

The Mutations of Pan-Asianism: Zhang Junmai's Cold War

*This essay reveals how Pan-Asianism was transformed from a potentially subversive ideal against capitalism and Western colonialism during the Republican period into a champion of capitalist accumulation under US domination after 1949. Focusing on Zhang Junmai's career as an anti-communist social democrat, the paper argues that whereas Asia's supposed cultural commonality and superiority facilitated a critique of Western political and economic norms in the first half of the twentieth century, the Cold War imperative of containing communist influence rendered this culturalism complicit in US strategic designs regarding Asia. Furthermore, the hope for an egalitarian economy and an international order based on altruistic reciprocity gave way to state-led developmentalism and market relations between Asian nation-states. Without a vision of overcoming the West's political and economic hegemony, Zhang's Pan-Asianism was reduced to hollow celebration of Oriental spirituality and other anti-communist Asian leaders.*

**KEYWORDS:** Pan-Asianism, Zhang Junmai, Cold War, social democracy, developmentalism, the West

“A united China, as much as a united India, could stabilize Asian relations satisfactorily. ... [W]e all felt that, with the pacification of India and China, representing nearly half of humanity, there should be durable peace and stabilization of the world order,” ruminated Indian academic Kalidas Nag (1892-1966) in 1947.<sup>1</sup> Asia, where China and India played leading roles, was hailed as the harbinger of a just, peaceful political-economic commonwealth. The “active co-operation of our brothers and sisters of Asia,” Nag mused with the aid of Rabindranath Tagore's (1861-1941) poetry, anticipated a world that was cleared of “the blood-red clouds of the West and the whirlwind of hatred.”<sup>2</sup> Soon, however, India achieved independence from the British after experiencing a bloody partition of the Indian subcontinent between Muslim- and Hindu-majority areas. More pertinent to this article, China split into two rival governments that were headquartered on opposite sides of the Taiwan Strait, determined to liquidate one another when the opportune time arrived. Such

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<sup>1</sup>Kalidas Nag, *Discovery of Asia* (Calcutta: The Institute of Asian African Relations, 1957), 24.

<sup>2</sup>Nag, *Discovery of Asia*, 8.

was the elusive hope for a Pan-Asian order of concord and reciprocity that many Asian nationalists once believed would supplant the Euro-American model of imperialistic and capitalist exploitation. The looming Cold War undermined Asia's ability to put up a common challenge to the socio-economic model that its former Euro-American masters championed.

Nag, who participated in Rabindranath Tagore's trip to China in 1924, welcomed Zhang Junmai (張君勱 1887-1969) to India in November 1949. A leader of the China Democratic Socialist Party (中國民主社會黨 Zhongguo minzhu shehui dang), Zhang had once anticipated that the world, with Britain as its model, would soon usher in a socialist order compatible with parliamentary democracy.<sup>3</sup> He shared with his contemporary, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), with whom he had extended conversations at a Chongqing bunker in 1939, social democratic ideals and a belief that pan-Asian spiritual traditions had much to offer the Western powers and the socio-political order that they created. With the communists assuming power in 1949, Zhang found both mainland China and Nationalist Taiwan inhospitable for his political and intellectual activism. After a brief stop in Taipei, Zhang spent the rest of his life in self-imposed exile, first in India and Southeast Asia before he settled in the United States. According to Nag, Zhang confided that "after the Revolution of 1949, he was cut off from his dear relatives and all assets stable and unstable. So he thought of coming to Free India bereft of Mahatma Gandhi no doubt but still guided by his worthy followers Nehru and [Sarvepalli] Radhakrishnan."<sup>4</sup> However, it was in

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<sup>3</sup>Zhang Junmai, *Minzhu fangfa* (Methods in democracy) (Shanghai: Zhongguo minzhu shehui dang, 1948), 90.

<sup>4</sup>Kalidas Nag, "Introduction: Sino-Indian Collaboration", in Zhang Junmai, ed., *China and Gandhian India* (Calcutta: Book Company, 1956), x.

independent India that Zhang's vision for Asia's oneness, the West's role in sustaining this continental unity and the socioeconomic relations that governed this unity diverged decidedly from the views of not only Nehru but also Zhang's former self. Instead of overcoming the capitalist economic model associated with European colonialism, Zhang left India convinced that China and Asia must cooperate with the US military and Western capital to pursue cultural subjectivity, political independence and social democracy.

By examining Zhang's writings for Chinese, US and Indian readerships from the 1950s, this article connects two seemingly distinct strands in mid-century Asian politics: 1) the desire for subjectivity vis-à-vis a hegemonic West through affirmation of the nation's and, by extension, Asia's cultural values and 2) the search for alternatives to capitalism. As a leading figure in China's third or middle force, Zhang Junmai's initial hope for an economically more equitable, less Eurocentric world order became subordinate to the Manichean battle between "Free China" and communism. To Zhang, as the following pages demonstrate, independence in much of the Republican period entailed a prophetic future in which China and other Asian countries would secure their sovereignty with democratic governments, public ownership of the means of production and confidence in their cultural traditions. With "Soviet Imperialism" tightening its grip across Asia through its supposed stooges in Beijing, Zhang's struggle for China's "independence" meant accommodation with US geopolitical designs. Indigenous religions and cultural traits, as markers of Chinese and pan-Asian identity, were celebrated alongside submission to the US economic and political crusade against communism. Nationalism and Pan-Asianism, inasmuch as they remained cherished goals, meant industrial modernization through state-led capital accumulation and foreign investments. Anticipation of a socialist future through mass enfranchisement and critique of Western modernity yielded to the full embrace of Cold War anti-communism.

Admittedly, the convergence between a member of a leading third party and the governing regime on either side of the Taiwan Strait was in itself unremarkable. Aside from the Nationalist and Communist parties, political organizations had an unenviable, if not impossible, existence. The Democratic League (中國民主同盟 Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng), a coalition of liberals and moderate socialists to which Democratic Socialists once belonged, had by late 1947 broken into three groups, two of which sided with the major rival parties. In 1949, Democratic Socialists and the China Youth Party (中國青年黨 Zhongguo qingnian dang) retreated with the Nationalists to Taiwan while what remained of the Democratic League aligned with the Communists who governed from Beijing.<sup>5</sup> My purpose here is not to confirm, much less dispute, the fact that non-revolutionary alternatives to Nationalist rule did not bear fruits. Rather, I argue specifically through Zhang Junmai's quandary that the failure of social democracy in China – both under unified Nationalist rule and separated across the Taiwan Strait by two rival regimes– was inextricably tied to its capitulation to the West's Cold War geopolitics and prioritization of capital accumulation.

Furthermore, this article suggests that Zhang's Cold War social democracy was closely intertwined with Pan-Asianism, a constellation of philosophies and policies positing that "people and nation-states in the region share an identity and a destiny, natural or constructed."<sup>6</sup> Zhang's exile from mainland China and Taiwan brought him to India, Indonesia, Australia, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore along with his base in the

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<sup>5</sup> The Democratic League was founded in 1941. The China Youth Party was established in 1923 by French-based activists.

<sup>6</sup> J. Victor Koschmann, "Asianism's Ambivalent Legacy," in Peter J. Katzenstein and Takashi Shiraishi, eds., *Network Power: Japan and Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 83.

United States. Firsthand experience interacting with social democrats in Australia and newly decolonized Asian countries provided Zhang a unique position to realign his long-term interest in Eastern philosophies with a center-left politics that had not only Chinese but also global significance. Zhang's travails demonstrated how social democracy and Pan-Asianism lost their subversive potential vis-à-vis Western colonialism and capitalism as animosity against Moscow and Beijing took center stage.

#### PAN-ASIANISM AND THE THIRD FORCE: FILLING HISTORIOGRAPHICAL GAPS

Although third force activism, much of which liberal or social democratic in ideological disposition, has received considerable scholarly attention, most historiographical interest has focused on domestic politics during the Republican period. The obvious reason for this lack of historiographical interest in third force activism after 1949 is because organized politics other than the two major parties played increasingly diminished roles as the Chinese Civil War took its course. Historian Roger Jeans, in the only English-language biography of Zhang Junmai, ended his narrative in 1941 and saw the Democratic Socialists' participation in the Nationalist-dominated constitution-making process in 1946 as the deathblow to their independent existence.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Chinese-language studies of Zhang gave short shrift to the man's career after Nationalist rule ended on the Chinese mainland.<sup>8</sup> Edmund Fung, who has

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<sup>7</sup>Roger B. Jeans, *Democracy and Socialism in Republican China: The Politics of Zhang Junmai (Carsun Chang), 1906-1941* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997).

<sup>8</sup>Xue Huayuan, *Minzhu xianzheng yu minzu zhuyi de bianzheng fazhan: Zhang Junmai sixiang yanjiu* (Dialectical development between constitutional democracy and nationalism: a study on Zhang Junmai's thoughts) (Taipei County: Daoxiang chubanshe, 1993); Zheng Dahua, *Zhang Junmai xueshu sixiang pingzhuan* (A critical biography of Zhang Junmai's

extensively studied liberal-leaning politicians, observed that the Chinese civil war accorded renewed importance to third parties as mediators between the Nationalists and Communists. Fung observed that in Chinese liberals' search for a third way between classical liberalism and Soviet communism, British socialism was as much an option as Mao Zedong's New Democracy, i.e., the Chinese Communists' formula of a cross-class, multiparty alliance against the Nationalist regime and its US sponsor.<sup>9</sup> Thus far, the only substantial studies on the post-1949 third force are attributable to historian Kenneth Yung's recent research on Chinese émigré intellectuals' contributions to Cold War liberalism. Yung argued that although Zhang was not above engaging in "Cold War rhetoric" and viewed his activism as confronting Soviet totalitarianism, he held steadfast to moderate socialism until the end.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, Zhang's socialism was unique among leading third party activists because it was irreconcilably anti-communist. While the fact that Zhang's faith in parliamentary democracy implied a different state form to that under the People's Republic of China was well documented by Fung and Yung, it remains to be seen how a non-revolutionary socialist vision of the national and world economy evolved in a divided China. Social democrats, as

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thoughts) (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 1999); Ding Sanqing, *Zhang Junmai jiedu: Zhongguo shijing xia de ziyou zhuyi huayu* (Reading Zhang Junmai: liberal discourse under China's historical context) (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2009).

<sup>9</sup>Edmund S. K. Fung, *In Search of Chinese Democracy: Civil Opposition in Nationalist China, 1929-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 341-46.

<sup>10</sup>Kenneth Kai-Chung Yung, "Chinese Liberal Thought in the Cold War Era: Three Émigré Intellectuals and Their Quest for Liberal Values, 1949-69" (PhD diss., University of Sydney, 2014), 213-5; *ibid.*, "Cold War Currents and Chinese Émigré Intellectuals, 1949-1960," *Twentieth-Century China* 40, no. 2 (2015): 146-65.

historian Eric Hobsbawm observed with regard to the US and European experiences, either advocated “gradual transformation of capitalism to socialism” or “the capitalist economy to operate subject to meeting some of the demands of labour.”<sup>11</sup> Social democracy, therefore entails two distinct approaches to managing the economy, one sought to bring about capitalism’s eventual demise and the other worked to reform it. By focusing on Zhang’s thinking on economics, this article does not suggest that politics and economics are separated. To the contrary, insofar as the economic refers to historically dynamic power relations that determine the exchange, distribution and plundering of resources, the category pertains to institutional formations that govern individual nation-states and the international order.<sup>12</sup> Zhang himself, as I will explain below, saw China and Asia’s battle against communism as much as a struggle fighting against dictatorship of the proletariat and Russian hegemony as a striving to craft a more efficient model of national and regional trade and development. His social democracy followed that of its Cold War Western European counterparts, which replaced radical transformation of capitalism with state-led economic reform under US oversight and anticommunism as the cornerstones of their politics.<sup>13</sup>

Akin to the demise of the third force as a coherent coalition distinct from the Nationalists and Communists, the supposed demise of Pan-Asianism after the Second World War contributes to the minimal attention third party activities’ striving for Asian unity

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<sup>11</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *How to Change the World: Reflections on Marx and Marxism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 9-10.

<sup>12</sup>Kojin Karatani, *The Structure of World History: From Modes of Production to Modes of Exchange*, trans. Michael K. Bourdaghs (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 4-14.

<sup>13</sup>Geoff Eley, *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 314-5.

received from historians. As an ideology that called for transnational solidarity, Pan-Asianism germinated among elites across Asia in the aftermath of China's defeat at the Opium War as a defensive strategy against Western encroachment. In the late nineteenth century, as Japan became a major industrial and military power, Pan-Asianist thoughts advocated by mostly Japanese but also some Chinese, Korean and Southeast Asian activists informed the island nation's expansionist projects targeting the Asian continent – its domination of Korea, conquest of Manchuria in 1931 and the abortive crusade against Anglo-American colonies in 1941.<sup>14</sup> In policy terms, Pan-Asianism enabled an autarkic diplomatic and economic strategy featuring a distinct Japanese-led model of development that prized dirigisme and Confucian values such as discipline, self-sacrifice, and moral suasion covering Korea, Taiwan and Manchukuo.<sup>15</sup> Nationalist elder statesman Wang Jingwei's (汪精衛 1883-

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<sup>14</sup> Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War* (New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 1-17; Sven Saaler and Christopher W. A. Szpilman, "Introduction: The Emergence of Pan-Asianism as an Ideal of Asian Identity and Solidarity, 1850-2008," in Sven Saaler and Christopher W.A. Szpilman, eds., *Pan-Asianism: A Documentary History* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), 4-12; Miwa Kimitada, "Pan-Asianism in Modern Japan: Nationalism, Regionalism and Universalism," in Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann, eds., *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders* (London: Routledge, 2007), 24-30.

<sup>15</sup> Prasenjit Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 99-102. Bruce Cumings, "The Origins and the Development of the Northeast Asian Political Economy: Industrial Sectors, Product Cycles, and Political Consequences," in Frederic C. Deyo, ed., *The Political Economy of the New Asian Industrialism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 56.



1944) decision to collaborate with Japan in 1940, as historian Margherita Zanasi revealed, stemmed from his geopolitical calculation that participation in Konoe Fumimaro's (近衛文麿 1891-1945) New Order for Asia was a more promising strategy to retain autonomy for China's developing, state-led industrial economy.<sup>16</sup> More generally, historians of China identified Japan's military victory over Russia in 1905 or the 1910s as moments when ideals of Asian solidarity began to be aligned with nationalist and revolutionary goals. Whether it was Zhang Taiyan's (章太炎 1868-1936) positioning of the anti-Manchu revolution as a continent-wide endeavor against colonialism or Sun Yat-sen's advocacy for a Confucian-informed political order superior to the Europeans' in 1924, the idea of a coherent Eastern civilization was prominent in Chinese intellectual and political thought until 1945.<sup>17</sup> Intellectual historian Wang Hui observed two strains of Pan-Asianism: one saw "Asia" as a set of popular, progressive quests for social change and national self-determination with the European capitalist order as their target. A competing, conservative strain appealed to culturalism and the Japanese state's military and industrial might to "liberate" Asia from Western colonial domination.<sup>18</sup> The latter of the two Pan-Asianisms drew from a late nineteenth-century German counter-evolutionary intellectual trend, which facilitated the refashioning of Eastern philosophical traditions into global religions superior to the

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<sup>16</sup> Margherita Zanasi, *Saving the Nation: Economic Modernity in Republican China* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), 209-12.

<sup>17</sup> Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 157-9; Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 99-102.

<sup>18</sup> Wang Hui, *The Politics of Imagining Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 22-40

materialist, mechanical and expansionist modernity of secular Euro-America.<sup>19</sup> Not coincidentally, Confucianism as supple religious values with universal significance was a position Zhang Junmai embraced along with other cultural conservatives in the Republican period even as he never counted on the Japanese to liberate China from Western domination.<sup>20</sup>

The multifarious and ambiguous meanings of Pan-Asianism – cultural, geopolitical, economic – allowed it to persist in other guises during the Cold War, even as the term itself became anathema. Despite the onset of US hegemony in the East, ideals of Asian solidarity remained in Japan and provided erstwhile supports of continental adventurism to realign themselves in support of leftwing agenda such as pacifism and rapprochement with Communist China.<sup>21</sup> In China, formidable US presence threw into chaos the alignment of liberal, social democratic politics with understandings of transnational interactions in Asia. Historian Thomas Lutze observed that China's third force politicians were deeply concerned with America's pivotal role in intra-Asian politics. The Communist doctrine of New Democracy appealed to most Chinese liberals and social democrats because it seemed to combine inclusive domestic politics and defiance of US designs on the continent. It was bad enough, Democrat Socialist and cultural conservative Zhang Dongsun (張東蓀 1886-1972) reckoned, that Washington's quest for a pro-US China lessened the Nationalists' incentive to

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<sup>19</sup> Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 92.

<sup>20</sup> Charlotte Furth, "Culture and Politics in Modern Chinese Conservatism," in Charlotte Furth, ed., *The Limits of Change: Essays on Conservative Alternatives in Republican China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 37.

<sup>21</sup> Koschmann, "Asianism's Ambivalent Legacy," 103-4; Saaler and Szpilman, "Introduction," 27-32.

share power with their detractors.<sup>22</sup> Even more unsettling was how Japan, along with its pre-Second World War business leaders and bureaucrats, replaced Nationalist China in 1947 as the United States' forward base against the Soviet Union in Asia. Third force politicians in China contemplated in horror a scenario in which a revived Japan would do the United States' bidding and join the fight against communism on Chinese soil, only years after the War of Resistance.<sup>23</sup> Chinese Communist success in winning over the smaller parties in the later stages of the Chinese Civil War much less concerned liberals' attraction to the socialist revolution than their alienation from US anti-communism. The position is akin to residual Asianist sentiments in postwar Japan which, while by no means pro-Communist, was more inclined to sympathize with Beijing's political experiments than Washington's overwhelming presence in Asia.

Zhang Junmai's uneasy identification with Taipei meant that he diverged from his liberal colleagues in his ideological investment in the United States' military and economic hegemony in Asia. Unlike other prominent third force figures, such as Luo Longji (羅隆基 1895-1965) and Zhang Bojun (章伯鈞 1895-1969), the peripatetic thinker avoided the Faustian bargain of trading his disaffection with the Nationalists for a precarious existence under an increasingly radical communist government after 1949. Alienated from other Democratic Socialists who followed Chiang's regime to Taiwan, Zhang continued to provide

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<sup>22</sup> Yang Kuisong, *Renbuzhu de "guanhuai": 1949 nian qianhou de shusheng yu zhengzhi* (Unbearable "care": scholars and politics before and after 1949) (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2013), 24-25.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas D. Lutze, *China's Inevitable Revolution: Rethinking America's Loss to the Communists* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

opposition to the Nationalist Party from abroad, mostly in the United States.<sup>24</sup> However, Zhang had to pay an intellectual price. His hope that China would be independent and free to rethink the economic orthodoxy of Britain and France even as it adopted their political thought receded to the background.<sup>25</sup> Like the Nationalist government, Zhang believed that the future of “Free China” belonged to a US-dominated Asia, even as he argued that China, not Japan, should be the semiperiphery in Washington’s “new system of empire.”<sup>26</sup> Asian religious and philosophical values, deployed to interrogate Western modernity through the first half of the twentieth century, informed a Cold War Chinese nationalism that fused state-led capitalist development.

#### GANDHI’S INDIA AS A COUNTERPOINT TO COMMUNIST CHINA

Zhang’s changing view on Asian unity had a strong India element. Compared to Communist China, he found newly independent India a worthy example of a once colonized society achieving nationhood. The latter beckoned for Asia a liberal democratic, mildly socialist alternative to revolutionary violence, even though the Congress government did not share Zhang’s animosity against Beijing. In November 1949, Zhang arrived in New Delhi after a brief stop in Taipei, where he became inextricably tied to Cold War backroom intrigues. Despite his well-advertised opposition to Chiang Kai-shek, Zhang put partisanship aside, at the Nationalist leader’s behest, and attempted to persuade India not to shift diplomatic

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<sup>24</sup>Xue, *Minzhu xianzheng yu minzu zhuyi de bianzheng fazhan*, 53.

<sup>25</sup>Zhang Junmai, *Liguo zhidao* (The way of establishing the nation) (Shanghai: n.p, 1938), 48.

<sup>26</sup> Cumings, “Origins and the Development of the Northeast Asian Political Economy,” 48-49.

recognition to the People's Republic.<sup>27</sup> After arriving in New Delhi, Zhang duly visited the foreign secretary, K. P. S. Menon (1898-1982). Menon made it clear that India was about to establish ties with Beijing to persuade the Chinese Communist government to accept the contested 1914 Simla Accord that determined the boundary between Tibet and what was then British India. Zhang conveyed this message to Luo Jialun (羅家倫 1897-1969), Nationalist China's ambassador to India. According to Luo, Zhang tried to sway Menon by suggesting that Zhou Enlai was unlikely to acquiesce to something that no prior Chinese government found acceptable.<sup>28</sup> Zhang was apparently aggrieved that Nehru, for whom he had great admiration, decided to switch sides so readily, despite the independence fighter's warm ties with the Nationalist establishment.<sup>29</sup>

If Zhang felt betrayed by the Indian prime minister, he refrained from demonstrating his disaffection while addressing his audience in the newly independent South Asian republic. From November 1949 to January 1950, Zhang delivered lectures in major universities across India on the cultural commonalities between China and India before spending the rest of his two-year stint writing philosophical treatises and political commentaries. His core concern, testifying to the compatibility between ancient Indian and

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<sup>27</sup>“Zhang Junmai xiansheng nianpu chugao” (Draft chronological biography of Zhang Junmai), in Sun Yafu and Yang Yuzi, ed., *Zhang Junmai xiansheng jiuzhi danchen jinian ce* (Volumes Commemorating the Ninetieth Anniversary of Mr. Zhang Junmai's Birth) (Taipei County: Wenhai chubanshe, 1976), 84; Yang Yongqian, *Zhonghua minguo xianfa zhi fu: Zhang Junmai zhuan* (The Father of the Republic of China Constitution: A Biography of Zhang Junmai) (Taipei: Tangshan chubanshe, 1993), 156-64.

<sup>28</sup>“Zhang Junmai xiansheng nianpu chugao,” 84.

<sup>29</sup>Yang, *Zhonghua minguo xianfa zhi fu*, 163.

Chinese thoughts, was shared by prominent Republican figures with an interest in promoting cosmopolitan Eastern traditions. At the height of the Pacific War, liberal writer Lin Yutang (林語堂 1895-1976), for example, offered his Anglophone readers the “wisdom” of China and particularly India as an antidote to a “morally and politically chaotic world.” He lauded the “Hindus” and their leaders Gandhi (1869-1948) and Nehru for retaining a “religious spirit” that influenced East Asia greatly and still had much to offer to world peace.<sup>30</sup> This interest in reviving the historic ties between China and India also characterized the travails of entrepreneurial Buddhist leader Taixu (太虛 1890-1947) and senior Nationalists officials like Dai Jitao (戴季陶 1891-1949), Zhu Jiahua (朱家驊 1893-1963) and Luo Jialun.<sup>31</sup> Echoing Lin’s wartime celebration of Asia’s two ancient civilizations, Zhang traced in one of his lectures the religious and philosophical affinity between China and India that spanned almost two thousand years since the Western Han (西漢 Xi Han 206C-9AD) dynasty and urged the two modern nation-states to relaunch a “common programme of spiritual co-operation.”<sup>32</sup>

To bring Indo-Chinese and, by extension, pan-Asian spiritual heft to bear on the new Cold War order, Zhang appended a eulogy for Gandhi to his published talks.<sup>33</sup> Citing the

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<sup>30</sup>Lin Yutang, ed., *The Wisdom of China and India* (New York: The Modern Library, 1942), 3-6.

<sup>31</sup> Brian Tsui, “China’s Forgotten Revolution: Radical Conservatism in Action, 1927-1949” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2013), chap. 5.

<sup>32</sup>Zhang Junmai, *China and Gandhian India* (Calcutta: Book Company, 1956), 267.

<sup>33</sup>Zhang saw other Asian societies as less developed peripheries to China, India or both. See Zhang Junmai, “Aozhou guoji shiqing yanjiuyuan yanjiang” (Speech at the Australian Institute of International Affairs), in *Xin shidai wenhua fuwu she* (New Era and Culture

Confucian canon *The Great Learning* (大學 *Daxue*), Zhang heaped praise on the Mahatma. “He saw clearly that any political activity without a moral basis was incomplete,” Zhang opined. “On the basis of his own virtue, he went further to renovate the people.”<sup>34</sup> He portrayed Gandhi as a sage-king whose political ideals blended seamlessly with his moral unrighteousness. “In the eyes of Orientals,” politicians are valued for their “spiritual leadership,” austere lifestyle, self-sacrifice and love. The Chinese admired Gandhi because he exemplified the saintly quality they expected of leaders, unlike strongmen such as Mussolini and Hitler who pursued selfish ends.<sup>35</sup> Gandhi heralded a future in which “Orientals” would lead a new world order based on altruistic reciprocity and ethical integrity. Zhang’s optimism echoed a vision that he expressed in a biography of Nehru he wrote during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945). In that vision, India and China would create a new Asian culture and politics as independent nations freed from colonialism.<sup>36</sup>

Of course, Zhang’s fascination with modern Indian spirituality as representing an Asian alternative to Euro-American modernity began before the Cold War, going as far as his association with Tagore’s 1924 visit to China. But while the East’s struggle for subjectivity featured in the Republican period as a rejection of an expansionist and war-ridden Europe, Zhang saw Asia’s supple cultural heritage as a weapon to thwart off communism after 1949. I shall develop this point further in the next section. Suffice it to say now that shift in the object

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Center) ed., *Zhonghua minguo duli yu Yazhou wenti* (Chinese Republic’s Independence and Asian Problems) (Hong Kong: Ziyou chubanshe, 1955), 87.

<sup>34</sup>Zhang, *China and Gandhian India*, 273.

<sup>35</sup>Zhang, *China and Gandhian India*, 288-89.

<sup>36</sup>Zhang Junmai, *Nihelu zhuan* (*Biography of Jawaharlal Nehru*) (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1946), 67.

against which Zhang's united Asian targeted regardless, he was consistent that spiritual and moral might, rather than economic and political system, determined a nation's health. Despite his reputation as a constitutionalist, Zhang attached more importance to the men and women who staffed government than the law of the land in explaining his nation's plight. As he observed at the height of China's resistance war against Japan, the issue with China was not one of nationhood (民族 *minzu*)—i.e., shared customs, language and culture—but of state organization (國家組織 *guojia zuzhi*). Zhang found Chinese bureaucrats abysmally insufficient as moral beings compared with their counterparts in Europe and Japan, where cabinet ministers were either incorruptible or willing to perform ritual disembowelment (切腹 *seppuku*) at the slightest hint of impropriety. Overall, imperialist states, unlike China, had “the underpinnings of wholesome political character.”<sup>37</sup> Beyond the nation-state, Zhang was unwilling to contemplate critiques of the political economy. As someone who devoted significant energy to crafting China's fundamental laws, Zhang was remarkably cynical about those that governed interactions among sovereign states. International law and treaties were, by their nature, applied differently in strong and weak states. There was no point in chastising Japan's occupation of Manchuria under the pretext that Nanjing had no effective control over China and that the Chinese Communists were a threat to the Far East. Zhang wrote that China's plight under imperialism was

a result of us not fulfilling our own responsibilities, not an issue of whether foreigners were treating us fairly. If we governed our country properly, others would dare not to treat us fairly. When had Britain or the United States ever seen their territories occupied? How

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<sup>37</sup>Zhang, *Liguo zhidao*, 31-40.



could Japan have thrown away the shackles of unequal treaties if it did not win the First Sino-Japanese War?<sup>38</sup>

The law of the jungle governed the world, and it was incumbent on the Chinese to pull themselves up by their bootstraps.

A nation's collective self-introspection drew on its cultural traditions. This ability, as Zhang found out after the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War, was alive in postcolonial India but remained elusive for an increasingly radical China. Gandhi and Nehru, not Chiang and Mao, represented an Asia freed from colonialism, confident of its identity and yet refrained from radical overhaul of political economy. The movement that brought about an independent India was an exercise in self-discipline and moral rejuvenation, not a social revolution. Having experienced racism firsthand in South Africa, Gandhi's

reaction to the supremacy of the Whites was different from that of the extremists, who put all the blame on Capitalism and not on themselves. Gandhi told his countrymen to reform themselves and to uplift themselves.<sup>39</sup>

In contrast to India's freedom fighters, Zhang's communist-leaning compatriots blamed their country's misfortunes on economics and absolved the Chinese people of their manifold inadequacies. Gandhi's emphasis on self-examination was, translated into political practice, far superior to the mighty political and military machines wielded by European leaders like Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) and Joseph Stalin (1878-1953). While Zhang attributed Gandhi's non-violence and moral fortitude to Indian religious traditions, his main interest was to illustrate the charismatic anti-colonialist's "life in the light of Chinese ideals."<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Zhang, *Liguo zhidao*, 52-3.

<sup>39</sup>Zhang, *China and Gandhian India*, 286-7.

<sup>40</sup> Zhang, *China and Gandhian India*, 271.

Articulation of Gandhian values in the language of Confucius and Mencius accompanied the Chinese constitutionalist's endorsement of the Indian National Congress's respect for British-style parliamentary institutions. Gandhi's "Fabian" emphasis on negotiation and gradual change earned for India independence without resorting to the people's "mob-frenzy and to their hot-headedness."<sup>41</sup> The contrast between the Congress's moderation, in which Zhang invested Hindu, Confucian and democratic socialist qualities, and China's two warring parties was stark. Unlike Indian independence fighters, Chinese leaders lacked convictions and subscribed to fads, first fascism and then communism. Not only did politicians in China fail to provide moral leadership, they pandered to the people's impatience for orderly reforms. China's increasing radicalism since the late Qing, cumulating in the Communist pledge to replace capitalist social relations with "Proletariat [*sic*] Dictatorship" was testament to China's failure to adjust to modernity.<sup>42</sup>

India, therefore, was for Zhang a shining example of an Asian country which emerged as a modern nation-state by adapting to, not declaring war at, the reigning global economic and political order. That moderate approach had much to offer Asia, particularly as it was informed by Hindu religiosity in communion with Confucianism. That religious disagreements very much informed the violent separation between India and Pakistan in 1947 did not seem to have troubled him. By the time Zhang left India in late 1951, this compatibility between Indian and Chinese cultures was extended to become a pan-Asian ideology to counter the spread of communism in the East. This strategy was unmistakable in his writings directed at US and Chinese audiences. Admittedly, Chinese politicians had long enlisted prominent Indians to project their visions of Asia. During the Second Sino-Japanese

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<sup>41</sup> Zhang, *China and Gandhian India*, 292-3.

<sup>42</sup> Zhang, *China and Gandhian India*, 21-22.

War, both Nationalists and Communists reached out to leaders of the Indian independence movement. In fact, Zhang first met Nehru on his visit to Chongqing in 1939. But it was Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), a staunch critic of Japan's aggression against China, who featured most prominently as an icon of spiritual gravitas that befitted an ancient culture with no independent political existence. As a testament to the peace-loving nature of Oriental peoples, the Indian sage stood for a society that possessed spiritual but little geopolitical weight. India's colonial status lent an apolitical image to the British possession. Zhang observed in 1938 that India's sole source of influence was its cultural profundity—meditation and religions; its disparate peoples, who “lacked a sense of history,” did not form a coherent nation, let alone a functioning political state.<sup>43</sup>

The triumph of communism in China catapulted India into an entirely different situation. By the late 1940s, of course, India was no longer just a cultural realm but a postcolonial nation-state that pursued concrete socio-economic objectives. Formerly directed against Western colonialism, supposed cultural commonality between China and India became Zhang's hope for a pan-Asian coalition targeting Moscow and Beijing after 1949. In his introduction to translated excerpts of Nehru's *Glimpses of World History*, published in 1942, Zhang used India's colonial experience under Britain to warn his compatriots regarding the danger of a large, populous country being swallowed by an avaricious imperialist power. He compared the British strategy of dividing India into directly governed provinces and nominally independent princely states with Japan's designs on China, which included a series of puppet regimes that Tokyo kept on leashes of various tightness.<sup>44</sup> The pillaging and

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<sup>43</sup>Zhang, *Liguo zhidao*, 273.

<sup>44</sup>Zhang Junmai, “Yi Nihelu ‘Jin yibai wushi nian zhi Yindu’ (Translating Nehru's “India in the last 150 years”), *Zaisheng* (National Renaissance), no. 83 (1942): 1-2.

hollowing out of indigenous industries by British imperialists in India was similar to the behavior of Japanese military officers, such as Doihara Kenji's (土肥原賢二 1883-1948) rampage across China and his plundering of factories. Immanent in Zhang's gloss of Nehru was the colonial socio-economic formation that China shared with India. By associating themselves with key Indian independence activists, Chinese politicians established a common front of resistance against Western hegemony (of which Japan was equally culpable). Soon, however, solidarity among Asians became for Zhang a front against the Soviet empire. The West and its politico-economic model were to be embraced.

#### “SINOGRAPHIC-CONFUCIAN-BUDDHIST BLOC”: A PRO-AMERICAN ASIA

With communism replacing colonialism as the evil Zhang's united Asia had to confront, however, interrogation of imperialism and its attendant socio-economic system had become all but absent. Traveling to Indonesia from India, Zhang gave a lecture in December 1951 at the invitation of prominent Indonesian social democrat Sutan Sjahrir (1909-1966). Echoing his lectures delivered in India two years ago, Zhang attributed Western dominance of the world to Asian countries' inability to adapt (適應 *shiying*) to modernity. This modernity was based on European “scientific, technological and political” achievements. Because the West's dominance was natural human evolution, Asian societies could either reform themselves by adopting their economic and political norms or lose their independence. Zhang praised Japan for its openness to foreign ideas and Indonesia for securing independence from the Dutch in 1945. India was highlighted for its elevated status in the “Asian cultural system” (亞洲文化體系 *Yazhou wenhua tixi*), and Sanskrit was portrayed as the East's answer to Greek and Latin. Gandhi's striving for India's independence represented for Zhang a religious (宗教性 *zongjiao xing*) endeavor rather than a revolt against colonial politico-economic relations. Rather than resisting industrial capitalism, an independent India testified to the embeddedness

of British liberal institutions in Sanskrit culture.<sup>45</sup> Instead of something to be repudiated, Western hegemony in world politics and economics should be blended with indigenous cultures. China's misfortune was that its communist government turned its back on the reigning socioeconomic model. "What Asian countries need most," Zhang admonished, "is peace to pursue interests (利益 *liyi*) for themselves, not war through making world revolution. Money should go towards scientific and industrial development, not military adventurism."<sup>46</sup> The only path to prosperity was rapid economic development. Any attempt to overhaul the global capitalist order dominated by Euro-America would be futile.

Zhang's exhortation to avoid revolution was extended to Asian peoples' relationships with their colonial masters. No longer the rapacious intruders that wreaked havoc across the continent, Western powers were Asia's partners in its striving for subjectivity. In a major essay that apparently caught the attention of Japan's wartime intelligence chief Ogata Taketora (緒方竹虎 1888-1956),<sup>47</sup> Zhang acknowledged that the European colonization of countries from India and Burma to Indochina and the Malay Peninsular since Vasco da Gama's "discovery of India (*sic*)" (發現印度 *faxian Yindu*) was "the most painful chapter in

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<sup>45</sup>Zhang Junmai, "Zhonghua minguo duli zizhu yu Yazhou qiantu" (Chinese Republic's independence and autonomy and Asia's future), in Xin shidai wenhua fuwu she (New Era and Culture Center) ed., *Zhonghua minguo duli yu Yazhou wenti* (Chinese Republic's Independence and Asian Problems) (Hong Kong: Ziyou chubanshe, 1955), 55-7.

<sup>46</sup>Zhang Junmai, "Yazhou geguo gaige de jiaoxun" (Lessons learned from reforms in various Asian countries), in Xin shidai wenhua fuwu she (New Era and Culture Center), ed., *Zhonghua minguo duli yu Yazhou wenti* (Chinese Republic's Independence and Asian Problems) (Hong Kong: Ziyou chubanshe, 1955), 62.

<sup>47</sup>"Zhang Junmai xiansheng nianpu chugao," 67; Yang, *Zhonghua minguo xianfa zhi fu*, 175.

world history” (世界史中至慘痛之一頁 shijieshi zhong zhi cantong zhi yiye). However, Zhang added that a new page could be turned with the end of the Second World War. Nationalist aspirations had been achieved because Britain “realized profoundly the harm communism brought to Asia” (深知共產主義之為害亞洲 shenzhi gongchan zhuyi zhi weihai Yazhou) and thus granted India and Burma independence voluntarily. The same propitious outcome applied to the Philippines. As for Indonesia, although the Netherlands had been reluctant to give up its colonial possessions, the US-dominated United Nations ensured the Southeast Asian nation’s liberation. Former colonial powers were facilitators of Asia’s independence, not only because white people had changed their colonial behaviors, but also because they helped fledgling Asian states to thwart communist invasion. For example, the Philippines benefitted from Roman Catholicism and a few decades of “US tutelage” (美國教之育之 Meiguo jiaozhi yuzhi), making the country the most democratically inclined among Asian countries. In India, the British had left behind an admirable parliamentary system, guarding the South Asian nation from communist mischief. Unlike India’s auspicious (re)birth—Zhang again ignored the violent separation of Muslim-majority Pakistan—Korea and Vietnam’s attraction to communism tore the countries apart. No matter where they operated, communists brought divisions, civil wars and foreign interference. Similar to China, these countries “became no more than subjects caught up in the ebbs and flows of world revolution and no longer qualified as independent nations” (只為世界革命浪潮隨波上下之一員，無復有獨立國家之資格 zhiwei shijie geming langchao zhong suibo shangxia zhi yiyuan, wufu you duli guojia zhi zige).<sup>48</sup> Instead of persisting in anti-capitalist struggle, Asian countries’ interests would best be served if they worked under the socioeconomic framework that their former colonizers laid down.

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<sup>48</sup>Zhang, “Yazhou geguo gaige de jiaoxun,” 1-18.

With anti-colonial internationalism banished from the political agenda, Cold War strategic priorities remained the only basis for Asian solidarity. For Zhang, the goal was to create a “constitutional” order safe for capitalist development, a plan that “our American friends” would heartily endorse. The Soviet model was painted as a radical Other, a menace that threatened the “Western political and social ideals” to which Zhang pledged allegiance in 1952.<sup>49</sup> During the Second World War, Zhang identified China and India as beacons of a new postcolonial order in Asia that exuded idealism rather than realpolitik and engendered peace rather than conflict. Modern Asian culture, embodied by luminaries such as Rabindranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), anticipated an enlightened future free of warfare and Western colonial exploitation. With the communists’ success in China, Zhang refashioned Asia into a front against Soviet slavery. He faulted his Indian hosts for allowing their country to become the weakest link in the continent-wide crusade against communism. In *Third Force in China*, a collection of articles republished to reach a US audience, Zhang castigated the Indian government for adopting a “pro-Communist stand.” He scolded K. M. Panikkar (1894-1963), the first Indian ambassador to the People’s Republic, who differentiated Beijing from other capitals in the Eastern Bloc by citing the participation of third force parties in a communist-led government. Zhang retorted that the minor parties enjoyed little independence; even the supply of rice to members was determined by communist apparatchiks. The most scathing rejoinder, however, was reserved for Panikkar’s assertion that “private property in land and in capitalist industry” co-existed with the Chinese Communists’ vision as laid out in the Common Program of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference.<sup>50</sup> In his memoir, the Indian diplomat remained convinced that the

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<sup>49</sup>Zhang Junmai, *The Third Force in China* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1952), 13-14.

<sup>50</sup>Zhang, *The Third Force in China*, 296.

early People's Republic was the culmination of both China's long-term quest for a functional national government since the late Qing and something created by a Pan-Asian desire for a more just global community. "The communist leaders," Panikkar remarked concerning China's new government, "not because of their communism but because they had a greater appreciation of the change that had come over the Asian mind, showed from the beginning a profound realization of the problems of Asia in relation to the West and to America and were therefore more in sympathy with their neighbours."<sup>51</sup> Far from Soviet puppets who blindly implemented whatever Moscow imposed on its extended territory, Chinese Communists were fiercely independent, drawing from their own history to create advances in industry, education and other aspects of social life.

Zhang had little patience for arguments that suggested Beijing could represent some Asian answer to Western and particularly American dominance. For him, the Chinese Communists' economic policies marked them as Russian satellites. While conceding that "the right of property in land and in capitalist industry [was] still allowed to exist," Zhang drew US readers' to the absence of a legal regime that sanctified private property under the communist government, arguing that the state could confiscate the means of production from private owners at any time. During the Korean War, private owners lost the right to control how they deployed the means of production because industrial production was mandated by the state. Redistribution of land to smallholder peasants anticipated Soviet-style collectivism in which each member would become "a slave of the Communist Government." Land reform in the People's Republic did fundamentally change socioeconomic relations; but instead of

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<sup>51</sup>K. M. Panikkar, *In Two Chinas: Memoirs of a Diplomat* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1955), 176.



empowering poor peasants, it marked the “first step towards land serfdom.”<sup>52</sup> Although Panikkar understood the communist-led government as an indigenous Asian alternative to the US-backed hegemonic order, Zhang was adamant that it was a Soviet imposition.

Zhang was equally unconvinced of the need to confront Western capitalism and the Chinese Communists’ independence from Moscow. His social democracy, like his Pan-Asianism, adapted to capitalism, not overcame it. Although his critique of Nehru was nowhere as strident as his rebuttal to Panikkar, Zhang disputed the Indian prime minister’s optimism in Asia’s and in particular China’s commitment to carving out an independent path of development—a sentiment the two men shared just a decade ago. Quoting Nehru’s anthropomorphized reading of China, Zhang dismissed the notion that “China [thought] for itself” or that Asia thought for itself. “In the field of economics and finance,” Zhang spoke for all Asians: “we have had to adopt the European or American currency or banking system. When the European countries changed from the gold standard to a managed currency, we followed them too.” In economic management, political systems and science, Asia deferred to Western wisdom, and communist China was no exception as a disciple of Soviet Russia.<sup>53</sup> Hence, Zhang skillfully sidestepped the issue of antisystemic resistance against the Western-dominated world economy by reducing the “West” to a civilization. Indeed, if Chinese Communists were guilty of selling out to Russia instead of safeguarding China’s independence, then the same accusation could easily be leveled against Zhang. The very idea of *Third Force in China* was to convince potential American patrons that what remained of China’s minor parties, which Washington tried in vain to win over during the Chinese Civil

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<sup>52</sup>Zhang, *The Third Force in China*, 298.

<sup>53</sup>Zhang, *The Third Force in China*, 300.

War, were not neutral players in the Cold War.<sup>54</sup> Zhang offered his social democratic alternative as a more reliable client than the Guomindang of the US-led free world. Any prospect of Asian unity was to be found not in Nehru's non-alignment policy but in the defeat of conservative and radical "totalitarianisms."

If Asia joined the capitalist bloc in military defense, political allegiance and economic development, what was left of Pan-Asian subjectivity as embraced by Zhang? The answer lies in culture and spirit, insofar as they were compatible with Cold War geopolitics and developmentalism. Whereas Asian philosophies and traditions were tasked with overcoming military conflict during the Second World War, they became appendages to the West's crusade against Soviet expansionism in the Cold War. Anticipating Samuel Huntington's typology of world civilization, Zhang mused of a "Sinographic-Confucian-Buddhist bloc" (漢字，儒教與佛教集團 *Hanzi, Rujiao yu Fojiao jituan*). China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam all used Chinese characters and held a common Confucian and Buddhist tradition. Meanwhile, Buddhism held sway in India, Thailand, Burma and Ceylon. Without so much as acknowledging the existence of Hinduism, Islam and Shinto, Zhang blithely observed that, "the bloc's spiritual vitality was so strong that it was not to be destroyed by Marxism-Leninism" (此一集團之精神基礎之活力極大，非馬列主義所能摧毀 *ci yi jituan zhi jingshen jichu zhi huoli jida, fei Ma-Lie zhuyi suoneng cuihui*).<sup>55</sup> Zhang's choice of the phrase "bloc," which was typical of Cold War parlance, was instructive. Communion among China, Japan and India had its basis in Buddhist benevolence, a quality that could be mobilized to confront "the brutality of Communist imperialism" (共產帝國主義之殘暴

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<sup>54</sup>Lutze, *China's Inevitable Revolution*.

<sup>55</sup>Zhang, "Zhonghua minguo duli zizhu yu Yazhou qiantu," 28.

gongchan diguo zhuyi zhi canbao).<sup>56</sup> Japan's wartime state Shintoism and the communal violence that led to India's partition were brushed aside in this Asian anti-communist entente. Placing high culture at the service of immediate partisan priorities was a common impulse among anti-communist intellectuals who worked outside both the Communist and Nationalist orbits. Cultural conservatives, including Zhang, complained that communism was doomed to fail because it represented a "sharp break with the whole development of Chinese culture." The "deadly enemy of Western democracy" was, furthermore, a product of Euro-American hegemony itself, which allowed Soviet agitators to capitalize on Asian and African countries' legitimate urge for independence. Having blamed Westerners for their imperialistic excesses, Zhang and other émigré intellectuals, mostly based in Hong Kong, nonetheless offered Asian cultures as allies of liberal democracies in the capitalist camp. They justified the compatibility between Western and Asian countries by appealing to the spirituality of Kierkegaardian Christianity, which was likened to Indian yoga and Confucian enlightenment in their transcendence of material existence. If Westerners were to tone down their ethnocentrism, they could well "champion also the enlightened development of other people's cultures together with their aspiration for national democratic reconstruction."<sup>57</sup> Celebration of Asian cultures was aligned with the triumph of postcolonial liberal capitalism.

Not unlike earlier Pan-Asianists in China and Japan, Zhang nominated his own country as the leader of the East's Cold War fraternity. As an extension of nationalism, Asian regionalist thoughts during and before the Second World War had a strong anti-Western streak, even if they were deployed to justify Japan's imperialist expansion. Postwar

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<sup>56</sup>Zhang, "Zhonghua minguo duli zizhu yu Yazhou qiantu," 28.

<sup>57</sup>Zhang Junmai, *A Manifesto on the Reappraisal of Chinese Culture*. (Original Chinese text published in 1958)

nationalism, as intellectual historian Naoki Sakai aptly observes in the case of Japan, was however tamed by the United States and made “subservient to colonial administration.”<sup>58</sup> The myth of the nation’s primordial cultural coherence, centered on the Emperor, was encouraged by the United States to compensate for Japan’s compromised sovereignty under the United States’ formal occupation and military dominance. A similar procedure was characteristic of Neo-Confucianists who fled from mainland China to British-governed Hong Kong. As educators, they grudgingly but unremittingly rendered their allegiance to China’s national culture as a willing partner of Cold War anti-communism. However much cultural conservatives raved about a great Chinese tradition, they were, unlike their Republican predecessors, reluctant to confront the premises of Western domination, be it capitalism, colonialism or Cold War politics.<sup>59</sup> This complicity with Western leadership determined Zhang’s Asianist imagination, including instances in which he boasted of China’s leadership role in its region: “In Asia, taking into account the histories of various countries, only China had a rich experience of being independent and self-sufficient” (亞洲之中，就各國歷史而言之，獨中國富於獨立自強之經驗 Yazhou zhi zhong, jiu geguo lishi er yanzhi, du Zhongguo fuyu duli ziqiang zhi jingyan). Having stared down non-Sinicized peoples from its northern, southern and western frontiers since the Han dynasty, China was best equipped to defend Asia from the alien communist menace. The Japanese had forfeited their leadership role in Asia since Pearl Harbor, whereas newly decolonized India would never match China’s

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<sup>58</sup>Naoki Sakai, “Trans-Pacific Studies and the US-Japan Complicity,” in Naoki Sakai and Hyon Joo Yoo, eds., *Trans-Pacific Imagination: Rethinking Boundary, Culture and Society* (Hackensack, NJ: World Scientific Publishing, 2012), 293-5.

<sup>59</sup>Wing Sang Law, *Collaborative Colonial Power: The Making of the Hong Kong Chinese* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), 138-41.

firmness in maintaining its long history of independence. Only with China's leadership could the Japanese and Indians be brought together to form an anti-Soviet bloc, just as NATO was a tripartite league dominated by the Anglo-Saxons, Aryans and Latins.<sup>60</sup>

## SOCIAL DEMOCRACY EMBRACED DEVELOPMENTALISM

Accompanying Pan-Asianism's capitulation to Western hegemony was social democracy's collusion with developmentalism. While Zhang expected China to lead an Asian coalition of formerly vanquished nations, he had no illusion that his Sinographic-Confucian-Buddhist bloc would be self-sustaining. Instead, Zhang's very aim was to draw Washington's attention away from Europe to Asia and channel US investments to economically backward "democratic countries" in the continent. Thus, similar to the Marshall Plan in Europe, the geopolitical and economic converged to ensure collaboration between Asian political elites, however stridently nationalist they might otherwise be, and Western capital. His devotion to traditional culture aside, Zhang was well in tune with Cold War development economics paradigm that set "underdeveloped economies" apart for state-planned industrialization. Development was typically focused on capital accumulation bolstered by foreign aid, with the goal of inducting poor countries into international trade and making disciplined factory workers out of peasants.<sup>61</sup> Such complete adoration of capital, particularly foreign, represented another shift of mind. At the height of the Chinese Civil War, Zhang still mused of a global future in which the reign of capital would be loosened in countries with

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<sup>60</sup>Zhang, "Zhonghua minguo duli zizhu yu Yazhou qiantu," 28.

<sup>61</sup> Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: the Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 73-5.

parliamentary systems.<sup>62</sup> He welcomed the British Labour Party's recent electoral victories and nationalization agendas. The success of socialist parties in Western Europe was attributed to mass enfranchisement and capitalists' awareness that concessions to labor were necessary given the communists' success in Russia. By the 1950s, capital was for Zhang more a partner in the containment of communism than an opponent with which labor competed for social and political power.

Indeed, Democratic Socialists' determination to preserve an anti-communist Taiwan at all costs meant that a US-protected developmental state, not an egalitarian economy that empowered labor, was the sure way to bring wealth and rekindle the myth of national subjectivity. "China has a large population and is rich in natural resources" (中國人口眾多，物產豐富 Zhongguo renkou zhongduo, wuchan fengfu), Zhang observed with attraction of Anglo-American investment and economic aids in mind. "Should it receive proper training in local self-governance and parliamentary politics, it can be transformed into a stable country with little difficulty" (倘加以地方自治與議會政治之訓練，不難使之成為安定的國家 tang jiayi difang zizhi yu yihui zhengzhi zhi xunlian, bunan shi zhi chengwei anding de guojia). Economic growth – industrial development, improvements in agricultural productivity and living standards – and a Western liberal political model thus went hand in hand.<sup>63</sup> Only when China regained its "independence" could South Asia be buffered from communism from the north. Only when Chinese industries and agriculture were properly developed with Anglo-American capital could its people enjoy standards of living higher than India's. Boosting regular Chinese citizens' spending power was important because a reindustrialized Japan, no doubt also with US assistance, needed a huge export market. As

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<sup>62</sup>Zhang, *Minzhu fangfa*, 90.

<sup>63</sup>Zhang, "Zhonghua minguo duli zizhu yu Yazhou qiantu," 28.

long as China remained enslaved by communism, Japan might not be able to resist interaction with Beijing because it needed the Chinese market.<sup>64</sup> The supposed religious and ideographic coalition was ultimately bound by commodity exchange and market relations.

True to Zhang's prognosis, a traditionally Sinographic region was merged into an interconnected bloc undergirded by US military and economic dominance. In East Asia, a Washington-led "grand area" promptly replaced Japan's colonial order. But instead of China, Japan remained the United States' flagship client in Asia. American strategists identified a reindustrialized Japan as Washington's bulwark against Soviet expansion and, after the Korean War, appointed South Korea and Taiwan as a hinterland on which, with North China and Manchuria out of reach, Japanese capital could re-exert influence.<sup>65</sup> Rather than Japan being dependent on access to China as an export market, "Free China" found itself dependent on the Japanese market as Taiwan industrialized. Under US auspices, semi-peripheral and peripheral Asian states retained some autonomy but remained well within the economic, political and security relationships defined by Washington. Military realignment and rapid capital accumulation of East Asia, contrary to what Zhang argued, required not parliamentary, much less social, democracy but de-facto one-party states under which bureaucrats and capitalists thrived in collaboration. Underwritten by the Seventh Fleet, the Nationalist state found itself in a stronger position vis-à-vis Taiwan society than any period of its rule in mainland China, where powerful landlords and warlords proved ungovernable.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Zhang, "Zhonghua minguo duli zizhu yu Yazhou qiantu," 29.

<sup>65</sup>Cumings, "Origins and the Development of the Northeast Asian Political Economy," 59-63.

<sup>66</sup>Bruce Cumings, *Parallax Visions: Making Sense of America-East Asia Relations at the End of the Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 88-92; T.J. Pempel, "The

There was never any chance that Democratic Socialists or any remnant of the third force from mainland China could challenge the Nationalists for power in Taiwan. Furthermore, Zhang's economic strategy, as he outlined in 1952, was not dissimilar to senior Nationalist bureaucrats'. Ideas such as restriction of private capital, which even Zhang did not see as peculiarly social democratic, would find a receptive audience among Taiwan officials.<sup>67</sup> Reformers working for Chiang's regime such as Yin Zhongrong (尹仲容 1903-1963) and Chen Cheng (陳誠 1897-1965) saw the state's commandeering role over capital as the key to enhancing popular welfare. The latter, who initiated land reforms in Taiwan, likened his party's economic program to the British Labour Party's.<sup>68</sup>

## NEW HEROES

The most telling illustration of the mutation of Zhang's Pan-Asianism and social democracy can perhaps be gleaned from the Asian leaders with whom he identified. In Zhang's less

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Developmental Regime in a Changing World Economy," in Meredith Woo-Cumings, ed., *The Developmental State* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), 151-81.

<sup>67</sup> Zhang Junmai, "Dongnanya, Aozhou yu Malai ji Zhongguo zhengju ganxiang dawen" (Questions and answers on the political situation in Southeast Asia, Australia, Malaya and China), in Xin shidai wenhua fuwu she (New Era and Culture Center) ed., *Zhonghua minguo duli yu Yazhou wenti* (Chinese Republic's Independence and Asian Problems) (Hong Kong: Ziyou chubanshe, 1955), 53.

<sup>68</sup> Nick Cullather, "'Fuel for the Good Dragon': the United States and Industrial Policy in Taiwan, 1950-1965," in Peter L. Hahn and Mary Ann Heiss, eds., *Empire and Revolution: the United States and the Third World since 1945* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2001), 247.



polarized world just after the Second World War, Nehru was an impeccable statesman, a twentieth-century version of Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872) or Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898). Whereas Gandhi was a “religious” (宗教式 *zongjiao shi*) and profound contemplative leader, Nehru was a “modern” (現代式 *xiandai shi*) man and strategist. The latter personified India’s transition to a formidable player in international politics, all the while exuding Gandhi’s Buddha-like quality.<sup>69</sup> Nehru’s elevation to the Indian premiership was a prophetic sign of a world that overcame the old order of colonial oppression. Set against the priority of Cold War anti-communism, however, India’s gestures of independence from the West became testaments either to the newly decolonized country’s puerile presumptuousness as an initiator of the 1955 Bandung Conference or a calculated resignation to *realpolitik*. The country could ill afford to antagonize both China and the Soviet Union, with whom it shared land border.<sup>70</sup> By 1965, Zhang was corresponding with Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (1878-1972), leader of the largest opposition party in India and apologist of US involvement in the Vietnam War. Echoing Rajagopalachari’s call for India and Japan to band together to prevent “the empire of China under Mao and his successors” from expanding into Southeast Asia, Zhang added South Korea, South Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and the

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<sup>69</sup>Zhang Junmai, “Nihelu zhuan di er xu” (Second Preface to the Biography of Nehru), in *Zaisheng* (National Renaissance) 130, no. 7 (1946).

<sup>70</sup>Zhang Junmai, “Ribei Yindu zhengce juli” (Policy differences between Japan and India), in Xue Huayuan eds., *Yijiusijiu nian yihou Zhang Junmai yanlun ji* (Collection of Zhang Junmai’s Post-1949 Writings), vol. 3. (Taipei County: Daoxiang chubanshe, 1989), 185-186.

Republic of China to this proposed alliance with US military support.<sup>71</sup> Any form of Pan-Asianism that excluded the United States would only play into communist hands.

In contrast to Nehruvian India, the defeated nation of Japan, having benefitted from US tutelage and preservation of its imperial system, had no trouble aligning with “democratic countries” around the world. In any case, Japan’s political elite, particularly the resuscitated war criminal Kishi Nobusuke (岸信介 1896-1987), were never keen to bet on Soviet stewardship. Conservative parties, such as Japan’s Liberal Democrats and India’s Swatantra, were ultimately more reliable crusaders against a Moscow or Beijing-led world revolution than Zhang’s fellow-Asian social democrats. From his government’s acceptance of the US-imposed postwar constitution through its adroit diplomacy down to Kishi’s facility with the exotic game of golf, the former Manchukuo bureaucrat exemplified for Zhang the Japanese people’s agility in learning from the West and adapting to the modernity that it created. Japan’s rehabilitation with US blessing allowed it to be welcomed in Asian countries that it had invaded less than two decades earlier. From Indonesia through the Philippines to Australia, Kishi neutralized old animosities and laid the groundwork for the re-entry of Japanese capital into Southeast Asia.

It was only in Singapore’s Lee Kuan Yew (李光耀 1923-2015) that Zhang eventually found an Asian social democrat that corresponded to his own ideological trajectory. The newly installed national leader, whose city-state was expelled from Malaysia in 1965, promoted a democratic socialism that was markedly anti-communist. Furthermore, similar to Kishi’s Liberal Democrats, Lee’s People’s Action Party prized economic development. Its political vision was also adequately Pan-Asian, whether in its unfulfilled desire to remain

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<sup>71</sup>C. Rajagopalachari, “Letter to the Editor,” *New York Times*, June 6, 1965, E11; “Zhang Junmai xiansheng nianpu chugao,” 104-05.

within a Malay-dominated nation-state or embrace of Asian and transnational capital. The Singaporean government's enthusiasm in multinational corporations—along with its heavy-handed approach to trade unions, the student movement and the press—marked a core point of contention between Lee's party and Western social democrats that eventually led to its withdrawal from the Socialist International in 1976.<sup>72</sup> Zhang, however, was all but effusive in his praise for Lee's development strategy. Lee, as Zhang introduced the leader to his American Chinese readers, was an “overseas Chinese anti-imperialist hero” (海外華僑反抗帝國主義之豪傑 *haiwai Huaqiao fankang diguo zhuyi zhi haojie*). However, Lee's anti-imperialism was far superior to those of Chiang or Mao. The British-educated statesman realized that “obeying the law and peaceful change” (遵守法律，和平變更 *zunshou falü, heping bian'geng*), not revolutionary dictatorship, were crucial to safeguarding a nation's independence. Unlike many of his Asian contemporaries, Lee was non-aligned and did not crave US aid to consolidate one-party dictatorship. More importantly, Lee disagreed with radical leftists, who comprised the Barisan Socialis.<sup>73</sup> As was the case with Nehru, Zhang's fascination with Lee was not just academic. In February 1967, the octogenarian travelled from San Francisco to the Southeast Asian republic, where he lectured on democratic socialism. The trip, according to Zhang's biographer Yang Yongqian, was to make up for Lee's aborted attempt to bring the US-based philosopher to run Nanyang University, where

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<sup>72</sup>C. J. Wan-ling Wee, *The Asian Modern: Culture, Capitalist Development, Singapore* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007), 70-5.

<sup>73</sup>Zhang Junmai, “Li Guangyao zhenglunji *Xinjiapo zhilu* suo biao shi dui ge fangmian zhengce” (Various policies as stated in Lee Kuan Yew's collection of commentaries *Singapore's Road*), in Xue eds., *Yijiusijiu nian yihou Zhang Junmai yanlun ji*, vol. 4, 589-602.

student activism had been a headache for his administration. Apparently, US officials were aware of the invitation and sent “someone from the intelligence agency” (情報機關的人 *qingbao jiguan de ren*) to urge Zhang to take up the presidency of the troubled institution. Washington’s brief to the staunch advocate of US intervention in the Pan-Asian front against Moscow and Beijing was, however, not to discipline radical students but to mediate between President Eisenhower’s government and Lee’s.<sup>74</sup> The two countries were at loggerheads since the early 1960s, when a Central Intelligence Agency operation to subvert the newly elected People’s Action Party government failed to materialize.<sup>75</sup> The United States’ interest in Zhang’s Singapore connection highlighted the subtle differences in approaches that the prime minister and his much older admirer took toward the US imperium, though they were nowhere as irreconcilable as Zhang’s disagreements with Nehru.

To be sure, Lee and Zhang were on the same page in their suspicion against communism and advocacy for capitalist development. Like Lee, Zhang considered left-wingers opposed to social democrats as communist fellow travelers whose aim was to overthrow the national government. Writing from Singapore, Zhang cited approvingly Lee’s support in an interview with the press of his Interior and Defense Minister Goh Keng Swee (吳慶瑞 1918-2010), who treated “subversive” (顛覆 *dianfu*) literature the same way as bombs, detonators and bullets used by violent revolutionaries. The right to free speech, otherwise critical to liberal democracies, seemed unimportant when it came to communist sympathizers, alleged or otherwise. The same interview, which Lee gave on the day his city-state was expelled from Malaysia on August 9, 1965, promised that Singapore would trade

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<sup>74</sup>Yang, *Zhonghua minguo xianfa zhi fu*, 236.

<sup>75</sup>S. R. Joey Long, *Safe for Decolonization: The Eisenhower Administration, Britain, and Singapore* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2011), vii.

with any country as long as they could bring in capital and posed no political threat. Zhang endorsed Lee's pragmatism, along with his plan to industrialize the district of Jurong by attracting Japanese, Taiwanese, Hong Kong and Western investment.<sup>76</sup> Yet, Lee's attraction to Euroamerican investment, economic and geopolitical, did not translate into consistent alignment with US strategic designs on Asia. Other than attributing it to the prime minister's self-esteem, Zhang was unable to fully account for Lee's pledge, for example, that Singapore was not Britain's Guantanamo, an allusion to the US Naval Base in Cuba.<sup>77</sup> Unlike Taipei, Singapore was neutral towards the United States' geopolitical engagement with Asia even as it saw Washington as a stabilizing, if at times overbearing, force.<sup>78</sup> Zhang's ideal of freedom from communist menace mandated an US-led Asia; for Lee, the United States' leadership role in the precarious region was contingent and provisional. Both men agreed, however, that Asian democratic socialists' future laid squarely with the modernity championed by foreign entrepreneurs, not those represented by home-grown social revolutionaries or even overseas Chinese capitalists oriented towards the People's Republic.<sup>79</sup>

Integration of Asia through domestic and foreign industrial capital, for which Kishi and Lee championed, was far from a prophetic experiment in creating the humane, socialist world order for which Zhang once held hope. Zhang's nationalist credentials and his attachment to China's and, to a lesser extent, India's, spiritual traditions are unquestionable.

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<sup>76</sup>Zhang, "Li Guangyao zhenglunji *Xinjiapo zhilu* suo biaoshi dui ge fangmian zhengce," 595-601.

<sup>77</sup>Zhang, "Li Guangyao zhenglunji *Xinjiapo zhilu* suo biaoshi dui ge fangmian zhengce," 592-4.

<sup>78</sup>Long, *Safe for Decolonization*, 182.

<sup>79</sup>Wee, *Asian Modern*, 74.

However, Cold War reaction against communism was such that pride in Asian cultural heritage, and even attachment to national subjectivity, served not to question the socioeconomic conditions of the continent's subservience to the West but to consolidate them. Zhang's nod to Eastern spirituality and embrace of the US-led developmental model was consistent with non-communist socialists in Western Europe, who by the 1960s had "mostly abandoned ideas of abolishing capitalism."<sup>80</sup> Under the ideologically charged Cold War atmosphere, Zhang invented a Pan-Asianist subjectivity and a democratic socialism that were open to Euroamerican intervention and safe for capitalism. Herein lay the paradox of an unrealized political model for China and, by extension, Asia.

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<sup>80</sup>Eley, *Forging Democracy*, 319.