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Between sovereignty and legitimacy: China and UNESCO, 1946-1953¹

Short Title: Between sovereignty and legitimacy

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Abstract

UNESCO's founding in 1946 coincided with the resumption of hostilities between China's ruling Nationalist Party (KMT) and their Communist Party (CCP) rivals for power. The new international organization's officials in Paris and its representatives on the ground in China were thus forced to navigate a fractious and fluid set of national circumstances that would result in an ambiguous outcome in 1949, with regimes on the Chinese mainland and Taiwan both claiming to represent 'China'. Although the KMT-led Republic of China continued to claim membership in UNESCO until the 1970s, the international organization nevertheless continued to operate within the People's Republic of China (PRC) for a number of years. Exploring the relationship between the issue of Chinese representation in UNESCO and the organization's on-the-ground presence in the mid-1940s through to the early 1950s, this article argues that domestic and international factors were inescapably intertwined in shaping the trajectory of Chinese relations with international organizations during this period. While CCP officials demonstrated a mixture of ideology and pragmatism similar to their handling of foreign entities and groups present in the PRC after its founding, engagement with UNESCO was significantly shaped by the complexity and depth of the KMT's engagement with the international organization from its inception onward. The Chinese Communist Party's relations with UNESCO underscores the extent to which the emerging Cold War – and China's place within it – was ultimately characterized by complexity and contingency.

Introduction

Between April and June 1950, Zhou Enlai dispatched a series of letters and telegrams to the heads of various international organizations. Zhou wrote in his dual capacities of the Premier and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China (PRC), founded just six months earlier. He demanded these organizations remove their current Chinese representatives, appointed while the Kuomintang (KMT, Nationalist Party) controlled the Chinese mainland, and install new ones appointed by the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) Central People's Government. As Zhou declared to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Director-General Jaime Torres Bodet, 'the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China is the only legal government representing the Chinese people' and that 'the so-called "delegates" of the Chinese Kuomintang reactionary remnant clique... must be driven out from [UNESCO's] various organs and meetings.'² Along with UNESCO, Zhou

¹ I am grateful to Robert Bickers, Mark Baker, and the anonymous reviewers for highly constructive feedback and suggestions. Thanks also to John Moffett and Jonathan Howlett for help tracking down crucial information, to Wei Yungaoli for ace assistance in the archives, and the Oxford TORCH Academic Writing Group. Research for this article was supported by the generous funding of the University of Bristol, the Worldwide Universities Network Researcher Mobility Programme, and the Universities' China Committee in London.

² Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (hereafter 'CFMA'), Beijing, 113-00013-01, Zhou E. to J. T. Bodet, 12 May 1950.

dispatched similar or identical messages to international intergovernmental organizations ranging from the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to the World Meteorological Organization.³ The text and overall message of these missives mirrored that of the telegram drafted by Chairman Mao Zedong and dispatched by Zhou in January to the United Nations (UN).⁴ Some of these organizations, like the ILO, long predated the UN's founding in 1945 and would subsequently become affiliated with it. Others, like UNESCO, were newly-created products of the widespread institution-building impulse in the 1940s, a period characterized by Glenda Sluga as the 'apogee of twentieth-century internationalism'.⁵

After October 1949, foreign governments and international organizations alike were confronted with the issue of whether 'China' now meant the CCP-led People's Republic of China on the mainland or would continue to be the Kuomintang-led Republic of China (RoC), now based on Taiwan following the Nationalist Party's retreat there at the end of the Chinese Civil War (1946-1949). Burgeoning Cold War politics and, the outbreak of the Korean War in the UN case, meant this ideologically-charged issue of Chinese representation would become one focus of inter-bloc competition. American containment policies helped ensure the RoC's continued presence in the UN and its affiliated organizations and agencies until the dawning of the PRC's *rapprochement* with the United States of America (USA) in the 1970s.⁶ The issue of representation has consequently dominated contemporary academic work on Chinese relations with international organizations like the UN produced during those decades.⁷ With a few notable exceptions, the study of PRC relations with international organizations has continued to be the purview of social scientists, with a corresponding shift in focus to examining Chinese engagement after achieved membership status.⁸ Indeed, when PRC has featured in any substantive way at all in recent histories of international organizations themselves, China-as-member has invariably remained the focus.⁹ Thus, the overall narrative about the PRC and international organizations has mirrored a longstanding wider narrative about Sino-Western relations in the Mao era: one of 'closure' in 1949 followed by 'isolation' prior to 'opening up' in the 1970s. Recent historical scholarship on Chinese foreign relations, however, has challenged such a straightforward characterization of the Mao era, demonstrating the extent to which the PRC continued to engage with a wide range of actors in Western Europe

³ The text of these other letters can be found in: CFMA, 113-00013-02 to -08.

⁴ Wilson Center Digital Archive, Mao Z. to Zhou E. and Liu S., 7 January [1950], <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112681> [accessed, 5 February 2016].

⁵ G. Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Pittsburgh, (2013), p. 79.

⁶ On the United States and Chinese representation, see: V. S. Kaufman, "'Chirep": The Anglo-American Dispute over Chinese Representation in the United Nations, 1950-71', *English Historical Review*, vol. 115, no. 461, April 2000, pp. 354-77.

⁷ B. S. J. Weng, *Peking's UN Policy: Continuity and Change*, Prager, London, 1972, remains the standout work on the PRC's relations with the UN during the 1950s and 1960s. A comprehensive list of other notable scholarly works from the 1960s and 1970s on the PRC and UN can be found in: S. S. Kim, *China, the United Nations, and World Order*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1979, p. 99.

⁸ A notable exception is: Xiong W., 'Zhongxi Kexue Shetuan De Jiaoliu (1949-1982) - Yi Zhongguo shengwu huaxue (weiyuan) hui weili [China's Participation in International Science: The Case of Biochemistry, 1949-1982]', *Kexue wenhua pinglun* [Science and Culture Review], vol. 10, no. 2, 2013, pp. 50-72. Important works on post-1970s engagement include: G. Chan, *China and International Organizations: Participation in Non-Governmental Organizations since 1971*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989; Kim, op. cit.; W. Liu, *China in the United Nations*, World Century, Hackensack, 2014.

⁹ For example, such is the case in most recent collection of work on UNESCO, where the only chapter substantively dealing with China is: C. Lai, 'UNESCO and Chinese Heritage: An Ongoing Campaign to Achieve World-Class Standards', in *A History of UNESCO: Global Actions and Impacts*, P. Duehl (ed), Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2016, pp. 313-324.

and even the USA throughout the period.¹⁰ This article brings international organizations into this more complicated picture of bilateral and transnational cross-bloc interactions, examining the relationship between the question of Chinese representation in UNESCO and the organization's on-the-ground presence from the Chinese Civil War through to the early years of CCP rule.

The Chinese Communist Party's relations with UNESCO underscores the extent to which the emerging Cold War – and China's place within it – was characterized by both complexity and contingency. Discussing the CCP's commitment to the creation of a socialist world economy in the 1950s and 1960s, William Kirby aptly observed that 'the CCP was, from its conception, internationalist in premise and promise'.¹¹ Yet its internationalist engagement also extended beyond the socialist world, including backing the creation of the United Nations. The foreign policy section of Mao Zedong's speech 'On Coalition Government', delivered to the CCP's Seventh National Congress on 24 April 1945, voiced support for the proposals for the UN negotiated at the 1944 Dumbarton Oaks Conference and about to be given form at the San Francisco Conference opening on the same day.¹² Meanwhile, Dong Biwu, a member of the CCP's Central Committee who had attended the Party's first Congress in 1921, was one of the Chinese delegates in San Francisco and would sign the Charter of the United Nations.¹³ The CCP and KMT were both keen to play a role in shaping the new international order emerging from the Second World War.

Both parties' level of engagement stemmed from the RoC's status as one of the 'Big Four' allied wartime powers. The United Kingdom, United States, and Soviet Union may well have consistently treated China as the junior partner in that quartet, but such status still provided a platform for Chinese participation – and leadership – in significant conferences and dialogues both during and after the war.¹⁴ For example, between 1943 and 1947 the RoC was far from a passive recipient of assistance from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), but rather also had a representative on the Central Committee of UNRRA's governing council alongside the UK, USA, and USSR. Involvement in such organizations therefore facilitated RoC experts' and policymakers' embeddedness in policy networks extending beyond border and region, in turn influencing the KMT's own policymaking and post-war ambitions.¹⁵ Yet, as Rana Mitter has shown, as much as the Nationalists saw UNRRA as a vehicle for aspirations to be exemplars of and agents for postcolonial change in a new post-war international order, the international organization also represented a vector for lingering imperialist attitudes and potential threats to hard-fought

¹⁰ See articles in *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 51, no. 1 (2017). Other notable recent work includes: M. D. Johnson, 'From Peace to the Panthers: PRC Engagement with African-American Transnational Networks, 1949-1979', *Past and Present*, vol. 218, supp. 8, January 2013, pp. 233-57; J. Lovell, 'The Uses of Foreigners in Mao-Era China: 'Techniques of Hospitality' and International Image-Building in the People's Republic, 1949-1976', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol. 25, 2015, pp. 135-58.

¹¹ W.C. Kirby, 'China's Internationalization in the Early People's Republic: Dreams of a Socialist World Economy', *The China Quarterly*, no. 188, December 2006, p. 874.

¹² Mao Z., 'Lun lianhe zhengfu [On Coalition Government]', *Mao Zedong Ji Di 9 Juan (1943.1~1945.12)* [*Collected Works of Mao Zedong, Volume 9 (January 1943 to December 1945)*], Hokubōsha, Tokyo, 1971, p. 258.

¹³ See: 'Dong Biwu', in *Lianheguo cidian [Dictionary of the United Nations]*, Yang Y. (ed), Heilongjiang Chubanshe, Harbin, 1998, pp. 686-687. On the CCP's early UN policy, see: Weng, pp. 73-75.

¹⁴ See, for example, R. C. Hilderbrand, *Dumbarton Oaks: The Origins of the United Nations and Search for Postwar Security*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1990, pp. 229-244. On China's wartime relations with its allies and wartime position, see: R. Mitter, *China's War with Japan: The Struggle for Survival*, Allen Lane, London, 2013.

¹⁵ T. Ma, "'The Common Aim of the Allied Powers': Social Policy and International Legitimacy in Wartime China, 1940-47", *Journal of Global History*, vol. 8, no. 2, July 2014, pp. 254-75.

sovereignty.¹⁶ The CCP's relations with UNESCO, which inherited many of UNRRA's undertakings after 1947, show the Communists struggling with issues strikingly similar to those faced by the Nationalists.

As with UNRRA, domestic and international were tightly intertwined for CCP and KMT alike when interacting with UNESCO. Like the other organizations to which Zhou Enlai dispatched letters or telegrams in 1950, UNESCO had an office on mainland China that remained open after the PRC's establishment. Operating between 1947 and 1953, UNESCO's East Asia Field Scientific Cooperation Office (EAFSCO, *Dongfang kexue hezuo guan*) was one of the most visible and longest lasting of such offices.¹⁷ Its field officers, based first in Nanjing and later in Shanghai, sought to support scientific exchange and reconstruction in a country with its economy and infrastructure in tatters after its devastating war with Japan and which remained divided by domestic conflict.¹⁸ After 1949, they faced a new set of challenges, trying to operate in a fledgling state not represented within the organization while the issue of Chinese representation was fiercely debated in committees and general assemblies. For the CCP, then, central and local authorities were confronted with how best to respond to EAFSCO's activities on the ground at the same time as the CCP leadership worked to displace the KMT from UNESCO and other international organizations.

At both levels, CCP officials wrestled with both pragmatic and ideological impulses in dealing with UNESCO. This reflected their approach to other manifestations of the lingering foreign presence in the early PRC, ranging from foreign-owned enterprises and industry in cities like Shanghai and Dalian to the fate of Japanese technical experts who remained in China after the Second Sino-Japanese War.¹⁹ Officials' handling of UNESCO, and its book programme in particular, shows the balance between pragmatism and ideology increasingly tilting toward the latter during the early 1950s. They viewed UNESCO and other UN-affiliated organizations with great suspicion not only because of factors like growing American influence but, crucially, also because of the KMT's involvement. While formal relations with the organization might have presented opportunities for expanded international influence and legitimacy, EAFSCO's activities in China were not only perceived as potential threats to sovereignty, but also provided evidence of the limits to the CCP's authority in the earliest years of its 'New China'. This article therefore traces the trajectory of Chinese relations with UNESCO on both domestic and international levels. Starting with the establishment of EAFSCO, it examines the international organization's failed efforts to remain above politics during the civil war. It then elucidates the interlinkages between battles over Chinese representation in UNESCO after 1949 and CCP officials' struggles to contain and constrain the East Asia Field Scientific Cooperation Office's activities in the PRC.

Navigating the Chinese Civil War, 1946-1949

¹⁶ R. Mitter, 'Imperialism, Transnationalism, and the Reconstruction of Post-war China: UNRRA in China, 1944-7', *Past and Present* vol. 218, supp. 8, January 2013, pp. 51-69.

¹⁷ For discussion of Shanghai-based organizations see: Zhou W. and Tang Z., *Shanghai waishi zhi [Record of Shanghai's Foreign Affairs]*, Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, Shanghai, 1999, pp. 329-331.

¹⁸ See: F. Boecking, 'Unmaking the Chinese Nationalist State: Administrative Reform among Fiscal Collapse, 1937-1945', *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 45, special issue 2, March 2011, pp. 277-301.

¹⁹ J. Howlett, "'The British Boss Is Gone and Will Never Return': Communist Takeovers of British Companies in Shanghai (1949-1954)', *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 47, no. 6, November 2013, pp. 1941-76; C. A. Hess, 'From Colonial Port to Socialist Metropolis: Imperialist Legacies and the Making of "New Dalian"', *Urban History* vol. 38, special issue 3, 2011, pp. 373-90; A. King, 'Reconstructing China: Japanese Technical Experts and Industrialization in the Early Years of the People's Republic of China', *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 50, no. 1, January 2016, pp. 1-34.

The Republic of China was closely interwoven into British biochemist Joseph Needham's efforts to put the 'S' for science in 'UNESCO'. His British Council-sponsored activities in China during the Second Sino-Japanese War and his connections with the China's Kuomintang government were both contributing factors. Needham was still based in 'Free China' when he began lobbying influential figures and government ministers about creating some form of organization to promote international cooperation and development during the early 1940s.²⁰ One of his earliest acts campaigning for such a service was a discussion with China's Foreign Minister, T.V. Soong (Song Ziwen), in December 1943. Needham was looking to find a larger organization in which what he then dubbed a 'World Science Cooperation Service' (WSCS) might play a part.²¹ Far from being a mere sounding board, Soong directed Needham's thinking on the matter. According to the British scientist, Soong urged him to press for this WSCS to be a part of the proposed international organization to promote intellectual cooperation 'to be set up by [the] Big [Four]' allied nations rather than the recently-created UNRRA.²² Needham seems to have heeded this advice, and over the next two years circulated three influential memoranda that argued the importance of an international scientific cooperation service and lobbying the Conference of Allied Ministers to include science as one of the areas covered the 'United Nations Educational and Cultural Organization' then being negotiated.²³ As one of the 'Big Four' allied nations, Republican China was involved throughout the process of creating the UN-affiliated organization and was one of the forty-four signatories to the UNESCO constitution agreed in London on 16 November 1945 that included science as one of the organization's areas of concentration.²⁴ The combination of Joseph Needham's presence and connections in China combined with the Nationalists' involvement in the inter-governmental negotiations to establish UNESCO meant that both state and party had close ties to the organization from the outset. Even as China slid into civil war, the KMT's representatives and institutions remained embedded into the organization.

Needham's strong ties to China remained important even after he left the country in February 1946 to lead UNESCO's Natural Sciences Section. Although he only served in that capacity until 1948, for some years afterward he remained in close touch with UNESCO officials. Needham's support for China in the organization owed more to his longstanding fascination with the country and prodigious network of contacts there, than to any particular affinity for the Nationalists. On the eve of the CCP taking power in 1949, he wrote that:

Though necessarily associated with the Kuomintang government during World War Two, I never disguised where my political sympathies lay, and by concentrating wholeheartedly on scientific and

²⁰ For more on Needham's wartime activities with the SBCO, see: J. Needham and D. Needham (eds), *Science Outpost: Papers of the Sino-British Science Co-operation Office (British Council Scientific Office in China), 1942-1946*, Pilot Press, London, 1948; T. Mougey, 'Needham at the Crossroads: History, Politics, and International Science in Wartime China (1942-1946)', *British Journal for the History of Science*, vol. 50, no. 1, March 2017, pp. 83-109; and S. Winchester, *The Man Who Loved China*, HarperCollins, New York, 2008.

²¹ Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, UK, Department of Manuscripts and University Archives, Joseph Needham Papers, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.1, Copy of Letter to T. V. Soong, Excerpt (hereafter: 'JNP').

²² See Needham's handwritten note on: JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.1, H. C. Kiang to Needham, 22 December 1943.

²³ The degree to which his Chinese experiences informed Needham's push is highly evident in these memoranda. This can be seen in the first and third, both published in *Nature*: J. Needham, 'An International Science Co-operation Service', *Nature*, vol. 154, no. 3917, 1944, pp. 657-60; 'The Place of Science and International Scientific Co-operation in Post-War World Organization', *Nature*, vol. 156, no. 3967, 1945, pp. 558-61. On the Conference of Allied Ministers and the creation of UNESCO, see: J. P. Singh, *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): Creating Norms for a Complex World*, Routledge, Abingdon, 2011, pp. 12-16.

²⁴ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.35, Duplicate typescript of Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, [16 November 1945].

technical work, was on excellent terms with officials, technologists, scholars, and all sorts of people on both sides of the lines, throughout China.²⁵

While he may have been writing about his wartime efforts in China, the passage also effectively captured his approach at UNESCO. Needham's left-wing politics meant he was a far from passionate supporter of China's Nationalist Party, but was happy to work with it while it was in power in order to support Chinese scientists and further international scientific cooperation.²⁶

Needham's prominent position in UNESCO therefore afforded numerous benefits for Chinese scientists when it came to their relationship with UNESCO and the wider scientific community. From a practical standpoint, his knowledge and network made him an effective enabler of Sino-foreign scientific exchange. For example, during the autumn of 1948, Needham assisted the Pacific Science Association (PSA) in its efforts to invite Chinese scientists to attend its Seventh General Congress, funded via a UNESCO grant for scientists from war-torn countries.²⁷ Needham not only gave the PSA detailed information about scientists on its preliminary list, but further suggested other suitable candidates. His comprehensive reply included a wealth of invaluable information, which included the scientists' names in English and Chinese, brief biographical sketches, and his last-known contact information for many of them.²⁸ A number of these scientists, such as Zhu Kezhen and Li Siguang, went on to hold prominent positions under the CCP after 1949, but his list was by no means politicized; rather, he steered the PSA toward prominent figures in major Chinese scientific organizations who in many cases were also connected to the KMT government's ministries or institutions.

UNESCO on the ground: The East Asia Field Scientific Cooperation Office

The benefits derived from UNESCO membership by Chinese scientists and the Kuomintang were far from limited to those afforded by Needham's extensive Chinese connections. Many of the most tangible benefits came via the East Asia Field Scientific Cooperation Office, the most visible manifestation of UNESCO's presence in China. Officially opened on 15 November 1947, the EAFSCO in Nanjing was the third of UNESCO's field offices. As with these other two offices, based in Rio de Janeiro and Cairo, EAFSCO aimed to aid scientific development and foster international cooperation among UNESCO member states within the region.²⁹ Needham's Sino-British Science Cooperation Office (SBSCO) was the model for these field offices, a connection explicitly acknowledged by EAFSCO's first Acting Principal Officer, Jan Smid, in his initial Activity Report for the Chinese National Commission to UNESCO.³⁰ As with the SBSCO, while EAFSCO aimed to establish relationships with a broad base of scientific institutions and individual scientists, it nevertheless coordinated its activities with, and reported to, a body affiliated with the Nationalist government. The Chinese National Commission not only included senior KMT officials such as the Ministry of Education's Deputy Chief of Government Affairs and later Minister of Education, Hang Liwu, but also held its meetings at the Ministry of Education.³¹ From the very beginning EAFSCO was explicitly

²⁵ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.159, Needham to E. Barger, 11 September 1949.

²⁶ On Needham's politics, see: G. Werskey, *The Visible College: A Collective Biography of British Scientists and Socialists of the 1930s*, Free Association Books, London, 1988.

²⁷ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.144, G. Archey to Needham, 15 September 1948.

²⁸ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.144, Needham to E. Marsden, 7 October 1948.

²⁹ J. Hillig, (2006), 'Going Global: UNESCO Field Science Offices', in *Sixty Years of Science at UNESCO, 1945-2005*, P. Petitjean et al. (eds), UNESCO Publishing, Paris, 2006, pp. 72-75.

³⁰ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.144, J. Smid, 'Activity Report', 3 September 1948.

³¹ One example of the nature of these ties can be seen in: 'Lian jiao zuzhi pai Shimaozhi lai Hua [UNESCO Sends Jan Smid to China]', *Shenbao*, 19 October 1947, p. 6.

and publicly tied to the RoC government. In this, its activities helped reinforce the Republican state's role in Chinese scientific research and education.

The opening of this UNESCO field office was a newsworthy event in China, to the benefit of the Kuomintang. *Shenbao*, the prominent Shanghai-based newspaper, even carried a profile of EAFSCO's first head in advance of the official opening in Nanjing. It described 35-year-old Czechoslovakian civil engineer Jan Smid's career before joining UNESCO, alongside information about the EAFSCO's proposed activities, and the Chinese delegation's participation in the upcoming UNESCO General Conference.³² Notices about Smid's arrival as well as the meeting held at Academia Sinica to formally welcome him similarly made it into the paper.³³ Smid worked to build connections within China's scientific community from the outset. During his first seven months, he travelled to Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Beiping, and Tianjin, visiting a total of fifty-three Chinese institutions along with eleven in the Philippines – the other UNESCO member state included in EAFSCO's regional remit.³⁴ One of the office's key responsibilities was facilitating scientific cooperation and the sharing of information across national borders. In China, such facilitation largely took the form of the UNESCO office arranging distribution of foreign scientific books and periodicals to Chinese organizations and libraries, as well as helping to distribute Chinese scientific periodicals overseas. It also acted as intermediary in securing samples and research material, and provided limited funding for Chinese scientists to travel overseas for conferences.³⁵ The office was based in China because its government was a member of the UN and UNESCO, while these aid and reconstruction initiatives were targeted at institutions and individual scientists in China precisely because of their government's ties to these international organizations. Therefore, many of the office's activities at least indirectly reinforced the Republic of China's legitimacy and, by extension, the Kuomintang. In the context of the ongoing civil war, such associations would do little to endear the UNESCO office to the CCP.

One of EAFSCO's greatest undertakings was administering aspects of the Industrial Rehabilitation Education Program, one of the post-war reconstruction schemes that UNESCO and other UN agencies had inherited after UNRRA ceased most of its functions in 1947.³⁶ EAFSCO staff had to arrange for a large quantity of engineering equipment for which UNRRA had arranged purchase to be distributed to Chinese universities based on size and need. This equipment began arriving from the United States and Canada from spring 1947 onward, and sat in storage at Jiaotong University in Shanghai while the international agencies negotiated transfer of responsibilities.³⁷ UNESCO's equipment donations and other rehabilitation activities continued well into 1949 in spite of the increasingly disruptive effects of the civil war, and shipments to institutions in both CCP- and KMT-controlled areas.³⁸ Nor was this activity low-key. As late as February, EAFSCO had arranged a formal presentation ceremony at the UN's building in Shanghai for their donations involving heads of seven recipient educational institutions.³⁹

³² 'Lian jiao zuzhi zai Woguo shoubu [UNESCO in China's Capital]', *Shenbao*, 29 October 1947, p. 6.

³³ 'Shimaode di Hu [Jan Smid Arrives in Shanghai]', *Shenbao*, 12 November 1947, p. 7; 'Lian jiao Zhongguo weihui huanying Shimaode [UNESCO Chinese National Commission Welcomes Jan Smid]', *Shenbao*, 29 November 1947, p. 6.

³⁴ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.144, Smid, 'Activity Report', 1948.

³⁵ Ibid.; JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.155, 'Activity Report', 29 December 1949.

³⁶ On UNRRA in China, see: Mitter, 'Imperialism', pp. 51-69. On UNESCO's inherited reconstruction activities, see: C. Maurel, 'L'action de l'Unesco dans le domaine de la reconstruction,' *Histoire@Politique* no. 19, 2013, pp. 160-75.

³⁷ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.144, Smid, 'Activity Report', 1948.

³⁸ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.155, 'Activity Report', 1949.

³⁹ 'Lianheguo chongshi wo xuexiao shebei [United Nations Enriches Chinese Schools' Equipment]', *Shenbao*, 3 February 1949, p. 4.

Another major undertaking by EAFSCO was to administer the UNESCO book coupons scheme in the region. The scheme had origins in a recommendation approved at the very first General Conference in 1946, but took years to operationalize.⁴⁰ Starting in December 1948, the scheme was intended to allow academic institutions in countries with unstable currencies to procure scholarly works published overseas by allowing them to purchase vouchers in their local currency through UNESCO that foreign publishers or distributors could then redeem in another currency. In addition to those available for purchase, Chinese institutions were eligible for some of the US\$40,000-worth of coupons that UNESCO's Reconstruction Fund made available to member states.⁴¹ In August 1949, EAFSCO distributed \$793 in coupons to 117 institutions through the Reconstruction Fund, and provided an additional \$100-worth paid out of its own budget. In contrast, however, it only sold \$154.25 in book coupons, of which National Nankai University purchased \$54.25 and the remaining majority to an institution in Hanoi.⁴² These numbers highlight the stark reality of conditions for academic institutions in the later stages of the Chinese Civil War. While such a scheme was no doubt attractive to many institutions in the abstract, limited funds and disruption in communications links were highly problematic for the functioning of such a scheme.

Both central and local governmental authorities would show increasing hostility to the book coupons scheme in the years following the PRC's founding. However, as late as December 1949, Jan Smid remained hopeful that those authorities would look positively upon EAFSCO having sent these vouchers to academic institutions in both CCP- and KMT-controlled areas during the civil war. These actions, he felt, showed EAFSCO as operating without a political agenda.⁴³ Yet Smid's analysis overlooked the legacy of his office and international organization it represented having had clear institutional ties to the Republican government and its ministries. Smid may have been trying to make inroads with Chinese Communist Party officials by late 1949, but only months earlier he had been bemoaning the RoC Ministry of Education's breakdown. In March, he had written to Needham, complaining that, 'contact with the Government is more or less unexisting [sic]', representing one of the greatest impediments to EAFSCO's activities.⁴⁴ UNESCO may simply have been working with its member state's internationally-recognised government, but doing so during a bitterly-fought civil war meant that these early close ties to the KMT aroused great suspicion on the part of CCP officials both during and after 1949.

Seeking contact with the CCP

Throughout that year, the organization's leading officials followed developments in China with great interest, discussing how the organization might best go about building a relationship with a new CCP-led government in Beijing. Although Needham was no longer head of the organization's science section, he nevertheless remained a 'Honorary Scientific Adviser' and so remained a vocal participant in high-level discussions. As such, his correspondence provides a window on the state of thinking among the organization's officials at the time. In the summer of 1949, Jaime Torres Bodet, UNESCO Director-General, and Evert Barger, head of its Reconstruction Department and author of a memorandum on China, consulted Needham informally about the evolving situation there. At the heart of these exchanges was a possible mission to mainland China to establish relations with the CCP as part of a wider strategy for

⁴⁰ UNESDOC Database, 'Draft Proposal for UNESCO Book Coupons Scheme', Paris, 1947, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001424/142485eb.pdf>, [accessed, 3 March 2016].

⁴¹ J. Zuckerman, UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme, *Notes*, second series, vol. 6, no. 2, March 1949, p. 237.

⁴² JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.155, 'Activity Report', 1949.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.152, Smid to Needham, 8 March 1949.

handling the issue of diplomatic recognition with what increasingly looked to be the incoming regime. Needham's view was that UNESCO should coordinate with its sister agencies and the UN to give any such mission a broad base of support and to time it for soon after the Communist government had been formally recognized by major Western powers.⁴⁵ Torres Bodet and Barger were interested in sounding out Needham as a potential candidate to lead this proposed mission. The idea clearly held great appeal for Needham, but academic commitments – particularly having begun work on *Science and Civilisation in China* – were powerful confounding variables.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the very fact that these discussions were taking place prior to the PRC's formal establishment in October 1949 showed the extent to which those working at the top of UNESCO not only took for granted that a CCP-led state would be recognized and become a UNESCO member, but furthermore were considering how to constructively work with that new government.

Discussions about the future of UNESCO in China extended to its presence on the ground, notably EAFSCO in Shanghai. Needham, in particular, was interested in appointing a new Field Scientific Cooperation Officer who might make more progress in building links with CCP officials than Smid. Needham's concern was, above all else, to find someone familiar with China, who spoke the language, and had political leanings that might to help ingratiate them with the CCP. Subsequent to his September 1949 exchanges with Barger, Needham contacted Fritz Jensen, an Austrian physician who he knew from his time in China to be openly sympathetic to the CCP. He was keen to find someone to lead the EAFSCO in China who could build on foundations set during the anticipated mission later in the year. Needham's letter was 'an entirely exploratory and unofficial one, of a personal and confidential nature' and so cannot be construed as definitive evidence of thinking among UNESCO's leading officers.⁴⁷ Still, his opinions mattered and clearly carried great weight with the organization's serving officers. Should he have subsequently suggested Jensen as a candidate, the proposal would have been taken seriously.

Jensen was set to accept being considered for the position, and in fact went so far as to send Needham a telegram indicating as much, but he was ultimately dissuaded from doing so following a 'rather unexpected visit of some responsible Chinese friends'.⁴⁸ These friends, presumably well connected with the CCP, convinced him that returning to China as representative of an international organization might be viewed as displaying a 'double allegiance', as he described it, rather than being 'their own man'.⁴⁹ Jensen's reasons highlight the suspicion with which the CCP viewed international organizations such as UNESCO that had both a strong American presence and a longstanding relationship with the Kuomintang. As Needham later wrote while continuing his search for Smid's replacement: 'it is going to be tragic if the UN and its specialised agencies are going to be quite unable to obtain the services of any "left"-sympathisers, to maintain their relations with the great communist countries.'⁵⁰

China's KMT government had a clear and complicated relationship with UNESCO from the very beginning. As a founding member state, it facilitated the organization's very creation, as well as a serving as a source of influence and inspiration behind the scenes, including T.V. Soong advising Joseph Needham in 1943 and the SBSCO serving as a model for field offices. The international organization's intergovernmental nature meant that the RoC's Nationalist

⁴⁵ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.159, Needham to Barger, 11 September 1949.

⁴⁶ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.159, Needham to Barger, 11 September 1949; Barger to Needham, [no date] no. 112694; Needham to Barger 22 September 1949.

⁴⁷ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.159, Needham to Jensen, 29 September 1949.

⁴⁸ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.159, Jensen to Needham, telegram received 7 October 1949; and Jensen to Needham, 23 October [1949].

⁴⁹ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.159, Jensen to Needham, 23 October [1949].

⁵⁰ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.159, Needham to M. Lindsay, 14 November 1949.

government continued to be prominently associated with UNESCO's activities on the ground throughout the civil war. Both the organization's officials in Paris and its representatives in China sought to conduct their activities in an even-handed way. During the later stages of the conflict, as a CCP victory looked increasingly likely, they began planning accordingly. Nevertheless, its early and visible links with the Nationalist government cast long shadows over its attempts to reach out to the Communists. Even prior to the PRC's founding or the outbreak of the Korean War, the CCP was wary about international organizations as potentially vectors for malign foreign influences regardless of the political sympathies of individual officials or representatives, as pointed out to Fritz Jensen by his 'responsible Chinese friends'. This confluence of factors would continue to shape relations with UNESCO into the 1950s.

The battle for representation and its consequences, 1949-53

The Chinese Civil War did not come to a definitive end in 1949, but rather with rival regimes making competing claims to represent 'China'. This lack of clear resolution to the conflict meant that it took on new forms, with international organizations like UNESCO becoming a battleground between a range of sympathetic ideological and regional supporters of the PRC looking to dislodge the RoC's incumbent representatives. Prior to the USSR's belated entry in 1954, the PRC lacked a superpower supporter in the international organization, unlike their RoC rivals.⁵¹ This was all the more significant after 1950, when the United States began to actively assert itself in UNESCO, resulting in a tug-of-war over policies with senior officials, most notably Director-General Torres Bodet.⁵² This was a positive development for the RoC's representatives. At the July 1950 General Conference, RoC delegates won recognition votes with American support in both the Credentials Committee and the full conference, alongside a resolution calling for the United Nations to set out 'guiding principles' for affiliated organizations and agencies to follow.⁵³ These UNESCO votes were won in spite of vocal opposition from Hungarian, Czechoslovakian, and Yugoslavian delegations, along with Indian representative Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.⁵⁴ This set the pattern for subsequent meetings, with the PRC's cause advanced by other socialist states as well as its then-sympathetic neighbour, India.

So it was in June 1951, when UNESCO member states' delegations gathered in Paris for the organization's Sixth General Conference. While the issue of Chinese representation was not a central focus of the conference, it was nevertheless a heatedly-debated part of the agenda once again. On 18 June, the Credentials Committee discussed the issue of Chinese representation, ultimately upholding the RoC's position. PRC foreign affairs officials followed these developments with interest, albeit at some delay and distance as France was not one of the handful of European states to have granted the CCP-led state diplomatic recognition. Consequently, the Chinese Embassy in Switzerland wired dispatches back to the PRC

⁵¹ On USSR-UNESCO relations in this period, see: A. Kulnazarova, 'Debating International Understanding in the Eastern World: UNESCO and the Soviet Union', in *UNESCO Without Borders: Educational Campaigns for International Understanding*, A. Kulnazarova and C. Ydesen (eds), Abingdon, Routledge, 2017, pp. 256-274.

⁵² R. A. Coate, 'Changing Patterns of Conflict: The United States and UNESCO', in *The United States and Multilateral Institutions: Patterns of Changing Instrumentality and Influence*, M. P. Karns and K. A. Mingst (eds), Routledge, London, 1992, pp. 161-62; and P. Petitjean, 'Visions and Revisions: Defining UNESCO's Scientific Culture, 1945-1965', in *Sixty Years*, pp. 31-32.

⁵³ P. Petitjean, 'The Joint Establishment of the World Federation of Scientific Workers and of UNESCO After World War II', *Minerva*, vol. 46, no. 2, June 2008, p. 267; and, Petitjean, 'Visions and Revisions', p. 31. See also: UNESDOC, 'Records of the General Conference, Fifth Session: Resolutions, Florence, 1950', Paris, 1950, p. 5, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001145/114589e.pdf> [accessed, 3 March 2016].

⁵⁴ Wen Y., 'Personal Recollections of The 5th and 7th General Conferences of UNESCO', *Free China Review*, vol. 3, no. 5, May 1953, pp. 7-10.

containing updates about the event and RoC delegates' participation in particular. The embassy primarily focused on sources of support for the PRC in its report on the Credentials Committee's discussions. In particular, it highlighted Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's arguments, that the RoC government could no longer claim to represent the majority of China's population now that it was based on Taiwan and, more broadly, that UNESCO 'need not do everything in lockstep with the United Nations'.⁵⁵ China's entry into the Korean War in October 1950 hardened American opposition to PRC representation in the UN.⁵⁶ Thus, the inter-organizational relationship between UN and UNESCO became even more important after the PRC became involved in a conflict on the opposing side to US-led UN forces. Radhakrishnan's argument reflected the extent to which UNESCO's relationship with the UN meant the handling of recognition and membership issues in one might impact another.

As a follow-up to the Credentials Committee's discussions, the General Conference subsequently adopted a resolution that the 'Nationalist Government of China' would continue as Chinese representatives in UNESCO, following UN General Assembly interim guidance for affiliated agencies until its Special Committee had reported on the issue.⁵⁷ A follow-up summary of events prepared for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) focusing on the heated exchanges during the debate before voting on the resolution between Radhakrishnan and Cheng Tianfang, RoC representative and Minister of Education. This report further noted which countries had supported, opposed, or abstained on RoC representatives' voting rights.⁵⁸ In other words, for PRC officials, delegates' behaviour in UNESCO served as a bellwether of international disposition toward each of the competing regimes on either side of the Taiwan Strait.

Radhakrishnan's interventions in particular carried multiple layers of potential significance for China within the context of UNESCO and beyond. He had longstanding political dimensions to his career, in addition to being a prominent scholar of religion and philosophy. At the time of the Sixth General Conference in 1951, he was in the third year serving as India's ambassador to the USSR and would be elected as the country's first Vice President in 1952. He was especially familiar with the situation in China, having visited Chongqing during May 1944 when tensions between the KMT and CCP had already ripped apart the 'United Front' against Japan's invasion.⁵⁹ As a prominent figure in India, his interventions on behalf of the PRC in UNESCO were noteworthy for that political dimension alone. Radhakrishnan's critical stance toward the RoC at General Conference was also important for PRC foreign affairs officials because he had influence in UNESCO beyond his role as a national representative. He had served on UNESCO's Executive Board, as well as being a member of working parties devoted to issues including representation and organization. Yet in the end, a combination of ideology and power politics proved to be more important than individual influence or rhetoric, as neither Radhakrishnan's position nor his arguments changed the vote's final outcome. Moreover, the PRC lost their influential supporter not long after the conference, since Radhakrishnan was among the Executive Board members who retired that summer.⁶⁰ While

⁵⁵ CFMA, 113-00078-07, 'Lianheguo wen jiao zuzhi taolun Tai fei diabiao quan wenti [UNESCO Debate on the Issue of the Taiwanese Bandits' Representation]', 25 June 1951.

⁵⁶ Kaufman, pp. 355-56.

⁵⁷ UNESDOC, 'Records of the General Conference, Sixth Session: Resolutions (Paris, 1951)', Paris, 1951, p. 5, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001145/114588E.pdf> [accessed, 3 March 2016].

⁵⁸ CFMA, 113-00078-07, Zhu Ruishi dashi bao bu guan wen jiao dahui liu yue sa ri jie jue Tai fei biao jue quan wenti ['Ambassador in Switzerland's Report for the Ministry on the UNESCO General Conference Resolution about Taiwanese Bandits' Representation on 30 June]', 4 July 1951.

⁵⁹ S. Radhakrishnan, *India and China: Lectures Delivered in China in May 1944*, second ed., Hind Kitabs, Bombay, 1947, pp. 1-2.

⁶⁰ UNESDOC, 'Resolutions and Decisions Adopted by the Executive Board at Its Twenty-Sixth Session (7 June to 9 July 1951)', 1951, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001137/113790E.pdf> [accessed, 3 March 2016].

the PRC's supporters may not have ultimately been able to overcome American-led opposition to recognising the CCP's fledgling state, it was nevertheless the case that the issue of Chinese representation was regularly revisited and hotly debated within UNESCO during the early 1950s.

Containing and constraining EAFSCO

The United Nations and many of its affiliated agencies and organizations continued to have a presence in the PRC into the 1950s, in spite of none of them recognizing it as a member state and the fractious backdrop of the Korean War. The United Nations' building in Shanghai kept operating until July 1957, when it received instructions from the organization's central headquarters to shut down its operations.⁶¹ The East Asia Field Scientific Cooperation Office in Shanghai was one of the last of any UN-affiliated agencies or organizations' offices to close, managing to remain open until July 1953. Only the International Refugee Organization's (IRO) Shanghai office outlasted UNESCO, closing in 1956. In contrast, the WHO and ILO's offices closed in 1950 and 1952, respectively.⁶² EAFSCO might have outlasted those of many other organizations' offices, but it did so under increasing restrictions and pressure imposed by local authorities. From the CCP's perspective, toleration of this presence was at least in part pragmatic in light of the PRC's pursuit of membership in them. Yet as it became increasingly apparent that the RoC's displacement was unlikely, PRC foreign affairs officials at both central and local levels adopted a correspondingly restrictive and interventionist approach to UNESCO's operations in the country.

Although CCP officials may have tolerated EAFSCO in the early days of the PRC, its presence and activities were not exactly welcomed. UNESCO field officer Jan Smid was keen to develop contacts with the new government and begin the process of building links with its ministries and institutions. He planned to visit Beijing, Tianjin, and Shenyang in December 1949 to build such links. Any such journey required prior approval by local authorities and receipt of a permit to travel, owing to extreme restrictions on movement the CCP imposed on all foreigners during 1949.⁶³ Smid, however, was denied a travel permit and so remained trapped in Shanghai, where he experienced little success in his official interactions. As he described in his activity report for March-December 1949:

The Shanghai authorities were contacted in various matters but even if the contact is very polite and if the satisfaction was given in two or three matters, the personnel is [sic] mostly uncommitting [sic] and very reserved to engage their personal responsibility in matters on which no positive directions were given by the central office. This position will certainly be maintained till [sic] the official recognition by the UN or Unesco will be given.⁶⁴

In subsequent years, Radhakrishnan continued to publically support both the PRC and it being represented in the United Nations. See, for example: S. Radhakrishnan, 'India and China', in *Occasional Speeches and Writings: First Series, October 1952-January 1956*, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 1957, pp. 40-44.

⁶¹ Zhou and Tang, pp. 329.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 330-31.

⁶³ B. Hooper, *China Stands Up: Ending the Foreign Presence, 1948-1950*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1986, pp. 71-72.

⁶⁴ JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.155, 'Activity Report', 1949. According to Needham, there was some debate at UNESCO headquarters in Paris during this period about whether Smid was himself partly responsible for the EAFSCO's lack of progress with the CCP. Needham speculated that Smid's family falling afoul of the new communist regime in Czechoslovakia made him somewhat languid in his approach to the Chinese communists. See: JNP, GBR/0012/MS Needham D.159, Needham to F. Jensen, 29 September 1949. Smid's personal feelings and circumstances aside, unless UNESCO's field officer had been an overt CCP sympathiser, practical impediments on the ground made it highly unlikely they would have been any more successful.

Even before the first votes on Chinese representation in UNESCO or the outbreak of the Korean War, local officials sought to limit EAFSCO's reach and functionality unless directed to do so by their central-government counterparts. For all the frustration that this obfuscation and ambivalent treatment by officials may have caused Smid, it was in fact mild treatment compared to the combativeness and outright hostility many other foreign nationals were encountering.⁶⁵ Moreover, these early encounters between EAFSCO and local foreign affairs officials were less hostile or fraught than those to come in future years.

Indeed, EAFSCO's relations with the authorities took a turn for the worse in 1950, though uncertainty surrounding the PRC's possible accession into the UN and UNESCO meant the Shanghai office managed to make some headway in its outreach and reconstruction activities. However, officials in the central government came to take an increasingly dim view of these activities and tried to put a stop to them, albeit with limited success. In March, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote to the Culture and Education Committee of the Central People's Government requesting it instruct subordinate organizations to sever contact with EAFSCO. They noted the Shanghai office's primary activities, which included meeting various academic institutions' representatives, compiling indexes of researchers and publications, and selling UNESCO book coupons. Tellingly, the MFA's stated objection to the office's undertakings was that the Central People's Government did not yet have relations with either the UN or UNESCO.⁶⁶ The foreign ministry's intervention, then, was driven by issues of international politics but prompted by domestic impacts.

It was also one prompted by inquiries from other ministries looking for input and guidance on how to handle EAFSCO's activities. In late January, Mao Dun, Minister of Culture wrote to the foreign ministry about EAFSCO contacting the National Beijing Library requesting its assistance in compiling a revised summary of Chinese scientific papers. The library had requested guidance from the Ministry of Culture, who had consulted the MFA.⁶⁷ Zhou Enlai's guidance was that the library should simply ignore the request in light of the lack of formal relationship between the PRC and UNESCO.⁶⁸ In mid-March the Ministry of Education's Higher Education Department brought to MFA's attention that the UNESCO office in Shanghai had continued selling book coupons to institutions in the PRC, a matter that was treated much more seriously. The case in question centred on correspondence between Jan Smid and Rao Yuqin, Dean of National Peking University's College of Science, regarding the purchase of US\$1,000 of the vouchers. In this instance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommended that the Ministry of Education find alternative means for Peking University and other institutions to purchase foreign books if they had an urgent need for such purchases.⁶⁹ In all, the MFA was far more concerned about EAFSCO selling the coupons than the university purchasing them.

⁶⁵ See Hooper, esp. ch. 5.

⁶⁶ CFMA, 113-00078-03, Waijiaobu bangongting [MFA General Office] to Wenjiao weiyuanhui [Foreign Affairs Committee], '(Yi) qing diaocha wenjiao xitong jiguan xuexiao zhi guoji guanxi huodong (er) qing zhuyi Lianheguo dongfang kexue hezuoguan huodong, bing chi suoshu jiguan bu yu laiwang [(1) Please Investigate the International Relations Activities of Organizations in the Culture and Education System (2) Please Note the UN East Science Cooperation Office's Activities and Order Affiliated Organizations to Not Have Dealings with It]', 25 March 1950.

⁶⁷ CFMA, 113-00078-04, Shen Y. [courtesy name for Shen Dehong (Mao Dun)] to Waijiaobu [MFA], 20 January 1950.

⁶⁸ CFMA, 113-00078-03, Zhou E. to Zhongyang renmin zhengfu wenhuabu [Central People's Government Culture Committee and Education Committee], 25 January 1950.

⁶⁹ CFMA, 113-00078-03, Jiaoyubu gaojiaosi [Ministry of Education Higher Education Department] to Waijiaobu [MFA] and enclosures, [16 March 1950].

The sale of book coupons, in particular, shows how closely domestic and international policy concerns were intertwined. Foreign affairs officials did perceive these coupons as a means of helping Chinese academic institutions overcome the instability posed by an unstable currency, as UNESCO had intended, but rather classed the coupons as illegal ‘foreign currency exchange vouchers’, arguing that their sale ‘disturbs China’s financial system’ and ‘foreign exchange controls’.⁷⁰ During these early years of the People’s Republic, the government was grappling not only with instituting its own new financial and monetary system, but also tackling the legacies of hyperinflation and economic instability that had rocked China during the previous decade.⁷¹ Touching on the sensitive issue of foreign exchange, UNESCO’s book coupons were framed as far more important a transgression on the part of EAFSCO than other activities. Tellingly, the MFA’s guidance to the Culture and Education Committee to instruct research and educational institutions to sever communications with the UNESCO office was issued on the same day as this response to the Higher Education Department. While other activities might be simply dealt with via officially-sanctioned silence, book coupons prompted more active intervention. In light of the sums involved, EAFSCO’s sale of book coupons did not likely pose a tangible threat the PRC’s financial system, but did provide justification for putting further pressure on the office. Furthermore, as a subsidiary of UNESCO, the EAFSCO office was undertaking this activity based on agreements made with the previous KMT government rather than that of the CCP. As such, the book coupons were seen as a symbolic challenge to both the PRC’s sovereignty and legitimacy.

Little came of central government ministries’ concerns or their instructions to subordinate bodies in the immediate period that followed. Well into 1951, numerous university departments, libraries, hospitals, and research institutes from throughout the country continued to approach EAFSCO about purchasing book coupons, and the UNESCO office continued to sell them. Moreover, while the coupons scheme may have been originally conceived as a means of assisting academic institutions in countries with ‘soft’ currencies, in 1950 and 1951 it also became a financial lifeline for UNESCO’s operations in China. As Smid explained to Rao Yuqin when discussing the PKU College of Sciences’ payment for their book coupon order: ‘Due to the depreciation of JMP [*Renminbi*, Chinese yuan], we would prefer if your remittance would not exceed US\$100.- every two weeks what [sic] would permit us to spend the local currency for our administrative expenditures’.⁷² Spreading these larger payments out over a longer period provided the office with regular infusions of local currency as well as a provided it with a buffer against currency fluctuations.

By 1951, the sale of coupons was being considered as a means of supporting the United Nations Information Center in Shanghai (UNICS) as well. In June, UNESCO Headquarters in Paris instructed the China office to try selling fixed quantities of book coupons at regular intervals to provide local currency for UNICS.⁷³ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs became aware of these proposals in September thanks to Shanghai’s Foreign Affairs Department intercepting copies of outgoing EAFSCO correspondence on the matter. These they forwarded to their

⁷⁰ CFMA, 113-00078-03, Waijiaobu bangongting [MFA General Office] to Jiaoyubu gaojiaosi [Ministry of Education Higher Education Department], ‘Han fu Jiaoyubu gaojiaosi xun ji Beida xiang Dongfangkexue hezuoguan goumai goushi shuquan shi [Reply to Ministry of Education Higher Education Department Inquiry and the Matter of Beida Purchasing Book Coupons from the East Asian Field Scientific Cooperation Office]’, 25 March 1950.

⁷¹ See: K. S. Hsiao, *Money and Monetary Policy in Communist China*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1971.

⁷² CFMA, 113-00078-03, Smid to Y. T. Yao [Rao Yuqin], 7 February 1950.

⁷³ CFMA, 113-00078-02, Smid, 25 June 1951, quoted in Louis E. Low to Jacob Zuckerman, 6 August 1951.

government counterparts alongside a report on the sale of book coupons.⁷⁴ By involving the East Asia Field Scientific Cooperation Office in the UNICS' financial affairs, UNESCO tied it and its office even more closely to the United Nations in the eyes of the PRC's officials. This development provided officials with further cause to justify increasing pressure on UNESCO's representatives. In August, while awaiting MFA guidance, the Shanghai Foreign Affairs Department instructed Louis E. Low, EAFSCO's representative after Smid left the country, to stop selling book coupons until further notice.⁷⁵ The MFA supported this decision and made it permanent that September: UNESCO was expressly forbidden from selling any coupons in China.⁷⁶ As in 1950, the MFA soon wrote to the Culture and Education Committee, informing them of the report from Shanghai and requested that the committee instruct all academic organizations in the country that they were not to purchase UNESCO book coupons, nor have any contact with EAFSCO.⁷⁷ By November, this information had made its way down to institutions and regional ministries via a circular by the Minister of Education, Ma Xulun.⁷⁸ Unlike in 1950, however, this spelled the end of UNESCO book coupons in China and by extension the financial lifeline that had been sustaining EAFSCO's activities, however limited they may have been.

While the Scientific Cooperation Office continued to nominally operate in Shanghai until 1953, Chinese officials managed to limit its activities with ever-greater success. In early 1950, the MFA had advised that the National Beijing Library simply ignore correspondence from EAFSCO. In contrast, by the spring of 1952, municipal foreign affairs officials were now able to assure their central government counterparts that Low had been prevented from contacting any academic intuitions or individual scientists in China about a UNESCO survey.⁷⁹ This gradual ramping up of severity in treatment from 1949 to 1953 showed the extent to which the UNESCO's on-the-ground activities reflected the trajectory of debates of over Chinese representation in the organization, but also tapped into more fundamental concerns about the CCP's sovereignty and legitimacy, salient issues both at home and abroad.

Conclusion

While UNESCO's presence in China disappeared in 1953, the ongoing debate over Chinese representation within the international organization did not. Since their Republic of China rivals already had representatives in the organization, foreign policy officials in the People's Republic of China relied on both socialist states and, crucially, sympathetic neighbours such as India to press their case. When the Soviet Union made its belated entry into UNESCO in

⁷⁴ CFMA, 113-00078-02, Shanghaishi renmin zhengfu junbu guangzhi weiyuanhui waishichu [Shanghai People's Government Military Control Commission Foreign Affairs Department] to Waijiaobu [MFA], 'baogao [Report]', 8 September 1951.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ CFMA, 113-00078-02 Waijiaobu guojisi [MFA International Department] to Shanghai waishichu [Shanghai Foreign Affairs Department], 'guanyu Lianheguo jiao ke wen zuzhi dongfang kexueguan jixu zai Woguo chushou shu quan shi [On the Matter of the UNESCO EAFSCO Continuing to Sell Book Coupons in China]', 26 September 1951.

⁷⁷ CFMA, 113-00078-02, 'Waijiaobu guojisi to Zhongyang wenjiao weiyuanhui, Wei Lianheguo jiao ke wen zuzhi dongfang kexue hezuoguan zai Woguo chushou shu quan shi [UNESCO EAFSCO Selling Book Coupons in China]', 27 September 1951.

⁷⁸ Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, File Q249-1-147, Ma X., 'Zhongyang renmin zhengfu jiaoyubu tongbao [Central People's Government Ministry of Education Circular]', 10 November 1951.

⁷⁹ CFMA, 113-00133-01, 'Shanghaishi renmin zhengfu junbu guangzhi weiyuanhui waishichu to Waijiaobu, 'Lianheguo jiao ke wen zuzhi ni diaocha woguo xueshu, wenhua, kexue jigou ji kexuejia zhi chuli jingguo [UNESCO plans to Survey the PRC's Academic, Cultural, and Scientific Institutions and Ways of Handling Scientists]', 24 March 1952; Gong P., 'Baogao [Report]', 6 May 1952.

1954, it brought a superpower ally into the picture for the People's Republic of China; nevertheless, even the USSR's presence failed to shift sufficient votes in the PRC's favour. But while the PRC's allies and sympathizers continued to raise the issue and attempt to find ways for it to take up a place in the organization, its absence from UNESCO during this period was at least in part self-imposed. CCP foreign policymakers refused to engage in any activity that might even tacitly be interpreted as lending legitimacy to the KMT on Taiwan or accepting a 'two China' solution in any way. In May 1956, the Czechoslovakian embassy approached the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs offering a potential stepping-stone into UNESCO. The Czechoslovakians indicated that their delegates were could put forward a motion at an upcoming meeting calling for PRC observers to be able to attend UNESCO's Ninth General Conference to be held that November in New Delhi. However, Chinese officials demurred, citing the continued presence of RoC representatives.⁸⁰ In declining to pursue this potential avenue in 1956, officials in Beijing reasserted a policy they would continue to stand by in the following decades. The PRC's eventual admission to UNESCO followed its admission into the United Nations in 1971, in each case accompanied by recognition as representing 'China' in the organization.⁸¹ Indeed, once this had occurred, PRC delegates swiftly put forward a resolution insisting that all non-governmental organizations affiliated with UNESCO also expel any 'bodies or elements linked with Chiang Kai-shek'.⁸² Unlike Zhou Enlai's missive in 1950, this demand now came from a member of the intergovernmental international organization rather than from outside it, resulting in a very different outcome. The PRC's entry into these international organizations in the 1970s therefore signalled a definitive shift in the battle for legitimacy and recognition between KMT and CCP.

Indeed, the KMT's great advantage prior to the 1970s had in part been derived from the complexity and depth of the RoC relationship with the international organization starting in the 1940s. This was not only the case at an intergovernmental level, with the RoC involved in UNESCO's founding and its membership afterwards, but also at more subtle levels behind the scenes, most notably seen in Joseph Needham's Chinese connections. The extent of this embeddedness was particularly significant at both practical and symbolic levels in light of UNESCO's founding in 1946 coinciding with the resumption of outright hostilities between China's ruling Nationalists and their Communist Party rivals for power. In the years that followed, the new international organization's officials in Paris and its representatives in China sought to navigate these fractious and fluid circumstances without getting practically drawn into the conflict. While UNESCO had numerous visible and practical connections with the Nationalist government, from the Chinese National Commission down to official relations with various ministries and departments, the organization's officials field officers nevertheless pursued contacts with and strove to aid individuals and academic institutions in CCP-held territory as well. The presence of an ongoing domestic conflict thus invariably complicated attempts to facilitate post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation.

UNESCO officials made particular effort to reach out to build bridges with the CCP officials after it became increasingly clear that Communists were likely to be the victorious party. The international organization encountered unexpected wariness – and even hostility – on the part of the CCP's foreign affairs officials at both local and central levels both before and after the

⁸⁰ CFMA, 113-00289-01, 'Guanyuda huo Jie fang xun Wo shifouyuan pai guanchayuan canjia Lian jiao zuzhi huiyi shi [On Replying to Czechoslovakian Enquiry as to Whether or Not China Sends an Observer to the UNESCO Meeting]', 16 July 1956.

⁸¹ UNESDOC, 'Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its 88th Session (Paris, 6 October-2 November 1971)', 2 December 1971, p. 48, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001131/113195E.pdf> [accessed, 4 March 2016].

⁸² UNESDOC, 'Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its 93rd session (Paris, 12 September-11 October 1973)', 9 November 1973, p. 40, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0000/000057/005730E.pdf> [accessed, 4 March 2016].

PRC's founding in 1949. Indeed, these officials sought to restrict the international organization's activities and, ultimately, its influence in the country even as the PRC lobbied for membership in the organization. These two seemingly contradictory pursuits show that, much as was the case in CCP policymakers' handling of foreign nationals, businesses, or organizations in the early PRC, there was a dynamic tension between pragmatism and ideology in their approach to international organizations.⁸³ When it came to their interactions with UNESCO, the balance appears to have tilted more toward ideology, particularly in their approach to the representation debate and the sale of book coupons. Such efforts were tangibly rooted in more generalized anxieties about sovereignty and foreign influence in common with those that had appeared in KMT officials' dealings with UNESCO's predecessor UNRRA.⁸⁴ Additionally, the CCP's relationship with international organizations was made even more complicated by their political rivals' embeddedness and depth of engagement in such organizations from the early 1940s onwards. International organizations therefore also represented a vector for KMT influence on mainland China both during the civil war and even after their retreat to Taiwan. After 1949, CCP policymakers thus perceived international organizations as representing threat and opportunity and alike after, in both domestic and international contexts.

Communist officials' concerted efforts to curb UNESCO's interactions with academic institutions in these years, and their response to its book coupons scheme in particular, were tangible demonstrations of these complex dynamics. It took central and local authorities multiple years and multiple attempts to completely contain the international organization's activities in China. Yet it is also worth noting that for all their objections to UNESCO's sale and distribution of book coupons to institutions in the PRC, foreign relations officials were not dead set against such schemes in broader principle. As the Foreign Ministry's response to the Ministry of Education in 1950 indicated, they were concerned not that academic institutions were attempting to obtain foreign publications, but that these institutions were doing so via a scheme over which the PRC government had no control or influence. Thus, it was in fact Chinese representatives who started pressing the World Federation of Scientific Workers (WFSW) to develop a strikingly programme to the UNESCO book coupons scheme starting in 1952.⁸⁵ Although both organizations emerged at the same time and had many common roots, unlike UNESCO, it was the CCP not KMT with strong early roots in the World Federation.⁸⁶ An international organization like the WFSW therefore represented much less by way of threat and a great deal of opportunity during this period. Yet it is significant that this definitive tilt toward focusing on organizations more closely aligned with the socialist world came after successive failed attempts to break through into ones with broader constituencies. In all, Chinese relations with UNESCO were complex and contingent. They were as tied to domestic developments as they were inescapably entangled with wider geopolitical ones. And ultimately, they show rival Chinese regimes navigating not an ossified international order of clear-cut Cold War blocs, but rather one that remained very much in flux.

⁸³ See, especially: Howlett, "'The British Boss Is Gone'"; and King, 'Reconstructing China'.

⁸⁴ See: Mitter, 'Imperialism'.

⁸⁵ University of Warwick Modern Records Centre, Coventry, World Federation of Scientific Workers Collection, MSS.270/12/2/2/2, W.143/52, Secretary General's Report on Activities, [1952], pp. 2-3.

⁸⁶ On the CCP and WFSW in this period, see: G. R. B. Barrett, *Foreign Policy, Propaganda, and Scientific Exchange: Scientists in China's Cold War Foreign Relations*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Bristol, 2015, pp. 36-80. On the organizations' early history, see: Petitjean, 'Joint Establishment'.