

according to a field report immediately after the war, there was not a single house that survived the catastrophe unscathed.⁴¹ Zhabei was never to recover, although some efforts at renewing this area were made by the Chinese government. A second blow dealt by the same enemy extinguished any hope for the revival of Zhabei. On August 13, 1937, Japanese troops attacked Shanghai again and, after two months, finally occupied the whole city except for the International Settlement and the French Concession. For the second time, Zhabei was severely bombarded by Japanese bombers and artillery. This time, fighting raged for more than two months, and, thereafter, the Japanese army set fire to whatever structures remained standing in Zhabei when it occupied the area.⁴² Zhabei was thus thoroughly devastated.

Fangualong as a slum appeared between these two wars. Although it was located in this war-ravaged area, Fangualong still had some attraction for the urban poor. First, it was in the immediate neighborhood of the Shanghai Railway Station which, for decades after it was established in 1908, was the main entrance to Shanghai. The area immediately surrounding this railway station became a sort of dumping ground on which was cast the teeming numbers of newcomers who sought shelter in this strange city. Furthermore, by its very nature, a railway station that serves as a key entrance to a great metropolis provides a number of job opportunities (as porters, rickshaw pullers, coolies, etc.) for unskilled and newly arrived migrants.

Also, Fangualong was located in an area that was just outside the northern boundary of the International Settlement and was only loosely controlled by the local Chinese authorities. This situation created a sort of administrative vacuum which, to some extent, was conducive to the appearance of a slum. In addition, the bombs of 1932 created a wasteland; with landmarks gone, it was often difficult to tell where one lot began and the next ended. Ownership of real property, in other words, became unclear; thus it was relatively easy for poor people to squat without permission or rent payment.⁴³ Indeed, not only in Fangualong but elsewhere on the periphery of Shanghai, as one witness observed, poor immigrants just squatted on tiny scraps of land and erected their huts.⁴⁴

The general deterioration of the rural economy in the late 1920s and the early 1930s and the Sino-Japanese War brought severe disasters to

the hinterland of Shanghai, particularly to northern Jiangsu and Anhui provinces. The war made the already bad situation in the countryside even worse. Thousands of refugees from rural areas around Shanghai flowed into the city. Those areas of Zhabei that were close to the railway station and covered with nothing but piles of rubble were soon crowded with refugees. Fangualong rapidly became a slum in the early 1930s. Since it was close in proximity to the railway station and the International Settlement, it drew more attention from journalists than did Yaoshuilong, the largest slum in the city. In 1935, a reporter of the *Evening News* took a trip through the straw huts located at the end of Qingyun Road, which was part of Fangualong, and wrote the following account:

There you can discover shoulder high huts with any odds and ends such as broken pieces of wood, grass, reed or discarded iron sheets serving as tile for the roof; for windows there are little holes in the mud wall; rain or shine, summer or winter, the same darkness, dampness and dirty smells prevail. Some have a few pieces of broken-down furniture coated with slimy dust so that one cannot tell the material of which it is made, some even without what could be called a chair for the occupants not only sit on the ground but sleep on it as well!

On the little narrow paths there are always puddles of muddy water; here men, women, children, pigs, dogs, chickens and ducks move and live. It is difficult to pick one's way through the dirt.⁴⁵

In fact, just as in Yaoshuilong, so too in Fangualong, straw shacks were considered relatively good housing, since the majority of dwellings in this slum were the so-called "rolling earth dragons." But even the inhabitants of these "houses" might have felt fortunate compared to those who lived in Zhaojiabang, another large slum in the southern suburbs of Shanghai (Figure 8).

Zhaojiabang was originally a creek that flowed into the Huangpu River. Although it was a small creek and was not well maintained, it actually carried water until 1937. The creek finally silted up after the Japanese occupied the city. It gradually became the trash dump of the factories and the residences along its banks. Stagnant water in the creek joined by polluted water from nearby factories, plus a daily in-pouring of garbage, soon made Zhaojiabang a stinking sewer. It had not drawn the attention of the urban poor until the end of the Sino-