans (The Statesman's Year-Book, 1934: 749). During the Republican period, the period under focus here, around 300–400 Finnish people lived in China.

Municipal administration in the treaty ports was controlled by the treaty powers. In Shanghai, the International Settlement administration was formed around the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC), which was responsible for public utilities and security. It was a committee of nine annually elected foreign members, who were typically managers of large companies, such as Butterfield and Swire, Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, Deutsch Asiatische Bank or Jardine and Matheson and Company. Continuance of this conventional oligarchy was secured by an electoral system based on limited property franchise. Thus, only the wealthiest businessmen had the right to vote. In reality, the SMC operated without the legitimisation of any government, Chinese or foreign. The Mixed Court was established to deal with people of Chinese nationality who were accused of having committed offences or crimes within the Settlement area. It was also responsible for resolving disputes, criminal administration and enforcing order in general for the very large Chinese component of the population. In other words, the Council thus dispensed justice on behalf of the Mixed Court, creating a very complex legal order when working in combination with the local Chinese court (Airaksinen, 2005: 5).

Politically and financially, British businessmen were the most influential group of foreigners, including bankers, manufacturers, traders and the managers of mines, railways and shipping industries. Other larger groups included missionaries, as Shanghai was the centre of all Protestant missions in China, as well as governmental and municipal officials. Finally, one of the major constituents of Shanghai's foreign community was the miscellaneous group of people providing services at the treaty port settlement, including journalists, lawyers, estate agents, shopkeepers and engineers.

This flexible categorisation included representatives of the Finnish community in China. Finnish encounters with the Chinese and their self-identification within the foreign community have thus far gone largely unstudied. Missionaries merely emphasised the importance of Christian values, and the vast majority of their communication was based more on religious than on national identity; thus, they are left out of this article. This research provides a concise analysis of Finnish national identity and community construction in China, especially after Finland gained independence in 1917. Another aim of the article is to examine political, cultural and economic activities that supported Finnish identity construction in China. The specific focus is on analysing the largest and sometimes cross-functioning Finnish groups in China: governmental officials and the commercial community. These heterogeneous groups constructed and produced the strongest images of Finnish nationalisms. A few important historical accounts of Finnish officials and some businessmen have been conducted to date (Arho Havrén, 2009; Uola, 1995), though unfortunately none published in English. This analysis is based on research in diplomatic and business archives, supported by private and personal correspondence. The archive materials referred to here have been written in Finnish and English and sometimes in Swedish, Russian and Chinese. Some time periods are covered more extensively than others, and secondary materials have at times been used when primary sources have not been available. All materials have been carefully

chosen by reflecting critically on their purpose, audience and distribution. This article concentrates on the identity construction of these two less-researched Finnish communities of officials and businessmen, a theme that has not received extensive international academic attention.

1.1 | On national Identities

Identities are always recreated in specific contexts. They are co-constructed in interactive relationships. They are usually fragmented, dynamic and changeable—everyone has multiple personal, social and collective identities. Identity construction always implies inclusionary and exclusionary processes, that is, the definition of oneself and others. In this case, the Finns created their own group—self—in relation to the Chinese and other foreigners living in China. Identities that are individual and collective, national and transnational, are also reproduced and manifested symbolically. In this situation, lenses of culture, ethnicity and common history are used to explain and conceptualise specific national identities. Identity may be constructed based on individual differences in the group, group difference within the larger society or state differences within the international community (Snow, 2001: 1–13). One purpose here is to evaluate the methods that the Finns used to interpret and narrate their national identities and self-images. The article will briefly discuss how the Finns were perceived by some Chinese, but first, it is crucial to analyse the development of the Finnish nationalistic project.

Stuart Hall (1996: 595–634) has famously analysed national culture as 'a discourse […] a way of constructing meanings which influences and organises both our actions and our conception of ourselves'. Hall describes five main elements of national culture, all of which are quite visible in Finnish narratives recounted in China. Hall's first element is the narrative of the nation: this includes stories, events and national symbols and rituals that represent the shared experiences, feelings and values that give meaning to a nation. Formulating Hall's example for this theme, the discourse on Finnishness represents what 'Finland' is and gives meaning to the identity of 'being Finnish'. Hall's second element is origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness: aspects of national culture that have existed since the nation's creation. The invention of tradition is Hall's third element: He states that traditions are often not old and that, in fact, many are recent inventions. Invented traditions are 'a set of practices […] of a ritual or symbolic nature which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviours by repetition which automatically implies continuity with a suitable historical past'. The fourth element is a foundational myth: This implies that the origins of the nation, its people and its character were founded far back in the past, in a 'mythic' time. Foundational myths provide a narrative of history that predates modern events. The fifth element is that of the 'pure original people' or 'folk': Hall claims that national identity is often founded on such people, even though they are usually not the people who hold power. National identity is a more general term that expands its meaning far beyond the limits of patriotism and nationalism (Hall, 1996: 595–634, 1997a: 173–188, 1997b: 13–74). Finally, Benedict Anderson (1983), with his famous concept of imagined communities, posits that identity is an imagined construct. This idea is appropriate with respect to Finnish national identity in China. Since not all individuals from a nation can hope to know or interact with one another, symbols and rituals are used as a means for bonding, and individuals thus imagine they have a community with other members of society. As a result, it is worth debating whether the definition and essence of national identity—whether it is based on ethnicity, common history or other cultural markers—are constructed and invented for manipulation. Mariana Achugar (2017: 301), when reflecting on critical discourse analysis, notes that its 'main contributions are to show what semiotic resources are deployed to construct the past and how discourses of the past are used to serve particular present agendas'. Taking a slightly different perspective than discourse analysis, Paul Cohen has described in his famous book *History in Three keys: The Boxers as Event*, *Experience and Myth* (1997: 14–208, 289–297) how past or historical events can be analysed as event, experience and myth. We historians tend to view the past as a series of events when trying to understand the past—what happened and why. The Finns in living in China during the Republican period created narratives to define their reality. It is these kinds of discourses that will be discussed here.

1.2 | New Finnish national identity

Finnish adventurers and travellers had one of their first reported encounters with Chinese people during the 18th century. Cadet Israel Reinius (1727–1797) was in the service of the Swedish East India Company and sailed to Canton and back when the Canton Trade System was just beginning, in the years 1746–1748. His detailed diaries thoroughly analyse Chinese society and culture and the Chinese people (Reinius, 2008). A bit later, estate owner Peter Johan Bladh (1746–1816) travelled to China as the ombudsman for the Swedish East India Company and lived there for 7 years, 1777–1784. Another well-known adventurer to China was Carl Gustav Mannerheim (1867–1951), who travelled there as an officer for the Russian Imperial Army to survey the country in 1906–1908.[4] By the end of the 19th century, though, only a few Finnish missionaries, scholars and sojourners had travelled to China.

The Finnish nationalist project that began in the second part of the 19th century led to independence from Russia in 1917, and 6 December became the official Independence Day of the Republic of Finland. The new national identity was reinforced with symbols and rituals. These included the national flag with its blue cross and white background, which is affiliated with other Nordic flags bearing a similar cross. The cross on the flag symbolised the Christian faith, but it also created a sense of connectedness with the Nordic countries as separate from the Russian Empire. According to Finnish nationalist Zachris Topelius (1818–1898), the white and blue colours of the flag were chosen to symbolise snow and the thousands of lakes in Finland. Understanding and respect for nature became a selling point of Finland: Many of the promotional materials used in China showed images of the country's beautiful and untamed nature. The unveiling ceremonies of the public statues of great men (and they were almost all men) on national holidays, when raising the flag, during summer festivals and on other public occasions created a sense of solidarity, offering Finns symbolic objects with which to identify.

1.3 | Finnish Officials' collective identity construction in China

The Finnish government's first contacts with China were made via Finland's diplomatic representative in Japan. For Finland, China was a non-European country that did not rank highly among the most politically important countries in which to open a representative office. Instead, it perceived Japan as more important since it could provide a diplomatic vantage point from which to observe developments in Russia. Finland established diplomatic relations with Japan in 1919, and a legation to Japan was inaugurated as early as 1920. On 6 September 1919, the President of Finland appointed Professor of Altaic Philology Gustaf John Ramstedt (1873–1950) to act as charge d'affaires of the Finnish government in Tokyo. He was responsible for the whole of Asia, or the Far East, as it was then called. Finland established its first consulate in Shanghai in 1921, and in 1926, it was granted the status of Finnish Consulate-General. Administratively, the Consulate-General was closed in 1945. In day-to-day politics, the Finnish government considered the opening of consulates and, ultimately, establishing legation with the support of honorary consuls the most efficient tool for conducting foreign policy in China. At the beginning of the 1930s, Finland had honorary consuls in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Hankou, Qingdao, Dalian, Harbin and Tianjin. Some of the honorary consuls were foreign businessmen with close ties to Finland, while others had Finnish roots.[5]

Finland's PR work lagged behind that of other Nordic countries, which had launched extensive propaganda projects in China. Several prominent Danish individuals had decided to fly to China with their own aeroplane, while the Swedish government moved a military gunboat into Chinese waters to mark the visit of the crown prince in October 1926 (OMA, UMS, Wähämäki to UM, Shanghai, 30 April 1926). The Finnish Consulate-General's attempts were finally rewarded when Captain Wäinö Bremer (1899–1964) flew to China. In 1933, Bremer, an internationally recognised aviator, attempted to fly around the globe with a modern Junkers A50 Junior airplane, arriving in China for a stopover. The arrival of the flying superstar in China was a PR victory for Finland. To strengthen his image, and before beginning of his pilot career, Bremer was part of the Finnish team that had won a silver medal in military patrol skiing at the Chamonix Winter Olympics in 1924. Flying around the world had taken him to four

continents. During the trip, Bremer encountered many exciting but also dramatic moments caused by bad weather, half-completed airports and incomplete maps. However, the 3-month trip was a national success and brought fame and glory to him and Finland. Accounts of the brave pilot's journeys appeared to reflect a Finnish imagined national identity: athletic and brave people—people who, to use the Finnish term, had *sisu*—dedicated to their home country (*Kauppalehti*, 5 August 1933: 1; *North China Herald*, 9 June 1933: 394).

1.4 | Building Finnishness: Propaganda work

The Finnish state supported community- and nation-building efforts by extensively promoting Finland's culture, politics and economy. The Finnish Propaganda Office produced images of a modern nation, aimed not only at Shanghailanders but also at the Chinese middle class and intellectuals living in the treaty port regions. A cavalcade of pictures of Finland proudly displayed on the walls of the consulate greeted visitors arriving through the various networks of contacts established by the consular officers, such as officials, journalists, members of the business community and missionaries, who were, for example, invited to the consulate to celebrate Finnish national holidays or Finnish artists' birthdays. Important achievements in politics, sports and business represented the idea of a country with a long history that was also quite modern. The office published materials in different languages, including French, English, Swedish, Chinese, Esperanto and German. Some Chinese representatives of the business community and intellectuals understood English, so the majority of PR materials were not published in Chinese.[6] Pictures and images are a well-known means to create the visual identity of a community. Particularly in the 1920s and 1930s, various pictorials were published in Finland to promote national and ethnic identity. The greatness of the country was also emphasised in images of its presidents, ministers and famous MPs. Pictures of respected presidents, such as Carl G.E. Mannerheim, Kaarlo J. Ståhlberg (1865–1952), Pehr E. Svinhuvud (1861–1944) and Kyösti Kallio (1873–1940), created a representation of a community with national honour. Showing strong leadership was seen as crucial for a young nation that had recently gained its independence from Russia.

The images that were regularly presented included nationally important buildings, historical sites and leisure-time activities (e.g. National Museum of Finland, Olav's Castle and sauna), modern industry buildings (e.g. Aaltonen Shoe Factory, Nokia Rubber Factory and SOK Brick Factory) and the arts (paintings by Akseli Gallen-Kallela [1865–1931] and Eero Järnefelt [1863–1937] as well as a Finnish wall hanging). Moreover, unique national activities like bear hunting and rapids shooting were displayed to the Chinese elite and foreign communities. Athletes who had succeeded in the Olympics were on a list of prominent sportsmen—such as the runners Paavo Nurmi (1897–1973) and Ville Ritola (1896–1982) and javelin thrower Joonas Myyrä (1892–1955)—who were portrayed in the newspaper or on special occasions organised by the Finnish Consulate-General (OMA, UMS, Da:1, 1926, Filmoskooppisarja [Films], 1926). To promote travel to Finland, the country was described as a 'Western country, not [an] Eastern country: Western luxuries, Western habits and … hospitable to strangers'. In contrast, Russia was portrayed as having Eastern luxuries, inferior habits and as being inhospitable to travellers. The average Finn was defined as quiet, industrious and very much aware of the sacred demands of hospitality; promotional literature described the Finns as a strong and athletic race, people who regularly go to the sauna (OMA, UMS, F34b:13 Acting Consul General to Edwin Haward, *North China Herald*, 4 February 1936, no page number).

The Finnish government and its Ministry for Foreign Affairs (established in 1918) were anxious to promote and manifest national symbols abroad. Thus, Chinese and other foreign colleagues, business community members and the intelligentsia were all regularly invited to the consulate to celebrate Finnish Independence Day (OMA, UMS, De:1, Consul for Finland Karl Gustaf Wähämäki to the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs Hsü Yuan, 27 November 1925). In addition, the Finnish settlement in China celebrated such Christian feasts as Christmas and Easter. The Nordic celebration of Midsummer was introduced as a typically Finnish national festivity, and exotic images of 'night-less nights when the sun does not set at all' were portrayed in newspapers, films and pictures shown at state receptions. During all national holidays, the Finnish flag was hoisted, displaying the white and blue national colours.

1.5 | The China press and Finland

The Finnish community builders' endeavours were greatly rewarded when, on Finnish Independence Day in 1936, American-Chinese newspaper *The China Press* published two supplements, one on Finland and one for a Finnish readership. The supplements were partly subsidised by the Finnish Consulate, and Finland, the Nordic countries and several European companies had purchased newspaper advertisements in the supplements.[7] One of the supplements was written in Finnish, with most of the 500 copies being distributed in Finland. The Finnish edition analysed Chinese Republican political life thoroughly. The cover portrayed Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975) and his famous wife, Soong May-ling (1898–2003). The supplement was obviously targeted at the Finnish mainland business community intending to invest in and do business with the Republic of China. Surely, many friends of China, including officials and businesspeople, read the paper with great interest.

A national promotional victory in China was secured when *The China Press*[8] published a six-page broadsheet analysing the country of Finland, its society and people. The paper provided an image of a progressive and modern country—exactly how the Finns wanted to be seen by others. According to the paper, the young Finnish Republic's industry was developing innovatively, and exports to China were increasing. Indeed, Finland enjoyed a trade surplus at that time, and moreover, the newspaper provided statistics buttressing the image of an economically resilient country. One picture of a Finnish-built icebreaker particularly helped create an image of a technologically advanced nation. Marketed as 'the country with 6000 lakes', the paper highlighted such principal tourist attractions as Suomenlinna Fortress, Turku Castle and Lapland, which it described as national heritage sites (*The China Press*, supplement, 6 December 1936). This promotion of heritage sites corresponded with Stuart Hall's notion of national symbols representing the shared experiences, feelings and values that give meaning to a nation. Representations of Finland and the discourse of 'Finnishness' gave important meanings to the identity of 'being Finnish'. The new nation's identity was illustrated with images of its politics, economy, history, culture and of course sports.

According to the *China Press*, a new 'mature period' had begun in Finland during the First World War (1914–1918), when the country was rescued from 'Russification and complete colonisation'. Finland's foreign policy was based on peaceful and friendly cooperation. The nation's historic background and continued strong leadership were reflected in pictures of the previous president, prime minister and foreign minister. Finland had a need to present 'great men' around whom a modern strong national identity could be built, and *The China Press* certainly promoted that idea. The nation state and national institutions such as the presidency, the military and the school system, and also associations and the media, maintained and re-enforced its recently created identity. A few years later, the Finnish diplomatic corps issued a Chinese publication entitled 今天的芬蘭語 (*Jīntiān de fēnlán yǔ*, Today's Finnish, 1938). Themes and pictures replicated those already published in *The China Press*: the importance of recent Finnish independence, history, heritage, culture and long-standing traditions. Moreover, the publication also showed the beauty of the country's nature and praised its strong sense of national identity.

The 1930s was a heightened time to celebrate national identity in China. Thus, the Finnish Consulate-General eagerly organised festivities that supported national identity: The centenary of the Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*, was held in 1935 (OMA, UMS, F23:3 Kalevala-vuosi [Kalevala year], 1934–1935). The 20th anniversary of Finland's independence was celebrated in 1937, and during the same year, it commemorated Mannerheim's 70th birthday (OMA, UMS, F1:1 Suomen itsenäisyys [Finnish Independence] 1934–1936. Vice-Consul Ville Niskanen (1887–1970) was politically active and a strong advocate of Finnish culture and identity. The consulate organised parties where the Shanghai International Settlement's own Shanghai Municipal Orchestra played composer Jean Sibelius' (1865–1957) compositions and celebrated his 70th birthday. Finnish nationalist performance music was a success and transcended the settlement's internal, external and cultural boundaries. The music resonated in the hearts of Chinese nationalists and foreigners who were missing their homeland (Bickers, 2000: 858–862; OMA, UMS, F23:2 Jean Sibeliuksen 70-vuotispäivä [Jean Sibelius' seventieth birthday]; Niskanen to Maestro Mario Puci, 8 November 1935). These national holiday commemorations reflected the formation and (re)production of

collective belonging. National history, culture and the arts were the young nation's spiritual export products. As nationalist sentiments were strengthening in China at the beginning of the 20th century, the Finnish Foreign Ministry recognised them as an important part of its export trade. Thus, collective Finnish national identity construction was portrayed in multiple ways: by organising advisory and information activities; by publishing newspaper articles and commentaries; by distributing literature, books and pamphlets; and by hosting lectures, film evenings and parties.

1.6 | Sports at heart

Benedict Andersson (1983: 6–7) has argued that sport constitutes a major ritual of popular culture contributing to the theoretical concept of the nation as an imagined community. Sports played an important role by constructing and legitimising a national imagery and by providing accounts of other races, cultures and nationalities that were considered different. Success in sports competitions demonstrated the physical ability and vitality of the people in peaceful conditions. In Finland, leaders recognised sports as a 'weapon' in defending the existence of the young nation state. They also viewed sports as an instrument of national expression and a driver of national unity—particularly given the social, political, economic and cultural uncertainty of the young nation at the time. The newly established international sports movement and especially the Olympic Games served the national project quite well. Finnish teams represented their national communities. Athletics was especially close to the Finnish heart. According to the Finnish narrative, runner Hannes Kolehmainen 'ran Finland onto the world map' at the 1912 Summer Olympics. Indeed, from the 1920 Summer Olympics to the Second World War, Finland was the second most successful country in athletics, with only the much larger United States collecting more Olympic medals. In China, books such as *Finland's Candidates for Los Angeles* and *Athletics in Finland* were proudly presented to prominent foreigners and Chinese persons alike. The country's positive reputation quickly spread through the ranks of international sports, and the nation was strengthened by additional success in the Olympics (Anderson, 1983: 6–7; Kokkonen, 2003: 4–25; on Finnish national identity and sports; see Tervo, 2002: 335–356).

The 12th Olympic Games were originally scheduled to be held in Tokyo, Japan, but the organisers had to cancel them due to the Sino–Japanese War (1937–1945), and the International Olympic Committee awarded the Olympic Games instead to Helsinki, Finland (OMA, UMS, F23:10 Niskanen to Mr Georg Chow, 29 September 1932; OMA, UMS, F24 Vuoden 1940 Olympialaiset, i.e., Olympics). Thus, sports-driven nationalism culminated at the end of 1930s when Finland received the honour of hosting the 1940 Olympics. A nation as small as Finland had not previously attempted to organise summer races at such a scale: The population of Finland in 1938 was approximately 3.6 million, and the population of Helsinki was less than 250,000. Finns in China also came together to support the idea of nationality through universal sport. Finland had not participated 'in the race to open treaty ports in China' but instead felt it had demonstrated its superpower position through success in sports. In 1936, China had favoured Finland over Japan as the site for the 1940 Olympics. Though it was well-known that China's decision was largely a matter of regional politics, the Finnish officials were grateful for Chinese support (OMA, UMS, F23:10 Mannerheim Sotamarsalkka [Marshal Mannerheim], Niskanen to UM, 30 August 1938). Thus, sports had become part of Finland's official foreign policy in China. Although the Second World War forced cancellation of the 1940 Olympics, Finland maintained its reputation of being a fair player in sports and in politics (Callahan, 2010: 1–11). Enthusiasm for national sport was apparent at the same time in both Finland and China. During the Republican period, physical education and sports became a matter of government interest in both countries. In China, this resulted in an increasingly Spartan and militaristic approach to athletics. As a result, China started participating in regional sporting meets, such as the Far Eastern Championship Games, first organised in 1913. Though the athletes did not always win, their participation united the Chinese as nation: People no longer necessarily cheered for their (local) team but for the national team (Boucher, 2008: 48–52).

1.7 | The Finnish–Chinese treaty: Principles of reciprocity and equal treatment

Separating itself from a Russian identity was instrumental in constructing a Finnish national self-identity, even among the Finns living in China. After independence had been secured, Nordic and European political, cultural and economic models attracted the young Finnish nation. However, the European imperialism in Asia was sometimes recognised as alien. At the Washington Conference negotiations (1921–1922), the main idea had been that none of the treaty countries will expand their existing privileges or earn new exclusive rights in China, such as leased territory and railroads. Whereas China's goal was to improve its international position and to emphasise the sovereignty of the state. China, for its part, no longer desired to grant new extraterritorial rights to foreigners and attempted to terminate old agreements. In the end, the Washington Conference failed to solve problems of China's unequal treaties, and it did not bring peace to Asia.

The Finns constructed alternative forms of identity and sought cooperation with China and were eager to support China's foreign policy. In the early 1920s, Finland had signed relatively few international agreements since the Foreign Ministry was still finding ways to operate in the international community. During the First World War, international relations had been severed in Europe, and all new international contracts were being closely scrutinised by officials. Finland already had signed trade and shipping agreements with France, Estonia and Japan at that time. Its interests with the Republic of China were based on the requirement for more official state-to-state relations: Finnish officials attempted to receive recognition for the newly independent state and create more equal relations, but they did not aspire to colonise China. The Finnish quest for legitimacy included subtle negotiations on cultural norms, economic relations, political power and institutional arrangements. China had formally recognised Finnish independence early, on 1 July 1919. In negotiations between the two states, Finland supported China's request to establish national relations based on mutual equality and reciprocity. As a result of these negotiations, the Treaty of Amity between Finland and China was signed on 29 October 1926. This was one of the first agreements that Finland signed as an independent country; it redefined the nation's international politics and trade relations and the legal status of its citizens. According to the treaty, the diplomatic and consular agents of these two countries 'shall enjoy the same rights, privileges, favours, immunities and exemptions which [might] be accorded to similar foreign agents in accordance with the principles of international law' (OMA, UMS, Da:1, Wähämäki to UM, 10 November 1926).

The Treaty of Amity, guaranteeing equal relations, was at that time still quite exceptional, as the majority of agreements signed between China and other countries were unequal for the Chinese. Only Germany and Austria had signed similar treaties with Republican China after losing to the Allies in the First World War. With this agreement, China accorded rights to Finnish diplomats in line with international laws. Moreover, Finnish citizens living in China—both their persons and property—were subject to the jurisdiction of Chinese local tribunals. Finns were required to pay any customs duties, taxes or contributions decreed by law. Thereafter, the rhetoric was that Sino–Finnish relations were based on principles of reciprocity and equal treatment. In accordance with these principles, the Chinese sent a delegation to Finland with the aim of increasing trade between the two countries. Mutuality between the two countries was emphasised in every trade negotiation (OMA, UMS, De:1, 1926).

1.8 | Business as usual

The Finnish national and commercial interests were intertwined and can be interpreted as a form of economic nationalism. The state controlled the economy, labour and capital formation and imposed tariffs to protect its domestic products. In China, Finland's governmental and business interests were represented and promoted by the same persons: government officials, businessmen and sometimes retired missionaries (Karttunen et al., 2006: 85; *Kauppalehti*, 1 March 1924: 1–4). Later, when more permanent economic relations with China were established, separate government and business representatives were appointed and sent to China.

The Finnish government considered paper, cellulose and plywood particularly suitable for export, thus choosing to send K. Tegengren, a representative of Sören Berner and Co, to China. His journey was supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and the aim was to report on export opportunities for paper products. Business leaders had already assessed China's own paper as poor in quality. Tegengren also monitored China's political and economic stability, as infrastructure was a prerequisite for trade and longer-term investment. Companies like the large Finnish state-owned sawmill and paper factory Enso-Gutzeit found it difficult to start trading in China, though, and so many companies first hired qualified export agents to promote their business in the East (OMA, UMS, F428:37; Enso-Gutzeit Oy to Niskanen, 10 April 1934; *Kauppalehti* 1 March 1924: 1; Tegengren, 22/1–18/61929; for other Finnish agents' business reports, see Auermaa, 1923; Torvelainen, 1921).

Economic nationalism was evident in Finnish products marketed to China. From a promotional standpoint, accounts of exceptionally modern and good Finnish products were published in all possible ways. However, Finnish businessmen's reports and statistics reveal frustration at increasing exports to China, which they perceived as progressing in an embarrassingly slow and difficult manner. The reports frequently compared Finnish exports to Swedish trade. In 1923, Sweden's exports to China were 2.28 million USD and to Japan 5 million USD; Finland's exports totalled 250,000 USD and 500,000 USD, respectively. Those countries dominating the Chinese import trade in the years 1900–1946 included Japan (24.51%), the United States (22.05%) and Britain (17.02%), each representing about one fourth of all imports. In all, these three countries represented almost 64% of all foreign trade with China. In 1923, China's total foreign trade was 738 million USD. To promote Finnish companies further, in 1936, the local consulate decided to publish the *Finnish Bulletin for the Far East*, which was particularly designed for Chinese clients (Chinese Maritime Customs, 1926 and 1932, *Foreign Trade* 1925 and 1930–1931; Hirvilahti & Autio, 1995: 8–11; *Kauppalehti*, 8 December 1926: 1–2; Keller & Shiue, 2020: 22). Finnish exports to China were mainly refined from wood products: paper (particularly newsprint), packing paper, pulp, plywood, tissue and cardboard. Trading companies also advertised other Finnish products, such as lifts, rubber flooring, files, axes, parachutes, sanitary ware, semidiesel motors, pumps and radiators (*China Press*, supplement, 6 December 1936). To promote Finnish exports and prevent product forgeries, the consul encouraged the use of appropriate trademarks in China. He emphasised that Chinese customers like vivid colours and that they prefer trademarks with an image of nature, plants or animals. Traditional Chinese cultural habits were to be respected, so pictures of tortoises (perceived as an insulting term) and particularly dogs (which had a very pejorative meaning) were not acceptable. Instead, strong animals such as tigers were well respected in Chinese business culture (*Kauppalehti* 5 July 1927: 2; Tao, 2010: 62–69).

More attention was also given to Finnish military exports in the 1920s. Undoubtedly, national pride was reflected when Finland began to export its own designed and produced Suomi Automatic Pistol at the same time that Germany (Schmeisser), Britain (Sten), the Soviet Union (PPŠ) and the United States (M3) were importing submachine guns. Developing guns and ammunition were a matter of national security and an example of the nation's technical military advancement. Thus, the military forces of different countries had their own production lines for guns. Finland was no exception. Being politically unstable, traders perceived China as a particularly good market for armament sales: the Qing Dynasty was politically weak and attempting to strengthen its military forces. Regional armies had developed into rival factions headed by warlords, and civilian politicians sought their help in resolving political conflicts by force, thereby empowering and politicising Chinese militias. After the 1911 Revolution, powerful warlords continued to fight to control the national government. In the countryside, continual fighting was fiercest where armies, bandits and local defence forces competed and intermixed. Under such circumstances, the need for military supplies was constant (*China Press*, supplement, 6 December 1936; Palokangas, 2021: 112–117; Rankin, 2000: 6–27).

1.9 | The Finnish association in China

The establishing of chambers of commerce or trade associations was part of an economic strategy by foreign powers to pursue their economic and political interests in China and throughout Asia. These commercial groups vehemently

defended their commercial privileges and links with their own foreign administrations. From the Finnish perspective, treaty port states like the United Kingdom, the United States and France had very effective chambers of commerce: The small Finnish trading community envied their reputation and demanded a similar interest group.

The Finnish government perceived establishing a trade association as crucial to Finnish economic development in China and the promoting of Finnish national identity. In the beginning of 1926, Suomalainen Yhdistys Kiinassa (SYK) (in Swedish, Finska Förening i Kina – in English, The Finnish Association in China) was established. The first article of the charter stated that 'the association was established to monitor and promote Finland's interests in China, to work for the preservation of Finnish nationality in China, and to maintain contact between the Finns living in China and in Finland'. Moreover, it represented the Finnish business community with the purpose of collecting and supplying information about the Chinese market, trade and economic cooperation. Membership was open to all 'Finns that had a pure reputation'. In its first year of operation, SYK listed 26 members, most of whom represented the small elite of the Finnish population in Shanghai. As the name implied, the association's interests were both economic and political. In local politics, the association followed the rhetoric of influential treaty port states and advocated for better commercial rights. The charity was part of the nonprofit activities of the chambers of commerce, and SYK's principles included 'helping Finns in need', which over the years included several sailors, missionaries and travellers (OMA, UMS, F40:22 Suomalainen Yhdistys Kiinassa [Finnish Society in China] 1926–1945).

SYK was not registered in Finland but was a member of the Suomalaisuuden liitto, ulkomaalaisosasto (Finnish Alliance, Expatriate Division) since 1926. This Finland-based alliance aimed to awaken and strengthen knowledge about Finland and to promote Finnish culture, especially the Finnish language, in every way.[9] Finnish market analyses did not differ much in content from those of the treaty port states pursuing their own nationalist trade politics: Each country praised its own products and criticised Chinese products. Finnish commercial rhetoric included criticism of non-Finnish and non-Western business practices. Finnish business traits consisted primarily of honesty, diligence and a strong work ethic. Although Finnish export products were slightly more costly, they were found to be durable and of high quality. Chinese trading partners were described as dishonest, greedy, crooked and lazy. According to the Finns, local products were of low quality, old-fashioned and often dismissed as forgeries (Auermaa, 1923:72–75; Enso-Gutzeit Oy, Pankakosken tehtaat [Pankakoski factories], Tegengren, 1929). The Finnish Association in China in the 1920s had much in common with similar foreign business-oriented organisations, such as the multinational Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce and the British Chamber of Commerce. As those in the Finnish commercial community perceived themselves as relative latecomers, they were anxious to follow established ways of promoting business in China.

1.10 | Chinese perspectives on Finnish national identity

Local Chinese military and civil government representatives, business community members and academics were perceived as important target groups. They were frequently invited to Finnish events (*North China Herald*, 9 December 1930; OMA, UMS, Da:1, Wähämäki to UM, 22 January 1926). The Finnish opinion was that no misunderstandings or frictions had existed between the two countries since the signing of the 1926 treaty (OMA, UMS, F34b Niskanen to E. Kuan, 17 January 1935; OMA, UMS, F34e, Propaganda, Niskanen, 12 April 1938). Chinese journalists and members of the educated and middle class often wrote about their unique national connection with Finland, frequently comparing the histories of the two countries. Finland had survived Russian colonialism. In China, too, sovereignty and autonomy had been strictly limited during the last decades of the Qing Dynasty due to the unequal treaties and treaty port system. Educated Chinese blamed the Qing Dynasty's weak and corrupt government for the system of unequal treaties with foreigners. Meanwhile, Finland was trying to find its place among other Nordic, European and Western nations. The Republican Chinese government had similar problems with global power politics, as seen during the international Washington Conference (1921–1922) after the First World War, where the decisions by the United States and European countries overruled Chinese ambitions for greater sovereignty. Both

the Republican period in China and recent Finnish independence had created opportunities to modernise society, establish foreign relations and become more integrated with global trade networks. Thus, both countries faced similar international and domestic political and economic challenges (*China Weekly Review*, 9 December 1939: *passim*; *Shun Pao*, 8 May 1926: *passim*; Weigelin-Schwiedrzik & Zhu, 2013: 183–199).[10]

These connections and yet obvious discrepancies between the two countries were widely discussed in the Chinese newspapers. After seeing a film on Finland in 1926, a Chinese journalist came to the conclusion that China lagged behind Finland in paper manufacturing, people's living standards and even as a source of culture and material civilisation. Another Chinese journalist reported on his desire to travel to Finland and described Per E. Svinhuvud's election as president as a 'Patriot's Return from Exile'. He had learned of Svinhuvud's nickname, Ukko-Pekka, and had translated it into English as 'Old Peter, the Grand Old Man of Finland' (*Shi Pao*, 9 January 1926; *Shun Pao*, 10 June 1934).[11] From the Finnish nationalist perspective, such articles constituted great PR victories in China. Republican institutions such as the parliament, presidency and public elections were essential elements of Finnish nationalism, the backbone of Finnish national identity.

In the beginning of the Republican period, falling international transportation costs had expanded China's international trade and capital. When the Chinese government experienced political problems with the major treaty powers, this was reflected in business. Chinese consumers frequently turned to nontreaty nations' products and organised economic boycotts through multiple forms of protest. During politically turbulent periods, Finland benefitted economically from its status as a nontreaty nation. During uncertain times, trade increased and Chinese people consumed more Finnish products. On 30 May 1925, the Shanghai Municipal Police, commanded by the British, opened fire on unarmed Chinese protestors, killing at least 11 people and wounding dozens of demonstrators: Chinese nationalistic demonstrations erupted in all parts of the country as part of the May Thirtieth Movement. Chinese people of all classes were outraged: Boycotts and strikes against British and Japanese goods and factories were organised by merchants and workers throughout the country. The unrest lasted 3 months, until the British fired the police officials in charge and paid an indemnity to the families of the dead and wounded (OMA, UMS, DA1, Wähämäki to UM, 20 January 1926). During this stormy period, Chinese officials publicly announced that Finnish products were nontreaty power imports and encouraged people to use them instead of imperialist British products, which at this stage were recognised as being inferior in quality. Chinese nationalists had previously made similar accusations about Japanese products during anti-Japanese movements, such as the May Fourth Movement in 1919. Later, throughout the 1930s and 1940s, when Japanese expansionist politics became even more aggressive, Chinese nationalists perceived it as a national act to consume 'friendly nations' products', as they termed it. Since then, the Finns began to use this expression in their advertising campaign to the Chinese consumers. According to the Chinese, national friendship had been verified in the Treaty of Amity between Finland and China in 1926. Thereafter, business between the two countries expanded, and Chinese products such as tea, seeds, spices, metal and olive oils were imported in larger quantities to Finland (*Shun Pao* and *Shi Pao*, in the 1930s and 1940s, *passim*).

During the Second World War, when first the Winter War (1939–1940) and then the Continuation War (1941–1944) broke out between Finland and the Soviet Union, the Chinese intercepted Helsinki wireless station messages and translated news about Russian attacks and bombings in Finland into Chinese. Many Chinese newspapers supported Finland against the USSR. Finland was recognised as an important ally in the West's battle against the spread of communism. Chinese and Finnish authorities alike feared Bolshevik activities throughout the 1930s, and later in the 1940s, the Red Army aroused the same fears (Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai Municipal Police, files from 1920s–1940s, *passim*). In the 1940s, China's leaders again compared the nation's destiny with that of Finland. Finland had been attacked by the Russians, while the Japanese had attacked China. Since the invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and establishment of the Manchukuo puppet state in 1932, the Japanese have aggressively increased their presence in China, which escalated into the Second Sino–Japanese war (1937–1945). According to Chinese reports, China and Finland were facing similar aggressive politics from their neighbours: power politics had been so aggressive that it had eventually led to war (Duara, 2003; *North China Herald*, 30 June 1941: *passim*; OMA, UMS, F34b, V.S. Cheng to Harald Tanner, 24 July 1941).

The treaty port system and foreign concessions in China were progressively dismantled by the mid-20th century. The International Settlement of Shanghai was reappropriated on 1 August 1943. Diplomatic relations between Finland and the Republic of China were maintained until 1944, when relations were severed with the signing of the Moscow Armistice Agreement, prompting the closure of the Finnish Shanghai Consulate-General in spring 1945. Within only 5 years of the proclamation of the People's Republic of China on 1 October 1949, most foreign interests on mainland China had either been surrendered to the authorities or nationalised.

2 | CONCLUSIONS

In China during the Republican period, the Finns pursued legitimacy and respectability that included negotiations on national identities, trading contracts and political power. Finnish governmental officials and business community members constructed identities and an existence in Republican China that projected Finland's official nationalist line while suiting their occupational and sometimes personal interests in the country. Many of the nationalist accounts were based on anti-imperialist nationalism due to colonial experiences under the Russian Empire, which was expressed as having strengthened the Finnish identity. In the East, Finland presented itself as a country with habits that could be trusted.

The Finnish national rhetoric was maintained on many levels and was reflected in criteria that defined a sense of Finnishness. In China, the Finns narrated their nation by recounting stories, organising events and presenting national symbols and rituals that represented their shared experiences and feelings. All this created a shared discourse on Finnish national identity. Arts in the forms of music, films and paintings recounted the unique culture of the newly independent nation. Finnish success in international sports was explained as an expression of a physically strong nation. Finnish citizens were described as reliable, honest, humble and hard-working—and as God-fearing people.

The Finns, for their part, felt that promoting their own commerce and products was a natural form of nationalism. From the Chinese perspective, Finnish trade was recognised as more equal than that of the treaty port nations, and its products highly were appreciated. In Republican China, Finnish officials and the business community found respect and understanding among the local educated people, members of the middle class and political activists. Both nations had encountered similar colonial experiences, and both were now striving to modernise their states.

The continued presence of smaller nations in Republican China crucially demanded that they define whether their identity was imperial or anti-imperial, and sometimes it was something in between. The Finnish national identities, actions and power relations show different colonial formations that contest some of our impressions of the development of imperialism in Republican China. Thus, the Finns created alternative identities beyond contemporary dichotomies such as self/other and Westerners/Easterners. They saw the Republic of China as a nation with similar national aspirations as their own, as exemplified in the 1926 treaty between them. Since the Finnish community was small and its resources limited, it had no real influence on treaty port politics. Finnish actions, however, provided alternative views on traditional unequal relations with Republican China. The Finns recognised the great Eastern country as an equal partner, and Sino–Finnish relations were for a long time, at least on paper, based on principles of reciprocity and mutuality. In reality, the partnership followed other Sino-European relations. However, Finland was one of the first countries to recognise the People's Republic of China in January 1950, and further diplomatic relations between Finland and China were established in October 1950.

ORCID

Tiina H. Airaksinen https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8204-1495

ENDNOTES

[1] 'Unequal treaties' has always been a contested term, and it became a part of Chinese rhetoric and the creation of collective memory during the treaty port era (1843–1943). For more, see Dong Wang, China's Unequal Treaties: Narrating National History (2008).

[2] In 1931, the 14 treaty powers in China were as follows: the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, France, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Peru, Mexico and Switzerland. After the First World War, Germany and Austria-Hungary lost their treaty rights and Russia gave up its rights as a matter of political expediency. China announced that Belgium had lost its rights in 1927. The treaty port system has been thoroughly analysed by various scholars dealing the different periods and various nationalities involved: see, for example, Robert Bickers and Isabella Jackson (eds.), *Treaty Ports in Modern China: Law, Land and Power*, which includes also discussion on French Concession; for the classic book on treaty ports; see John King Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: the Opening of the Treaty Ports, 1842–1854*. On Japanese imperialism, see M.R. Peattie, *Japanese Treaty Port Settlements in China, 1895–1937*. For more on the imperialism of the smaller in China, see the article by Carles Brascó Broggi and David Martinez-Robles, 'Beyond Colonial Dichotomies: The deficits of Spain and the peripheral powers in treaty-port China'; on the Netherlands, see the article by Frans-Paul Van der Putten 'Small powers and imperialism: the Netherlands in China, 1886–1905'.

[3] British treaty port colonialism in Shanghai has been thoroughly discussed by Isabella Jackson in *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*.

[4] Carl G. Mannerheim was Marshal of Finland during the Second World War and President of Finland during the years 1944–1946. For more on Mannerheim's journeys in China and his exciting life, of the General, see Clements (2010).

[5] Kansallisarkiston Oulun toimipiste, Finland (hereinafter OMA), Ulkoasiainministeriö (hereinafter UM), Shanghain pääkonsulinviraston arkisto (hereinafter UMS) (Oulu Local Office of Finnish National Archive, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Shanghai Consulate Archives).

[6] An important exception was an addition to the newspaper *Nykypäivän Suomi* (*Contemporary Finland*), which was published in Chinese in 1938.

[7] *The China Press* was the bestselling foreign newspaper with a daily print run of over 4500. Chinese newspapers frequently had print runs of over 35,000 per day. See French, 2009: 123, 127.

[8] *The China Press* was the earliest and most important American-style newspaper published in Shanghai. It was also the first known English-language newspaper published in modern China by professional journalists instead of businessmen or missionaries.

[9] The Finnish Alliance, or Suomalaisuuden Liitto, was established in 1906 to 'promote Finnish culture, language, literature and national spirit'.

[10] *Shun Pao* was the oldest, most influential and longest running commercial newspaper before the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Both of these newspapers were published in the International Settlement and were subject to fewer regulations than many other Chinese newspapers.

[11] *Shi Pao* was one of the three most important Chinese-language newspapers published in Shanghai. It emphasised commentaries on current affairs and carried excerpts of many novels and sports news as well as pictorial reports during its later stages.

REFERENCES

Achugar, M. (2017). Critical discourse analysis and history. In J. Flowerdew & J. E. Richardson (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies* (pp. 298–311). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315739342-21

Airaksinen, T. H. (2005). *Love Your Country on Nanjing Riad: the British and the May Fourth Movement in Shanghai*. Renvall Institute.

Airaksinen, T. H. (2011). 'Kiina ja Pohjoismaat'. In P. Stadius, P. Hautamäki, & S. Nygård (Eds.), *Opera et dies: Festskrift till Lars-Folke Landgrén* (pp. 147–163). Schildts.

Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso.

Arho Havrén, S. (2009). *Meillä ei ole ikuisia ystäviä eikä ikuisia vihollisia. Ikuisia ovat meidän omat etumme.: Suomen suhteet Kiinan kansantasavaltaan 1949–1989*, PhD Diss., University of Helsinki.

Auermaa, K. K. (1923). *Itä-Aasian markkinamaat ja meidän mahdollisuutemme siellä*. WSOY.

Bickers, R. A. (1999). *Britain in China: Community, Culture and Colonialism, 1900–1949*. Manchester University Press.

Bickers, R. A. (2000). *"The Greatest Cultural Asset East of Suez": History and Politics of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra and Public Band, 1881–1946* (Vol. 2000). Institute of Modern History, Academica Sinica.

Bickers, R. A. (2014). Moving Stories: Memorialisation and its Legacies in Treaty Port China. *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, *42*(5), 828–856.

Bickers, R. A., & Henriot, C. (Eds.). (2000). *New Frontiers: Imperialism's New Communities in East Asia, 1842–1953*. Manchester University Press.

Bickers, R. A., & Jackson, I. (Eds.). (2016). *Treaty Ports in Modern China: Law, Land and Power*. Routledge.

Boucher, A. (2008). The Introduction of Sports in China. *China Perspectives*, *1*, 48–52.

Brascó Broggi, C., & Martinez-Robles, D. (2019). Beyond Colonial Dichotomies: The deficits of Spain and the peripheral powers in treaty-port China. *Modern Asian Studies*, *53*(4), 1222–1,247.

Callahan, W. A. (2010). *China- The Pessoptimist Nation*. Oxford University Press.

China Press Shanghai. (1936).

China Weekly Review Shanghai. (1939).

Chinese Maritime Customs. (1926). *Foreign Trade of China 1925*. Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs.

Chinese Maritime Customs. (1932). *Foreign Trade of China 1930–31*. Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs.

Clements, J. (2010). *Mannerheim: President, Soldier, Spy*. Haus Publishing.

Cohen, P. (1997). *History in Three keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience and Myth*. Columbia University Press.

Duara, P. (2003). *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern*. Rowaman & Littlefield.

Enso-Gutzeit Oy, & Pankakosken tehtaat, (1925-1935). Joensuun maakunta-arkisto (Enso-Gutzeit Oy, Pankakoski factories, Provincial Archives of Joensuu).

Fairbank, J. K. (1969). *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: the Opening of the Treaty Ports, 1842–1854*. Stanford University Press.

French, P. (2009). *Through the Looking Glass: China's Foreign Journalists from Opium Wars to Mao*. Hong Kong University Press.

Hall, S. (1996). The Question of Cultural identity. In S. Hall, D. Held, D. Hubert, & K. Thompson (Eds.), *Modernity An Introduction to Modern Societies* (Vol. 199, pp. 595–634). Blackwell Publishers.

Hall, S. (1997a). The Local and the Global: Globalisation and Ethnicity. In A. McClintock, A. Mufti, & E. Shohat (Eds.), *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives* (pp. 173–188). University of Minnesota Press.

Hall, S. (1997b). The Work of Representation. In S. Hall (Ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (pp. 13–74). Sage Publications.

Hirvilahti, J., & Autio, J. (1995). Vuoden 1926 valuuttakurssiratkaisun tarkastelu. *Kansantaloudellinen aikakauskirja*, *91*, 5–14.

Jackson, I. (2018). *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. Cambridge University Press.

Kansallisarkiston Oulun toimipiste, Ulkoasiainministeriö, Shanghain pääkonsulinviraston arkisto, (Oulu Local Office of Finnish National Archive, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Shanghai Consulate Archives).

Karttunen, I., Pietikäinen, M., & Suopanki, M.-L. (Eds.). (2006). *Uljaksen vanavedessä: John Nurmisen kauppahuoneen ja varustamon historiaa 1886–1967, miehiä, laivoja, elämää JN-lipun alla*. John Nurmisen Säätiö.

Keller, W., & Shiue, C. H. (2020). *China's Foreign Trade and Investment, 1800-1950*. *Working Paper 27558*. National Bureau of Economic Research.

Kokkonen, J. (2003). *Kansakunnat kultajahdissa: urheilu ja nationalismi*. *Tampere: Liikuntatieteellinen seura, no 22*. (p. 1924). North China Herald.

Palokangas, M. (2021). Suomi-konepistoolin kehitysvaiheet ennen talvisotaa, in book. In M. Karjalainen (Ed.), *Puolustusvoimien kokeilutoiminta vuosina 1918–1939*, *Kokeilutoiminnan historialliset juuret* (Vol. 43, pp. 112–117). Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu: Julkaisusarja 1, tutkimuksia.

Peattie, M. R. (2014). Japanese Treaty Port Settlements in China, 1895–1937. In P. Duus, R. H. Myers, & M. R. Peattie (Eds.), *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937* (pp. 166–209). Princeton University Press.

Rankin, M. B. (2000). State and Society in Early Republican Politics, 1921–18. In F. Wakeman, Jr. & R. L. Edmonds (Eds.), *Reappraising Republican China* (pp. 6–27). Orford University Press.

Reinius, I. (2008) [1745–1748], *Journal hållen på resan till Canton i China*. (*Journal written during journey to Canton, China*) 273. Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland, Helsingfors.

Shanghai Municipal Archives, China, Shanghai Municipal Police, Headquarters, Central Register Files, files from 1920's-1940's. (n.d.).

Shanghai Municipal Council census. (1865-1942).

Shi Pao, Shanghai, in the 1930s–1940s.

Shun Pao, Shanghai, in the 1930s–1940s.

Snow, D. (2001). Collective Identity and Expressive Forms, *UC Irvine CSD Working Papers*: 1–13.

Statesman's Year-Book. (1934). Statistical and Historical Annual of the States.

Suomalaisuuden Liitto ry (Finnish Alliance). (n.d.) http://suomalaisuudenliitto.fi/suomalaisuuden-liitto-ry/

Tao, Y.-H. (2010). A Study on Cultural Connotations Between Chinese and English Animal Words. *Studies in Literature and Language*, *1*(4), 62–69.

Tervo, M. (2002). Sports, 'race' and the Finnish national identity in *Helsingin Sanomat* in the early twentieth century. *Nations and Nationalism*, *8*(3), 335–356.

Torvelainen, J. (1921). *Kaukainen Itä: Maailmansodan aikaisia matkamuistelmia Itä-Aasian maista*. WSOY.

Uola, M. (1995). *Suomi ja keskuksen valtakunta: Suomen suhteet Kiinan tasavaltaan 1919–1949*. Rauma.

Van der Putten, F.-P. (1996). Small powers and imperialism: the Netherlands in China, 1886–1905. *Itinerario- Journal of Imperial and Global Interactions*, *20*(1), 115–131.

Wang, D. (2008). *China's Unequal Treaties: Narrating National History*. Lexington Books.

Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, S., & Zhu, J.-M. (2013). Reappraising the Nanjing Decade (1927–1937) Modernising China during the World Economic Crisis. In H. Konrad & W. Wolfgang Maderthaner (Eds.), *Routes Into The Abyss: Coping with Crisis in the 1930s* (Vol. 21, pp. 183–199). Berghahn Books, International Studies in Social History.

How to cite this article: Airaksinen, T. H. (2023). Forming an anti-imperialist national identity in Republican China: The Finnish interpretation. *Nations and Nationalism*, *29*(1), 364–379. https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12906