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0521842123 - China and the Great War: China's Pursuit of a New National Identity and Internationalization

Xu Guoqi

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China and the Great War

China's role in the First World War has been a curiously neglected topic. This book is the first full-length study of China's involvement in the conflict from perspectives of international history, using largely unknown archival materials from China, France, Germany, the UK, and the USA. It explains why China wanted to join the war and what were its contributions to the war effort and the emerging world order in the postwar period. The book also demonstrates that China's participation in the First World War was not only a defining moment in modern Chinese and world history, but also the beginning of China's long journey toward internationalization.

In this groundbreaking and provocative book, Professor Xu adds a new dimension to our collective memory of the war, its tragedy and its significance, and restores the China war memory to its rightful place.

XU GUOQI is Wen Chao Chen Chair of History at Kalamazoo College. He is a leading scholar in the field of the international history of China, and is currently working on a study of sports and China's internationalization, 1896–2001. He has taught history in both China and the United States.

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To my parents

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Illustrations

Between pages 200 and 201

Yuan Shikai. From *The Far Eastern Review* (Shanghai) 13, no. 1 (June 1916)

Duan Qirui. From *The Far Eastern Review* (Shanghai) 13, no. 4 (September 1916)

Liang Shiyi. From *Liang Tan Yuying ju shi suo cang shu han tu zhao ying cun*, 1986. Courtesy of Asia Library, University of Michigan
Handwritten note of Liang Shiyi. From *Liang Tan Yuying ju shi suo cang shu han tu zhao ying cun*, 1986. Courtesy of Asia Library, University of Michigan

Liang Qichao. From *Liang Tan Yuying ju shi suo cang shu han tu zhao ying cun*, 1986. Courtesy of Asia Library, University of Michigan

Liang Qichao's handwritten letter to Duan Qirui. From *liang Qichao wei kan shu xing shuo ji*, vol. 1. Beijing: zhong hua shu ju, 1994

Wellington Koo. From *Liang Tan Yuying ju shi suo cang shu han tu zhao ying cun*, 1986. Courtesy of Asia Library, University of Michigan

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Acknowledgments

My interest in the topic of China and the Great War started in the late 1980s when I was working with others on a book about the history of American foreign relations. I was intrigued by the sea changes in Chinese perceptions of Woodrow Wilson during the short period of the First World War. In the early 1990s when I came to Harvard University to pursue my doctoral degree, I decided to write a dissertation on the topic that had become my intellectual obsession by then. I was extremely fortunate to have Professor Akira Iriye as my academic advisor; he has provided generous and unfaltering support and encouragement through the years. I am also profoundly grateful to two other members of my dissertation committee, William C. Kirby and Ernest R. May. Like Iriye, they have shared their boundless knowledge and penetrating insights whenever I needed them and have provided much expert guidance and encouragement, as well as the example of their outstanding scholarship. Without these three mentors, this book would not have taken the shape it has.

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xii Acknowledgments

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Note on romanization

This book employs the *pinyin* system for the transliteration of Chinese names with the exceptions of names such as Confucius, Wellington Koo, Sun Yat-sen that are familiar in the West with their established spellings. In citing Western-language sources that use the older different spelling systems, however, references to persons and places have been left unchanged.