

Chinese Asianism, 1894–1945

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Chinese Asianism, 1894–1945

CRAIG A. SMITH

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For Songjoo

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Introduction

East Asian writings on Asianism have circulated since the nineteenth century, as the threat of a seemingly unified Europe encouraged elite intellectuals across Asia to imagine international strategies in response to imperialism. The list of countries imagined to be cooperating in this potential alliance was constantly in flux, sometimes only including East Asian nations and sometimes reaching much further. Meanwhile, the West appeared as a united and almost monolithic threat, with the merchants and soldiers of European countries often choosing to support each other in Asia despite continued divisions and even mutual hatred in their homelands. Although intellectuals from many countries advanced proposals for Asian solidarity, due to Japan's official efforts to propagate pan-Asianism during World War II, historians have tended to concentrate on discourse from the Japanese empire alone.

This book specifically examines Chinese discussions of East Asian solidarity to combat Western imperialism between 1896 and 1945. Previous scholarship on Asianism, loosely defined as a call for the countries of East Asia to unite in the face of Western imperialism, has demonstrated that there was indeed such a thing as Chinese Asianism. This concept developed throughout a crucial period in the construction of the Chinese nation and its particular processes of modernity, yet none have investigated the various forms of this discourse and the influence it has had on Chinese nationalist and internationalist thought. This book examines the development of Asianist thought at crucial points in its history, showing how Asia and Asianism were employed as discursive tools in various ways to serve the needs of those promoting the concepts. Although often ignored or dismissed by historians in the second half of the twentieth century, Asianism was prominent in a vast array of Chinese intellectual writings. It was and remains an influential discourse. Long

imbricated with Chinese nationalism, it played an important role in discourse and action, then and now. Through the history related below, we see how Chinese nationalism developed hand in hand with larger racial and civilizational identities, frequently situating the Middle Kingdom at the center of a future unified Asia.

Asianism was a “call” for Asian unity, but its advocates used this packaging for their own agendas. Over the years, efforts toward international regionalism worked to alter and support the construction of Chinese nationalism. Beginning with texts following the first Sino-Japanese War of 1894 and concluding with Wang Jingwei’s failed Guomindang (GMD) government in World War II, this book engages with a period when the Chinese empire had crumbled and intellectuals were struggling to adapt to imperialism, new and hegemonic forms of political economy, and radically different epistemes. Asianism frequently returned to intellectual debates during this time. Intellectuals as diverse as Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873–1929), Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 (1869–1936), Ye Chucang 葉楚儉 (1887–1946), Li Dazhao 李大釗 (1889–1927), Wang Jingwei 汪精衛 (1883–1944), and Sun Yat-sen endorsed some form of Asianism, ostensibly for various reasons but always with patriotic purpose.¹ These discussions altered the construction of Chinese identity, engaging in a dialogue that usually worked in concert with nationalism, further buttressing the construction of Chinese nationalism with elements of a metanational identity related to key concepts of race, civilization, Confucian tradition, and a strong connection to geographic region, concepts that are still prominent in discussions of China-centered regionalism.

Critics looking at East Asia in the twenty-first century correctly point to the difficulties of regional cooperation with the continued agitation of unresolved territorial claims and emotionally overpowering issues, including the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute, the Dokdo/Takeshima Islands dispute, the Spratly Islands dispute, the comfort women of World War II, textbook controversies, Yasukuni Shrine visits, and many other

1. There is debate on the use of the term *intellectuals* in the field of Chinese history, partly stemming from the fact that these individuals did not refer to themselves as intellectuals (*zhishifenzi*), a term that came into use much later, and also because the later construction of intellectuals as a class and social category began in the 1920s. I use the English term in a much more general sense, including all of those who engage in and produce writings on thought. For more on the term, see U, “The Making of Chinese Intellectuals.”

issues. Despite all of these problems, discussions of regionalization and even a future Asian Union continue to appear as many Asian intellectuals and leaders see such regionalization as a political inevitability and an economic necessity. In his talks on the One Belt One Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Xi Jinping refers to future Asian regionalism as a community of shared destiny.² Shortly before becoming Xi's foreign minister, Wang Yi even outlined a theory called New Asianism based on Sun Yat-sen and Li Dazhao's writings on Asian solidarity.³ These forms of regionalization are seen as acquiescing to the international realities of the twenty-first century. However, looking to discussions from more than one hundred years earlier, it seems that the goals of Asianism may dramatically differ from the speaker's stated intent. Political regionalization may not be an inevitability, although critics have often seen it as such because of East Asia's close economic and cultural ties.

Historians encountering the question of an East Asian region point out the long existence of a world system that included most of East Asia and had considerable influence on the entire world.⁴ They also note the repeated attempts to put various forms of an East Asian regional system into practice from the late nineteenth century until the final and abysmal failure of Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in 1945. Unlike most twenty-first-century discussions of regionalization, which tend to be international relations' assessments of economic and security benefits,⁵ most of the regionalist texts written by East Asian intellectuals before World War II used concepts of regional culture, race, tradition, and morality as the bases for integration, even when the real focus was military or economic strategy devised to save or raise the nation. Japanese intellectuals and politicians were by far the most prolific writers on the subject, with their writings turning from late nineteenth-century condemnations of the Japanese government's abandonment of Asia

2. For a detailed discussion of Xi's use of the concept, see Barmé, "Introduction," xii.

3. Wang Yi, "Sikao ershiyishiji de xin Yazhouzhuyi," 6–10. Also available in English translation by Weber, "Wang Yi," 361–69.

4. Duara, "Asia Redux"; Frank, *ReOrient*; Frank and Gills, *The World System*; Shigeru, *Gentlemanly Capitalism*.

5. For example, see the popular Katzenstein, *A World of Regions*. Also see Ravenhill, *APEC and the Construction of Pacific Rim Regionalism*; Evans, "Between Regionalism and Regionalization."

to discursive support of Japanese imperialism in the 1930s and 1940s. Although this book focuses on Chinese (rather than Japanese) discussions of Asianism, the scope of this discourse can be quite extensive, and it is necessary to consider the definition of the term and its relevant contexts.

Asianism

Considering Asianism as a “concept” follows a methodology set out by the recently popular field of conceptual history, introduced and defined as *Begriffsgeschichte* by Reinhart Koselleck. As Timothy Cheek explains, conceptual history “provides a frame to tell the life of an idea by looking for fundamental ideas, or concepts, and how they are deployed,” thereby offering a link between intellectual history and social history. Cheek defines a concept as “a word representing an idea that is both powerful enough in a certain discourse to direct thought and ambiguous enough to hold within it a range of meanings.”⁶ Therefore, this study follows the concept of Asianism through relevant contexts, concentrating on intellectuals’ overlapping assumptions and areas of discord to reveal the life of the concept.

The term *Asianism* only became common in Sinitic characters after 1912, when it was proposed in the pages of the Shanghai GMD newspaper *People’s Stand* (*Minli Bao* 民立報) by a Japanese diplomat before being seriously considered and expounded on by GMD publisher and propagandist Ye Chucang in March 1913.⁷ Those who employed the concept rarely attempted to define it. In the 1920s and 1930s, when Chinese writings on Asianism were at their peak, intellectuals employed simple and malleable definitions, concentrating on ideas of unification or exclusion, with slogans such as “Asia for the Asians,” always reaffirming a positive or negative judgment. It was not until after World War II that Takeuchi Yoshimi considered the plurality of Asianism. Considering its imperialist and anti-imperialist manifestations, he argued that Asianism’s common denominator was “the intention of solidarity of the countries of Asia.”⁸

6. Cheek, “Chinese Socialism,” 110–11.

7. The *People’s Stand* lists the Japanese politician as Ibuka Hikotarō. However, as I have been unable to find such a person, I am quite sure the writer was Ibuka Hikosaburō. This is explained in chapters 4 and 6.

8. Quoted in Weber, *Embracing “Asia,”* 32.

Although I accept the idea of Asian solidarity as a common denominator, I question Takeuchi's use of "intent." Rather than see Asianism as an ideology, or another -ism, I see it as a strategic concept and thus prefer to expand Takeuchi's definition to "the *implied* intention of solidarity of the countries of Asia." This definition includes imperialist and anti-imperialist assertions, and it does not differentiate by country. As Saga Takashi has pointed out, although the development of Asianism in China was different because of China's status as a victim rather than a perpetrator of capitalist imperialism in the early twentieth century, I find that when viewed across several decades, the diversity of discourse was just as broad as it was in Japan.⁹ Although all writers on Asianism may have voiced support for a united Asia, they used the concept for their own purposes, and, as I will show, their purposes were usually tied to nationalism.

The hegemony of nationalism in the twentieth century dictated that most Asianists—Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, Indian, Vietnamese, or from any other Asian nation—employed this concept to save or raise their nation, to make it strong and able to resist external threats. The power of twentieth-century capitalism formulated the space of the nation-state through nationalism. In comparison, religious, spiritual, cultural, or civilizational discourse was less able to determine formulations of social space. However, as these discourses combined with Asianism and nationalism, they affected the creation of a self in contrast with a perceived West. Therefore, the discursive construction of the region was also the construction of an identity. This transcending Asia, based in part on Orientalist views of East Asia, was a reversal of Orientalism: it was an effort to abrogate the West's claim to civilization. Unlike the Saidian understanding of Orientalism, in East Asian visions of the East, intellectuals show agency through the appropriation of dichotomies of difference for their own discursive purposes. The connection to Edward Said's Orientalism is palpable. However, this is not a study of Orientalism. While Orientalist texts contribute to the construction of a binary that underscores a power differential positing the West over the East, Asianism attempts to discursively abrogate the power differential and plan for the material annulment of Western superiority. Although Asianism acquiesces to some of the imposed binaries of Orientalism,

9. Saga, *Ajiashugi to Kindai Nitchu*, 107.

the discourse denies their power and reverts them, reconceptualizing the binaries to serve the East rather than oppose it.

If the terms “discourse” and “imagined” seem to appear frequently in the foregoing paragraphs, this is because this book fully accepts the argument that a region is foremost a discursive construction. Furthermore, the construction of a region, including its boundaries and its characteristics, is largely arbitrary, as we see by the fluid and often opportunistic understanding of the “East” or “Asia” in the texts studied in this book. “Asia,” just like Asianism, is a concept. And this concept signifies much more than the geographic space indicated by a continent. How Chinese intellectuals viewed this concept and the spatial relations that were used to define it, and by which they often defined themselves and their “other,” the West, is a focus of this book. Moving beyond Said’s criticism of Western constructions of the East, Kären E. Wigen and Martin W. Lewis argue that “the division between East and West is entirely arbitrary,” and that all metageographic concepts are not based in science but are discursive constructs.¹⁰ Lewis and Wigen consider that we must move beyond these metageographic signifiers that hinder our understanding of the world due to their arbitrary generalization.

This leads to a question that inevitably arises when reading Lewis and Wigen’s work. If Asia is a constructed concept, for what and whose purpose is it constructed? To understand this, I turn to another book that grapples with the idea of a constructed region. In struggling to define the “Pacific Rim” for the introduction of a book that includes a broad array of articles, Arif Dirlik introduces *What Is in a Rim?* with the understanding that the Pacific Rim is an “invented concept,” and its material basis is “defined best not by physical geography, but by relationships (economic, social, political, military, and cultural) that are concretely historical.”¹¹ “Relationships” define the region. Joshua Fogel conceptualizes the importance of such historical relationships by describing the Sinosphere as an ever-changing atom with China as its center. Like an atom, the core and its “orbiting entities” are interdependent.¹² Yet it is

10. Wigen and Lewis define metageography as “the set of spatial structures through which people order their knowledge of the world.” Wigen and Lewis, *The Myth of Continents*, xi, 3.

11. Dirlik, “Introduction,” 4.

12. Fogel, *Articulating the Sinosphere*, 4.

not just the relationships in the region but also those between the region and other regions or peoples that define East Asia. Like national identities, regional identities are products of these relationships, their conflicts, and their cooperation. Even though “Asia” may be a European term,¹³ indicating that the vocabulary and worldview of Asianism are products of imperialism, the region was constructed by the peoples of Asia and their relationships. China’s historical position at the center of these relationships, and the country’s twenty-first-century return to that center, is crucial to both Chinese and non-Chinese understandings of the concept, but the modern concept of Asia was also born out of nineteenth- and twentieth-century imperialism. Therefore, although I agree with Wigen and Lewis’s project, at least in the respect of correcting geographic ignorance, I find that the constructed binaries of East and West were useful for a strategy of resistance to serve Asian nations in the twentieth century, in which an organized and imperialist West threatened East Asia. In this sense Asianism mimicked Orientalist binaries and appropriated them for an antihegemonic discourse.

But Asianism was not only an antihegemonic discourse. Just like nationalism, international regionalism has the propensity to oppose external oppression, but is also frequently used as a tool of oppression. No discussion of Asianism is complete without consideration of Japanese imperialism. In the 1930s and 1940s, Asianism legitimated and apologized for Japanese military expansionism. Refraining from seeing Japan as a monolithic force, and acknowledging that most Japanese Asianists, even many in the wartime years, were not imperialists, we must also remain sensitive to the turmoil that East Asia entered in the 1930s while remaining open to the perspectives that intellectuals would have had in their time. Although this book ostensibly concerns Chinese discussions of Asianism, it inevitably focuses on Sino-Japanese relations in the past and today. This history of modern Asianism repeatedly sees a Japanese engagement and a Chinese response. In fact, other than their use of a few adapted classical phrases, Chinese intellectuals adopted concept names

13. The term “Asia” is generally believed to be Greek in origin. At the very least, it was through Greek that the term entered other European languages and became a common word around the world. However, research has shown that the term may be based on the Babylonian term *asu*, meaning “to rise,” and therefore a term stemming from an Asian language and indicating the rising of the sun. Hay, *Asian Ideas of East and West*, 13.

or key words for Asianist beliefs from Japanese.¹⁴ Due to this history, it should come as no surprise that the vast majority of academic works concerning Asianism are to be found in Japanese studies, although this is a recent trend.

Not long after the end of World War II, the terms *Asianism* and *pan-Asianism*,¹⁵ which had been tainted by their close relation with Japanese imperialism, were politically retired. To even suggest that there were positive elements of this concept, or of Asian regionalism in general, was to risk being labelled an apologist for Japanese war efforts.¹⁶ Although a number of left-leaning critics, notably Takeuchi Yoshimi, used Asianism to critique imperialism, the Japanese government, and postwar capitalism, the academy generally followed the political path of the government, and very few studies were conducted on the subject until recent decades.¹⁷ Scholars first began to cautiously write about this subject in Korean and Japanese. English-language studies that touched on Asianism, such as numerous works by Joshua Fogel and Akira Iriye, occasionally appeared, but as Fogel explains in his preface to Lu Yan's monograph, *Re-Understanding Japan*, it was not until very recently that there existed a variety of English-language books on Sino-Japanese relations.¹⁸

14. These include “raise Asia” (Ch/Ja: *xingyal/kōa* 興亞), Great Eastern Federation (*dadonghebang/daitō gappō* 大東合邦), Japan–China cooperation (*rizhong tixie/nicchū teikei* 日中提攜), Asian union (*Yazhou liandai/yaxiya renpai* 亞洲連帶), Japan–China alliance (*rizhong tongmeng/nicchū dōmei* 日中同盟), East Asian League (*Dongya lian-meng/tōa renmei* 東亞聯盟), Asianism (*Yazhouzhuyi/ajiaishugi* 亞洲主義), Great Asianism (*da Yazhouzhuyi/daajiaishugi* 大亞洲主義), pan-Asianism (*fan Yazhouzhuyi/hanajiaishugi* 泛亞洲主義), the East Asian Community (*Dongyagongtongti/tōakyōdōtai* 東亞共同體), and the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (*Da Dongya gongrong-quan/daitōakyōeiken* 大東亞共榮圈).

15. Pan-Asianism is the long-standardized term for discussing the 1930s and 1940s Asianism propagated by the imperial Japanese government. In discussing this period, I often use the term for continuity with past research. The term *pan-Asianism* was translated into Chinese as *fan Yaxiyazhuyi* and *da Yaxiyazhuyi* 汎/大亞細亞主義 at least as early as 1912.

16. Eri Hotta remarks that this is still the case in Japan; Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 232.

17. Takeuchi made many contributions to the study of Asianism, including his writings and his collection of sources; Takeuchi, *Ajia shugi*. For a brief description of Takeuchi, his Asianism, and his research in context, see Saaler and Szpilman, “Introduction,” 29–30; Uhl, “Takeuchi Yoshimi.”

18. Fogel, Preface, xi.

Because of the memory of Japanese imperialism, there have also been problems in researching Asianism in China. Recently this has been a renewed area of research. Recent work by scholars such as Wang Hui and Sun Ge has reconsidered the conceptual implications of “Asia” in relation to regionalism, reviving previous strategies of anti-imperialist discourse that posit “Asia” in opposition to the capitalist and imperialist West.¹⁹ Prasenjit Duara makes it clear that the pan-Asian discourse of Eastern civilization “flourished in China as an intellectual, cultural and social movement” from 1911 until 1945, yet it has been ignored or dismissed in historiography due to nationalist sensitivities.²⁰ This book agrees with Duara but sees the discourse as evolving fifteen years earlier. The recent acceleration in the studies of Sino-Japanese relations and Asianism are related to new perceptions of the nationalist sensitivities Duara mentioned, as academics have striven to deconstruct the nation over the past two or three decades. Also, as Rana Mitter and Akira Iriye suggest, it is only natural that we look again to the long-silenced Asianism, now that there is renewed talk of “Asia” and “Asian values” in China and Japan, and now that China, Japan, and India have found rapprochement in the twenty-first century.²¹ This was certainly an important reason for Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann to publish their edited collection *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*, which explores the ambiguity of the ideology as “a precursor of contemporary Asian regionalism.”²² However, Japanese imperialism has remained the dominant issue for all these discussions of Asianism.

Writing on Japanese Asianism

Most scholarly works on Asianism refer to the debate on Japan either “leaving or leading Asia” as the roots of Japanese Asianism.²³ Meiji intellectuals involved in this debate asked whether Japan could become a “Western” nation, completely adopting a role in the system of nation-

19. Sun Ge, “How Does Asia Mean?”; Wang Hui, *The Politics of Imagining Asia*.

20. Duara, “The Discourse of Civilization,” 112.

21. Mitter and Iriye, Preface, ix.

22. Saaler, “Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History,” 1.

23. Saaler, “Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History,” 3–4; Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 54–57; Hashikawa, “Japanese Perspectives on Asia,” 328–30; Bharucha, *Another Asia*, xvii–xviii; Duara, “The Discourse of Civilization,” 101; Sun Ge, “How Does Asia Mean?,” 11–13.

states and becoming an imperial power in its own right and attacking other Asian nations, or, as the most developed nation in the East, become the leader of a united East to counter Western imperialism. Although these choices reflected very different opinions on how to engage in power dynamics in Asia, both were based on a reaction to the West. The continuing debate resulted in two conflicting discourses that characterized Japanese policy toward China until the end of World War II. This conflict is important to any discussion of Asianism and provided a central focus for many studies until the twenty-first century.²⁴

Recent studies of Japanese (pan-)Asianism have gone much further into defining and categorizing the concept. Some scholars have constructed a periodization, considering the differences in Asianist thought over time. This figures heavily in Saaler and Koschmann's volume *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*. In Saaler's introductory chapter, he defines three periods that experienced different dominant forms of Asianism. The Meiji period had only a vague ideology of Asianism, despite regular discussion.²⁵ The development of crucial Asian institutions in the late Meiji, such as the Tōa Dōbun kai, led into a more organized period for Asianist ideology during the Taishō reign. Largely based on the belief of "same script" (*tongwen/dōbun* 同文) and "same race" (*tongzhong/dōshū* 同種), the Asianism of this period strove for equality across East Asia and unity in facing Western imperialism.²⁶ Finally, Saaler sees actors employing an imperial form of Asianism to legitimate Japanese colonial rule in the 1930s and 1940s.²⁷ This categorization into three periods has roots in the groundbreaking research of Hazama Naoki through various studies in 2001 and 2002.²⁸ However, although this periodization is somewhat helpful in imagining a narrative history of Asianism, it may be misleading because all of these forms of Asianism were thriving in the late Meiji period. More recently, Torsten Weber has provided a framework that takes differences of power and authority into account, dividing the dissemination of Asianist discourse into bottom-up and top-down approaches in the 1920s and 1930s, respectively, showing that Asianism was prevalent at different

24. Such as Hashikawa, "Japanese Perspectives on Asia."

25. Saaler, "Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History," 9.

26. Saaler, "Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History," 10–11.

27. Saaler, "Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History," 12.

28. According to Kuroki, "The Asianism of the Koa-kai," 34–35.

levels of society.²⁹ Studying Chinese Asianism, I find that a categorization by specifics in the use of the concept provides helpful tools for analysis because this approach incorporates related discourses and historical trends.

Eri Hotta provides this form of analysis in *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War*. In her investigation of the "fifteen-year war" from 1931 until 1945, Hotta uses three categories to consider pan-Asianism:

1. Tea-ist pan-Asianism emphasized Asian commonalities in philosophical dimensions. Often in binary opposition to the West, this was a concentration on aspects of Asian civilization, such as communalism as opposed to Western liberalism.
2. Sinic pan-Asianism sought to create an alliance among Asian nations, especially those of East Asia, based on "same script" and "same-race" arguments.
3. *Meishuron* 盟主論 pan-Asianism, which dominated in the 1930s and 1940s, posited Japan as an "Asian alliance leader" against Western imperialism.³⁰

It should be clear that Hotta's categorization is very similar to the periodization in Saaler's work that I have described already. Hotta manages to avoid the confines of periodization, showing that all three of these forms of pan-Asianism were evident throughout the war despite the clear dominance of *Meishuron* pan-Asianism. These features of pan-Asianism were all present in the 1910s when Chinese intellectuals engaged with them, although it is what Hotta refers to as "Tea-ist" and "Sinic" pan-Asianism that Chinese intellectuals showed interest in. Unsurprisingly, non-Japanese intellectuals rejected or abhorred the *Meishuron* pan-Asianism that legitimated Japanese dominance and inevitably supported the turn to militarism.

This categorization scheme is still limited, yet Hotta's categories of pan-Asianism and her in-depth analysis of ideology in wartime Japan, although not clearly defined enough to incorporate all aspects of pan-Asianism, provide an excellent beginning and demonstrate that Japanese imperialism was not merely about material pragmatism, but was grounded in ideology. As will be shown, this book employs a more complicated analytic framework, following a chronological path through the conceptual centers of Asianism in Chinese discourse.

29. Weber, *Embracing "Asia."*

30. Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War*, 7–8.

Writing on Chinese Asianism

Researchers in Japanese studies have steadily been making progress in the study of Chinese Asianism, including excellent work by Sven Saaler, Saga Takashi, and Torsten Weber in recent years. However, these works remain limited in sources and scope due to their favoring of Japanese intellectuals and a recurring theme of Chinese discourse composed in opposition to Japanese writings, showing an underestimation of Chinese agency.³¹ Duara has arguably provided the most English-language writing on Chinese Asianism, beginning with his study of non-national redemptive societies. Duara's concentration on civilization has influenced my understanding, particularly my discussion of World War I in chapter 4. Duara sees Asianism as a form of identity in the twentieth century that was different from nationalism and race because of its base in civilization.³² He narrates a history of the idea of civilization, emphasizing that Civilization—with a capital C, denoting its singularity as a proper noun—was a linear history, the concept of which entered Japan via Fukuzawa Yukichi's 福沢諭吉 (1835–1901) writings and was brought to China by Liang Qichao. This discourse, a crucial part of the West's ideology of imperialism, authorized nations based on their level of Civilization.³³ The Darwinist model of progress that this referred to remained intact after World War I, but the idea of one Civilization dramatically gave way to the idea of many cultures/civilizations, based on Herder's concept of *kultur*. Nationalism finally triumphed over imperialism as the hegemonic global ideology in the spirit of Woodrow Wilson's self-determination and the Soviet revolution.³⁴ Duara's work is particularly important for his investigation of the conflation of nation and Asianism in the twentieth century. He finds that Asianism is a discourse based on civilization, which has its roots in the nation-validated discourse of Civilization, which has led to the conflation between Asianism and nation.³⁵ Duara's more recent work on the subject returns to these ideas and draws out the complicated relationship between Asianism and nationalism by

31. Saaler and Szpilman, *Pan-Asianism*; Weber, *Discovering "Asia"*; Saga, *Ajiashugi to Kindai Nitchu*.

32. Duara, "The Discourse of Civilization," 99–100.

33. Duara, "The Discourse of Civilization," 100.

34. Duara, "The Discourse of Civilization," 101, 103, 105.

35. Duara, "The Discourse of Civilization," 125–26.

considering Rabindranath Tagore, Okakura Tenshin, and Zhang Taiyan as Asianist intellectuals who considered the region from the perspective of religion or spirituality in the early twentieth century.³⁶

Rebecca E. Karl's *Staging the World* has also anticipated the context for this study by showing how political events in colonized countries and regions around the world had tremendous influence on the development of key features of Chinese nationalism.³⁷ She has shown how Chinese intellectuals from the late Qing saw themselves not just in relation to Japan and the West but also situated in global spaces of uneven development, with a particular emphasis on Asia. This is helpful in understanding the journals and Asianist organizations from the 1920s and 1930s, to which I turn in chapter 7. Karl's emphasis of the importance of self-situation in global space hints at how intellectuals thought of themselves as part of an Asia in opposition to the West and wrote a Chinese nationalism that related to this new spatial understanding. This connection to the rise of Chinese nationalism indicates the importance of the discourse on a China-centered Asia. Although no other studies have explicitly traced this relationship with nationalism, a few have demonstrated its importance and provided some of the building blocks on which this book is constructed.

This book provides the first analysis to bring together the many different Chinese discussions on Asianism and analyze them as a connected but not united discourse in tangent with Chinese nationalism and Sino-Japanese relations. I concentrate on Chinese writings, but I frequently turn to Japanese and English texts, especially those that influenced Chinese intellectuals. With the exception of some archival documents, letters, and government information, most sources referenced in this volume are published articles and books. However, unlike most historians, I am also regularly drawn to translated texts.

What was translated, by whom, for whom, and when and where these translations were published tell many stories about intellectuals, their intentions, and their ideas. In translation studies, this methodology is what Anthony Pym categorizes as “translation archaeology.” It is an important part of the “history” in translation history and connects translation studies to intellectual history, which provides the role of

36. Duara, “Asia Redux.”

37. Karl, *Staging the World*.

“explanation” in Pym’s categorization.³⁸ Intellectuals’ efforts to find or create equivalence between languages often allowed for concepts to flow between and change between one culture and another, pointing to the power differentials that accompanied the rising hegemony of Eurocentric knowledge. These translated texts—usually from Japanese, English, and Russian—often made up the majority of text space in Chinese newspapers and journals at the fin de siècle, and the translators were some of the most prominent intellectuals of the time, as will be seen in the following chapters. Therefore, translation history is crucial for an understanding of East Asian intellectual history, and this study of the translation of Asianist texts between Japanese and Chinese opens new doors for understanding the changing relationship between Chinese intellectuals and their regional neighbors.

China, Japan, and East Asia

Hotta has argued for the importance of the study of Asianism as crucial to our understanding of the war between China and Japan. According to Hotta, pan-Asianism is what “started, sustained and even prolonged Japan’s war from 1931 to 1945.”³⁹ In China, the influence of Asianism as a discourse of a China-centered Asian civilization in contrast to the West’s imperialism has also been shown. Lu Yan has examined the importance of this discourse to Dai Jitao, how it became crucial to the GMD after Sun Yat-sen’s death, and the important role it played in defining his fierce anticommunism.⁴⁰ Asianism also justified the work of collaborators during the war and urged the GMD to postpone their defense of China. Largely for these reasons, the study of this regionalization has only recently been renewed in the Chinese language.

Beginning in 2000 with Sheng Banghe’s article “Japanese Asianism at the Turn of the 20th Century,” Chinese academics have been taking a new approach to Japan studies.⁴¹ This new approach steps back from the excessively critical discourse before it and sees early Asianism in a more positive light, including the arguments that stressed equality among nations standing together to oppose Western aggression. Wang

38. Pym, *Method in Translation History*, 5.

39. Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 16.

40. Yan, *Re-understanding Japan*, 151.

41. Sheng, “19 shiji yu 20 shiji zhijiao de Riben Yazhouzhuyi.”

Ping's *Modern Japan's Asianism* took this a step further in 2006.⁴² This full book-length study is of great significance, not only because it marks a turning point in the study of Japan by Chinese scholars, almost ignoring previous Chinese studies on the subject, but also because of Wang's position. She is a scholar at the Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing and serves on various government think-tanks on Japan policy. She remains a regular contributor to official Chinese news, such as the *People's Daily*, on current issues in Japan. Wang is not only a historian, she is influential in Chinese political circles, reminding us that the history of Asianism remains an important topic in the current relations between China and Japan. Despite this constant pressure from today's political environment, works by Sheng Banghe and Wang Ping are carefully researched and written with open minds. They have had an influence on the writing of this book as they show the way to return to early twentieth-century Sino-Japanese relations with a degree of caution but a perspective that does not simply view Japan and its people as monolithic.

Between China and Japan, Korea and Taiwan struggled throughout this period. Because of their geographic and political positions, both were pivotal in Chinese and Japanese discussions of Asianism. Koreans and Taiwanese appear throughout this book as both points of debate and as actors influencing discourse in the empires that surrounded them. Koreans were particularly vocal, with activists such as Kim Ok-gyun 金玉均 and An Jung-geun 安重根 writing impassioned calls for Asian unity to save Korea in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These efforts have been well reflected in Korean studies scholarship, particularly in studies of collaboration. Vladimir Tikhonov has carefully detailed Koreans' involvement in early Asianist societies. This research was especially useful in my first chapter.⁴³ Likewise, Andre Schmid's study of Korean newspapers around the turn of the century has shown the pervasiveness of Asianist discourse across Asia.⁴⁴ Although previous generations of researchers ignored or dismissed these texts in the past, scholars such as Lee Heonjoo have argued against outdated ideas that Korean intellectuals were tricked by malicious Japanese, instead showing that desires for Asian solidarity were based in similarities in

42. Wang Ping, *Jindai Riben de Yaxiyazhui*.

43. Tikhonov, "Korea's First Encounter with Pan-Asianism."

44. Schmid, *Korea between Empires*.

worldview stemming from the traditional Sinocentric order.⁴⁵ Continuing along these lines with great care for the problems of anachronistic moral assumptions, Yumi Moon has investigated Korea's most notorious fin-de-siècle pro-Japanese association, the Ilchinhoe, arguing against nationalist histories that simply accuse the association of collaboration with the Japanese empire and showing that the Ilchinhoe aimed to empower the people within the contexts of empire.⁴⁶ For more recent events, Shin Gi-wook has examined Korean intellectuals' discussions of the concept of "Asia" and Asian solidarity as a means to lift both Korea and East Asia out of domination by the West.⁴⁷

In many ways, due to the particular importance of this discourse to Korea's changing status and identity, Korean studies has led the study of the history of Asianism, most recently with Pae Gyöngghan's study of Korean attitudes to Asianism from China and Japan.⁴⁸ Chinese historical experiences and perspectives were notably different from those in Korea, but similarities in discourse and language are dominant throughout, and the study of one inevitably sheds light on our understanding of the other. The Korean studies trajectory toward a less anachronistic and more empathetic intellectual history (as seen in the work of Lee, Moon, and others) influences my own investigation, and, although I focus on Chinese perspectives and Asianism's imbrication with nationalism, I hope this volume will be of use to those in Korean and Japanese studies.

Chapter Breakdown

This book relates a narrative of the construction of modern Chinese Asianism in dialogue with Japanese Asianism, proceeding from a distressed encounter to an ambiguous rejection, and finally to a theoretical reconstruction. Beginning with Qing dynasty intellectuals' first encounters with Japanese discourses of Asianism, in chapter 1 I show that there was very real interest in Sino-Japanese alliance around the time of the 1898 reforms. These discussions were sometimes haphazard, but they provided the building of intellectual networks and terminology seeding the development of the concept of Asianism in China and Japan in the twentieth century.

45. Lee Heonjoo, "1880 Nyōndae Chōnban."

46. Moon, *Populist Collaborators*.

47. Shin, "Asianism and Korea's Politics of Identity."

48. Pae, *Chungguk kwa Ashia*.

Chapter 2 continues to consider the encounter with Asianism but takes a different approach by analyzing an institution that was born of Sino-Japanese cooperation, the Datong Schools of Japan, a fin-de-siècle network of schools created by some of the most prominent figures in China's public sphere: Liang Qichao, Kang Youwei, and Sun Yat-sen. By investigating the intellectuals involved in the establishment of the schools, as well as the related texts, I show how the discourse of Asianism played an important role in this educational institution, as these influential intellectuals and educators constructed and propagated an identity that was connected to both China and Asia but focused on an evolving reformist understanding of Confucianism as the uniting force in Asia.

In the second part of the book, I examine the attempts to reorganize intellectuals' worldviews in terms of race and civilization. Chapter 3 examines the discourse of racial solidarity in Chinese writing in the first decade of the twentieth century, especially considering texts by Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 (1869–1936), Zou Rong 鄒容 (1885–1905), Liu Shipei 劉師培 (1884–1919), and Chen Tianhua 陳天華 (1875–1905). Through an analysis of revolutionary writings, I argue that a fluid conceptualization of race, formed in opposition to the Asia-wide oppression by the white race, permeated growing Chinese nationalism at this time.

In a similar vein, chapter 4 looks to the new paradigm of multiple civilizations as a means to categorize East and West. Focusing on texts from the *Eastern Miscellany*, I show how World War I led to redefining the East in opposition to the West. This period also saw the translation of numerous Asianist texts from Japan, but because both Chinese and Japanese writers defined Eastern civilization as anti-imperialist, forms of Japanese Asianism that posed the nation as Asia's leader were inevitably rejected, leading to the need for reconceptualizing Asianism with China as the center of Eastern civilization.

The third part of this book discusses the dominant forms of Chinese Asianism that intellectuals theorized between 1917 and 1924. Although various people wrote about Asianism, the theories proposed by Li Dazhao and Sun Yat-sen have attracted the most attention and had the greatest influence. Chapter 5 discusses Li's theory of New Asianism as a reaction to Japanese hegemony. I find this quasi-Marxist regional approach to a national struggle to be an important part of the definition of Chinese

Asianism, showcasing the bond of nationalism and Asianism in a cosmopolitan and socialist context.

Chapter 6 continues to relate the narrative of the construction of Chinese Asianism, showing how Sun Yat-sen complicated the simple anti-imperialist regionalism of Li Dazhao by affirming Confucian values—and China by extension—at the center of Asianism. Sun accentuated the importance of the Chinese nation to the region and showcased Asianism's difficult balancing of nation and empire with his very political form of regionalization. Although Sun offered a strategy for liberation from empire, his writing and speeches on Asianism inevitably contributed to possibilities for oppression by empire as Japanese writers appropriated them for use in wartime propaganda.

As seen in the fourth and final part of this book, Sun's death was followed by a boom in writing on Asianism, largely revolving around Sun's "Nationalism" speeches and "Great Asianism" speech, all made in 1924. Chapter 7 examines some of the many organizations for a united Asia that intellectuals from China, India, Korea, the Philippines, and Japan established in urban areas across China in the late 1920s. It shows that at this juncture, the discourse and practice of Asianism in China became increasingly international and focused on the liberation of all Asia.

Chapter 8 investigates official GMD discourse on Sun's Asianism, East Asian solidarity, and Chinese leadership from 1925 to 1937. In this period, we see the breakdown of a simple dichotomy between imperialism and anti-imperialism. Particularly after 1931, Chinese intellectuals vehemently disagreed on Japan's position in any Asian league or union, with most seeing Japan as an unwelcome imperialist power. This chapter, more than any other, discusses the strong calls for China to lead first the nationalities in China and then all of Asia. Because Japan employed much of the same discourse of Asian solidarity, as well as the term *Asianism*, most Chinese intellectuals retreated from the concept after the outbreak of war in 1937. However, chapter 9 investigates those who continued to use Asianism as a pro-Japanese concept during the war, showing Wang Jingwei's 1940–1945 regime's use of Asianist propaganda and continuities with prewar discourse, ending the book with the pro-Japanese Asianism that resulted in the concept being considered taboo for much of the twentieth century.

These chapters can be interpreted as different concentrations in Chinese discourse on international regionalization. In other words, although chronologically arranged, they can be divided by the “type” of Asianism that was predominant or formed in each period: Confucian Asianism, racial Asianism, civilizational Asianism, socialist Asianism, pan-Asian liberation Asianism, China-centric Asianism, or Japan-centric Asianism. This analytic framework influenced the process of research and the writing of this monograph, with each chapter focusing on a specific category. However, the categories should not be considered as temporally defined, nor should they be seen as limiting or exclusive, but simply as a framework to assist us in understanding the myriad ways Asianism intersected with dominant paradigms and concepts during this period. Perhaps the most important of intersections for Asianism was with nationalism.

The convoluted passage narrativized in this volume consistently returns to the precarious balance between nation and empire in the twentieth century, a problematic of modern Chinese history that continues to pose political problems for China today. The nation that Chinese people constructed during this time was invariably related to discourses of identity, the struggle to protect the self from a dangerous other. This process is the focus of this book. By employing the history of the concept of Chinese Asianism as a lens through which we can reexamine the intellectual struggle with political modernity and the construction of nationalism, we see how metanational structures were fused into Chinese identities. Furthermore, we can peer into the shifting relationship that Asianism has with nation and empire. This arbitrariness has resulted in a complicated historical memory, accounting for the variety of positions on Asianism today and shedding light on the surprising continuities of regionalist vocabulary that have stretched from the interwar period well into the twenty-first century.

CHAPTER ONE

Lips and Teeth

Uniting with Japan: Enthusiasm and Disdain

Chinese efforts to reform in the late nineteenth century, especially the so-called Hundred Days' Reform of 1898, have been revisited as a crucial node in China's modernization.¹ This period was marked by a new willingness for significant political and ideological change on the part of Chinese intellectuals and the Qing government while the Chinese imperial system was nearing its end. The reforms enacted in 1898 had a great influence on education, industrialization, the military, and the political system. The majority of the reform edicts were rescinded following the September 21, 1898, coup d'état, but a number of the changes were reenacted a few years later. The reforms were not directly modeled on Western countries but were attempts by Kang Youwei and the Guangxu emperor to emulate the successes of the modernization reforms in Meiji Japan while maintaining the emperor as head of state. Just a few years after the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), many Chinese intellectuals were interested in following Japan's lead to free themselves from an increasingly powerful and imperialist West. However, cooperating with China's eastern neighbor during the rise of a new world system was not an avenue that Chinese intellectuals eagerly walked down. Rather, it was a choice they felt compelled to make given the unfortunate circumstances.

In *China, 1898–1912: The Xinheng Revolution and Japan*, Douglas Reynolds argues that "From 1898 to 1907, however, the relationship between China and Japan was so productive and relatively harmonious

1. Rebecca Karl and Peter Zarrow detail this trend in recent Chinese scholarship in which "the 1898 reform period is now often raised as the originary moment of (an aborted effort at) nonsocialist modernization, to which China now has (finally) returned." Karl and Zarrow, *Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period*, 4, discussion of trend: 2–6.

that it could rightly be called a ‘Golden Decade.’”² Although China–Japan relations in these years were certainly productive, and could even be called harmonious, the phrase “Golden Decade” conceals the fact that this relationship was plagued by the countries’ historical relations and power differentials already steadily marching toward a colonial relationship. Ge Zhaoguang has argued, “This ignores the true feelings and emotions of the Chinese people of that time. It misrepresents the history of that time, covering up the disdain that existed in the background with the enthusiasm on the surface.”³ Chinese intellectuals were convinced of the material benefits of turning to Japan through the growing discursive power of Japanese institutions and publications. At this early point in this new form of international relationship, as Chinese intellectuals became conscious of impending disaster, accommodative strategies were deployed to reconcile their world order with the new imperial order of global capitalism. This was a gradual process, as new concepts slowly found legitimacy while translators struggled to find equivalence in the Chinese language and history, establishing the discursive elements of a translated modernity. There was no true equivalence for these terms, concepts, and culture, resulting in confusing attempts at reform. Efforts toward accommodation included the real work toward a new political system and the ideological and intellectual underpinnings behind it.⁴ Japan offered an avenue for reformers to take toward these ends.

Reinhart Koselleck borrowed from Ferdinand de Saussure when he argued that concepts must be understood and analyzed within related “handed-down linguistic inventory,” applying this structuralist analysis to conceptual history.⁵ In this chapter, I reconsider a pivotal moment in Chinese intellectual history to show how Asianist ideas were accommo-

2. Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912*, 5. More recently, Douglas Reynolds and Carol Reynolds’s book *East Meets East* showed that previous understandings of late Qing Chinese literati as viewing Japan from a Sinocentric worldview were flawed and limiting. Reynolds and Reynolds saw a shift away from Sinocentric paradigms appearing as early as 1879 but exploding in a wave of empirical objectivity in 1887. Reynolds and Reynolds, *East Meets East*, 23, 233–35.

3. Ge, “Xiangxiangde he shijide,” 28.

4. I am referring to what Max Ko-wu Huang and Thomas A. Metger refer to as the “accommodative” approach, in which late Qing reformers attempted to retain aspects of tradition in their attempts at modernization. For example, see Max Ko-wu Huang, *The Meaning of Freedom*.

5. Koselleck, *Sediments of Time*, 171.

dated through a linguistic inventory of traditional concepts as intellectuals struggled to find a way to save China, not just in relation to the very material existence of a Sinocentric tribute system but through the specific analyses of history in relation to classical terms and ideas. At this crucial junction, many Chinese elites argued for the need not only to emulate Meiji Japan but to ally with the country, discussing various forms of alliance or even federation that would set the stage for many later discussions of Asian unity. This history was not merely a Chinese response to Japanese action. The discourse on China–Japan unity, and ultimately Asianism, was a dialogue born out of nationalist fears in both countries. Chinese intellectuals such as Liang Qichao, Kang Youwei, and Sun Yat-sen played important roles in constructing Japanese Asianism, just as Japanese discourse prompted and influenced Chinese writings on Asianism. This chapter relates the narrative of this dialogue, showing how the entry of new institutions, publications, and translations led to the growing discourse of a pro-Japan reformist Asianism, as Chinese elites contemplated not just emulating but also uniting with Japan. Although these discussions in the 1890s did not yet consider countries beyond East Asia, I argue that this period was crucial for the later development of Chinese Asianism because of its establishment of key concepts and vocabularies, as well as the pivotal question of China–Japan alliance, an issue that was central to all later discussions of Asianism. In these early years, a shared written language and a shared literary and historical culture facilitated this discourse, while the growing threat of Western imperialism encouraged Chinese elites to cooperate with Japan just a few years after the Sino-Japanese War.

The Reformers’ Strategic Turn toward Japan

The Sino-Japanese War of 1894, including the Treaty of Shimonoseki that followed it in 1895, was one of the most humiliating sequences of events for Chinese elites in the history of modern China. The anger and frustration of numerous intellectuals can be seen in texts from the period. In more recent times, the events have been returned to in popular media as anger toward this history has begun to eclipse the standardized bearer of foreign humiliation, the Opium Wars.⁶ Even immediately after the

6. For an extremely popular dramatization of these events, see the TV drama *The Enchanting Years*. The extended time given to the emperor’s ratification of the Treaty

war, many Chinese scholars favored a path that would bring them closer to Japan. For the reformers, emulating the Meiji reforms was crucial for China's survival in the modern world of nation-states.

After his humiliation in Shimonoseki, which led to hatred by generations of Chinese, Li Hongzhang, the great statesman who signed the treaty, was opposed to further reconciliation with Japan. Li traveled to Russia in 1896 and signed the Sino-Russian Secret Treaty 中俄密約. This secret agreement, which was soon widely known, promised that Russia would support China in future conflicts with Japan.⁷ However, in the next year Russia continued to encroach on Chinese territory. Kang Youwei had also been furious over the devastating Treaty of Shimonoseki, but he took a very different approach from Li. In his famous *Gongche shangshu* 公車上書, he called for drastic change to the Chinese legal system based on the Japanese Meiji reforms. Only once the laws have changed, Kang explained, can China become powerful enough to take back the Ryukyu Islands and Taiwan.⁸ But once Russia began infringing on Chinese territory, Kang suggested joining the British–Japanese alliance. Only two years after the war with Japan, he was arguing for union based on the familiar Asianist saying of “lips and teeth” (*chunchi* 齒齒) to describe the close relationship between the two countries.⁹ He argued: “We and the Japanese are like lips and teeth. Russia and Germany have

of Shimonoseki, and the dramatic camera angles and sound, show the importance the director Zhang Li decided to bestow on this incident. Zhang Li, *Zou shang gonghe*.

7. The agreement, signed on June 3, 1896, also allowed the Trans-Siberian Railway to be extended across Manchuria to Vladivostok. See Cheng and Lestz with Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 173.

8. Wang Xiaoqiu, *Jindai Zhongri qishilu*, 88.

9. “If the lips perish, the teeth will freeze” (*chunwangchihban* 唇亡齒寒) is a Chinese idiom from the Confucian classic *Chunqiu Zuo Zhuan*. Often alongside its preceding idiom, “the jaw and jowls are interdependent” (*fuchexiangyi* 輔車相依), these words indicate the interdependent relationship between the two states of Guo 虢 and Yu 虞 when threatened by outside forces (see Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 145–46). It became a popular phrase in the late nineteenth century and was frequently used to describe the relationship between China and Japan as scholars attempted to return to Confucian political theory on international relations to solve these problems. Interestingly, the lips and teeth metaphor has continued to be used by Chinese writers to refer to its East Asian neighbors in times of solidarity. Throughout the Cold War this metaphor was used to refer to China's relationship with its ally North Korea. See Chen Jian, “Limits of the ‘Lips and Teeth’ Alliance.”

set their ambitions upon the Orient to the detriment of all. . . . Invitations to unite are based upon true feelings.”¹⁰

The “lips and teeth” idiom indicated a form of interdependence with Japan that was not expressed by Chinese literati before the Sino-Japanese War. However, it had been used by Japanese thinkers as early as the Opium Wars.¹¹ This reveals the remarkable change that was occurring in China as the literati struggled to accommodate the new reality in their classical discourse. Part of this accommodation was a new perspective on Japan.

Many other scholars agreed with Kang’s fears for China’s future and urged further cooperation with Japan. There were two primary reasons for this sudden change in sentiment. One was strategic, the other was emotional. The Western powers, specifically Russia, were posing a real threat to China at the time, and the need to seek external help for protection was becoming more evident each day. At the same time, an outpouring of Japanese support for China in the years that followed the Sino-Japanese War had a tremendous influence on Chinese attitudes toward Japan.¹² Whether this support was due to Japanese strategy or to a genuine belief in responsibility, the impressions of some Chinese intellectuals toward Japan were affected. In the years after the war, Chinese reformers increasingly turned to Japan for help in many forms. As Wang Xiaoqiu explains: “It can be seen that reformers consistently believed that imitating and allying with Japan would initiate reforms.”¹³

The Rise of Asianist Institutions in China

Although the First Sino-Japanese War shocked reformers like Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao into this sudden turn toward Japan, the recruitment of Chinese intellectuals into early Japanese pan-Asianist organizations enabled the transnational flow of discourse and vocabulary that was essential to establishing the concept outside of Japan. This began with the Kōakai 興亞會, and was much more successful with its successor, the Asia Association 亞細亞協會.

10. Kang Youwei, *Kang Nanhai ziding nianpu*, 40.

11. It was used by scholars of the Mito School to indicate that Japan could not survive if China fell. See Tikhonov, “Korea’s First Encounters,” 204.

12. Wang Xiaoqiu, *Jindai Zhongri qishilu*, 90.

13. Wang Xiaoqiu, *Jindai Zhongri qishilu*, 91.

The Kōakai, the Raise Asia Society, was established by Sone Toshitora 曾根 俊虎 (1847–1910) in 1880.¹⁴ Navy lieutenant Sone was adamantly opposed to the Meiji government's expansionist policies. Vladimir Tikhonov notes that Sone and his followers "hardly could be classified simply as tools of the Meiji elite's foreign policy."¹⁵ They earnestly hoped East Asian nations could cooperate against the European threat and feared that Japanese dreams of expansion might endanger the future of the race. This was long before the Sino-Japanese War. Despite more than a decade of Japanese modernization, in 1880 China was still perceived to be in a position of military superiority. Naturally, these Asianists were also interested in preserving the culture they considered themselves a part of. The principal goals of the Kōakai were promoting Chinese language education, a reversal of the power imbalance between Europe and Asia, and preparation for the global conflict between the "white and yellow peoples."¹⁶ In addition to running language schools, providing avenues for Japanese and Chinese scholars to meet, and holding regular meetings, the Kōakai produced a regular newsletter called the *Kōakai hōkoku* (*The Raise Asia Society Report* 興亞會報告).¹⁷

The association was established in Tokyo not long after the Qing government sent their first modern delegation into residence there. The first ambassador to Japan was He Ruzhang 何如璋 (1838–1891), suggested for the position by Li Hongzhang. Joining He in Tokyo was the soon-to-be reformer Huang Zunxian 黃遵憲 (1848–1905). These two repre-

14. Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia*. Selections from the founding manifestos of the Kōakai and the Asia Association are available in translation by Urs Matthias Zachmann, "The Founding Manifesto."

15. Tikhonov, "Korea's First Encounters," 212.

16. KKHK.

17. *Kōakai hōkoku* began as a predominantly Japanese-language journal in March 1881. The first few issues usually contained one or two articles in literary Sinitic (classical Chinese or *Kanbun* 漢文), but the majority of the text was written in Japanese. However, by the twelfth issue, published on November 15, 1881, the format changed and the journal was then predominantly written in literary Sinitic. Although a Japanese-language section was added at the back of the journal a month later—and in a few issues this section was as large as the literary Sinitic section—the new format opened the door for Korean and Chinese scholars to read and contribute to the content. The November 15 issue opened with a sentence briefly and directly explaining that publishing in Japanese resulted in many Asians being unable to read it, and this was against the aspirations of the association. KKHK, 76.

sented the first of many elites to live in Japan during the late Qing, and they were quickly invited to join the association and played a role in its early days. However, they remained suspicious of the group, and Huang Zunxian never actually accepted membership, despite being a proponent of the raising Asia doctrine himself.¹⁸ The second edition of the newsletter for the Kōakai, published on April 1, 1881, related Sone Toshitora's persuasion of He Ruzhang to support the Kōakai. The article was titled "A Discussion between Imperial Envoy Ambassador He and Mr. Sone."¹⁹ In this discussion, Sone paid particular attention to emphasizing the importance of "same script, same race" and "a cooperation of those of the same mind" (*dōshinkyōryoku* 同心協力). He made reference to the "lips and teeth" metaphor that would continue to be used by Asianists in the decades to follow.²⁰

This text represents a symbolic discussion in the Chinese perspective on Asianism, particularly because it contained so many of the catch-phrases that continued to be used over the following few decades to convince Chinese elites of the need for Asianism, showcasing the accommodation of classical concepts with the new.

Despite the triumphant tone of the Kōakai newsletter as it related the narrative of its most active member convincing the ambassador to support the organization, it remains difficult to say to what extent He was truly convinced of the grander ideology of the Kōakai and to what extent he was making strategic concessions. He would have been impressed by the association's attempts to propagate the study of Chinese, and he would also have been moved by the arguments in favor of standing up to Western imperialism. However, He's position in the Chinese government put him directly in contact and conflict with the Japanese expansionist efforts. The annexation of the Ryukyu kingdom was fresh in his mind, and he had been quite upset by it. During the height of the affair, he received a petition from the Ryukyuans and wrote to Li Hongzhang: "The Japanese have neither mercy nor reason. They are like crazy dogs, bullying others as they please."²¹ This elite disdain for the Japanese was

18. Zachmann, "The Founding Manifesto," 55.

19. KKHK, 9.

20. KKHK, 9.

21. He Ruzhang was dealing with a newly aggressive expansionist Japanese government but associating with anti-imperialist Asianists at the same time. It seems most

hidden when China's strategic concerns matched those of Japan, but the enthusiasm on the surface led to the expansion of Asianist organizations.

The Kōakai officially became the Asia Association in 1883 after its Chinese members complained about the name during a January meeting in Tokyo.²² The Asia Association's Japanese membership grew, and largely through its few Chinese members, it expanded onto Chinese soil during the early days of the 1898 reforms. The Asia Association in Shanghai retained old supporters from the Kōakai days and added new members to its list. Influential Chinese members in 1898 or earlier included diplomat He Ruzhang; *sanwen* writer Li Shuchang 黎庶昌 (1837–1898); scholar and translator Wang Tao 王韜 (1828–1897); reformer Zheng Guanying 鄭觀應 (1842–1922); future prime minister of Manchukuo Zheng Xiaoxu 鄭孝胥 (1860–1938); diplomat Li Fengbao 李鳳苞 (1834–1887); revolutionary intellectual Tang Caichang 唐才常 (1867–1900); and journalist Wang Kangnian 汪康年 (1860–1911). Because of the number of well-known reformers related to the Asia Association, its establishment in Shanghai has recently received attention in Chinese and Western scholarship.²³ Sang Bing puts much emphasis on the 1898 establishment of the Asia Association in Shanghai, arguing that this group was one of the most important that resulted out of the Hundred Days' Reform, and its importance has been underestimated by scholars in the past, who failed to recognize the first grassroots acceptance of a pro-Japanese agenda.²⁴ As can be seen from the list of names, this group gained the attention of many Chinese elite intellectuals. Like the journals and newspapers of the time, which were heavily influenced by Japanese publications, the Asia Association was an avenue for the entry of Japanese Asianist ideology.

likely that he would have been inclined to take a strategic position and remain open to the potential of Asianism, but it is difficult to say to what extent this classically trained Chinese scholar would have accepted Japanese partners as equals. Regardless of what his motives were, He Ruzhang continued to support the association into its transformation into the Asia Association in 1883, remaining a member until his death in 1891. Quoted in Shogo Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire*, 160.

22. Kamachi, *Reform in China*, 123.

23. For example, Guo Wu, *Zheng Guanying*, esp. 79–85. Japanese scholarship on the Shanghai Asia Association began much earlier than did Chinese and Western scholarship. Sang Bing offers a short annotated bibliography of the key Japanese texts in his helpful article: Sang, "Xingya Hui." Yi Huili discusses Zheng Guanying's views on the Asia Association as seen in the diary of Zheng Xiaoxu; Yi, *Zheng Guanying pingzhuhan*.

24. Sang, "Xingya Hui," 42.

The establishment of the Asia Association was mentioned in many major Chinese papers of the time, including the *Xiang Bao* 湘報, *Dagong Bao* 大公報, *Xinwen Bao* 新聞報, *Wanguo Gong Bao* 萬國公報, and *Jicheng Bao* 集成報. Many of these papers included the full fifteen-point Asia Association manifesto 亞細亞協會章程.

The association presented itself as a people's organization that was anticlassist, allowing members to pay fees as voluntary donations. Membership was open and equal: "Whether members are officials or gentry, whether they are scholars, farmers, workers or merchants, all are free to enter the association. Even should they be eminent or humble, intelligent or slow, all will be treated equally and without discrimination."²⁵ Nor would nation affect membership: "For association members, no matter the size nor the strength of their country . . . they will no longer acknowledge boundaries. They will be as brothers of one heart and one mind."²⁶ The group instead emphasized modernization, calling for members with special abilities or interests to meet through the association and further the advancement of Asia in all areas.

The association and its advertisement were products of the popular rights movement and tide of liberalism that were sweeping Japan and extending to Chinese intellectuals at the end of the nineteenth century.²⁷ Just like the Chinese reformers who were the object of this association's appeal, the Japanese Asianists were caught in the rush toward liberalism. From the early days of the Kōakai, there was evidence of sympathy toward this movement. In the early 1880s, when the Kōakai opened its first school to teach colloquial Chinese, Korean, and literary Sinitic, the instructors also taught a course on John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*.²⁸ The association intended to appeal to those interested in a liberal approach

25. This translation is based on the version printed in the *Jicheng Bao* as "Yaxiya xiehui zhangcheng."

26. "Yaxiya xiehui zhangcheng."

27. The phrase "popular rights movement" refers to a variety of the Meiji period movements for democratization and increased political participation, as well as the sudden influx of texts concerning such thinking, especially from Germany and Great Britain. Despite grand talk, these "rights" rarely extended beyond the upper classes in practice. However, Chinese intellectuals became increasingly aware of and interested in this discourse and made great efforts to translate such texts at the end of the nineteenth century. For a brief discussion of the movement, see Bowen, *Rebellion and Democracy*.

28. Kuroki, "The Asianism of the Koa-kai," 37.

to the problems encountered by Western imperialism. On the basis of shared feelings of humiliation, the association urged individuals to stand up and act independently of their government to assist others. At the same time, the association argued for the equality of nations in its organizations. Although this might not have appealed to earlier generations of Chinese scholars, it was suited to this new generation of so-called reformers, at least as far as the simple argument above. On the margins of an expanding Japanese empire, Chinese elites were certainly getting caught up in the popular rights movement.

The organization was also very clear about its aims for the modernization of all of Asia. Concrete ideas were set forth in this short declaration. These fascinating efforts to link professionals and specialists together to solve problems across the continent were surely appealing to a new elite who believed that science and progress were the answers to China's ills.

What is most important about this declaration is that it completely disregarded governments and states. The Asia of tomorrow was not to be reliant on the government of any country. Its problems were to be solved by the people. Its wealth and power were to be products of uniting different people, of all classes and nations, across Asia. Therefore, this nongovernmental organization did not need to consider issues of inter-Asia politics, a feature that may have spelled its doom had it not been prematurely ended because of the coup that marked the end of the reforms. In this respect, the members of the Asia Association failed to predict the coming course and the rise of state power and nationalism. The redemption they sought was related to nationalist dreams of liberation but was racially and geographically defined. The organizers referenced the Red Cross as an organization worthy of their emulation. Established a few decades before this, the Red Cross was unconstrained by nation or state. These Asianists envisioned a similar transnationalism with the stated goal of liberation for all Asians.

The founding of the Asia Association in 1898 was tightly linked to the pro-Japanese reformers and their goals. Those most closely involved with its establishment were Wang Kangnian, Zeng Guangcuo 曾廣鏗, Tang Caichang, and Fukumoto Makoto 福本誠.²⁹ All of these men held a certain amount of power in the publishing industry of 1898 Shanghai. Not least of these were Wang Kangnian and Huang Zunxian, who

29. Sang, "Xingya Hui," 42–46.

held considerable sway with the very influential journal the *Chinese Progress* (*Shiwu bao* 時務報 1896–1898). Huang Zunxian consolidated his complete control over the *Chinese Progress* during the management changes of late 1897 and early 1898.³⁰ Through the efforts of these individuals and a few others, the publication became one of the key avenues for Asianist concepts to enter China during this time.

The Translation of Pro-Japanese News

The *Chinese Progress* was the voice of the reform movement in 1898. Established in Shanghai in 1896 under Zhang Zhidong's guidance, it was led by publisher Huang Zunxian and director-general Wang Kangnian, two prominent Asia Association members, as well as editors Liang Qichao and Wang Rangqing 汪壤卿 (1860–1911), Confucian scholars trained by Kang Youwei. The journal has long held the intrigue of historians as one of the most influential publications of the late Qing. At the height of its popularity in April 1898, it reached a circulation of ten thousand.³¹ Seungjoo Yoon calls it the “harbinger of the literati-led modern press in late Qing China.”³² Despite this notice from historians, few have paid serious attention to the details surrounding the translations that made up such a large part of the text of this journal. However, as Lydia Liu and many others have long asserted, translation points to power differentials between cultures and opens avenues for historians to analyze these differentials.

Right from the beginning, the *Chinese Progress* was an important avenue for translated knowledge from around the world. As the Chinese publishing industry had not yet developed to the point where it was common to send foreign correspondents around the world, newspapers and other periodicals relied heavily on translations from foreign publications. This practice continued far into the twentieth century. Like similar publications of the time, the *Chinese Progress* often contained extensive sections devoted to translation from a particular language. These sections usually took up 50 percent or more of the total text in each issue. Most of these translations were from English or Japanese, but there were also translations from French and Russian. The English translations were

30. Yoon, “Literati Journalists of the *Chinese Progress*,” 63.

31. Britton, *The Chinese Periodical Press*, 93.

32. Yoon, “Literati Journalists of the *Chinese Progress*,” 48–76.

almost always by Zhang Kunde 張坤德, and all of the Japanese translations were by Kojō Teikichi 古城貞吉 (1866–1949). Translations from Japanese were crucial for Liang Qichao, Kang Youwei, and their reform movement. In addition to their Datong Translation Company, which was responsible for several translations during its two years of existence, notably the quasi-translation of *On the Great Eastern Federation* (*Daitō gappōron* 大東合邦論) by Tarui Tōkichi 樽井藤吉 (1850–1922) discussed below,³³ the *Chinese Progress* was the primary outlet for their translations from Japanese during this time. Because Liang Qichao and his clique were not yet proficient in Japanese, the work was carried out by an outsider. Kojō Teikichi, who lived in Tokyo at the time, often translated more than ten articles in each issue. He devoted a great amount of time to the *Chinese Progress* and made a considerable contribution to China's reform movement. Having the power to select and translate texts as he saw fit gave Kojō power in shaping the opinions of China's reformers. The man and his translations deserve a brief summary here.

Kojō Teikichi was one of the finest Sinologists of late Meiji Japan. He wrote numerous books on Chinese literature and certainly had a hand in Japanese perceptions of China. In Japan, he is best known for *Shina bungakushi* (A History of Chinese Literature 支那文學史, 1906), which was widely available at the time and has been called “the first modern history of Chinese literature.”³⁴

This eminent Sinologist was still early in his career, and the *Chinese Progress* was fortunate to have the opportunity to bring him onto its staff. Kojō was committed to his position and contributed far more text to the journal than did any other contributor. His translations regularly totaled more than one quarter of each issue. He was invited to the position by Huang Zunxian, who had spent much time with Japanese Sinologists while living in Tokyo.³⁵ Kojō was given much freedom in selecting texts

33. The word translated as “federation,” *hebang* 合邦, was not satisfactorily defined by these intellectuals. There is a significant overlap in the meanings of alliance with Japan (*lianri* 聯日) and federation (*hebang*). Throughout the texts of this period, there are numerous references to similar terms, such as *lianbang* 聯邦, *banglian* 邦聯, and *tongmeng* 同盟, as well as frequent use of the single-character terms *lian* and *he*, which must be viewed contextually.

34. Chen Yirong, “Gucheng Zhenji yu Shiwu bao,” 100.

35. Some texts mention Wang Kangnian as introducing Kojō to the *Chinese Progress*, but Chen Yirong has convincingly argued that Huang Zunxian was behind the invita-

that would be of interest to Chinese readers. Over these two years, he translated hundreds of articles from over forty different Japanese sources and had a distinct and central role in informing the readers of *The Chinese Progress* about the flow of history and the world outside China. Not surprisingly, one of the most pressing issues at the time was the rise of imperialism in East Asia and the Western powers encroaching on China.

From 1896 to the summer of 1898, there were an impressive number of articles translated on the Russian encroachments in Siberia and Manchuria. These articles, all translated by Kojō, provided the Japanese perspective on the growing trouble in the north. Articles concerning such issues were translated from the journals *Tōhō Gakkai Report* 東邦學會錄 and the *Sun*. Although on occasion a translation of a Russian article was included in the very limited Russian section, it was exceedingly rare compared with the many translations from Japanese in every issue. Articles on Russia were often fearful forecasts of future war and Russia's eventual control of China, or even all of Asia. "China's future is to become Russian territory," one article prophesied.³⁶ Almost monthly there were articles describing the power that Russia would hold with the extension of the Siberian railroad. This was something that weighed heavily on the minds of Chinese and Japanese elites. As time went by, Kojō's translations on Russia changed from short passages of two or three lines to full-length articles that often admonished the Chinese for not preparing for the Russian threat. At the same time, the Japanese articles looked unfavorably on the Sino-Japanese War, which had divided the countries.³⁷ The Japanese translations in the *Chinese Progress* also painted Korea as a country suffering under Western imperialism and in need of assistance to achieve autonomy. In "Korean Scholars of Will Call out for Autonomy" 朝鮮志士提倡自主, Kojō explained that Korean elites felt under pressure from external forces. "Korea is independent in name but has no power of independence." Russia controls its military, while Britain controls its finances, explained Kojō.³⁸ In addition to articles on Korea and Manchuria, areas

tion. Chen Yirong, "Gucheng Zhenji yu *Shiwu bao*," 100. On Huang Zunxian's life in Tokyo, see Kamachi, *Reform in China*.

36. "Eguo jiang tunshi Yazhou," 1635.

37. "Lun Eguo riqiang."

38. Originally in *Nihon hō* (*Japan Times*), March 26, 1897. Translation in *Chinese Progress* 25 (May 2, 1897), 1712.

where Japan had clear interests at the time, the *Chinese Progress* ran translated articles on issues that were relevant to Western imperialism in general. Kojō translated no fewer than seven articles concerning Germany's invasion of Jiaozhou. He included occasional pieces on Western racism, translating two short articles on Canada's head tax and the terrible quality of life for Chinese immigrants in Vancouver.³⁹

Because China had few or no foreign correspondents at the time, Kojō played an important role as an intermediary, giving readers access to Japanese media perspectives on the issues facing China in a fluent and familiar literary Sinitic, drawing on classical philosophy and metaphor. In the years running up to the reforms, the *Chinese Progress* offered a variety of viewpoints on the world through its translations section. It was by no means one-sided. The English-language translation section frequently ran articles about Japanese encroachments of all kinds. The readers must have been well aware that they were surrounded by imperialism on all sides.

Although the articles Kojō offered were correct in their denunciations of the atrocities of Western imperialists, Japan's growing power over Korea was played down and the country was portrayed as a fellow victim of Western imperialism. Although a number of articles pointed out the inefficiencies and corruption of the Qing government, articles that did discuss China and Japan concentrated on feelings of mutual affection between the countries or flattered the Chinese readers with praise.⁴⁰ Articles on Japanese domestic issues covered a wide array of news, especially of financial, economic, and political nature. Such articles were important to the reformers, who hoped to model a new China on the advances made by Meiji Japan. According to Chen Yirong, articles were chosen that would be of interest to Chinese readers, but they were also a representative selection of contemporary Japanese media.⁴¹

One subject of these articles that stands out and should be noted here is the regular mention of Ōkuma Shigenobu. Ōkuma was one of the earliest and most powerful of the Japanese Asianists. Regular articles on Ōkuma reported his various speeches, even when they had little or noth-

39. "Jianada Ziyoudang guozheng," and "Jianada paichi Huaren."

40. "Lun Zhongguo renmin zhi xingzhi."

41. Chen Yirong, "Gucheng Zhenji yu Shiwu bao," 100.

ing to do with China.⁴² Ōkuma was nearing the height of his popularity at this time. During these years he formulated his foreign policy goals known as the Ōkuma Doctrine, a policy that was designed to refocus Japan's efforts for the mutual benefit of East Asia to raise the region's status and power.⁴³ Ōkuma was a committed Asianist and a cofounder of one of Japan's earliest Asianist organizations, a group of scholars and politicians known as the Tōhō Kyōkai 東邦協會, translated as the Oriental Cooperation Society by Marius Jansen.⁴⁴

The *Chinese Progress* provided a Chinese venue for two Tōhō Kyōkai-related journals through translation: the *Japanese* and the *Tōhō kyōkai hōkoku* 東邦協會報告, which Kojō always referred to as *Tōhō gakkai* 東邦學會 in the *Chinese Progress*. Although Kojō translated many short articles from major Japanese daily newspapers, he sourced many long articles from the *Tōhō kyōkai hōkoku*. Including serialized sections, eighteen articles from the *Tōhō kyōkai hōkoku* appeared in the *Chinese Progress*. In all but two cases, these were the lead articles in Kojō's section. Although this number is very low compared with the number of articles from the *Tokyo Daily* or the *Osaka Shinbun*, these were not news articles but long reports, almost all of them concerning Russia's ever-increasing role in the events of northeast China.⁴⁵

42. Articles on Ōkuma translated by Kojō: "Daweibo lun bizhi" (Count Ōkuma on Currency), originally in *Japan's New Times* (*Nihon shinbō*, February 15, 1897), *Chinese Progress*, March 13, 1897; "Lun Riben Daweibo tichang xin shuo" (Count Ōkuma Sets Forth a New Doctrine), originally in *The Citizen* (*Kokumin hō*, 3.13, March 22, 1897), *Chinese Progress*, 25 (May 2, 1897), 1639; "Daweibo yanshuoyu shangye gongsuo" (Count Ōkuma's Speech at the Offices of Commerce), originally in *Tokyo Daily* (*Tōkyō nichinichi hō*, May 28, 1897), *Chinese Progress* 30, 2045, June 20, 1897; "Daweibo lun biangeng guozheng" (Count Ōkuma on Changes to National Politics), originally in *Japan's New Times* (*Nihon shinbō*, June 11, 1897), *Chinese Progress* 31 and 32, 2117–18, 2178–82, June 30, 1897.

43. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 53.

44. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 52. This was the organization to which Yano Ryōkei, Japan's ambassador to China, belonged. The Tōhō Kyōkai was composed of people across the political spectrum, but it was organized and dominated by the Seikyōsha, an organization established in 1888 to oppose the government's pro-Western ideology. The Seikyōsha's popular journal *The Japanese* (*Nihonjin*) was the mouthpiece for the organization and its philosophical supporter, Miyake Setsurei 三宅 雪嶺 (1860–1945), who had long stressed the importance of Japan cooperating with Asia.

45. For example, "Zhongguo bian shi lun" (On Events on China's Frontiers) stretched across volumes 12, 15, 16, and 18 of the *Chinese Progress*. "Eguo waizhengce shi" (A History of Russia's Foreign Policy) stretched across volumes 33, 34, 47, 48, and 50.

Because the Kang-Liang faction was already a very pro-Japanese group, the reformers' writing and reading of this relatively pro-Japan and anti-Russia journal was a significant step before they sought refuge in Japan in 1898, where they found the support of and became friends with Ōkuma and other high-ranking Asianist officials. Although there were many translations from Asianist periodicals in the pages of the *Chinese Progress*, these articles were not outright calls for Asian unity or even alliance. Those calls came from the Chinese writers at the magazine.

Chinese Voices at the *Chinese Progress* Promote Alliance with Japan

In a series of articles in the *Chinese Progress*, Chen Chi 陳鐵 (1855–1900) expressed a growing distrust toward Russia and the empire's eastward expansion. This was first evident in "On the Mistakes Made by Six Countries during the Sino-Japanese War" ("Zhong-Ri zhi zhan liuguo jie shisuan lun" 中日之戰六國皆失算論), published in October 1896, five months after Li Hongzhang had signed the agreement with Russia to work together to keep Japan out of China.⁴⁶ This article explained Chen's belief that China, Japan, Britain, France, and Germany had made mistakes during the resolution of the Sino-Japanese War, resulting in Russia becoming the greatest danger in the region. Three months later, Chen expanded on these thoughts by arguing that China must turn to Japan and Britain to seek protection from Russian encroachment. A few months later, his criticism was even more pronounced with the inflammatory title: "Russians' Policy Is as Ruthless as the Qin."⁴⁷ Later in 1897, Chen continued to write similar articles that called for turning to Japan to face Russia. Mao Haijian notes that these articles reveal that some Chinese intellectuals favored an alliance with Japan even before the German assault on Jiaozhou Bay (Kiautschou Bay 膠州灣) began in November 1897.⁴⁸ Indeed, a number of Chinese intellectuals did favor alliance with Japan during this time, but the majority of these intellectuals were only seeing this as an international alliance to protect China. Many influential leaders promoted such an alliance for China's national interests, such as Zhang Zhidong's use of the "same script, same

46. Chen Chi, *Chen Chi ji*, 309–12.

47. Chen Chi, *Chen Chi ji*, 312–15.

48. Mao Haijian, *Cong Jiawu dao Wuxu*, 252.

race” argument when he discussed the benefits of using Japanese military might against the Russians and Germans.⁴⁹ Zhang Taiyan also called for a China–Japan alliance based on Asianist principles at this time.

In the years before the 1898 reforms, Zhang Taiyan was living in Shanghai and contributing to the *Chinese Progress*. Like other reformers of the period, he was hopeful for a union with Japan to defend against Western imperialist powers and may have been influenced by the book *Zuozhi chuyan* (*Sketches on Governance* 佐治芻言), which had advocated China and Japan joining to create a larger state in 1885.⁵⁰

At this point he was still formulating his beliefs on race and ethnicity, but the division between the yellow and white races was becoming part of the “common knowledge.” In the years that followed, Zhang became an important Asianist in Japan because of his solidarity with Indians and the Tokyo-based Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood.⁵¹ He wrote many articles on the importance of Asian unity in the early twentieth century, but as early as 1897, at the age of twenty-eight, he wrote an article that demanded China’s union with Japan based on racial and geographic reasons that appear more suited to Liang Qichao’s writings after he moved to Japan. Zhang published “Asia Should Support Its Lips and Teeth” on January 21, 1897.⁵² This article showed the possibility of uniting with Japan to defend against the imperial ambitions of Germany and Russia, but it was also notable for its reliance on geography and race as a major part of the argument. Zhang relied on a new scientific understanding of the world to understand its divisions, as well as understand how such unions may be effective and necessary in the new world. He began by describing the Eurasian continent in geographic terms: “The world is separated into five great continents. . . . From the days of the Yao Emperor, the Caspian Sea and the Ural Mountains have acted as a barrier to cut off Europe from Asia and divide yellow people and white people.”⁵³

Zhang not only completely accepted the dichotomy of East and West, he equated the West with European and white, while he saw the East as being Asian and yellow. This is one of the earliest Chinese arguments

49. Telegram reprinted in Mao Haijian, *Cong Jiawu dao Wuxu*, 248–49.

50. Yang Jikai, “Zhang Taiyan de Dongya lianbang gouxiang,” 275.

51. See chapter 3 for more on this organization.

52. Zhang Taiyan, “Lun Yazhou yi zi wei chunchi.”

53. Zhang Taiyan, “Lun Yazhou yi zi wei chunchi,” 3–4.

for uniting Asia based on an idea of the yellow race. Just as the “lips and teeth” metaphor implies, both countries, and finally all Asians, needed to cooperate and support each other to survive this wave of imperialism: “If neither abandons the other, and the multitude of yellow people help one another, then Asia will not falter.” However, Zhang was not inferring that Westerners had no place in Asia or arguing for an exclusive policy of “Asia for Asians,” as many Asianists argued for in the twentieth century. The coming together of West and East, Europe and Asia, white and yellow, was an inevitable conclusion for Zhang: “Hence those on the eastern sea and those on the western sea would inevitably come into contact. This is only natural. What could be wrong with this opening up?”⁵⁴ Zhang did not oppose contact between East and West; rather, he found that it had added to the strength of the Europeans, and he saw the reasons for Europe’s initiation of this contact based in a difference of geography. “The world (geographically) is a varied place, as uneven as the teeth of a dog. Therefore, that which was basic to the people of Europe had no place in Asia. Hence the sickness of China.”⁵⁵ Zhang’s use of geography appeared years before Liang Qichao (perhaps unwittingly) translated Hegel’s theories of geographical determinism.⁵⁶

As he found these inherent differences between race and people to be related to geography, Zhang argued that China should engage in an alliance with Japan and not with Russia, which, although at China’s northern border, appeared to Zhang as an empire that controlled Kamchatka from afar: “Of those that are at elbows with China and can be mutually reliant and dependent on each other, only Japan remains. . . . It is difficult to be an impoverished state with an avaricious power in the North. Forgetting its bite, we have entered a secret alliance, turning our backs on our own kind and encamping with a foreign clan. Should we not be doing the opposite?”⁵⁷ Zhang’s argument here was based on a similarity in “kind” (*tonglei* 同類), slightly different from the standard Asianist argument of “same race,” “same script,” or “same religion.” However, Zhang was

54. Here “contact” and “opening up” are translated from the term *tong* 通, an important word that was regularly used around the time of the Wuxu reforms. See the conclusion of this chapter for more on this. Zhang, “Lun Yazhou yi zi wei chunchi,” 3–4.

55. Zhang Taiyan, “Lun Yazhou yi zi wei chunchi,” 3–4.

56. For more on Liang’s 1902 introduction of Hegel and Henry T. Buckle’s theories of geography, see Ishikawa, “Liang Qichao, the Field of Geography,” 156–76.

57. Zhang Taiyan, “Lun Yazhou yi zi wei chunchi,” 3–4.

clearly familiar with the Asianist arguments of the time. Although this article appeared one year before the Kōakai established their Shanghai chapter, their publication *Kōakai hōkoku* (Raise Asia Association Report 興亞會報告) had been widely available in literary Chinese since 1881. It seems likely that Zhang was well aware of the discourse. From the following line, we see that he was at least familiar with Japanese writing on unification: “From the beginning, the idea of the union of Asia came from the Japanese. These were not empty words. China is dependent upon Japan and Japan is also dependent upon China. They hope for a strong China, taking pride in ‘lips and teeth.’ Then we can match the West from afar and face Russia near. And the Pacific will be at peace.”⁵⁸

Zhang’s use of “lips and teeth” represented his accommodation of Asianist writings in general, and the idea of a union with Japan in particular, with classical concepts and historical allusions. To explain how Japan could be excused for the Sino-Japanese War, infringements on Korea, and the militaristic attitude to foreign relations with which most Chinese were very angry, Zhang reduced everything down to a matter of Japan being proactively defensive. In his Darwinist argument, he even commended Japan for pushing China to be competitive and active: “It is in hoping to save themselves that they bring out the competitive spirit in China, causing China to resolutely make plans for self-strengthening.”⁵⁹ China, Zhang believed, must not act in revenge, as Gou Jian 勾踐 did in the Spring and Autumn period, but look to the example set by the Shu in the Three Kingdoms era and unite with Japan as Shu did with Wu to defeat the Wei. This simple allusion posited the Russian empire as the much-hated Wei Kingdom of Cao Cao, but stressed the importance of reason and strategy for the development and survival of the Chinese. Zhang detailed various moments in Chinese history to emphasize the importance of reason and to think of the future, but his strategy was surprisingly extreme.

In the final line of his essay, he explained, “Threats that reside in the horse’s tail can be cut off. By being determined and brave we can use the horns of our neighbors to our advantage. Otherwise, in the blink of an eye we will be routed and destroyed.”⁶⁰ The horse’s tail referred to

58. Zhang Taiyan, “Lun Yazhou yi zi wei chunchi,” 3–4.

59. Zhang Taiyan, “Lun Yazhou yi zi wei chunchi,” 3–4.

60. Zhang Taiyan, “Lun Yazhou yi zi wei chunchi,” 3–4.

that which, although a part of the body, could be removed without any disadvantage to the organism. This passage is best read in the context of a more explicit letter Zhang wrote to Li Hongzhang in which he advised the statesman to offer Weihaiwei to the Japanese government to counteract the Germans in Shandong.⁶¹

Typical of the burst of pro-Japanese writings that appeared in the late nineteenth century, this article by Zhang showcases the hesitant strategy found in early pro-Japan reformist Asianism. Also, Zhang included many of the early Asianist slogans and ideology and built his argument on the pseudo-scientific approaches of race and geographic determinism. His writings forecast the turn to race and geography that would define early twentieth-century Asianism. It offered an early example of the conceptual accommodation that provided for the acceptance of Asianism in China, but it also showed the extent to which Japanese Asianist writings were influencing young Chinese reformers in the years after the Sino-Japanese War, as Zhang borrowed heavily from popular Asianist vocabulary and even referred to Japanese calls for a China–Japan union. Zhang was not alone in this, although some were more explicit in their imagining of the future of East Asia. At about the same time, other reformers related to Zhang and the *Chinese Progress* were showing interest in Japanese writings on an East Asian union in the form of a federation. Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei republished a prominent book that typified Japanese Asianism at the end of the nineteenth century.

Translating Race, Nation, and Asianism

On the Great Eastern Federation by Tarui Tōkichi was probably the first major text on Asian unity that was widely available in Chinese.⁶² First serialized in Japan in literary Sinitic in the journal *Governance through Liberty and Equality* (*Jiyū byōdō keirin* 自由平等經綸) in 1891, it was compiled and published in full in 1893 and arrived in China, Korea, and Taiwan later that year. The book was widely read in Korea and China. According to Suzuki Tadashi, the popularity of the book soared in China after an edition appeared with an introduction by Liang Qichao.⁶³ That Tarui chose to write this book entirely in literary Sinitic is of great

61. Zhang Taiyan, “Shang Li Hongzhang shu,” in *Zhang Taiyan xiansheng*, 61–63.

62. Tarui published the book on his own under the pen name Morimoto Tōkichi.

63. Tadashi Suzuki, “Profile of Asian Minded Man,” 84.

significance. Although Japanese scholars could read in literary Sinitic in the 1890s, writing in the language was becoming rare.⁶⁴

Tarui's text also exemplified some of the key contradictions that would accompany Asianism in the next century. It contained the paradoxical mixing of socialism and imperialism that gave this discourse power as a complicated paradigm to be used in a variety of ways by those who propagated it. It also used Western frameworks of political thought to imagine a truly Eastern society.

The first person to write a substantial text on Asianism was also a founder of the first political party in Asia to use the name *socialist*. Tarui's party was called the Eastern Socialist Party (Tōyō Shakaitō 東洋社會黨).⁶⁵ Although the party was immediately declared illegal and disbanded by the government, the significance of this event and its connection with an early imagining of Asianism should not be underestimated. As can be seen from their name, this party sought an international form of socialism that would span across three countries of East Asia. However, we can see from Tarui's statements that the dream had a long-term goal of much more: "You, who have been raised amid the current trends of Eastern civilization, are members of our Tōyō Shakaitō; and it is upon the success or failure of our party that the rise or fall of human morality depends."⁶⁶

Like many that came after him, Tarui saw the East as the moral force of the whole planet. He saw in the East the last hope of humankind. It offered a universal redemption that could overcome the inequalities and injustices that accompanied capitalism. Yet Tarui was also a long-serving member of the lower house of the Diet. While he was in government, the Japanese empire expanded to include Taiwan and then Korea. Although Taiwan had not been part of his plan, union with Korea was a crucial step in Tarui's design for an Eastern federation, yet the way Japan and Korea came together was not at all the manner in which he had originally outlined it.

64. He was not the first Japanese Asianist to write in literary Sinitic. The Kōakai had begun publishing their periodical *Kōakai hōkoku* in literary Sinitic beginning in November 1881 after eight months of publishing in Japanese. Nor was he the last: the pan-Asianist organization Kokuryūkai began publishing their journal *Tōa Gēppō* in literary Sinitic as late as 1908.

65. Tadashi Suzuki, "Profile of Asian Minded Man," 82.

66. Quoted in Tadashi Suzuki, "Profile of Asian Minded Man," 87.

On the Great Eastern Federation described a future federation of Korea and Japan in which the two countries come together in what appears to be equality. He found a basis for the likelihood of a peaceful integration between the two countries in a linguistic and racial analysis: “Although the two countries now speak different languages, their word order and grammar are completely the same. This is proof that they are of the same race.”⁶⁷ Throughout the text, Tarui also uses the phrase “our yellow brothers” 我兄弟黃人 to refer to Korean and Chinese people. A racialization of the world was finding its position as a hegemonic discourse at this time, and Asianism was configured along racial lines. Tarui finished his book by emphasizing what he saw as an inevitable war between the white and yellow races. He feared a future in which the white race would attempt to eliminate the yellow: “Friendly internal relations with those of the same race, but competing with those of other races, this is the natural trend of the world, as the reader can see.”⁶⁸ As will be shown in chapter 3, the fear of race war was long used as an impetus for the union of Asian nationalities. For Tarui, it was not the deciding factor but was an important point that supported his ideology and his argument. He based his discussion of the Eastern federation not on a negative program of fear of war but on a positive belief in the progression of society to a state of freedom and equality.

Years before Yan Fu would make his famous translations of Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill, Tarui Tōkichi introduced their writings to China in relation to the traditional, comfortable, and familiar Asian belief systems of Confucius and Lao Zi, but in the new packaging of socialist Asianism. As for China, although Tarui’s immediate concern was the union of Korea and Japan, he was very concerned with the Qing dynasty and included a chapter that explained his views on how those suffering under Qing rule would eventually enter this federation, also discussing the reasons it was not yet ready for such a union. In the chapter “On the Suitability of the Qing and the Eastern Country’s Coalition” 論清國宜與東國合縱, Tarui expressed his hopes:

Should our country wish for the Qing’s prosperity while the Qing does not wish for close relations with Japan, then we all will forever be mired in disaster. The Westerners say that there are two powers in the Orient. These

67. Tarui, *Daitō gappōron*, 97.

68. Tarui, *Daitō gappōron*, 134.

are Japan and China. East Asia is fortunate to have these two powers, which can protect the dignity of our yellow race. If these two countries were not within the realm of yellow people, then the white race would ravage across all of our Asian continent and enslave our yellow brothers, just as they have done so to the black people of Africa.⁶⁹

From this chapter we can see that for the immediate future Tarui believed that Japan and Korea must unite, but China, though a substantial power in its own right and essential for the survival of the yellow race, was not yet required in this union. Tarui believed that the Chinese were an oppressed people under the Qing government who had yet to realize their independence and achieve national self-determination. Tarui explained: "If we in the East are to unite and participate in our government, then it follows that China under the [Q]ing dynasty, Tartary, Mongolia, Tibet and other states must recover independence and enable their peoples to participate in the government of their own countries."⁷⁰

Tarui viewed the state as a governance structure based on an ethnic nation. This resulted in a tension in his text. Although he hoped the Qing dynasty would eventually unite with the Eastern federation, it was temporarily unimaginable because the various ethnicities under the Qing had yet to achieve their own independence and therefore could not cooperate in the Asian government he had imagined. Despite his hopes for cooperation with the Qing, his writing indirectly called for the disintegration of the Qing dynasty.

These beliefs in the nation would certainly have endeared him to many Chinese intellectuals at the time. While the Qing dynasty was foundering in the final decades of the nineteenth century, Han nationalism was beginning its rise among intellectuals as an ideology that firmly opposed Manchu rule. At the same time, Tarui's words must have struck fear in the hearts of patriotic Chinese who believed in the necessity of a united China that saw all the nationalities tied together under the idea of a greater Chinese nationality that encompassed all nations on Chinese soil. Territorial integrity and national sovereignty would continue to be issues that few Chinese elites would compromise on throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century.

69. Tarui, *Daitō gappōron*, 133.

70. Tarui, *Daitō gappōron*, 132–33; Tadashi Suzuki, "Profile of Asian Minded Man," 96.

When *On the Great Eastern Federation* was brought to China, although it appealed to many intellectuals, this section was unacceptable and some sentences had to be changed. Chinese editions of the text were edited by Liang Qichao's student, and from 1897 onward a new wording was used for a number of passages.⁷¹ Through a few minor changes, this section was changed to indicate that China must not be divided, allowing for the reformers' belief that the Qing emperor must continue to rule over all China and that the empire need not be divided based on ethnic nationality. Although *On the Great Eastern Federation* did bring in discourse on nationalism, race, and political theory at this critical time, it also presented reformers with difficult questions regarding how to accommodate nationalism or even Asianism with their traditional Chinese worldview—questions that danced along the tension between nation and empire. These questions were not easily answered. The struggle can be seen in the elliptical and even contradictory preface provided by Liang Qichao in 1898.

The Complications of Translating Tarui Asianism

Although *On the Great Eastern Federation* was first published in its entirety in 1893, it was in 1898 that it received the most notice by Chinese intellectuals.⁷² The new edition appeared at the height of China's reforms. It was released with a new name as well, *The New Idea of a Great Eastern Federation* (*Dadong hebang xinyi* 大東合邦新義). Perhaps more important, it contained a new preface by one of the stars of the 1898 reforms, Liang Qichao, who was forced to flee to Japan just months after publication of the new edition due to his involvement in the reforms. The book was advertised in major newspapers in August 1898 for 280 *wen*, a fairly modest price compared with other books for sale at the time.⁷³ The book was published by a new publishing company established by Kang and Liang, the Datong

71. Through a close reading of these two texts, Lei Chia-Sheng identified this and a few other important changes in Lei, “*Dadonghebang lun’ yu*,” 92–93 (originally 132–33 and 65–66, respectively).

72. The 1893 edition is the one found in the Shanghai Library today. In Korea I worked with an edition published in Shanghai in 1897, available in the special collections of the Korea University Library. However, this version does not include Liang's preface. I was not able to find an original copy of the 1898 edition with the preface written by Liang Qichao.

73. See advertisement on front page of *Xiangbao Fuzhang* (August 8, 1898).

Translation Publishing House 大同譯書局. Liang Qichao introduced his new company and detailed the urgent need for many translations to support the reform movement: “Relying on our resentment, we have united our comrades to create this publishing house. Translations from Japanese will make up the majority, supplemented by translations from Western languages. Politics will come first, followed by the arts.”⁷⁴ The reformers had decided that translation would open the door to the learning from the West. Japan would serve as the gateway and *On the Great Federation* would be one of the first books to be “translated,” meaning that a few alterations were made to domesticate the text for Chinese readers.

Although the book was quite well received at the time, Liang’s preface was one of a few pieces that was not included in his collected works. *On the Great Federation* fell far out of favor during the rise of Japanese imperialism, so copies of this edition became exceedingly rare and the text became virtually unheard of in China after 1949. Before 2005 it appears to have only been mentioned briefly by Japanese scholars and perhaps not at all in China. However, Xia Xiaohong’s 夏曉虹 landmark study of unpublished Liang Qichao texts brought the preface back to life and it is now widely available in the collection *Texts Not Included in the Yin Bing Shi Collected Works*.⁷⁵ This preface is an important key to understanding the reformers’ convoluted views on the possibility of uniting with Japan. It offers insight into Liang Qichao’s yearnings and misgivings at this crucial juncture in Chinese reform, as well as the difficulties of accommodating different worldviews in the reformers’ efforts to save China.

In considering the merits of Tarui’s proposal, Liang began by discussing the concept of unity, *he*, from a largely theoretical perspective, quoting the *Book of Odes* and the *Book of Changes*. He dismissed those that did not take a holistic view of the current issues and argued that people must do more than worry about their individual states. “Whether in the *datong* of Confucius or in the *shangtong* of Mozi, all living things are one and all life is connected. Without the individual, the great *dao* is still magnificent. Should each manage his own state and each instruct his own people, they will be of no consequence and not be following the *dao*. The great flow of history cannot be managed through frustrations.”⁷⁶

74. “Datong yishuju xulie,” *Chinese Progress* 42 (October 16, 1897), 2836–37.

75. Liang, “*Dadong hebang lun xu*,” in *Yinbingshi heji jiawai wen (shang)*.

76. Liang, “*Dadong hebang lun xu*,” in *Yinbingshi heji jiawai wen (shang)*.

Liang turned from this discussion of classical Chinese political theory to other examples of international cooperation and federation in practice. He mentioned the uniting of ancient Greece that began the Hellenistic era, the uniting of eighteen European countries to battle Napoleon, and finally the union of the thirteen colonies to form the original United States. These historical lessons showed the merits of such unions and contextualized Liang's discussion of the union of China and Japan:

Those that stand together meet with prosperity and those that stand alone are executed. Is it not absurd to be arrogant and self-important? Japan and China are separated by the mists that envelop the East Sea. Asia has chosen to be timid and put on the butcher's block by a foreign people. The yellow and white races are becoming like ice and coal. The Southeast with its profit and thriving people is divided like meat. And all our scholars close their eyes and snore. While the funeral pyre is stocked with wood, they believe things are still safe. If a crisis occurs and those that rely upon each other for existence do not help, but stay divided as though their circumstances are particular, how can they not but be bait for those snakes?! Therefore, we must plan for wealth and power. We must have political reform. In order to protect our race we must not be timid but must ally!⁷⁷

Pursuing a racial method for alleviating the ills of the current crisis provided a simple plot much in line with late nineteenth-century science.⁷⁸ However, Liang ended this passage arguing that China and Japan "must ally" (*fei lianmeng buke*). In the passages before this, Liang convinced his reader of the positive nature of *he* in this preface to a book on federalism. Had he written "we must federalize" (*fei hebang buke*), it would have been a clear call of support for the author. However, Liang's use of the term *alliance*, *lianmeng*, reveals the ambiguity of the reformers' vision in this regard. He was aware that uniting with Japan, although offering possibilities for the protection of China, was a journey into uncharted waters. He was therefore cautious and wary of Tarui's proposal. He did provide an abstruse criticism of Tarui near the end of his preface:

Picking up On the Great Eastern Federation, and considering this man Morimoto, for a while I thought him some sort of genius. But should the

77. Liang, "Dadong hebang lun xu," in *Yinbingshi heji jiawai wen (shang)*.

78. I return to this reliance on race in further detail in chapter 3.

pillar that supports this house fall, then the normal walls will protect the people. The wood must be straightened with compass and square. Federalists should protect the supportive wall of classical learning [Confucianism] and support the people's long held customs as their compass and square. It is a pity that this book is so wordy and its approach is treacherous. Although it appears to support a common perspective, it revolves around the author's own opinions. The taking of our vassal state has changed my perspective. Finding a crack (in our thinking) his rattling on is evasive. However, with the dishonest practices of the world powers, a union is logical, and my criticisms are like picking at bones. Understanding his main points, the valuable words left behind in the history of each dynasty can also help towards the long term autonomy of the Orient.⁷⁹

This criticism, though contradictory and half-hearted, reveals Liang's fear of Japan's growing imperialism, specifically regarding Korea. Tarui wrote this book before the Sino-Japanese War, and Liang has the advantage of hindsight on this event when considering the complexity of Japan's actions and words regarding Korea. It is a pity that Liang did not further discuss his misgivings in his preface. The fact that he agreed to publish a book on Japan's absorption of Korea just three years after the Sino-Japanese War is significant. Despite his evident anger at Japan's growing dominance over Korea, he agreed with the main principles of this book and found its greatest flaw to be its disregard for Confucian traditions and their importance in instructing the people. Liang saw these teachings as essential in any possible international union. This fit well with his mentor's beliefs on Confucianism. Kang was in complete agreement with Liang on this idea of unity. In his masterpiece *Datong Shu*, the uniting of states was one of the most crucial steps on the path to *datong*. He wrote: "Abolishing state boundaries and evolving from division to unity (*he*) is a natural trend of the times.⁸⁰ Discussing alliance (*lianbang*), Kang favored a system in which each state would govern domestic issues but a united government would handle other matters. This was in accordance with Kang's understanding of the historical development of the intermediary stage that he believed humanity was passing through, the Age of Approaching Peace (*shengping shi*).⁸¹ For Kang, the final purpose of unification was the telos of global harmony, whereas for Liang it was a means to wealth and power.

79. Liang, "Dadong hebang lun xu," in *Yinbingshi heji jiwai wen (shang)*.

80. Kang Youwei, *Datong shu*, 87.

81. Wang Hui, *Xiandai Zhongguo sixiang*, shang, 774.

During his years in Japan, Liang turned more and more to the importance of wealth and power for China, an inclination strongly voiced in the preface to Tarui's text: "We must plan for wealth and power. We must have political reform. In order to protect our race we must not be timid but must ally!" The connection between wealth and power, reform, and Japan was emphasized in these lines. Liang knew that only by increasing China's wealth and power could the country survive the onslaught of Western imperialism. The only way to do so was through reform, and reform indicated copying Japan's success or, in this case, uniting with Japan in this new form of international cooperation. Liang was viewing this as a very modern international union, despite his conflicting Confucian worldview.

The new edition of this text was extremely popular in China. If we are to believe Tarui's 1910 assessment, the edition sold 100,000 copies.⁸² Whether or not this number is accurate, the book certainly garnered attention among China's elite. Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培, who was working at the Hanlin Academy in 1898, did a careful analysis of the "translated" edition of the text in September 1898. Cai lists chapters of the original book and offers a short review of its main subject, the unification of China, Korea, and Japan to defend against the West, before calling it a masterpiece.⁸³ As for the version published by Liang, Cai explains the numerous changes that have been made. He notes some of the changes, such as changing the term "our nation" to "Japan," as frivolous but calls other minor changes into question. This he directly brings to the attention of Kang and Liang, who by that time were living in Japan.

One hundred ten years after Cai Yuanpei's careful examination of the difference between the two editions, Lei Chia-Sheng decided to make another examination of these two texts.⁸⁴ Lei's reasons for returning to the texts in this manner have quite a different focus. As a researcher of federalism in modern Chinese history, Lei looks to these texts while asking the question: "What is the relationship between the Chinese publication of *On the Great Eastern Federation* and the concept of 'feder-

82. Min Tu-ki, "Daito Gappo ron," 93–94.

83. Cai Yuanpei, "Riben Senben Danfang," 78–80.

84. Lei, "Dadonghebang lun' yu," 87–108.

alism' during the Hundred Days' Reform?"⁸⁵ Lei finds that the differences between these texts were not merely the cosmetic differences listed above. The editors at the Datong Translation Publishing House changed a number of lines that neither the Qing authorities nor the reformers would feel comfortable with, including many passages that stressed the contradiction of Manchu rule and Han complacency.⁸⁶

According to Lei, Kang Youwei was eager to work toward a federation with Japan at the time. Lei cites numerous texts that show Kang's support for the federation and details how he pressured others to push this idea onto the emperor. Lei believes that the idea for the federation that brought a dramatic end to the reforms was directly related to Kang's reading of Tarui's text: "It is clear that the 'federation' plans of the 100 Days Reform followed the steps of *On the Great Eastern Federation*."⁸⁷ However, Lei believes that this would have resulted in China being annexed by Japan. In Lei's reading, it is therefore only the foresight of Empress Dowager Cixi that saved China from such a fate.⁸⁸

Conclusion

As China descended into crisis in the late nineteenth century, the need for reform and the urge to Westernize while maintaining independence became a central focus for contemporary intellectuals. The possibilities for a new China were imagined in many ways at the time, but the texts analyzed here frequently return to the prospect of allying with Japan or creating some form of an East Asian international federation. An increasingly influential influx of Asianist institutions and texts entered

85. Lei, "'Dadonghebang lun' yu," 88.

86. Although Lei finds these changes as attributable to the reformers' belief system, it also seems possible that some of these changes would have been made to keep in line with local authorities. Some passages from Tarui's book openly attacked the Qing government as unjust and their ancestors as unscrupulous.

87. Lei, "'Dadonghebang lun' yu," 103.

88. In *Containing the Furious Waves*, Lei argued that the reformers, who had only a basic knowledge of foreign politics, including federalism, proposed the idea to the Guangxu emperor before Empress Dowager Cixi stepped in to bring an end to their reforms. Lei does not think highly of Kang and believed he was overly influenced by zealous Japanese bent on dominating China. Lei's hypothesis offers interesting insight into Kang's reasoning for publishing Tarui's book. Lei, *Liwan kuanglan*.

China during this period, and these new flows of information, people, and concepts resulted in this early dialogue on East Asian unity between Chinese and Japanese elites. Chinese intellectuals struggled to accommodate new concepts and new futures with traditional concepts and histories, a practice that Japan had much experience in.

This offered Japan a new form of hegemonic power in the production of knowledge, pulling the reformers to Japan just as Western imperialism was pushing them from behind. These choices made by pro-Japanese intellectuals were therefore neither representative of the enthusiasm of a golden decade nor the disdain of the traditional Sinosphere but reflected a struggle to find safe and acceptable alternatives under the duress of growing imperialism. This is not to say that the Japanese and Chinese were not sincere in their efforts to cooperate to defend East Asia against Western imperialism. There was sincerity to their calls for mutual assistance and truth to their fears that one would fall without the other. As the title of this chapter suggests, one nation depended on the other. The teeth freeze without the lips, but Chinese intellectuals would later find that the teeth sometimes have a tendency to bite the lips.

The pro-Japanese reformist Asianism that took root among Chinese intellectuals did not simply disappear in 1898. However, the dialogue between Chinese and Japanese did change. After 1898, removed from their positions of power, the exiled reformers turned their attention to education and publications. As seen in the next chapter, the schools and journals they created espoused a form of Asianism more connected to Confucianism. The 1898 reforms were brought to a dramatic end with Cixi's coup on September 21. By this time the reformers had made friends with a number of Japanese elites who would welcome them to exile in Yokohama and Tokyo, where efforts were made for cooperation to save China from the Manchu conservatives and the Western imperialists.

As will be explained in chapter 2, Kojō Teikichi, the Sinologist and translator at the *Chinese Progress*, had already introduced the reformers to Yamamoto Ken, an influential Sinologist based in Osaka who ensured that the lead reformers Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao were warmly welcomed. The Tōa Dōbunkai 東亞同文會, the largest and most influential Asianist organization in the early twentieth century, was estab-

lished shortly thereafter. The organization played a role in disseminating Liang Qichao's thought in both China and Japan.⁸⁹ Japanese discourse on Asianism became noticeably more aggressive as these elites were encouraged by what they perceived to be a surge in Chinese interest in alliance after 1898.⁹⁰

89. The Tōa Dōbunkai also began publishing numerous Chinese-language newspapers and journals in China and had an enormous influence across East Asia in 1900. See Zhai, *Tōa Dōbunkai to Chūgoku*.

90. An excellent example of this is found in Takayama Chogyū's description of Chinese newspapers; Zachmann, *China and Japan in the Late Meiji Period*, 74.

CHAPTER TWO

Jaw and Jowls

Confucian Asianism in Japan's Chinatowns

Studies of imperialism often have the advantage or impediment of being able to assume a center for empire in the metropoles of Europe. Late Qing dynasty China was in a state of semi-colonialism that differed from most other colonies but retained many of the worst features. Although it remained nominally independent and never fell under the power of one colonial empire, China suffered under late nineteenth-century imperialism. Similar to intellectuals from other colonies, intellectuals in China turned to the metropoles to educate their youth, modernize them, and prepare them to counter imperialism. Unlike other colonies, China had a choice to make between numerous imperial centers. Japan was also a special case for empire, lying close at hand to the colonies it governed, recently having been a victim of European imperialism and still under the threat of Western empires, notably the enlarging Russian empire. Although China and Japan had maintained a degree of independence before 1900, intellectuals in both countries recognized the degree to which the threat of Western imperialism loomed over their autonomy. Despite the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, the turn to Japan for help was a natural choice for Chinese intellectuals, and they were warmly welcomed.

The establishment of the Datong Schools in Yokohama and Tokyo is symbolic of Chinese intellectual efforts to confront the crisis brought on by Western imperialism through a mix of nationalist Confucianism

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and the new knowledge coming from the West.¹ Unable to bring about meaningful reform in China, intellectual elites turned to Japan as a place where they could both effectively study the so-called New Learning as well as train a new generation of intellectuals to bring China into modernity without losing them to the West. These years in Japan reinforced the new Japanese terminology in the reform intellectuals' language and further emphasized popular Japanese ideology in their writing. However, this was not merely unidirectional. These few years represent a period of Sino-Japanese elite cooperation in which intellectuals imagined a future that was both Asian and modern, discarding the "leaving Asia" slogan which a number of Meiji intellectuals had used to posit Asia as the past and Europe as the future. This can particularly be seen in the establishment and early years of the Datong School in Yokohama. Although still following the reformers' dialogue with the Japanese elite, this chapter turns toward efforts to promote Confucian Chinese education in Japan, examining the Datong Schools as a site of Japan–China cooperation.

In this chapter, I examine discourse on a modern Confucian Asianism that promoted China–Japan unity and reached its peak around the turn of the century. Although it existed before this and continued to be relevant through Chinese Asianist organizations in the 1920s, 1930s, and even into the Second Sino-Japanese War, the establishment of reformer schools in Japan are the best example of this form of Asianism, showcasing how ideas were constructed through the dialogue of cooperating Chinese and Japanese elites. Although much of this discourse may be interpreted as Chinese lip service to Japanese hosts, the political rhetoric gained ground in the minds of Chinese youth as the next generation of elite intellectuals selectively incorporated revolutionary elements of their mentors' teachings and writings.

Concepts and identities changed as they passed to a new generation living through this pivotal period of transnational cooperation. I argue that the Datong Schools were very much a concrete product of the coop-

1. I use the Mandarin name of the school (Datong) merely for the reader's convenience. This school was never called *datong* at the time of its existence. It was officially known in Japanese as *daidō*, and students and staff were Cantonese speakers who would have called it *daaitung*. This chapter largely concerns the first Datong School, established in Yokohama in 1897 and beginning operations in 1898. The Datong Higher School, established in Tokyo in 1899 and largely involving the same students and staff, is also discussed.

eration of Japanese and Chinese intellectuals, and the nationalist and Asianist concepts and identities employed for the students' education were epistemological products of this same cooperation in an effort to save China and East Asia from Western imperialism. These efforts, which concentrated on a Confucian education with modern attributes, resulted in nationalistic youth with a victim consciousness, showcasing the relationship between Asianism and nationalism. This was a time of great cooperation. As one Japanese journalist remarked, using yet another classical idiom for the countries' modern relationship: "The two states of China and Japan are as interdependent as jaw and jowls."²

Despite the schools' obvious importance and relation to many Japanese and Chinese elites, texts concerning the initial Datong Schools are limited. In the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, the main school in Yokohama was completely destroyed, along with most of its records.³ This chapter relies on published sources in newspapers, journals, and books, as well as a number of memoirs and some unpublished letters sent by school officials during the first few years after the school's establishment in 1897.

The Reformers and the Tōa Dōbunkai

As shown in chapter 1, the reformers led by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao failed in their muddled efforts to re-create the Chinese political system in the Meiji model. All sorts of possibilities for cooperation with Japan had appeared in 1898, but the palace coup in September ended the reformers' hopes, and they were forced to flee, finally finding a welcoming exile in Japan. They settled in Yokohama, an important site of Sino-Japanese cooperation that would play a continued role in collaboration between the countries' citizens even well into World War II.⁴ Their welcome there was partly due to the Japanese friends they had

2. Similar to the "lips and teeth" slogan discussed in chapter 1, the slogan "interdependent as jaw and jowls" 輔車相依 first originated in the *Zuo zhuan* and indicated an interdependent relationship between two states. "Xing Qing lun," *QYB*, 1, 48. Page numbers from *QYB* are only included when clear in the republished edition.

3. In the earthquake, three other Chinese schools in Yokohama, the Zhicheng School, the Huaqiao School, and the Zhonghua School, were also destroyed. The Datong, Huaqiao, and Zhonghua Schools combined and reopened in 1926 as the China Public School (Zhonghua gongli xuexiao).

4. For a discussion of Yokohama's history as a site of wartime collaboration, see Han, "A True Sino-Japanese Amity?"

made through the *Shiwu Bao* and partly due to the establishment of a new transnational institution. The reformers' 1898 flight to Japan coincided with the establishment of a far-reaching Japanese Asianist organization, the Tōa Dōbunkai.

The Tōa Dōbunkai 東亞同文會, the Asianist organization that would become the most powerful and best-known such organization of the twentieth century, was established just weeks before the *China Discussion* (*Qingyi Bao* 清議報) began publishing, in November 1898.⁵ It had a very diverse membership, including the expansionist, politically minded Tōakai, the liberal Dōbunkai, and others, such as Sun Yat-sen's friends Miyazaki Tōten and Hirayama Shū. The organization was not limited to Japanese membership. One of the founding members was Kang Youwei's student, Xu Qin (1873–?), who was in Yokohama to head the newly opened Datong School.⁶ This connection may have influenced the Japanese elite to provide Kang and Liang with such a welcome and may explain the connection of the organization to the *China Discussion*. The members of the Tōa Dōbunkai decided on four principal goals:

1. To preserve the integrity of China.
2. To aid China's advancement.
3. To investigate the current state of affairs in China and decide on appropriate action.
4. To raise public awareness.⁷

These goals show the unidirectional interest of the institute. It was not concerned with collaboration with Chinese intellectuals as much as it was with actively influencing China. The reformers' arrival in Japan provided an opportunity to advance these goals. The stated intentions

5. As this periodical included the English name the *China Discussion* on its front cover, I use it here. The Chinese name *Qingyi bao* was a more complicated play on words, as *qingyi* indicated "fair discussion" but the single character *Qing* was also the name of the Manchu-led state. The name could then be translated as either *qingyi bao*, *Journal of Fair Discussion*, or as *Qing yi bao*, *Journal of Discussion on the Qing State*.

6. Before the establishment of the Tōa Dōbunkai, a number of its members had made contact with the reformers in China. According to founding member Murakata Kotarō's diary, he had discussed Sino-Japanese unity (*lianhe*) with Liang Qichao, Wang Kangnian, and Li Shengduo in Shanghai in February 1897. See Zhai, *Tōa Dōbunkai to Chūgoku*, 73. See the following section of this chapter for Yamamoto Ken's Shanghai meetings with the reformers. On Xu Qin and *Taiyō*, see Zachmann, "The Foundation Manifesto," 116–17.

7. Zachmann, "The Foundation Manifesto," 117.

of the Tōa Dōbunkai would have appealed to the reformers who were working toward similar ends. In the first issue of the *China Discussion*, a journal established with Tōa Dōbunkai support to promote the interests of the Chinese reformers living in Japan, the editors forwarded their own four principles:

1. Support discussions on China and arouse the righteousness of the citizens!
2. Expand the knowledge of the Chinese people!
3. Facilitate the communication between Chinese and Japanese voices, and bring them together in friendship!
4. Invent an East Asian learning in order to preserve the Asian essence!⁸

These principles had a noticeably stronger concentration on “Asia” than those of Japan’s most famous Asianist institution. While Japanese Asianist organizations were discussing China and what Japan could do with it, the Chinese intellectuals who were working with them were discussing East Asia and encouraging cooperation with the Japanese.

The *China Discussion* became an important voice for the Tōa Dōbunkai in its early days. On the twenty-third page of the initial issue, the organization placed a full-page advertisement, declaring the intentions and the founding principles listed above and inviting Chinese literati to join them.⁹ Repeating the standardized metaphor of “lips and teeth,” the short article refers to China and Japan’s ancient brotherhood and laments the fighting between the countries. Renewed ties and exchanges are what the statement calls for, ending with the words: “We invite the literati [*shidaifu* 士大夫] of both these countries, those born on this same continent, those with the same ambitions in these times, to support these ideas and enter this organization so that we may join forces on this.”¹⁰

8. *QYB* 1, 4. By the end of its third year, these principles are no longer mentioned in the journal, indicating Liang’s loss of confidence in the strategy of Asianism. Dikötter notes that they are not mentioned at all in the 100th issue article on the journal. Dikötter, *Discourse of Race in Modern China*, 86.

9. *QYB* 1, 47.

10. Dikötter, *Discourse of Race in Modern China*, 86. Also in the first few pages of the first edition is “Yu Zhina youzhi zhu junzi shu” (A Letter to China’s Gentlemen of Will), *QYB* 1, 25–31, which is simply listed as authored by a gentleman from the Tōa Dōbunkai. The article displayed the group’s anger with Westerners’ theory that the

Perhaps because of the sudden influence of the Tōa Dōbunkai, reformers' writing became more pro-Asianist after their 1898 arrival in Japan, for which Liang is often cited as an important Chinese pan-Asianist by Asianist organizations today.¹¹ Although Liang certainly wrote texts on Asian unity and cooperation with Japan, unlike Sun Yat-sen, his Asianist ideology is only evident in his writing for a few short years following the reforms of 1898 and must be seen in temporal and spatial limitations. Liang made the logical choice to turn to Japan for help with China's problems during what he saw as a period of crisis. Although generally always believing in nationalism and liberalism as the appropriate paths to modernity, Liang regularly changed his mind on other key issues, his focus vacillating between republicanism and constitutional monarchy during the late Qing years. Pan-Asianism was also a path to modernity that Liang flirted with around the turn of the century.

Some form of a union between China and Japan made logical sense to Liang during his pro-Japanese years. Although he never clearly conceptualized what this Asian union would be, he made vague references to unity before the coup and then naïvely called for a bizarre union of Japan, China, the United States, and Great Britain during and after the coup.¹² Such discussions cannot be strictly called Asianist. They expose the desperation of Liang and others during this time, but also indicate the great distance between Liang's thinking in 1898 and modern ideas of nationalism that typified his writing in Japan. However, later critiques cited his journal the *China Discussion* as evidence of Liang's Asianist leanings. In the final sentence of the introduction of the first edition, the editors explain: "We must support those of our yellow race who will strive for an autonomous Asia in the twentieth century."¹³

white West was superior to the yellow East. It demanded that China modernize and regain its position as a world power for Asia.

11. For example, see the writing of the Society for Asian Integration or the many websites, blogs, and Facebook pages designed by vocal Asianist blogger Niraj Kumar. See Kumar, *Arise, Asia!*, 172. Liang is mentioned as a Chinese proponent of Asianist thought in a 2006 article by China's current foreign minister, Wang Yi, "Sikao ershiyishiji de xin Yazhouzhuyi."

12. Liang in a meeting with Shiga Shigetaka on October 27, 1898. Available in translation in Masako, "Shiga Shigetaka," 206.

13. *QYB* 1, 4.

This statement is representative of the intellectual climate surrounding the reformers' arrival in Japan and the short collaboration with the Tōa Dōbunkai and Japanese supporters of China. The *China Discussion* was the voice for the reformers during the first few years of their exile in Japan and served as the foremost promoter of the Datong Schools and as educational materials for their students. The *China Discussion* remains one of the most important sources for studies of the schools today and is frequently referenced in this chapter. However, the school itself, which serves as material evidence of the reformers' Confucian Asianism, predates the journal and the arrival of reformers by a year.

The Establishment of the Datong Schools

The first Datong School was opened in Yokohama in 1898, bringing together a wide range of people with a common goal: modernize China through education. The decision to establish the school was not made by the reformers, who would soon dominate the school and control its teaching, but by the Chinese of Yokohama. The port had been open to foreigners since 1859 and immediately saw the growth of a Chinatown, despite Chinese residents not gaining legal status until the ratification of the Sino-Japanese Friendship and Trade Treaty in 1873. The population came primarily from Guangzhou, with a minority from the San Jiang area, and they naturally wanted a school in which the students could be instructed in their native Cantonese (fig. 2.1).¹⁴ The school was originally a project envisioned by the Yokohama Chinese Association in consultation with Sun Yat-sen and his revolutionary organization, the Xingzhonghui. They made plans to open the Zhongxi School (Zhongxi xuexiao 中西學校) in 1897, a project initially led by Feng Jingru 馮鏡如 (1844?–1913) and Ma Zishan 馬紫珊.¹⁵ The Chinese Association decided to send Kuang Rupan 廖汝磐 to Shanghai to find a suitable teacher. At that time, Kang Youwei had become quite famous, and Kuang was able to call on him to forward a request for a new headmaster from Sun Yat-sen.

According to a school history from 1908, Kang told Kuang: "If the school is called the Zhongxi School [China and the West School], it is missing a term for Japan. If it is called the China-Japan School, it is

14. Han, "Narrating Community in Yokohama Chinatown."

15. Itō, "Yokohama daidō gakkō," 4–5.

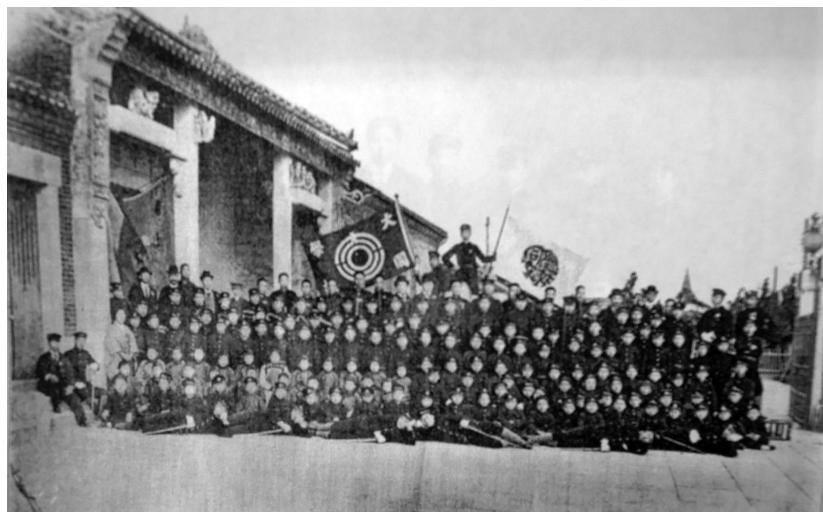


Figure 2.1. An assembly of students at the Datong School in Yokohama. This rare photo found in the 1908 Datong School Register (Zhang Xuehuan 1908) shows the Datong students with visiting students from the Shizhong School 時中學校 in Penang and the Tongwen School 同文學校 in Kobe. Public domain. Yokohama Archives of History (Museum).

missing the West. It would be best if it were called the Datong School.”¹⁶ From this point on the school was known as Datong, indicating the Confucian utopia and the subject of Kang’s magnum opus, the *Datong Shu* (大同書 World Unity), which he was in the middle of writing in 1897. Kang’s philosophy was established in the name of the school as well as in its teaching and staff. To provide the students with the proper reformist Confucian education, Kang dispatched Xu Junmian 徐君勉 (1873–1945), who is more commonly known as Xu Qin 徐勤, along with Chen Moan 陳默庵, Chen Yinnong 陳蔭農, and Tang Juedun 湯覺頓 (1878–1916), to serve as his representatives.¹⁷ Xu Qin, one of Kang’s earliest and favorite students, was made headmaster of the new school.¹⁸

16. Zhang Xuehuan, *Datong xuelu*, 2.

17. Zhang Xuehuan, *Datong xuelu*, 2.

18. There are two other slightly different stories of this event, both of which seem unlikely and do not match the earlier sources. One version is that the Chinese Association had originally wanted Kuang Rupan to bring Liang Qichao back as headmaster. However, as Kang Youwei had recently asked Liang to serve as editor of the *Shiwu Bao*, he was unwilling to allow him to leave for Japan. This is certainly plausible,

The need for a school therefore came from three directions. First, the reformers, who were establishing schools all across China, were very active in Yokohama, and it was logical to send some of their best intellectual resources to the people to whom they turned for financial help. Second, the local residents wanted a school for their children so that they would not have to endure the terrible racism that was prevalent at schools for foreigners in Japan. Third, Japanese Asianists wanted a school established to continue with the reforms and “raise China,” and they were willing to offer the necessary support.

One of the reformers’ key concepts was widespread education under a mix of Confucianism and New Learning: scientific, political, and philosophical knowledge from the West. In essence, this indicated the push to educate a reform-minded youth under the framework of Confucianism as state religion, as outlined by Kang Youwei.¹⁹ These education initiatives began in China with Kang’s famous Wanmu Caotang 萬木草堂 in Guangzhou and the Shiwu School 時務學堂 in Changsha, which was opened by China’s paramount diplomat to Japan, Huang Zunxian.²⁰ However, after reformers lost power at court in 1898, domestic proreform schools were closed or made ineffective, and schools were opened abroad in Chinese communities as far away as Singapore, Surabaya, and Victoria, Canada.²¹ The Datong Schools were intended to be the central institutions for this worldwide expansion.²² Once the key reformers had made their homes in Yokohama and Tokyo in late 1898, the Datong Schools became the models for all others.

As for the local residents’ need for separate schooling, Feng Ziyou, an insider on such a need, wrote a scathing criticism of the racism toward

yet it seems odd for the association to have made such a direct request. This became the school’s official history: *Yokohama Yamate*, 45. The original source that this comes from is probably Feng Ziyou, *Zhonghua Minguo kaiguo qian geming shi*, 42, where Feng explained that Chen Shaobai recommended Liang. The other version is that Sun Yat-sen and the Chinese Association wanted Kang Youwei to be headmaster himself. This version seems to be a result of Joseph Levenson’s misreading of his source, Li Jiannong. Levenson, *Liang Ch’i-Ch’ao*, 50. Li Jiannong, *Zujin sanshi nian*, 68. Li’s original source is also Feng.

19. Chen Lai, “Bainian lai ruxue fazhan,” 42–46; Fujiya, “Yokohama daidō gakkō,” 22–23.

20. Reynolds and Reynolds, *East Meets East*, 34.

21. The opening of Victoria’s Lequn yishu was discussed in Hong Jiang, “A Socio-Historical Analysis,” 11–14.

22. “Dongjing gaodeng Datong Xuexiao gong qi,” *QYB* 25, 7–8.

Chinese that existed in schools for foreigners in Japan. Feng had first-hand experience with Western condescension at such schools. In 1896 he was sent to study at Gyōsei Gakkō (曉星學校 Ecole l’Etoile du Matin), a French Catholic school in Tokyo. The vicious bullying of the Chinese by Western students was too much to bear, and he gave up after only four months of study. According to Feng, the Western students constantly berated the Chinese and accused them of being dirty, a theme that is evident in the newspapers of the time.²³

In an 1898 article on the Datong School in the *Kobe Weekly Chronicle*, the author condescendingly mocks Chinese people for being dirty. Conversely, in the same paragraph the author proclaims the Yokohama Chinatown to be the cleanest in the world, apart from those in Dutch colonies, where “the Chinaman down there—no doubt much to his unspeakable disgust,—has to keep not only himself, but the roadways and the interiors of his own *campong* clean as well.”²⁴ The author goes on to explain with amazement that the students of the Datong School appear even cleaner than Japanese students. Though it was taken years later, in 1915, a photo of the student body gives some sense of the refinement of the students, in contrast to the opinions expressed by the *Kobe Weekly Chronicle* reporter (fig. 2.2). In fact, the author has only positive things to say about the school, but cannot help but deride the reformers who were sent to educate the children. The article ends, “But from the teacher’s standpoint we are not quite so sure about the advantage of being born in the kingdom where men are brought up on roast-pig and the Confucian Analects.”²⁵ Most Westerners were not willing to help the Chinese at this time. Their condescension was overwhelming.

The overseas Chinese living in Japan brought about the need for the Datong Schools, but the arrival of the reformers in Japan greatly accelerated the process. Within two years, the Chinese community in Japan opened two new schools, one in Kobe, the other in Tokyo. The school in Kobe, proposed by Liang Qichao during a visit to Kobe in 1899, was

23. This small school was founded by Alphonse Heinrich in 1888. Although the buildings were destroyed in the Great Kantō Earthquake, the school survives to this day. See Ecole de l’Etoile du Matin website at <http://www.gyosei-e.ed.jp/newhp/pages/ayumi.htm>; Feng Ziyou, *Geming yishi*, 50–51.

24. “The Chinese School in Yokohama,” *Kobe Weekly Chronicle*, October 1, 1898, 306–7.

25. “The Chinese School in Yokohama,” *Kobe Weekly Chronicle*, October 1, 1898, 306–7.



Figure 2.2. The Datong School in Yokohama in 1915. Public domain. <http://www.oisii-net.co.jp/tousai/2k12/tokushu2k12.htm> (accessed October 13, 2020).

initially to be called the Kobe Datong School, but before it opened the name was changed to the Tongwen School 同文學校.²⁶ Meaning both “same script” and “same culture,” *tongwen* (Jp. *dōbun*) was a key term for China–Japan cooperation at the time, as well as half of the name of Japan’s largest Asianist organization, the Tōa Dōbunkai, which had provided support for the reformers behind the school. Mai Shaopeng 麥少彭, the headmaster at the Tongwen School, was an associate of Liang Qichao, and his family was prominent in the Kobe business community,²⁷ but Inukai Tsuyoshi was established as the honorary headmaster and delivered a full-fledged Asianist speech at the opening ceremony on March 1.²⁸ This school is the only Datong School to survive to the pres-

26. “Shenhu Qingren jiang kai Datong xuexiao,” *QYB* 19; “Ji Shenhu Tongwen xuexiao kaixiao shi,” *QYB* 38.

27. Chen Laixing, “Haiwai Zhonghua zongshanghui,” 160.

28. The speech praised China–Japan cooperation in the opening of the school, made references to the “same script, same race” and “teeth and lips” idioms, and offered criticism of Japan straying from the shared cultural roots provided by Confucius and Mencius. Also, the date for the school’s opening is often written as Feburary 1. It was in

ent day. Although the building was destroyed in the bombing of Kobe on June 5, 1945, it was rebuilt and continues to play an important role in Kobe's Chinese community.²⁹

The other school that the overseas Chinese established was the Datong High School, an upper-level school designed to cultivate talent selected in Japan, China, and other countries to rescue China.³⁰ The reasons listed for establishing the school in Japan rather than in another country were cost, proximity, Confucianism, script, race, and the abundance of Japanese willing to help China. In establishing the Datong School, the Chinese found numerous influential Japanese friends to whom they could turn for help. An article in the *China Discussion*, written by a group from the Yokohama Chinese community, conveyed the need for this reliance on Japan and the level of support they saw after two years of running the first Datong School:

The powers all come from another continent, but Japan is our neighbor. Our soil is close by. We are of a similar race and use a similar script. This makes it easier for our students to learn. Furthermore, those that are knowledgeable among Japan's government and people understand the importance of the mutual assistance of teeth and lips. They see supporting China as of first importance. Their feelings of mutual love and friendship are many times that of the white race and they are willing to assist and educate. On our own we may not be able to accomplish this. Moreover, if the youth of China can unite with the youth of Japan and support East Asia in these times, then such an effort can begin with this school of higher education.³¹

The assistance of Ōkuma Shigenobu and Inukai Tsuyoshi was mentioned in many of these articles on the Datong Schools. Their Asianist vocabulary of “teeth and lips,” a common metaphor for Japanese and Chinese mutual assistance, as well as references to race and script, stand

fact the first day of the second month on the lunar calendar, March 1 on the Gregorian calendar. “Ji Shenhу Tongwen xuexiao kaixiao shi,” *QYB* 38.

29. This is according to the official school history. Kobe Dōbun Gakkō, *Gakkō shōkai*, 2. Also mentioned in *Asahi*'s commemoration of the school's 110th anniversary: “Dōbun gakkō sōritsu 110 nen,” *Asahi Shinbun*, September 10, 2009, 25. My thanks to the staff at the Kobe Overseas Chinese History Museum for these and many other materials concerning the Tongwen School.

30. “Dongjing gaodeng Datong Xuexiao gong qi,” *QYB* 25, 8.

31. “Dongjing gaodeng Datong Xuexiao gong qi,” *QYB* 25, 8.

out in the foregoing passage as well as many other articles from the reformers' journals in Japan. Asianism featured strongly in the pages of the *China Discussion*, and many people surrounding and supporting the Datong School were committed Asianists, partly due to the timing of the reformers' arrival in Japan and the associations they formed immediately on arrival.

Sino-Japanese Elite Cooperation and the Datong School

The Datong School was an important symbol as the point of intersection of Chinese reformers and revolutionaries, as well as Japanese China adventurers, politicians, and Sinologists. One of the most interesting elements of the Datong School's early days is the number of these elite Japanese Asianists involved with the school. They can be broken into three groups: the so-called *shishi* 志士 adventurers, typified by Sun Yat-sen's close friend Miyazaki Tōten; the Japanese political elite Asianists, who had found new power in Japan in 1898; and the Confucians who dreamed of an Asia based on classical traditions thriving in a modern world. Although we regularly divide the Asianists by their beliefs and their actions, on issues such as this they could all work together and support a common mission.

When the 1898 reforms came to an end with Cixi's coup, Sun Yat-sen hurriedly asked his Japanese Asianist adventurer friends to help the fugitives escape from the Qing police. Miyazaki Tōten was sent to Hong Kong to find Kang Youwei hiding on a British boat, and Hirayama Shu 平山周 was sent to Beijing to find Liang Qichao and Wang Zhao stuck in the Japanese embassy.³² Both of the major groups opposing the Qing government were temporarily united in Yokohama. The China hands had made friends with important Chinese agents of change and managed to prove their worth in times of trouble. Although these adventurers had the least influence of the three Asianist groups on the Datong School, they continued to appear. Correspondence between Miyazaki Tōten and Xu Qin, while he served as headmaster, show Miyazaki's importance and the diminishing role Sun was able to play in the school. Xu dramatically declared that China was like a boat lost in the storm and needed

32. Sun Yat-sen's role may not have been as great as Feng claims it to have been. In any case, Miyazaki and Hirayama did bring Kang and Liang to Japan in November 1898. Feng Ziyou, *Geming yishi*, 48.

Japan's help.³³ Of course, just a year earlier, Miyazaki had brought Xu's mentor to Japan. Despite Xu's disagreements with Sun, he wanted to keep ties with Miyazaki. The Japanese Asianists with a larger influence on the school were in much more powerful positions.

The reformers had arrived in Japan at just the right time to receive help from Japanese Asianists. The newly established Tōa Dōbunkai assisted Liang in establishing and publishing his latest journal, the *China Discussion*, hastily put forth in November 1898 and printed by Feng Jingru, noted as one of the founders of the Datong School and the father of Feng Ziyou, the school's most famous student, who will be discussed below.³⁴ Tōa Dōbunkai members were conspicuous in their involvement with the school. Kōmuchi Tomotsune 神鞭知常 (1848–1905), an examination minister, frequently attended ceremonies. Kashibara Buntarō 柏原文太郎 (1869–1936), an assistant of Inukai Tsuyoshi,³⁵ served as executive secretary and made speeches to the students.³⁶ Two of the most important members of the Tōa Dōbunkai, Inukai and Ōkuma Shigenobu, played very active roles in the school.

Inukai was minister of Education under Ōkuma Shigenobu from June 30 to November 8, 1898. Shortly after this he served as the honorary head of the Datong Schools.³⁷ Having the former minister of Education serving as the honorary headmaster of a small school with fewer than two hundred students certainly offered the school credibility and must have attracted much support. However, Inukai's position was not easy. For the Sun and Kang camps, the school was another point over which they could not get along after Kang's arrival in Japan. Inukai, called the "godfather of the school" by Marius Jansen, worked hard to get the two camps to work together and succeeded in establishing and supporting the

33. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 79.

34. For more on Feng Jingru, see Feng Ruiyu, "Yokohama daidō gakkō to Feng Jingru."

35. Inukai Tsuyoshi, prime minister from 1931 to 1932, was involved in various Asianist organizations, including the Tōakai, forerunner to the Tōa Dōbunkai, and the Kokuryūkai, which became a rather notorious and sometimes terrorist organization years later. See Saaler, "The Kokuryūkai, 1901–1920."

36. "Datong Xuexiao xiaji jinji ji," QYB 25, 7. Also Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 79.

37. In a February 3, 1899, letter, Kang Mengqing informed Yamamoto Ken of Inukai's appointment as honorary headmaster. Kang reported that Inukai was very pleased with this appointment. YKA, article C124.

schools, but with Kang's arrival the success was short-lived and animosity soon dominated the Sun–Kang relationship.³⁸

The other major political figure associated with both the Datong Schools is Ōkuma Shigenobu. Ōkuma was an important friend of Kang, Liang, and Sun and provided continuous support from his first term as prime minister in 1898 to his second and last term, which lasted from 1914 to 1916, at which time he led the push for the Twenty-One Demands and finally lost favor with his Chinese friends. Ōkuma provided financial and government support for the Datong Schools.³⁹ Ōkuma also provided Datong students with personal recommendations—which, it can be assumed, guaranteed admission—to the university he established in Tokyo, the Tokyo Professional School 東京専門學校, later renamed Waseda University.⁴⁰

Yamamoto Ken

The final Japanese Asianist who was connected to the Datong School is the least known of those mentioned here but may have had the greatest influence on the school and, in terms of ideology, would have had the most in common with the Confucian reformers Kang, Liang, Wang, and Xu. Yamamoto Ken 山本憲 (1852–1928) was a little-known Japanese Confucian who was highly connected with the reformers from an early stage and provided much assistance with the Datong School, among other affairs.⁴¹

Yamamoto gained his Asianist activist credentials in 1885 when he assisted the famous Korean reformer, Kim Ok-gyun 金玉均 (1851–1894),

38. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 79. Also see Feng Ziyou, *Zhonghua Minguo kaiguo qian geming shi*, 43. Miyazaki Tōten also made numerous efforts. At this point he saw them both as necessary to the revolution with Sun as the vanguard and Kang as the educator. Miyazaki, *My Thirty-Three Years' Dream*, 129, 143.

39. In a letter dated August 25 (no year is written, but it can be assumed to be 1899), Liang Qichao thanks Ōkuma for his support and details the need for the Datong Higher School in Tokyo. This letter is available in the Ōkuma Archive at Waseda University Library.

40. Feng Ruiyu, "Yokohama daidō gakkō to Feng Jingru," 36.

41. Yamamoto Ken was also known as Yamamoto Baigai 山本梅崖. The best-known source on him is a two-page passage in the often-cited *Stories and Biographies of Pioneer East Asian Adventurers*, a history compiled by the Kokuryūkai and first published in 1933. Due to the ubiquity of this book, references to Yamamoto Ken almost always concern his contribution to the Osaka Incident and little else. Kokuryūkai, *Tōa Senkaku Shishi Kiden*.

by storing explosives in his Osaka home in preparation for Kim's failed coup.⁴² Deemed a major player in the Osaka Incident, Yamamoto was sentenced for his involvement and spent a few years in prison.⁴³ In late 1897 he visited Beijing and Shanghai, where he became friendly with many of the reformers before the 1898 Wuxu reforms.⁴⁴ These friendships lasted for decades, resulting in constant exchange and mutual influence. Although his role in Japan's popular rights movement was not one of the most influential, he delivered many of the ideas of this movement to a receptive Chinese audience through his influence on Liang Qichao's understanding of new literature.⁴⁵ In turn, his Confucian friends from China supported his Asianist ideals and even gave him a voice for these ideals in the *China Discussion*.

Although Yamamoto maintained contact with many of the reformers, his main contact in their group and at the Datong School was Kang Youyi,⁴⁶ the cousin of Kang Youwei. Eighty-four letters from Kang to Yamamoto remain in the Yamamoto Ken Archives today, the majority of which use the official address of the Datong School in Yokohama.⁴⁷ In his autobiography, Yamamoto states that at one time Kang asked him to be the headmaster of the Datong School, but he was unable to leave his own school, the Baieseisho 梅清所 in Osaka.⁴⁸

Yamamoto was both a people's rights' advocate and an ardent Confucian. His particular version of Asianism was in favor of constitutional monarchies in which the peoples of East Asia worked together to defend against the White Peril. He first published his Asianist ideology in "On Conditions in East Asia" 論東亞事宜 as a serialized column in the 1898–1899 editions of the *China Discussion* and then released the same text as a twenty-six-page pamphlet in summer 1900.⁴⁹ The article concentrated

42. Yamamoto was also involved in the establishment and the theoretical background of numerous nongovernmental Asianist organizations, including the Asia Trade Protectionist Association (Ajia böeki hogo kyōkai) and the China-Japan Friendship Association (Ni-Shin kyōwakai).

43. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 75.

44. Lu Shunzhang, "Yamamoto Baigai to Wang Kangnian no kō yū," 29.

45. Willcock, "Japanese Modernization," 833.

46. Kang Youyi is usually referred to by his *hao*: Kang Mengqing.

47. There are also nineteen letters from Wang Kangnian, ten from Kang Youwei, nine from Liang Qichao, and six from Wang Zhao, among many others.

48. Masuda, "Seigaku tōzen to Chūgoku jijō," 34–60.

49. Yamamoto, *Tōa Jigi*. Available in the YKA, article A9.

on the Russian threat to East Asian autonomy and stressed the need for cooperation. Using the analogy of the Warring States, Yamamoto posited the Russians as the Qin, not unlike Chen Chi's 陳熾 articles in the *Shiwu Bao* in 1897, which Yamamoto would have been familiar with.⁵⁰

In the introduction to the *Contents of the Yamamoto Ken Archive*, the archivists explain, “The value of Yamamoto Ken’s Asianism remains an important research topic. Taking Confucianism as the basis for Japanese and Chinese mutual assistance, it is clearly different from the Great Asianism which arose later to posit Japan as the leader of Asia.”⁵¹ This is so, however, in “On Conditions in East Asia,” where Yamamoto does not just concentrate on the Confucian side of things but emphasizes Asianism as a defensive strategy to deal with Russia. Although Yamamoto took Confucianism as the assumed basis for society, his Asianism was also strongly based on his belief in the people’s sovereignty. He opposed the absolute sovereignty of the monarchs in East Asia and opposed investing too much power in political parties. Yamamoto’s vision for East Asia’s future, based on his liberal beliefs combined with his strong belief in Confucianism and acceptance of the forces of social Darwinism, made him an excellent partner for Kang and his students in the final years of the nineteenth century.⁵²

After returning from Kantō on the arrival of the reformers in Japan, he established the China-Japan Friendship Association 日清協會, an organization committed to intellectual collaboration for the protection of China and East Asia and vehemently opposed to government interference. He advertised this association regularly in the *China Discussion*, where he remarked: “China, Korea, and Japan compose a tripod that holds up the Orient. Our benefits and losses are interrelated just like lips and teeth or jaw and jowls.”⁵³ Liang Qichao wrote a letter to Yamamoto, thanking him for his role in influencing the Japanese government to protect Kang and Liang and praising his new association and showing his hopes for cooperation, calling the association the “fortune of the East.”⁵⁴

^{50.} Discussed in the previous chapter.

^{51.} Kōchi Liberty and People’s Rights Museum, “Introduction,” 13.

^{52.} In fact, Kang wrote a poem to praise Yamamoto Ken: “Da Shanben jun,” *QYB* 25.

^{53.} Yamamoto, “Shanlin xiehui zhuzhi,” *QYB* 1, 102.

^{54.} Liang, *Yinbingshi heji jiwai wen*, 57.

Yamamoto was friends with Kang and certainly familiar with his works. He may even have been one of the few insiders to see Kang's unpublished draft of the *Datong Shu*, which were much more extreme in their imagining of the route to *datong*. Xu Qin sent him an unnamed copy of one of Kang's books. In the accompanying letter, Xu briefly explains the thrust of Kang's argument: "The central meaning of Nanhai Xiansheng's [Kang Youwei] propagation of Confucius' *datong* is his aim to correct the hearts of the people in order to save China; to save China in order to raise East Asia; to raise East Asia in order to bring peace and stability to the world."⁵⁵ Yamamoto would have been pleased by this. Like Kang and Xu, he believed that China was central to saving East Asia and that Confucianism was necessary for world peace. Exchanges like this are representative of the Chinese and Japanese elite dialogue that gave birth to Asianism in the early twentieth century, and Yamamoto and Xu were key players in this dialogue.

Xu Qin: The Primary Educator at the Datong School

For the early years of the first Datong School, Kang Youwei's star pupil, Xu Qin (fig. 2.3), pictured here with Liang Qichao, served as headmaster and likely had the greatest influence on education at the school. In 1896 Kang sent Xu to be headmaster at the Shiwu School in Changsha. This was important in giving him the experience necessary for his later work at the Datong School, which he ran from the age of twenty-five. In 1897, just before his move to Yokohama, he established the *Zhixin Bao* 知新报 in Macau.⁵⁶ This magazine concentrated on the growing threat of Russia, which Xu and his editors saw as China's ultimate enemy. Like Liang Qichao and the writers at *Shiwu Bao*, they encouraged greater ties with Japan to counter the Russian threat. Naturally, *Zhixin Bao* was also important for the propagation of reform ideas and reprinted many of the same articles from the *Shiwu Bao* and the *Xiang Bao*. Like Kang, Xu saw all possibilities for reform in a Confucian context, hoping to find a way to combine classical traditions with the New Learning. Xu was one of Kang's earliest disciples and was consistently one of his favorites,

55. Letter dated July 23 (no year). Available in YKA, article C-213.

56. Although based in Macau, the *Zhixin Bao* was a major journal for the reformers. It was also used by Xu Qin to run a number of articles on the school before the *China Discussion* was established in Yokohama.



Figure 2.3. Xu Qin (left) photographed with Liang Qichao. *The 1908 Datong School Register* (Zhang Xuehuan 1908). Public domain. Yokohama Archives of History (Museum).

enjoying numerous posts in Kang's various organizations over the years. Others considered him equal to a shadow of Kang Youwei, even going as far as to call him "The Kang Youwei that is not Kang Youwei."⁵⁷

While at the school, Xu devoted himself to teaching the students the importance of Confucianism. In this regard the school was a conservative institution. Naturally, Xu's Confucianism was Kang Youwei's reform Confucianism, which was tinged with social Darwinism and emphasized

57. Chen and Wang, "Xu Qin yu Yokohama Datong Xuexiao," 256–58. This article contains a full biography of Xu Qin and details his philosophy and work at the school. Concerning his collaboration with Japanese friends, Chen and Wang criticize Xu for being ignorant of what the authors see as the *yexin* of the Japanese and their ambition to create pro-Japanese Chinese.

progress toward *datong*. The reformers believed that, coupled with the New Learning of the West in Japan, these teachings would make China strong enough to repel the West, the materialism of which Xu abhorred.

In 1898 Xu outlined five points by which the school, and by extension China in reform, would stride into the future. These five points were published in the *Zhixin Bao* and the *Xiangxue Bao* 湘學報. The points were: “Establish your Will! Study the Texts! Unite! Honour the Teachings! Protect the Nation!”⁵⁸ To Xu, these were connected with reform-minded Confucianism and all had the objective of repelling the West. Xu’s opposition to the West was not expressed as a simple form of xenophobia but was harbored in his religious conviction that Confucianism was the only possible way for humankind to reach greatness. Therefore, the moral lacking that was evident in Westerners’ imperial ways was best explained in their ignorance of Confucius and his teachings. In his writing about the Datong School, he explains his conviction:

As for those foreigners that come from far off lands, their eyes have never set upon the books of Confucius, their ears have never heard the name Confucius. Through their habits they accept wrong as right. They are deceived and fail to see. Those in Japan who still respect and revere do not submit to heterodox faith. However, those who are misled by the worshiping of unorthodox gods go as far as to pledge allegiance to another race, abandon the divine land of China and call the disciples of Confucius weak and of a weak country. Alas!⁵⁹

Xu Qin, like Yamamoto Ken, saw Christianity as the greatest threat to Confucianism and therefore to the passage of humanity toward *datong*. At school he insisted on making the students kneel and bow before Confucius. This was an act that was unacceptable to Christians and caused friction among the students.⁶⁰ He saw those Japanese who turned to Christianity as traitors to the Sinocentric Confucian world order and embracing “another race” (*bizu* 彼族). Xu believed that loyalty to one’s race (*zu* 族) was interconnected with loyalty to the classical teachings.

58. Xu Qin, “Riben Hengbin Zhongguo Datong Xuexiao ji,” 518–20. Chen and Wang have noted that these five points and Xu’s general teaching philosophy are borrowed in great deal from Kang Youwei’s *Chang xing xue ji*. Chen and Wang, “Xu Qin yu Yokohama Datong Xuexiao,” 262.

59. Xu Qin, “Riben Hengbin Zhongguo Datong Xuexiao ji,” 520.

60. Feng Ziyou, *Geming yishi*, 51.

In his writings on the Datong School, Xu outlined the various levels of identity that were important to him. Supporting China and protecting its classical teachings were of the utmost importance, but he also emphasized race and the universal *datong*. Xu was a nationalist. He found China suddenly flung into a modern system, not a system of nation-states but a new world order of imperialism. Although he may have been receptive to some Asianist ideas, his ultimate goal was the survival of China. For the time being, the best way to achieve this was by working with his Japanese friends and educating Chinese students in Japan.

The Datong School and Layers of Identity

The reasons for studying in Japan were obvious. Japan had mastered New Learning, was affordable, and close at hand. Liang Qichao adds to this: “We can be at ease knowing that the talent that can pull China from its troubles has not left the land of the East. In protecting our race, we protect our country. The connection between these two is by no means small.”⁶¹ Like Xu, Liang mentions race as a basis for Japanese–Chinese cooperation. The reformers hoped that the students in Yokohama would not disregard China and seek personal gain, as foreign students in Europe and America had done. They taught the New Learning with an extreme emphasis on Confucianism with a social Darwinist take on nationalism. But students in Yokohama would have had access to more than the New Learning and Confucianism that their teachers hoped to instruct them in. In school they would study the Confucian classics as well as the reformist works of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao.

The educational ideology of Kang Youwei is a perfect example of the fundamental tension evident in the creation of a modern national identity. At the same time, the reformers looked backward to tradition for the continuity of their identities and forward to progress in modernity for their basis in the new world system. To do this, Liang and Kang tried to reimagine Confucianism, disregarding earlier emphases and instead seeing Confucianism as an agent of change and a doctrine that foretells the teleological path to modernity and finally *datong*.⁶²

61. Liang, *Yinbingshi wenji* 4, 703.

62. Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation*, 13–14.

Reform Confucianism was highly stressed at the school. Every Sunday, students had to kneel and bow before the image of Confucius. Even the Christian students were forced to do this on pain of expulsion. At the 1898 birthday celebration for Confucius, at which numerous Chinese and Japanese dignitaries were in attendance, a scroll was hung beside the image of Confucius: “When those of the same race and the same script rise again, they will ally under the same religion (Confucianism) and disallow the flaunting and ravenous gaze of the Western Europeans. The Great Qing and the Great Nippon will henceforth combine under the Sage and gaze upon the rise of East Asia” (fig. 2.4).⁶³ The Asianism espoused here avoids the question of leadership, unlike the Japanese-led Asianism that would dominate the twentieth century. Just like the school itself, this Asianism was seen as a matter of cooperation, based on Confucianism, with the ambition of protecting China and Japan in the modern system of imperialism. As can be seen in the quote, another binding factor was that of race.

The phrases “same race,” and “same script” were very popular in 1898, the first year of the school’s operations. They turn up frequently in the reformer periodicals in China and Japan, as well as in correspondence from the time. Although the terms had been around much earlier, they were strongly revived by an exceedingly racially motivated article by Konoe Atsumaro 近衛篤麿 (1863–1904) in the popular journal *Taiyō* (*The Sun* 太陽). The Asianist article was not as well

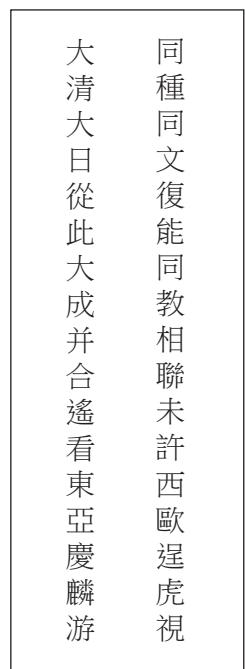


Figure 2.4. Scroll hung at an event celebrating Confucius’s birthday in 1898. The organizers had arranged the structure of the couplet to express another level of meaning that could be derived from reading the text horizontally. The term *datong* appears over and over again in this text, indicating the importance of the union of China and Japan as a step toward utopia. The phrase “Qing race” or “pure race” 清種 also indicates the direction reformers and revolutionaries would turn to in the years ahead and is further analyzed in chapter 3.

63. Feng, *Geming yishi*, 51–52. I am grateful to a member of the audience at the 2013 Junior Sinology Conference at National Chung Cheng University for pointing out the couplet’s arrangement.

received in Europe, where it added to the illogical fears of a “yellow peril.”⁶⁴ Reveling in their brief Japanophilic stage, the reformers littered their writing with the word *same*, using all sorts of combinations. Although it was a symbolic term paraded out at any mention of Sino-Japanese relations, it also demonstrates the feelings of the time. The desire to declare sameness with the Japanese sometimes bordered on the ridiculous, with Kang Youwei getting first prize in this contest for his rather absurd sentence in a letter to Yamamoto Ken: “Your country is of the same religion, same governance, same customs, same race and same script.”⁶⁵

There are two relations integral to this emphasis of sameness: the internal and the external relations. Internally, declaring one’s nation the same as the other may be seen as complimentary to that other, but the external relation is of more importance. This sameness between Japan and China indicated difference with the West in a strategic attempt to unite against a common enemy. This racial identity was strongly linked to the ever-present theme of race war in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As Western imperialists often cooperated, a very logical fear of the “white peril” became widespread and gave rise to strategies of united resistance. It is evident that both racial and national strategies were considered to defend against imperialism. As shown in the next chapter, what was understood as “same race” or “same nation” had not yet been clearly established. Asianism based on race relied on identity constructions similar to those of nationalism. The former could not exist without the consciousness of the latter. Despite talk of racial sameness, the primary ideology that recurred in materials concerning the Datong schools was nationalism.

Feng Ziyou recalls how Xu Qin “urged the students in the task of saving the country.” “All those who listened could not help but be moved.” On their textbooks and blackboards, a slogan was written in large characters: “While the nation’s humiliation has not been cleared and the people suffer hardship, at every meal we will remember and urge

64. Zachmann, “Konoe Atsumaro.”

65. Letter in YKA, article C-95. Kang had been moved by Konoe’s article and wrote him a letter in November 1898, encouraging Japanese involvement in Chinese affairs. See Zhao Jun, “Sun Zhongshan he Yazhouzhui,” 195.

our youth onwards.⁶⁶ The students had to recite this slogan loudly at the end of classes every day. There was also a patriotic school song and other slogans. Survival in the modern system of imperialism necessitated China's transformation into a more economically powerful country. The students left the Datong Schools foremost with a drive to bring China into modernity, and within a few years of the school being established, patriotic fervor dominated mention of the school, largely replacing talk of Japan–China cooperation.⁶⁷ Feng Ziyou has noted the revolutionary spirit with which the Chinese students in Tokyo imagined their future.⁶⁸ This spirit was expressed in many different ways and on different levels of identity, ranging from Cantonese independence advocacy to transnational Asianism. Although there are few details on the later lives of the students, at least one became active in Tokyo Asianist organizations. Su Manshu's 蘇曼殊 (1884–1918) involvement in Zhang Taiyan's Asiatic Brotherhood is discussed in the next chapter.⁶⁹

Conclusion

The Datong Schools represent an important moment in modern China–Japan civilian cooperation, offering a glimpse at efforts to imagine a Confucian-centered transnational modern East Asia. Confucian Asianism continued to appear in Chinese intellectual discourse, even after the iconoclasm of the May Fourth Movement and perhaps strongest in the crucial Sun Yat-sen speeches in the 1920s. At this important early stage, it was not only born of Chinese thought, it was a product of the dialogue and cooperation between Chinese and Japanese elites.

Those involved in the Datong Schools would not have considered themselves conservatives in any way. Being progressive and working

66. Feng Ziyou, *Geming yishi*, 51.

67. For example, see the patriotism expressed in the 1903 article “Yokohama Datong xuexiao wunianjinian zhudian,” *QYB* 45.

68. Feng Ziyou, *Geming yishi*, 45.

69. Su Manshu is generally known by his dharma name as he became a monk at the age of fourteen. His birth name was Su Zigu. His translations include works by Victor Hugo, Lord Byron, Robert Burns, a number of Buddhist texts from Sanskrit, and a surprising number of poems by women from the United Kingdom and India. His poetry and fiction, though never having great influence, have been noted as works in the time of transition to New Fiction and are widely available in collected volumes. Liu Yazi, *Su Manshu yanjiu*, 52–54.

toward modernity was crucial to their self-understanding; they rejected the imperialism and hegemony of Western culture. At the heart of the Confucianism espoused at the Datong Schools was a strong belief in the central claims of social Darwinism and a confidence that a muscular progressive Confucianism could meet this challenge. The vision that Kang Youwei, Xu Qin, and others had of the history and future of humankind was based on competition, especially competition between nations and competition between races. This firm belief in an environment of competition tied Confucian modernity to the rise of national and regional consciousness.

What went into the Datong Schools and what came out were different in many ways. A shared victimhood and anti-imperial consciousness remained. However, the reformers and their Asianist friends imagined a modernity very different from that which took shape in the twentieth century. The reformers, at the height of their pro-Japanese sentiments, and the Japanese Asianists, just before Asianism began its turn toward an imperialist strategy of Japanese domination, were working together to protect China and East Asia in the face of a shared enemy: Western imperialism and white racism. Educators were teaching the consciousness of a shared victimhood under imperialism. This victim consciousness and the need for self-preservation, a psychological basis for nationalism, opened doors to consciousness of other identities not limited to nation but including local and regional manifestations. The students graduating from the Datong Schools were strongly invested with a revolutionary consciousness that manifested itself in activities relevant to these different levels of identity, ranging from the Xingzhonghui, which most students joined, to the revolutionary publication, *Kaizhi lu* 開智錄, largely staffed by former Datong students. Finally, some students manifested anti-imperialist consciousness on a racial level. Race was becoming one of the most popular subjects for Chinese and Japanese intellectuals at the end of the nineteenth century and presented a new level of identity that further complicated East Asia and forced intellectuals to reconsider their relations with those perceived to be a member of their own race or of another race. Therefore, the following chapter examines discussions of race by Chinese intellectuals in Japan, considering these discussions in regard to China's relationship to Japan, the West, and the rest of Asia.

CHAPTER THREE

Same Script, Same Race

What is history? History is nothing but an account of the development of and strife among the human races. There is no history without race.

—Liang Qichao¹

Alongside the coercive hegemony of imperialism, hierarchies of race based on biological difference were imposed on much of the world in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Chinese intellectuals consented to the hegemony of Eurocentric New Learning and translated theories on race alongside ideas of liberalism, socialism, and the individual. This entry of racialization into Chinese epistemes had profound influence on the conceptual binaries of Asia-Europe and nation-empire. Étienne Balibar has shown that “the discourses of race and nation are never very far apart,” and this was very much the case in China.²

Race was a crucial factor in the construction of Asianism. Although born in Euro-American modernity, racialization swept across the world with the tide of imperialism, inextricably tied to discourses of nation, ethnicity, culture, and civilization.³ Global imperialism enabled and accelerated the conceptual flow of this discourse, racializing class in almost absolute terms, as Frantz Fanon pointed out sixty years ago. In East Asia, the concept was imagined as a defense against imperialism. There was a sudden surge in writings concerning theories of race in China at the fin de siècle, in part due to the realization of a unified assault from the white West and in part due to a group of young Chinese intellectuals’ discovery of Japanese theories that positioned the Manchu as a

1. From the first paragraph of the lead article in the first edition of Liang Qichao’s *Xinmin Congbao*. Translated and quoted in Ishikawa, “Anti-Manchu Racism,” 215.

2. Balibar, “Racism and Nationalism,” 37.

3. Dirlit, “Race Talk, Race, and Contemporary Racism,” 1364–67.

different race from the Han Chinese. Excited by this scientific proposal of difference, the revolutionaries embraced race theory and found they could easily adapt it to their needs. The establishment of their enemies as racial others through an authoritative discourse provided the impetus for Chinese intellectuals' adoption of racial theories, but the process by which these theories came to be adopted is more complicated. This process is crucial to our understanding of how race was related to early twentieth-century Asianism.

In an article on the absorption of the discourse of civilization into modern Chinese thought, Xu Jilin explains how the classical “Yi-Xia distinction” 夷夏之辨 allowed for the wholehearted adoption of Western racial paradigms. This distinction differentiated those who had not accepted classical Chinese culture from those who had, respectively, as “Yi” and “Xia.” Xu Jilin has shown how Tianxia-ism 天下主義 enabled the absorption of these paradigms and their easy accommodation with classical thought, allowing for absolutist racial paradigms to be accepted by a vast range of Chinese literati and to fill the discursive space of the relative Yi-Xia distinction.⁴ As seen in what follows, early twentieth-century writings on race continued to use the vocabulary of the Yi-Xia distinction, positing those outside of the writer’s perceived race as Yi and adopting the concentric circles of Tianxia-ism to hierarchical configurations of the yellow race. Adopting the imperialist hierarchies of racialization brought Chinese intellectuals further into the episteme of colonial modernity and offered new conceptual weaponry.

In this chapter, I show that race was a fluid concept, easily molded to form tools of othering that suited the designs of the speaker. The concept of race, like the concept of Asia, was employed as a vehicle to unite oppressed peoples against the imperialist West and was therefore a crucial component in early twentieth-century Asianism. This race-based Asianism rose to prominence at the turn of the century. Although it remained an important feature in all later Asianist discourse, this chapter examines the rise of “same race” solidarity in Chinese revolutionary writing in the first decade of the twentieth century and the drift from hopes for Japa-

4. The racial paradigm was absolutist in the sense that one could not change one's race. However, traditional Chinese “racism” in the form of the Yi-Xia distinction was actually relative and based on transcendable cultural differences. Xu Jilin, “Tianxiazhuyi/Yixiazhibian,” 69–70.

nese support to a belief in the rising consciousness of Asia's oppressed. I first review early Chinese writing on race, showing how the concept of race was closely tied to the idea of race war: a conflict between the white and yellow races. As talk of the "yellow peril" made its way to East Asia, the concept was appropriated, and pride in race was established. Chinese intellectuals struggled to define the "self" and the "other" under the concept of race and within the historical reality of continued oppression by Asian Manchus on one hand and foreign Europeans on the other. This led to considerable drift of the concept of race, indicating that a precise or static conceptualization of race was not the focus for these intellectuals. Rather, they saw racialization as a tool to employ in their efforts to oppose hegemony. I find that the complications created by internal Asian imperialism and external European imperialism dominated early twentieth-century Chinese revolutionaries' discussions of race, leading to frequent reorganizing and recategorizing of race, and finally to the imagining of a new form of Asianism drifting from "same race" solidarity toward an Asian solidarity based on a shared sense of victimhood.

Late Nineteenth-Century Chinese Writings on Race

Chinese writings on race can be dated back to antiquity, yet in the late nineteenth century a Western hierarchical racialization appeared in China, accompanied by scientific studies that offered the discourse a compelling new form of legitimacy for a new world.⁵ The modern concept of race, a system of classifying humans based primarily on their skin color and other physical features, did not initially enter China through Japanese sources. Rather, the first known discussion of this Western concept was in John Fryer's (1839–1928) *Gezhi huibian* 格致匯編 (Chinese Scientific Magazine) in 1892. A translated article titled "Ren fen wulei shuo" 人分五類說 (On the five classifications of mankind) used a physical anthropology approach to describe these five races of yellow, white, red, brown, and black based entirely on physical characteristics.⁶ However, this early article was not as widely received as those that appeared a few years later.

In 1895, immediately following the Sino-Japanese War, Yan Fu altered

5. Frank Dikötter shows that, although different, the concept of race and racial prejudice has existed in China since the Classics. Dikötter, *Discourse of Race*.

6. Ishikawa, "Anti-Manchu Racism," 212–13.

the worldview of many of his compatriots with four articles published in the *Zhili Gazette* 直報. Although the terms “white people” and “yellow people” had long been used, and the above-mentioned text on Western race theory had been translated three years earlier, these articles first popularized modern race theory in China.⁷ They described four races—yellow, white, brown, and black—and unlike earlier understandings of race, defined them within the all-important context of evolutionary competition, a theory that would remain tightly connected to race theory for the next few decades. Liang Qichao continued in this same vein with his seminal “New History,” in which he described history as “nothing but the account of the development and strife of human races.”⁸ He divided races into those with history and those without. Because Liang only saw the yellow and the white races as having history, and therefore having developed to the requisite level for future survival, the coming war would necessarily occur between these two races.

Race and Race War

A race-based worldview was not the only basis for early Asian solidarity, which was a more general anti-imperialist reaction to the violent attacks by Western powers to open up markets, but it was very early that racial imaginings of the world entered the discourse of Asianism and became one of its core components. There was an undeniable logic in viewing the imperialism of the West as a combined attack by “white people” on “yellow people,” especially as such racialization was also employed by the oppressors themselves, in East Asia and around the world. It is difficult to ascertain the exact moment of entry of racial politics, but Vladimir Tikhonov asserts that “one of the first instances of the use of racialist taxonomies in Sino-Japanese contacts” was Sone Toshitora’s (1843–1910) 1881 speech to He Ruzhang, in which he convinced him of the Asianist intentions of the Kōakai and thereby garnered important elite support for his activities in China.⁹ Dikötter notes the turn to a belief in race war in popular Chinese intellectual writing around 1895, after which “Many

7. The color yellow, signifying both the emperor and China itself, was seen very favorably by Chinese intellectuals. On the other hand, white symbolized death. Dikötter, *Discourse of Race*, 55.

8. Ishikawa, “Anti-Manchu Racism,” 215.

9. Discussed in chapter 1. Also see Tikhonov, “Korea’s First Encounters,” 218.

reformers gradually came to adopt a vision of a world order dominated by the white race against which the yellow race had to fight in order to survive.¹⁰ Yan Fu, one of the first to bring the scientific discourse on race to China, was also one of the first to hypothesize the extinction of the yellow race.¹¹

Race war was a recurring topic in Chinese writing. The fear of this war continued throughout much of the twentieth century. During World War II, Wang Jingwei used this fear to justify calls for a pan-Asian alliance and connected such ideas to Sun Yat-sen's philosophy. In his epilogue to an English-language collection of Sun's writings compiled in 1941, he explained: "This is the origin of Pan-Asianism. As has been said before, the three native races in America, Australia and now Africa have been extinguished one after another and the fate of the Yellow race in Asia is at stake."¹² Although a prominent and long-influential concept among East Asian intellectuals, the fear of race war and racial annihilation had its roots in imperial Europe.

Its early beginnings were closely tied to the belief of a yellow peril, the Western fear of Asian hordes taking control of the West either militarily or economically. This fear was used to justify racist and imperialist policies across the world. Under the guises of Christianity and free markets, Westerners were united in their domination of everything to the east of Europe. Kaiser Wilhelm II, who famously coined the phrase "yellow peril," must have been aware of the irony of his words when he dispatched troops to China during the Boxer Uprising:

You are to fight against a cunning, courageous, well-armed and cruel foe. When you are upon him, know this: spare nobody, make no prisoners. Use your weapons in a manner to make every Chinaman for a thousand years to come forgo the wish to as much as look askance at a German. . . .
 (27 July 1900).

You are going on a grave and portentous mission, the end of which is not yet clear. It may be the beginning of a great war between Occident and Orient. The whole Occident is united. For the common end even such nations have joined who have all along confronted one another as inveterate foes. (2 August 1900)¹³

10. Dikötter, *Discourse of Race*, 69.

11. Dikötter, *Discourse of Race*, 75.

12. Wang Jingwei, "Preface" to Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*, 169.

13. Wilhelm II, *The Kaiser's Speeches*, 260.



Figure 3.1 “Die Gelbe Gefahr” (The Yellow Peril), 1895. The original inscription on this painting read “Völker Europas, wahrt eure heiligsten Güter” (Peoples of Europe, guard your dearest goods). This painting, sent to leaders of Western countries, caused quite a controversy with its blatant calls for a united West. Although the West certainly was united in its domination of Asia, this had not been explicitly addressed until Kaiser Wilhelm II did so.

German imperialism in East Asia was expressed by Kaiser Wilhelm II in terms of a great battle between West and East, white and yellow. Years earlier he had designed the famous “Yellow Peril” painting by Hermann Knackfuß, in which a Buddha riding a fiery dragon approaches Christian Europe (fig. 3.1).¹⁴ This call for a united West to fight the “yellow peril” was noted in both Japan and China, and the memory of this discourse remains today.

Yellow Peril

The yellow peril has been a subject of numerous studies in Chinese and Japanese, but only a few in the English language. This interest by Chinese and Japanese scholars in the yellow peril is not surprising, as the

14. Some Europeans were very opposed to the idea, seeing other European powers as much more of a threat to their own interests. A long and detailed satirical analysis of the painting from a British perspective is available in Diosy, *The New Far East*, 330–34. Diosy was the founder of the British Japan Society and an avid supporter of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Also see Luo Fuhui, *Huanghuo lun*, 59–62. Decades later, Lu Xun still referred to Kaiser Wilhelm II as the originator of the yellow peril belief. Lu, *Quanji* 5, 343.

similarities between Western fears of a rising Asia at the beginning of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century are difficult to ignore.¹⁵

Perhaps the most influential of studies on the yellow peril is well-known German historian Heinz Gollwitzer's *Die Gelbe Gefahr* (The Yellow Peril). Gollwitzer views the yellow peril as an integral part of Western imperialism. Although his book has never been translated into other European languages, it was translated into Chinese as early as 1964 by the Commercial Press.¹⁶ A Japanese translation appeared in 1999 and was republished in 2010.¹⁷

In China, a collection of source materials was published in 1979 as *Huanghuo lun: lishi ziliaoj xuanji* 黃祸論:历史資料選集. The editors provide translations of news reports and journal articles concerning the yellow peril from Britain, the United States, Germany, Russia, and Japan. There is also a useful section that collates various Chinese reactions to the theory, but the editors refrain from engaging with the texts and provide little analysis. More recently intellectual historian Luo Fuhui 罗福惠 has provided a very popular analysis of the yellow peril theories and reactions with his text *Huanghuo lun: Dongxi wenming de duili yu duihua* 黃禍論:东西文明的对立与对话, published in China and Taiwan in 2007.

Luo Fuhui describes racist yellow peril theories as stemming from an essentialized Western system of thought inherited from Greek and Hebrew intellectual histories and crystallizing in nineteenth-century Western imperialist thought.¹⁸ Looking at the first wave of yellow peril writing,

15. In 2014, John Kuo Wei Tchen and Dylan Yeats finally ended this trend with *Yellow Peril*. Earlier English studies include the 1957 study by American Richard Thompson: *The Yellow Peril: 1890–1924*. There is also *Yellow Peril? Red Hope?* by British writer C. R. Hensman. In Japanese, Hashikawa's 1967 *Kōka monogatari* is the most well-known study, but it concentrates on Japanese responses and rarely mentions Chinese intellectuals. More recently, Hashimoto Yorimitsu edited two series of English-language texts concerning the yellow peril: the first seven-volume set comprises British novels and was published in Tokyo in 2007; the second four-volume series collects historical documents and was published in 2012. Hashimoto, *Yellow Peril*; Hashimoto, *Primary Sources of Yellow Peril Series II*.

16. However, as this text was initially published for “internal reading” (*neibu duwu*) only, it did not reach a wide audience in the 1960s. Gollwitzer, *Huanghuo lun*. See Luo Fuhui, *Huanghuo lun*, 48–49.

17. Gollwitzer, *Kōkaron to wa nani ka*.

18. Luo Fuhui, *Huanghuo lun*, 26–27.

Luo studies seventy articles from prominent Chinese publications: the majority of the articles appear in 1903–1905, a time of sudden fascination with the race war that revolved around Russian aggression in Manchuria leading up to the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905).¹⁹ The journals that ran the articles included *Eastern Miscellany*, *China Foreign Daily* 中外日報, and the *Tocsin Daily* 警鐘日報. However, the *Diplomatic Review* 外交報 stands out with a surprising number of articles.²⁰ The *Diplomatic Review* was connected with Yan Fu during this time, a man often considered to be the originator of modern race theory in China. Much like the frequent articles on carving up China, these articles contributed to a consistently maintained climate of fear over the future of Chinese civilization. The fear of a race war continued throughout the twentieth century and still exists today, although it has now been rescripted as a clash of “civilizations.”²¹ This fear held considerable influence over intellectual thought, and almost every well-known intellectual commented on it during the Republican period, embedding it into understandings of the divide between Europe and East Asia as well as the growing discourse of Asianism.

Subverting the Yellow Peril and Taking Pride in Race

What is the yellow peril? It is we, we Asians! We! We! We!

—Huang Zunxian²²

Reactions to the yellow peril discourse varied. Some called for a united yellow race to combat the much more real white peril;²³ others dismissed

19. Of these articles, twenty-five are translated from English and fifteen from Japanese, and thirty were originally written in Chinese.

20. Luo Fuhui, *Huanghuo lun*, 292.

21. In Japan, the perceived inevitability of such a war remained one of the reasons for World War II and the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The concept has persisted in popular Japanese imaginings and has made its way into various popular manga and literature. An interesting example of this is the 2004 anime adaptation of *Casshern*, set in a post–World War III new order where after a fifty-year war between Europe and Asia, “the Eastern Federation has beaten Europa’s armies and taken control of the Eurasian continent.” It is taken for granted that this federation is led by Japan. (Opening sequence from *Casshern* 2004.)

22. Huang Zunxian lived in Japan for many years in the nineteenth century, and his writings were among the most influential for late Qing intellectuals interested in Japan. He was associated with early Asianist organizations (see chapter 1) but saw Japanese culture and lineage as a subset of China’s. Kamachi, *Reform in China*, 55 and 141.

23. The phrase “white peril” continued to appear in Japanese texts long after this, especially after the 1913 publication of Nagai Ryūtarō’s “The White Peril.” See Duus,

the term as merely based in delusional Western fears. The more inventive of the intellectuals turned the peril on its head and envisioned the positive effects that Asia could have on the imperialist West.

Lu Xun was in this third group. Although he was always opposed to Western imperialism, what he truly feared was that Chinese people would emulate the violence and greed of the West to expel Westerners, thus becoming the West. In what Takeuchi Yoshimi famously called “Asia as Method,” Lu Xun looked to how Asia could provide another possibility to the ruthlessly competitive capitalist future offered by Western modernity. In 1908, he criticized those who were angered by Westerners’ talk of the yellow peril and promoted violence. Instead he argued that the yellow peril should be a movement of world peace:

Through the present writing I beg to submit to the able-bodied men of China that though bravery, strength and resolve in struggle are certainly attributes most appropriate to human life, they are best applied to self-improvement and should not be employed to attack and swallow up innocent countries. If our own foundation is stable and we have surplus strength, let us then act as the Polish general Bem did in supporting Hungary, or as the English poet Byron in aiding Greece, that is, to promote the vital cause of freedom and to topple oppression, so that the world will finally be rid of tyranny. We should offer aid and support to all nations in peril or distress, starting with those which have been our friends and extending our aid throughout the world. By spreading freedom everywhere, we can deprive the ever-vigilant white race of its vassals and servants; this will mark the beginning of a real “Yellow Peril.”²⁴

Sun Yat-sen’s reaction to the yellow peril discourse hinted at similar ends but followed a nationalist model. In 1904 he dismissed the idea of the yellow peril as a Western delusion based on a misunderstanding of the peaceful nature of the Chinese. “If Chinese people are able to achieve self-rule,” he argued, “then they will prove that they are the most caring and peaceful nation in the world.” Should this happen, “the yellow peril can become the Yellow Fortune [*huangfu* 黃福].”²⁵

These reactions are positive and constructive in the face of racial hatred. However, the majority of people did not show such patience or

²⁴Nagai Ryūtarō: ‘The White Peril.’ It was also an important part of Kodera Kenkichi’s 1917 *Dai Ajiashugi ron* (Treatise on Greater Asianism), discussed in the next chapter.

²⁵ Originally published in *Henan* magazine in Tokyo, 1908, under the pseudonym Xun Xing. Lu Xun, “Toward a Refutation of the Voices of Evil,” 108–19.

²⁵. Sun Yat-sen, “Zhongguo wenti de zhen jie jue,” 62.

hold such high hopes for the future. Yan Fu, who was responsible for or connected to much of the writing and translation of race theory, was of the opinion that the war between the white and yellow races was an inevitability and must be prepared for.²⁶ Writing like this continued to appear for decades, although it was most pronounced in the years around the Russo-Japanese War and World War I.

In Yan Fu's writing were explicit calls for the yellow race to work together to expel the white peril. Although there is nothing surprising in such a view, Yan particularly called for the Han to work together with the Manchus at a time when many intellectuals were calling for a Han-based revolution that would drive them from China altogether. Yan argued that there are only "four great races" and, as the Manchu and the Han are of the same yellow race, they must work together.²⁷ James Pusey notes, "He sounded a warning of the 'white peril' . . . Yen Fu again looked outside China for the true field of Darwinian struggle. Even though it had been China's defeat at the hands of another member of the yellow race—Japan—that had prompted him to write in the first place, Yen Fu looked beyond struggles within his race to a struggle that for him was far more frightening, the 'ultimate' struggle between races of different colors."²⁸ As racialization was thriving in its infancy in East Asia, there were different interpretations of race and kind that conceptualized Han-Manchu relations within a racialized framework, demanding that the Manchus be destroyed, yet paradoxically maintaining calls for racial unity. Attempts to organize this theory into a discursive strategy of resistance used the terms *tongzhong* 同種 and *yizhong* 異種.

Tongzhong and *Yizhong*

The idea of *tongzhong*, which simply translates as "same race" or "same kind," was one of the underlying principles behind Asian cooperation beginning in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Japanese intellectuals eagerly employed the concept and used it to promote solidarity against the imperialist West and as a pretense to expand Japanese influence in East Asia. The term was used by intellectuals in Asia at least as early as 1880, when ambassador He Ruzhang met with leaders of the Kōakai (Raise

26. Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, 68.

27. Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, 68.

28. Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, 69.

Asia Society 興亞會) in Tokyo.²⁹ Throughout the 1890s and into the 1900s, influential journals, such as the *Chinese Progress* 時務報 and the *Eastern Miscellany* 東方雜誌, continued to echo the notion of *tongzhong* and the warnings of race war, often directly borrowing from Japanese pan-Asianists, such as Tarui Tōkichi and Konoe Atsumaro. It was a popular term for influential Chinese thinkers such as Zhang Zhidong, Liang Qichao, Zhang Taiyan, Zou Rong 鄒容 (1885–1905), and Sun Yat-sen. Unlike *renzhong* 人種 and *zhongzu* 種族, terms that were usually used to translate the word “race,” during the modern period, *tongzhong* usually only referred to the people of East Asia. However, like all such identities, its inclusiveness was broadened or narrowed to suit the needs of the speaker, as we shall see with the examples of Zou Rong and Liu Shipei 劉師培 (1884–1919).

Although the idea of a united East Asia based on *tongzhong* had been raised before, in 1898 it became a popular topic and the terminology spread, partly because of Konoe Atsumaro’s famous article, “A Same-Race Alliance and the Necessity of Studying the Question of China.”³⁰ Konoe admonished Japanese for feeling superior because of their recent advancements on the path of “civilization,” and he explained the need for working together with the Chinese during the coming race war between white and yellow races.³¹ As the nineteenth century was coming to a close, intellectuals in China and Japan had largely accepted the Darwinist belief in competition and survival of the fittest. Competition was seen as the fundamental ingredient in progress and could result in one culture, ethnicity, or race being completely erased by another.

Konoe’s article was popular with many Chinese intellectuals. It was translated into Chinese for the *Subao* (Jiangsu News) in May that same year and was later added to the famous “Collected Essays about Statecraft of the Qing” in 1901.³² The *Subao*, a paper under the protection of Shanghai’s foreign settlement because of the publisher’s Japanese family

29. KKHK, 9. The Kōakai was an early Asianist organization based in Japan in the 1880s. See chapter 1. Also see Zachmann, “The Founding Manifesto.”

30. Zachmann, “Konoe Atsumaro.”

31. Konoe called this “competition between the races,” *jinshu kyōsō*. It was translated into “battle of the races,” *zhonglei zhi zheng*. Konoe, “Dō jinshu dōmei,” 1–2.

32. The Chinese translation had the shorter title of “Union of the Same Race” (*Tongzhong lianmeng shuo*), but it did include the section that explains Konoe’s hopes for Japanese government policy toward China as well. Konoe, “Tongzhong.” This section of the “Collected Essays about Statecraft of the Qing” specifically concerns articles on an alliance with Japan.

associations, was a popular publication for revolutionaries. In the three-page article, Konoe did not use the terms *tongzhong/dōshū* or *yizhong/ishū*; instead, he used the longer forms, *dōjinshū* 同人種 and *ijinshū* 異人種. However, the translations used the shorter terms, words that had already entered common usage in Chinese publications on race, but also maintained an ambiguity due to their brevity.³³

Unlike the term *dōjinshū*, used by Konoe Atsumaro, *tongzhong* did not simply indicate “same race.” In fact, the term was in use long before there were theories of race in place; there was a similar connotation and, as we have seen in previous chapters, this traditional concept was easily accommodated to modern epistemes. The term indicates “same type” or “same kind,” and should only be translated as “same race” when the context clearly indicates such a meaning. Naturally, the term *tongzhong* belongs in the simple dichotomy of self and other, with its partner *yizhong* signifying the other. Although *yizhong*, usually translated as “different race,” was a common term used by East Asian intellectuals to refer to Westerners, its usage can be seen as far back as the fifth-century *Hou Hanshu* (Book of the Later Han 後漢書), with a surprisingly similar meaning.³⁴ In modern times, the term refers to race when included as part of the four-character phrase *tongwen tongzhong*. *Tongwen* 同文 is usually translated as either “same script” or “same culture”; *wen* alone indicated culture or civilization. However, when *tongzhong* was used as a two-character term, its meaning was not always as clear. Defining who was and was not *tongzhong* was not something that could be agreed on. Neither was its opposite. The term *yizhong*—of a different kind—usually referred to the white West but was also frequently used by revolutionaries to refer to the Manchu, who many leading Han intellectuals were trying to posit as of a different “type” or “race,” highlighting their difference.

33. These were also popular terms in Korean newspapers during this period. Andre Schmid has pointed out that the *Hwangsȏng sinmun* regularly used the terms *tongju* (same ethnicity), *tongjung* (same race), and *tongmun* (same script/culture) in pro-Japanese editorials that called for East Asian cooperation to repel the West, but in a form that would guarantee the autonomy of the three nations. See Schmid, *Korea between Empires*, 88–93.

34. Etymology found in the *Hanyu da cidian*. *Yizhong* referred to a different tribe or group. In the classical notion of *zhong*, this differentiation was certainly not biological but was defined by location and culture.

Anti-Manchu Nationalism and Race

Although anti-Manchu writing had been appearing for centuries, a sudden incident brought it to widespread readership in 1903 with disastrous consequences. The popular newspaper *Subao*, operating in the politically protected foreign enclave in Shanghai, was becoming increasingly radicalized under editor Zhang Shizhao 章士釗 (1881–1973). With Zhang Taiyan and Zou Rong arriving in Shanghai in 1903, they formed what Young-tsu Wong has called “a chorus of radicalism.”³⁵ When Zou published the violently anti-Manchu book *The Revolutionary Army*, with an introduction by Zhang Taiyan simultaneously published in the *Subao*, the two became enemies of the Qing government in what is known as the *Subao* Incident. The protection of the foreign settlement saved them from execution, but they were both sent to prison, where Zou died on April 3, 1905, seventy days before his release date.³⁶

In *The Revolutionary Army*, Zou Rong made frequent reference to race. However, his use of the term was in disagreement with Yan Fu’s understanding. Throughout the book he referred to the Manchu rulers as *yizhong*, a different kind, and he used the term *tongzhong* to refer to the Han ethnicity in general.³⁷ Yan Fu made his own references to *tongzhong*, but instead saw Manchus and Han and even Japanese as coming from the same *zhong*.³⁸ In his translation of the book, John Lust translated *zhong*, *zu*, *renzhong*, and *zhongzu* as “race.”³⁹ However, it seems that Zou Rong often used these terms only to distinguish between Manchu and Han: “Manchus are of a different *zhongzu* from those of us who are the divine descendants of the Yellow Emperor.”⁴⁰

35. Wong, *Zhang Binglin and Revolutionary China*, 40. Although the classically educated Zhang Binglin was already a well-known intellectual by this time, Zou Rong was only eighteen years old and completely unknown before this point.

36. After much pressure from foreign consuls, Zhang was sentenced to three years and Zou to two years. The government viewed Zhang as the more serious threat and found that Zou had “adopted Zhang’s ideas” (quoted on 42). Wong, *Zhang Binglin and Revolutionary China*, 40–43.

37. Zou, *Geming Jun*, 8–9.

38. Yan Fu, “Yuan Qiang,” 110.

39. For example: Zou, *The Revolutionary Army*, 68, 69, 80, 126.

40. Zou, *Geming Jun*, 23. Lust’s translation reads: “were not by origin of the same race as the illustrious descendants of our Yellow Emperor.” Zou, *The Revolutionary Army*, 80.

In the fourth chapter of his book, Zou explained his emphasis on race. This short, six-page chapter, titled “The Necessity to Clarify Race for the Revolution,” exhibits Zou’s understandings of race, mixing classical Chinese distrust of northern “barbarians,” *yì* 夷 and *rong* 戎, with the modern racial differentiation of white and yellow. Like reformers Yan Fu and Kang Youwei, Zou believed that only the yellow and white races were worthy enough to survive evolution, but unlike Kang, who believed in the eventual amalgamation of the two races, Zou mirrored Yan Fu’s belief in natural selection through conflict and the inevitability of race war:

The yellow and white races which are to be found on the globe have been endowed by nature with intelligence and fighting capacity. They are fundamentally incapable of giving way to each other. Hence, glowering and poised for the fight, they have engaged in battle in the world of evolution, the great arena where strength and intelligence have clashed since earliest times, the great theatre where for so long natural selection and progress have been played out.⁴¹

However, Zou saw the yellow race as being further divided into two groups: the Chinese race *Zhongguo renzhong* and the Siberian race *Xiboliya renzhong*.⁴² These groups were further divided into various nationalities: the Chinese race included Han Chinese, Koreans, Thai, Japanese, Tibetans, and “other East Asian peoples.” The Siberian race included Mongolians, Manchus, Siberians (former Tatars), “other North and Central Asians,” Turks, Hungarians, and “other yellow peoples from Europe,” as can be seen in fig. 3.2.⁴³ It should be clear that the Chinese race as explained by Zou was essentially a list of the ethnicities that fell under the traditional Sinosphere of China and neighboring vassal states. Scientific discourse had been appropriated to uphold a classical Chinese outlook.

Of course, the focus of Zou’s book, and the reason for this detailed categorization of “yellow” peoples, was to show that the Manchus belonged to a different group and should have been expelled from the country. In doing so, Zou found commonality with other East Asians based not on linguistic or physical features, as was common at the time, but on his understanding of historical migration patterns. All of the above mentioned groups

41. Zou, *The Revolutionary Army*, 106.

42. Zou, *Geming Jun*, 33.

43. Zou, *Geming Jun*, 33.

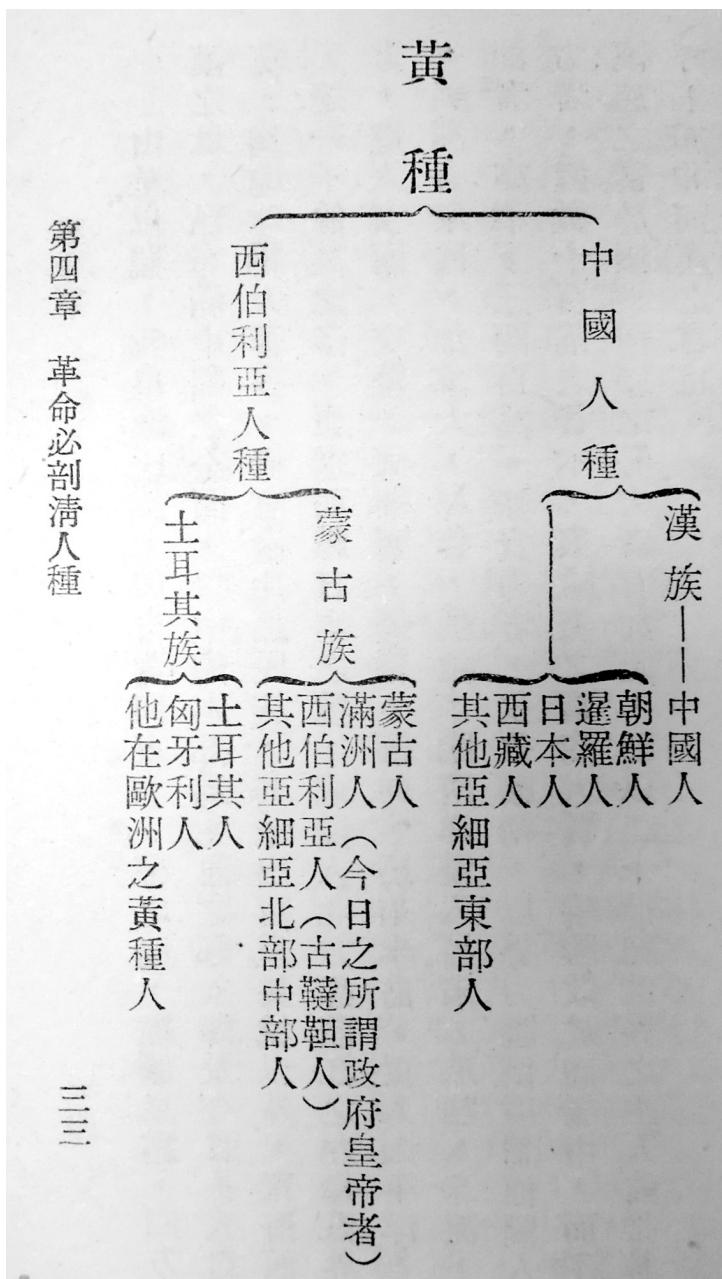


Figure 3.2. Zou Rong's categorization of the yellow race. Zou Rong, *Geming Jun* 革命軍. (Taipei: Zhongyang Wenwu Gongying She, n.d.), 33. Public domain.

of the “Chinese race” emigrated to their contemporary locations from China’s northeast Huang River area during the Qin and Han dynasties.⁴⁴ This pseudo-scientific explanation of race is an example of the conceptual bridge from the China-centered tribute system of the imperial age to the race-based Asianism of the twentieth century. However, Zou had defined race in terms of China’s ethnic relations, largely ignoring the white race, the focus of Asianists. This was quickly added to by those just outside Zou’s immediate circle.

Liu Shipei

Like Zou Rong, Liu Shipei was a follower of Zhang Taiyan and involved in the anti-Manchu group of revolutionaries in Tokyo. Although he would become best known for his anarchist writing, one of his first major works concerned race and ethnicity and has been considered the first important text on Han ethnicity.⁴⁵ Just a year after Zou Rong’s famous *Revolutionary Army*, Liu Shipei released his history of the Han nation, titled *Zhongguo minzu zhi* 中國民族志.⁴⁶ Following Italian revolutionary hero Giuseppe Mazzini’s thinking on nationalism and political activism and strongly rooting his discourse in a social Darwinist belief of survival of the fittest nation, Liu rethought Chinese history with the Han as core. For Liu, nation was based in bloodlines (*xuetong 血統*), and a nation had to be ruled by those of the same nation. Therefore, disposing of the “barbarian” (*yidi 夷狄*) Manchu was of the highest priority, just as the Italians freed themselves of the Austrians, and the Irish of the English.⁴⁷ Like Zou, Liu saw the Han as an expanding force over 2,000 years. He divided Han expansion into four periods and foreign invasion into five periods.⁴⁸ Liu’s understanding of racial history came directly from Sinologist Kuwabara Jitsuzō 桑原 隘藏, from whom he quoted heavily. Kuwabara divided the “Asian race” (*Yaxiya renzhong 亞細亞人種*) into Siberian and Chinese races (*Zhina renzhong 支那人種*). Unlike Zou Rong, Kuwabara and Liu saw Japanese and Korean as belonging to the Siberian race.⁴⁹

44. Zou, *Geming Jun*, 34.

45. Zeng, “Liu Shipei yu Zhongguo.”

46. Liu Shipei, “Zhongguo minzu zhi,” in *Liu Shipei quanji*, 597–626.

47. Liu Shipei, “Zhongguo minzu zhi,” in *Liu Shipei quanji*, 597.

48. Liu Shipei, “Zhongguo minzu zhi,” in *Liu Shipei quanji*, 598.

49. Liu Shipei, “Zhongguo minzu zhi,” in *Liu Shipei quanji*, 599.

Like Zou, Liu saw the Han as the “slaves” of the Manchu. But he stressed the fear that in the near future the Han would become slaves of the white race (*baizhong* 白種 or *ouzhong* 歐種). He listed China’s invaders as Russia, Britain, France, Germany, and Japan.⁵⁰ He saw the “white peril” (*baihuo* 白禍) as the ultimate danger for the Han and for the Asian race (*yazhong* 亞種), which he feared might be wiped out. Using the same example that Liang Qichao raised in 1919, in 1904 Liu Shipei warned his compatriots who did not believe in the threat of racial genocide to look at the natives of North America and Australia.⁵¹

Zou and Liu’s argument that the Manchu were of a different “race” than the Han was not merely based on hatred of the ruling ethnicity. In the early twentieth century Japanese anthropologists were busy creating ethnic classifications for all of Asia’s inhabitants. Torii Ryūzō 鳥居龍藏, one of the most influential Japanese researchers in this new field, published numerous works on the “Siberian race” around the turn of the century. In a 1904 work he exclaimed, “From the viewpoint of physical features, the Manchus closely resemble the Tungus. We can be fairly certain that the Manchus are one of the subgroups of the Tungus. From the viewpoint of ethnology; they belong, beyond a doubt, among the Tungus race.”⁵² Such a classification legitimated anti-Manchu revolutionaries calling the Manchus Tungus or Siberian, and resulted in Japanese anthropology gaining popularity among many Han intellectuals. This movement to view Manchus as coming from a different “race” was popular, and it led to the pro-Manchu reformers’ defensive reaction. Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao could not deny the “scientific” evidence of the Japanese and the revolutionaries, but they still argued that the Manchu had been sufficiently assimilated by the Han to the degree that they should be considered one race.⁵³

The science of racialization was malleable enough to suit the political needs of those who employed it. However, adopting this hegemonic classification scheme to legitimate difference with political others, intellectuals gave authority to a system of hierarchy that defined the Euro-American empires and could be used against the Chinese. Both

50. Liu Shipei, “Zhongguo minzu zhi,” in *Liu Shipei quanji*, 625.

51. Liu Shipei, “Zhongguo minzu zhi,” in *Liu Shipei quanji*, 626.

52. Translated and quoted in Ishikawa, “Anti-Manchu Racism,” 11.

53. Ishikawa, “Anti-Manchu Racism,” 18.

revolutionaries and reformers agreed that China and Japan were of the same race or *tongzhong*, and they should work together. However, by the middle of the decade, simple hopes for *tongzhong* unity were fading amid increasingly blatant Japanese assertions of superiority.

Chen Tianhua, the Beginning of the People’s News, and the End of the “Golden Decade”

The year 1903 was the beginning of open calls among Chinese students in Japan for a revolution to topple the Qing government and eradicate the Manchu. Chen Tianhua, a young revolutionary student from Hunan, arrived in Tokyo just as the anti-Manchu sentiment reached its height.⁵⁴ According to Feng Ziyou, this rise was instigated by Zhang Taiyan’s April 1902 rally in Ueno Park, held in opposition to the Qing government on the 242nd anniversary of China’s subjugation.⁵⁵ At the same time, the Japanese government was becoming more and more of an outright imperialist power. In early 1903, Osaka hosted a World Fair.⁵⁶ The display of Taiwanese people as Japanese subjects and Hokkien culture as a Japanese subculture gave rise to protests among the Chinese visiting students and the permanent Chinese communities in Japan.⁵⁷ In addition, various other student protests were held throughout the year to voice displeasure with Japanese capitulation to Qing requests on student control. This was hardly the “Golden Decade” that Douglas Reynolds has described.⁵⁸ The romance was ending. However, at the time of Chen’s arrival in Japan, the anger in his writing was directed toward Westerners and the Manchu ethnicity.

A fierce nationalist, Chen was distraught by the disdain directed toward Chinese around the world and particularly the treatment of

54. Zhu and Niu, *Zou Rong Chen Tianhua pingzhuhan*, 148.

55. Zhang considered China’s subjugation to the Manchu as the fall of the Southern Ming in 1661, rather than the fall of the Ming dynasty in Beijing in 1644. Feng, *Geming Yishi*, 57–59.

56. Although often referred to as a World Fair, this event was actually the fifth National Industrial Exposition. The Taiwan Pavilion brought about the indignation of many visiting students, including the Taiwanese themselves. See He, “Taiwan yu ziwo xingxiang.”

57. Zhu and Niu, *Zou Rong Chen Tianhua pingzhuhan*, 149.

58. Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912*.

Chinese students in the United States and Japan.⁵⁹ Yet the domestic situation bothered him the most. He made specific reference to the famous sign in Shanghai that read “Dogs and Chinese not admitted,” a symbol of the disgusting racism that existed in semi-colonized China.⁶⁰ Writing in a simple colloquial language, Chen made an emotional plea to awake the Chinese to the Western threat: “Here they come, here they come! Here who comes? The Westerners, the Westerners! Bad news for all! Young and old, men and women, rich and poor, officials, scholars, merchants and craftsmen—from this day on, we’re all just livestock in his pen, meat in his pot; not an inch of room to move, to kill as he chooses and stew to his taste. Also, our day of death has come!”⁶¹

Chen made calls to kill Westerners in both of his published pamphlets, *Soul Searching* 猛回頭 and *Alarm Bells* 警世鐘 (The Tocsin), but in both he added a note to indicate that he was referring to military personnel rather than civilians. He employed dramatic rhetoric to engender anger toward both Manchus and Westerners: “Kill the enemy of long generations, kill the enemy new to our shores, kill the sycophant collaborators, kill them all, kill, kill, kill!”⁶²

The raw, unbridled anger in Chen’s writing spoke to the frustration that many were feeling under the increasingly unjust forces of imperialism, including Western empires, the Manchu Qing, and the Japanese. His work is often placed together with that of Zou Rong, who also used simple but powerful language to express his rage toward the Manchu rulers and the necessity for Chinese to revolt and establish some form of democratic republic to survive in a world dominated by race conflict.⁶³

59. Chen Tianhua, “Selections from *Alarm Bells*,” 243. “Alarm Bells” most likely refers to the late nineteenth-century revolutionary journal *Nabat* (The Tocsin), established by Petr Nikitich Tkachev in 1875.

60. Chen Tianhua in Chapman, “Introductory Note,” 245. Whether this sign actually existed has been debated by many historians, but the legend was clearly very persuasive in 1903. Even though many Westerners certainly did treat Chinese people like dogs during this time, Robert Bickers and Jeffrey Wasserstrom have argued that the sign was never worded in such a disparaging way. Bickers and Wasserstrom, “Shanghai’s ‘Dogs and Chinese Not Admitted’ Sign.”

61. Chen Tianhua, “Selections from *Alarm Bells*,” 240.

62. Chen Tianhua, “Selections from *Alarm Bells*,” 246.

63. In fact, two of the most common books that concern Chen Tianhua are written about both of these young revolutionaries: Zhu and Niu, *Zou Rong Chen Tianhua pingzhuhan*, and Feng Zudai, *Zou Rong Chen Tianhua pingzhuhan*.

Chen's novel *The Lion's Roar* concentrated on the necessity of creating a national republic to fight against the encroaching West, what he called the "white peril flowing across the rice paddies of East Asia."⁶⁴ Serialized in the *People's News* after his death in 1905 and throughout 1906, the novel contained numerous themes that were central to the editorial preferences of the journal. Although *The Lion's Roar* was labeled fiction, the majority of the text was made up of essays on Darwinism, race, and republicanism.

Writing on race, Chen was not very different from his contemporaries Zou Rong and Liu Shipei. His understanding of the world order was race-based, as was his understanding of democracy and nation.⁶⁵ He went further in his descriptions of what binds and repels those of the same race:

Uniting with others is not as good as uniting with one's own group (*zu*). Therefore, we call those of the same ancestors and the same surname "*tongzhong*." Those of different ancestors and with different surnames are called "*yizhong*." To those who are *tongzhong*, we feel kinship and love. To those who are *yizhong*, we feel distrust and enmity. This is the competition between races (*zhongzu*). The stupid and weak races are swallowed or destroyed by the intelligent and strong races, just as lesser animals are swallowed or destroyed by other animals.

Chen continued and carefully explained the background of each race:

To this day the many become more and more and the few become less and less. Of the countless races, there remain only five great races today, which can be carefully separated into a few hundred kinds. Of the five races, the yellow race is composed of the people of the Asian countries of China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Burma and Siam. Their civilization developed earliest, three or four thousand years ago, at which time they already had various institutions/technologies (*zhidu*) in place. Their numbers reached 800 million one hundred years ago, but now are over 500 million. Second is the white race, which resides in Europe. This race is composed of the peoples of Britain, Russia, Germany, France, Austria, Spain, Italy, Holland, Portugal and the new countries of the Americas. Their civilization did not develop very early. During the Spring and Autumn period, they were still barbarians. All of their institutions/technologies come from China, such as the compass . . . guns . . . books . . .⁶⁶

64. Chen Tianhua, *Shizi hou*, 1.

65. Zhu and Niu, *Zou Rong Chen Tianhua pingzhuhan*, 160.

66. Chen Tianhua, *Shizi hou*, 3.

Chen rarely mentioned other races or countries, and when he did, he was not kind. Like his contemporaries, he adopted a disparaging form of racialization from white imperialists and accepted that only the yellow and white races mattered. These intellectuals accepted the discourse of white superiority to an alarming extent. Their efforts to engage with this discourse did not lead to refuting such absurd ideas. Instead, they gave way to the power of “science” and tried to merely alter the discourse to include the yellow race, accepting that black, brown, and red “races” were inferior. Of course, many of these intellectuals never came into contact with people they did not consider to be either white or yellow, and they accepted the paradigms of this hegemonic discourse as fact. When Zhang Taiyan and others started meeting with Indians in Tokyo, we see this disparaging of other races falling from the pages of their journals. However, that did not occur until shortly after Chen Tianhua’s death.

Writing under the pen name Si Huang 思黃 or “Thinking of Yellow,” Chen was a strong proponent of race theory and bitterly opposed to the Manchu government and ethnic group, as well as Japanese restrictions on Chinese students.⁶⁷ Only weeks after *People’s News’* inaugural issue in November 1905, he committed suicide in Tokyo Bay to show his anger with Japanese newspapers’ descriptions of Chinese students as being “unruly and debased” after the students protested Japanese government restrictions on them due to a Qing government request.⁶⁸

In his suicide note, a marked change from Chen’s earlier work was apparent. The note indicates the beginning of a gradual change from race-based cooperation to cooperation based on a shared victimhood, which would come to define both Chinese and Japanese Asianist discourse in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. After years of angrily protesting Manchu and Western imperialist action and discourse, Chen drowned himself as an act of protest against Japan, angrily denouncing the idea of China and Japan becoming allies based on the concept of *tongwen tong-zhong*. Although he recognized the need to work with Japan to protect East Asia, he presented the political realist perspective that alliances are based on costs and benefits, and China could find its authority in peril.

67. In the *Min Bao*, Chen Tianhua is referred to as Chen Xingtai. He also wrote under his *zi*, Guo Ting.

68. Chapman, “Introductory Note,” 239. The Japanese government reversed the restrictions the following month, January 1906.

An alliance is based upon equal costs and benefits, not on *tongwen tongzhong*. Britain does not ally with the *tongwen tongzhong* countries of Europe, but with the non-*tongwen tongzhong* country of Japan. . . . Although China and Japan have similar costs and benefits, their national power is markedly different and uniting with Japan could lead to China losing even more autonomy, as in the case of Korea. However, cutting China off from Japan could lead to the end of East Asia.⁶⁹

These words of Chen's were immediately published in the *People's News*. The editors included a photograph of the powerful-looking man and a eulogy. Shortly afterward, they published all of his unpublished works. He had become a martyr and, through his suicide, left his readers and colleagues with an enduring message. The hopes for Japanese assistance in defending against Western empire, although not entirely destroyed, were fading. The Golden Decade had come to an end, and Chinese intellectuals would have to look elsewhere for help against the encroaching empires. Race-based Asian unity to defend against the white race did not disappear, but the concept was expanded to include those from beyond East Asia, as influential intellectuals encountered Indian revolutionaries in Japan.

The Revolutionaries Are Introduced to India

The editors of the *People's News* had always put a strong emphasis on race, viewing it as an important concept in any analysis of China's problems. From the very beginning, before Zhang Taiyan had been released from Qing prison and become editor-in-chief, Wang Jingwei set the tone of the journal in the inaugural issue. He began with a discussion of ethnology or the study of race 人種學 to emphasize the difference between Han and Manchu.⁷⁰ Zhang Taiyan had gladly continued in this vein when he arrived in Tokyo in July 1906. His trials in prison and his firm rejection of the Manchu and the Qing during the *Subao* Incident confirmed his loyalty to the movement. Sun Yat-sen had four representatives meet Zhang on his release from prison on June 19 and

69. Chen Tianhua, "Chen Xingtai xiasheng jueming shu," 6.

70. Wang Jingwei detailed six elements for differentiating peoples through the scientific study of race: bloodlines, language and script, territory, customs, religion, and spirit (*jingshen*). He argued that because Manchus are different from the Han in all of these elements, they must be of a different ethnic nationality (*minzu*) and must be of a different country, for, as he repeats throughout the article, "One ethnic group is one citizenry" (*yi minzu wei yi guomin*). Wang Jingwei, "Minzu de guomin."

accompany him back to Japan, where he was asked to take control of the *People's News* and experienced a period of solidarity with Sun and Huang Xing.⁷¹

Zhang Taiyan had been one of the first to write extensively about race in Chinese and one of the first to write that the Manchu were of a different race than the Han. The enormous popularity of his *A Book of Urgency* 儘書, first published in 1900 but reedited and republished to popular reception in 1904, brought his views to a generation and played an important role in establishing a racial paradigm and vocabulary for a generation.⁷² However, he may have realized that there were grave limitations to the racial model that would not allow for the successful overthrow of the Manchu.⁷³ Zhang began looking for other avenues to accomplish his goals. When he took control of the *People's News*, he began introducing his readers to Yogācārā Buddhism, which he had studied while at Shanghai's Tilanqiao 提籃橋 Prison.⁷⁴ Through Yogācārā, Zhang hoped to find a non-Western method to structure his political philosophy.⁷⁵ He began experimenting with different philosophies and directions, but his path was largely directed by historical forces.

Changes were taking place throughout the first decade of the twentieth century that shaped the now influential Zhang. In 1905, while Zhang was still in prison, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was expanded and renewed, with the introduction of clauses specifically relevant to British interests in South Asia. The gradual strengthening of the alliance created an overlap between two empires, offering the possibility of new interactions. Indian communities in Japan, like Chinese and other foreign communities, were largely centered in Tokyo, Yokohama, and Kobe at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁷⁶ However, Tokyo was becoming

71. Wong, *Zhang Binglin and Revolutionary China*, 46, 50.

72. Specifically chapter 16, "The Origins of Man" (*yuan ren* 原人), focuses on race. Zhang discussed China and the West, differentiating the two groups from other peoples, whom Zhang looked down on as civilizational challenges. Zhang Binglin, *Qiushu*, 38–39.

73. Kai-wing Chow argues that Zhang realized as early as 1900 that the race war model was ineffective because it could not effectively exclude the Manchu from the yellow race. Chow then sees Zhang as creating and promoting "Han racism." Chow, "Imagining Boundaries of Blood," 34–52.

74. Wong, *Zhang Binglin and Revolutionary China*, 43, 53.

75. Murthy, *The Political Philosophy of Zhang Taiyan*, chap. 3.

76. Azuma, "Indians in Tokyo."

the city for revolutionaries and anarchists. In 1906, the same year Zhang arrived in Tokyo, an Indian revolutionary named Borohan arrived from the United States.⁷⁷ Borohan and another unknown Indian, only referred to as Bose, met with Zhang in Tokyo, probably at the beginning of 1907, and discussed the similarities between China and India, two countries suffering under what Zhang refers to as a *kedi* 客帝 (an intruding emperor). Of the meeting, Zhang wrote: “I think the two countries have been old bosom friends. We should consider the pros and cons and complement each other.”⁷⁸ This meeting initiated Zhang’s sudden fascination with India, which is detailed in the pages of the *People’s News*. Essays on India began to appear in every issue, as well as photographs of Indian independence fighters, articles in support of Sanskrit studies, and translations from Indian newspapers. Not long after Zhang began this deep interest in India, an important event occurred that strengthened his support for Indian independence and ended any lingering hopes he had for Japanese support.

On April 20, 1907, Zhang attended an event to commemorate Shivājī.⁷⁹ Speaking at the event was the former prime minister Ōkuma Shigenobu. Ōkuma was an important member of the government opposition at the time. He had regularly supported both the revolutionaries and reformists from China and maintained friendships with Kang Youwei and Sun Yat-sen. However, Ōkuma’s speech and actions deeply shocked and frustrated Zhang Taiyan. Ōkuma warmly greeted the white English on his arrival: “When Ōkuma saw that there were British gentlemen and ladies in attendance, he shook hands with them respectfully and showed great humility before them. I never thought

77. Aside from Zhang’s writings, nothing is known about this man, including his full name. Although Zhang puts great importance on Borohan’s position among Indian revolutionaries, this cannot be confirmed.

78. Quoted in Lin Chengjie, “Friendship-in-Need,” 155.

79. Zhang detailed the event and his Indian friends in an article and supplementary note in *Min Bao* 13: “Ji Yindu Xipoqi Wang jinianhui shi” and “Song Yindu Boluohan Baoshen er jun,” *Min Bao* 13, 19–26. Shivājī Bhosale (1627–1680) fought against the Mogul empire and pushed them from his homeland in 1674. Zhang compared Shivājī with Zhu Yuanzhang, founder of the Ming dynasty and a Han Chinese who delivered the Han independence from the Mongol Yuan. Celebrating Shivājī, who had ended foreign rule of India and changed the court language from Persian to Marathi, was a way for Indians to protest English rule and demand independence without directly and dangerously doing so.

Ōkuma, being such a famous politician, would act like that.” Zhang urged the Indian revolutionaries in attendance “not to blame the British for their ills, nor to resort to violence, but instead concentrate their energies on social reform.”⁸⁰ Zhang’s disappointment in Ōkuma turned to anger: “What we should be suspicious of is the fact that even Ōkuma, this ‘Oriental hero,’ still tries to flatter. Has he become senile? Are all his energies desiccated?” Japan had a duty, as both the most powerful Asian state and a nation that had received Buddhism from India: “Even if [Japan] cannot extend its administrative or military strategies that far, the will must remain alive.”⁸¹ Realizing that Ōkuma placed more importance on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance than he did on his Asian friends, Zhang dismissed the Japanese government and became more interested in India.

In considering why Zhang would work with Indians, when he appears to be one of the intellectuals most focused on race in the modern period, one must look to his earlier work, in which he explained his understanding of race. In the 1904 reedited edition of the *Book of Urgency*, Zhang differentiated the white and yellow races from all other peoples. However, his understanding of these groups was very different from the ways in which they were imagined by others. He agreed with the contemporary belief that the Han, and therefore the yellow race, was descended from the Babylonians, as was the white race. His views on Indian ancestry were also interesting: “Actually, Indians are of the white race. From the time of the Vedas, their philosophy surpassed that of China, yet still today they are regarded as an uncivilized ethnic group. They are then half civilized and half barbarian.”⁸²

Zhang’s early views on race were rooted in a classical Chinese paradigm of civilized and barbarian, wedging the Yi-Xia distinction with the modern concept of civilization. There are very problematic contradictions in his writing as he engaged with modern ideas on race. He posited the white and yellow races as the only civilized races time and again, seeing them at the top of a hierarchy of races, yet he also frequently

80. Quoted in Yuan Cai, “The Charter of the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood,” 179.

81. Zhang, in a translation of the “On the Commemoration of Shivājī,” by Shimada Kenji and Joshua Fogel: Shimada, *Pioneer of the Chinese Revolution*, 79 and 80.

82. Zhang Binglin, *Qiushi*, 39.

constructed hierarchies within the races, notably the rather petty placing of Manchus at the bottom of a hierarchy in the yellow race. The contradictions that are inherent within Zhang and his friends' discussions of race and their use of racialization to attack the Manchu Qing become clearer with their turn to India. Although the discourse on race did not end, revolutionaries took an important turn to concentrate on the differences between oppressed and oppressor nations.

The Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood

Much has been written about the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood as an early Asianist association.⁸³ In fact, the number of essays on the association is surprising, considering the limited number of relevant primary sources. This indicates that the symbolic value of the organization outweighed its influence at the time. A Chinese intellectual-initiated Asianist organization with impressive international membership, the Brotherhood reimagined the concept of race, turning the emphasis from skin color to geography with the notion of an “Asian race.” This highlights the arbitrary use of racialization for political ends at this time while also indicating the shift to a spatially defined oppressor-oppressed binary.

The Brotherhood was founded in late April 1907 and disbanded only sixteen months later, “largely due to the intervention of the Japanese government.”⁸⁴ During this short time, Chinese members included Zhang Taiyan, Chen Duxiu, Liu Shipei, the anarchist Zhang Ji 張繼, He Zhen 何震, Su Manshu, Tao Zhigong 陶治公, Lu Fu 呂復, and Luo Xiangtao 羅象陶. Japanese members included social anarchists Kōtoku Shūsui 幸徳秋水, Ōsugi Sakae 大杉 栄, and Sakai Toshihiko 堀 利彦. All three played large roles in introducing anarchist and socialist literature into Japanese. Other members included Yamakawa Hitoshi 山川 均, one of the founders of the Japan Communist Party, and Takeuchi Zensaku 竹内善朔, a socialist and supporter of revolution in both Japan

83. Because of the international nature of this organization, it used an English name from the beginning. However, as Chinese revolutionaries in Tokyo were responsible for much of the writing on the brotherhood, the Chinese name Yazhou Hegin Hui has appeared in print many times, resulting in a number of common English translations of the association, including Association of Asian Affinity and Asian Solidarity Society.

84. Yuan Cai, “The Charter of the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood,” 181.

and China.⁸⁵ Although numerous sources refer to members from India, Korea, Annam (Vietnam), Burma, and the Philippines, the only names to be found are those for Zhang's two Indian friends, Borohan and Bose. The famous Vietnamese revolutionary Phan Bội Châu 潘佩珠 indicated in his memoirs that he was involved with the association.⁸⁶

Some studies on the society have taken it for granted that this organization would not work with Japanese citizens and did not allow them to participate.⁸⁷ This was not the case. Although anti-Japanese sentiments were rising, the anger was directed at the government and capitalist class. Zhang Taiyan and the other Chinese revolutionaries maintained their friendships with Japanese people and invited many to take part in their society. The *People's News* continued to have as its third principle, "We advocate the alliance of the citizens of both China and Japan."⁸⁸ However, the fact that the manifesto was published in Chinese and English but not Japanese indicates the direction that the founders were hoping to take.

Judging from the great number of prominent Chinese and Japanese anarchists involved in this organization, one might expect that anarchism would be one of the main ideological systems on which they based their beliefs. However, their manifesto directly stipulates: "All Asians, except those who advocate imperialism, shall be admitted regardless of whether they are 'Nationalists,' 'Republicans,' 'Socialists' or 'Anarchists.' . . . The objective of the society is to fight against imperialism and to achieve the independence of Asian peoples who have lost their sovereignty."⁸⁹ The preamble of the manifesto emphasized the need to free Asians from white European imperialism and mentioned the need to end the Manchu Qing empire. Uniting the people of Asia was the means to this end, but particular emphasis was given to the union of China and India:

Our Chinese, Indian, Annamese, Burmese and Filipino brethren have vowed not to follow in the footsteps of these nations and have established the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood to fight imperialism in

85. Chinese and Japanese members are listed in Zhu Wuben, "Yazhou Heqinhui de zuoyong," 55.

86. Karl, *Staging the World*, 1112.

87. Wong, *Zhang Binglin and Revolutionary China*, 73.

88. These three principles were usually printed on the second to last page of every issue of the *Min Bao*. The other two principles were: "To overthrow all vile (*elie*) governments that exist today" and "Maintain true peace across the world."

89. Yuan Cai, "The Charter of the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood," 183.

order to preserve our various races. In the future when we rise up against the Western barbarians, people from both East and South will unite in their efforts and we will have all the strength of bundled reeds. We will form a fraternal alliance that will revive the fortunes of our Brahmanism, Confucianism and Daoism and expose the immoral falsehood of the West. While we cannot assemble all our brethren now, we can first unite India and China, the two most ancient and largest lands in the East. If these two countries can achieve independence, they will be able to form a protective shield over Asia and many countries will be the beneficiaries. All Asian races who share a firm belief in national independence should unite, and we extend our warmest welcome to them.⁹⁰

Despite the strong interest that members such as Zhang Taiyan and Liu Shipei had in race before this, the primary focus of the Brotherhood was not racialization. Although the phrase “Asian races” was mentioned in the preamble, the focus was on reviving nations suffering under the oppression of imperialism. Race may have remained part of the conceptual terminology, but all efforts to show the basis of unity highlighted the commonality of their suffering and lack of national independence. The members were striving for national independence through cooperation.

This emphasis on national independence or national determinism is what historians from China have chosen to concentrate on more recently, choosing to see the association in the context of its relevance to rising Chinese nationalism and twentieth-century mainstream ideologies, rather than as an Asianist association. Cui Jinyi sees the association as a mix of “guocui 國粹 nationalism, socialism, as well as Buddhist nihilism and liberalism.”⁹¹ Zhu Wuben finds two principal uses for the Brotherhood: furthering the awakening of Asia’s colonies and semi-colonies and exposing and destroying the imperialist strategy of using Asians to attack Asians.⁹²

Asianism could not have developed without nationalism. Groups such as the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood understood national indepen-

90. Yuan Cai, “The Charter of the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood,” 183.

91. Cui, “Zhengzhi rentong yihuo minzu renting,” 781.

92. Zhu Wuben, “Yazhou Heqinhui de zuoyong,” 55–60. These studies build on earlier Chinese studies of the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood by Tang Zhijun, who provided a similar analysis as early as 1980. Tang Zhijun, “Guanyu Yazhou Heqinhui,” 79–84. Tang helpfully reprints the complete manifesto at the end of the article.

dence in relation to Asian solidarity, which they conceived based on a shared sense of victimhood among the Asian races. Although the association was a failure in terms of action and longevity, it sheds light on the conflicting ideologies that were prevalent among Chinese intellectuals on the eve of the 1911 revolution and the rise of Chinese nationalism.

This is best displayed in an article by Tang Zengbi 湯增璧 (1881–1948),⁹³ “The hopes for Asian Friendship,” which appeared in the August 10, 1908, edition of *People’s News*.⁹⁴ Tang related the struggles of the Chinese to that of the Indians and the Vietnamese, identifying racial difference as the underlying factor in oppression.

It is only when we are looking towards *datong* and we have talk of a socialist revolution will it be right to unite with our European and American comrades. For the many conquered states of East Asia, the situation is vastly different. It is right that we support each other, and I see race as the reason. Politics and society must all be reformed. This must be done soon. Race is the main point. All the states of Asia are friendly allies, aside from Japan. Does not everyone feel the same?⁹⁵

Conclusion

Étienne Balibar has shown that racialization has little or nothing to do with the existence of biological races.⁹⁶ The ambiguousness of Chinese usage and the lack of equivalence between languages fully supports Balibar’s conclusions. Especially at this time, the word *race* had an even more arbitrary nature in Chinese than in European languages. Japanese translators chose to accommodate the concept into Sinitic script by turning to existing terms from classical texts, and the process of fixing *zhongzu* as an equivalent for “race” took a long time. The popular term *tongzhong*, which historians usually translate as “same race,” further allowed for the

93. According to Zhou Nianchang, Tang studied at Waseda University, possibly beginning in 1903. He became a copy editor at the *People’s News* in 1906 and attended a socialism lecture group. Although relatively unknown compared with many of his contemporaries in the Tongmenghui, he contributed many articles on revolution and socialism to various Chinese publications in Tokyo, especially the *People’s News*. Zhou Nianchang, “Tongmenghuiyuan Tang Zengbi,” 81.

94. Tang Zengbi (under the penname Kui Zheng), “Yazhou heqin zhi xiwang.”

95. Tang Zengbi, “Yazhou heqin zhi xiwang,” 57.

96. Balibar, “Racism and Nationalism,” 37.

arbitrary use of pseudo-scientific discourse to assign difference to self and other under the contexts of the problems faced by intellectuals.

The Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood highlights these ideological problems, problems that were also pronounced in 1911 and left their influence on Chinese nationalism and the construction of the Chinese state in the twentieth century. The two most important conflicts for Chinese intellectuals to resolve were the internal problem of Manchu dominance and the external problem of white imperialism. To engage with these issues, intellectuals promoted both Han nationalism and racial unity, employing the arbitrariness of racialization toward their political ends. Inherent contradictions reduced the efficacy of racialization as a tool for Asian unity, but it remained one of the most important factors in later understandings of Asia and China, regionalism, and nationalism.

CHAPTER FOUR

Asia for the Asians

Eastern Civilization and the Great War

After Japan's 1910 annexation of Korea, Chinese intellectuals were less inclined to consider Japan as an Asian nation that would fight against the inequalities of a world system under the capitalist West. Instead, Japan emulated the West more and more and had become a full colonial power that could confront and defeat Western powers, as had been proven in the Russo-Japanese War a few years earlier. Yet there remained many contradictions in Chinese elite understandings of Japan. Japan remained the source for knowledge throughout this period, and many Japanese opposed government policy, calling for new approaches to China and Asia and actively engaging with their counterparts around the region. Because Japanese was relatively easy for intellectuals in China and Korea to learn, translations from Japanese were common. Japanese newspapers were available in major cities across East Asia and often provided a gateway to international current affairs, just as Japanese periodicals and books provided a gateway to scientific knowledge. Furthermore, although the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship had resulted in an increased number of Chinese students studying in the United States from 1909 onward, Japan remained the most popular foreign study location for students from China and Korea.¹ Graduates returning

1. Only 1,300 students took part in the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship program from 1909 to 1929, while the number of Chinese students in Japan was more than this at any given time. Although the numbers fluctuated by a surprising amount, in the busy years of 1905–1907, there were between seven thousand and twelve thousand Chinese students in Japan. Between 1900 and 1911, Paula Harrell estimates that more than twenty thousand Chinese students studied in Japan. Today Japan is once again one of the most popular destinations for Chinese students. In 2010 students from China made up 60.8 percent of all foreign students with 86,173 students. Koreans were the

from Japan dominated industry, military, and media positions, as well as government offices.² These elite intellectuals created international relationships with Japanese intellectuals and often translated or introduced popular Japanese writings to Chinese readers.

During this period of growing Japanese hegemony, the Great War (later known as World War I) broke out in Europe, showcasing violent and immoral aspects of Western civilization, and playing a role in introducing Chinese intellectuals to new ways of thinking about the world and the concept of civilization, one of the focuses of this chapter. Although a growing discourse on polarized civilizations was evident across the expanding world of Chinese publishing, it was particularly evident in China's most popular monthly periodical, the *Eastern Miscellany* 東方雜誌. Due to the exposure of the ills of Western civilization through the Great War, intellectuals analyzed this perceived dichotomy of East and West and engaged in discussions on the possibilities for resolving opposing civilizational attributes through conflict or synthesis. Japanese intellectuals were experiencing a related but markedly different process to their Chinese counterparts, as they discussed how to unite Asia to defend against Western imperialism. During this time of rising Chinese nationalism, rising anti-Japanese sentiment, and increasingly open Japanese imperialism, Chinese intellectuals translated a surprising number of Asianist texts as interest in a civilizational Asianism grew.

In this chapter, I show how elite intellectuals began to self-identify with and place emphasis on Eastern civilization, an important component in Chinese nationalism. In turn, interest in this concept led to the translation of Japanese writings on Asianism. As shown in the foregoing chapters, there had already been decades of modern Sino-Japanese intellectual interaction and collaboration on the bases of the classical Confucian Sinosphere and race. In the 1910s, Chinese intellectuals redefined the East against the West, asserting the unique nature of East

next largest group, totaling 20,202 (14.2 percent), followed by Taiwanese with 5,297 (3.7 percent). Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912*, 48; Harrell, *Sowing the Seeds of Change*, 215. Statistics according to Japan Student Services Organization (Ministry of Education) webpage: http://www.g-studyinjapan.jasso.go.jp/en/modules/pico/index.php?content_id=25 (accessed March 15, 2014).

2. Ninety percent of foreign-educated returning students who passed the civil service exams between 1906 and 1911 were graduates from Japanese institutions. Harrell, *Sowing the Seeds of Change*, 214.

Asia as a civilization. This discourse also defined the Sinocentric Eastern civilization as anti-imperialist, a definition that underscored all later manifestations of Asianism and still has influence today as an embedded feature in Chinese nationalism. Written in dialogue with Japan's Great War discussions of East Asian civilization and Asianism, this redefining of the East led to a rejection of Japan's militant Asianism as a Western phenomenon and a part of Japan's "leaving Asia" strategy. Ultimately, as will be explained in chapters 5 and 6, Chinese intellectuals would turn to constructing their own versions of Chinese Asianism in response to this issue. Despite rejecting any form of Japanese leadership, Chinese intellectuals remained open to the idea of a morally superior Asian civilization as a model to counter Western imperialism.

The *Eastern Miscellany* under Du Yaquan

By the outbreak of World War I, the *Eastern Miscellany* was an established and well-renowned journal. Since 1910 it had been led by Du Yaquan 杜亞泉 (1873–1933), who Leo Oufan Lee calls "a 'transitional' intellectual very much in the late Qing reformist mode: a pioneer thinker who had translated several books on modern science and philosophy but who was unwilling to embrace total Westernization."³ Zhang Xichen 章錫琛 (1889–1969), who worked under Du as a junior editor throughout this period, recalled that Du was focused on science from the beginning. Like many scholars of the time, Du learned Japanese so that he could study science texts from Japan. Before working for the Commercial Press, he published his own science magazine, *Yaquan Magazine* 亞泉雜誌.⁴ He came to the Commercial Press in 1904 and began work in the Science Department 理化部, where everyone was from his hometown and thus known in Shanghai as the Shaoxing Gang 紹興幫.⁵

Despite his deep engagement with the world of science, Du rejected many of the revolutionary ideas that were gaining prominence at the

3. Leo Ou-fan Lee, "Incomplete Modernity," 39–40.

4. Both Du Yaquan's name and the magazine he created mean "Asia's source." However, Du related his adopted *hao* to science, saying that *ya* 亞 was the short form of *ya* 離 (argon), and that *quan* 泉 was the short form of *xian* 線 (line). Argon is the least reactive of the elements, while a line is a geometric form with no body or shape. In a play of words, Du Yaquan explained that this refers to his quiescence and to his ambivalence toward face. Cai Yuanpei, *Cai Yuanpei quanji* 6, 360.

5. Zhang Xichen, "Mantan Shangwuyinshuguan," 287.

time. Of particular note, and drawing the ire of those writing for *La Jeunesse* (*Xin qingnian* 新青年), Du rejected the ideas of social Darwinism that were becoming so popular in Chinese writing.⁶ In the pages of the *Eastern Miscellany*, he formulated and propagated his own ideas on culture and civilization. The evolutionary progression toward the “modern” that had so entranced thinkers of the time, notably the writers of *La Jeunesse*, left no room for Chinese or Eastern culture. A linear model of history demanded that “traditional” progress to “modern” and “Eastern” progress to “Western.” According to biographer Gao Like 高力克, Du Yaquan’s cultural theory “was a response to the evolutionary cultural approach envisioned by those associated with *La Jeunesse*.⁷ In that respect, Du can be considered a relatively conservative intellectual operating a relatively conservative periodical, yet his writings are not easily classified as such.

When Du Yaquan came to the *Eastern Miscellany*, he made considerable changes to its format and appearance. In 1910, to modernize this magazine, which had been stagnating under its earlier editors, he copied the style and format of one of Japan’s leading periodicals of the time, the *Sun* 太陽.⁸ This journal, from which Du borrowed many articles over the years, was a long-running Japanese general-interest magazine and represented the popular interests of educated Japanese.⁹ Although Du was responsible for making the journal’s appearance Japanese, by the time that he stepped in to lead, the *Eastern Miscellany* and its publisher already had a very close connection with Japan. In fact, the Commercial Press was a half-Japanese company until just a few years before the war, largely controlled by the publisher Kinkōdō 金港堂.¹⁰

Translators at the *Eastern Miscellany*

On the eve of World War I, the Commercial Press shed itself of the Japanese management and financial support that had brought it to power,

6. In 1919, Chen Duxiu led the attack against Du and the *Eastern Miscellany* as feudal and obsolete. See Tang Xiaobing, *Yu Minguo xiangu*, 184–85.

7. Gao Like, *Tiaoshi de zhuhui*, 43.

8. Zhang Xichen, *Zhang Xichen xiasheng*, 287.

9. During these years, the *Sun* was edited by Ukita Kazutami (1859–1946), whose views on Asianism will be discussed below. Goossen, “*Taiyō*,” 320.

10. Zhang Xichen, *Zhang Xichen xiasheng*, 278, 282–83. Also see Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai*, 197–98.

but the Chinese editors who had been working under this system were not removed until the renewed attacks against the press at the height of the May Fourth Movement in 1919. Although the Japanese personnel may have moved on to the Shanghai Printing Company, the influence of the Kinkōdō years remained. This can be seen in the pages of the *Eastern Miscellany*. The periodical, which remained under Du Yaquan's control until 1919, retained the format and style of the *Sun* and continued to translate and publish major articles from Japanese periodicals and newspapers, including but not limited to *Central Review* 日本中央公論, *Diplomatic Review* 日本外交時報, *New Japan* 新日本, *Light of the East* 東亞の光, *Asian Review* 亞細亞時論,¹¹ *Japan and the Japanese* 日本及日本人,¹² *Twentieth Century* 廿世紀, *New Review* 新公論, and *Tokyo Daily* 東京日日新聞. Even years after the split with Kinkōdō, translations from these and other influential Japanese periodicals remained some of the most important sources for material for the *Eastern Miscellany*. For example, in the first half of 1917, two years after the Twenty-One Demands, fifty of the eighty-two articles in the first two sections of the journal were translations. Twenty-three of those came from Japanese articles, and twenty-four were translations from English articles.

Translations from Japanese were handled by the editorial staff at *Eastern Miscellany*. Sometimes Du Yaquan himself is listed as the translator under his pen names of Gao Lao 高勞 or Cang Fu 倉父. Recalling the early days of his work as a translator for Du, Zhang Xichen explained that he would translate texts under Du's pen name. Du would review and correct Zhang's translation before publication.¹³ It is difficult to say with great accuracy to what extent certain individuals were involved in

11. Sometimes also catalogued as *Ajia Jiron*, *Asian Review* was an international magazine devoted to Asianism. Also available in an English edition, it was a major ideological publication for the Kokuryūkai, the right-wing Asianist organization that was determined to drive Westerners out of Asia. Its contributors included Ōkuma Shinobu, Rabindranath Tagore, and its famous editor, Ryōhei Uchida. Saaler, "The Kokuryūkai, 1901–1920," 122–23.

12. Established by Miyake Setsurei, *Japan and the Japanese* was a continuation of Miyake's earlier journal the *Japanese* (*Nihonjin*), which, from its publication in 1887, played an important role in Meiji-period Japanese nationalism. Miyake's nationalism emphasized Japanese culture and was very opposed to the Europeanization of Japan. The magazine was regularly banned and twice changed its name to *Ajia* (Asia). Yamaryō, "Nihonjin," 380.

13. Zhang Xichen, *Zhang Xichen xiānshèng*, 256.

the process, but it seems certain that Du maintained control over what was translated and what was published while he was the chief editor of the *Miscellany*.

Of the articles that concern Asianism, the Japanese texts were translated or introduced by three of the most important editors at *Eastern Miscellany*, Du Yaquan, Qian Zhixiu 錢智修 (1883–1947), and Zhang Xichen. None of these three editors were conservatives in a narrowly defined sense of the term. Qian and Du, however, were accused of being so during the New Culture Movement as over the course of World War I they developed a distrust of Western civilization and propagated an approach to modernization that included Eastern values based in Confucianism.¹⁴ In fact, as Lydia Liu shows, Du played a major role in bringing discussions of the individual (*geren* 個人) to the forefront.¹⁵ Du's approach was unique because of his emphasis on reconciling the promotion of the individual with Confucianism and socialism. Although he continually promoted Western science and played an important role in modernization through the publication of *Eastern Miscellany*, he was unwilling to accept total Westernization and continued to argue for Confucianism until he was removed from his position at the journal.

These translators had little experience in Japanese, and there is no evidence that any of them received any education in Japan. Du Yaquan taught himself Japanese to read the science books he had become fascinated with. Zhang Xichen had been enamored with Japan from a very young age. Although he had always wanted to go to Japan to study, he never had the chance. The closest he came to this was a three-month introduction to Japanese language at the Japanese Seminar School 東文傳習所 in Shaoxing. But this was enough for Du Haisheng 杜海生, the principal of the school Zhang worked in years later, to recommend him to his distant cousin Du Yaquan.¹⁶ Within a few years, Zhang became a renowned translator. Before the May Fourth Movement, he remained in the employment of Du Yaquan, whose core beliefs framed the content of the *Eastern Miscellany*, determined what would be translated, and controlled the emphasis and perspective that the journal placed on current events.

14. Leo Ou-fan Lee, “Incomplete Modernity,” 40.

15. Lydia H. Liu, “Translingual Practice,” 96–99.

16. Zhang Xichen, *Zhang Xichen xiansheng*, 249–51.

The Great War in the *Eastern Miscellany*

Despite China's relatively minor role in World War I, the war was of great concern to intellectuals and had a tremendous influence on the rise of a consciousness in Eastern civilization, a crucial element in both Chinese Asianism and nationalism. The ideological premises of wealth and power that late Qing intellectuals had focused on were suddenly called into question. As Xu Jilin explains, "the Great War's eruption and its disastrous consequences awakened the Chinese intellectuals from the dream of materialism and statism."¹⁷ This was clearly evident in the pages of the *Eastern Miscellany*, China's most widely read periodical at the time.¹⁸ This periodical was extremely outward-looking. The majority of the articles did not concern China or even East Asia, but were primarily focused on Europe and North America, and occasionally on other areas of the world. There was usually a lead article that would take a general look at China and its problems, often discussing China in relation to the world at large. This article was usually written by Du Yaquan, but prestigious guest writers were also regularly given the privilege of writing the lead article. The articles that followed contextualized China's problems in the world system. For 1914 to 1919, this resulted in explicit connections between China and major discourses that were becoming common around the world through a global news system of which China was now a part. It also contextualized China's present and future in terms of the war as a turning point.

Throughout the war, but especially in the early years, educated Chinese were very aware of the events in Europe, reading translated reports that included detailed biographies, maps, photographs from the front, and detailed descriptions of the towns and cities that were under siege. The first thirty pages of the *Eastern Miscellany* were regularly dominated by reports on the war, which sometimes took up 90 percent of this first section. Du Yaquan was already noting the possible influence the war would have on China in the August 1, 1914, edition. He saw how the Anglo-Japanese Alliance had brought the war to East Asia, and Qingdao

17. Xu Jilin, "May Fourth," 39.

18. Christopher Reed notes that circulation had reached fifteen thousand by 1910, making the *Eastern Miscellany* the most widely circulated journal in China. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai*, 215.

and Hong Kong would soon be at war.¹⁹ He was quite accurate when he predicted the influence that the war would have on China in the September 1, 1914, edition: “At this time I cannot help but feel ill at ease for the changes that will soon be upon us due to the current war in the various countries of Europe. This is a great transformation that only occurs once in one hundred years, and it will have its influence upon us in China, creating smaller transformations over the next ten years.”²⁰ This article showed Du’s concerns for the extent of the war, but it also contained his hopes that China’s citizenry would enter into a realization of their position in the modern system and bring China out of its dismal state: “Firstly, it will incite our citizens’ patriotism. Secondly, it will arouse our nation’s self-awareness.”²¹

Like the majority of actors in the May Fourth Movement, Du put self-awareness and patriotism at the top among his hopes for changes in China. To that extent he used *Eastern Miscellany* as an important vehicle for modernizing thought in China, emphasizing the importance of science but retaining pride in the history and the traditions of the East, a pride accelerated by the atrocities of war in Europe. Early on in the war, Du criticized the narrow-minded nationalism at the heart of Europe’s problems: “Although cosmopolitanism and universal love are the epitome of Christianity, inside the citizens of these countries there is small-minded nationalism and despicable imperialism, tied together and inseparable. These transgressions have occurred due to ethnicity, brewing into ethnic war. If such atrocities can develop among people of the same white race, what will they make of us yellow people?”²² This fear of the West was different from earlier fears. With war breaking out between the so-called civilized nation-states of Europe, claims of Western superiority no longer held any basis. Du led the assault on Western civilization. Although a strong proponent of science, he was not as accepting of the social Darwinism that many of his contemporaries supported. He quickly disappeared from the stage in 1919, yet he had an immense influence on Chinese thought throughout the 1910s as one of the main proponents of Eastern civilization.

19. Gao Lao, “Ouzhou dazhanzheng kaishi,” *EM* 11.2 (August 1, 1914).

20. Cang Fu, “Dazhanzheng yu Zhongguo,” *EM* 11.3 (September 1, 1914), 1.

21. Cang Fu, “Dazhanzheng yu Zhongguo,” *EM* 11.3 (September 1, 1914), 4.

22. Cang Fu, “Dazhanzheng yu Zhongguo,” *EM* 11.3 (September 1, 1914), 3.

Du Yaquan and Civilization

In the years from 1914 to 1919, Du Yaquan formalized his beliefs on civilization in relation to modernity and tradition. His understanding of civilization is important to his later arguments for the East–West binary, as it validated Eastern civilization’s existence in the new world order. Du rejected claims of progress being tied to a teleology based on Western civilization, as his conceptualization of civilization simultaneously referred to modernity and tradition. The term *wenming* referred to both the advanced material status of the West and the advanced moral status of the East. Like many in the early Republican period, Du saw the benefits and even the necessity of learning Western approaches to science and the material world, but he believed that the East still held the keys to morality. His division of the East and West into a dichotomy of spiritual and material was a shared discourse with the dichotomies that underlay the beliefs of most Asianists, including Rabindranath Tagore and almost every Japanese Asianist. Du’s theory of civilization can be read against *La Jeunesse* iconoclasm, but the real impetus for his theory came from the horrifying tragedy of the Great War in Europe.

The war destroyed any hopes Du had for Western civilization. It exposed the immoral and unjust roots of capitalism and caused doubts that returned Du to the morality of Confucianism. Most notably was the change in his understanding of civilization. In the article mentioned above, “The Great War and China,” this great disappointment with the war is first evident: “I have long held firm to a belief in peace, thinking that world civilization was progressing, but this war will leave it without a trace. Alas, this belief has been defeated and cannot be realized.” His belief in a “progressive world civilization” was crumbling.²³ Every month in the latter half of 1914, Du wrote his thoughts on the Great War in the opening pages of *Eastern Miscellany*, documenting his loss of faith in the West:

We are unfortunate to be born in a corrupt country of the East. I often think about how things are not as I would have them. The officials engage in horrendous graft. Bandits roam the lands. Plagues are epidemic. Floods and droughts are commonplace. Our common people are tormented by kidnapping and murder, disease and disaster. Who

23. Cang Fu, “Dazhanzheng yu Zhongguo,” *EM* 11.3 (September 1, 1914), 2.

knows how many have died over the years. Threats to our lives come as often as the morning dew. Life is valued at next to nothing. And yet these people from the civilized countries of Europe enjoy freedom and such great happiness. This makes us sigh with envy that we may not have such things for ourselves. But since the outbreak of the Great War, the number of European people dying beneath cannon fire and bayonet has reached into the millions.²⁴

In an article lambasting state nationalism and nationalists' departure from peace, he expressed his frustration with those who subscribed to Western discourses of nationalism and civilization:

The Japanese have emulated the militarism of the West, becoming the hegemon of East Asia. And we Chinese have copied the nationalism of the Westerners and become embroiled in internal strife. We Eastern people have generally embraced and respected Western civilization, but can we be sure that this is not the evil of the West? The evil of Westerners is shown in the blood that runs because of this Great War. How can our people who copy the evils of the West redeem themselves?²⁵

This complete loss of faith in the “civilization” offered by the West that occurred in the first year of the war was followed by a long process of redefining the East based on a great number of dichotomies.

Establishing Dichotomies, Defining China and the East

Throughout World War I, debates that attempted to define and differentiate the East from the West repeatedly appeared in the pages of major periodicals. Chinese intellectuals took an active role in defining the East, and, as Japanese intellectuals had done a decade earlier, they based their understandings on dichotomies that emphasized difference with the perceived West.²⁶ These intellectuals often accepted Western discourses of science and evolution, yet did not accept discourses of superiority. They gradually began to argue that material disparities were resultant of different civilizations, rather than degree of civilization. In the pages of the *Eastern Miscellany*, difference was represented by a number of dichotomies, including moral civilization versus material civilization, competitive civilization versus cooperative civilization, active civilization versus

24. Du Yaquan, “Dazhanzheng zhi suo gan,” *EM* 11.4 (October 1, 1914), 5.

25. Cang Fu, “Guojiazhuyi yu pinghezhuyi,” *EM* 12.1 (January 1915), 3.

26. For the Japanese construction of the East, see Tanaka, *Japan's Orient*.

passive civilization, and civilization in harmony with nature versus civilization in opposition to nature. This reverse Orientalism allowed intellectuals to imagine a future, past, and present that transcended the imposed teleology.

First, the idea of one linear civilization that all humanity progressed on had to be destroyed. As late as 1915, Du Yaquan still made references to “humanity’s evolution from barbarism into civilization,” but the stage had already been set for an understanding of multiple civilizations that were very different from one another.²⁷ Three months earlier, in January 1915, Wu Tingfang’s book *America through the Spectacles of an Oriental Diplomat* was made accessible to a Chinese audience through Qian Zhixiu’s translation.²⁸ This translation introduced Wu’s belief that civilization was Eastern in nature and adopted by the West. Picking up Henri Frédéric Amiel’s definition of civilization as “foremost a moral thing,” Wu argued for the superiority of morality in the East. Qian contributed: “If we consider morality to be of the most importance in relevance to civilization, then the wisdom of the yellow people is by no means inferior to that of the white people.”²⁹ Wu followed Liang Qichao and others in arguing that, unlike the morality-based civilization of Asia, Western civilization was based on material accumulation:

Our differences of color, like our differences of speech, are accidental, they are due to climatic and other influences. We came originally from one stock. We all started evenly, Heaven has no favorites. Man alone has made differences between man and man, and the yellow man is no whit inferior to the white people in intelligence. During the Russo-Japan War was it not the yellow race that displayed the superior intelligence? I am sometimes almost tempted to say that Asia will have to civilize the West over again. I am not bitter or sarcastic, but I do contend that there are yet many things that the white races have to learn from their colored brethren. In India, in China, and in Japan there are institutions which have a stability unknown outside Asia. Religion has apparently little influence on Western civilization; it is the corner-stone of society in all Asiatic civi-

27. Gao Lao, “Lun sixiang zhan,” *EM* 12.3 (March 1915), 1.

28. Wu Tingfang was one of China’s most respected diplomats of the late Qing and early Republican periods. He served as the Qing ambassador to the United States, where he often lectured on Chinese culture. From 1916 to 1917 he served as the Foreign Minister for the Republic of China.

29. Qian Zhixiu, “Wu Tingfang jun zhi Zhong Xi wenhua guan,” *EM* 12.1 (March 1915), 3.

lizations. The result is that the colored races place morality in the place assigned by their more practical white confreres to economic propositions. We think, as we contemplate the West, that white people do not understand comfort because they have no leisure to enjoy contentment; THEY measure life by accumulation, WE by morality. Family ties are stronger with the so-called colored races than they are among the more irresponsible white races; consequently the social sense is keener among the former and much individual suffering is avoided.³⁰

Wu was quite direct in differentiating Western material culture and Eastern moral culture, and he was not alone in such an opinion. Du Yaquan also questioned the idea that morality could be related to Western civilization. Reviewing European history, he asked: "From times ancient to now, from barbarity to civilization, has morality progressed with the passing of days, or has it deteriorated?" He found that instead, financial well-being had improved.³¹ Du and others attributed this difference of the moral and the material to difference between societies based on competition and cooperation.

The belief in a dichotomy of competitive civilization versus cooperative civilization was supported by the war in Europe and the Western belief in theories of Darwinism and liberalism. Du questioned the nationalism and material greed that instigated competition: "The human race's social life has been gradually pushing the scope of cooperation further and further, from a tribal level to a racial level. But state nationalists, due to political or national relations, have set the scope as the country. Pacifists, however, see the entirety of humanity as the scope."³² In his thoughts on the war, Du explained that those who advocate war argue that it is a natural part of evolution and necessary from a Darwinian perspective. Those who advocate peace argue that war could not supply that which is lacking. Only through human cooperation can we increase human production.

This was not a simple dichotomy for Du Yaquan. He saw not just China's future but the future of the world in a mediation of the differences. In one of his many articles that considered the economic disparity between China and the West, he came to the conclusion that the differ-

30. Wu, *America through the Spectacles*, chap. 12, para. 3; emphasis in original.

31. Gao Lao, "Wenming yu daode," *EM* 12.12 (December 1915), 4.

32. Cang Fu, "Shehui xielizhuyi," *EM* 12.1 (January 1915), 5.

ence was between passive and active civilizations: “Our nation’s people do not want to tread the path of Poland and India. They stand as a warning to be against inaction and to be engaged in an active manner. Is this a nation of people or of worms?”³³ At this point, war had already broken out in Europe, but this was the last lead article that did not address the war. Two years later, using a different terminology, Du changed his mind and reclarified his position on the difference:

Our perspective on this should thus be: We should not see the difference between Western civilization and our own civilization as disparity in degree, but as diversity in form. The civilization that is intrinsic to our country is just what is needed to deliver us from the ills of Western civilization, and to rescue the poor of Western civilization. Western civilization is rich like wine, while the civilization of our country is simple like water. Western civilization is luxuriant like meat, while the civilization of our country is austere like vegetables. And when one is drunk on wine and the toxins of meat, then an abundance of water and vegetables is just the cure.³⁴

Du may have accepted the Orientalist discourse in part, but he would not accept the supposed power differential between the two civilizations. This was especially true after the outbreak of World War I, in which all the horrors of Western civilization were on full display around the world in the newly established print media. Western civilization had certainly proven that it had something worthwhile to offer the world in a very material sense, but it was sick. Du proposed that the cure for Western civilization’s sickness lay in the traditions of Asia, with China at its heart.³⁵

This same dichotomy had been used by Chen Duxiu and *La Jeunesse* months earlier. The leading article for the December 1915 edition was called “The Basic Differences in the Thinking of Eastern and Western

33. Gao Lao, “Ce Xiaoji,” *EM* 11.2 (February 1914), 1.

34. Cang Fu, “Jing de wenming yu dong de wenming,” *EM* 13.10 (October 1916), 1.

35. This was not the first time such an analogy had been used. The *jing/dong* (quiescent/active) analogy that Du followed painted the East as a *jing* or sedentary civilization and the West as *dong* or active civilization. This was a favorite among Asianists and stemmed back at least as far as the Kōakai of the 1880s. In the April 1, 1881, second edition of the Kōakai’s newsletter, Kaneko Yahei (1854–1924), a well-known student of Fukuzawa Yukichi, wrote an article that relied on the same dichotomy of *jing* and *dong* cultures, also arguing that Western material culture stemmed from the East. Kaneko, “Ajia Gairon.”

Nations.”³⁶ Although Chen based his argument on the dichotomies of war versus peace, individual versus family, and legal practice versus emotion, the articles are noticeably similar. There was a wide range of intellectuals who were redefining the East—and China—against a wealthy capitalist world that was morally bankrupt.³⁷ Yet there were certainly some that viewed the same dichotomy in a different light.

Writing in April 1917, one year after Du’s article, Li Dazhao published the short article “Active Lives and Passive Lives.”³⁸ Li saw these two civilizations as developing differently because of an Eastern economic basis in agriculture and a Western economic base in business. The former requires a sedentary lifestyle, while the latter requires travel. These lifestyles respectively lead to clan-based beliefs and individualism, as well as polygamy and a respect for women, autocratic rule and liberalism, and class and equality. All things flow from these two different streams of civilization. “If the source is muddy, then its 10,000 streams will be muddy. If it is clear, the 10,000 streams will be clear.” “I firmly believe that in today’s progressive world, if we do not create a progressive lifestyle, we will not be able to survive. And I also believe that if we want to create such a progressive lifestyle from within a quiescent civilization, this can only be done with a tremendous effort.”³⁹ However, Li surprisingly backed away from this anti-Asia position and expressed the need for the passive and the active civilizations to synthesize only one year later.⁴⁰ This was much closer to the writing of Du Yaquan and may have been influenced from his writings or from Chen Duxiu’s article.

All these debates on East and West civilizations had one thing in common. They were trying to forecast the future for the two civilizations. Either competition would hold sway, leading to conflict, or coop-

36. Chen Duxiu, “Dongxi minzu genben sixiang zhi chayi,” *Xin qingnian* 1.4 (December 1915).

37. Wang Hui uses the works of Liang Qichao to show how his opinions of the West and what could be learned from it had changed dramatically during World War I. By the end of the war, Liang’s focus was not on the achievements of the West but on its myriad failings. Wang Hui, “Wenhua yu zhengzhì,” 2.

38. Li Dazhao, *Li Dazhao wenji*, 439–40.

39. *Dong* can be more easily translated here as active, progressive, or moving. *Jing*, however, may be seen positively as “passive” or “peaceful,” as Du may have understood it, or as “static” as the more standardized Orientalizing perspective would have defined it.

40. Li Dazhao, *Li Dazhao wenji*, 557–71.

eration would reign, leading to synthesis. This was by no means easily understood, and many intellectuals changed their minds over the issue, hoping for synthesis but fearing conflict.

Conflict: Race War or Clash of Civilizations

As explained in the previous chapter, the possibility of race war had been an issue on the minds of intellectuals since the end of the nineteenth century. As a Darwinian belief in competition gained prominence, and with Japan's victory over Russia in 1905, the first decade of the new century saw a surprising number of articles and books concerning the issue all around the world. With the outbreak of war in Europe, the concept of race war once again took on prominence as fears grew that such a conflict might follow the war in Europe. At a time when Europe was so clearly divided, how could Asian intellectuals fear that Westerners would unite to fight a race war? Survival of the fittest had become an accepted assumption of scientists and other intellectuals. And science held sway. Du Yaquan had a background in science and consistently featured articles in *Eastern Miscellany* on social issues by accomplished scientists. He had raised the fear of race war at the very beginning of hostilities in Europe: "If such atrocities can develop among people of the same white race, what will they make of us yellow people?"⁴¹

Du invited leading scientists to write articles, and they also mentioned the scientific inevitability of racial conflict. Xia Yuanli,⁴² a physicist who had just left Berlin on September 12, 1914, neatly explained the possibilities for conflict in his leading article on "The Reasons behind the War in Europe": "From this point on, global political and military strategy will remain centered around three kinds of competition: One: competition between different peoples in the white race; Two: competition between different peoples in the yellow race; Three: competition between the white and yellow races."⁴³

The world was seen as a stage of competition. Although Du later argued against this emphasis on competition, during the first few years

41. Du Yaquan, "Dazhanzheng yu Zhongguo," *EM* 11.3 (March, 1914), 3.

42. Xia Yuanli was one of the most important physicists in twentieth-century China. He had studied at Berlin University and was working at Peking University as the dean of sciences during World War I. Later he translated Albert Einstein's works into Chinese.

43. Xia Yuanli, "Ouzhou zhanhuo zhi yuanyin," *EM* 12.2 (February 1915), 1–5.

of the war he ran numerous articles that accepted this discourse and translated Japanese articles on the inevitability of race war. A few months after this article, he had Zhang Xichen translate an article by Mizuno Hironori 水野廣徳 (1875–1945) on the need for militarizing Japan to prepare for this race war: “The quarrel between the Germans and the Slavic people pales in comparison to that between the yellow and the white peoples. If white people soon come to realize the ignorance of fighting amongst themselves, to where will that horse turn its head? As the only super power in the world that is composed of yellow people, how can we not be preparing for this?”⁴⁴

Surprisingly, the most interesting article concerning this topic was presented as a translation from German.⁴⁵ The original author, Tailishi 台利史, speaking through Zhang Xichen’s translation, describes the coming clash of civilizations, a great battle between East and West, between the yellow race and the white race:

Once the Great War in Europe has reached its conclusion, the next question to arise is not the clashes that occur between nations or ethnic groups, but must be the clash between one civilization and another, between one race and another. To put it frankly, it is the clash between Europe and Asia. . . . The Eastern area of Asia composes a special civilizational sphere of its own. It is indisputable that the centre of this sphere is based upon Chinese and Indian culture. With the added political might of Japan, it becomes a complete body from head to toe, with Japan as the bicep of East Asia and China as the brains of East Asian civilization. . . . Contemporary East Asia is a diverse and confusing area, caught up in

44. Mizuno Hinonori, “Riben zhi junguozhuyi,” *EM* 12.7 (July 1915), 14. Mizuno soon abandoned all talk of militarization to take an extreme pacifist stance after World War I. Despite his early militaristic writings, he is now known for being an outspoken critic of war. Mizuno was a committed anti-imperialist. However, he equated imperialism with European imperialism. Although he vehemently argued against Western intervention in China, he accepted Japanese intrusions into Manchuria as a consequence of protecting one’s neighbor of the same race. This line between protecting and invading China was one that Japanese intellectuals grappled with for decades before the line disappeared altogether.

45. The article may have originally been written in German. However, I have not found any evidence of Zhang Xichen’s German ability in his autobiography. For other translations of German articles, Zhang refers to the Japanese translation from which he worked, yet this article is simply noted as being translated from German. I have not been able to find any other references to the original author, Tailishi, and could not find a similar article in the Japanese journals from which Zhang Xichen normally translates.

internal conflicts. Yet the clouds of war gather together in Europe. Once the various nations have ratified their peace agreements, then the states of Asia will inevitably unite in an alliance to create a full-fledged power. Thus the two races of yellow and white will be represented in two different civilizations and the greatest of conflicts will arise. The war that will rise from this conflict will be of the likes unprecedented in the history of the world. This manner of war will be unlike those of old. It will exhaust all military resources and the relations of production as it will be a war rooted in the difference between two kinds of life values, two kinds of religious values and two kinds of national spirit.⁴⁶

Regardless of whether this article was originally from Germany, its translation and inclusion in the *Eastern Miscellany* reveals the fact that Chinese intellectuals such as Zhang Xichen and Du Yaquan were giving serious thought to what they saw as opposing elements in Western and Eastern civilizations. Many intellectuals at this time were clearly self-identifying as “Eastern,” defined in opposition to “Western.” Although most appeared to agree that many of the defining characteristics of the two civilizations were polar opposites, the issue of whether this indicated irreconcilability was not agreed on. Conflict and race war were being imagined,⁴⁷ but so was the unity of the two civilizations.

Synthesis of East and West

Wu Tingfang’s casual remark that “I am sometimes tempted to say that Asia will have to civilize the West over again,” became a serious consideration for Du Yaquan later in the war years. The idea that the East could provide a cure for the West was certainly not a new idea; it had flourished in the late nineteenth century. Indeed, Du quotes heavily from Leo Tolstoy’s “Letter to a Chinese Gentleman” to set his scene: “I think that a great revulsion [*sic*] is taking place in our time in the life of humanity,

46. Tai Li Shi, “Ou Ya liangzhou weilai zhi dazhanzheng,” *EM* 13.1 (January 1916), 2.23–25.

47. It was certainly not only those in China and Japan who were imagining a great race war to follow the war in Europe. For example, Bronson Batchelor wrote an article that discussed a similar topic from an English perspective. He assumed that England would win the war in Europe and have to battle Japan for control over China and the East. “Japan’s Challenge to England” was published in many periodicals around the world, including *American Review of Reviews* in 1916, and a translation by Zhang Xichen in the *Eastern Miscellany* 13.10 (October 1916), 2.43–45.

and that in this revulsion China, at the head of the Eastern nations, must play a grand part. The vocation of the Eastern nations—China, Persia, Turkey, India, Russia, and perhaps Japan, if she is not yet completely enmeshed in the net of depraved European civilization⁴⁸—consists in indicating to all nations the true way towards freedom.”⁴⁹ Tolstoy’s letter was intended to dissuade Chinese reformers from following the Western model of governance and control. It was a warning about what Tolstoy saw as the dangers of Western modernity and the inevitable inequality that would follow. Du recognized the fact that “this war has shown the flaws in Western civilization,”⁵⁰ but he also recognized that the terrible economic conditions China was suffering could not continue. In fact, despite the frequent praising of Tolstoy in the pages of the *Eastern Miscellany*, Du Yaquan was an intellectual devoted to “progress,” and his writings would not have been appreciated by Tolstoy, who was at the time advocating antimodernization.

For Du, “That which holds most importance to human lives is the economy and morality.” Because the war was attributable to “economic conflict between nation-states,” Western countries were lacking in morality, something that China had to offer. Although the ancient Greek writings approached Confucian classics, the rationality (*lixing*) of these texts did not reach the common people. “Neither the Eastern nor Western modern way of living can be considered to be the perfect way of living, and neither Eastern nor Western modern civilizations can be permitted to be our model civilization.” Du hypothesized that a new civilization must be created from the two. It was not only Confucianism that Du saw as having moral foundations; he had made references to the importance of syncretism in the past. He had even gone as far as praising the Baha’i faith as a symbol of the merging of Western and Eastern thought based on morality, “pivotal for the attainment of *datong*.”⁵¹

Writing on Du Yaquan, Gao Like divides modern Chinese thinkers into those influenced by British empiricism and those influenced by

48. Interestingly, this clause concerning Japan is not included in Du’s translation. Japan is merely listed with the other Asian states. Of course, it is likely that Du was working from a Japanese translation of the letter that may not have included the clause.

49. Originally written in 1899, the letter was translated into English by Vladimir G. Tchertkoff and published in 1900; Tolstoy, *Letter to a Chinese Gentleman*.

50. Du Yaquan, “Dazhanzheng yu Zhongguo,” *EM* 11.3 (September 1914), 1.

51. Gao Lao, “Bohai hui,” *EM* 12.5 (May 1915).

French romanticism. He sees Du, along with Yan Fu and Liang Qichao, as falling into the British empiricism tradition.⁵² Gao explains that British liberalism was propagated among Chinese intellectuals by two major periodicals in the early twentieth century. One was *Eastern Miscellany*; the other was Zhang Shizhao's 章士釗 *Jiayin Magazine* 甲寅雜誌.⁵³ The Jiayin group of Zhang Shizhao, Li Dazhao, and Gao Yihan 高一涵 were all supporters of British liberalism and syncretism.⁵⁴ Although this paradigm may be too simplistic to define the very complicated world of modern Chinese intellectuals, it offers a way of understanding how intellectuals as different as Du Yaquan and Li Dazhao allowed for discussions of Asianism while others dismissed the idea outright. Regardless, the sudden rejection of Western civilization as the authoritative telos by a number of leading intellectuals because of the war led to reimagining the East and its importance, albeit often on models delineated by the now hegemonic discourses of (Western) science. At the same time, a related but different movement was occurring in Japanese intellectual circles. The term *Asianism* had exploded onto the scene in 1916 and was being used in a variety of ways by the end of the year. Chinese intellectuals were well aware of the discussions and made an effort to translate the central texts into Chinese.

Civilizational Leadership and Pan-Americanism

Because of Du Yaquan's interest in Eastern civilization, the *Eastern Miscellany* and the Commercial Press published articles and translations both for and against Japanese ideas of Asianism. From the number of translations of Japanese Asianism, it is clear that Chinese readers were well aware of the relevant debates and changing discourse in Japan. If Asianism was to be built on civilizational commonalities, then a hegemonic leader was out of the question for Chinese intellectuals. Wartime Japanese debates on Asianism focused on this issue of leadership, and these debates quickly spilled into the pages of the *Eastern Miscellany*.

In 1916 *Eastern Miscellany* published its first translation of Japanese Asianism in an article simply accredited to translator Zhang Xichen: "The

52. Gao Like, *Tiaoshide zhibui*, 183.

53. Gao Like, *Tiaoshide zhibui*, 187.

54. Gao's interpretation simplifies Zhang, Li, and Gao's inclination toward liberalism. For a more nuanced depiction, see Morikawa, *Seironka no kyōji*, esp. 217–24.

Destiny of Greater Asianism.⁵⁵ It was listed as an abridged translation of an article from the Japanese journal *New Japan* 新日本, published by veteran publisher Fuzan Bō 富山房. This article introduced the concept to *Eastern Miscellany* readers and established some of the key vocabulary and issues that were related to Asianism. These issues were the crises of race and civilization, crises that had been growing for decades already, and the possibility of the US style of hegemony that had regulated the Americas since the Monroe Doctrine.

The Monroe Doctrine stemmed directly from President James Monroe's (1758–1831) seventh annual address to Congress. It demanded that Europeans not meddle in the affairs of the Americas, with the slogan "Americas for the Americans." Intellectuals and politicians from some Latin American countries were initially very excited about the announcement as a voicing of regional support, but as Bruce Jentleson explains, "There was little altruism in this policy, or even straightforward good neighborliness; it represented much more the self-interest of a regional power seeking to preserve its dominant position against outside challenges."⁵⁶ In the 1910s, the United States continued to follow this policy. Observers in Japan may have seen it in a positive light as the United States came to Europe and Japan's side in World War I, partially as a result of the Zimmerman Telegram violating the Monroe Doctrine.⁵⁷ Regardless, the Monroe Doctrine in Asia or in the Americas could be seen as mere imperialism, or it could be seen as opposing imperialism, depending on one's position.

Every text that directly referred to Asianism in *Eastern Miscellany* between 1915 and 1919 made mention of the Monroe Doctrine. It was transliterated variously as *Mengluozhuyi*, *Mengluzhuyi*, or *Menluozhuyi* (孟羅主義、孟祿主義、門羅主義, from the Japanese *Monrō shugi* モンロー主義).⁵⁸ Oddly, the same translator sometimes used different transliterations across different texts. The Monroe Doctrine was a policy of great relevance to World War I and the US decision for involvement, and Asianists therefore had varying positions on the doctrine relevant to their position on Asian leadership.

55. Zhang Xichen, "Da Yaxiyazhuyi zhi yunming," *EM* 13.5 (May 1916), 2:16–18.

56. Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, 77.

57. Ukita, "Xin Yaxiyazhuyi," *EM* 15.11 (November 1918), 15.

58. The Monroe Doctrine is now known as *menluozhuyi*. Note that in Chinese and Japanese, it was understood as an ideology, a *zhuyi*.

The Chinese translation of “The Destiny of Greater Asianism” did not mention the original author, although he would not yet have been known in China. Ōyama Ikuo 大山郁夫 (1880–1955) was a professor at Waseda University during this time, but it was not until the interwar years that he would become an important intellectual and leader of the proletarian movement.⁵⁹ Due to his antiwar and anti-imperialist stance, he had to escape Japan and fled to the United States during the 1930s. His article is unsurprisingly a critique of the problems with Kodera’s plan, an Asianism clearly based on the Monroe Doctrine.

Zhang Xichen’s 1916 translation of Ōyama’s article on Greater Asianism introduced the term *Asianism*, but did not effectively define the concept. The article instead concentrated on the term *pan-Americanism*, an extension of the Monroe Doctrine that was finding popularity in the United States from 1915 as a counter to pan-Germanism.⁶⁰ This American “pan”—written in Roman script but also translated as *da* 大 in this text and sometimes as *fan* 權 after 1918—was seen as providing the initial idea for Asianism to *Eastern Miscellany* readers. The idea of pan-Americanism was translated directly from a new book on extending the Monroe Doctrine.⁶¹

Interestingly, in Ōyama’s criticism of the Asianist goal, he identified the source of the term *pan-Asianism* not in Japan but in China, where he claimed to have come across a pamphlet calling for the Monroist ideal of “Asia for the Asians.” The pamphlet, which Ōyama claimed was published in secret in China, was republished in the original Chinese in Ōyama’s Japanese article. Interestingly, in his translation, Zhang omitted the original Chinese quotations and the references to the pamphlet. Scholars’ attempts to locate a copy of the pamphlet have been fruitless.⁶² No matter whether such a pamphlet was actually distributed, the text was certainly published in China. In the October 7, 1912, edition of the

59. On Ōyama’s growing frustration with the ruling class’s control over politics and power in the parliamentary system, see Duus, “Ōyama Ikuo and the Search for Democracy.”

60. Zhang Xichen, “Da Yaxiyazhuyi zhi yunming,” *EM* 13.5 (May 1916): 2.16–18.

61. In March 1915, Roland G. Usher, a professor of history at Washington University in St. Louis, published *Pan-Americanism*. This book spelled out the necessity of united Americas to contend with the winner of World War I. The final chapter also considered the possibility of Japan unifying East Asia in the vacuum that would be caused by England’s defeat.

62. Saaler and Szpilman, “Introduction,” 15 and 40, n. 14.

People's Stand (*Minli Bao* 民立報),⁶³ the article “On Greater Asianism,” a piece by Japanese House of Representatives member Ibuka Hikosaburō 井深彦三郎 (1866–1916), included the exact same text found in Ōyama’s article.⁶⁴ The short article, most of which Ōyama quoted in the Japanese version of his article, openly called for an Asian Monroe Doctrine, in which Japan would lead China. Citing race and religion as commonalities, with humanitarianism (人道主義) and republicanism as its basis, all Asian nations were asked to unite to stop those from other continents. Greater Asianism is the only way for countries to maintain their independence and avoid the clash of the races, Ibuka explained.⁶⁵

The term and the core philosophies of Greater Asianism may have been discussed in Chinese newspapers even before they were discussed in Japan, although they were introduced by a Japanese official. It is difficult to tell what influence Ibuka’s essay may have had on Chinese readers. However, we can see from articles from the time that the editors at the *People’s Stand* would not have accepted Japan’s claims of Asian leadership. Xu Xue’er, the same editor who introduced the above article, frequently wrote editorials that warned Japan not to become like the Western powers and to remember the mutual interdependence of lips and teeth.⁶⁶ In response to a translation of Ōkuma Shigenobu’s call for a Japan-centered “Great Asian Empire 亞細亞大帝國 in order to oppose Euro-American civilization,” Xu Xue’er appended a short postscript: “The Chinese nation has 400 million people. We believe that an Asian Republic 亞細亞共和國 should be established with China as its centre. Would that not be better than Count Ōkuma’s plan?”⁶⁷

63. The *People’s Stand* was a pro-Guomindang newspaper that stressed republicanism. At the time it was edited by Xu Xue’er (1891–1915), who also introduced Ibuka and his article.

64. In this article the author was listed as Ibuka Hikotarō. This must be a misprint or Ibuka must have been using a different name as no such representative existed. Ibuka Hikosaburō was a Meiji China hand and politician who frequently appears in Tōa Dōbunkai materials. Ibuka Hikotarō, “Da Yaxiyazhuyi lun,” *MLB* 752 (October 7, 1912), 2.

65. The Ōyama version of the Ibuka text is very faithful to the original. However, the paragraphs on republicanism and American Monroism were excluded.

66. For example, see “Zhonggao Ribenren,” *MLB* 754 (October 9, 1912), 2; and “Zhonggao Riben wuwang chunchi zhi yi” *MLB* 758 (October 13, 1912), 2. These editorials were largely in response to Japan’s acceptance of Russia’s call for Mongolian independence. For more on the “lips and teeth” metaphor, see chapter 1.

67. Ōkuma Shigenobu, “Daweiwo zhi shishi tan,” *MLB* 755 (October 10, 1912), 2.

The proposal that Japan should lead Asia, sometimes called *meishuron* Asianism 盟主論亞細亞主義, is the defining feature of Greater Asianism.⁶⁸ This was not what Ōyama was arguing for. In fact, he was questioning the feasibility of Asianism and doubting Japan's ability and right to rule. However, the most widely read book on Asianism at the time, Kodera Kenkichi's *Treatise on Greater Asianism* 大亞細亞主義論, was suggesting just that.

Kodera's Greater Asianism: Eastern Civilization under Japan

In 1916, Kodera Kenkichi 小寺 健吉 (1877–1949) published *Treatise on Greater Asianism*. This text defined a vocabulary for Asian integration that still has relevance today.⁶⁹ Kodera's terminology was soon added to by intellectuals on both sides of the East Sea/Sea of Japan. The phrases "New Asianism" and "pan-Asianism" quickly followed "Great Asianism" as Kodera's vision was questioned and reimagined. This book was not the first text to call for an East Asian political unity to defend against Western imperialism, but it may have been the first book-length study to use the name that has carried down to this day. Not unlike the significance of Tarui Tōkichi's *On the Great Eastern Federation* in the 1890s, Kodera's text was the most influential and widespread book on Asianism in the 1910s. Unlike Tarui's book, *On Greater Asianism* was not received with open arms by non-Japanese readers but instead provided ammunition for critics of a Japanese-led Asia. This transition from Tarui's Asianism to Kodera's Asianism represents changing opinions toward Asianism in Japan. Sven Saaler has provided an excellent study of Kodera Kenichi's *Treatise*.⁷⁰ He summarizes Kodera's central goal as a call for a

"glorious new Asian civilization under Japanese leadership and guidance"; this was to be based on close Sino-Japanese cooperation with the aim of stopping the advance of the "white peril" (*bakka*) into Asia, and, ultimately, of bringing about the unification of the "entire yellow race." Japan should become the "educator" (*kyōikusha*) for China and indeed the whole of Asia, and introduce Western, modern civilization to Asia in order to bring about the birth of a "new Asian civilization."⁷¹

68. For a brief history of *meishuron* Asianism, see Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War*, esp. 44–52.

69. For more on the impact of Kodera's book, see Saaler, "The Construction of Regionalism," 1281–82.

70. Saaler, "The Construction of Regionalism."

71. Saaler, "The Construction of Regionalism," 1271.

This was not what Du had in mind when he outlined a syncretic civilization. Despite the clear call for Japanese leadership, or rather because of this outright call for Japanese leadership, the book was quickly translated into Chinese.⁷² What was probably the first translation of Kodera's *Treatise* appeared in April 1917. It was published by the Huashang Yinwu Company 華商印務公司 in Yokohama. This first edition was called *On Annexing China: Originally Titled on Greater Asianism* 併吞中國論:原名大亞細亞主義論. It was condensed and translated by Chinese students living in Japan and associated with the *Minduo Magazine* 民鐸雜誌. Their modification of the title alone makes their message clear, despite their insisting in the introduction: "Although we present the words, the speaker is innocent. The listener is warned that this medicine has its advantages and its ills, and thus we have translated it, in order to warn our compatriots. As to whether its words are true or not, the reader must decide."⁷³

Chinese readers were interested in the book, and the following year saw a new and complete 847-page translation published under its original name by the Commercial Press. The translators quoted Sun Zi in their introduction: "Know your enemy and know yourself, then in every battle you will be victorious" 知彼知已;百戰百勝. The group had noted Kodera's message and recognized it as a new form of imperialism. Greater Asianism would not find any form of acceptance in China. The concept of Eastern civilization was more than welcome, but Japan's leadership of this civilization was not.

Conclusion

The years 1915–1918 were a pivotal time for the discourse of Asianism in China. The ferocity of World War I came as a shock to people across the world. In China, this shock resulted in a reappraisal of the merits of a China-centered Eastern civilization. Much like Wang Yi in the twenty-first century, Chinese intellectuals in the 1910s posited Eastern civilization as an inherently moral civilization, in direct contrast with the material civilization of the capitalist West. Just as Stefan Tanaka has shown that Japanese intellectuals saw *Tōyō* 東洋, the East, as simply

72. Kodera, *Bingtun Zhongguo lun*; Kodera, *Da Yaxiyazhuyi lun*.

73. "Translator's Introduction," in Kodera, *Bingtun Zhongguo lun*, 4.

“not the West,” this chapter has shown that many Chinese intellectuals understood both “the East” (*dongfang* 東方) and “Asia” as “not the West.”⁷⁴ This self-identification and self-reevaluation came at a crucial time and was an inspiration for many in the decades that followed. The civilizational Asianism that was limned through this discourse particularly inspired the sudden flurry of discussions on Asianism throughout the 1920s and 1930s, yet the question of leadership remained the pivotal issue.

Japanese intellectuals were discussing the East–West divide from a different perspective. With discourse focusing on how to maintain territorial integrity after the war, Japanese intellectuals discussed plans for a united Asia. With the defense of the state as the impetus, these intellectuals imagined numerous bases for Asian unity, including race, culture, and religion, but most saw Japan as playing some sort of leadership role. Although the idea of a united Asia may have held some appeal with Chinese intellectuals, they were not interested in Japanese leadership.

The Greater Asianism that was popular in Japan was rejected in the Chinese journals of the 1910s, yet these texts were crucial in establishing perspectives from which intellectuals such as Li Dazhao and Sun Yat-sen defined Asianism after the war. No practical steps toward an Asian union were outlined by any of these articles, and no Chinese writers created their own vision of a united Asia during the war. However, the liberal concepts of New Asianism, based on ideas of complete racial equality, democracy, and national sovereignty, were widely read in China. From this springboard, Li Dazhao introduced his own form of New Asianism in 1919, combining it with Trotsky’s internationalism and positioning it as a step toward global emancipation.

74. Tanaka, *Japan’s Orient*, 4.

CHAPTER FIVE

Toward *Datong*

Li Dazhao and Cosmopolitan Regionalization

In 1919, at the height of the May Fourth Movement and a period of surging Chinese nationalism, a few influential figures in Chinese intellectual circles engaged in a debate about the concept of Asianism.¹ The public discussion was carried through a number of major periodicals and spanned most of 1919. It resulted in the formulation of Li Dazhao's "New Asianism," one of the most often-cited and little-understood Chinese theories of Asian regional integration and mutual support.

The future of the nation-state was still in question only a few years after the establishment of the Republic of China as a state for the *zhonghua minzu* (Chinese nation 中華民族), a recently developed concept that saw China composed of the five nations of Han, Hui, Tibetan, Mongolian, and Manchu. Intellectuals were unsure of the role this political structure would play as a step toward world unity and the utopian future that Confucians and Marxists both referred to as *datong*. Although the period surrounding May Fourth is popularly considered to be a time of patriotism, Xu Jilin has shown that a wide range of intellectuals were questioning the value and meaning of the state and were wary or even openly opposed to expressions of statist patriotism, instead favoring cosmopolitan ideals.² Despite disagreements on the future role of the nation-state,

1. I use Xu Jilin's periodization for the May Fourth period, which includes the New Culture Movement and roughly stretches from 1915 to 1925. In the narrow sense of the term, the "movement" refers to the 1919 protests that followed the Paris Peace Conference. Xu Jilin, "May Fourth," 30.

2. Xu defines this cosmopolitanism as "an ideal with (moral) value based on the Great Community [*datong*] and mutual aide among human beings." Xu Jilin, "May Fourth," 40–41.

the period was marked by a widespread agreement on the necessity of national self-determination, often in relationship to a cosmopolitan belief system and a longing for world unity, rather than a simple acceptance of the contemporary system of nation-states. In these contexts, Li Dazhao borrowed from Japanese Asianists and European Marxists to outline his New Asianism, the model of a socialist-utopian Asianism.

In the years before 1919, Li, caught up in the feelings of the new republic and frustrated with Japan's Twenty-One Demands and the encroaching Western empires, had pushed for a nationalist agenda. Throughout 1919 he joined Chen Duxiu in advocating an internationalist and cosmopolitan approach. Li's stated goals remained cosmopolitan throughout 1919 and 1920. However, the nationalist goal of liberating China was still his primary motivation. Maurice Meisner calls Li's use of Asianism "the paradox of Chinese intellectuals adopting an internationalistic ideology for nationalist reasons and using it for nationalistic ends."³ This "paradox" can be seen in all writings on Asianism.

This imbrication of nationalism with internationalist ideology is one of the themes of this book. Rather than seeing it as a paradox, as Meisner does, I see it as different approach to the related self–other binary that defines identities and worldviews. The relationship between nationalism and regionalism, and the elevation of one over the other, depend on which "other" is seen as the primary threat at the time and place in question. As Mao explained in 1937, in times of duress, conflict with militant forms of imperialism becomes the principal contradiction, relegating all contradictions between the classes (and in this case between other countries) to secondary and subordinate positions.⁴ In the early twentieth century, Japanese intellectuals viewed the imperialist West as the greatest threat and therefore were inclined toward the regional, despite (or perhaps in addition to) their feelings of superiority because of historical socioeconomic factors in that region. For Chinese intellectuals in the same period, the situation was not as simple. Any study of Li's strategy needs to be contextualized in the rising nationalism surrounding the May Fourth Movement, the internationalist intellectual trend of cosmopolitanism, and the sudden surge of Japanese writing on Asianism that was available in China in the late 1910s.

3. Meisner, *Li Ta-chao*, 177.

4. Mao, "On Contradiction," in *Selected Readings*, 85–133.

This chapter investigates the appearance of Li Dazhao's New Asianism in this climate, showing how Li conceived of Asian regionalism not as a goal by which non-Asians would be excluded from Asian territory but as a means to oppose Japanese aggression before democratically uniting all Asia on the basis of national self-determination. For Li, this was merely a step on the path to the inevitable world unity of *datong*. Redemptive and cosmopolitan elements of Asianism have been seen in previous chapters, but this Asianism was a product of the May Fourth Movement and Li Dazhao's readings in early Soviet internationalism. In part due to Li's enduring significance as a founder of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), his socialist-utopian Asianism was influential among CCP members and continues to be cited today.⁵ As a socialist-utopian approach to Asianism, this form is compelling as a historically derived paradigm of regionalism, mixing Marxist theory, May Fourth cosmopolitanism, and a resolute opposition to imperialism, all while struggling to reconcile its relationship with nationalism.

New Asianism and New New Asianism

Li Dazhao's New Asianism was not the first "new" Asianism. By 1917 there were a number of new Asianisms, and Li was largely writing in response to the right-wing imperialist Great Asianism proffered by Kodera Kenkichi and others and in response to a Japanese liberal formation of Asianism called New New Asianism, developed by one of Li's former teachers. By 1917, Ukita Kazutami 浮田和民 (1859–1946) was a well-established intellectual in Japan. In 1901 he had published *Imperialism and Education* 帝国主義と教育, which Akira Iriye argues represented the middle position on imperialism, representing neither the aggressive nor pacifist extremes of his contemporaries.⁶ Ukita wrote this book while working at *Kokumin Shinbun* 国民新聞 under Tokutomi Sohō, whose ideas on the Monroe Doctrine Ukita engaged with and critiqued. Ukita was not opposed to imperialism, only to the militaristic side of imperialism that was seen in the past two centuries.⁷ Ukita advocated a liberal imperialism that was economically based and peaceful, except, of course,

5. This includes the explanation of New Asianism made by Wang Yi, the People's Republic of China's foreign minister, discussed in the introduction to this volume.

6. Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, 78.

7. Jansen, "Japanese Imperialism," 61–79.

in Korea.⁸ In 1909, Ukita became editor-in-chief of *The Sun*, the magazine on which Du Yaquan remodeled the *Eastern Miscellany* in 1910 and turned to for many articles. Throughout World War I, he was a professor at Waseda University. Ukita had been writing about Japan as Asia's leader since 1896, but in 1917 he took a very direct and comprehensive look at the issue.⁹

Li read and responded to wartime Japanese Asianism before the texts were available in Chinese, but the Chinese translations soon followed. As shown in the previous chapter, the *Eastern Miscellany* was responsible for introducing many writings on Asianism to Chinese readers during World War I. Only a few days after the end of hostilities on November 11, 1918, Du Yaquan, writing under his often-used pen name of Gao Lao 高勞, provided a twelve-page translation of Ukita's "New Asianism" 新亞細亞主義.¹⁰ This article was one of the most important *Eastern Miscellany* articles on Asianism in the 1910s, as it provided a relatively thorough investigation into the topic as it had been discussed in Japan, listed the different "kinds" of Asianism that had been discussed in the past, and highlighted the major Japanese writers who had contributed to the discussion. As for the Monroe Doctrine, Ukita largely associated it with Tokutomi Sohō's New Asianism. Although often agreeing with Tokutomi on the application of the Monroe Doctrine to East Asia, Ukita disagreed with Tokutomi's choice to base his distinctions on racial and national factors.¹¹ Tokutomi, initially an important proponent of democracy in Japan, was very opposed to liberalism at this time as he saw it interfering with loyalty to the state and as damaging to the idea of the nation-state.¹² Ukita saw the Monroe Doctrine as a proclamation of liberalism and democracy, as a way to ensure the domestic autonomy of nations. He discussed each of the major points of the original doctrine and showed that it was to defend democracy.¹³ For Ukita, Japan's role in such a world

8. Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, 79.

9. Jiang Keshi, *Ukita Kazutami*, 409.

10. Ukita, "Xin Yaxiyazhuyi," *EM* 15.11. This is a translation from Ukita Kazutami's article in *Taiyō* (Ukita, "Shin Ajishugi"), a prominent Japanese monthly edited by Ukita. Ukita was a Yale-educated professor of history at Waseda University. He is known for his contributions to liberalism in Japan during this period.

11. Ukita, "Xin Yaxiyazhuyi," *EM* 15.11 (November 1918), 12.

12. Tanaka, *Japan's Orient*, 109.

13. Ukita, "Xin Yaxiyazhuyi," *EM* 15.11 (November 1918), 14–15.

would be as the protector of East Asia, stopping any outside powers from interfering with a country's autonomy. As an odd example, he cited the US involvement in Cuba in 1898, in which the Monroe Doctrine was invoked to begin the Spanish-American War and liberate Cuba from Spanish control.¹⁴ However, once the US Army "liberated" Cuba from Spain, it immediately put Cuba under US domination, forcing Cuba to put an amendment into its constitution giving the United States special rights to intervene.¹⁵

Ukita called his form of Asianism "New New Asianism" to differentiate it from Greater Asianism, which Ukita equated with New Asianism and viewed as a call for direct military or political control over Asia. Hoping to find a path toward Asian unity that did not involve violence or coercion, Ukita imagined an Asia where each state held complete autonomy over internal matters but shared responsibility over foreign relations.¹⁶ Despite his attempts to critique the imperialism of his compatriots, his Asianist ideal was criticized by his former student, Li Dazhao.

Asian Leadership and the Imbrication of Nationalism and Asianism

As shown in chapter 4, disgust with World War I resulted in a surge in Japanese intellectuals' interest in Asian regionalization. A wide variety of "Asianisms" were suggested during this time, varying from openly militaristic to liberal dreams of informal empire under democratic partnership. These ideas eventually returned to the basis of Japanese leadership, what Eri Hotta calls *meishuron* Asianism.¹⁷ Li Dazhao's early writings on Asianism rejected such an idea.

Despite the numerous translations of Japanese Asianist texts, especially from 1916 to 1918, Chinese intellectuals offered few direct responses during this time. One of the first concise and organized responses finally came from Li Dazhao in 1917. From February to April 1917, Li engaged with Japanese Greater Asianism in several articles in the pages of *Jiayin* 甲寅 (Tiger Magazine).¹⁸ His 1917 discussions of Asianism were centered

14. Ukita, "Xin Yaxiyazhui," *EM* 15.11 (November 1918), 16.

15. Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, 75.

16. Ukita, "Shin Ajiaishugi," 2, 13, and 17.

17. Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War*.

18. *Jiayin* was established by Zhang Shizhao in spring 1914. Many of its writers, such

on three points: a rejection of Japanese leadership, the need for Chinese moral leadership, and the need to avoid West-East or white-yellow civilizational war.

In what is perhaps Li's first mention of Japanese Greater Asianism, in the February 19, 1917, edition of *Jiayin*, he made his position on Japanese leadership clear:

As for Japan's so-called Great Asianism, from whence will leadership come, I cannot say. But our China is so vast it encompasses almost the entirety of the Asian continent. Of all the nations of the Asian states, there are none that are not tied to us Chinese in their blood. Of their civilizations, there are none that do not trace their ancestries to ours. The current desire to employ Great Asianism to tidy up the Asian nations. Without awakening new China and the rise of new China nationalism, I dare say that it cannot succeed.¹⁹

The idea of China as the leader of Asia was nothing new. Even in terms of modern Asianism, Xu Xue'er had responded to the notion of a Japan-centered Asianism with the demand of a recentering on China in 1912: "The Chinese nation has 400 million people. We believe that an Asian Republic should be established with China as its centre."²⁰ However, Li Dazhao believed that China should be the leader of a modern united Asia and New China nationalism should be the basis for the Asianism that would unite the continent. Li saw China as having the particular ability to amalgamate other nationalities into a united whole. He discussed this popular belief in China's ability to absorb various groups as a stepping stone to Asianism:

Our country has the longest of histories and has accumulated numerous nationalities which have amalgamated into this Chinese nation. Paying no heed to borders, the bloodlines have long died out. This has created the lofty and extensive spirit of our nation. There are those who regret that in the early days of the establishment of the republic, there were proclaimed to be five nations. As far as I am concerned, the culture of the five nations has long since been molded into one under a free and equal republican system. In the past, those known as Manchurian, Han, Mongolian, Hui, Tibetan, and even Miao and Yao, these names are merely fragments left

as Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao, Gao Yihan, and Yi Baisha, worked together as the core of *New Youth*. Xu Jilin, "May Fourth," 35.

19. Li Dazhao, "Xin Zhongguominzuzhuyi," in *Li Dazhao quanji* 1, 284.

20. Xu Xue'er, Editor's response.

over from history. Today the boundaries have long disappeared and all of these groups are native people of the Republic of China. They are all part of the new Chinese nation. Therefore, from this day the republic's political and education institutions should be aimed at establishing the spirit of the nation and the thinking of a unified nation. The ideology behind this is the new Chinese nationalism. There must be this new Chinese nationalism before carrying the movement on to East Asia. And only then can Great Asianism find glory in the world. Otherwise, it is merely an illusion or some rambling in our dreams. Take note! Concerning the fate of the nation, we all have our responsibilities. As the Western wave hammers down upon us, the youth of the new Chinese nation must push on and leap forward, bearing this great responsibility.²¹

The focus of this article was the importance of New China nationalism, not Asianism. Li's mention of Asianism here was a brief aside concerning a popular topic, but it also shows his thoughts on the future of China and Asia, what he saw as a natural march away from the various ethnicities and toward world unity. Li Dazhao's view on the five nations that make up the Chinese nation particularly illuminates his thinking on nationalism.²² Li took a modern rational approach to both nationalism and Asianism, viewing culture and cultural difference as temporary impediments. Like Kang Youwei before him, he saw homogenization as a parallel with progress on the path to *datong*, but he expressed this with a clear nationalist intention. Asia had to conform to China, not to Japan. However, Li's nationalism during this time was also characteristic of the Marxist view of nationalism as an unfortunate means to an important end.²³ The nationalism expressed in Li Dazhao's Asianism was not intended to accentuate difference from other nations. Unlike the political nationalism explained by Ernest Gellner or Benedict Anderson's "imagined community," Li's nationalism was marked with a belief in the universal equality of humankind and was focused on ending oppression. For Li, nationalism and Asianism were the means by which to liberate

21. Li Dazhao, "Xin Zhongguominzuzhuyi," in *Li Dazhao quanji* 1, 285.

22. The theory of five nations combining to form a republic was first proposed in 1907 by Yang Du in the pages of the *Zhongguo xin bao* (New China Report), a journal created by Chinese students in Japan. In various articles he outlined a social Darwinist hierarchy of competing nations with the Han as the most evolved and the nation that would inevitably assimilate the other four nations of Manchu, Mongolian, Hui, and Tibetan. See Xu Jilin, "Tianxiazhuyi/Yixiazhibian," 71.

23. Meisner, *Li Ta-chao*, 176–77.

humans from the oppression of other nations or groups. His utopian goal was to end national and racial borders. Assimilation was an equivalent for progress toward this end.

Two months after this article, he wrote a more direct piece on Asianism as a response to a popular text published by Wakamiya Unosuka in *Chūō Kōron* in April 1917.²⁴ In this article Li was much more critical of Greater Asianism, which was appearing more frequently in Japanese periodicals. Rather than rejecting the idea completely, Li highlighted the necessity of China's leadership, stressing that this must be a moral leadership. He feared that Greater Asianism was merely being raised as a militant response to "Greater Westernism." Instead, Li continued a familiar discussion that was seen in the discourse on civilization examined in chapter 4. Following in the footsteps of those promoting civilizational Asianism, he argued that Asianism should not be based on military strength or economic power but on values that are in contrast to the values of the capitalist West:

As our citizens awaken to the ideal of the establishment of Greater Asianism, firstly we must realize our duty to Asia and its position in terms of Asia as the Chinese people's Asia, as the creation of a new civilization and the construction of a new country in order to exist in the world, and as the opposite of those nations in the Western civilization. We will not engage in any activities of aggression or oppression over any of the world's peoples. The need for force is not tolerated by our ideal. This is proven by the history of our ancestors. We also ask that others do not invade or oppress our nation or country. Should these requests be accepted, then there is nothing left to wish for and our responsibilities have been taken care of. We can then proceed to extend a spirit of vast benevolence and universal love, thereby showing our brother countries of Asia a fit example and leading them, so that they may progress to become independent and self-governing territories, free from the tyranny of others and casting off their shackles. If this is what is meant by those who support Greater Asianism, we are willing to expend the utmost of our efforts to achieve these ends as this will provide the world with a benign humanitarianism and be of benefit to Asia in general. Otherwise, this is not something that our country's people want to know about.²⁵

The spirit of Li's New Asianism was already apparent in these lines. However, at this point in 1917, he was not making his own calls for Asian

24. Wakamiya, "Dai Ajiashugi towa nanzoya."

25. Li Dazhao, "Da Yaxiyazhuyi," in *Li Dazhao quanji* 2, 106–9.

unity. He was denouncing the militarism that was growing in Japan and demanding that the future be based on morality. He recognized that Greater Asianism was characterized by imperialist ambitions, and he rejected any such form of regionalization. However, his call to lead the countries of Asia, “showing our brother countries of Asia a fit example and leading them, so that they may progress to become independent and self-governing territories,” was in fact what most Japanese intellectuals were calling for when they used the phrase “Greater Asianism.”²⁶ Even during World War II, the Greater East Asia Declaration of 1943 stated “autonomous independence” for Asian nations as one of its five principles.²⁷ Li was questioning whether the real concerns underlying Japanese writing on Greater Asianism were benign, but the foregoing passage could have also appeared in Kodera Kenkichi’s writing. Much like Xu Xue’er in 1912, Li’s assertions for Chinese leadership were largely reactive rhetoric. He did not hope that China could lead Asia, but he wanted to make clear that Japan was not qualified for such leadership. Two years later, Li clarified this and argued against any leadership of Asia, rethinking the concept of Asianism under the framework for the United States of Europe posited by Leon Trotsky (1879–1940).

Trotskyist Internationalism

In 1918 the English translation of Trotsky’s *War and the International* was published by Boni and Liveright in the United States as *The Bolsheviks and World Peace*. This book, originally serialized in Russian at the beginning of the war, revealed Trotsky’s thoughts on the war and the international cooperation he believed would be a result of it. Trotsky revealed what Ian Thatcher describes as his “most theoretical exposition of the underpinnings of imperialist rivalry in the Preface to *War and the International*.²⁸ He saw the war as “a revolt of the forces of production against the political form of nation and state.”²⁹ Trotsky saw an end to capitalism and the political and economic form of the nation-state. “The

26. For examples, see Saaler, “Pan Asianism in Modern Japanese History,” 7.

27. The others being: Co-existence and co-prosperity, cultural promotion, economic prosperity, and contribution to global advancement, such as the abolition of racial discrimination. Makimura, “Senjika no Daitōkaigi,” 151.

28. Thatcher, *Leon Trotsky and World War I*, 8.

29. Trotsky, preface to *War and the International*, n.p.

nation must continue to exist as a cultural, ideological, and psychological fact, but its economic foundation has been pulled from under its feet.”³⁰ For Trotsky, the Great War was the turning point that would bring forth proletarian revolution. He imagined an international political order in which political forms harmonized with productive forces across borders, something the capitalist state could not achieve.³¹ In the preface to *War and the International*, Trotsky described the process that would characterize this movement, labeling the first stage “the republican United States of Europe as the foundation of the United States of the World.” This would be an internationalist proletarian movement in response to the imperialist “Great Germany under the hegemony of the present German state,” which was being pursued by the German government.³² Li Dazhao immediately realized the possibility of applying the theoretical principles behind Trotsky’s “United States of Europe” to the Japanese concept of Asianism.

Maurice Meisner has noted the strong influence that Trotsky’s *War and the International* had on Li Dazhao.³³ Li directly quoted from *The Bolsheviks and World Peace* (*Bolsheviki 與世界和平*) in his December 1918 article “The Victory of Bolshevism” (*Bolshevism 的勝利*), using the English terms as they appeared in the 1918 edition.³⁴ Only a few weeks later, on January 1, 1919, Li published “Greater Asianism and New Asianism,” remodeling the Japanese concept of Asianism that Li had struggled with in 1917 and describing it the same way that Trotsky described the United States of Europe. He explained that Japan’s Greater Asianism “conceals the doctrine of China’s annexation.”³⁵ He argued that Greater Asianism was merely Greater Japanism, comparing it to the “Greater Germany” critiqued by Trotsky.³⁶ Following and expanding on Trotsky’s outcome, Li envisioned the uniting of various nations into new regional

30. Trotsky, preface to *War and the International*, n.p.

31. Thatcher, *Leon Trotsky and World War I*, 8–10.

32. Trotsky, preface to *War and the International*, n.p.

33. Meisner, *Li Ta-chao*, 185.

34. Li Dazhao, “Bolshevism de shengli,” in *Li Dazhao wenji*, 601.

35. Li Dazhao, “Greater Asianism and New Asianism,” 220. Li uses the same terminology here that was used by Chinese students in Japan to criticize Kodera Kenkichi’s book in their 1917 Chinese translation.

36. The translation here as Great and Greater is not quite equivalent to the German *Großdeutschland* or to the Chinese/Japanese “da . . . zhuyi.”

formations: “Looking at the world situation, the Americas will surely become an American Union, Europe will become a European Union and we Asians should also form such an organization, which together will make up the foundation of a World Union.”³⁷

This was a crucial period in Li’s development as a Marxist and in the introduction of Marxism to China. In 1919, Li played an important role in raising Chinese interest in Marxism through the publication of “My Marxist Perspective” 我的馬克思主義觀, which Ishikawa Yoshihiro notes “was little more than a translation, or rather adaptation, from two Japanese writings.”³⁸ Ishikawa argues that Li’s Marxism was entirely based on Japanese Marxist texts. However, although the Japanese influence is clear, Li was also reading English-language texts on Marxism at about the same time and reinterpreting Trotsky’s writings to fit the East Asian circumstances. Li’s excitement about this goal also carried into other articles. In a February 1, 1919, article, he explained:

As I see it, the process for this world federation is as follows: 1. Each country with a great area and different nations must become a federation independent of others. 2. The states of the Americas will form the All America Federation; The states of Europe will form the All Europe Federation; The states of Asia will form the All Asia Federation. 3. The Americas, Europe and Asia will unite to form the World Federation. 4. All humankind will form a federation encompassing everyone, destroying all racial and state borders. This is the worldwide *datong* that all humanity has been praying for!³⁹

Everything suddenly seemed simple. Li’s acceptance of direct and universalist materialist theory did away with the problems of the particular. Unlike earlier Asianists from Japan, China, or India, Li Dazhao largely disregarded culture and race at this point in his writing. When he did mention these topics, he only made reference to their inevitable disappearance. For Li, Asianism was a step toward *datong* based on a convenient geography. Although his ideas were rooted in internationalist communist discourse, he only provided a simple model to restructure

37. Li Dazhao, “Greater Asianism and New Asianism,” 222. In the original Chinese, Li used the term *lianbang*.

38. Ishikawa sees Li Dazhao basing his article on texts by Kawakami Hajime and Fukuda Tokuzō. Ishikawa, “Chinese Marxism,” 27.

39. Li Dazhao, “Lianzhizhuyi yu shijie zuzhi,” in *Li Dazhao wenji*, 625–26.

the world. In this regard, he departed from Trotsky to concentrate more on the liberation of nations, rather than the liberation of the proletariat. Li's basis for the individual members of these continental federations was national liberation and autonomy. This denoted a marked difference between his aspirations and many forms of Japanese Asianism, which focused on the survival of the race and often the removal of non-Asians from Asia. Li insisted on the initial autonomy of each national group:

The Asian peoples should together advocate a New Asianism that will supersede the “Greater Asianism” advocated by some Japanese. This New Asianism will also differ from that advocated by Ukita Kazutami. He proposed a federation between China and Japan as foundation while preserving the existing state forms. We, however, insist on a national liberation as the foundation and [call for] a radical transformation. Every Asian nation that has been annexed by another power must be liberated, carry out national self-determination, and then unite in a great federation.⁴⁰

In this passage, Li differentiated his New Asianism from Ukita's New Asianism. Although Li had strong criticism for Tokutomi's brand of Great Asianism, he had some respect for Ukita's New Asianism. They both saw Asianism as leading to a great federation (聯邦) of nations in Asia.⁴¹ Ukita proposed disregarding nation but maintaining the state. His liberal text argued that there should be no difference between race or nation. He saw Asianism as applying to “all the nations that live in Asia, no matter the differences in their race,” including Russians, English, French, and any others that “currently live in Asia.”⁴² Li based his Asianism on national liberation. He argued that “All the nations of Asia that have been swallowed up by others must first be liberated and achieve national awareness.”⁴³ Both thinkers believed that the same three federations of Europe, America, and Asia would eventually come together to achieve world peace, much like Kang Youwei had been forecasting for

40. Li Dazhao, “Greater Asianism and New Asianism,” 222.

41. In Du Yaquan's translation of Ukita's “New Asianism,” the term *lianbang* was used to denote the Asian federation, and *datongmeng* was used to denote the world union. Li used *lianhe* to signify the Asian union, and he used *lianbang* for the world federation. Li and Du used these terms in an arbitrary fashion and rarely made efforts to define or differentiate the words.

42. Ukita, “Xin Yaxiyazhuyi,” *EM* 15.11, 13.

43. Li Dazhao, “Greater Asianism and New Asianism,” 222.

decades. A few years before this surge in writing on Asianism, Li had been Ukita's student at Waseda University, where he had taken the popular liberal's class on modern political history.⁴⁴ Although they may have shared some ideas, Ukita's student chose a very different intellectual path and envisioned a much more radical and socialist form of Asianism. However, in criticisms of Li's Asianism, his theory was unfavorably compared with Ukita's. Yet from this criticism and the criticism of Ukita's Asianism, both of which were directed from the cosmopolitan beliefs that abounded during the May Fourth period in China, Li was pushed to further develop his theory.

Cosmopolitan Criticism of Li's Asianism

Of the many articles on Asianism in the *Eastern Miscellany*, only one took an entirely negative view of Asianism.⁴⁵ This was “The Menace of Asianism” 噬蟲亞細亞主義, written by Gao Chengyuan, the editor of *Fazheng Xuebao* 法政學報 (Journal of Law and Politics) and an associate of Li.⁴⁶ Gao's article was a response to the translation of Ukita's “New New Asianism” and appeared only three weeks after publication of Li Dazhao's “New Asianism.”⁴⁷ Gao examined Ukita's relatively positive account of the Monroe Doctrine and exposed the imperialism underlying the US approach.⁴⁸ While Ukita pointed to the US perspective on the doctrine, Gao looked at other American countries to illustrate his point. Although he provided a crucial perspective on this history by showing American imperialism from the threatened nation's point of view, he also used an angry polemic that secured the support of passionate nationalists:

Seeing Mr. Ukita say “Asia's problems can be solved by the pan-Asianism proposed by Japan,” I see that this is an exact model of pan-Americanism. They hope by this means to create a “Great Asianism for the Japanese;” to

44. Wu Hanquan, “Li Dazhao yu lishi zhexue lilun,” 9.

45. Many of the articles on Asianism in the *Eastern Miscellany* are discussed in chapter 4.

46. Gao Yuan (pen name for Gao Chengyuan), “Duoduo Yaxiyazhui,” *EM* 16.5. Also published in *Fazheng xuebao* 10 (February 25, 1919).

47. Although Li Dazhao was aware that Ukita had called his form of Asianism “New New Asianism,” he still decided to call his own form “New Asianism.”

48. Although he supported elements of the Monroe Doctrine in Asia, Ukita opposed employing it in a hegemonic fashion. For a more detailed analysis of Ukita's stance, see Weber, *Embracing “Asia,”* 138–40.

create “Great Japanism.” Ha ha! . . . In the past, when the United States issued such proposals at the pan-American conferences, they were always met with the objections of the different American countries. They could not succeed. And what were the reasons for this? Because the United States was wearing a false mask. They wanted to annex the countries of South America.⁴⁹

While Ukita saw Asianism as a defense against the likes of European imperialism, Gao saw it as a “close friend of German militarism.” Ukita had made every effort to disassociate his thinking from the more militaristic forms of Asianism and envision a democratic form of regionalism. However, Chinese intellectuals like Gao were aware that any form of Japanese leadership would inevitably stumble in the direction of hegemony. Gao’s prediction of Asianism being used as a mask for imperialism was correct. Japan would take control of Manchuria only twelve years later. Relentless in this criticism of Ukita and Tokutomi Sohō (1863–1957), Gao’s initial criticism of Li Dazhao was not as clear.

Although this article appeared three weeks after Li’s,⁵⁰ Gao did not mention Li’s discussion of Asianism directly. Instead, he turned to an earlier article by Li to prove his point that all forms of Asianism will resort to hegemonic rule. Li published “The Defeat of Pan . . . ism and the Victory of Democracy” in July 1918 in *Taipingyang* 太平洋 (The Pacific).⁵¹ He argued that “Pan . . . isms” were the antithesis to democracy and saw the end of World War I and the destiny of Great Germany as the coming of a new age. In the months after this, Trotsky influenced Li and his view on pan movements changed from complete opposition to conditional acceptance. Gao was not convinced. He argued that such continent-wide organization would bring about the greed of the Japanese to rule through their “Asian Monroe Doctrine.” If a certain country “should not harmoniously engage with the states and nations of the world . . . then all the states of the world will rightly unite and deal with this thick-headed one. There is no need to limit ourselves to one

49. Weber, *Embracing “Asia,”* 199.

50. Because Gao’s article was published three weeks after Li’s, it is safe to assume that Gao knew about and was writing in response to Li’s “New Asianism,” not just Ukita’s “New New Asianism.” They were friends and had engaged in public debates with each other in previous issues of the *Fazheng xuebao*.

51. Li Dazhao, “Pan . . . ism zhi shibai yu Democracy zhi shengli,” in *Li Dazhao wenji*.

continent in some sort of stubborn conservativeness.”⁵² Gao saw continental regionalization as dangerous and unnecessary. However, his first attack on Asianism was largely directed at the Japanese. It was not until Li’s article was republished that Gao delivered a much fiercer attack on Asianism during the height of the May Fourth Movement.

Li’s “Greater Asianism and New Asianism” was widely read and provoked controversy. It initially appeared on February 1, 1919, in *Guomin* 國民 (Citizen), and was republished on March 6 and March 21 in *Zhenbao* 震報 (Awakening). Although Gao’s initial February 25 discussion of Asianism had been largely directed at Ukita Kazutami, on April 15 he launched a methodical attack on Li Dazhao’s New Asianism.

“A Critique of Mr. Shou Chang’s (Li Dazhao’s) New Asianism” offered a sophistic analysis of Li Dazhao’s “New Asianism,” beginning with a quote from Li’s article, followed by Gao’s question, an imagined response by Li, and Gao’s final rebuttal. His article revolved around two main points: the goal should be the unity of the entire world, and Japan is far too economically developed and philosophically unenlightened to allow for any form of equality in a regional organization. Gao argued that equality between developed and less developed nations could not work. The more developed nation will inevitably devour the less developed, just as capitalists abuse laborers, or adults eat more than their share when seated with children.⁵³ “Shou Chang’s [Li Dazhao’s] New Asianism is nothing more than the idea of having adults and children equally dividing up some food!”⁵⁴ The idea of equality can only work if the powerful have attained the requisite level of consciousness to not abuse their power. The Japanese and the Europeans, Gao argued, have not attained such a level. He concluded with an angry statement in bold and enlarged font: “We advocate that all the humans on the planet come together in a universal unity with no differences between nations because of their relations. No matter be it old or new, no matter be it proposed by the Japanese or by the Chinese, we oppose all forms of Asianism based on such differences.”⁵⁵

52. Gao, “Duoduo Yaxiyazhuyi,” *EM* 16.5, 198.

53. Gao Chengyuan, “Ping Shouchang jun de xin Yaxiyazhuyi,” 1–2.

54. Gao Chengyuan, “Ping Shouchang jun de xin Yaxiyazhuyi,” 3.

55. Gao Chengyuan, “Ping Shouchang jun de xin Yaxiyazhuyi,” 4.

Gao was siding with the popular discourse of cosmopolitanism and pointing out the clear paradox of Li's cosmopolitan regionalism. If universalism is accepted and desired, on what basis can regionalism be accepted? Backed into a corner by this editor, Li had to continue the discussion, providing his response to Gao in *Guomin* a few months later. In the article "A Further Discussion of New Asianism: A Response to Mr. Gao Chengyuan," Li described his ideas for the creation of an Asian regional political order.⁵⁶

New Asianism Clarified

In this article, which was much longer than his earlier article, Li described six central points to describe his New Asianism. These points can be briefly paraphrased thus:

1. New Asianism involves the uniting of nations, then continents, with the final goal of world unity.
2. Nations that are closer together geographically or culturally will unite earlier out of convenience.
3. New Asianism is in complete opposition to Japan's Greater Asianism.
4. Any form of oppression is opposed, be it within the continent or between continents.
5. New Asianism calls for national autonomy, not xenophobia or a closed-door policy.
6. New Asianism calls for weaker countries to unite against Japanese Greater Asianism. Then all the masses of Asia will unite and enter the world federation.

On the defensive with this article, Li responded to Gao's questions regarding the necessity for Asianism by arguing that it was a stage on the path to world unity. "I certainly never opposed the direct uniting of all the world's nations into a world federation. . . . However, from a regional perspective, Asia is Asia. Africa is Africa. There is no way around this fact. From the perspective of nation, the nations of all the continents are bound to their land."⁵⁷

Gao had raised an epistemological question about the existence of Asia as a unit, whether it was geographically, culturally, or racially constructed. He called on Li to provide some sort of basis for Asian unity

56. Li Dazhao, "Zai lun xin Yaxiyazhuyi," in *Li Dazhao wenji*, vol. 2, 108–12.

57. Li Dazhao, "Zai lun xin Yaxiyazhuyi," in *Li Dazhao wenji*, vol. 2, 109.

that included all the nations of Asia but excluded Europeans, Americans, and Africans. In his response, Li turned to a specious conclusion that “Asia is Asia . . . There is no way around this fact.” He did not attempt to engage with the concept of Asia but followed common metageographical assumptions that indicate the simplicity of Asia as a discursive construct. As his materialist perspective ignored cultural and racial elements, he saw Asia as a mere geographic entity, which could conveniently be used as a stepping stone to world unity.⁵⁸ Even as a geographic entity, Asia was an arbitrary construction, but Li readily accepted its existence as he argued that the continent was merely a means to his end. In this regard, Li’s Asianism differed from almost all others. It was not based on similarities or differences but was a strategy for ending oppression.

Li frequently returned to his assertion that New Asianism was intended as a counter to Greater Asianism. While Greater Asianism inevitably gave way to Japanese dominance, New Asianism demanded national liberation, equality, and democracy as foundations for regionalization. In 1918 Li had first argued that “Pan . . . isms” were the antithesis to democracy. In later years his writings indicated that he conceived of democracy as an egalitarian ideal that could be achieved through socialism. He defined it as “the rejection of the relationship between the ruling and ruled.”⁵⁹ His rejection of oppression and dominance led to his opposition to Greater Asianism and his distrust of any form of Japanese leadership. While Japanese thinkers raised the idea of Greater Asianism in opposition to European imperialism, Li called for a New Asianism in opposition to the imperialism of Greater Asianism. Whereas Gao argued that any form of regionalization would end up with the “adults” at the table taking more than their fair share from the “children,” Li countered, “we propose that the children make the adults into children as well!”⁶⁰ Li not only took the term *Asianism* from Japan’s Asianism, he based his ideas of regionalism in opposition to it. Although he certainly kept the idea that Asia would be constructed as a unified geopolitical body, there were no leaders in Li’s vision.

58. He does argue that on some points, the “people’s feeling” (*mingqing*) may be similar across Asia. Li Dazhao, “Zai lun xin Yaxiyazhuyi,” in *Li Dazhao wenji*, vol. 2, 109.

59. Quoted in Ip, *Intellectuals in Revolutionary China*, 32.

60. Li Dazhao, “Zai lun xin Yaxiyazhuyi,” in *Li Dazhao wenji*, vol. 2, 101.

Conclusion

Zhang Hao has investigated the interaction between nationalism and cosmopolitanism as one of the dualities that defined the May Fourth Period. He finds that nationalism has only a subtle relationship to May Fourth writing, but writings concerning cosmopolitanism, expressing what Chen Duxiu called “the religion of love,” flourished.⁶¹ However, this relationship between nationalism and cosmopolitanism needs to be considered further. Li Dazhao’s New Asianism offers an interesting example of this interaction, what I consider to be the imbrication of nationalism and regionalism. Although Li’s thinking during this time emphasized the need to organize on a regional and eventually global level, the basis for his thought was always tightly connected to the need for national self-determination and an acute awareness of the suffering of his nation. His assumption of the existence of a coherent and unified nation was maintained throughout these writings. However, the long-term goal for the nation was not any form of nation-state but merging with other nations into a united world or *datong*. In this respect, molded through internationalist Marxism and May Fourth cosmopolitanism, Li’s New Asianism was a socialist-utopian Asianism, offering later generations of the CCP the opportunity to employ the concept of Asianism in a legitimated pseudo-socialist context. However, Li’s influence paled in comparison with that of Sun Yat-sen’s writings on Asianism, which closely followed Li’s and established a Sinocentric model for Asianism that proved to be immensely popular.

61. Zhang Hao, “Chongfang Wusi,” in *Zhang Hao zixuanji*, 273, 276.

CHAPTER SIX

The Kingly Way

Sun Yat-sen's Reconceptualization of Asia

Sun Yat-sen is officially regarded as the “Father of the Nation” in both Taiwan and mainland China. This has resulted in a great deal of confusion when considering his undeniably pro-Japanese behavior.¹ Contemporary Chinese nationalism will face a formidable challenge if attempts are made to reconcile Sun with current patriotic tendencies. Throughout his career, although often critical of Japanese imperialism, he consistently retained the belief that only by working with Japan could China become strong. Furthermore, he believed that Japan and China shared essentialized Asian political attributes, related to millennia of Confucianism and diametrically opposed to Western imperialism. The essence of this political Asianism is what I have referred to in the title of this chapter as “the Kingly Way” 王道.

Although Li Dazhao also constructed a form of Chinese Asianism during the New Culture Movement, Sun Yat-sen’s Asianist discourse is of more importance for two reasons: First, his adoption of the various dichotomies that defined Asianism into his own discourse make for an appropriate example of how such ideas found their way into elements of Chinese modernity and nationalism. Second, the influence of Sun’s discourse on Asianism far outweighed any other Chinese intellectuals’ writing on the issue and continues to be felt today.

Sections of this chapter previously appeared in Smith, “Chinese Asianism in the Early Republic.”

1. The difficult questions of “how much” and “in what way” can Sun be criticized has clearly caused difficulties for journalists, artists, and even censors in recent years. See Jiao, “High Price for Airing”; Frisch, “Opera Ends.”

Asianism persisted in Sun's vocabulary and thought from the 1890s until his death in 1925. Like many intellectuals and most Asianists, Sun often feared that a race war was inevitable. Furthermore, he accepted the dichotomizing of West and East into different civilizations, but unlike those in chapter 4 who concentrated on material and spiritual differences, Sun saw the dichotomy on lines of traditional moral governance. Like Li Dazhao (chapter 5), he was influenced by socialism and envisioned a political utopia that China would play a large role in constructing, but instead of looking to new ideologies coming from the West, Sun returned to what he saw as an essential East in Confucian principles, arguing for a syncretic civilization that would embrace his very Westernized "Three Principles of the People." In fact, Li and Sun had similar ideas concerning the rise of an anti-imperialist and united Asia. Like Li, Sun was a fervent patriot. His love for China appears in all his writings, perhaps even more so in his Asianism. He asserted that traditional Chinese thought, given the chance and supported by Japanese economic and military might, could redeem the world of its ills. In his great enthusiasm for the revival of China toward these ends, Sun's actions were often opportunistic and related to his own ambitions for control over China's course. He was a consummate politician, and his writings should be seen as rhetoric, yet they were incredibly influential and even dangerous. He sometimes validated Japanese expansionism and often encouraged imperialism, leaving behind ample opportunity for Japan's expansionist propaganda to use his writings for Japan's benefit.

This chapter traces the development of a Sinocentric Asianism ostensibly based on the Confucian political concept of the Kingly Way, a Chinese Asianism that incorporated aspects of the various Asianisms reviewed in the previous chapters. The following sections show how this discourse reimagined the concept of Asia in connection with Chinese nationalism to offer a criticism of Western universalism and the phenomenon of capitalist imperialism, offering Asian nations a newly theorized perspective to combat empire.

Returning to Sun Yat-sen's Asianism in Historiography

Studying the Asianism advocated by Sun Yat-sen poses several problems. Unlike other Chinese intellectuals who wrote about Asianism, Sun has remained famous and popular on both sides of the Taiwan Straits and

to some extent around the world. Therefore, his every word has been analyzed over and over again in futile efforts to consolidate his thinking into a comprehensible whole. Standard hagiographies generally ignored or marginalized his Asianism as it failed to comply with nationalist ideologies in the postwar period. Beginning in the 1980s, there was renewed interest in his theory as talk of regionalization surfaced. Therefore, this chapter does not stop at reviewing Sun's Asianist theory but concentrates on how it was received at the time and even now.

Marius Jansen carried out the first full-length study of the history of Sun Yat-sen's Asianism more than sixty years ago. Although, as will be seen below, there are far more sources available to researchers now to understand Sun's Asianism, Jansen's study remains a persuasive and rich investigation into Sun's relationship with Japan. In the introduction to *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen* he explains, "it becomes apparent that the idea of an Asiatic union under Japanese leadership to combat Western imperialism was not merely the contrivance of Japanese imagination. In recreating the contemporary attitude and climate of opinion which Chinese revolutionaries and Japanese nationalists shared at the turn of the century, this story will show that for Chinese, as well as for Japanese, the overwhelming danger was Western imperialism."² Jansen carefully weaves through a great number of sources to find that "the Chinese revolutionaries turned toward Japan a face which the West did not see: Pan-Asianism. It is this aspect which underlies the entire history of Japanese relations with Sun Yat-sen. For the Japanese, it was a theme which was basic to the thought of Sun Yat-sen, one to which he adhered throughout a long series of intellectual changes."³ Jansen argues that theories of Asian solidarity "were more than the contrivance of Japanese imagination. They represented a reasonable and probable solution to a very present problem, and they were abandoned only gradually and reluctantly as the Chinese revolutionaries saw Japan try to justify a rule of Might with Oriental maxims of Right."⁴

Jansen's book remains one of the best English-language studies of Sun Yat-sen. However, his perspective on Sun is dictated by his sources. As he acknowledges, this was the face that Sun Yat-sen turned to Japan, and

2. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 6.

3. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 201.

4. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 212.

today Sun is remembered in Japan for his Asianism. Sun had many faces, and Chinese perspectives on him were more likely to downplay or excuse away his Asianism as strategy or folly. More recently, his Asianism has been looked to as a basis for a Chinese-centered regionalization. This has resulted in a number of Chinese articles and books that return to Sun's Asianism for reevaluation and renewed research. Differentiating Sun's Asianism from Japanese "pan-Asianism" remains a recurring topic in Chinese scholarship. However, some studies go further. Wang Hui uses Sun Yat-sen's Asianism as a jumping off point to understand "Asia" as a heterogeneous whole.⁵ Chen Kuan-hsing sees it as a philosophy to deal with current issues of imperialism.⁶ At least one graduate thesis proposes it as a model for future Asian regionalism.⁷ Very occasionally, a historian such as Sang Bing has produced vigorous and balanced investigations into Sun's Asianism and the myriad problems of studying it.⁸ Although most of these studies concentrate on the wording of Sun's 1924 "Great Asianism" speech, Sang Bing and others discuss the early development of Sun's pro-Japanese and Asianist ideologies. Following this lead, I too return to Sun's earliest encounters with Asianism, showing how the discourse first appeared in his thought as a strong voice against Western imperialism.

Sun Yat-sen's Early Asianist Inclinations

In English, Chinese, or Japanese, with few exceptions, studies on Sun Yat-sen's thought consider Minakata Kumagusu 南方 熊楠 (1867–1941) to be the first to influence Sun's Asianism.⁹ Minakata was a botanist working in London. He and Sun met in 1897 through the introduction

5. Wang Hui, "The Politics of Imagining Asia," 79.

6. Chen Kuan-hsing, *Asia as Method*, 13.

7. Li Guangzhi, *Lun Sun Zhongshan de Yazhouzhuyi*.

8. Sang Bing's many books and articles on Asianism have allowed for more complicated academic understandings of the concept to take shape since about 2000, but his 2015 book in particular delves further into the historiography of Sun's Asianism. Sang, *Jiaoliu yu duikang*, esp. chap. 8.

9. See, for example, Well, *The Political Thought of Sun Yat-sen*, 14; Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 66; Ogata, "Son Bun-Kumagusu no 'Ajiashugi,'" 220. However, there are opposing views. Li Taijing is opposed to the idea that Sun was influenced by the Japanese. Instead, he argues that it was something of a shared discourse by the end of the century. Due to Sun's claim in 1924 that he had been planning for the unity of Asian peoples for thirty years, Li argues that Sun's thinking must precede his meetings with Japanese pan-Asianists. Li Taijing, *Zhongshan xiansheng da Yazhouzhuyi yanjiu*, 49–51.

of Professor R. K. Douglas (1838–1913), chair of Chinese studies at King's College, London University. Years afterward they remained friends and visited each other in Yokohama and Minakata's hometown of Wakayama. According to Minakata's diary, "the first time I met Sun Yat-sen, he asked me what I hoped to accomplish with my life. I responded: 'I hope that we Orientals can remove all Westerners from the East.' Sun was shocked."¹⁰

Not long after his meeting with Minakata in London, Sun moved to Yokohama. There he became caught up in the pan-Asian anti-imperialist spirit and became friends with several Japanese pan-Asianists. As Jansen explains, "Certainly the West never gave the feeling of Oriental solidarity as much help as it did at the close of the nineteenth century."¹¹ Under this spirit of solidarity, Sun became friends with Tōyama Mitsuru 頭山満 (1855–1944), Inukai Tsuyoshi 犬養毅 (1855–1932), and Miyazaki Tōten 宮崎滔天 (1871–1922). Sun first met Miyazaki at the house of Chen Shaobai, not long after arriving in Yokohama. Miyazaki then introduced Sun to Inukai and others, connecting him with powerful politicians and pan-Asian activists.¹² On the outside looking in, Sun was aware of the danger of Japanese imperialism, but compared to many others he was not as troubled by the concept of Japanese leadership. He was surrounded by trusted Japanese friends and often used their resources for his efforts in China.

Even in the early days of their collaboration for Asia, these Chinese and Japanese revolutionaries were not merely focused on their own countries but looked to help any Asians suffering under Western imperialism. The first armed action that Sun and his new friends initiated was in support of Emilio Aguinaldo (1869–1964) in his war against US imperi-

10. Chen Pengren, *Jindai Zhong Ri guanxishi lunji*, 22.

11. Jansen devoted a considerable amount of his text to Sun's relationship with these famous pan-Asianists. I only briefly summarize these relationships here and instead turn to concentrate on Sun's writings, many of which were not available to Jansen. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 68.

12. Reading Miyazaki's autobiography reveals much about the mindset of many so-called *shishi* Japanese activists. Although there was clearly a wish to bring about positive change in China, there was always a romantic impulse to lead the Chinese as a Japanese savior. Miyazaki's introspection highlights this impulse: "When I dreamed about the outcome of my activities in Siam, I imagined myself entering the Chinese continent in front of a host of Chinese, a general mounted on a white horse in white raiment." Miyazaki, *My Thirty-Three Years' Dream*, 132–33, 138, 73.

alism in the Philippines in 1899.¹³ However, he and his Japanese friends were most interested in China. In his popular 1902 autobiography, Miyazaki Tōten explained the need to save China. He and his brother disagreed with the perspective that China was stuck in the past, instead arguing that “What the Chinese have done is to take the three dynasties of antiquity as their ideal of good government, but they consider them as norms and not as exact patterns to be followed. They may seem to idolize the past, but in actuality they are trying for progress for the future.”¹⁴ Miyazaki believed that China would once again become the center of Asia and lead the revival through its superior morality.

Working closely with these colleagues and many others in the first decade of the twentieth century, Sun worked toward the revolution in China. Perhaps the zeal and idealism of his Japanese friends during this time left Sun with hope for Japan that would not die, even as the country increasingly engaged in imperialistic politics toward China. It was through the support of these friends that those involved in the 1911 Revolution successfully overthrew the Manchu government and brought great political change to China. With the Manchu suddenly marginalized, Sun and others in the Guomindang began looking to future possibilities, including the possibility of working together with the Japanese to create a united Asia. The speeches analyzed here show that Sun used issues of race and civilization to frame his calls for Asian unity under Japanese leadership.

At the same time, in early 1913 the US government—as well as the governments of a number of Western states—were involved in very public discussion of restrictions to be imposed on newly arrived foreigners that would bar them from owning land. The only foreigners to be affected by this new law were those deemed ineligible for citizenship, specifically, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Indian immigrants. The reasons for the prolonged debate were partly due to fears that “it would give grave offense to China and Japan.”¹⁵ Despite repeated appeals by the Japanese government, these discussions were finalized with the Alien Land Law of 1913, largely set in place to stop Chinese and Japanese from buying

13. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 71.

14. Miyazaki, *My Thirty-Three Years’ Dream*, 47.

15. “For Delaying Alien Bills,” *New York Times* (February 9, 1913), 13. *New York Times* articles followed these discussions throughout 1913.

or cultivating land in California. As the discussion of these restrictions moved into the Japanese media in June 1913, the terms “Han-Ajiashugi” 汎アジア主義 and “Zen-Ajiashugi” 全アジア主義 entered the Japanese language as translations of the English term “pan-Asianism.”¹⁶ This was one of the first discussions of pan-Asianism in Japan. The term had been used to criticize Japan in the Western media and was not accepted in any positive manner in the Japanese newspapers, but the word initially entered Chinese writing as a positive term just months before this.

Sun’s Asianist Speeches: Strategic Alliance under Japanese Leadership

Sun Yat-sen’s Asianist face was always clearest when he was in Japan. To some extent, this can be looked on as strategy. Although his speeches were often intended for Chinese students or businessmen living in Japan, Sun was trying to build on China–Japan relations by encouraging further transnational development. Back in China, the issue of Japan was more likely to fade from his speeches and writings. Therefore, Sun’s “Asianism” speech should be contextualized with his other speeches in Japan. When this is done, the content of his symbolic 1924 speech does not seem particularly special.

The most blatant examples of Sun’s calls for Asian unity were in the series of speeches he made in February and March 1913 in various cities across Japan. Although Sun visited Japan for research in his role as minister of railways, he had other plans for his travels. He stressed commonalities by peppering these speeches with popular slogans used by Japanese Asianists, including the race solidarity slogan “same script, same race,” the Japanese Monroist slogan “Asia for the Asians,” and the classical state solidarity idiom “If the lips perish, the teeth will freeze.”¹⁷

Sun was looking to gather widespread support from the Chinese in Japan as well as from high-ranking Japanese politicians and elites. When he spoke to a Chinese audience, he urged them to enhance relations with Japanese and work toward solidarity. He saw the Western powers as the danger to Chinese as well as Japanese interests: “If there was no Japan, then there would be no talk of future prospects for East Asia. In East

16. Saaler, “Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History,” 6.

17. Sun, “Xuesheng xu yi geming jingsheng nuli xuewen,” *GFQJ*, 144.

Asia, the revolution accomplished by our generation was due to Japan's strength. For the victory of China's revolution, we must thank Japan. Japan and China share the same gains and losses. To protect Japanese interests, they must protect the interests of all East Asia.”¹⁸ In this speech to Chinese students assembled in Tokyo, Sun called for students to use brotherly love to correct Japanese false impressions of Chinese people. It was their responsibility to work toward China–Japan unity for China and the world. Sun repeatedly stressed that this unity was for China's national interests, but he related his country's interests to those of Asia and of the “yellow” race:

Asia's population amounts to two thirds of that of the world, yet today there is a part that remains subjugated under the might of the Europeans. Were China and Japan to cooperate in their development, then our power would be greatly expanded and we could easily create a Great Asia revitalizing the past glories of history. We could bring peace to the world, bring *datong* to humanity with rights of equality and freedom for all. The happiness of the world could be achieved by the 500 million of the yellow race.¹⁹

The redemptive power of Asia to right the world and achieve harmony was a concept frequently returned to by proponents of Asianism. Not unlike the traditional Sinosphere, concentric circles of nation and race—which indicated the 500 million people of China, Japan, and Korea—extended outward to the entire world, which could look forward to progressing to the Confucian utopia of *datong*. Asia's “past glories of history” referred to not just economic power or world standing but the righteousness of governance under traditional Confucian society. This is a subject that Sun further explained in his 1924 speech (returned to below). It is in his 1913 speeches, however, that he first highlighted the issue of Japanese leadership.

Unlike Liang Qichao, Li Dazhao, Ye Chucang, and many other Chinese intellectuals, Sun Yat-sen was quite clear in his calls for Japanese leadership. For Sun, Japanese leadership was certainly not meant as dominance but as guidance: “Japan's restoration came long before China's revolution and the country has already experienced so much. The people of my country will still be looking to Japan for guidance for a

18. Sun, “Xuesheng xu yi geming jingsheng nuli xuewen,” *GFQJ*, 144–45.

19. Sun, “Xuesheng xu yi geming jingsheng nuli xuewen,” *GFQJ*, 145.

long time.”²⁰ National autonomy was assumed. However, his speeches to Japanese Asianists at the Tōa Dōbunkai were surprisingly upfront in their demands for Japanese leadership—perhaps so much that some of the elite at these speeches wondered whether Sun was inviting empire. “Asians have a duty to maintain the peace in Asia. However, China is currently lacking in the power to maintain peace. Therefore, Japan’s responsibility is great! I hope that Japan will work hard to take care of China and engage in mutual support with China. This is not only my hope, but this is what all of the Chinese people eagerly look forward to!”²¹

In his speeches to Chinese citizens, he also made calls for Japanese leadership, remaining at odds with those who saw Japan as the greatest threat. Sun was always wary of Japanese imperialism, but he made it clear that the European empires were the greater threat. He occasionally mentioned the United States in a positive light but always made it clear that he believed the Western powers would not assist China if it was not in their own interests:

Throughout history, Chinese people have misunderstood and looked down upon Japan. But from the beginning of the revolution, those cadres who held positions in the revolutionary parties all studied in Japan. And many Japanese men of high morals offered great assistance during the revolution. Some of us advocate turning to the United States for help with China’s future, but can Monroist America become the country that China will rely on? Can the power of the United States be entwined with China’s fate? I am convinced that no matter what, it can only be Japan that can share China’s doom or survival.²²

Although it is difficult to estimate the influence that these speeches had on Japanese leaders, the influence on Chinese attendees can be seen through Dai Jitao’s change in thought, which occurred in 1913. Accompanying Sun as translator and assistant, Dai likely listened to all of Sun’s speeches in the February to March visit. Despite being quite critical of Japan until this time, just after the visit he began to write about the necessity of a Sino-Japanese alliance in *Minquan Bao* 民權報 and later became what Lu Yan has referred to as “one of the foremost Pan-Asianists

20. Sun, “Xuesheng xu yi geming jingsheng nuli xuewen,” *GFQJ*, 138.

21. Sun, “Zhong Ri xu huxiang tixie,” *GFQJ* 3, 158. There is similar content in “Zhong Ri liangguo ying xieshou jinbu,” *GFQJ*, 137.

22. Sun, “Zhong-Ri zhi guanxi,” *GFQJ* 3, 158.

in China": "If Japan does not collaborate with China to work for the cause of preserving the yellow race, it will face extinction soon. . . . If China and Japan combine their forces to resist European powers, they will surely force them to change their aggression into cooperation."²³

Ostensibly, Sun's reasons for going to Japan in 1913 were related to his new position as minister of railways and to visit old friends. From his speeches, it is clear that he was spending much of his time garnering Japanese support, and his activities and speeches expose a growing desperation. Marie-Claire Bergère notes that between these Asianist speeches, Sun met with industrial tycoon Shibusawa Eichi (1840–1931) to discuss the creation of the Industrial Company of China to bring Japanese *zaibatsu* to China to help with development and resource exploitation.²⁴ There were other meetings that are more revealing of Sun's work in 1913.

For example, John C. H. Wu argues that the most important event during the 1913 tour of Japan was Sun's meeting with Katsura Tarō 桂太郎 (1848–1913), who had just fallen from power and lost his position of prime minister through a no-confidence vote earlier that month.²⁵ Katsura was frustrated with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which he had been instrumental in establishing years before, and was now interested in establishing a Sino-Japanese Alliance. Sun was excited about the prospects of furthering relations with Japan, but he was openly critical of Japan's actions in Korea. He purportedly said to Katsura: "The doctrine of Greater Asia (大亞細亞主義) must be based on the principle of equality and fraternity. Now, before the Russo-Japanese War, China was in full sympathy with Japan; but not after the war. The reason is that Japan, riding on the tide of victory, went ahead to annex Korea."²⁶ Because of the construction of these sources years after the event, whether Sun actually used the term *Asianism* at this point cannot be confirmed. In the translation of Sun's conversation with Katsura, John Wu worked with the *Guofu Nianpu*, which was based on an article by Hu Hanmin

23. Translated and quoted in Lu Yan, *Re-Understanding Japan*, 68, 76–77, 79.

24. Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 238–39.

25. John C. H. Wu, *Sun Yat-sen*, 193. Sun's meeting with Katsuro is also discussed in Jansen, *Sun Yat-sen and the Japanese*, 159. *MLB* (February 20, 1913) makes mention of the meeting but provides no details.

26. Quoted in John C. H. Wu, *Sun Yat-sen*, 193–94.

published in 1936.²⁷ Assuming Hu may not have been writing this article from notes of their conversation, he based his writing on memory of an event twenty-three years before. In 1936, Asianism was already a common term, and there is certainly the possibility that Hu, either purposefully or unintentionally, made an alteration to the original conversation between Katsura and Sun to support his own belief in Asianism.

However, Sun certainly did mention “da Yazhou zhi zhuyi” 大亞洲之主義, a term similar to *Asianism* at a speech in Shanghai a few weeks later, and this speech was immediately published in *The People's Stand* on March 29, 1913.²⁸ Whether or not Sun also used such a term in his meeting with Katsura, the spirit of their conversation is most likely accurately portrayed by Hu Hanmin. According to Hu, Katsura promised Sun he would work toward righting these wrongs and won his support. However, Katsura passed away a few months later in October 1913, and these plans for a Sino-Japanese alliance disappeared. Hu Hanmin later remarked that there were few Japanese like Katsura remaining and that the principles of Asianism had therefore become skewed.²⁹

The meeting with Katsura and Sun's speeches in Japan in February and March 1913 are particularly important in our understanding of Sun's early Asianism, or at least his views on China-Japan cooperation. As Dai Jitao remarked later: “He naturally believed that the rise or fall of the nation and the survival of the country was greatly related to the possibility of alliance (*lianmeng* 聯盟) with Japan.”³⁰ Sun firmly believed in the cooperation of China and Japan. Unlike Li Dazhao, who saw Asianism as a step to an egalitarian cosmopolitanism with no leadership, based only on geographic convenience and quite separate from the cultural realm, Sun understood the foundation of this cooperation to be found in the shared culture and history of the two countries. From this shared culture and history, Sun turned to economic and military issues. However, GMD figures back in China were discussing Asianism at the same time, likely in conjunction with Sun, and they concentrated on economic and military issues alone. These 1913 discussions of Asianism

27. Hu Hanmin, “Da Yaxiyazhuyi yu kangRi”; Sun Yat-sen, *Guofu nianpu*, 495–97.

28. *GFAQ* 3, 159.

29. Hu Hanmin, “Da Yaxiyazhuyi yu kangRi,” 540.

30. Dai also discussed the Katsura meeting and recalled that the meetings between the men were “sincere and heartfelt.” Dai, *Riben lun*, 108 and 109.

in China contextualize Sun's talks in Japan, showing that his thinking was as much a part of the historical zeitgeist as it was of his individual perspective, but they also show the surprising consideration given to possibilities for regional cooperation in conjunction with the rise of nationalism in China.

The Guomindang's Push for Asian Cooperation in 1913

Suisheng Zhao follows Joseph Levenson's lead in defining this period by its "elite nationalism," as GMD intellectual and political leaders defined Chinese nationalism and propagated it through publications under their control.³¹ In agreement with this analysis, this section concentrates on official GMD efforts toward Sino-Japanese cooperation, as well as the discussions by Chinese intellectuals on the merits of further alliance or cooperation with Japan in 1913, as found in party journals and newspapers.

In February and March, leaders took practical steps toward Sino-Japanese cooperation, while Chinese journalists wrote articles and translated Japanese texts on the issue. Articles explaining the necessity for the two countries to form an alliance of mutual assistance appeared almost immediately after the Japanese versions were published.³² Young intellectuals cautiously engaged with two ambiguous and overlapping concepts: Sino-Japanese mutual assistance (*Zhong-Ri tixie lun* 中日提攜論) and a Sino-Japanese alliance (*Zhong-Rilianmeng* 中日聯盟). Although Chinese elites had raised the prospect of an alliance as early as the reforms of 1898, the idea was largely within the realm of political rhetoric with little action taken.

In early 1913, Chinese intellectuals began to consider Asia's future in response to Japanese calls for Asianism and the continued threat of Western imperialism. Throughout February, a number of articles discussing the importance of cooperation with Japan appeared in the newspaper. One of these was "Preparations for the China-Japan Association" 中日協會之籌備, describing a meeting in Nanjing to discuss a China-Japan Alliance (中日同盟) that would bring together the people and the governments. The initial Chinese members of this association are

31. Zhao Suisheng, *Power by Design*, 80–81.

32. Henmi, "Zhong-Ri tixie lun," *MLB* (March 27 and 30, 1913).

listed as Li Zhaofu 李肇甫, who had been Sun's secretary in 1912; Wang Yinchuan 王印川, politician and *The People's Stand* editor; Zhu Qi 朱淇, who had aided Sun in a number of early revolutionary activities; Lin Changmin 林長民, who held a great number of posts in the first republican government; and journalist Huang Yuanyong 黃遠庸.³³ In 1913 the China-Japan Association was greatly expanded and looked promising for the brief window that appeared before Yuan Shikai's Empire of China. In an opening speech for the association in Nanjing, Tang Hualong 湯化龍, the newly elected chair of the legislative assembly, stated: "The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries may have been the time of the white peoples, but the twentieth century is the age of East Asians as China and Japan's friendship is a relationship between brothers."³⁴ As in the cases described here, these intellectuals saw working with Japan as the key to save China, but others looked further away.

In three articles simply titled "Great Asianism" ("Da Yaxiyazhuyi" 大亞細亞主義) and serialized in the March 15, 16, and 21 editions of the *People's Stand*, Ye Chucang wrote the first long description of Asianism to appear in any language.³⁵ Ye detailed a military and economic union that would extend across all of Asia, and it would begin with the integration of the "Chinese, Japanese, Turkish, and Siamese markets."³⁶ Ye considered Japan as merely another country in this project, disregarding culture and history and instead outlining a strategic Asianism for the survival of all nations on the continent. The serialization of his articles was cut short by the assassination of Song Jiaoren, but the drive to unite with Japan briefly continued in Beijing.

Perhaps the largest organization to come out of this—the China-Japan Citizens' Association 中日國民大會—was first assembled in Beijing just before the Second Revolution. Despite Song's death on March 22, the association gathered on the afternoon of March 23, with Chen Jiading 陳家

33. "Zhong-Ri xiehui zhi choubei," *MLB* (March 11, 1913).

34. Feng Ziyou and many others were added to the list of members in this publication. Unknown author, "Zhong-Ri xiehui zhi jinxing" [The establishment of the China-Japan Association] in *Guohui congbao* [Journal of the National Assembly] 1 (1913), *waijiao* 4–5.

35. I investigate Ye Chucang and these articles in much greater detail in Smith, "Chinese Asianism in the Early Republic."

36. Ye, "Da Yaxiyazhuyi."

鼎 (1876–1928), a close friend of Song, giving the opening address.³⁷ Chen discussed the history of Sino-Japanese relations, announcing that “from this day on we can forecast that this will be a period of Sino-Japanese Alliance” 中日同盟 to “thunderous applause.”³⁸ As the Chinese representatives were all GMD politicians, many of whom escaped to Japan after the Second Revolution, the association was short-lived. However, these associations were accompanied by numerous editorials discussing the merits of working with Japan, offering us an idea of non-GMD intellectuals’ opinions of an alliance during this window.

As print media expanded at a dramatic pace during the first decades of the twentieth century, intellectuals working beyond the political center entered into this discourse and commented on the possibility of China and Japan working together. Cautious optimism can be seen in the words of Beijing artist Hu Peiheng 胡佩衡 (1892–1962): “How odd! Japan can be strange! The meaning behind Japan’s recent activities is difficult to fathom. Japan wishes to form an alliance 聯盟 with China. I was quite doubtful when first I heard this, but seeing is believing. Considering the various relations between Japan and China, there is a necessity for friendly relations. It is admirable that the Japanese were early to be aware of this.”³⁹

In his article on Sino-Japanese alliance, Hu did not use the realpolitik of contemporary politicians, but expressed the idealism of his generation. He saw the benefit of nations from the “same continent and of the same race” working together, but only as a step toward political *datong*, the final unity of all nations. In a burst of idealist pacifism, he ended the article with the hope that Yuan Shikai could lead an alliance with the Taisho emperor and then another with Woodrow Wilson.⁴⁰ An alliance with Japan was not the only option. Many intellectuals proposed cooperation with the United States, Germany, and Great Britain in 1913, indicating that for many, any alliance was about politics and Asianism was often merely rhetoric toward that end.

37. Chen Jiading studied at Waseda University in the late Qing dynasty. He joined the Xingzhonghui while studying in Japan. After the failure of the Second Revolution, he returned to Japan.

38. “Zhong-Ri guomin dahui,” *MLB* (March 29, 1913), 8.

39. Hu Peiheng, “Zhong-Ri lianmeng ganyan,” 1.

40. Hu Peiheng, “Zhong-Ri lianmeng ganyan,” 3.

Before these visions could be brought closer to implementation, an internal threat took precedence for China—unrelated to the Western powers that Asianism was designed to protect China from. In the short term it was Yuan Shikai seizing power and specifically the assassination of Song Jiaoren that disrupted Asianist ambitions. Song was shot on March 20, the day before publication of Ye's third article. Beginning on March 22, the day of Song's death in the hospital, the *People's Stand* was inundated with photographs, reports, and eulogies related to Song Jiaoren, stretching from corner to corner on most pages. Ye himself took to compiling these reports, as well as those from other major newspapers, and published them in an edited volume.⁴¹ Sun Yat-sen ended his trip to Japan and hurried back to China to help relieve party chaos after the assassination and to embark on a mission to promote integration with Japan. However, as Yuan wrested power from the GMD over the next few months, Sun had no choice but to return to Japan and reconsider his options.

Contradictions and Continuities: Sun Yat-sen, 1913–1918

In his final exile to Japan (1913–1916), Sun made fewer references to Asianism. Although he certainly did not give up on the idea entirely, he must have been frustrated with the disaster of the Second Revolution, when he was used by Japanese capitalists and completely failed to win support in China. A number of events occurred during Sun's last exile in Japan that later contributed to his being labeled as an Asianist. These events reveal continuities in Sun's Asianism, but also present a number of contradictions, indicating that Sun's thinking on Asianism did not just divide the world between East and West, but considered the division of oppressed and oppressor. The first of these was Sun's interactions with Indian revolutionaries in Tokyo, events that can be compared with Zhang Taiyan's similar work in the late Qing period, analyzed in chapter 3. The second was the very confusing stance that Sun took toward Germany during World War I. Marius Jansen notes that even after the Twenty-One Demands of 1915, Sun believed that "a Sino-Japanese alliance was the only path to freedom from European imperialism."⁴² Although Sun always phrased this as an "Asian" partnership, and he

41. Ye, *Song Yufu*.

42. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 192.

certainly made numerous references to race over the years, he was very open to the idea of allying with other nations that he felt suffered under European imperialism, especially if there was the possibility that cooperation could assist him in his ambitions or further China's liberation from the powers.

Immediately after his arrival in Japan, Sun began campaigning for support to return himself to power and to defeat Yuan Shikai. He once again turned to his pan-Asianist allies. On May 11, 1914, Sun wrote a letter to Ōkuma Shigenobu. Ōkuma was prime minister at the time, but they had been friends before, during Sun's time in Yokohama at the end of the century. The letter was called "Proposal for a Sino-Japanese Alliance."⁴³ This letter is largely concerned with economic partnership but hints at the need to remove Yuan Shikai and put Sun back in power. The content of the letter is at times disturbing and shows the desperation that Sun was feeling in his exile and the lengths he would go to in order to regain power: "While the exploitation of Japan's natural resources has almost reached its limit without any more room for further expansion in Japan, China is large and rich with potential wealth yet to be developed. Japan could, therefore, without even incurring the trouble and expense of stationing her troops as Great Britain does in India, acquire large commercial markets in China."⁴⁴

This letter may have influenced Ōkuma's role in the Twenty-One Demands, which the Japanese presented to the Yuan Shikai government a year later. Concerning this letter and Sun's involvement in the demands, Jansen writes: "He became, at times, an apologist for Japanese expansion, and even an instrument of that aggression."⁴⁵ It is disturbing to imagine that Sun would consider allowing China to become Japan's colony in a way similar to India's subjugation by Great Britain. He had always been fiercely opposed to the British in India, and his capitulation to empire here reveals contradictions that developed in his thought and action due to the desperation he must have felt. It was also during this

43. Appears in Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*, 1–7.

44. Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*, 3–4. Original letter is available in the Ōkuma Archives at Waseda Library (http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kosho/i14/i14_bo269_4/; accessed June 10, 2013).

45. Sun did not want the Japanese working with Yuan at all and offered them much more than was included in the Twenty-One Demands. Jansen, *Sun Yat-sen and the Japanese*, 189, 192–93.

same period that Sun became an ardent supporter of Indian independence activists living in exile in Japan.

On December 23, 1912, the governor general of India was injured by a bomb blast during the ceremony for the transfer of the capital from Calcutta to New Delhi. Rash Behari Bose was identified as behind the plot and had to escape, eventually arriving in Japan in 1915 after a series of dramatic events.⁴⁶ Shortly after his arrival, Sun introduced Bose to Japanese pan-Asianists and convinced *Asahi Shimbun* journalist Yamanaka Minetarō 山中峯太郎 (1885–1966) to assist him. Due to his compelling articles, Yamanaka played a large role in rousing the Japanese public's support of the Indian independence movement and Bose.⁴⁷ Sun allegedly met regularly with Bose to discuss sending weapons to India.⁴⁸ Not long after this, Bose became an important writer of pan-Asianism in Japan, leaving his mark on the development of the theory and on the fight for Indian independence.⁴⁹ Sun's old friends, the pan-Asianists Inukai Tsuyoshi, Miyazaki Tōten, and Uchida Ryōhei, provided a considerable amount of support for Bose and the Indian independence movement during this time, possibly helping maintain Sun's belief in Japan, despite the clear expansion of Japanese imperialism in China. However, it was not long after this that Sun endeavored to find support for his cause against the British with alliances that can only be seen far outside of Asianism.

In 1917, the *Far Eastern Review* in Shanghai ran a number of articles lambasting Sun for his pan-Asian attitude, not because of his attempts to ally with Japan, but for his support of Germany at the height of World War I. Despite his government's official position of war with Germany, Sun had offered the German government significant economic privileges in China in exchange for military aid in his fight with the north.⁵⁰ According to William Kirby, although Sun turned to many countries for help, “it may be argued that Germany enjoyed a particularly eminent

46. Zhang Chengzhi, *Zunzhong yu xibie*, 232. Also Nakajima, *Bose of Nakamuraya*.

47. Zhang Chengzhi, *Zunzhong yu xibie*, 232.

48. Nakajima, *Bose of Nakamuraya*, 56–68.

49. Hotta, “Rash Behari Bose.”

50. This occurred at the beginning of the rule of Sun's Guangzhou government. This period is often referred to as the “warlord period.” Sun's government had little control over the country, and many foreign observers doubted the extent to which he could represent China.

position in his dreams.”⁵¹ Kirby has detailed Sun’s plans and efforts for the Germany and China alliance that progressed through the end of World War I into the 1920s.⁵² Although Sun tried numerous times and through numerous avenues, he was never very successful at establishing any form of ties.⁵³ However, Westerners’ fears of Asian unity and its relationship with Germany appeared in news media.⁵⁴

Sun’s main argument was that Germany was being victimized by the British empire, not unlike the nations of Asia. “Pan-Asianism” was briefly seen as being anti-British in this media. However, even in declaring his position against the war with Germany in 1917, Sun made it clear that by pan-Asianism, he was referring to a Sino-Japanese partnership that would indicate a sphere of interest in relation to other regions: “Under the principle of Pan-Asianism, Japan and China can together develop the natural resources in the West of the Pacific, while under the Monroe Doctrine the United States can unify authority in the East of that ocean.”⁵⁵

Still, Sun’s attempts to expand his alliances to non-Asian countries signify that his thought on the divisions in the world were not limited to a simple East-West binary, despite his assertion of such a belief in “Asianism.” Although often an opportunist and willing to work with a great number of

51. Kirby, *Germany and Republican China*, 30.

52. Or perhaps even earlier. Tajima Nobuo has also argued that Sun advocated a China–Japan–Germany alliance to Katsura in their famous 1913 meeting because Germany was a victim of Anglo-Saxon imperialism. Tajima, “Son Bun no ‘Chū Doitsu So san koku rengō,’” 7–13. Tajima largely bases his understanding of this on the writings of Dai Jitao, who described Sun and Katsura’s meetings in *Riben lun*.

53. Kirby, *Germany and Republican China*, 30–37. Also see Kobayashi, “Sun Yatsen and Asianism,” 24.

54. The June 6, 1917, edition of the *Christian Science Monitor* also featured an article on pan-Asianism. The article saw the concept as a dangerous Japanese-led anti-West movement, labeling Sun Yat-sen, Tang Shaoyi, and a certain Wen Zhongyao (Wen Chung-yao) as “Chinese adherents of the Pan-Asian propaganda.” See “Pan-Asianism,” *Christian Science Monitor* (June 6, 1917). Western media use of the term *Asianism* generally approaches this discourse from the perspective of anti-Western policies. Even in 2009, Daniel Sneider used the term “New Asianism” to indicate Japan’s shift away from the United States, while Chinese intellectuals’ use of the same term during the same period indicates the building of positive relationships with neighboring East Asian states. Sneider, “The New Asianism.”

55. Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*, 116. Originally published in the 1917 pamphlet “Zhongguo cunwang wenti” (The Vital Problem of China), republished in Taiwan in 1953. In the Chinese original, the term for pan-Asianism was *Yazhouzhuyi*. *SZSQJ* 4, 95.

questionable allies, Sun emphasized ideas of morality and anti-imperialism in his work, qualities he did not necessarily see as only Asian but clearly believed were an essential part of an East Asian past and in opposition to modern Western imperialist values. As to whether Sun was sincere in his vision for Japan and China to work together, his translator certainly thought so. Dai Jitao accompanied Sun and translated for him at all the 1913 speeches and activities in Japan in 1924, and he recorded the events in 1928, three years after Sun's death.⁵⁶

In the following excerpt from Sun's 1917 booklet on China's survival, he discussed the importance of Japan's help in confirming China's future. He opposed joining the war with Germany throughout the book. Although he expressed China's hopes for support from the United States, a country that he saw as relatively friendly to China, he believed the popular arguments that a race war may follow the Great War and that the United States would join the rest of the white race:

Europeans and Americans talk about justice and righteousness only for themselves, not for the Yellow race. The American nation, whose Constitution is based on the principles of equality and liberty, was the first to advocate discrimination against the Yellow race. The United States may at this moment show us friendliness and sympathy, but when the time comes for Britain, Russia, and Germany to join their efforts to conquer China, will she oppose the conquest by using her whole strength to champion the cause of a different race?⁵⁷

Sun was still trying to negotiate with those who favored siding with the United States, just as he was in 1913. The only choice, he maintained, was to turn to Japan. "Without Japan, there would be no China; without China, there would be no Japan."⁵⁸ But this returns us to the earlier contradiction in Sun's Asianism, based on binaries of race and civilization, but also ostensibly connected to the oppressed–oppressor binary. If the shared victimhood of race or civilization came into conflict with the shared victimhood of nations by empires, which binary would take precedence? This issue is somewhat resolved in Sun's 1924 return to the discourse of Asianism.

56. Dai, *Riben lun*, esp. chap. 18, 107–13.

57. SJSQJ 4, 88. English translation from Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*.

58. SJSQJ 4, 94.

1924: Is Japan Still Asian?

On November 28, 1924, Sun Yat-sen made his famous “Great Asianism” speech at the Prefectural Secondary School for Girls in Kobe. This speech summarized Sun’s views on Asianism and became symbolic of the concept and his attitude toward Japanese imperialism. In the speech, Sun described the relationship between national independence and Asianism; he limned the dichotomy that he believed defines East and West; and he directly asked whether Japan would leave or lead Asia.

There is an important historical context for this speech. Sun was at the height of his popularity in 1924. He had just finished his speeches on the Three Principles of the People and established himself as not merely an anti-Manchu revolutionary but an anti-imperialist intellectual. At the same time, the US government had just passed an extremely infamous and openly racist immigration act, designed to stop the immigration of both Chinese and Japanese to the country. The Asian Exclusion Act was brought into law on May 26, 1924, as a section of the Immigration Act of 1924.⁵⁹ The Immigration Act specified that future immigration to the United States would ostensibly be based on quotas proportionately equivalent to the origins of contemporary Americans, an effort designed to put an end to ethnodemographic change and essentially disallowing immigration from Asia.⁶⁰ Furthermore, the quotas for Chinese and Japanese immigration disregarded any existing immigrants who were not born in the country or were not eligible for citizenship. All people from the nations of East Asia were deemed as persons “ineligible to citizenship” because of their “racial unassimilability.”⁶¹ Although this did not entirely stop immigration from Asia, it did slow it to a crawl. In 1929 the published quotas for Chinese, Japanese, and most other nonwhite immigrants were limited to one hundred new immigrants from each country.⁶² Racist Western views of “unwanted Asians” could only contribute to a shared identity as an oppressed group.⁶³

59. For more on its relation to Sun Yat-sen’s 1924 speech, see Sang, “PaiRi yiminfaan yu Sun Zhongshan de Yazhouzhui yanjiang.”

60. Ngai, “The Architecture of Race,” 67–92.

61. Ngai, “The Architecture of Race,” 80–81.

62. Ngai, “The Architecture of Race,” 74. For comparison, the quota for immigrants from Great Britain was 65,721, Germany was allowed 25,957, and Ireland was allotted 17,853.

63. The United States was certainly not the only country to impose racist anti-Asian laws at this time. The Canadian government’s “head tax” was a racist immigration

It was in this climate, in November 1924, that Sun returned to Japan for the final time and delivered his famous speech on “Great Asianism.” This speech became a symbolic text that influenced countless people across Asia and beyond. It is not known if Sun originally planned to travel to Japan and make this speech. He was on his way to Beijing to resolve the warlord factional issues when he switched to a boat heading to Japan at Shanghai, ostensibly for safety reasons and due to the lack of transportation to Beijing at that time.⁶⁴ When asked why Sun was being so friendly toward Japan and antagonistic to the West, he was forthcoming about his motives, which were the abolition of foreign extraterritoriality and the restoration of customs autonomy; essentially, he was hoping for Japanese support in revoking the unequal treaties.⁶⁵

Before the speech, he met with his old pan-Asianist friend Tōyama Mitsuru 頭山満 at the Oriental Hotel. They discussed the Manchuria and Mongolia issues, and Sun allowed an interview with a reporter from the *Mainichi Newspaper* 每日新聞.⁶⁶ The subject of the speech was not entirely Sun’s choice but was suggested by his host, president of the Kobe Chamber of Commerce Takikawa Gisaku 瀧川儀作 (1874–1963), a Japanese businessman with a long history of involvement in Chinese business.⁶⁷ The speech was delivered at the Hyogo Prefectural Kobe Girls’ High School 兵庫県立神戸高等女学校 and was originally titled “The Problems of Great Asia” (“Da Yaxiya wenti” 大亞細亞問題).⁶⁸

In the speech, Sun described Asia’s grand ancient civilization and Europe’s recent imperialist rise. He lauded Japan as the first country to

policy that had been noted in Chinese periodicals just before anger rose in response to the US Immigration Act. “Jianada jingnei Yazhou yimin renshu,” *Nongshi yuekan* 9 (January 1923), 62.

64. See “Dr. Sun Yat-sen Sounding Japanese Opinion,” *Japan Chronicle* (November 26, 1924). Available in Chen and Yasui, *Son Bun Kōen* (English source section), 14. Sang Bing has identified this as an ongoing debate among historians in Sang, *Jiaoliu yu duikang*, 247–51.

65. See “Sun Yat-sen on China’s Subjection. ‘Every Englishman a King in China,’” *Japan Chronicle* (December 2, 1924). Available in Chen and Yasui, *Son Bun Kōen*, 8.

66. Chen and Yasui, *Son Bun to Kobe*, 251–55.

67. Kobayashi discusses the possibilities and quotes from Fujii Shōzō, who believes Sun had long planned the speech and that it was part of a specific move on his part toward China–Japan cooperation. Kobayashi, “Sun Yatsen and Asianism,” 30.

68. This was the original title according to an exhibition at the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Museum in Kobe.

repeal the unequal treaties and defeat Russia, giving hope and inspiration to countries all across Asia. He discussed the Russo-Japanese War as an impetus driving Asians to realize independence and drive out European imperialists. Here the nationalist movements and the Asianist movement combined in Sun's words:

The Egyptian, Turkish, Persian, Afghan, and Arabian independence movements have already materialized, and even the independence movement in India has, with the passage of time, been gaining ground. Such facts are concrete proofs of the progress of the nationalist idea in Asia. Until this idea reaches its full maturity, no unification or independence movement of the Asiatic peoples as a whole is possible. In East Asia, China and Japan are the two greatest peoples. China and Japan are the driving force of this nationalist movement. What will be the consequences of this driving force still remains to be seen. The present tide of events seems to indicate that not only China and Japan but all the peoples in East Asia will unite together to restore the former status of Asia.⁶⁹

This excerpt reveals the necessity of nationalism to Sun's Asianism. They were inseparable ideas. Only with nationalism could a people move into Asianism, and only with the independence of individual nations could Asia move to total independence. These were not unconnected levels of identity but were overlapping layers that would be realized through the same awakening of consciousness.

But Sun Yat-sen's famous speech was not only about the rise of nationalism and Asianism. Frustrated by Westerners' oppression of Asia, their disparagement of Asian civilization, and the continued racism of white people toward "yellow," Sun identified an essential difference between East and West. Asianists had conflated race and civilization throughout the decades before this, but Sun added something new. The crux of his argument came in dichotomizing of West versus East into what has been translated as "the rule of Might" 霸道 and "the rule of Right" 王道, or "the way of the hegemon" and the "Kingly Way."⁷⁰ This was an argument that he had emphasized as an important part of his Three Principles earlier in the year.⁷¹ Sun's careful articulation rehabilitated a

69. Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*, 144.

70. Both terms find their roots in classical Confucian literature and had appeared repeatedly in Confucian writing for thousands of years.

71. The Kingly Way first appeared in the *Shangshu*, but Mencius developed the concept in contrast with the way of the hegemon. Sun Yat-sen, *San Min Chu I*, 3.

popular Confucian dichotomy, designating the East as moral and the West as hegemonic. This summarized the political manifestations of a dichotomy that has been regularly regarded as civilizational differences of “material” versus “moral,” a connection Sun also made evident in this speech.⁷²

European civilization is nothing but the rule of Might. The rule of might has always been looked down upon by the Orient. There is another kind of civilization superior to the rule of Might. The fundamental characteristics of this civilization are benevolence, justice and morality: This civilization makes people respect, not fear, it. Such a civilization is, in the language of the Ancients, the rule of Right or the Kingly Way. One may say, therefore, that Oriental civilization is one of the rule of right. Since the development of European materialistic civilization and the cult of Might, the morality of the world has been on the decline. Even in Asia, morality in several countries has degenerated. Of late, a number of European and American scholars have begun to study Oriental civilization and they realize that, while materially the Orient is far behind the Occident, morally the Orient is superior to the Occident.⁷³

Sun accepted the same opposition of Western material civilization and Eastern spiritual civilization that was popularized by Rabindranath Tagore, whom he had invited to Guangzhou only a few months earlier.⁷⁴ However, for Sun Eastern spirituality was not only superior, it held the capacity for redemption, to relieve the West of its ills and allow it to follow Asia on the path to *datong*. Sun made reference to China’s tributary system in which he viewed weaker countries following the strong out of respect, not out of fear. He elucidated the foundations of his understanding of Asianism. It was what he saw as the classical attributes of Asia that Sun argued contemporary civilization should be constructed on. Ever a nationalist, he was always referring to Confucian China when he made statements about Asia’s past. However, the problem remained: how does one deal with the threat of the imperialistic material civilization that continues to oppress China and other Asian nations? Sun returned to the question that Chinese and Japanese intellectuals had already been dealing with for decades, and he came up with a rather

72. See my discussion of Du Yaqian’s dichotomizing of East and West in chapter 4.

73. Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*, 146.

74. Tagore declined the invitation due to his busy schedule. The letter is reprinted in Hay, *Asian Ideas of East and West*, 147.

similar answer. Just like the *dao* 道 and *qi* 器 and the *ti* 體 and *yong* 用 dichotomies of the nineteenth century, Sun's proposal was to learn from the West materially but preserve the essence of the East morally:

If we want to realize Pan-Asianism in this new world, what should be its foundation if not our ancient civilization and culture? Benevolence and virtue must be the foundations of Pan-Asianism. With this as a sound foundation we must then learn science from Europe for our industrial development and the improvement of our armaments, not, however, with a view to oppressing or destroying other countries and peoples as the Europeans have done, but purely for our self-defence. . . . We advocate Pan-Asianism in order to restore the status of Asia. Only by the unification of all the peoples in Asia on the foundation of benevolence and virtue can they become strong and powerful.⁷⁵

However, like Ye Chucang, Sun advocated following Japan's lead in military development to gain the might needed to repel the European imperialists. He recognized the need for material development, not for the needs of the people but to regain and protect the autonomy of Asia: "But to rely on benevolence alone to influence the Europeans in Asia to relinquish the privileges they have acquired in China would be an impossible dream. If we want to regain our rights we must resort to force."⁷⁶ His realist militarism was in conflict with his idealist vision, and his anti-imperialist philosophy struggled to make room for his pro-Japan Asianism.

Of course, Sun was well aware of the problems associated with turning to Japan for leadership. Beginning in 1885 with Fukuzawa Yukichi's 福澤 諭吉 famous "Datsu-A Ron" 脱亞論 editorial, the question of whether Japan was leaving or leading Asia had persisted among the Asian elite. Fukuzawa had notoriously decided that Japan must leave Asia for what he referred to as the "measles" of the West: "We do not have time to wait for the enlightenment of our neighbors so that we can work together toward the development of Asia. It is better for us to leave the ranks of Asian nations and cast our lot with civilized nations of the West."⁷⁷ In 1924 Sun returned to this question in Kobe and frankly asked the Japanese in attendance which path they choose. Sun redefined

75. Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*, 149.

76. Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*, 149.

77. Available in David Lu, *Japan: A Documentary History*, 353.

both Asia and Europe under his new dichotomy. In Fukuzawa's time there was only one civilization; it was a linear concept, and Europe was much further along the line. For Sun, there was also an Eastern or Asian civilization, and Japan, in his mind, should recognize its righteousness: "Japan to-day has become acquainted with the Western civilization of the rule of Might, but retains the characteristics of the Oriental civilization of the rule of Right. Now the question remains whether Japan will be the hawk of the Western civilization of the rule of Might, or the tower of strength of the Orient. This is the choice which lies before the people of Japan."⁷⁸

These few short lines, the only words of critique that Sun offered against Japan in this text, became the most important and well-known lines of the speech. This was not due to any level of profundity in the words, but because of their perceived omission from major Japanese newspapers. Sun's speech appeared in the *Osaka Asahi*, the *Osaka Mainichi*, the *Kobe Yushin Nippo*, and the *Kobe Shimbun*, the newspapers that cohosted his talk. These lines of criticism only appeared in Chinese editions after Sun's return to China. Although it was popularly believed that the Japanese newspapers had omitted the lines, since Yasui Sankichi's article on the speech, scholars have accepted that Sun and Dai Jitao edited the text after the speech, before their arrival in China.⁷⁹ This addition indicates Sun's ability to show a very different face to audiences in China and Japan, yet he was consistent with the idea that Asia was represented by the principle of the Kingly Way.

Along with Chen Deren, Yasui Sankichi conveniently compiled the Japanese newspaper reports concerning Sun's talk into a collection.⁸⁰ Reading through them, one sees common themes appear. The Japanese newspapers were very supportive of Sun and his proposal of uniting Asia against Western imperialism. However, there remained much skepticism regarding Sun's ability to organize and lead China without considerable cooperation with Duan Qirui and perhaps even Wu Peifu. The *Osaka Mainichi* was particularly roused by Sun's speech. A week following its transcription, the newspaper ran articles on Asianism under the headline of "Asiatic Unity" in their Japanese and English editions, heavily quoting

78. Sun Yat-sen, *China and Japan*, 151.

79. Yasui, "Son Bun 'DaiAjiashugi,'" 82.

80. Chen and Yasui, *Son Bun Kōen*.

from Sun's speech and earlier talks.⁸¹ The reception of Sun's speech in other areas of the Japanese empire is more telling of the complexity of his proposition in a divided East Asia.

The Mixed Reception Outside of Japan and Issues of Nationalism

Sun Yat-sen was famous on a level beyond any other proponents of Asianism. When Li Dazhao made comments on Asianism, despite his quasi-celebrity status in 1919, they slowly faded into obscurity. Shortly after Sun's speech, versions of "Great Asianism" appeared in newspapers across East Asia. Chinese interest in the speech is of no surprise, but Japan's colonies of Korea and Taiwan were particularly interested in Sun's theory, what it would mean for their existence, and the possibilities for the future.

In Korea, the response was immediate. *Dong-A Ilbo* 東亞日報, one of Korea's two leading newspapers, dispatched a reporter to Kobe during Sun's visit.⁸² Both the *Dong-A Ilbo* and the *Choson Ilbo* 朝鮮日報 printed translations of the speech and strong critiques of Sun's plan. The correspondent dispatched to Kobe directly asked Sun in his interview: "Do you think your idea of Pan-Asianism could be compatible with the present situation Korea is faced with?" Sun responded: "Surely, it could not be compatible with it. However, while in Japan, I would like to avoid discussing the Korean question fully."⁸³ Sun was avoiding more than the Korean question. While he was in Japan, his vision of Asianism focused only on China–Japan cooperation and, although he mentioned many other Asian nations in his speech, he virtually ignored issues of autonomy for Japan's colonies. These same Korean newspapers had been very positive about Sun's "Three Principles of the People," introduced earlier in the year, and An Chae-hong, the same journalist who provided harsh criticism of Sun

81. The Japanese title of the article was "Ajia minzoku no danketsu" (The uniting of Asian nations). The editors at the *Japan Chronicle* were quick to notice discrepancies between the Japanese and English versions of the article. On December 4, 1924, they published the article "Asia for Some of the Asiatics," attacking the *Mainichi* for omitting lines on Japanese leadership. All three articles can be found in Chen and Yasui, *Son Bun Kōen*, English source section, 19–21 and 25–28; Japanese source section, 139–40.

82. Sun agreed to give *Dong-A Ilbo* a special article for publication. He asked Dai Jitao to draft the article, but apparently it was never finished by Sun, presumably due to his sickness. Min Tu-gi, *Men and Ideas*, 27.

83. Translated and quoted in Min Tu-gi, *Men and Ideas*, 35.

for his Asianism, related the Three Principles to readers in a nine-part series in *Choson Ilbo*. However, for Sun to justify a powerful Japan to defend against Western imperialism and yet make no mention of Japan's colonies in Asia was unacceptable.⁸⁴

In Taiwan, the reception of this speech was dramatically different. This difference may lie in the fact that Taiwanese newspaper readers and their journalists were much better acquainted with Sun Yat-sen and understood his Asianism not as a separate or stand-alone theory but in conjunction with the great body of writings and other speeches he had produced, as a part of his oeuvre, not separate from it. The difference between the reception in Korea and the reception in Taiwan was also related to the different approaches intellectuals in the two colonies were taking toward nationalism and therefore nationalism's relationship with Asianism. For Koreans, national independence was the aim for intellectuals and political leaders who placed ultimate importance on the *minjok* 民族, a path to the independent nation-state. Meanwhile, Taiwanese intellectuals from the same period were primarily interested in achieving autonomy, be that independence or some form of autonomy within the Japanese empire or within a Greater Asia.

Chao Hsun-ta 趙勳達 has provided a thorough analysis of the reception of Sun's speech in Taiwan, including the intellectual climate at the time and the numerous reports on Sun before and after the speech.⁸⁵ He notes that in an article on Sun, a Taiwanese journalist acclaimed: "If Japan believes in the uniting of East Asia, it must first properly resolve the issues of China, Korea and Taiwan."⁸⁶ The view of the Taiwanese toward Sun's Asianism must also be contextualized within intellectual and political issues and the influence of Taiwan's main newspaper, the *Taiwan People's Daily* 臺灣民報.

Debates concerning Taiwan's position and political power flourished in the 1920s. Unlike Koreans, who were focused on the idea of national independence, the central issue that Taiwanese intellectuals were discussing was the concept of political autonomy. This difference is crucial because it allowed for imagining Taiwan as having an exis-

84. Min Tu-gi, *Men and Ideas*, 33.

85. Chao, "Sun Zhongshan 'Da Yazhouzhuyi.'"

86. Quoted in Chao, "Sun Zhongshan 'Da Yazhouzhuyi,'" 93. Original quote from *Taiwan Minbao* (1924).

tence in relation to (but not necessarily completely independent from) a powerful Japan. In a May 28, 1924, editorial, the importance of this perspective can be seen in relation to a possible united Asia:

We strongly believe that the American passing of the anti-Japanese act is truly an opportunity for the uniting of the Asian nations. It is also an opportunity for Japan to become the leader of Asia. However, for Japan to succeed in this great mission, this great goal, there is something that the Japanese must realize. And what must they realize? Firstly, they must kindly treat the disadvantaged nations of Asia. This time they have gathered support from both Taiwan and China, but is this event any different from Japan's actions that makes people so upset? Secondly, if they hope for liberation from others, then they should first liberate others. Those such as Koreans and Taiwanese should be liberated so that they receive the same treatment as those from the mother country, and enjoy the same happiness. Should Japan have the magnanimity to carry out such measures, the uniting of the Asian nations can be easily accomplished.⁸⁷

This editorial, printed before Sun's famous speech, reveals a number of important things regarding Taiwan's prospects for Asian unity. The topic was being debated in the public sphere before the speech, and Asianism was seen as an opportunity to critique Japanese imperialism.⁸⁸ The Taiwanese were not necessarily opposed to Asianism, but were opposed to Japanese domination, and many were hoping for equality and political autonomy. The Asian Exclusion Act had proven frustrating for people across Asia. Because of the act's wide range across Asian nations, it had the possibility to create feelings of unity across Asia—if only Japan could rise to the challenge and stop emulating the same form of discrimination against its own citizens. Subsequent articles in the *Taiwan People's Daily* continued to evoke the injustice of the act in their appeals to the Japanese government to discontinue the discrimination among “yellow” peoples, as well as to righteously argue for an end to discrimination by whites. They accused the Japanese government of asking the Americans to show humanism while the Japanese themselves were imperialistic in Asia.⁸⁹

As for the idea of Asian nations uniting together, it certainly was not anything new. Although Taiwanese intellectuals had not joined in such

87. Quoted in Chao, “Sun Zhongshan ‘Da Yazhouzhui,’” 93–94.

88. A similar method was followed in Korea in the 1910s and before. See Schmid, *Korea between Empires*, 97–100.

89. Chao, “Sun Zhongshan ‘Da Yazhouzhui,’” 94–96.

discussions during World War I, the idea had made its way into Taiwan's circles in the early 1920s, and at least one prominent intellectual had offered a different take on the proposal.

Chen Fengyuan 陳逢源 (1893–1982) was an advocate of Taiwanese autonomy, an acclaimed poet, and one of the founders of the *Taiwan People's Daily*. In 1923 he advocated a form of federalism that would allow for the autonomy of nations in the empire, calling his plan “friendly federation” 友聯主義.⁹⁰ Chen introduced his concept in a 1924 article titled “The Movement to Revive Asia and Japanese Colonial Policy.”⁹¹ Although ostensibly his discussion of “friendly federation” was to offer a reasonable alternative for Japan’s population problems, the article was designed as an attack on Japan’s *dōka* policy 同化, which was a plan to have Taiwanese and Koreans assimilate to the Japanese.⁹² Chen argued that Japan “must charge forward as a leader based on a righteous and humanitarian pan-Asianism,” and this “righteous and humanitarian” 正義人道 behavior should begin with Japan’s actions toward its colonies, Korea and Taiwan.⁹³ Citing numerous Japanese intellectuals, Chen argued against the feasibility of the *dōka* program, instead claiming that the nations’ cultural particularities could be allowed and encouraged under systems of autonomy 自治制度.⁹⁴

The entry of Sun Yat-sen’s Asianism was not something new, but another voice against Japanese hegemony amid Taiwanese anger toward policies of assimilation. Although *dōka* policy and discourse had been voiced for more than ten years by 1924, relevant discussions and attempts at realizing the policy had remained relatively vague until the 1920s, when the Japanese government officially adopted a policy of gradual assimilation. The 1923 book *Taiwan dōkasaku ron* 台灣同化策論 (The Policy of Taiwanese Assimilation) by Shibata Sunao 柴田廉 had ignited a public debate that was still continuing when transcripts of Sun’s speech were printed in Taiwan.⁹⁵ “Great Asianism” was seen in relevance to this

90. Chao, “Sun Zhongshan ‘Da Yazhouzhui,’” 96. Chao argues that Chen was influenced by Sun Yat-sen and his ideas on Asianism.

91. Chen Fengyuan, “Ajia no fukkō undō,” 18–33. I thank Chao Hsun-da for scanning and sending me copies of this and Chen’s other articles.

92. Ching, *Becoming “Japanese”*, 12–13 and 98–103.

93. Chen Fengyuan, “Ajia no fukkō undō,” 24.

94. Chen Fengyuan, “Ajia no fukkō undō,” 29, 33.

95. On *dōka* and Shibata, see Fong, “Hegemony and Identity,” esp. 166–69.

discourse and regarded as a positive call for support of Taiwan's autonomy. It was also seen as a way of connecting Taiwan to China.

Zhang Wojun 張我軍 (1902–1955) was a Taiwanese intellectual who lived in Beijing but was one of those responsible for introducing the May Fourth Movement ideals to Taiwan a few years earlier. Zhang wanted Taiwan to adopt Mandarin as part of the movement and had become an important voice in Taiwan intellectual discussions in the 1920s, promoting both Japanese and Chinese modern literature. Although Zhang was wary of discussions of Eastern civilization that ignored positive modernizing aspects of Western civilization, he was supportive of Sun's Greater Asianism.⁹⁶ After Sun's death, he wrote a eulogy including the impassioned lines:

The Three Principles of the People have not yet been realized,
China's revolution has not yet succeeded,
The Great Asian Alliance 大亞細亞聯盟 has not yet been realized.⁹⁷

These very divergent understandings of Sun's Asianism and its application highlight the different perspectives on nation and nationalism in the Japanese empire. For those not living in the empire, the speech was not as important but still received a response.

Even beyond the familiar East Asian sphere of classical Sinocentrism, Sun's ideas on Asianism were considered. Notably, in 1928 Sukarno wrote "Indonesianism and Pan-Asianism." This article appeared very early in Sukarno's independence activities and shows the influence that Sun and his Asianism had on the revolutionary's ideology:

People are beginning to be conscious of a sense of unity and a feeling of brotherhood between the Chinese people and the Indonesian people, that is, that both are Eastern people, both are people who are suffering, both are people who are struggling, demanding a free life. . . . Because the common lot of the people of Asia is certain to give birth to uniform behavior; a common fate is certain to give birth to a uniform feeling.⁹⁸

96. See Zhang's attack on Gu Hongming during his 1924 visit to Taiwan. Zhang Wojun, *Zhang Wojun wenji*, 9–11.

97. Zhang Wojun was not the first or the last to connect these three ideas. As will be explained below, during World War II the relationship between these ideas became an important part of the propaganda movement by both the Japanese and the Wang Jingwei governments. Zhang Wojun, *Zhang Wojun wenji*, 37–40.

98. Quoted in Liu Hong, "Constructing a China Metaphor," 30.

Like Sun, Sukarno turned to oppression and discrimination as the binding commonality between Asian peoples. This understanding of Asianism remained with Sukarno throughout his life and contributed to his cooperation with the Japanese during World War II as well as his hosting of the Bandung Conference in 1955.⁹⁹ Although his ideology was markedly different from Sun's, Sukarno frequently lauded the Chinese leader and considered himself to be a "pupil" of Sun.¹⁰⁰ A shared identity of the oppressed drew Sukarno to Sun's Asianism. The discourse thereby contributed to Asian nations' constructions of nationalism and international cooperation, offering an Asian form of anti-imperialist thought that proved to be influential in the early twentieth century and beyond.

Conclusion

The Kingly Way has not disappeared. The idea of China leading regional development through a foreign policy aspiring to the Kingly Way once again appeared in Chinese media in the 2010s as many intellectuals and journalists used the concept to examine the One Belt One Road Initiative. Popular Tsinghua University political scientist Yan Xuetong 閻學通 connected the Kingly Way to his push for moral realism 道義現實主義, arguing that it is in opposition to the hegemonic politics of the United States.¹⁰¹

Although it does not make the news very often, neither has Sun Yat-sen's Asianism entirely disappeared. In 1991 Taiwanese academic Li Taijing 李台京 produced the first book-length monograph on Sun's Asianism, titled *A Study on Sun Yat-sen's Great Asianism*.¹⁰² He did not intend his work to be read as merely a historical study but hoped it would have significance for future government policy.¹⁰³ He found that "the Great Asianist ideal of revitalizing Asia was not quickly realized due to the post-war threat of communist world revolution, the influence

99. On Sukarno's Asianism, which he also referred to as "internationalism," see Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle*, 115–16.

100. Liu Hong, "Constructing a China Metaphor," 29.

101. Huang Yufan, "Q. and A.: Yan Xuetong Urges China to Adopt a More Assertive Foreign Policy," *New York Times* (Chinese edition), February 15, 2016, <https://cn.nytimes.com/china/20160215/c1yuechinayan/>. For a description of "moral realism," see Yan Xuetong, *Shijie quanlide zhuanyi*, 1–3.

102. Li Taijing, *Zhongshan xiansheng da Yazhouzhuyi yanjiu*.

103. Li Taijing, *Zhongshan xiansheng da Yazhouzhuyi yanjiu*, preface.

of the American-Soviet Cold War, and the early development of rising Asian countries.”¹⁰⁴ Li is certainly not the only one. More recently, Chen Kuan-hsing has referenced Sun’s Asianism as a positive step toward the deimperialization of Asia. Very similar to Yan Xuetong’s comments on the Kingly Way, Chen sees Sun Yat-sen’s Great Asianism as offering a new route for China’s future: “These ideals would serve as a reflexive mechanism to challenge the scenario in which the Chinese empire is pitted against the American one, in what would surely be a disastrous reproduction of the imperial desire.”¹⁰⁵ During the Second Sino-Japanese War, Sun’s Asianism was appropriated to facilitate and apologize for just such an “imperial desire,” yet Chen adopts Sun’s idea of Asianism as an anti-imperialist concept.

However tainted, there remains a considerable amount of historical memory invested in this aspect of Sun Yat-sen’s philosophy, allowing for a variety of opportunities for appropriation. Sun’s Asianism has proven particularly compelling because of its symbiotic relationship with nationalism. The cultural nationalism that is propagated by Asianism defines Asia, and in this context “China,” based on an essential difference with the West. The political nationalism of Asianism, which primarily opposes the injustice of Western imperialism, indicates or assumes political autonomy based on very modern ideas of the nation. Not just an appropriation of Western nationalism, the Asianism seen in this chapter only mimics some features of modern nationalism and instead offers a firm challenge to Western universalism by arguing for an alternative to the reigning systems of thought. This challenge necessarily appropriates Orientalist discourse in its limning of “Asia,” but by no means does it resort to simple essentializing. In fact, Sun disrupts the power differentiation in Orientalism. Although succumbing to classical dichotomies of East and West, he does not merely point to the eventual triumph of the East due to its moral superiority; he refers to a more human path to follow for systems of governance in modernity, hence the recent return to these ideas as a means to criticize or commend the People’s Republic of China as a regional leader.

To summarize, I find that Sun’s Asianism, although based in binaries of race and civilization due to historical realities at the time, developed

104. Li Taijing, *Zhongshan xiasheng da Yazhouzhuyi yanjiu*, 7.

105. Chen Kuan-hsing, *Asia as Method*, 13.

to offer three different functions in relationship to its sliding relationship with nation and empire: (1) as a discourse to oppose imperialism and support nationalism based on a shared victimhood that transcends nation; (2) as an anti-Western discourse that was easily used by Japanese imperialists to justify expansionism in China; and (3) as a concept of Asia that transcends its geographic signified and offers an avenue for opposition to Western universalism and hegemony. Invariably in conflict, the differences between these functions account for the many differences in the memory of Asianism today.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Weak and Small Nations

Organizing Asian Unity in Shanghai and Beijing

After Sun Yat-sen's 1925 death at the age of fifty-eight, a process of sanctification began. This process had an enormous impact on China's intellectual climate in the 1920s and included the creation of many Asianist organizations. However, this was not merely due to the memory of Sun Yat-sen and his speeches on "Nationalism" and "Great Asianism" but was part of the zeitgeist toward internationalism and pan movements that had been appearing around the world following the horror of World War I. The League of Nations and the Third International were established in 1919. The Pan-African Congress began holding biennial meetings in 1919. In Europe, Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi's (1894–1972) 1923 book *Pan-Europa* and the organization he formed following its success are often considered to be the roots of European integration.¹ Although hopes for a united East Asia were present in China and Japan from the late nineteenth century, more specific and structured ideas of Asianism had been steadily growing in China since the cosmopolitanism of the May Fourth Movement and amid this global zeitgeist of internationalism.

In the mid-1920s, a number of Asianist organizations appeared in major cities across China, bringing together intellectuals, activists, politicians, and expatriates searching for international answers to questions of imperialism. These groups provided institutional bases for intellectuals to experiment with dialogue on Asian cooperation and were influential environments for a number of Chinese elite, including Wang

1. Stirk, "Integration and Disintegration," 14, 20.

Jingwei, who was a founding member of Guangzhou's League of Oriental Nations 東方被壓迫民族連合會 in 1925.²

The majority of these groups did not begin by concentrating on Sino-Japanese relations but turned to Asian countries that were victims of Euro-American imperialism. As Rebecca Karl has shown, intellectuals reunderstood global spaces in relation to economic development. Despite this trend, intellectuals and their related organizations often turned to Japanese counterparts shortly after establishment. This highlights the tension between anti-imperialist Asianism and imperialist Asianism.

Understanding why these Asianists would choose to work with their Japanese counterparts at a time when Japanese imperialism was so evident is crucial for understanding the history of Chinese Asianism. Therefore, I examine two organizations as examples of this movement, Beijing's Asian Nations' Alliance 亞細亞民族大同盟 and Shanghai's Asiatic Society 亞洲民族協會, charting the gravitation of these groups toward cooperation with Japanese pan-Asianists. These groups, as well as the League of Oriental Nations, began through the cooperation of Chinese intellectuals with Indian and Korean anti-imperialist activists resident in China. The groups were born out of the surge of interest toward internationalism and the failure of the League of Nations to fulfill promises. Encouraged by the words of Sun Yat-sen and impassioned by the violence of imperialist actions on Chinese soil in summer 1925, Chinese intellectuals pursued strategies of international cooperation to deal with foreign imperialism and the unequal treaties that held China in a quasi-colonial grasp. However, once they were joined by the Japanese pan-Asianists they turned to for help, their organizations lost legitimacy in the eyes of many Chinese intellectuals; yet these groups led to the establishment of newer institutions that would define membership based on oppression by those in power.

This chapter examines nonofficial representations of Asianism in the 1920s, a discourse that united urban Chinese who were increasingly conscious of global and regional events, as well as the power dynamics that shaped them. Expanding print media, growing urban middle-class literacy, and a diversification of the public sphere led to this new dynamic

2. Mizuno, "Tōhō hi appaku minzoku rengōkai." Wang Jingwei's involvement is further discussed in chapter 9.

for Asianism. Therefore, Torsten Weber discusses this phenomenon as “Asianism from below” in the Japanese context.³ Although the diversification of this discourse through nongovernment organizations indicates its independence from the political parties, at least in China, Asianism remained an issue that was solely discussed by the urban elite as they argued to reframe and reunderstand global space. Dividing Asianism into “Asianism from below” and “from above” is helpful for analyzing Japanese Asianists’ actions, but this paradigm does not suit China. I argue that the expansion of this discourse among the urban elite across China shows that Asianism was not merely rhetoric of the political parties but a concept that any nationalist intellectual could turn to in order to imagine China’s position in the world and work toward raising it. This period is crucial in the construction of Chinese Asianism, as we see the popularization of the discourse and its seamless integration into Chinese understandings of nationalism and internationalism.

The Failure of the League of Nations

The end of World War I was a watershed moment for China and Japan. For China, the changes that occurred in the wake of the war and the May Fourth Movement were largely intellectual ones, driving writers to reassess themselves, their nation, and their position in the world. Although China’s understanding of the Paris Peace Conference was dominated by the embittering loss of Shandong to Japan, the establishment of the League of Nations presented an exciting possibility for international resolution of injustice. Wellington Koo 顧維鈞 (1888–1985) referred to it as “a ray of hope for the oppressed nations in Asia.”⁴ For Japan, the Paris Peace Conference had resulted in a reordering of the world system with Japan as one of the four permanent members of the League of Nations Council, allowing Japanese nationalists to view their country as a superior nation, affirming Japan as a major power and supporting the country’s imperialist claims in China.⁵

The establishment of the League of Nations was a crucial event in changing the way people looked at the world and the possibilities for international cooperation. This was certainly true in Japan, where the

3. Weber, *Embracing “Asia,”* esp. chap. 6.

4. Quoted in Clements, *Makers of the Modern World*, 57.

5. Burkman, *Japan and the League of Nations*, 6.

public and the government felt encouraged to pursue international organization,⁶ but it was also true in China, where the postwar climate was flush with cosmopolitanism. Wellington Koo was dispatched to represent China at the league, and the debates were well followed in the Chinese media.

From the very beginning of the league, the issue of racial equality was proposed by Japan's representatives time and again. The subsequent rejections all led to public dialogue on the league, which many had originally hoped would be Japan's route to equality with whites. Wellington Koo spoke for Japan's racial equality proposal in Paris, voicing China's support for the idea. However, once Count Makino Nobuaki 牧野 伸顕 (1861–1949) realized it was a lost cause, he agreed to US requests to drop the proposal in return for awarding Shandong to Japan, infuriating the Chinese.⁷ The next thirteen years often saw Geneva as the stage where the two countries played out their grievances with each other. Despite having the common goal of racial equality, China and Japan found that the league led to further distrust and hatred between them. Chinese commentators' frustration with the league and the Chinese representatives accelerated after China failed to be awarded a seat on the governing councils and was unable to compel the league to follow through on promises for arms reduction.⁸

China remained eager to play a formative role in the early days of the league, and despite crushing defeat at the Paris Peace Conference, public opinion of the League of Nations was initially very positive. The Chinese public was able to follow the meetings and decisions of the league closely in the media, and as the news flowed in, disappointment quickly dominated perceptions.⁹ The media followed the actions of Koo and the other representatives very closely. When China was passed over for a nonpermanent spot on the council in favor of Czechoslovakia due to China's domestic turmoil, Koo's disappointment was reflected and repeated in the newspapers.¹⁰ There were also calls of corruption on financial issues, with at least one reporter voicing anger at the huge waste of funds spent

6. Burkman, *Japan and the League of Nations*, xiii and 111.

7. Burkman, *Japan and the League of Nations*, 80–84.

8. Chiang, “Guojilianmeng yu ZhongRi guanxi.”

9. Kaufman, “In Pursuit of Equality and Respect.”

10. For example, “Guoji lianmeng” (League of Nations), *Xing Hua* 20.39 (1923), 30.

to support representatives when the league was showing so few tangible results.¹¹ The cost of supporting the League of Nations was difficult for China to bear, and, with multiple governments struggling to be seen as the official government of China, the country was often simply too unorganized and debt-ridden to pay the bills. By early 1932, when Japan's invasion of Manchuria was dominating league negotiations, China was more than nine million francs in arrears, crippling their diplomatic power.¹²

By 1925 the Chinese media's frustration with the League of Nations was evident. In January 1925, Gong Guangyuan 龔光遠 complained about the 600,000 *yuan* annual bill, in addition to the costs for each representative, and argued that the new representative, Wang Zengli 王曾里, his assistants, and the propaganda chief were not suitable. When Gong went to the league in Geneva, Wang was recuperating from an illness and his assistants were traveling around Europe rather than representing China. Also, he argued that the league had essentially fallen under the control of the British and French.¹³ Other voices took more specific approaches to their critique of the league. After China once again failed to find a seat on the council or any other body for the league's sixth year, Wang Kaiji 王開基 argued that the millions spent each year amounted to "taxation without representation." In his angry article "The League of Nations Should Die," Wang detailed the original Wilsonian aims of the league and its stated goals before examining the colonial mandates given to the various powers and exclaiming, "It is obvious that the League of Nations is simply a protective charm for imperialist invasion."¹⁴

Anger toward the League of Nations became more focused as urban Chinese became acutely aware of how an internationalization that had once promised equality was now merely a tool of the powers: "Because the League exists, the powers' invasion of weak nations (*ruoxiao minzu*) is organized."¹⁵ This anger toward the united and organized discrimina-

11. This reporter argued that the Paris and Washington conferences alone cost four to five million *yuan*. "Guojilianmenghui zhi fubai" (The corruption of the League of Nations), *Huzhu* 1.1 (1923), 6–7.

12. Godshall, "What Can China Expect?" 187.

13. 600,000 *yuan* was an estimate. China paid 1,800,000 French francs a year. Gong, "Ai! Guojilianmenghui zhong de woguo daibiaoz!" 6–7.

14. Wang Kaiji, "Guojilianmeng gai si," 10 and 8.

15. Wen and Li, "Guoji lianmeng hai you cunzai de liyou ma?"

tion of weaker nations by the stronger powers led intellectuals to consider other possibilities to protect China from imperialism, until finally a catalyst propelled them into action.

Beijing and Shanghai Intellectuals after the May Thirtieth Movement of 1925

Although Beijing remained the capital until 1928, when the Guomindang moved it to Nanjing, the government struggled to capture the support of the people and failed to create an atmosphere of order or confidence until the Nanjing period of 1927 to 1937.¹⁶ Still, the city was teeming with intellectuals and abuzz with the zeitgeist of revolutionary change in 1925.¹⁷ These intellectuals established a number of anti-imperialist organizations in Beijing, including the Asian Nations' Alliance.

This was not the first such organization to be founded in Beijing, but it was part of a surge in Asianist organizations. Only one year earlier the government had begun the Anti-Imperialist Movement and organized the Anti-Imperialist Movement Great Alliance with the goal to “Unite the oppressed nations of East Asia, including Korea, Vietnam and India.”¹⁸ The liberation of Asian nations was becoming a popular topic even before Sun Yat-sen’s “Great Asianism” speech of November 1924, but even more so afterward. Beijing was awash in Sun Yat-sen fever during these years. His arrival in Beijing, following his famous “Great Asianism” speech in Kobe, was attended by representatives from five hundred different organizations.¹⁹ However, these organizations were not interested in Japan. The problem of violent Japanese domination had been highlighted in 1925 with the May Thirtieth Movement.

The United Front was still holding itself together in 1925, but the leftist and rightist factions of the Guomindang were finding it increasingly difficult to work together. However, beginning on May 30, a series of violent incidents with representatives of the imperial powers temporarily galvanized nationalists in the summer of 1925. After a Japanese manager

16. Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing*, 217.

17. Beijing remained a popular city for intellectuals until Duan Qirui attacked communists on March 18, 1926, executing Li Dazhao and many others. Intellectuals left the city in droves. Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing*, 195.

18. Xing Hua, “Fan diguozhuyi yundong datongmenghui.”

19. Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing*, 192.

shot and killed a protestor at a factory demonstration, a mass demonstration was held on Shanghai's Nanjing East Road. When the protests escalated out of control, a panicked British police officer led local and foreign police to shoot into the crowd, killing and injuring dozens of relatively peaceful protesters. The focus of the protests then turned from the Japanese to the British, and strikes and protests against British factories continued for the remainder of 1925.

David Strand considers the May Thirtieth Movement to be "the most spectacular expression of mass participation in China in the twenties," leading to "giant rallies, which far exceeded the May Fourth Movement demonstrations in both size and inclusiveness."²⁰ The universities of Beijing and Shanghai were the centers of these student-led protests. In Beijing students refused to go to classes in early June and held rallies with as many as 100,000 people protesting the Duan Qirui government's lack of action and calling for boycotts of British and Japanese goods. The abrogation of the unequal treaties became a constant theme in the media for the rest of the year.²¹ Intellectual and political leaders responded to or took advantage of the situation and made attempts to organize the momentum into political organizations and study groups for a variety of ends.²² The Asian Nations' Alliance was formed in the spirit of the May Thirtieth Movement specifically to oppose imperialism in China.²³

Beijing's Asian Nations' Alliance

Following Sun Yat-sen's call for Greater Asianism in 1924, a great number of Asianist organizations were established in urban areas across China. Composed of intellectuals, educators, and politicians, these organizations described a variety of stated goals, but all were committed to the general idea of uniting Asia to oppose Western imperialism. Beijing's Asian Nations' Alliance is a focus of this chapter due to its size, its leadership role in the Asian Peoples' Conferences, and the convenience of surviving documents.²⁴ These organizations were short-lived

20. Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing*, 182.

21. See, for example, any issue of the weekly *North China Herald*.

22. Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing*, 183–92.

23. Huang Gongsu, *Yaxiyaminzu diyici dahui*.

24. Other Chinese Asianist organizations that had representatives at the conferences included the Shanghai Asian Nations Association (Shanghai Yazhou minzu xiehui),

and left behind relatively few documents, suggesting that their creation was generally limited to a short burst of poor organization. However, the latter half of the 1920s saw many intellectuals from different political backgrounds joining these groups and participating with the goal of saving China.

The alliance was dominated by a number of elite Beijing intellectuals angry over the violence of imperialists in China and frustrated with the expensive and ineffective League of Nations.²⁵ Huang Gongsu 黃攻素 played the role of a leader and was responsible for much of the later meetings with Japanese officials. An educator and member of the national assembly in Beijing in the 1920s, he had begun calling for cooperation with Japan to repel the West at least as early as 1917.²⁶ In 1923 he pushed the Duan Qirui government for the establishment of a National Science Institute 國立科學院. His ideas were never realized, but some scholars see them as a step on the path to the establishment of Academia Sinica.²⁷ Although Huang was a Guomindang official, the alliance was by no means partisan, especially during the United Front. Lin Keyi 林可彝 (1893–1928), a Communist Party member just returned from two years of study in Moscow, worked together with Huang as a co-leader.²⁸ Another important member of the alliance was Ma Hetian 馬鶴天 (1877–1962), who was a manager with the Beijing mayoral office at the time of the group's establishment in 1925. Ma was a researcher of China's Western frontiers. Educated at Waseda University, he would become a well-known researcher and important member of the New Asia Research Association in the 1930s, which is examined in chapter 8.²⁹

On August 3, 1925, a group of Chinese, Koreans, Japanese, and Indians officially established the Asian Nations' Alliance at a meeting in the same Central Park that had seen anti-imperialist protests throughout the summer, a symbolic place in the heart of the city.³⁰ Their manifesto read:

the Asian Culture United Progressive Foundation (Yazhou wenhua gongjinhui), the Asian Issues Discussion Group (Yaxiya wenti taolunhui), and the Asian Peace Research Association (Yaxiya heping yanjiuhui).

25. Huang Gongsu, *Yaxiyaminzu dijici dahui* 42.
26. In a letter published in Huang Gongsu, *Waijiao weiyian*, 70–73.
27. Cheng and Qiu, “Guoli zhongyangyanjiuyuan,” 76–77.
28. Zhou Bin, “Yaxiya minzu huiyi,” 132, n. 2.
29. See Zhao Xia, “Ma Hetian xiansheng.”
30. “Yaxiya minzu datongmeng” (Asian Nations Alliance), *Shen Bao* (August 6, 1925), 7 (vol. 215, 105).

“The principles of this organization are to oppose those countries which engage in imperialist activities within Asia, and to achieve equality and freedom for the nations of Asia.” The association was composed of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Indian members. The Chinese members included Huang Gongsu, Lin Keyi, Ma Hetian, Wang Wenjun 王文俊, a professor at North China University 華北大學, and Tu Peiyuan 塗培源 from Tianjin. Japanese members included Tokumitsu 德光衣域, newspaper journalist Yamase Goichi 山瀨悟一, and his colleague Sasaki Kenji 佐々木健児.³¹ Indian members included Dosnan Iha 十獅子, Mang En 滿恩, and Singh 辛士, and the Koreans were represented by Kim Hong-sön 金弘善, Yu Jang-saeng 柳長生, and Chöng Hwan-sön 鄭煥善.³²

This first open meeting, which was presumably conducted in English, also considered a number of possible names for the organization, including the Great Alliance of the Oppressed Nations of Asia 亞細亞被壓迫民族大同盟, the Free Alliance of Asian Nations 亞細亞民族自由大同盟, and simply the Great Asian Alliance 亞細亞大同盟.³³ Judging by the newspaper reports on the meeting, the largest problem for those attending was the appearance of the three Japanese expatriates who asked to join the group.

The Japanese presence at the meeting perturbed the others, until Kim Hong-sön asked: “Do your purposes align with those of the organization? Should our purposes be opposed, you should leave.” The Japanese representative replied: “The Japanese government is imperialist, and I and these others oppose imperialism. There are no differences between our purposes and those of this organization.”³⁴ This simple dialogue allowed for the three Japanese to join the group. This was an important addition to the league because it would soon open doors to Asianist organizations in Japan and a number of new possibilities for the group, as well as for all other Asianist organizations in China. Before investigating the turn

31. Tokumitsu’s given name appears as 衣域 in the *Shen Bao*. However, this is not likely to be a Japanese name and most likely was a mistake made by the reporting journalist.

32. *Shen Bao* (August 6, 1925); Zhou Bin, “Yaxiya minzu huiyi,” 30.

33. Because the recording of the conversation with the Japanese attendees appeared quite differently in the August 6 and 7 editions of the *Shen Bao*, and because the attendees were from four different countries, the meeting was most likely in English.

34. *Shen Bao* (August 6, 1925).

toward Japan, I briefly introduce another Chinese Asianist organization, the Asiatic Society of Shanghai.

Shanghai's Asiatic Society

There were various Asianist groups established in Shanghai throughout the 1920s. The historical contexts for their establishment have little difference with those of the Asian Nations' Alliance in Beijing. Shanghai groups included the Shanghai Asian Nations Association 上海亞洲民族協會, the Asian Culture United Progressive Foundation 亞洲文化共進會, the Asian Issues Discussion Group 亞細亞問題討論會, and the Asian Peace Research Association 亞細亞和平研究會. There are very few documents relating to these groups that have survived to today. However, due to the founders' efforts to work with Japan and due to the public anger toward these actions, there are a number of reports of the Asiatic Society of Shanghai and its founders Cai Xiaobai (Willar Chai 蔡曉白) and Hari Prasad Shastri 夏士屈里 (1882–1956).

Unlike many Asianist organizations, the Asiatic Society was bilingual from the beginning, and a few editions of their journal, the *Asiatic Review* 大亞雜誌, are still available.³⁵ Most articles were simultaneously published in Chinese and English because of the interesting cooperation of Indian and Chinese intellectuals in Shanghai. Cai was responsible for much of the Chinese content, while Shastri and his assistant, H. C. Singh, were responsible for much of the English content. The reason behind this cooperation was not Sun Yat-sen's call for Chinese to work with and lead oppressed nations but was a visit by the most famous of Indian intellectuals.

From April to June 1924, Rabindranath Tagore made a tour of China at the invitation of Liang Qichao. His visit divided the Chinese elite, with many intellectuals frustrated with Tagore's attack on nationalism and support for an Orientalist ideal of Eastern civilization based in spirituality and in opposition to materialism, an ideal shared by many Asianists.³⁶

In Shanghai he was warmly welcomed by the family of Silas Aaron Hardoon (1851–1931), a Jew from Baghdad who had grown up in Mumbai

35. Only a few volumes are available at Beijing University Library, Beijing National Library, and the Tōyō Bunko in Tokyo. The editor-in-chief was Wu Shan, a member of the Guangdong government involved in various infrastructure projects over the first decades of the republic. Other editors included Xu Guannan and Chen Jieqi.

36. Hay, *Asian Ideas of East and West*, 148–52.

and become the richest man in 1920s Shanghai. Hardoon established his own Hardoon University 倉聖明智大學 in the center of the foreign concession at his massive residence at the intersection of Hardoon Road 哈同路, Ferry Road 小沙渡路, and Seymour Road 西摩路. Hardoon's wife, Loo Kar Lin (Lisa Hardoon or Lisa Roos 羅迦陵, 1864–1941), was the chancellor of the university for its short existence from 1915 to 1923, and Shastri was employed as a lecturer and translator.³⁷

Three months after Tagore left China, his admirers established the Asiatic Society based on his ideals.³⁸ Perhaps more than any Asianist, Tagore propagated the belief in a united spiritual Asia in direct opposition with a united materialist West. His adherents in Shanghai eagerly hosted the poet and his vision, and soon after his departure they established an organization based on the same ideals.

With the limited sources available today, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the journal espoused Tagore's views. However, through the writings of Hari Prasad Shastri, which were available to Chinese readers in Chinese and English, we can see the influence of Tagore and Sun Yat-sen. In "The Soul of a Nation," Shastri explains his theory for a "group soul."

Just as each cell in the human body has an individual mind that together form the human, each person has an immaterial mind that, when put together in a group, form a group consciousness, "which we call the soul of a nation." The science of cultivating the expression of the nation is nationalism, developed through liberty. And a true nationalist will therefore love liberty and oppose imperialism, which would inhibit the liberty of other nations.³⁹

Compare this to the end of the sixth speech from Sun Yat-sen's *Three Principles*: "Let us to-day, before China's development begins, pledge

37. Cheung, "Chinese Music and Translated Modernity," 112.

38. Kalidas Nag recalls touring the country with Tagore in Nag, "Tagore in Asia," 343–44. At this time there was already a much more famous Asiatic Society, the long-running Asiatic Society of Bengal, which has since changed its name to the Asiatic Society. The society was a fixture in Calcutta, Tagore's hometown. There was also the Asiatic Society of Japan, based in Yokohama from 1872, of which Shastri may have been aware of during his two years teaching at Waseda University. However, there are no existing materials that indicate any direct connections between the Shanghai society and the earlier societies.

39. Shastri, "Soul of a Nation," 14–15.

ourselves to lift up the fallen and to aid the weak; then when we become strong and look back upon our own sufferings under the political and economic domination of the Powers and see weaker and smaller peoples undergoing similar treatment, we will rise and smite that imperialism. Then will we be truly ‘governing the state and pacifying the world.’”⁴⁰

Sun’s speech on “Nationalism” was reprinted in the *Asiatic Review* (vol. 34), the issue just before that including Shastri’s article, “Soul of a Nation.” Sun’s understanding of nationalism included a strong opposition to imperialism, which Shastri neatly wedded to his more spiritual beliefs.

This syncretic and quasi-spiritual stance was representative of the *Asiatic Review*. However, because of the journal’s promotion of Eastern civilization, it became known for promoting Asianism. Cai Xiaobai in particular was singled out for his role in the *Asiatic Review* and castigated in the media for advocating an “Asian union” 亞洲聯盟.⁴¹ However, this anger only appeared in the media after Cai attended the Asian Nations Conference, held in Nagasaki in 1926.

The Asian Nations Conferences

As explained, the Asian Nations’ Alliance and the Asiatic Society were not originally focused on Sino-Japanese issues and did not have Japanese members until three expatriates attended the open meeting in Central Park. Sasaki, Yamase, and Tokumitsu’s entry into this organization proved to be a critical juncture for many of the Asianist organizations in Beijing and Shanghai.

Sasaki Kenji and Yamase Goichi were journalists with long connections to China. Sasaki had numerous contacts to Japanese pan-Asianist organizations through his earlier membership in the Tōa Dōbunkai, Japan’s largest pan-Asian association, although he was no longer a member and was working for Japan’s China-based news agency Tōhō Tsushinsha 東方通信社.⁴² It was likely through this membership that

40. Sun Yat-sen, *The Three Principles*, 49.

41. “Yazhou minzu dahui zhi zhengxiang” (The true face of the Asian Nations Conference), *Shen Bao* (July 22, 1926), 13. Also “Cai Xiaobai tan Yazhou minzu dahui zhi fanxiang” (Cai Xiaobai discusses the repercussions of the Asian Nations Conference), *Shen Bao* (July 24, 1926), 13–14.

42. Mizuno, “Tōhō hi appaku minzoku rengōkai,” 349 and n. 6.

he had become connected to Imazato Juntarō 今裡準太郎 (1886–1976), chairman of the Pan-Asiatic Society 全亞細亞協會 of Tokyo. According to the *Shen Bao*, on the evening of August 19, only two weeks after Sasaki and Yamase were introduced to the group, a few leading members of the Asian Nations' Alliance met with Imazato and others from the Pan-Asiatic Society at the Yinghuan Hotel 瀛寰飯店 in Beijing. The society's ideas of pan-Asianism were not yet accepted by the Japanese government, and they were closely watched. Inoue Kenkichi 井上謙吉, who was later known for spying on China for Japan, was listed as attending the meeting in the *Shen Bao*.⁴³

During the meeting, Huang Gongsu and Imazato discussed the racist immigration policies of Britain and Canada, the need for Japan to relinquish privileges in Manchuria and Mongolia, and the eventual uniting of oppressed peoples, including those in the Soviet Union and India.⁴⁴ They decided to organize a grand international conference in April 1926 in Shanghai. However, due to the British presence in Shanghai and the ongoing violence in China, they later changed their plans and decided to hold the conference in Nagasaki in July of the same year. The conference was attended by a variety of nongovernmental groups and was hosted by Beijing's Asian Nations' Alliance and Tokyo's Pan-Asiatic Society.⁴⁵

The Chinese representatives at the conference were composed of two groups. The Beijing group was led by Huang Gongsu and Lin Keyi. These are also the two who contributed most to the efforts after the meetings, including a number of publications on the conferences and their hopes for the future.⁴⁶ Others from the Beijing delegation included Wang Wenjun; director of the China Xinmin Communications Bureau 中華新民通訊社 Cai Zhangchuan 蔡障川; and former national representative Wang Shinai 王世鼐.⁴⁷ From Shanghai there were a number of representatives

43. “Yunniangzhong zhi Yaxiya huiyi” (Discussions on an Asian conference), *Shen Bao* (August 8, 1925), 7 (vol. 215, 431).

44. Huang Gongsu, “Yu Riben yiyuan.”

45. Huang Gongsu, *Yaxiyaminzu diyici dahui shimo ji*, 4.

46. Lin had studied in Moscow from 1923 to 1924. It is unclear when he became a member of the CCP. As noted by Zhou Bin, if he was a member in 1926, he was likely attending the conferences as an individual and not a party representative. He was executed by the Guomindang in January 1928. Zhou Bin, “Yaxiya minzu huiyi yu Zhongguo,” 132, n. 2.

47. Later Shi Lei replaced Wang Wenjun.

of smaller Asianist organizations, including Cai Xiaobai of the Asiatic Society, Liu Huarui 劉華瑞 of the Asia Mutual Progress Association 亞洲共進會, Lin Gengyu 林耕餘 of the Asian Issues Discussion Group 亞細亞問題討論會, Fang Maolin 方懋林 of the Asian Peace Research Association 亞細亞和平研究會, and Fang Xiaokuan 方孝寬, manager of Shanghai Southern University 上海南方大學.

The conferences were largely failures. The reasons for this failure are still open to discussion. Torsten Weber sees them as a failure because “‘Asia’ was seriously discussed as a concept that signified more than superficial talk of ‘Yellow peoples’ or the mere opposite of the West,” leading to a plurality that could not be reined in.⁴⁸ After reading the Chinese participants’ accounts of the conference, I see the failure as being due to representatives from China and Japan becoming mired in arguments for the abrogation of the unequal treaties that Japan had imposed on China. In his opening speech, Huang Gongsu, a representative who worked continually toward cooperation with the Japanese, stated: “Under the principles of this conference, to seek equality between nations, the Asian state of Japan must first revoke all unequal treaties with other Asian states in order to achieve true equality between nations.”⁴⁹

Huang went on to discuss the necessity of returning all the land and privileges Japan had acquired from China. Although he repeatedly stated that Great Britain was responsible for much worse, the criticism of Japan was clear. For the Chinese representatives, ending the unequal treaties and regaining some of China’s autonomy and respect were the crucial issues, made even more urgent due to the events of 1925. For the Japanese representatives, the British empire’s construction of a massive naval base in Singapore was the crucial issue. Although they saw this as an act of imperialism threatening all of Asia, they failed to understand that issues of imperialism were closer to home for Chinese representatives.

For the Chinese representatives, Asianism had to be unforgivingly anti-imperialist, but many of the Japanese representatives struggled to address these issues well enough to relieve the thick atmosphere of distrust. Although they were willing to fully support their Chinese counterparts behind closed doors, they could not say such things in front of

48. Weber, *Embracing “Asia,”* 257.

49. Huang Gongsu, *Yaxiyaminzu diyici dahui*, 38.

the media at this closely watched conference.⁵⁰ Imazato and the other Japanese attendees were aware of the Japanese government's hostility toward their conference and the fact that the Home Ministry had questioned their status as "representatives." This conference predated official Japanese government support for Asianism.

Furthermore, many of those who attended the conference noted Japanese arrogance toward the other Asian nations and particularly criticized their unwillingness to allow any form of Korean representation. When the "Assist Korea in Achieving Independence Motion" 幫助韓國獨立案 was raised, even Imazato refused to discuss it.⁵¹ This issue was even more divisive at the 1927 Shanghai conference, when a representative of the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai appeared at the meeting, causing the Japanese representatives to walk out in anger.⁵² Once again, the Korea issue prevented the realization of Asianist ideals, as it had since the 1890s.

This divide between a perceived Japanese sense of superiority and the constant claims of equality indicated that the conferences were largely failures. Despite these disagreements, and keeping in mind that none of the representatives had any authority from their respective governments, the 1926 conference did lead to agreement on a future pan-Asian alliance that attendees saw as an Asian response to the League of Nations and a format that is arguably an early framework for the wartime Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

Asia's Response to the League of Nations: The League of Asian Nations

What this alliance signified was disputable, but it was certainly a representation of the missed opportunities for anti-imperialist Asianism. For Huang it was a step toward "the union of the Eurasian continent," and not at all an expression of East Asian sameness.⁵³ Although racial unity

50. Huang Gongsu, *Yaxiyaminzu diyici dahui*, 18–22.

51. Republic of China Students' Union of Nagasaki, "Zhonghua Minguo liuri Changqi xueshenglianhehui duiyu Yaxiya minzu dahui jingguo qingxing baogaohan" (A report by the Republic of China Students' Union of Nagasaki on the Asian Nations Conference), *Xing Shi* 102 (September 25, 1926).

52. Shuren, "Tan dierci Yazhou minzu huiyi."

53. Huang Gongsu, *Yaxiyaminzu diyici dahui*, 1.

was cited, both Japanese and Chinese representatives listed British imperialist aggression as the primary reason for the alliance. The Japanese representatives' sense of victimization by white imperialists led them to largely dismiss their own imperialism inside Asia. Lin Gengyu, the young Taiwanese intellectual who was acting as a Shanghai representative, followed the Japanese lead of insisting that the alliance was a route to equality, arguing that "only when humanity is all free and equal, can there be eternal peace on earth."⁵⁴

Lin Keyi, the Communist Party member who had just returned from two years of study in Moscow, explained the need to cooperate with Japan from the perspective of class struggle:

In accordance with the spirit of national self-determination, we hope for the equality of all nationalities on the continent. Therefore, there should be no instances of nationality "A" oppressing nationality "B." However, we truly believe that what we call the oppressors of nationality "A" are no more than a particular class of that nation, and there is no relation to the great number of lower classes of that nation. Due to this, although we truly hope that nationality "B" will soon rid itself of oppression, the uniting of all the nations of Asia should not be threatened by the oppression delivered by one class of nationality "A."⁵⁵

Because equality was the focus, after much debate the participants agreed that Japan's unequal treaties with all other Asian countries should be abrogated, despite their lack of power to influence such a move.⁵⁶ This was followed by a series of resolutions for the formation and goals of the League of Asian Nations.

The delegates largely imagined the league as an economic and logistical cooperation, calling for the establishment of pan-Asian communications offices, railways, and trade and financial offices, but the conference also agreed on the Shanghai representatives' call for the establishment of an Asia University 亞細亞大學 in Shanghai. One fascinating decision that they all agreed on was the necessity for an Asian lingua franca. After the disorder of multiple languages on the first day, they decided to establish a body of scholars to devise a pan-Asian language. The possibility of an Asian Esperanto briefly surfaced. In addition to this, they resolved

54. Lin Gengyu, *Yazhou minzu dahui zhi jingguo*; Huang Gongsu, *Yaxiyaminzu diyici dahui*, 3.

55. Lin Keyi, "Yaxiya minzu datongmeng xuanyan."

56. Huang Gongsu, *Yaxiyaminzu diyici dahui*, 48–52.

to pressure the League of Nations to finally pass a resolution on racial equality, something Japan and China had long been arguing for.⁵⁷

These initial proposals reveal high expectations. However, it appears that little was done to actualize the resolutions, and the second conference, in Shanghai in 1927, only repeated many of the same resolutions and returned to the question of the unequal treaties, which were no closer to abrogation in 1927. Because of the lack of any progress in this respect and the continued cooperation with Japanese representatives, the Chinese press saw the conferences as complete failures and was merciless in condemning the Chinese representatives.

The Media Backlash and the Turn to *Ruoxiao* Nations

The failure of the conference in Nagasaki was also a failure for the representatives, whose names were listed in the newspapers with disparaging comments. While arguing for the need for China to lead Asian and all weak nations, the Guomindang publicly rejected Cai Xiaobai's excuses for cooperating with the Japanese, accusing him of "pledging loyalty to the Japanese empire."⁵⁸ The key term that was used to differentiate Chinese and Japanese leadership of Asia was "*ruoxiao* nations" 弱小民族, the small and weak nations. The term had first appeared in print at the beginning of the 1920s as a way to redefine oppressed nations in opposition to the imperial powers, the *liechang*. The *ruoxiao* nations referred to the colonized or semi-colonized nations of the world, including China.⁵⁹

The Chinese media was unforgiving in criticism of the Chinese representatives for working with the Japanese.⁶⁰ Chinese students from Nagasaki had attended the conference as translators and observers and led the charge in identifying Huang Gongsu and Lin Keyi as naïve puppets of the Japanese.⁶¹ Even Li Dazhao took the time to denounce Huang

57. Huang Gongsu, *Yaxiyaminzu diyici dahui*, 39, 48.

58. Cai Xiaobai, "Cai Xiaobai tan Yazhou minzu dahui zhi fanxiang," 591–92.

59. It was a key category for Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao and would become an important category for understanding China's position in the world by the end of the 1920s, as is discussed in the next chapter.

60. For a thorough investigation of the Chinese media response, see Zhou Bin, "Yaxiya minzu huiyi."

61. Zhonghua minguo liuRi Changqi xueshenglianhehui, "Zhonghua Minguo liuri Changqi xuesheng."

Gongsu, Peng Shaoxian, and Lin Keyi as collaborating reactionaries for announcing the Pan-Asian Alliance with Grigory Mikhaylovich Semyonov, a leader of the anti-Soviet White Movement, and for lying to the *ruoxiao* nations and damaging the united front of Eastern *ruoxiao* nations, an important part of the global revolution.⁶²

Some in the Chinese media attempted to show the complexity of the situation surrounding the conference. Many news sources, such as *Xiandai Pinglun*, particularly drew attention to the divisions in Japanese society over support for the West or support for Asia and Asianism. However, the common theme was that “this Great Asianism is Japan’s Great Asianism and not the Asianism of the many nationalities of Asia.”⁶³ Looking toward an imperial power, argued the critics, was looking in the wrong direction.

Very few were against the idea of uniting Asia. In fact, many who criticized the conference specifically mentioned their support for the idea. However, working with the Japanese was not acceptable. This was not the first time Chinese intellectuals had voiced such opinions. The idea of creating an Asian union that excluded imperialist Japan had growing support in the 1920s and can be traced back to Li Dazhao’s New Asianism, discussed in chapter 5. Chen Duxiu had added his voice to the discussion with his various writings on *ruoxiao* nations, but was very clear in one 1924 article that any union should unite the oppressed of Asia and exclude the oppressors: “What we call for is not a union of all the nations of Asia, but a grand union of all the oppressed common people of Asia, excluding the Japanese, the Chinese warlord governments, and all the privileged classes!”⁶⁴ The conference inevitably furthered this belief.

The second Asian Nations Conference in Shanghai gave critics another opportunity to voice their anger at the participants, reinforcing the belief in uniting nonimperialist nations. This time, Lu Xun added his voice to those frustrated with Huang Gongsu and the other Chinese participants. “In investigating the value of this conference, I found that it is zero. From a theoretical perspective, I do not oppose the uniting of all Asia’s *ruoxiao* nations to oppose imperialists. Yet many of the conference attendees are

62. Li Dazhao, “Riben diguo zhuyi zuijin jingong Zhongguo,” in *Li Dazhao quanji* 5, 123-27.

63. “DaYazhou minzu huiyi” (The Asian Nations Conference), *Xiandai pinglun* 4.88 (1926), 182 (Shanghai Municipal Archives D2-0-1783-181).

64. Chen Duxiu, “Yazhou minzu lianhe,” 547.

from Japan, the only imperialist country in Asia. Once Japanese people are included, this conference entirely loses its value and its *raison d'être*.⁶⁵

Conclusion

There remain few sources on the Asian Nations' Alliance, so it is difficult to determine what became of it after the conferences. Although it may have had little influence on politics, it did continue to play a minor role in academic affairs, at least in China. In March 1930, Huang Gongsu, still using his title as a chairman, presented a report to the newly established Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission 蒙藏委員會, noting that the cause of the dangerous deterioration in Nepali–Tibetan relations was to be found in British interference.⁶⁶ He had been sent there to encourage cooperation between the peoples of China, Tibet, and Nepal.

The alliance, and many other Chinese Asianists, had begun to turn away from previous obsessions with Sino-Japanese relations to concentrate on the frontiers of China, particularly emphasizing ethnic minorities and continental neighbors. There was a significant shift in the trend of transnational cooperation as intellectuals finally gave up on cooperating with their Japanese associates and turned to the *ruoxiao* nations.

This turn was crucial for Chinese Asianism, which began to focus on oppressed nations, and for Chinese nationalism, which overlapped with a discourse positing China as a leader of the weak and small nations beginning in the mid-1920s and continuing into the twenty-first century. Capitalizing on the discursive opportunities of such a role for China, officials quickly appropriated the movement, and the ideas that were initially established and propagated by nonofficial Asianism were adapted by intellectual and political leaders in the Guomindang.

Unlike the loosely organized nonofficial and nonpartisan groups seen in this chapter, this was a coordinated strategy by Guomindang leaders. Well-educated and politically sound writers, such as Ma Hetian, were invited to join a new party-funded research group that focused on the frontiers and surrounding countries. The New Asia Research Association continued these legacies of Asianism with new direction and new motivations.

65. Shuren, "Tan di'erci Yazhou minzu huiyi."

66. Quoted in Qiu, "1930 nian Niboer Xizang difang guanxi," 140.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The International of Nations

The Guomindang as Asia's Leader

As discussed in the last chapter, many Chinese intellectuals in the 1920s began turning away from Japan to consider the possibility of a China-led Asia. This plan saw China as a leader of the “weak and small,” what the Guomindang called the *ruoxiao* nations, and Asian nations remained the focus of this leadership, if only for the time being. China was led by Japanese-educated intellectuals in the 1930s, and it was often these intellectuals who tried to incorporate popular ideas of benevolent assistance into discourse on the future spread of China’s revolution across Asia. This was reflected in the Guomindang’s January 1924 reorganization at the First National Congress, during which the party, aligned with the Communist Party and the Soviet Union, proposed to unite the world proletariat and oppressed nations against imperialism.¹ A united Asia was therefore a shared discourse between the GMD and the CCP, and it was influential in Chinese and global intellectual discourse in general amid a zeitgeist of internationalism that followed the establishment of the League of Nations and the Third International. In the 1920s, a great number of urban Chinese organizations were established with this goal, and GMD elites joined international organizations, such

An earlier version of this chapter was published as Smith, “China as the Leader of the Small and Weak.”

1. The shift to a concentration on the peasantry came not long after this. Mao’s address to the First National Congress of the GMD concentrated on the proletariat, but his address to the Second National Congress, in January 1926, turned to focus on the peasants. Schram, *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, 34–35; Li Yuzhen, “1925–1926 nian, Hu Hanmin,” 152.

as the short-lived Comintern-sponsored Anti-Imperialist League.² Even after the bloody end of the United Front finished cooperation with the CCP and the Comintern in 1927, GMD discourse on the mission of global leadership only expanded.

This chapter concentrates on official and semi-official discourse on the Guomindang as the leader of a united Asian and global movement against imperialism during a peak in the imbrication of nationalism with Asianism. In the 1920s, the GMD took a new approach to their position in China, to the Chinese revolution, and to their position and responsibility in the world. I argue that in the late 1920s and early 1930s, if only in discourse, the revolution entered an expansionist stage, pushing out to China's frontiers with the goal of bringing the Three Principles and the nationalist revolution to China and all Asian nations due to a belief in the cultural centrality of China that wedded modern Asianism to the Sinocentric tribute system. Discourse on Chinese leadership of Asia was China's own *meishuron* discourse, an attempt to rebrand cultural Sinocentric regionalism as a more political Sino-principalic Asianism. To an indeterminable degree, this discourse was GMD propaganda initially intended to abrogate the authority of the CCP and its Comintern backer. The same was later used to refute the propaganda of the Asian Monroe Doctrine that was often used to justify the expansionism of the Japanese empire. However, beyond propaganda, the new Sino-principalic GMD leadership discourse led to a wide-ranging research program for China's frontiers, borderlands, and neighboring countries. This research program in turn furthered a spatially defined nationalism that raised intellectuals' consciousness of territory.

The Limits of China and New Asia

According to Charles Maier, the twentieth century was the century of territoriality. This was certainly true in China. In her doctoral dissertation on China's borders, Zhihong Chen makes use of Maier's understanding of the twentieth century to explain and contextualize Chinese intellectuals' fascination with territoriality during the Nanjing decade of 1927–1937.³ As elusive political authority was finally consolidated with

2. Piazza, "Anti-imperialist League," 166–76.

3. Zhihong Chen, *Stretching the Skin of the Nation*.

the dissolution of warlordism and the reestablishment of the Republic of China in Nanjing, and with Japan, Russia, and other powers still eager to slice off China's extremities, the question for China's thinkers became the territorial boundaries of China. This had crucial importance in defining the territory of the later People's Republic but was also important in defining China's relationship with neighboring countries.

A concrete example of this is Xie Bin's 謝彬 (1887–1948) *History of China's Territorial Losses*. First published in 1925, it was republished seven times by 1941 and even used as a middle school textbook in Shanghai.⁴ Xie was a military officer and a prolific writer in the 1920s and 1930s, penning a number of books on military strategy, development, and China's frontiers, especially on Yunnan, Xinjiang, Tibet, and Mongolia. This talk of China's losses was a form of nationalism based on shame and trauma. Such writings on the history of territorial losses and national shame were repeated continuously, producing a collective trauma that emotionally prepared this new generation for action against further incursions, forecasting the rise of a positive form of nationalism that would sweep the country in the 1940s.

The map that Xie published in 1925, *The Lost Land and Sea Territories of China* 中國喪失領土領海圖, was distributed with his book and remains widely available (fig. 8.1).⁵ This was a book with impact, which could be seen in the pages of the journal *New Asia* 新亞細亞 a few years later.⁶

Leading the people in the dissemination of this territory-based nationalism in the early 1930s, the Guomindang began a political movement with the long-term goals of reasserting Chinese control over lost territories in the spirit of the Chinese revolution and Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles. This desire was articulated in the journal *New Asia* and its controlling research organization, the New Asia Research Association.

The New Asia Research Association was a society of academics, intellectuals, and politicians interested in China's frontiers and/or neighbors. The GMD subsidized the organization and members contributed donations and membership fees.⁷ Although the group was created with

4. Xie, *Zhongguo sangdi shi* (1941).

5. Xie, *Zhongguo sangdi shi* (1941).

6. Zhihong Chen, *Stretching the Skin of the Nation*, 47.

7. Zhihong Chen, *Stretching the Skin of the Nation*, 44.

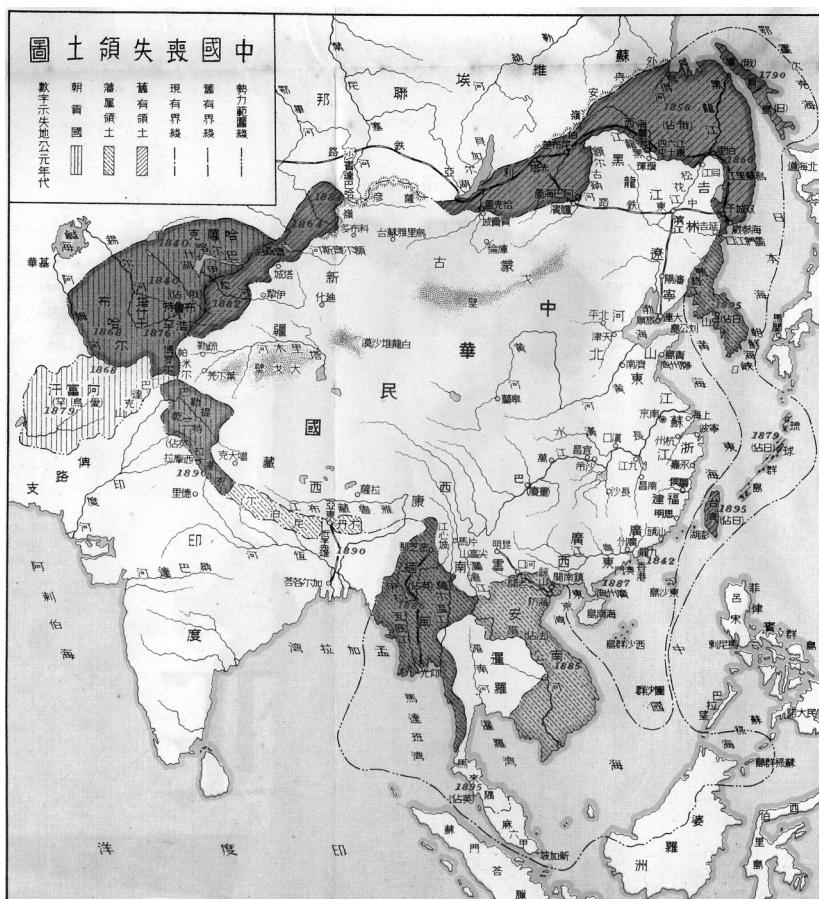


Figure 8.1. The accompanying map became a standard image for displaying China's territorial losses since the Opium Wars. In the image, shading indicates areas once under the authority of China. This image is taken from a 1941 edition of the book, published for school children just months before the Japanese occupation of Shanghai. Xie Bin, *Zhongguo sangdi shi* (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1941).

an academic focus, there was little distinction between scholarly and ideological purposes. Established in Shanghai in 1931, the New Asia Research Association's founding almost coincided with China's latest loss of territory and the birth of a new pseudo-country. The Japanese invaded and occupied Manchuria in late 1931, proclaiming the state of Manchukuo in 1932. Unable to resist Japan with force, Chiang Kai-shek

and the Nanjing government turned to the League of Nations for help.⁸ The failure of the league to deal with the Manchurian Incident was the final straw for Chinese politicians and intellectuals who had maintained lingering hopes for its intentions. The New Asia Research Association was established on the eve of this disaster by elites who were aware of the possibility for the cutting up of China and were preparing for this through efforts to assert ownership over the frontiers.

The association was a who's who of politicians and intellectuals with interests or research on the frontiers or in other Asian countries. Chiang Kai-shek and Dai Jitao were honorary chairpersons. The real chairpersons and senior researchers included the famous researcher of India Tan Yunshan 譚雲山 (1898–1983); noted researchers of West China Ma Hetian 馬鶴天 (1877–1962) and Xu Gongwu 許公武; propaganda specialist and acting Minister of Information Fang Zhi 方治 (1895–1989); and well-known academics Xin Shuzhi 辛樹幟 (1894–1977) and Chen Daqi 陳大齊 (1886–1983). A number of intellectual and political leaders from the frontier areas attended meetings and sometimes contributed articles, including the Mongolian Prince Demchugdongrub 德王 (1902–1966), who became leader of the Japanese-sponsored state of Mengjiang almost ten years later, and Kesang Tsering 格桑澤仁 (1905–1946), an important GMD operative of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission.⁹

The foremost activities of the group were research, translation, and publishing. Although *New Asia* was the primary outlet of the group's research and essays, the group's list of published books reveals their concentrations as well as their own explanations do. Books included *The Chinese Frontiers* 中國邊疆, *Issues in Manchuria and Mongolia* 滿蒙問題, *Issues in Xinjiang* 新疆問題, *Issues in Tibet* 西藏問題, *Issues in Yunnan* 雲南問題, *Industrial Projects for Building up the Frontiers* 實業計劃之邊疆建設, *Manchuria and Mongolia* 滿洲與蒙古, and *Strange Tales from Malaysia* 馬來搜奇錄.

Unlike these books, Marguerite Harrison's *Asia Reborn* stood as the only translation from English published by the group due to her assertion that an Asian federation was on the horizon, an assertion of great interest

8. Mitter, *The Manchurian Myth*, 5.

9. Close to five hundred members are listed in the *Xin Yaxiya xuehui huiyuan lu*. The 1935 edition is also available, with only minor changes.

to the association.¹⁰ It was edited by Zhang Zhenzhi 張震之, who excitedly announced in his introduction, “China’s rebirth is the beginning of the rebirth of the Asian nations!”¹¹ This echoed Harrison’s words, as she assumed that China would pass through the present turmoil with a strong rebirth and that China, Japan, and Korea could create a race-based alliance.¹² Hua Qiyun 華企雲, one of the most prolific of *New Asia*’s essayists, used his translator’s preface to remind readers that “The Republic of China contains one half of the population of Asia. Thus, the responsibility for leading the other nations in our mutual struggle should therefore fall upon us!” These beliefs were more clearly expressed in the association’s journal.

The primary organ of the New Asia Research Association was *New Asia*, which was produced from 1930 to 1937. This journal, a mouthpiece publication for the Guomindang, wedded the Nationalist objectives of securing the former territorial holdings of the Qing dynasty with Chinese leadership of the Asian continent, both under the theoretical outlines of Sun Yat-sen’s Three Principles and Great Asianism. The three goals of the journal are declared in the opening pages of the first edition before a reprinting of the complete text of Sun’s 1924 “Great Asianism” speech:

1. To establish the central theories of the Three Principles.
2. To research issues concerning China’s frontiers from the perspective of the Three Principles.
3. To research the liberation of the Asian nations from the perspective of the Three Principles.

The centrality of East China to the frontiers and all of Asia was an assumption that would be clarified through the research of this association. The modern disciplines of geography, history, and anthropology were put to use with the employment of a hitherto unknown level of specialization materialized in the new generation of Chinese graduates from Japan’s imperial universities. Judging by the team assembled, one would imagine the frontiers to be the focus of the journal, and they were for most articles. However, the introductory essay by the editors did not

10. Harrison, *Yazhou zhi zaisheng*, 6.

11. Zhang passed away before the book was published and was replaced by his colleague at the association, Jiang Yonghong. Harrison, *Yazhou zhi zaisheng*, unpaginated introduction and chap. 3.

12. Harrison, *Asia Reborn*, 274.

mention China's frontiers. Instead, "The Future of Asia" extolled the greatness of Asia compared to other continents, repeatedly called for Asian nations to unite, and detailed Sun's Asianism in relation to the Three Principles:

Our president was always discussing Great Asianism. Is this an independent principle? No, Asianism is certainly not an independent principle. The Great Asianism discussed by our president is the application of the Three Principles of the People to the International of Nations (*minzu guoji*), just as our president explained "The Three Principles of the People are principles to save the country . . ." In the East there is a country which has already reached a privileged position that uses Great Asianism to flaunt its pipedream of a unified Asia. And there are those military and political figures who ingratiate themselves to imperialist motives. They too call for Great Asianism. Despite the fallacies of the Great Asianism promoted by the common people, our president did not shy from using the term because it stands on the resolute position of the Three Principles of the People. He speaks of a Three Principles' Great Asianism. . . . Chinese people hoping for the revival of China, must resolutely trust in the Three Principles of the People. Asian peoples hoping for the revival of Asia's peoples of colour must resolutely trust in the Three Principles of the People.¹³

This vision of Great Asianism as the international incarnation of the Three Principles was continually propagated from Sun's "Great Asianism" speech of 1924 through the repeated discussions by Sun's closest supporters, Dai Jitao and Hu Hanmin, until the fall of Chen Gongbo's government in 1945. It stemmed from an unassailable belief in China's eventual return to dominance, and a traumatized nostalgia for the traditional Sinocentric tribute system, which Sun had helped stimulate.¹⁴ The crucial category of analysis that GMD supporters used to imagine Chinese leadership was the *ruoxiao* or "weak and small" nations that would turn to China for benevolent tutelage and support.

This understanding of a coming reorganization of the global system appropriated a Marxist discourse of dialectical history, as well as Marxist understandings of imperialism and global capitalism. However, the key concept of *ruoxiao* was not derived from classical Marxism.

13. *Xin Yaxiya* editors, "Yazhou zhi jianglai," 11–12.

14. See chapter 6 and the text below for more on Sun's nostalgia for the tribute system.

Ruoxiao Nations: Reunderstanding the Colonial Situation

Ruoxiao is almost invariably translated in English as “weak and small.”¹⁵ This is a fine direct translation, but it misses the real connotation of the term. *Ruoxiao* nations are defined in opposition to capitalist imperialist nations. Imperialism is defined in the Leninist sense of the term, as a transnational extension of financial capitalism. Imperialist nations were those in the stage of financial capitalism; *ruoxiao* nations were those that remained in an agricultural and craftsman stage of development. The difference was defined temporally.¹⁶ Nations that were defined as *ruoxiao* were usually those colonized and oppressed by the Western and Japanese empires. Therefore, the term *ruoxiao* must be understood within an international system. It was used to understand China’s place between the weak and the strong. It was never used to refer to minorities within China, such as Tibetans, although it was often used to refer to minorities in other countries, such as Jewish groups. In 1928 Li Zuohua 李作華 published a popular book that listed the *ruoxiao* nations and their individual circumstances.¹⁷ The book was reissued a number of times but soon had to compete with similar collections that were expanded, updated, and regionally focused as *ruoxiao* nations became a popular field of study in the 1930s.

Some definitions of *ruoxiao* nations included colonized, semi-colonized, and Sun’s idea of a “subcolony” 次殖民地.¹⁸ These last two categories emphasized external control over the economic production or markets of the nation.¹⁹ *Ruoxiao* was thus sometimes a term that was more specific than “oppressed” but more inclusive than “colonized.” Unlike the latter term, it emphasized economic over political oppression. As Rebecca Karl has illustrated for the decades immediately preceding this period, Chinese intellectuals redefined China and the world by the appropriation of uneven global spaces “translated” through the colonized

15. Du, *Ruhe lianhe ruoxiao minzu*.

16. Du, *Ruhe lianhe*, 1–3.

17. See Li Zuohua, *Shijie ruoxiao minzu wenti*. The following year also saw Hu Shiming, *Jindai ruoxiao minzu*; Zheng, *Shijie ruoxiao minzu wenti*; Zhang Bi, *Yazhou ruoxiao minzu*.

18. Sun Yat-sen, *San Min Chu I*, 10.

19. Du, *Ruhe lianhe*, 9–13.

and oppressed nations of the world.²⁰ This was explicit in the formation of the concept of *ruoxiao minzu*.

The first use of the term *ruoxiao* in application to a nation was by Chen Duxiu in an article blasting the abuse of China at the Paris Conference during the height of the May Fourth Movement. He coined the term in literary cohesion with a popular expression from literary Chinese: *ruorou-qiangshi*, “the meat of the weak is eaten by the strong.”²¹ In the early twentieth century, the strong (*qiang*) brought to mind the colonial powers (*lie-qiang*). Chen was referring to China, Korea, and other oppressed nations when he first used the term *ruoxiao*.²²

In the early 1920s, writers and translators began to show an interest in the literary output of “oppressed peoples.” Mao Dun and *Short Story Monthly* 小說月報 were particularly instrumental in introducing works of Polish, Jewish, Black, and Irish writers.²³ This focus followed the influences of the time and soon began to include fiction from Asia as the preferred term drifted from “oppressed” to *ruoxiao*. Collections of short stories from *ruoxiao* nations appeared during the 1930s and introduced the fiction of a variety of oppressed and colonized peoples, including Irish, Jewish, New Zealand, Korean, and Taiwanese short stories.²⁴

The term became particularly important with its usage in the 1926 Second National Congress of the Guomindang, where members agreed to sympathize with and unite with the “weak and small” nations of the entire world.²⁵ Delegates from across Southeast Asia attended the congress and began organizing to unite the Chinese in Nanyang to pursue emancipation.²⁶ After the congress, *ruoxiao* regularly appeared in writings by

20. Karl, *Staging the World*, 10.

21. Chen Duxiu, “Taipingyang huiyi yu Taipingyang ruoxiao minzu.” This idiom also appears frequently in texts on the *ruoxiao minzu*. Hu Shiming, *Jindai ruoxiao minzu*, 1; Du, *Ruhe lianhe*, 37.

22. There were already Chinese equivalent terms for “oppressed” *beiyapo* and “colonized” *zhimin* in popular usage, so *ruoxiao* gradually gave way to these more popular terms. Although the word has been deemed pejorative and is now seldom used outside of historical contexts, there is a clear continuity with the currently popular term *ruoshi minzu*, which is often seen in academic writing on literature and used as an equivalent to the English term “marginalized nations.”

23. Eber, *Vocies from Afar*.

24. *Ruoxiao minzu xiaoshuoxua*; Chen Yuan, *San zimei*.

25. Jiang Yongjing, *Guomindang Xingshuai shi*, 354.

26. Belogurova, “The Chinese International of Nationalities,” 452.

GMD elite. Wang Jingwei clarified his usage of the term, arguing that China was a special case among the *ruoxiao*, as it was not a small (*xiao*) nation but a large one, and therefore might be called a *ruoda* nation. This was an even worse state to be in and was due to China's concentration on spiritual, rather than material development.²⁷ However, Sun's use of the term in his Three Principles authorized it as a crucial keyword for the late 1920s and the 1930s.

Chinese Paternalism and the Asian Elder Brother

In his speeches on nationalism, Sun used the term *ruoxiao* nations to refer to people oppressed by imperialism. In Sun's sixth speech on nationalism, a paternalist speech that emphasized China's duty to lead the *ruoxiao* nations, Sun connected the term to another classical Chinese concept: aid and support the weak (*jiruofuqing*).

It was this policy, explained Sun, that allowed small countries like Annam, Burma, Korea, and Siam to maintain their independence before the Europeans arrived. For Chinese nationalism to succeed and for China to realize "our nation's true spirit," the Chinese nation "must support the *ruoxiao* nations and oppose the world powers."²⁸ Sun integrated the assumed values of China's tributary system and a development approach for surrounding nations as his future foreign policy theory.²⁹ Drawing on China's glorious past as the center of the tribute system, Sun looked to a future in which China could lead Asia.

Sun's theory of nationalism was more complicated than strict ethnic nationalism. He emphasized the importance of preferencing blood relations of nation and race, which he believed to be naturally constructed through *wangdao*, the Confucian principle of benevolent rule, as opposed to the state, a Western construct based on violent or coercive hegemony.³⁰ His return to this principle was nothing new. Indeed, it had been recurring in Japanese writings regularly after the Meiji period. However, Sun's

27. Wang, "Guanyu jiumang tucun de ji juhua," *EM* 34.16, 13.

28. Sun Yat-sen, *Sun Zhongshan wencui*, 732–33.

29. In Sun's second speech on nationalism, he explained that Korea, Taiwan, Burma, and Annam were all Chinese territory, while Ryukyu, Siam, Borneo, Nepal, and many others were countries that paid tribute. Sun Yat-sen, *San Min Chu I*, 9. Sun Yat-sen, *Sun Zhongshan wencui*, 681.

30. Sun Yat-sen, *San Min Chu I*, 3.

positioning of *wangdao* as the root of the Chinese nation and the Asian form of governance was unique, although it would be emphasized even more so by Wang Jingwei's Reorganized National Government during the Second Sino-Japanese War, when it became an important piece of Japanese propaganda. This theory provided a theorized and authoritative explanation by which many Chinese intellectuals saw China as having destined and morally imperative grounds for being the leader of an Asian family of nations.

In discussions of Asia, its future, and its past, intellectuals asserted Asia's qualifications as the "elder brother" (*lao dage*) of the world, including the continent's area, population, history, and culture.³¹ The ideology of the Three Principles put China in an advanced position from which its leaders could tutor and support the surrounding Asian nations. In a rather extreme religious analogy, one author argued that Sun Yat-sen's "Nationalism" was a "Bible" for uniting the *ruoxiao* nations: "We must now endeavor to spread the word of this bible to all of the *ruoxiao* nations and bring them to believe that only once we are all united can we hope to overthrow imperialism." This missionary work of the GMD was a means by which the meek could find salvation and be liberated from their mutual oppressors:

The modern national revolution is a movement against imperialism. All *ruoxiao* nations must unite in a front for the anti-imperialist movement because we are in the same position, that of the oppressed. We have the same enemy, imperialism. Our objectives are the same; we want freedom and equality. Our hopes are the same, mutual aid. Our methods are the same: the overthrow of imperialism. The power we need is the same: the power to oppose imperialism. And the high principles upon which we rely are the same: the realization of the worldwide utopia (*datong*).³²

For writers in the Nanjing decade, China and the GMD were poised to lift the world toward *datong* because of their centrality. As New Asia Research Association member Zhang Zhenzhi explained, "Asian culture can be said to be the centre of world culture, and Chinese culture can

31. See the editors' introduction to *New Asia*, "Yaxiya zhi jianglai" (The future of Asia), *Xin Yaxiya* 1.1 (October 1, 1930): 9–12. Also see the introduction to Harrison, *Asia Reborn*.

32. Du, *Ruhe lianhe*, 23.

be said to be the centre of Asian culture.”³³ Zhang further clarified his argument that Chinese culture, the root of “world culture,” came from the high plateaus two issues later in “The Southwards Development of Chinese Culture,” in which he also conflated the Chinese nation with the Han ethnicity: “The Chinese people, which are the Han people.”³⁴ This conflation was not acceptable in a 1930 GMD publication, and other scholars rose to challenge Zhang. Chen Yaobin 陳耀斌 wrote in to *New Asia* to argue that all the nations of China are actually part of the Chinese nation, so there is no need for any of them to claim independence. Zhang responded to the letter, explaining that his article was about the historical Chinese nation, which did not include minorities, but the current Chinese nation certainly does include all nationalities.³⁵

This issue points to the difficulties and ambiguities of Chinese Asianism and Chinese leadership, particularly in contrast with Japanese Asianism, which also ostensibly stipulated that all nations must achieve independence and equality, including Tibetans, Mongolians, and Manchu, despite many Japanese writers’ belief in Japanese superiority. Of course, any emphasis on Chinese or Japanese centrality was irreconcilable with the other. Although most Asianist writing from both countries maintained the argument that Asianism was about peace and equality, any plans for institutionalized Asianism inevitably slipped toward centralization. For Chinese writers, this institution was the organization of the *ruoxiao* nations, the International of Nations 民族國際.

In a book titled *How to Unite the Ruoxiao Nations*, editor Du Jiu called for uniting these nations under the GMD.³⁶ His understanding of leadership was the tutelage of equal nations: “China’s Guomindang is the world’s kindest, strongest and earliest established revolutionary organization to seek equality among nations. We hope that every *ruoxiao* nation can have this sort of organization as it is necessary to have a strong revolutionary organization in order to lead the revolutionary movement.”³⁷

33. Zhang Zhenzhi, “Yaxiya wenhua de bianqian yu qi xinshengji,” 83.

34. Found in Zhang Zhenzhi, “Zhongguo wenhua zhi xiangan kaizhan” (The Southwards Development of Chinese Culture), *Xin Yaxiya* 1.3 (December 1930): 91–97.

35. Chen Yaobin, “Zhonghua minzu yu Hanzu,” 129. Zhang’s response is on 129–30.

36. The book is unfortunately undated, but it appears to have been published in the late 1920s or early 1930s. Du Jiu’s only other published works are listed between 1933 and 1937.

37. Du, *Ruhe lianhe*, 33.

Sun Yat-sen himself was never recorded specifically describing an international institution by which China and the GMD could lead the *ruoxiao* nations. However, he did make general calls for them to be united: “We must first unite ourselves, then through sympathy for others in the same state, unite the *ruoxiao* nations and fight the 250,000,000 [imperialists] together, using right to defeat might.”³⁸ From these words his followers envisioned a global structure led by the GMD, a new form of international known as the International of Nations.

On the International of Nations

The fundamental program of the operation is none other than political and economic alliance (*tongmeng*). Political alliance refers to political integration, gathering the strength of all the individual *ruoxiao* nations in order to resist the political invasion of the imperialists and to resolve the political issues of each *ruoxiao* nation. Just as the League of Nations is actually a political alliance to unite white imperialism against *ruoxiao* nations, the Third International is a political alliance of red imperialism.³⁹

Shortly after Sun Yat-sen’s death, Dai Jitao and Hu Hanmin began calling for an International of Nations, an organized international league of oppressed nations to compete with the League of Nations and the Third International. The organization would be based on the concept of nationalism, particularly in connection to Sun Yat-sen’s definition, rather than liberal imperialism or communism. “Free” (*ziyou*) and “self-determining” (*zijue*) were keywords found throughout promotion of the organization, and some intellectuals linked the movement to Woodrow Wilson’s famous Fourteen Points.⁴⁰ At the Second National Congress of the Guomindang, the party was called upon to lead the *ruoxiao* nations. This marked the official and widespread acceptance of the idea of the *ruoxiao minzu guoji*, which was usually shortened to *minzu guoji*, or the International of Nations.⁴¹

Dai Jitao, who may have been the first to push for the International

38. Sun Yat-sen in “Minzuhui” 1924. Quoted in Du, *Ruhe lianhe*, 25.

39. Du, *Ruhe lianhe*, 26–27.

40. Tan Pimeng provides a short history of the movement, finding “Wilson’s lie” to have fanned the flames of nationalism. Tan, “Ruhe zuzhi minzu guoji,” 4–5.

41. Jingpu, “Roxiao minzu guoji wenti.”

of Nations, brought up the idea on July 30, 1925, at a press conference at Shanghai University, where he was principal. He called for nations oppressed by the five imperialist countries (Great Britain, the United States, France, Italy, and Japan) to unite and oppose the imperialists' international. Uniting *ruoxiao* nations all around the world, the movement would be centered in China and, in addition to fighting imperialism, it would engage with issues of the economy, culture, transportation, international law, and immigration.⁴² His article "International of Nations" was released in *Asiatic Review* 大亞雜誌, discussed in the previous chapter.⁴³

Coming at the peak of Dai's anticommunist discourse, the call for this "international" can be seen as part of his ambition for the intellectual abrogation of the authority of the Third International over oppressed nations. He had theorized the world into three camps: the capitalist imperialists, the communist imperialists, and the nationalists, who would fight for independence and freedom under the banner of Sun's Three Principles. In 1925 Dai interpreted the Three Principles as fundamentally in opposition to communism. He argued that Sun was really a traditionalist and had based his writings on Confucianism, the belief structure at the heart of China and soon to be at the heart of the International of Nations. As someone who had once devoted himself to the study of Marxist thought, Dai was particularly dangerous because of his ability to use the language of his enemies as well as they could.

Leftist intellectuals rose to the challenge, and articles attacking Dai Jitao were published in all major communist journals in 1925. Mikhail Borodin even went as far as calling Dai one of the "five evils" in China (the others were imperialism, warlords, comprador capitalists, and Guomindang rightists).⁴⁴ Many responded with anger, but most engaged with Dai's arguments. In a published exchange, popular young socialists Yun Daiying 懿代英 and Yu Zhongdi 于忠迪 discussed Dai Jitao's call for an International of Nations. Yu explained that communists also hoped for the liberation of nations, but argued that Dai Jitao was misunderstanding the crucial contradictions when he argued for oppressed nations to unify against imperialist nations. "We must unite the oppressed nations

42. Wang Shounan, *Zhongguo lidai sixiangjia*, 143.

43. Dai Jitao, "Minzu guoji," 2–5.

44. Lu Yan, *Re-Understanding Japan*, 150.

with the oppressed classes of imperialist countries and organize a global anti-imperialist united front.”⁴⁵

However, some leftist intellectuals who wavered between the CCP and the GMD supported the idea. Literary scholar Tan Pimou 譚丕模 (1899–1958), writing under his pen name Pimeng 披朦, wrote a lengthy article in 1929 supporting the idea based on the ideas of self-determination and equality. He quoted Sun Yat-sen’s call for China to unite and then unite with the *ruoxiao* nations as proof of Sun’s support of the organization and argued that it was the will of the party representatives, as leading the *ruoxiao* had been established as a party goal during the Second National Congress, in which representatives from the entire country participated. Following from the argument by Yu Zhongdi to continue supporting the Third International, Tan argued that the Third International was destined for failure because it concentrated only on the proletariat and “cannot represent the interests of the entirety of the *ruoxiao* nations.”⁴⁶ As the Soviets had refused to support the GMD, Tan reasoned that they would never support all of China and would divide its strength. Therefore:

We must organize the International of Nations, unite with the oppressed peoples or the proletariat of the West, offering them a firm and powerful force to struggle against the capitalist class. Then the capitalist class of the imperialist states will have no power left to oppress us. We must organize the International of Nations, unite the *ruoxiao* nations of the East, including India, Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam and Burma, shake off the imperialists and gain independence. Then the imperialists will have no time for colonizing and have no power left to oppress us.⁴⁷

Tan extended Dai’s argument for the International of Nations to allow for the inclusion of Western proletariat forces. This was a logical and expected answer to communist critiques. However, other theoretical approaches to the international provided even more obvious Marxist analysis.

The people [of the *ruoxiao* nations] are the commodities of imperialism and the supplier of imperialism’s industrial material at the same time. Their countries are sites for imperialists’ surplus capital, and also the

45. Yun and Yu, “Minzu guoji yu minzu jiefang,” 743–44.

46. Tan, “Ruhe zuzhi minzu guoji,” 1, 6–7, 8.

47. Tan, “Ruhe zuzhi minzu guoji,” 8–9.

sphere of imperial rule. In short, the imperialists are the masters and they are the slaves. So the common masses of the oppressed nations, especially the worker and peasant masses, have a life of hardship beyond expression in words.⁴⁸

In this passage Jingpu 荆璞 (dates unknown) relates the subalternesque situation of the proletariat in the *ruoxiao* nations, showing the glaring difference between the workers or peasants of oppressed Asian nations and the workers or peasants of imperialist Western states.

From this we can also see that the International of Nations was a discursive movement to deny Comintern leadership in the global revolution, questioning its legitimacy as a global leader by debating the nature of a revolution that was limited to the proletariat. This was an important task for a revolutionary party whose own legitimacy was questioned by the CCP, which was now the sole Chinese party authorized by the Comintern and therefore by the global revolutionary movement.

Responsibility for leadership for the global revolution, Jingpu argued, "has already passed from the proletariat to the *ruoxiao* nations."⁴⁹ Although the proletariat were leaders during the Industrial Revolution and before the consolidation of imperialist power, Jingpu saw the *ruoxiao* as the central revolutionary forces in the 1920s because of the nature of imperialist oppression growing internationally to oppress all people in oppressed nations.

On these grounds, Jingpu argued that the Fifth Plenary Session of the Second National Congress of the Guomindang, which was about to be held in August 1928, should make it a priority to establish a committee for the International of Ruoxiao Nations and invite representatives from various countries to hold a provisional session.⁵⁰ The Fifth Plenary Session did not establish the committee, but it was a crucial session in Chinese history because Chiang Kai-shek was able to make changes to the constitution ensuring that the president remained commander-in-chief of the military and was no longer responsible to the National Government Council but only to the chairman of the Central Executive Committee, which was himself.⁵¹

48. Jingpu, "Ruoxiao minzu guoji wenti," 24.

49. Jingpu, "Ruoxiao minzu guoji wenti," 23.

50. Jingpu, "Ruoxiao minzu guoji wenti," 27.

51. Zhao Suisheng, *Power by Design*, 75–76.

The Guomindang Leading the *Ruoxiao* Nations

Of course it must be China's Guomindang that is the leader and China's Guomindang that is the nucleus [of the International of Nations].

—Tan, “Ruhe zuzhi minzu guoji,” 10

In the first volume of *New Asia*, Hu Hanmin contributed an article on the International of Nations designed to capture the authority of Sun Yat-sen. “On the International of Nations and the Third International” followed the opening articles on Sun’s Asianism. He claimed that he had initially raised the idea with Sun, who generally agreed. They then brought it up with Mikhail Borodin. Borodin agreed but stated that Hu should be responsible for initiating this international alliance. Hu humbly replied that his poor language skills would hold him back from this, but Borodin and Sun insisted.

Not long after Sun’s death, Hu left for Moscow. The official mission was to push for the GMD’s entry into the Third International, but Hu later claimed that his plan was to promote the International of Nations. If Hu Hanmin did go to Russia to push for the International of Nations, this term is not to be found in his speeches and writings from Russia in 1925. He did make calls for uniting the oppressed and the weak a number of times, particularly in his speech “The Solution of the Guomindang” 國民黨真解, in which he clearly explains the GMD policy of leading the *ruoxiao* in relation to Sun’s Three Principles:

As for Nationalism, Dr. Sun explained that no matter what nation or country people come from, those who are oppressed or wronged must unite together against power. . . . Aside from Japan, all of the *ruoxiao* of Asia have been brutally suppressed and suffered all manner of hardships. Sympathizing with each other’s suffering, they must unite together and oppose those brutal countries. Once these oppressed nations unite, they will certainly devote themselves to war with the brutal countries. The international war of the future will not be interracial but intraracial. The white race will divide and go to war. The yellow race will divide and go to war. It will be a class war, a war between the oppressed and the oppressors. . . . In calling for nationalism, we will first unite ourselves, then through compassion for others’ situations, we will unite all of the *ruoxiao* nations to defeat the 250,000,000 oppressors.⁵²

52. Hu Hanmin, *Hu Hanmin xiānshēng zài E yanjiāng lù*, 26–27.

Not long after Hu returned from Russia, Chiang Kai-shek destroyed the United Front of the CCP and GMD with violent attacks against CCP sympathizers beginning in April 1927. Hu sided with Chiang, became the leader of the Legislative Yuan, and began to employ anticommunist rhetoric, referring to the Third International as “red imperialism,” which he believed could be confronted by the International of Nations. He claimed to have brought the idea to Sun Yat-sen much earlier as an extension of the Chinese revolution: “When the President was in Japan, I advocated for the idea of organizing an International of Nations so that our Guomindang could become the leader of the international nationalities revolutionary movement (國際的民族革命運動).”⁵³

At the beginning of the 1930s, following Hu’s lead, other intellectuals took up the call for this international as the only structural alliance that could defend against both white imperialism and red imperialism. In response to white imperialism’s organization into the League of Nations and red imperialists’ organization into the Third International, Yin Weilian argued that “The first step shall be the uniting of Asia’s oppressed nationalities, the establishment of the International of Nations. Only with such a specific international organization can we establish common purpose and common action.”⁵⁴ Yin’s article included a small drawing of a warplane with the character for “Asia” on its side, perhaps indicating the potential for a shared military force (fig. 8.2). Explaining why only the Republic of China could lead Asia, Yin Weilian explained:

Firstly, only the Chinese nation has such a population large enough to fight against the white race. Secondly, the Chinese nation has a completely superior national character (*minzu xing*) in terms of its national moral structure (*minzu daode*), national ideology (*minzu sixiang*) and national ability (*minzu nengli*). Thirdly, under the leadership of the Three Principles of the People, the Chinese nation will never succumb to riding the coattails of imperialism and use force to persecute other nations.⁵⁵

New Asia continued to be a vehicle to promote the idea of Chinese leadership and the International of Nations. In 1932, Hong Weifa 洪為法 (1895–1970), a member of Guo Moruo’s Creation Society, published a more detailed article on the need for the organization. Not unlike Hu

53. Hu Hanmin, “Minzu guoji yu disan guoji,” 18.

54. Yin, “Yaxiya minzu yundong zhi jinzhan,” 97.

55. Yin, “Yaxiya minzu yundong zhi jinzhan,” 97.

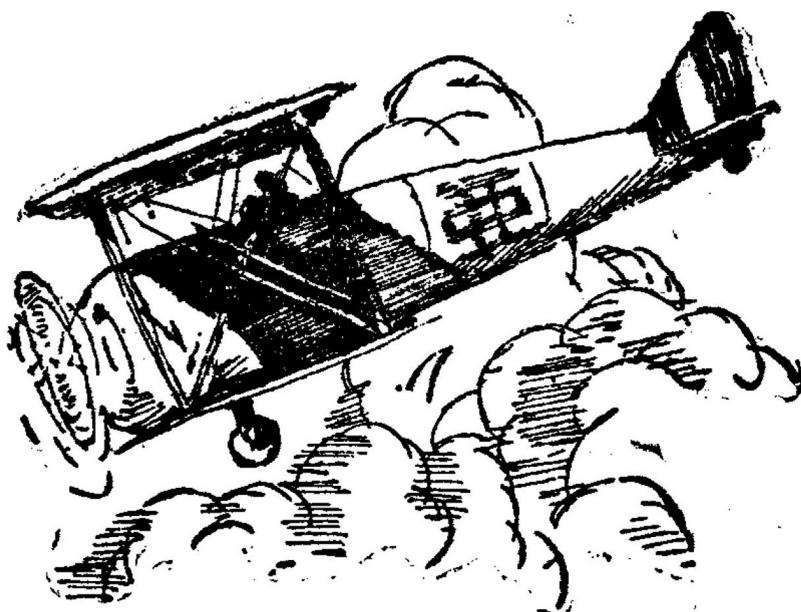


Figure 8.2. An image of a warplane with the character *Ya*, signifying “Asia.” From Yin Weilian 印維廉, “Yaxiya minzu yundong zhi jinzhhan” 亞細亞民族運動之近戰. *Xin Yaxiya* 1.1 (1930): 91.

Hanmin, he argued that there were three trends for power in the contemporary international struggle: imperialism, represented by the League of Nations; socialism, represented by the Third International; and nationalism, particularly the nationalism of the *ruoxiao minzu*, which needed an international organization to represent these nations and further their interests.⁵⁶ Although he did not use the phrase “red imperialism,” he was very critical of the “class struggle” for its role in “substantially detracting from the movement for the independence of the *ruoxiao* nations.”⁵⁷ Again, the reasons Hong used to argue for Chinese leadership returned to China’s history and the uniqueness of Chinese culture. This was a dominant and recurring argument throughout the 1930s.

56. Hong Weifa, “Guanyu minzu guoji,” 31.

57. Hong Weifa, “Guanyu minzu guoji,” 34.

Cultural Superiority

In the current phase, the *ruoxiao* nations are unorganized. The *ruoxiao* nation that will take the position of leader must have a glorious history, a solid foundation and a noble culture. Of course, only the Chinese nation can fill these requirements and take on the responsibility of leadership.⁵⁸

Beginning in the nineteenth century and accelerating in the New Culture Movement of the 1910s, a debate on the merits of Eastern or Western cultures had imagined them in the form of a dichotomy.⁵⁹ By the 1930s, and partly in concert with the rise of Chinese nationalism, a belief in the moral or spiritual superiority of a Sinocentric Asian culture was common. This is reflected in the reasoning behind arguments for Chinese leadership of the International of Nations.

In 1931, another group of activist researchers attempted to bring the idea of an International of Nations to fruition. They focused on Asian nations, calling their organization the Asian Cultural Association 亞洲文化協會. In their first meeting, held on April 5, 1931, at Nanjing's Central University 中央大學, representatives from China, India, Korea, Vietnam, and Taiwan came together to discuss the future of their association.⁶⁰ Although the association was limited to Asian nations, it remained ideologically in line with the ideas of the International of Nations, particularly those Dai outlined in 1925. The focus of the members was on the independence and freedom of member nations. The insistence on a dichotomy between material or hegemonic states and human or benevolent states remained in place.⁶¹ Sun Yat-sen's "Great Asianism" speech and Three Principles remained at the core of the association, with Huang Shaomei quoting from "Great Asianism" quite excessively in his own opening address.

Other than the occasional mention of trips to India reported in the *Shen Bao*, the news on the Asian Cultural Association slowed throughout the 1930s, yet the group continued to exist and promoted the study of Asian culture and the organization of an International of Nations

58. Du, *Ruhe lianhe*, 30.

59. Fung, *Intellectual Foundations of Chinese Modernity*, 31–37.

60. "Wenhua xiehui daibiao dahui" (A grand meeting of the representatives of the Cultural Association), *Shen Bao* (April 6, 1931).

61. Unlike in earlier dichotomies, Huang Shaomei avoided using the word *spiritual*. "Wenhua xiehui daibiao dahui," *Shen Bao* (April 6, 1931).

through its journal, *Asian Culture* (亞洲文化 1932–1937). The journal posted its six stated principles on the cover of every issue:

1. Belief in the Three Principles of the People.
2. Develop Asian culture.
3. Revive the liberation of nationalities.
4. Organize the International of Nations.
5. Overthrow imperialism.
6. Achieve global *datong*.

Even more so than *New Asia*, *Asian Culture* focused on culture and stated in every edition that “China is the mother of the Eastern nations.” But the 1930s was a difficult time for Chinese intellectuals to be insisting on the unity of Asian nations through a coherently related culture. Japan invaded Manchuria after the Mukden Incident in 1931 and withdrew from the League of Nations in February 1933 after the complete collapse of negotiations over Manchukuo. Although Chinese readers continued to show interest in Japanese Asianism and had opportunities to follow Japanese debates on Asianism through occasional translations, most were well aware that the Japanese government was at odds with the more egalitarian of the Asianists.⁶² It was therefore important to show difference from Japan’s aggressive policies.

Differentiating Chiness Asianism from Japanese Monroism

Like most Chinese intellectuals, Dai Jitao had abandoned his pro-Japanese Asianism by 1931. His concerns about militarism had begun with a 1927 visit to Japan and accelerated over the following years.⁶³ Any talk of an Asian union ignored Japan during these years and concentrated on the *ruoxiao* nations. Although Dai Jitao turned more to his interests in education and the study of the northwest after 1930, the momentum for an International of Nations continued to influence intellectuals, and differentiating China from Japan became a paramount issue.

The idea of a Japanese Monroe Doctrine for Asia was a recurring theme in Japanese writing.⁶⁴ This accelerated after 1934 with the Amau Doctrine 天羽声明. Just as the United States had claimed itself the

62. Such as the translations of *Kaizō* debates on the Monroe Doctrine, which were translated into 1931 issues of *Eastern Miscellany*.

63. Lu Yan, *Re-Understanding Japan*, 164.

64. Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War*, 95–97.

protector of the Americas, banning European powers from pursuing their interests there, Japan could have a Monroe Doctrine that defined the country as the protector and leader of Asia. Throughout the 1930s, Japanese leadership discourse, or what Eri Hotta refers to as *meishuron* 盟主論 pan-Asianism, came into dominance.⁶⁵ Chinese intellectuals had regularly refuted these claims to Japanese leadership from the early days of the Republic.

In the post-Sun period of Chinese Asianism, differentiating Asianism from the Monroism that was gaining momentum in Japan was crucial for those Chinese intellectuals who continued to use the term in the 1930s, especially after Manchukuo became nominally independent. This problem with the term *Asianism* was deliberated early on in *New Asia* in an article by researcher Ma Hetian.

Ma was a researcher of the frontiers and a longtime proponent of Asianism, having also been a key member of Beijing's Asian Nations' Alliance 亞細亞民族大同盟 in the 1920s and a representative at the Asia Peoples' Conferences in Nagasaki (1926) and Shanghai (1927) (see chapter 7). He described *New Asia* thus: "The purpose of the publication of *New Asia* is what the President often called 'Great Asianism.' This New Asianism is the real Great Asianism, not the Great Asianism promoted by imperialists or those that admire imperialism." Ma noted that the Chinese statist Zeng Qi 曾琦 (1892–1951) had used the phrase "Great Asianism" to call for a more aggressive China that would make Korea, Annan, Siam, and Burma into Chinese territory 中國屬地. Ma clarified that the Asianism of *New Asia* was one that followed benevolence and morality (仁義道德) and Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles.⁶⁶

Only a month later, Ke Xing'e 克興額 offered an analysis of Great Asianism that echoed Li Dazhao's "New Asianism" of 1919, which saw Asianism as a necessary step toward a world government. He also turned to Sun Yat-sen's speeches to prove that Asianism is not Monroism.

First we must unite together and unanimously oppose Euro-American powerful nations, as well as this continent's imperious nation—Japan. Then the *ruoxiao* nations from other continents will naturally arise and oppose them, and the liberation of all *ruoxiao* nations and the collapse of imperialism that we have been anticipating will be successful. In this way

65. Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War*, 49.

66. Ma, "Guanyu 'Da Yaxiya' yu 'xin Yaxiya,'" 139–40.

the party's support of nationalism for *ruoxiao* nations around the world can accelerate and find success, and we shall be able to stride from this into the successful attainment of cosmopolitanism.⁶⁷

Ke was not only writing this for *New Asia*. A few years later, early in the war, he wrote to the GMD in Chongqing, exhorting China's leaders to end the war and pursue peace, for China and for all of East Asia. Peace does not just mean an end to the war: "We must unite all of the nationalities of East Asia in order to construct the East Asian New Order, with the purpose of uniting against communism."⁶⁸

Despite the surprising similarities with Japanese discourse of the late 1930s and early 1940s, Ma did not cooperate with the Japanese during the war. His condemnation of Japanese aggression was clear from early on. He was also absolute in his attack on Monroeism, listing Japanese scholars who promoted "the propaganda of the Great Asianist East Asian Monroe Doctrine (大亞細亞主義東亞門羅主義)" and its use to cover Japanese dreams of conquest through terms such as *wangdao* and "The Far East is of one mind and one family" 泰東一心一家.⁶⁹

Japanese leadership was a terrifying prospect for the researchers of the New Asia Research Association. Like other periodicals of the time, *New Asia* featured regular discussions of the Monroe Doctrine, lambasting Japanese attempts to control Asia. However, unlike in the articles on Asianism that Chinese intellectuals discussed during and after World War I, New Asia researchers accepted that leadership was necessary, and they did not shy away from saying that it should be China at the center. Japan simply did not have the credentials to lead. In his speech to the association, Zhang Ji 張繼 stated: "Recently, the Japanese have been loudly promoting their Asianism." However, "I personally believe that only China can lead Asia." Zhang believed that China, India, and the Arab world had the cultural history necessary for leadership, but only China had maintained its freedom.⁷⁰

67. Ke, "Minzuzhui yu da Yazhouzhui," 56.

68. Ke, "Kangzhan jiuguo yu heping jiuguo," 16.

69. This argument stemmed from Ke's opposition to a 1932 translation of an anonymous Japanese pamphlet intended for Chinese readership. The pamphlet was titled *Taitō isshin ikka no taigi o shōmei ni shite Chūgoku yōjin kakui no takkan ni kyōsu* (A declaration that the Far East is of one mind and one family for all the elite of the Republic of China), (1932) (no other information available).

70. Zhang Ji, "Xin Yaxiya xuehui zhi shiming," 1.

Chen Liefu 陳烈甫, a Chinese Pilipino scholar of Chinese Islamic studies who had been able to study in the United States due to his Pilipino citizenship, wrote a detailed article on the Monroe Doctrine for *New Asia*. Perhaps his education at the University of Illinois had contributed to his more positive stance on the concept. His opposition to Japanese leadership was unapologetic, but he concluded his article: “Only when Japanese imperialism has been overthrown can there be a true Asian Monroe Doctrine. This great mission and sacred duty is upon the shoulders of the Chinese nation.”⁷¹

Conclusion

The propaganda concerning the Chinese leadership of the *ruoxiao* nations and the International of Nations was largely designed to counter the aspirations of the Comintern and the Japanese empire. Chinese intellectuals involved in this project believed in China’s inevitable return to dominance. They had hope that this rise would be benevolent, often basing this hope in their acceptance of a dichotomy that posited China as Confucian and moral at essence, a dichotomy that was all too logical given the aggression of Western imperialism. They whole-heartedly leaped into the global zeitgeist of international regionalism, which convinced people around the world that internationalism was both inevitable and progressive.

With the interwar rise of the League of Nations and the Third International, there was evidence all around that international unity was the future. With talk of pan-Arabism, pan-Africanism, pan-Slavism, and pan-Germanism, regionalism was a powerful global trend. This led to an opportunity for the imagining of a China-led international community, the International of Nations, an ersatz form of the Third International. The International of Nations was an ephemeral dream for Chinese nationalists, but the larger dream of Chinese leadership of the *ruoxiao* nations did not fade, it was merely renamed. Throughout the twentieth century, this discourse took various forms, none more often than the theory of the third world. Although assertions of leading the third world faded in the 1980s, the country’s inclusion in this category has been internalized despite China’s rise to the second largest economy in the world.⁷²

71. Chen Liefu, “Yazhou Menluozhuyi,” 32.

72. Teng Wei, “Third World.”

Returning to the 1930s, any hopes of China leading an international union were crushed as the country collapsed under the onslaught of war with Japan's invasion following the July 7, 1937, Marco Polo Bridge Incident. Within six months, Japan had occupied most of east China. Although the International of Nations and 1930s' discussions of Sino-principalic Asianism were usually intended to oppose Japanese expansionism, the discourse was not unlike Japanese propaganda and fed into wartime promotion of the New Order in East Asia and the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The Asianist propaganda found in publications during the Japanese occupation of China and espoused by Wang Jingwei and Lin Baisheng was identical to that found in the above texts, except for one defining difference: the acceptance of Japanese leadership.

CHAPTER NINE

Mutual Glory

Wartime Propaganda and Peace with Japan

From 1932 to 1937, the Japanese expanded their military control over northeast China. In leaps and bounds, the army moved from Manchukuo toward Beijing. After the Marco Polo Bridge Incident on July 7, 1937, this advance accelerated with Japanese troops quickly taking control of major Chinese cities from Beijing to Nanjing by the end of the year. The horrendous suffering of the Chinese people in the last six months of 1937 was just the beginning of more than a decade of war.

For the entire publishing industry, 1937 was a turning point. Many major periodicals and newspapers stopped publication, and many others moved inland to Wuhan and Chongqing. However, over the next few years, hundreds of new periodicals and newspapers were published as opposing sides created a propaganda war to match the military war that was already under way. During this time, the propaganda apparatus behind Mao Zedong, Chiang Kai-shek, and Wang Jingwei developed the cult of personalities that were instrumental to these leaders' legitimacy and defined the competing governments through contradistinction.¹ As each campaign self-defined as the opposite of their other, only the Wang Jingwei government defined itself as Asianist; the other two aligned with the United States and the Soviet Union.

The final chapter of this book concentrates on official propaganda of a "puppet regime": Asianism advocated by Chinese "collaborators" during the Japanese occupation was necessarily a pro-Japanese Asianism, one that accepted Japanese leadership of Asia. Therefore, this chapter relates a narrative of how propagandists used Asianism to legitimate occupation by

1. Taylor, "Republican Personality Cults."

a foreign power. Decades of discourse on shared civilization, race, culture, Confucian beliefs, and especially a shared victimhood were employed with new political purpose. Hence, this chapter details how anti-imperialist discourse can be appropriated and subverted to imperialist ends in the hands of able propagandists. I argue that the advocacy of Asianism during the war must be considered along with the preceding decades, rather than in relation to the outcome of the war. Not unlike Asianists earlier in the century, the Wang government's propagandists, including Zhou Huaren 周化人 (1903–1976), Yang Honglie 楊鴻烈 (1903–1977), and Hu Lancheng 胡蘭成 (1906–1981), produced media and initiated movements designed to promote feelings of Asian solidarity directed against the imperialist West. This chapter provides a fitting end to this volume because this wartime pro-Japanese Asianism spelled an end for the concept in many ways.

The fervent rejection of the Wang Jingwei regime and the Asianism it espoused produced an effect largely in contrast with that found in previous chapters. During and after the war, those who cooperated or collaborated with Japan were no longer seen as pro-Japanese but as *hanjian*, traitors. The elite thoroughly rejected Asianism just as nationalism spread to the masses. The Chinese people especially rejected the pro-Japanese wartime Asianism described here, influencing postwar nationalism and dominant ideologies. Although internationalist elements of both GMD and CCP ideology remained and appeared in the following decades, a turn away from Asia and toward the empires of the United States and the Soviet Union dominated rhetoric after the war. Interestingly, this trend was similar to the fears expressed in wartime Asianism. The Wang government warned of white and red imperialism's invasion of China, largely employing Sun Yat-sen's thought in propaganda and programs such as the New Citizens' Movement. This chapter examines the content of this rejected discourse, content that has often been ignored by previous historians.

Historians Climb a Mountain of Sources

Despite a wealth of sources available on the propaganda from this period, little research has been carried out in English. In China, recent restrictions on the publishing of such a sensitive topic and the continued self-censoring by academics have not stopped research but stymied its

progress. In the 1980s, the work of Cai Dejin 蔡德金 provided the earliest research on the Wang regime and related topics.² Li Zhiyu's 李志毓 more recent work, *Jing Xian* 驚弦, although banned in mainland China, has been published in Hong Kong and has breathed new life into the study of Wang Jingwei in Chinese, providing a biography of his early revolutionary years that expands research in a way that very few have pursued in any language.³ New sources and collections have recently boosted research possibilities, as relatives of wartime collaborators have stepped forward to write and compile resources such as the wangjingwei.org website and the six-volume collection *Wang Jingwei and Modern China* 汪精衛與現代中國系列叢書.⁴ In Japanese, Shibata Tetsuo has led the way on research concerning the Wang regime, and, as shown below, his research has made important connections between events and writings in China and Japan during this period.

In English, much of the recent writing on this period has concentrated on the question of collaboration. In 2012, John Whittier Treat, Timothy Brook, and Michael D. Shin engaged in a discussion on such a topic in the *Journal of Asian Studies*.⁵ These scholars provided differing moral perspectives on collaboration, with Treat arguing that historians can and do judge collaboration, and Brook arguing that historians should remember that moral questions inevitably change with time. This provides a parallel with our judgment on and our recording of Chinese invocations of Asianism. These decisions need to be contextualized, but we should also approach the sources with patience—a virtue that has been lacking until recently.

Most histories of the wartime occupation remain limited to political and military histories, including those that examine the actions of the Reorganized National Government elite and their subsequent trials, with almost all studies ignoring or dismissing any discussion of Asianism

2. Cai also collected and published documents related to this research, greatly influencing later research in China and around the world. Cai Dejin, *Wang Jingwei ping zhuan*.

3. Li Zhiyu, *Jing xian*.

4. This new collection was edited by Wang's granddaughter: Ho, *Wang Jingwei yu xiandai Zhongguo*.

5. Shibata, *Kyōryoku teikō chinmoku*.

6. See the February 2012 issue of *The Journal of Asian Studies* for a discussion between John Whittier Treat, Timothy Brook, and Michael D. Shin: Treat, "Choosing to Collaborate"; Brook, "Hesitating before the Judgment of History."

or pro-Japanese writings. Rana Mitter points out that scholars no longer see Japanese imperialism and the Manchurian occupation through a “conspiracy theory” analysis; rather, the expansion is explained “by a combination of power-group conflicts and logrolling by power cartels.”⁷ This approach still strips the pro-Japanese factions of agency and ignores their writings. Western scholars’ perspective on the peace movement’s propaganda is perhaps best displayed in Gerald Bunker’s 1972 volume *The Peace Conspiracy: Wang Ching-wei and the China War, 1937–1941*: “The publications in occupied China itself, of which an unclassified mountain remains, seem after some examination to be nothing more than the most mindless and trivial sort of propaganda with little historical value.”⁸

Although I acknowledge intellectual shortcomings and the repetitive nature of the propaganda, I disagree with Bunker’s belittling of the texts’ historical value. I argue that they pose a different set of problems for historians—particularly difficult problems—that can be examined through a study that considers the conceptual history over decades of use. Writings on Asianism accelerated rapidly in the 1920s and 1930s, but Chinese intellectuals wrote more on Asianism under the Wang Jingwei regime than in the rest of the twentieth century combined. The intellectual value of these texts may be questionable, and the difficulties they present are certainly considerable, but they do have historical value when considered in the contexts that this book provides.

Legitimacy and Collaboration: Establishing the Reorganized Government

In 2001 David P. Barrett adapted a theory used to understand the Vichy regime from wartime France; this included a differentiation between collaboration, indicating a form of cooperation with the occupiers from Nazi Germany, and collaborationism, indicating ideological identification with the Nazis.⁹ Even with its wartime propaganda, the peace movement and the Reorganized National Government never entered into ideological identification with the Japanese. Supporting the emperor and Japanese superiority simply could not happen. However, they repeatedly

7. Mitter, *The Manchurian Myth*, 15.

8. Bunker, *The Peace Conspiracy*, 272.

9. Barrett, “Introduction,” 8.

caved to Japanese demands and in some respects handed sovereignty to the invading power. Boyle, Bunker, and many others have discussed the moral implications of these actions and the collaborators' defensive arguments that they did so in the name of peace and in the best interests of China. I do not enter into these arguments of morality but instead focus on the words of the collaborationist government, examining how they justified these actions to themselves and to others.

Barrett argued, "Wang Jingwei had strenuously reinterpreted Sun Yat-sen's principle of nationalism so that Chinese nationalism now was to be realized within a greater regional nationalism, that of East Asia."¹⁰ This was not actually a strenuous reinterpretation. It was not a reinterpretation at all, at least not a new one. As shown in the previous two chapters, Sun's nationalism had been interpreted in this way since he finished his speeches on nationalism in 1924. It was interpreted in this way by his closest intellectual associates and protégés, Dai Jitao, Hu Hanmin, and Wang Jingwei. Barrett said: "Pan-Asianism aside, Wang's political, social, and ideological programs were in no way distinct from those of the government he claimed to have superseded. In this respect Wang's regime was quite different from its European counterparts."¹¹ Although I agree with Barrett that the continuities between Guomindang governments were markedly different from the respective power transfers found in collaborationist governments in Europe, I emphasize that the regime's Asianism was also little different from that earlier espoused by the Nanjing-decade Guomindang and other Chinese elites. Entirely different, however, was the historical context from which Wang and his government made these calls for Asianism, and therein lies the distortion.

Continuities extending across the 1937 outbreak of war include Wang's leadership and position in the government. Until December 1938, Wang collaborated with Chiang Kai-shek in leading the Guomindang. The Second National Congress, held in January 1926, confirmed Wang's leadership. However, Chiang remained in control of the military and soon wrested control over the government, leading to a decade of struggle between the two leaders. As the situation with Japan deteriorated in 1937, Wang became the leader of the Peace Faction, actively working

10. Barrett, "Introduction," 9.

11. Barrett, "Introduction," 103.

toward a peaceful settlement with the Japanese, much to the frustration of many in the government.¹² Chiang, however, recognized the need for Wang's continued communication with Japanese Prime Minister Fumimaro Konoe (1891–1945). The Konoe government announced its refusal to work with Chiang, who had begun collaborating with the Communist Party, in the first Konoe declaration. Wang realized that the situation was hopeless, and like the Japanese, he was angry with Chiang's cooperation with the CCP. In December 1938, he finally gave up on the Chongqing government and fled to Hanoi.

Wang had counted on Konoe's ability to control the Japanese military, believing that by distancing himself from Chiang, the Japanese government would offer a withdrawal. The withdrawal never came, and Konoe resigned on January 4, 1939, unable to influence the military.¹³ In April, Wang and his associates decided to fully cooperate with the Japanese and create the Nanjing Peace Government as a restored Guomin-dang. What historians refer to as the Reorganized National Government was formally established on March 30, 1940.¹⁴ Wang was by no means the first to establish a collaborationist government. Wang Kemin 王克敏 (1879–1945) established his Beijing-based Provisional Government 中華民國臨時政府 in late 1937, at the same time that Su Xiwen 蘇錫文 (1889–1945) established the disorganized and unstable Great Way Government of Shanghai 上海市大道政府.¹⁵ Liang Hongzhi 梁弘治 (1882–1946) then established the much larger and more organized Reformed Government of the Republic of China 中華民國維新政府 in Nanjing on March 28, 1938. However, Wang Jingwei was a long-serving leader with revolutionary legitimacy. His government amalgamated these three, offering the Japanese a centralized Chinese puppet regime, and offering many Chinese the opportunity to work with an authentic Chinese government in the occupied areas.

There were many reasons to work with Wang's government, and many of those branded as *hanjian* believed they were doing their best for China. The propagandists examined in this chapter were intellectuals. Although they were not the intellectual stars of the interwar period, some of the

12. Mitter, *China's War with Japan*, 38, 39, 60.

13. Bunker, *The Peace Conspiracy*, 107, 113, 116, 121–22.

14. Bunker, *The Peace Conspiracy*, 143.

15. Brook, "The Great Way Government of Shanghai," 161–163.

intellectuals of the Restored Government, such as Hu Lancheng and Yang Honglie, had respectable published works and had made a name for themselves. Charles Na Li's explanation of his father, Li Shengwu's 李聖五 (1899–1985), collaboration offers one reason these intellectuals might have supported Wang against Chiang: "In [my father's] opinion the Nationalist Party would be doomed under the leadership of a soldier like Chiang Kai-shek who was, in his words, 'at best, inane and insipid, and at worst, corrupt and pernicious.' He wanted a highly educated leader who spoke and wrote eloquently. Wang Jing-wei, a man of letters, a charismatic orator, and a hero of the democratic revolution against the Manchu dynasty, fit Father's ideal."¹⁶

Like Li Shengwu, historians Li Zhiyu, Gerald Bunker, and John Boyle highlight Wang's failed attempt to assassinate Zaifeng 載灃 (1883–1951), the regent of the Xuantong emperor, or Puyi.¹⁷ They find that the incident was an immensely formative event as it led to Wang's instant fame, and Bunker argues that Wang was forever seeking his own apotheosis from this moment: "Wang sought for the rest of his life another like opportunity for sacrifice and glory."¹⁸ The glory offered by the Reorganized National Government must have been a disappointment. Few governments recognized this regime, despite efforts by Wang and his Japanese backers to prove its legitimacy through Sun Yat-sen. When Wang announced his intentions to establish a Reorganized Guomindang with the Three Principles as its central ideology in 1939, both Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang and the CCP published angry responses.

Wang Jiaxiang 王稼祥 (1906–1974), director of the CCP Political Department 總政治部, responded with a denunciation of Wang Jing-wei and a reaffirmation of the party's support for the Three Principles and the United Front: "Wang Jingwei and the Wang clique emerged; they betrayed Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People and promptly surrendered to the Japanese imperialists; they even attempted to appropriate the Three Principles of the People as the basis for their surrender. Of course, this is a defamation of Sun Yat-sen and his revolutionary Three Principles of the People."¹⁹

16. Li Shengwu held various posts in the Wang Jingwei government, including minister of Education and ambassador to Nazi Germany. Charles Li, *The Bitter Sea*, 150.

17. Boyle, *China and Japan at War*, 18. Li Zhiyu, *Jing xian*, 5 and most of chapter 1.

18. Bunker, *The Peace Conspiracy*, 6–7.

19. Wang Jiaxiang, "On the Three Principles," 902.

Wang Jiaxiang noted the different understandings of Sun's principles that had emerged in recent years, differentiating them as revisionary principles of the bourgeoisie and the false principles of the Wang clique, in contrast with Sun's "revolutionary" principles. Although all three wartime Chinese governments espoused the Three Principles, their propaganda machines used them more as a badge of legitimacy than as an ideology of governance. Control of discourse over the Three Principles indicated the Mandate of Heaven.

Wang Jingwei had certainly always emphasized Sun's Three Principles in his writings. Before and after the peace movement's inception, he maintained his call for freedom and equality. However, I find no evidence of his mention of Asianism before the peace movement. Immediately following Sun's death, Wang understood Sun's nationalism to be foremost an avowal of the concept of equality between nations.²⁰ Although he did see the unequal treaties and foreign concessions as evidence of the continued inequalities, he made no mention of nationalism's applicability to Asianism or cooperation with Japan but was critical of Japan for bullying China.

After the establishment of the Reorganized National Government in Nanjing, the word *Asianism* was a regular feature in his speeches and writings. He often used the term to praise Sino-Japanese cooperation in cringingly poor evaluations of the relationship. In 1942 he stated, "Since Konoe's declaration to establish the East Asian New Order, and since the beginning of the peace movement, the Great Asianism we have avowed to and complied with has already passed from its time of theorizing to its time of practice."²¹ Like many expressions of Asianism under the occupation, this was a standardized discourse. Lin Baisheng 林柏生 (1902–1946) later said: "Today, as we actively launch into the Greater East Asia War, Asianism is proclaimed. It has already passed from theory into practice."²² Rhetorical expressions like these were common. However, there was some substance to the Asianism of wartime China.

20. Wang Jingwei, "Minzuzhuyi."

21. Wang Jingwei, "Da Dongya jiefangzhan," 5.

22. Lin Baisheng is sometimes romanized as Lin Bosheng, although English-language materials from wartime China used the former. Lin Baisheng, "Fakanci."

The Wang Regime's Use of Asianism and the Kingly Way

At the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, many in the Guomindang were supporters of Sun Yat-sen's Asianism. With Sun's political sanctification, his words held more power after his death than before it. Supporters like Dai Jitao, who served as Sun's translator throughout much of his time in Japan, continued to keep his ideas alive. Lu Yan has shown the importance of this discourse to Dai Jitao, how it became crucial to the Guomindang after Sun Yat-sen's death and the role it played in defining his fierce anticommunism.²³ Hu Hanmin also remarked that Sun Yat-sen's Asianism was based on the "Kingly Way" of the East and opposed to the hegemony of the West.²⁴ However, in his eyes Japan represented the hegemony of the West. Therefore, Hu would say: "I am an Asianist, but also an advocate of resisting Japan."²⁵ The door was open for Japan and its collaborators to use Sun Yat-sen's writing on Asianism to justify the occupation of China or at least cooperation with the Japanese.

It was important for Wang Jingwei to show himself as following in the footsteps of Sun Yat-sen. His propagandists even referred to him as a "second Sun Yat-sen."²⁶ He regularly turned to Sun's Asianism and related it to the Three Principles of the People, an ideology that had not lost popularity across China: "For China, the Three Principles of the People is an ideology to save the country. For East Asia, the Three Principles of the People is Great Asianism."²⁷ These words were echoed by his minister of Propaganda, Lin Baisheng, who unabashedly connected Sun's philosophy to Japan's Great East Asian New Order 東亜新秩序 and encouraged Chinese citizens to accept Japanese rule as a phase in the Asian revolution: "The basic theory of the Chinese revolution is the Three Principles of the People, and the canon that leads the Asian revolution is Great Asianism." Japan's "New Order" was a phase in the revolution, "so the Chinese people should not fear Japan's establishment of the Great East Asian New Order as masked imperialism."²⁸

23. Lu Yan, *Re-Understanding Japan*, 151.

24. Hu Hanmin, "Da Yaxiyazhuyi yu kangRi," 539.

25. Hu Hanmin, "Da Yaxiyazhuyi yu kangRi," 541.

26. Taylor, "Republican Personality Cults," 683.

27. Wang Jingwei, "Sanminzhuyi zhi lilun yu shiji," 211.

28. Lin, "Preface," 1, 3.

Among the collaborators, Zhou Huaren was the most outspoken of proponents of Asianism. His book *An Outline of Asianism* expanded on the concepts of Sun's Asianism. Like the articles by those who resisted the Japanese, such as Hu Hanmin, the collaborationist discussion of Sun's Asianism also focused on Sun's use of the Kingly Way. Zhou Huaren argued that Asia's problems and the East's decline were largely "due to the abandonment of Asia's intrinsic Kingly Way culture."²⁹ As Sun had tied the Kingly Way to an essentialized Asian culture in opposition to an essentialized West, the task of the Wang propagandists was to show that the primary conflict was, as Japanese wartime discourse asserted, a racial conflict between Asia and the West. The war had to be understood as the race war that Asianists had been warning against since the nineteenth century.

As shown in chapter 3, race was always an issue for Asianists, and it unsurprisingly remained an important issue throughout the war. Wang was one of the early revolutionaries to discuss race and race war in the late Qing dynasty.³⁰ He had been a founding member of Guangzhou's League of Oriental Nations in 1925.³¹ Wang turned the argument toward race war more frequently than other propagandists of Asianism during the war with assertions such as: "If we are so unfortunate as to lose this war to the British and Americans, all the nations of East Asia will be treated as slaves, just as the people of India, the black people of Africa, the red people of the Americas, and the brown people of Australia."³²

Not unlike intellectuals in the previous two chapters, Zhou Huaren connected race and essentialized understandings of East and West to benevolent and hegemonic forms of rule, respectively: "The ideology of the Kingly Way is at the heart of Great Asianism."³³ The "way of the

29. Zhou Huaren, *Da Yazhouzhuyi gangyao*, 4.

30. See the discussion of race in chapter 3. Wang wrote about race theory as early as 1905, but he used this theory to differentiate the Han Chinese from the Manchu rulers. Wang Jingwei, "Minzu de guomin," 1. He continued to emphasize the importance of race and nation from a social Darwinist perspective throughout the 1910s: Li Zhiyu, *Jing xian*, 33.

31. An Asianist organization that united East Asians for a future race war. See the last chapter of Mizuno, "Tōhō hi appaku minzoku rengōkai."

32. Wang, "Da Dongya jiefang zhan," 5.

33. Zhou Huaren, *Da Yazhouzhuyi gangyao*, 8.

hegemon” 霸道 was at the heart of European thought.³⁴ Those in the resistance who continued to support Sun’s Asianism had a very different idea of what the Kingly Way was, but Japanese propagandists had turned Sun’s use of the dichotomy to criticize Japan in 1924 to support for Japanese militarism. A Japanese general who opposed the war with China began this process.

Ishiwara Kanji 石原莞爾 (1889–1949), one of the strategists who organized the establishment of Manchukuo, opposed any expansion of the war. He and Miyazaki Masayoshi argued that the Kingly Way must be at the heart of the East Asian League (Tōa Renmei Undō 東亞連盟運動) in the late 1930s. Miyazaki’s 1938 book *On the East Asian League* 東亞連盟論 warned Japan of the dangers of repeating Western imperialism, instead insisting on the importance of political independence for all nations in East Asia. When Ishiwara drafted the manifesto of the league, he highlighted both political independence and the Kingly Way as crucial concepts for East Asian peace and unity. Although Tōjō Hideki opposed the league after becoming prime minister in October 1941, the concepts continued to be an important part of Japanese propaganda in China and Manchukuo.³⁵

The dialogue between the more egalitarian Asianists, such as Ishiwara, and the imperialist expansionists, such as Tōjō, facilitated the Japanese government’s appropriation of the concepts of the Kingly Way and Asianism. Of course, it was not difficult for government propagandists to use Sun’s words for the Japanese cause. In the foreword to a 1941 English-language collection of Sun Yat-sen’s writing published in Japanese-occupied Shanghai, Wang Jingwei declared that “it was [Sun’s] constantly proclaimed hope that [China and Japan] would become friends, wholeheartedly in a united effort to promote the glorious cause of Pan-Asianism.”³⁶ This was not false. The book is a translation of Sun’s writings and speeches concerning Japan. The translations are faithful and even include sections where Sun is openly critical of the empire. Only the historical context is markedly different. What Sun said in 1913, 1917, and 1924, he may not have repeated in 1941. This clearly presented problems for many in the Guomindang, some of whom may have honestly

34. Zhou Huaren, *Da Yazhouzhuyi gangyao*, 110.

35. Shibata, *Kyōryoku teikō chinmoku*, 18. Also see Schneider, “Miyazaki Masayoshi.”

36. Wang Jingwei, foreword, ix.

believed that they were following the lead of the “father of the nation.” It was all too easy to meld it to the cause of the East Asian League in a propaganda exercise that was carried out through the New Citizens’ Movement 新國民運動.

The New Citizens’ Movement and the East Asian League

Historians of Chinese history see the New Citizens’ Movement as an extension of the New Life Movement, while historians of Japanese history see the movement as the Chinese extension of the East Asian League.³⁷ Both are correct. Ishiara Kanji designed the East Asian League to integrate the five nations of Manchukuo—Han Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian, Japanese, and Korean—under a system of governance based on the Kingly Way. His followers often used the phrase “coexistence and mutual glory” 共存共榮 to indicate the unity of these nations. The phrase, which serves as a title for this chapter, was often repeated by Chinese Asianists and was a slogan in propaganda for the New Citizens’ Movement. As shown in figure 9.1, postwar satirists used the slogan in their attacks on the Wang government.

At the beginning of 1942, the Wang administration began this nationwide movement to train the people in the correct spiritual (*jingsheng*) and ideological manner. The New Citizens’ Movement, the government argued, would inevitably lead to material benefit for the people of China and East Asia. This was a more urban equivalent of the Rural Pacification Movement 清鄉運動, which the Wang government had begun in 1941 to root out communists. Wang Jingwei indicated the need for such an urban program at the fourth plenary session of his government in November 1941. Chiang Kai-shek’s New Life Movement, Wang explained, “overly concentrated upon the spiritual,” whereas the Citizens’ Economic Restoration Movement 國民經濟建設運動 of 1927–1937 “overly concentrated upon the material.” The Wang regime expected the New Citizens’ Movement to combine the best of these.³⁸

In 1942, Wang and his followers repeatedly mentioned the importance of a synthesis of the spiritual and the material.³⁹ This synthesis had been a recurring subject since the nineteenth century. It was a component

37. Shibata, *Kyōryoku teikō chinmoku*, 13.

38. Ling, “Wang Jingweizhuyi yu xin guomin yundong,” 382.

39. Wang Jingwei, “Tashang baowei Dongya de zhanxian,” 7.

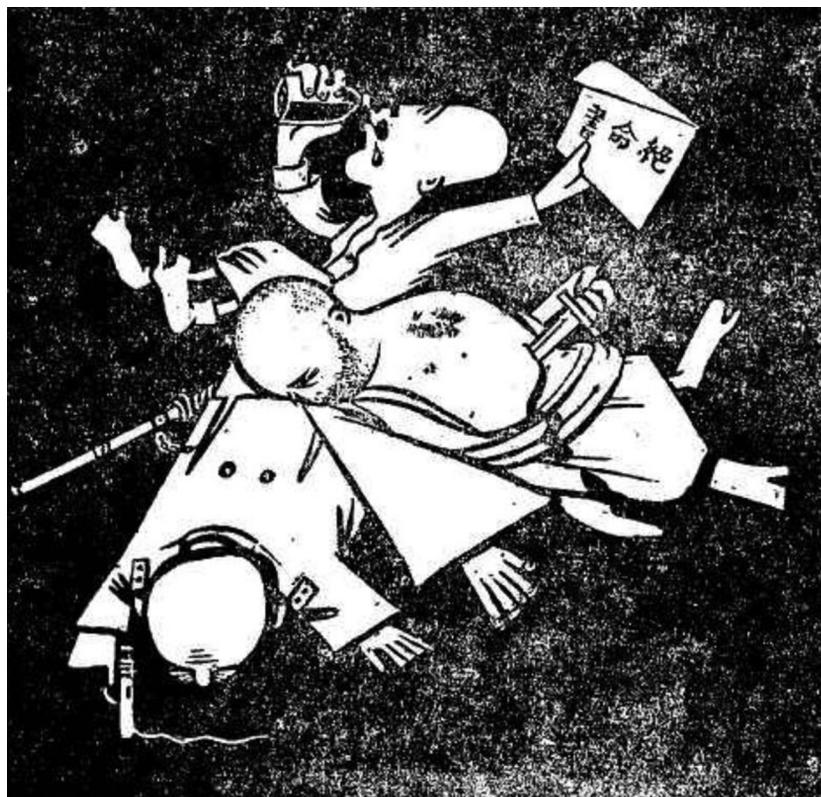


Figure 9.1. “The vow of Asianism: live together and die together.” “Da Yazhouzhu yi de nuoyan: tongcun gongwang” 大亞洲主義的諾言：同存共亡. *Xinsheng Zhongguo* 6 (1946): unpaginated comics page.

of modern Asianist thought that flowed neatly alongside a key concept in traditional Chinese thought—the synthesis of opposites. “Material” often implied the West, while “spiritual” implied the East, or China. Synthesizing them to create a civilization superior to both East and West was a project that enticed generations of Chinese intellectuals.⁴⁰

The government officially inaugurated the New Citizens’ Movement on January 1, 1942, with the publication of Wang’s “Outline of the New Citizens’ Movement,” in which he outlined the various political, spiritual,

40. See chapter 4 for a longer discussion of this concept. Wang had been repeating the discourse on material versus spiritual civilization since at least the 1910s. See Li Zhiyu, *Jing xian*, 39.

and material means by which China could achieve the Three Principles of the People. In this article, Wang wrote the famous line “Why are we unable to achieve [Sun Yat-sen’s ideal of] nationalism? Because we have forgotten Great Asianism.”⁴¹ This line, the first of Wang’s eight points on the New Citizens’ Movement, frequently appeared in articles on Asianism in the years that followed.⁴² It was a symbolic line for his propagandists, but it was also a telling line about the administration’s use of Sun Yat-sen’s Three Principles in connection with Great Asianism in the context of 1942.

In his six speeches on nationalism, Sun Yat-sen repeatedly urged his readers to avoid a close-minded or simplistic nationalism and to support other countries. However, his sixth speech, the one that focused on the international ramifications of nationalism, clearly and repeatedly maintained that the extension of nationalism beyond China should be to support and defend “oppressed nations” 被壓迫民族, or what Sun sometimes referred to as *ruoxiao minzu* 弱小民族, the weak and small nations. Although Sun often wrote about cooperation with Japan, he did not consider Japan a small or weak nation.⁴³

Barrett has pointed out the remarkable similarities between the New Citizens’ Movement of 1942 and the New Life Movement of the Chiang Kai-shek administration in 1934.⁴⁴ The movements were certainly similar, and the one was modeled on the other with the hope of making use of the administration’s experience. However, the introduction of Asianism was a substantially different direction for its ideology. In Wang’s first point on the movement, he explained: “From today onwards, we must galvanize our love for China with our love for East Asia. The countries of East Asia must unite in mutual love and protect all of East Asia. This is the central feature of Nationalism.”⁴⁵

The movement was propagated through publications and study groups, but also through a widespread education campaign largely targeting China’s youth. The Ministry of Education in occupied Shanghai

41. Wang, “Xin Guomin yundong gangyao,” 371–73.

42. For a complete translation of this outline, see Smith, “The New Citizens Movement.”

43. See chapter 6 on Sun Yat-sen’s Asianism. See chapter 8 on the *ruoxiao minzu*. Sun Yat-sen, *Sun Zhongshan wencui*, 732–33.

44. Barrett, “The Wang Jingwei Regime,” 106.

45. Wang Jingwei, “Xin guomin yundong gangyao,” 371.

hai quickly requested that the Three Principles and Asianism be included in textbooks for primary and middle schools during this time.⁴⁶

During the New Citizens' Movement, the propagandists thoroughly developed Wang's cult of personality. They distributed pins bearing Wang's image and encouraged those living under the Reorganized National Government to wear them on their lapels.⁴⁷ This was also when the propagandists developed Wang Jingwei-ism, a combination of Sun's Three Principles with Asianism, pacifism, and realism.⁴⁸ In an intriguing turn of events, an undercover CCP agent helped develop Wang Jingwei-ism for the propaganda department in Nanjing. Yuan Shu 袁殊 (1911–1987) published "Wang Jingwei-ism" in *New China* 新中國報 on December 21, 1941. As was standard practice for the propagandists, they published his article in various periodicals and newspapers under government control in 1942.⁴⁹

The main thrust of Wang Jingwei-ism was encapsulated in four points: the correct understanding of the Three Principles, as opposed to the heterodox pro-imperialist and revolutionary understandings espoused by the Chongqing Guomindang and the CCP, respectively; Sun Yat-sen's Great Asianism and "Sino-Japanese cooperation as the core component to solve East Asian issues"; peaceful resolution of enmity; and action over words.⁵⁰ Wang's cult of personality overlapped with propaganda on Asianism and the New Citizens' Movement seamlessly. The New Citizens' Movement neatly coincided with the East Asian League.

As Shibata Tetsuo has shown, the timing of the movement and phrasing of the main components were connected to Japan's push for an East Asian League. The East Asian League was the most successful attempt to bring ideals of political Asianism into practice for the East Asian

46. Shanghai Municipal Archives (R48-1-1455-33 and R48-1-1446-40).

47. Taylor, "Republican Personality Cults," 688.

48. Taylor notes that this was one year before the first appearance of the concept of Maoism (*Mao Zedong sixiang*). "Republican Personality Cults," 688. Also, although Taylor uses the word *realism*, I feel that Wang was implying "practice," as opposed to the empty words of the Chongqing government.

49. Yuan, "Wang Jingwei-zhuyi." Also in *Dongya lianmeng (Nanjing)* 2.1 (1942) and *Jiangsu jiaoyu (Suzhou)* 3.4 (1942). On Yuan Shu as the originator of Wang Jingwei-ism, see Ling, "Wang Jingwei-zhuyi yu xin guomin yundong," 382.

50. Taken from the *Zhengzhi yuekan* version. Note that Yuan also explained that an "ism" (*zhuyi*) could be defined as a common thought (*sixiang*), belief (*xinyang*), and power (*liliang*).

region. It was not the first such attempt—Chinese and Japanese efforts to create a similar league are discussed in the preceding two chapters—but it was more successful than any previous efforts. Chinese propagandists described the East Asian League as an alternative to the League of Nations and the Third International that would “resist the onslaught of red and white imperialism,” almost the same terms used by Guomindang officials to describe the International of Nations approximately ten years earlier.⁵¹

Building on an existing discourse and new political reality, the Wang regime’s propaganda department portrayed his Asianism as the true evolution of Sun Yat-sen’s thought. This was not done lightly, but was a carefully articulated ideology that came from the planning of professional propagandists as early as 1938.⁵² However, it was Wang himself who demanded that Sun’s principles be the guiding ideology for any peace government and that he retain the flag of the Guomindang as his government’s flag.⁵³ Wang was one of Sun’s oldest and truest disciples and maintaining the facade of the Guomindang was a logical and effective plan, even though those in power all knew that Wang’s rule was not a matter of legitimacy but of military control. Publicly broadcasting ideological legitimacy was crucial for success in the long run, and the Reorganized National Government was looking to the future. Therefore, the Propaganda Bureau was one of the government’s most important offices after establishment in 1940.

The Propaganda Bureau and Its Publications

Very little propaganda work was carried out before the establishment of the Reorganized National Government in March 1940. Even after the regime and its Propaganda Bureau were established, publishing pro-Japanese propaganda was a risky business with very limited returns.⁵⁴

51. “Zhonghua Dongya lianmeng xiehui chengli xuanyan,” *Da Yazhouzbuyi* 1.3, 158–63 (1940), 161. On the International of Nations, see chapter 8, particularly on articles by Hu Hanmin and Yin Weilian in the inaugural issue of *Xin Yaxiya* (Oct 1, 1930).

52. The idea of uniting the concept of “Greater East Asia” with the Three Principles was raised by Japanese and Chinese in Shanghai in 1938. Bunker, *The Peace Conspiracy*, 76.

53. In a meeting with Colonel Imai Takeo on May 7, 1939. Quoted in Bunker, *The Peace Conspiracy*, 149.

54. Fu, *Passivity, Resistance and Collaboration*, 114–15.

However, as the government expanded, publications became common. The Asianism of the occupation government was most frequently expressed through journals edited and published by the Propaganda Bureau under Lin Baisheng. Lin was an established newspaper editor and longtime secretary of Wang Jingwei. He played a crucial role in the regime through his extensive network and experience. After Wang's December 1938 departure from Chongqing, Lin began a hagiography of Wang, stressing that he was a constitutional leader in opposition to the dictator Chiang Kai-shek.⁵⁵ Lin created and propagated this image through his network of newspapers, such as *Central China Daily News* 中華日報 and the *South China Daily News* 南華日報, as well as periodicals, such as *New Orient* 新東方 (1940–1944), *Great Asianism* 大亞洲主義 (1940–1942), the *East Asian League Monthly* 東亞聯盟月刊 (1941–1942), and *Great Asianism and the East Asian League* 大亞洲主義與東亞聯盟 (1942–1943).

Established in late 1940, the group Chinese Comrades of the East Asian League 東亞聯盟中國同志會 was ostensibly responsible for the unity of thought in China, but it was really a propaganda unit responsible for broadcasting pro-Japanese understandings of Asianism and the four principles of the East Asian League. Executive members included Li Shiqun, Zhou Huaren, and Hu Lancheng.⁵⁶ Confusing matters, established on February 1, 1941, the Chinese Assembly of the East Asian League 東亞聯盟中國總會 was a political unit chaired by Wang Jingwei and also managed by top leaders Zhou Fohai and Chen Gongbo.⁵⁷ The Chinese Comrades association worked in concert with the existing Propaganda Bureau to produce periodicals. They first produced the *East Asian League Monthly* in 1941, to match the bureau's *Great Asianism*, before the two periodicals were integrated into *Great Asianism and the East Asian League* in 1942.

Great Asianism, the first of the journals to develop the concept of Asianism, lasted from August 1940 to February 1942. Lin Baisheng regularly wrote for this journal, but Zhou Huaren dominated the pages with

55. Taylor, "Republican Personality Cults," 674, 676.

56. Initial members of the organization are listed in "Dongya lianmeng Zhongguo tongzhihui chengli xuanyan" (Announcement of the establishment of the Chinese Comrades of the East Asian League), in *Minxian xunkan* 10/11 (1940): 31.

57. Shibata, *Kyōryoku teikō chinmoku*, 21.

his frequent articles on Asianism. His articles from the first few issues of the journal were published in book form by the journal at the end of 1940. Although his official position was vice minister of Transportation, according to Torsten Weber, he was one of the regime's main propagandists, even as early as 1940.⁵⁸ He was vice chairman of the Chinese Comrades of the East Asian League and was one of the association's most prolific writers. Zhou's book remains the single most complete study of Asianism in Chinese. He offered a history of white people's invasion of Asia, discussing many countries individually to show that the people of Asia had a shared victimhood that could only be reversed through Sino-Japanese cooperation and the establishment of an Asian Union.⁵⁹

Lin Baisheng introduced the integrated journal *Great Asianism and the East Asian League* on July 1, 1942, explaining that the concepts of Great Asianism and the East Asian League had already become one and the same, while also inferring financial realities had forced the bureau's hand.⁶⁰ The journal remained in publication through 1942 and 1943, when the bureau stopped publication, likely because of wartime cuts.⁶¹ It was formally under the guidance of Lin Baisheng, but Yang Honglie, who had already been regularly producing articles for *Great Asianism* from 1940, provided the most important articles on Asianism.⁶² Although officially an editor and officer with the Propaganda Bureau, Yang was also a history teacher at wartime Central University. His eight speeches on Asianism were important articles for this journal. Although often repeating much of the content found in Zhou Huaren's work, Yang focused more on the unity of China and Japan, whereas Zhou wrote about all of Asia. Yang's Japanese training as a legal historian also allowed him to provide a much more academic perspective on Asianism. While most Chinese discussions of Asianism remained limited to the philosophies of Sun Yat-sen and Wang Jingwei, Yang Honglie provided a more thorough contextualization in recent Japanese political and military thought in his third

58. Weber, *Embracing "Asia,"* 213.

59. Zhou Huaren, *Da Yazhouzhuyi gangyao*.

60. Lin, "Fakanci," 2.

61. The Nanjing government officially declared war on Great Britain and the United States on January 9, 1943.

62. Yang moved to Hong Kong after the war and edited the *Sing Tao Daily*. He returned to China in 1956. He was labeled a rightist and sent for labor reform.

speech, although he often pandered to Japanese military leaders.⁶³ He also provided one of the first Chinese histories of Asianism through his fifth, sixth, and seventh speeches. In his eighth speech, “How to Realize Great Asianism,” he returned to talk of the East Asian League, showing how the words of Sun Yat-sen and Kodera Kenkichi 小寺 謙吉 (1877–1949) pointed to the East Asian League as the realization of Asianism.⁶⁴

Perhaps more than any other wartime theorist of Asianism, Yang Honglie shows the continuity of prewar and wartime discourse, as many of his prewar texts, including his famous books on legal history, promoted the idea of East Asian oneness. However, like the discourse he promoted, Yang faded into obscurity after the war, as he and Asianism were no longer welcome in China.⁶⁵

Conclusion

As the Russian tanks swarmed into Manchukuo, the dream of Asian unity died. Japan was not the only country defeated in Asia. The Reorganized National Government led by Chen Gongbo had a standing army of hundreds of thousands in 1945. Although the territory under its control was constantly changing, as was the degree of control, the Reorganized National Government did ostensibly represent hundreds of millions of people across ten provinces of China. The country had an expansive bureaucracy, its own currency, and a fully functioning government. Dismissing the government and its texts as a temporary aberration would be a tragic neglect. There are many ways to see this history, but it was certainly a turning point in which China could have followed a very different path.

Wing-Ming Chan has pointed out that “when Li Zicheng 李自成 (1606–1645) seized Beijing in April 1644, most of the Ming officials in the northern capital surrendered themselves to the rebels and even took office in the new court.”⁶⁶ Just as China was not the only country to see such phenomena, World War II was not the only time intellectuals and politicians “collaborated” with a foreign power. Instead of imposing our moral judgments on those who worked with the enemy for a new

63. Yang Honglie, “Da Yazhouzhuyi ba jiang,” 10–11.

64. Yang Honglie, Speech Eight, in “Da Yazhouzhuyi ba jiang,” 111.

65. Smith, “Collaboration and Propaganda.”

66. Chan Wing-Ming, “The Early-Qing Discourse on Loyalty,” 31.

China, we should try to contextualize their actions. Therefore, I have shown wartime Asianist propaganda as a culmination of close to fifty years of Chinese discourse on Asianism. In many ways, this was an end for Chinese Asianism, as the concept entered a period of taboo at the end of the war.

To a certain degree, intellectuals' choice to support Asianism was also a choice to support Japan. And as Japan was defeated, Asianism was defeated. From this perspective, the demise of Asianism was not due to the flaws of the concept but to the victory of the Allied forces and the Chinese regimes they supported. Li Shengwu's regrets on the period show the tragedy of Chinese politics:

In hindsight, it is clear that Wang Jing-wei and I made a grave mistake by choosing Japanese patronage. But if Wang and I were traitors because we collaborated with a foreign power, so were Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Ze-dong. The difference was that their patrons won in World War II and our patron lost. You see, victory and defeat in the Chinese political arena were determined by international events. We, the politicians in China, could not control our own destiny.⁶⁷

As the powers effectively carved China into two countries, both competing for power and legitimacy, the Soviet Union and the United States extended their influence over Chinese propaganda. Asianism, a concept in direct conflict with the two global powers, had no more place in the Chinese vocabulary. From the perspective of the Asianists, red imperialism and white imperialism had won the war over China. Korea and Taiwan—no longer struggling between the Asian empires of China and Japan—were forced to turn to the new empires of the United States and the Soviet Union as the world slipped toward the Cold War.

67. Quoting his father, Li Shengwu. Charles N. Li, *The Bitter Sea*, 38.

Conclusion

Calls to unite Asia around China were framed through repeated otherings of the West—and sometimes Japan—and developed through the new and popular concepts that intellectuals translated into Chinese contexts and accommodated in existing paradigms. In the first two chapters of this book, we saw the desire for Confucianism to play a role in a united East Asia as reformers considered various possibilities for their engagement with Japan. However, the modern concept of Asianism was born amid the rise of race (chapter 3) and civilization (chapter 4), two paradigms through which Chinese intellectuals saw themselves and their world, producing binaries that posited the West as other and China as the center of a racial or civilizational East. With the proliferation of liberal and Marxist ideologies in the 1910s and 1920s, the importance of national liberation on the path to *datong* became a crucial element of Chinese Asianism and nationalism (chapter 5). Although Li Dazhao hoped for a future in which Asian nations acted as equals, Sun Yat-sen wedged this often Orientalist framework to an understanding of the East that was centered on China and based in benevolence and the Kingly Way of governance (chapter 6). Due to the popularity of Sun and his writings, beginning in 1925 we saw a surge in interest in Chinese Asianism and a split into various forms.

I organize these forms into nonofficial Asianism (chapter 7) and official Asianism (chapter 8). Although there was significant overlap between these forms, their interactions and disputes, as well as the interactions and disputes with equivalent ideas from Japan, played a role in Asianism's imbrication with nationalism during this key period. At the same time, we saw the rise of competing forms of Asianism that saw either China (chapter 8) or Japan (chapter 9) as the leader of Asia. Although the possibility of Japan leading Asia ended with the war in 1945, China-principalic

Asianism has only become stronger in recent years. This leaves us with the question of Japan's future role in the region.

China and Japan

Events in the twenty-first century, especially the dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and fierce arguments over historical memory, may lead us to believe that any form of rapprochement between China and Japan is impossible and talk of Asianism should be put aside for a few more years at least. However, a historian from Hokkaido University has been arguing quite the opposite. In a 2013 interview with *Asahi Shimbun*, Nakajima Takeshi argues that Asianism as an “ideology of resistance” has relevance to Japan and China today as “an attempt to resist the Western materialism and mammonism.” Japan’s failure to follow the path of moral Asianism, subsequent domination by the United States, and postwar Westernization have led to a country even further removed from the civilizational attributes that early Asianists saw as binary opposites to the West. It is this prewar period that needs to be turned to for answers. Nakajima explains, “Japan once trampled on the sovereignty of China, so it should take a fresh, hard look at history.” He turns to Indian writers as well as Japanese Asianists and Sun Yat-sen to support his argument for Asia as “civilization instead of a mere geographical region.”¹

In continuity with prewar Asianism, some elites have maintained almost identical positions to their predecessors in interwar China and Japan. Wang Yi and Nakajima Takeshi acquiesce to the coming clash of civilizations due to inherent differences between East and West, yet the historical contexts of today are very different from the early twentieth century. With successive US governments led by George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump increasing military budgets year after year to maintain global dominance, the West remains in the position of the hegemon, providing an easy other for pundits to contrast Chinese politics as the Kingly Way. The urge to view today’s two powers in dichotomy remains strong, even when they are alike in so many ways. China now engages with US hegemony in East Asia. Alongside China’s

1. Takeshi Nakajima has been studying Asianism for many years. His book on Bose was an important source for chapter 4 of this volume. Hagi, “An Interview with Takeshi Nakajima.”

rise, Japan's importance has diminished. Chinese leaders see Japan as less and less important in their visions of a China-centered Asia.

China as the Center of Neoliberal Asia

Writings on early Asian regionalization made up a complex and contradictory discourse, but they offer valuable insight to link and make sense of important elements of twentieth-century East Asian history, particularly the rise of nationalism in relation to the region, as well as contemporary discourse on regionalization. New developments have brought the issue of Asianism back into current academic debate. The increasing importance of ASEAN + 3, the Confucianism of Lee Kuan Yew, and Tu Wei-ming's Confucian World are all related to the gradual reemergence of Sinitic Asianism and prompt us to remember these early imaginings of Asia in China and the lessons and idealism they offered. If early twentieth-century Asianism really is, as Sven Saaler understands it, "a precursor of contemporary Asian regionalism," we need to give further attention to its early beginnings in the Chinese language.² Numerous intellectuals wrote about Asian regionalism in various forms as a strategic plan to escape the ills brought by Western imperialism. This study has shown how the acceptance and rejection of Asianism played an important role in the development of Chinese intellectuals' understanding of the nation and their relation to the non-Western world. These discussions of Asianism were discussions of identity, and they greatly influenced other forms of identity formation in China, particularly influencing Chinese nationalism by contributing to definitions of inclusiveness and exclusiveness on categories including the classical concept of *tianxia*, race, culture, region, and shared victimhood. Intellectuals defined themselves, their nation, and their civilization as they constructed self-other relationships through changing concentric circles of identity.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Jia Baohua 賈保華, a senior researcher at Beijing's Institute of International Economy, published a number of articles to introduce yet another conceptualization of New Asianism. Jia argued that East Asians need to continue the work of Confucius and Sun Yat-sen and strive toward a united East Asia to create an Asian Union 亞盟 that will stand as one of the three poles in

2. Saaler, "Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History," 1.

the twenty-first century, the other two being the European Union and the North American Free Trade Agreement.³ Discussions of Asian regionalization continued to appear in journals concerning Asian economics throughout the first decades of the twenty-first century, although the authors' conceptualizations of regionalization differed dramatically in each context, varying from a free trade agreement to EU-style international cooperation.⁴ These discussions tend to accept the premise of neoliberal politics, imagining the governments of East Asian states coming together for cooperation to protect the interests of their nations and open new markets. The precursor for this was the high-level meetings between leaders instigated by the regionalization success of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). On November 28, 1999, Kim Daejong, Zhu Rongji, and Keizō Obuchi, leaders from Korea, China, and Japan, met to discuss regional integration at the ASEAN meeting in Manila. This was the beginning of what is often called ASEAN + 3 and has since developed into the East Asia Summit. It was the first time leaders from these three countries had come together and was a symbolic beginning for further dialogue, signaling the end of a century marked by far from friendly relations between these three countries and initiating excited talk of future cooperation. Despite regular setbacks to this East Asian rapprochement, optimism continued to be expressed at the highest of levels, and economic integration did not suffer any of the setbacks that dominated the social realm.

More recently, Chinese dominance has displaced talk of shared leadership, and Chinese leaders have begun discursively rebuilding a China-centered East Asia, taking tentative but practical steps toward actualizing this regional model. Beginning in 2013, Xi Jinping promoted

3. Jia, "New Asianism and Asian Union," 388–89. Or see a similar article by Jia written in Chinese: Jia, "Xin Yazhouzhuyi."

4. More recently, Yang Jieman, president of the Shanghai Institute for International Studies, has used the phrase "New Asianism" to indicate the inclusive and peaceful nature of the expansion of the ASEAN + 3 organization in the twenty-first century. Yang Jieman, "New Dynamism in Cultural, Intellectual Influences," 33–34. Also, Shin Gi-wook offers an interesting historical perspective on the "new Asianist" policies of the South Korean government in the early twenty-first century. These studies and policies are generally directed toward a departure from reliance on the United States and toward the eventual formation of an Asian Union. Shin, "Asianism and Korea's Politics of Identity," 624–25.

the “Community of Common Destiny” as a united future with shared developmental goals for Asian countries. Hu Jintao initially used the phrase to refer to Taiwan’s “destiny” of reuniting with China, indicating that the term *destiny* refers to China’s past as much as China’s future.⁵ Because of the dramatic decline of China’s economic and cultural power, as well as the breakdown of relations with regional neighbors, the long twentieth century served as an aberration from the narrative of history. Now China has the opportunity to return to its position as a world leader.

The Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) was an important step in rebuilding China’s position as a benevolent regional leader. First announced in 2013 and fully established in 2016, it appears to be a practical realization of the discourse of China as a leader of the weak and small nations, the *ruoxiao minzu*. It also matches the benevolent nationalism called for by Sun Yat-sen in his sixth speech on nationalism. As seen in chapter 6, Sun argued that the Kingly Way was at the heart of Eastern civilization, differentiating it from the hegemony of Western civilization. One hundred years later, this discourse is often repeated.

At about the same time as the establishment of the AIIB, Chinese leaders announced the One Belt One Road Initiative to place China at the center of an economic infrastructure network spanning most of Asia. This comprehensive plan, financially tied to the AIIB’s support, promises to bring economic development to Asian countries between China and Europe with little influence on the domestic politics of the developing countries. Chinese news reports hailed both projects as the realization of the Kingly Way, often in opposition with America’s way of the hegemon.⁶ Notably, Japan is not involved in either of these projects. The dilemma of China’s prewar intellectuals over the position of Japan in models of a united Asia has all but disappeared, but lingering discourse in both countries points to the continued significance of Sino-Japanese relations and the inevitability of future deliberation on the role of cooperation between the two countries.

In 2006, Wang Yi 王毅, then China’s ambassador to Japan, introduced his own theory of “New Asianism” 新亞洲主義. Before being appointed Foreign Minister of the People’s Republic of China in 2014, Wang rose to success at the Tokyo embassy, where he served as ambassador from

5. Barmé, “Introduction,” xii–xiii.

6. Wang, Xiao, and Wang, “Yidaiyilu.”

2004 to 2007. During this time, which saw relations with Japan worsen over the Yasukuni Shrine visits, the textbook controversy, and numerous anti-Japanese demonstrations in China, he formulated his theory of Asian international solidarity, or New Asianism, as a plan to strengthen China–Japan ties and provide a terminology for the peaceful future of East Asia based on cultural commonalities. His 2006 article in *Foreign Affairs Review* 外交評論 drew on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century conceptions of Asianism to reimagine the future of Eastern civilization 東方文明.⁷ Wang’s return to this concept, for which he chose the same term used by Li Dazhao in 1919, was driven by his intention to emphasize China’s role as Asian leader in its peaceful rise. President Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized this role at the annual conference for the Boao Forum for Asia and in discussions on the One Belt One Road Initiative. Xi’s calls for a Community of Common Destiny in Asia are not merely rhetoric. China has begun to follow through with impressive examples of Asianism in practice rather than theory. To understand these actions and this discourse, just like Wang Yi has done, we should return to the early twentieth century as a lens to consider the implications of the concept and carefully consider Chinese Asianism today.

The Imbrication of Nationalism with Asianism: Wealth and Power

Asianism was a tool for nationalist ends. As Gloria Davies has shown, “patriotic worrying” has long been a crucial element in Chinese critical inquiry, more so than in other countries.⁸ It should be no surprise that saving or raising China was behind both theoretical constructions of Asianism and practical efforts aimed at uniting Asian nations or elite circles. This use of Asianism for patriotic purposes is what Maurice Meisner has referred to as the “paradox” of internationalist ideology for nationalist ends.⁹ I find that Chinese Asianism could not have existed without Chinese nationalism. Asianism was not a paradox but a logical movement to unite with others suffering under Euro-American imperialism against a common enemy to preserve the self. Therefore, instead of

7. Wang Yi, “Sikao ershiyishiji,” 6–10. Also available in English translation, Weber, “Wang Yi,” 361–69.

8. Davies, *Worrying about China*.

9. Meisner, *Li Ta-chao*, 177.

viewing this as a paradox, I see it as a conceptual imbrication: nationalism and Asianism are overlapped in such a way that they are intrinsically fused. One supports the other to the extent that they cannot be easily disentangled, even though they can be differentiated by stated intents. This helps explain the Japanese turn from anti-imperialist Asianism to the invasion and occupation of other areas of Asia. After all, Asianism in China and Japan had similar discourse and the same potentials.

Under the twentieth-century hegemony of nationalism, whether openly hierarchical and hegemonic, such as the American Monroe Doctrine, or ostensibly egalitarian, such as the European Community, the wealth and power of the proponents' nations remained the central goals for movements toward regionalization. Participants that joined or supported such unions had to be careful to ensure that their own interests were secure. Benjamin Schwartz has shown how Chinese intellectuals employed liberal ideas for the wealth and power of China. But liberal ideas were always about wealth and power. Schwartz ended his famous study with a touch of introspection from his North American perspective: "The problem of the relation between the Faustian religion of the limitless pursuit of wealth and power and the achievement of social and political values—even more fundamental human values—remains a problem for us as much as for them."¹⁰

Discourses of Asianism were inevitably about the wealth and power of the nation, but this was little different from dreams of international regionalization elsewhere and does not indicate that Chinese Asianism always attempted to posit China as the leader or center of Asia. The tension between hierarchical and egalitarian visions of Asian regionalization remains, and contemporary Asianist efforts such as the One Belt One Road Initiative will inevitably slide between the two in endless ambiguity. The relationship between nationalism and Asianism, on the other hand, is less ambiguous. It is an imbrication rather than a tension. As long as nationalism retains its hegemonic position in the twenty-first century, Asianism will exist but will fail to unite in the ways that were imagined in the chapters herein.

10. Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power*, 247.

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- GFQJ*: Sun Yat-sen 孫中山. *Guofu quanji* 國父全集. Taipei: Jindai Zhongguo chubanshe, 1989.
- KKHK*: Kōakai hōkoku Ajia kyōkai hōkoku 1–2 興亞會報告·亞細亞協會報告第一、二卷. Compiled and introduced by Kuroki Morifumi 黑木彬文 and Masuzawa Akio 鮎澤彰夫. Tokyo: Fujishuppan 不二出版, 1993.
- MB*: *Min bao* 民報 (The People's News).
- MLB*: *Minli bao* 民立報 (The People's Stand).
- QYB*: *Qingyi bao* 清議報 (The China Discussion).
- SZSQJ*: Sun Yat-sen. *Sun Zhongshan quanji* 孫中山全集. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985.
- YKA*: Yamamoto Ken Archive 山本憲關係資料 at the Kōchi Liberty and People's Museum 高知市立自由民権記念館.

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- Guomin* 國民 (Citizen).
- Min bao* 民報 (The People's News) (*MB*).
- Minli bao* 民立報 (The People's Stand) (*MLB*).
- Nongshi yuekan* 農事月刊 (Agriculture Monthly).
- Qingyi bao* 清議報 (The China Discussion) (*QYB*).
- Xin qingnian* 新青年雜誌 (La Jeunesse or New Youth).
- Xin Yaxiya* 新亞細亞 (New Asia).
- Yazhou wenhua* 亞洲文化 (Asian Culture).

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