

CHINA CROSSROADS

Thursday, January 16th, 2025, 19:30 – 21:00

Tormented Alliance: The History of the US Military in Wartime China, 1941-1949

Zach Fredman

Associate Professor of History

Chair of the Division of Arts and Humanities

Duke Kunshan University

Author of [The Tormented Alliance](#) (2022)

WhiteSpace | Jianing Building 5F | 500 Yanan Xi Lu

150rmb admission with drink | FREE for members

Scan to RSVP or email editor@shanghai-review.org



After Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, leaders in China and the United States had high hopes of a lasting partnership between the two countries. More than 120,000 U.S. servicemen deployed to China, where Chiang Kai-shek's government carried out massive programs to provide them with housing, food, and interpreters. But as Zach Fredman uncovers in his book, [The Tormented Alliance](#), a military alliance with the United States means a military occupation by the United States. The first book to draw on archives from all of the areas in China where U.S. forces deployed during the 1940s, it examines the formation, evolution, and undoing of the alliance between the United States and the Republic of China during World War II and the Chinese Civil War. Fredman reveals how each side brought to the alliance expectations that the other side was simply unable to meet, resulting in a tormented relationship across all levels of Sino-American engagement. Entangled in larger struggles over race, gender, and nation, the U.S. military in China transformed itself into a widely loathed occupation force: an aggressive, resentful, emasculating source of physical danger and compromised sovereignty. After Japan's surrender and the spring 1946 withdrawal of Soviet forces from Manchuria, the U.S. occupation became the chief obstacle to consigning foreign imperialism in China irrevocably to the past. Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek lost his country in 1949, and the U.S. military presence contributed to his defeat. The occupation of China also cast a long shadow, establishing patterns that have followed the U.S. military elsewhere in Asia up to the present.

[Zach Fredman](#) is a historian of U.S. foreign relations and modern China. Fredman has published articles, essays, and book chapters in numerous venues, including *Diplomatic History*, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, *Modern American History*, *The Journal of Modern Chinese History*, *The Washington Post* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. In 2017, he received the Edward M. Coffman First Book Manuscript Prize from the Society for Military History and the Betty M. Unterberger Dissertation Prize from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. Fredman holds a BA in history from the University of Arizona, and an MA and PhD in history from Boston University. Prior to joining Duke Kunshan University, he held postdoctoral fellowships at Dartmouth College and Nanyang Technological University.

[China Crossroads](#) hosts talks on all topics related to China, including business, foreign policy, and other areas as they relate to China, the idea being that China is both already a "crossroads" of the world and itself at a "crossroads" in terms of its future global influence. For more information, contact Frank Tsai at editor@shanghai-review.org.