
REVIEW

IS CHINA JUST ANOTHER JAPAN IN THE WORLD? TOWARDS A NON-HEGEMONIC UNDERSTANDING OF GLOBAL ORDER

ZHANG YONGLE (章永乐), *CI JIANG ER JIE: MENLUO ZHUYI YU JINDAI KONGJIAN ZHENGZHI* (此疆尔界：“门罗主义”与近代空间政治) [SHIFTING BOUNDARIES, A GLOBAL HISTORY OF THE MONROE DOCTRINE] (BEIJING: SHENGHUO DUSHU XINZHI SANLIAN SHUDIAN (生活·读书·新知三联书店), 2021)

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The latest addition to Zhang Yongle's systematic investigation of modern Chinese legal and political ideas in times of crisis and transformation is titled *Shifting Boundaries, A Global History of the Monroe Doctrine* (此疆尔界：门罗主义与近代空间政治). At first, the focal point of Monroe Doctrine in this book seems to be a huge deviation from the strong China-centric problematic in Zhang's previous monographs. Although demonstrating a high academic rigorous in the discipline of intellectual history, this book is far from being a conventional investigation of the concept Monroe Doctrine.

This book does not want to treat Monroe Doctrine as a static and self-contained notion that travels across borders. Instead, it focuses on tracing the mechanism which links Monroe Doctrine with imperialism during its global transition and transfusion. Apart from looking at its development within the US, the book brings in *Großraum* in Germany and pan-Asianism in Japan and China into the discussion of the global journey of Monroe Doctrine, depicting a complicated and transnational network of ideas. As we can see from Zhang's discussion, the fundamental principle of Monroe Doctrine, although manifesting in different forms, has predominantly been based on the imperium claim of space.¹ However, can we understand China by using the same principle?

Interestingly, Zhang noticed that the life of Monroe Doctrine in China took an intriguing and inward-looking turn in China. The discourses of Monroe Doctrine in China were overwhelmingly focusing on establishing autonomy on a sub-state, rather than inter-state level.² Comparing to their counterparts in the US, Japan and Germany, Chinese intellectuals and political activists were more inclined to interpret Monroe Doctrine as a justification for self-determination (自主) when the term was firstly translated into Chinese from Japanese sources.³

¹ See ZHANG YONGLE (章永乐), *CI JIANG ER JIE: MENLUO ZHUYI YU JINDAI KONGJIAN ZHENGZHI* (此疆尔界：“门罗主义”与近代空间政治) [SHIFTING BOUNDARIES, A GLOBAL HISTORY OF THE MONROE DOCTRINE] 141–53 (Beijing: Shenghuo Dushu Xinzhi Sanlian Shudian (生活·读书·新知三联书店), 2021).

² See *id.*, at 211.

³ See *id.*, at 221–22.

The peculiar case of China is what makes the book exciting. It also brings forward the main problematic of Zhang's meticulous survey of the global intellectual journey of Monroe Doctrine. In the beginning of his introduction, Zhang refers to Mark Leonard's *What Does China Think?*.⁴ This could be taken as one of the main issues driving Zhang's investigation. Roughly in the 1990s, Western scholarship began to actively ask the questions such as why China clings to its Leninist traditions. How long Chinese communism will last? What will come next?⁵ Moving into the 21st century with China steadily rising up to its current position of being the second largest economy in the world, questions turn into a more assertive statement. In both public media and academic writings, Western-centric narratives claim that China will assume the position as the new global hegemon.

No one is able to provide definite answers to those questions or convincingly prove the claim. The overarching assumption behind these enquiries is utterly Western-centric. A popular justification for failure to answer those questions is from Lucian Pye in 1992 and made popular by Henry Kissinger in his account on the rationale of Chinese foreign policy making. Lucian states that China is a "civilization pretending to be a nation-state."⁶ Since China is only pretending to be a nation-state, as this premise suggests, the contemporary social science theories have to be "recalibrated" when applying to the study of China. Hence, Pye came up with the term Confucian Leninism, suggesting that the uniqueness of contemporary communist China is the result of the marriage between "long-standing Chinese cultural traditions" such as its patrimonialism and imported modern ideas such as Leninism. Alternatively, one should simply accept, like Henry Kissinger suggests, the singularity of China and try to make sense of China from within its own "civilization," or in Chinese *wenming* (文明).

However, by advocating the uniqueness of China, we are actually implying that the universalism of social theories stands firmly and strong. It is China that has problems. Henceforth, we often could hear the judgement that China is not a "conventional nation-state" that needs to be treated with care or even as an abnormality. However, could it be that the crystal ball we use to comprehend the world that is broken? Or maybe it's not a crystal ball after all. Otherwise, we would surely see China would follow suit the Japanese way of understanding Monroe Doctrine and become regional hegemon with a global ambition. Why it was not the case? The answer to this question lies partially in Zhang's comparative historical investigation.

⁴ See *id.*, at 4.

⁵ See Lucian W. Pye, *Social Science Theories in Search of Chinese Realities*, 132 CHINA Q. 1161 (1992).

⁶ *Id.*, at 1162.

I. AGAINST HEGEMON-CENTRIC WORLD VIEWS

Zhang's investigation places hegemon at its heart. He frankly points out that Monroe Doctrine, at least to most of its advocates, is a euphemism for hegemonic control. Unlike Perry Anderson's conceptual history study of hegemony, Zhang looks at the "political process" and "historical context" enabling the global transfusion and transformation of Monroe Doctrine. He describes the Chinese application, or "misuse" of Monroe Doctrine as an "accidental rupture" in the "great chain" of its global evolution.⁷ This understanding distinguishes Zhang's discussion from the other conceptual and geopolitical understandings of hegemon, consequently, providing a novel perspective in addressing the question: Will China take the same path and become another global hegemon?

The assumption that China would become another hegemon is rooted in the conventional Western-centric geopolitical understanding of the world. Contemporary International Relations scholarship constantly reminds us the centrality of a Westphalian sovereignty. It is the result of the "awakening" of the non-Western people, leading towards the diffusion of a Westphalian nationalism in the non-European world. Consequently, the anti-imperial strive for unity of order and orientation beyond the Western-centric view of modernisation is undervalued as a "Kantian moral solidarity" in action with an attempt to "sweep away evil" from international society.⁸

Based on the premise that projects of anti-imperialism since the late 19th century are diffusion of the Westphalian nationalism, the theory of hegemonic stability would then assume that the denial of one supra-national hegemony would become the justification for the rise of another. It also further assumes that only dominating by a hegemonic power could constitute the optimal situation for ensuring and maintaining an open and stable world economy. The decline of one hegemon means confrontations and conflicts and will always lead to the rise of another.⁹ Its underlying assumption is that the nationalist rise of a state will always lead to expansionism. It takes a Western-centric perspective and paints a teleological destiny for nations in the non-Western world established during the wave of the anti-imperial national independence movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In this teleological destiny, nationalism across the world will always repeat the European historical experience, leading to expansionist aggression, causing havoc to people and the

⁷ See ZHANG, *supra* note 1, at 18–19.

⁸ See Martin Wight, *An Anatomy of International Thought*, 13 REV. INT'L STUD. 221, 224–25 (1987); ROBERT JACKSON, CLASSICAL AND MODERN THOUGHT ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS 66 (2005).

⁹ See Robert O. Keohane, *The Theory of Hegemonic Stability and Changes in International Economic Regimes, 1967–1977*, in CHANGE IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM 131, 131–62 (Ole R. Holsti et al. eds., 1980); ROBERT O. KEOHANE, AFTER HEGEMONY: COOPERATION AND DISCORD IN THE WORLD POLITICAL ECONOMY (1984). ROBERT GILPIN, U.S. POWER AND THE MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (1975); CHARLES P. KINDLEBERGER, THE WORLD IN DEPRESSION, 1929–1939 (1987).

world.¹⁰ A state will either strive to become a regional or global hegemon and success or being placed under the dominance of a rising hegemon.

Surely, the theory of hegemonic stability has more comprehensive layers. Robert O. Keohane's criticisms against Charles P. Kindleberger and Robert Gilpin depict a cooperative model among the major powers and actors. In this modification, the role of hegemon is no longer filled by a single state, but a cohort of powers including state and non-state actors alike.¹¹ Proponents of this modified version of hegemonic stability theory prefer to use "international regimes" to replace the thorny word "hegemon."¹² However, as Susan Strange pointed out, international institutions continue to be strategic instruments of US will. The American state is undisputedly the "hegemon of the system" that excises its power through military intervention, enormous nuclear and conventional weapon arsenal, the dollar's dominance of international finance, and selective deregulation of markets.¹³

The hegemonic thesis enjoys such a popularity that it has "trickled down" into the world of journalism and become part of the worldview among the general public.¹⁴ Contemporary global media is never in short supply of stories and commentaries discussing the "rise of China" as a "global power" and its implications, mostly threat, to the international and regional stability. Readers are also constantly presented with warnings about the retreat of an interventionist regional or global power could leave a "power vacuum" for insurgents and power mongers who would upset the international status quo and consequently readers' own way of life.

The world in the eyes of hegemonic stability theory is hierarchical, which envisions the forming of a global order based on a Hobbesian state theory. It holds fast the assumption that the "governance of international systems" could not be possible without the presence of "empires, hegemonies and great powers."¹⁵ Even for Keohane's rule-based multilateral cooperation, a strong state power still needs to be the pivot point, providing leadership and security for the smooth running of the international order.¹⁶ This state-centric hierarchical understanding of the world order reminds us the discussions of civilization in 19th and 20th centuries.

Although many researchers show reservations when drawing similarities between 19th century British Empire and today's global status of the United States of America, there is little doubt that the world order through such a world view is merely a continuous transition from one hegemon-centric *pax* to ano-

¹⁰ See ELIE KEDOURIE, *NATIONALISM* (1961).

¹¹ See KEOHANE, *supra* note 9, at 78–80.

¹² See Robert O. Keohane, *The Demand for International Regimes*, 36 INT'L ORG. 325 (1982); Stephan Haggard & Beth A. Simmons, *Theories of International Regimes*, 41 INT'L ORG. 491 (1987).

¹³ See Susan Strange, *Cave! Hic Dragones: A Critique of Regime Analysis*, 36 INT'L ORG. 479 (1982).

¹⁴ See Isabelle Grunberg, *Exploring the "Myth" of Hegemonic Stability*, 44 INT'L ORG. 431 (1990).

¹⁵ ROBERT GILPIN, *WAR AND CHANGE IN WORLD POLITICS* 156 (1981).

¹⁶ See KEOHANE, *supra* note 9, at 136–37.

ther.¹⁷ Such a world view places no importance in the agency of small and weak nations predominantly located in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. As if area there is merely “empty” space filled, about to be filled, or too insignificant to be filled by major powers.

Neatly trimmed empirical evidence has enhanced the universal appeal of this theory. Scholars have noticed that the rejections against Euro-american expansionism since the mid-19th century always led to the rise of another power striving for regional and even global hegemony. The Monroe Doctrine emerged as a rejection of the European interventionism in America. It soon expanded into the global space providing justification for a US-dominated world order by the end of the 19th century.¹⁸ Carl Schmitt’s *Großraum* rejects the “*Universa-lismus*” of Anglo-american liberal world order, while at the same time, justifying the German dominance of Europe.¹⁹ Beyond Euro-american world, the Japanese reception of civilization theory eventually gave birth to pan-Asianism, which resists against the Western imperialism in Asia while legitimizes Japanese claim for hegemony in East Asia.²⁰ Similarly, the demand for decolonization among Arab intellectuals led to the claim of a pan-Islamic unity consisting racist rhetoric against the white/Western peril in the world.²¹

This hegemon-centric approach of global order reminds us the notorious theory of hierarchical civilization which gained its popularity from the mid-19th century when Euro-american expansionism was rapidly reshaping the global geopolitical space and worldview. Both discourses envision a world order in which only a hegemon could provide global public goods. The teleological claim of the 19th century civilization theory that civilization is the “optimum condition for all mankind” and “only the civilised can know what it is to be civilised” is manifested in contemporary hegemonic stability theory as the belief that hegemony will always rise to fill up the void and only a hegemon could live up to this obligation to provide global public goods.²²

An imperialist politics is always sustained by the language of hegemony. Conventional scholarship on cultural imperialism tends to focus on the domi-

¹⁷ See DAVID P. CALLEO, *THE ATLANTIC FANTASY: THE US, NATO AND EUROPE* (1977); KEOHANE, *supra* note 9, at 31–45; PAUL KENNEDY, *THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GREAT POWERS, ECONOMIC CHANGE AND MILITARY CONFLICT FROM 1500 TO 2000* (1988).

¹⁸ See ZHANG, *supra* note 1, at 61–105; JAY SEXTON, *THE MONROE DOCTRINE: EMPIRE AND NATION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA* (2011); GRETCHEN MURPHY, *HEMISPHERIC IMAGININGS: THE MONROE DOCTRINE AND NARRATIVES OF U.S. EMPIRE* (2005).

¹⁹ See CARL SCHMITT, *POSITIONEN UND BEGRIFFE, IM KAMPF MIT WEIMAR-GENÈVE-VERSAILLES 1923–1939*, 295–302 (1940).

²⁰ See Yoshimi Takeuchi, *Hōhō To Shite no Ajia (方法としてのアジア) [Asia as A Method]*, in TAKEUCHI KŌHYŌ RONSHŪ (竹内好評論集) [COLLECTION OF TAKEUCHI YOSHIMI’S REVIEW ARTICLES] 419–20 (1966) (Japan).

²¹ See CEMIL AYDIN, *POLITICS OF ANTI-WESTERNISM IN ASIA: VISIONS OF WORLD ORDER IN PAN-ISLAMIC AND PAN-ASIAN THOUGHT* 59–69 (2007).

²² See Anthony Pagden, *The “Defence of Civilization” in Eighteenth-century Social Theory*, 1 HIST. HUMAN SCI. 33 (1988).

nant culture's oppression of others and its resistance.²³ However, it is problematic to depict hegemony as merely a form of dominance, as it consists of not only cohesion but also forming of a consent. Gramsci's insights allow us to see how hegemony constitutes its legitimacy in realm of ideas and knowledge rather than force. Gramsci refers this struggle over the domination of ideas and beliefs as "war of position." He noticed that within the Western nations, "war of position" always occurs prior to the domination through force, which is called "war of movement."²⁴ On the international level, however, the encounter of the European expansionism among the non-European peoples experienced "war of movement" first. In the case of Japan, where pan-Asianism was conceived, the violent early encounters with the West led the way to the submission to the hierarchical civilization theory.

II. JAPANESE STATE-CENTRIC CIVILIZATION THEORY AND ORIGIN OF PAN-ASIANISM

As Zhang clearly points out, Chinese encounter with Monroe Doctrine comes from Japanese sources. Pan-Asianism, according to Zhang's study, is the Japanese version of Monroe Doctrine.²⁵ Japanese notion of anti-western power through installing a powerful union of Asia under Japanese domination was attracting attention from intellectuals.²⁶ However, the interest was very short-lived. Why this is the case?

The Japanese enthusiasm toward 19th century civilization theory was rooted in the political reality of being forced to open up their countries to foreign pressure and entering the system of international relations dominated by the Euro-american "great powers" (*rekkyō* 列強, or in Chinese *lieqiang* 列强). This transition began in the mid-19th century with the intensification of the Anglo-american global expansion. In China, the landmark event was the First Opium War (1839–1842). In Japan, it began with the famous *Kurofune raikō* (黒船来航, known in English as the Arrival of the Black Ships) in 1853 and 1854. During this transition, both China and Japan struggled to redefine their place in the new international order. Historically, a system of inter-state relations and tributary trade cantered on China, also called the Sinocentric world system, had been the framework holding East Asia together as a region. Japan had long been part of this system. However, the growing European presents in Asia and the weakening of China post significant challenges to this existing world order in Asia.

²³ See Russell Smandych, *Cultural Imperialism and Its Critics: Rethinking Cultural Domination and Resistance*, in *CULTURAL IMPERIALISM: ESSAYS ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CULTURAL DOMINATION* 3 (Bernd Hamm & Russell Smandych eds., 2005).

²⁴ See ANTONIO GRAMSCI, *SELECTIONS FROM THE PRISON NOTEBOOKS OF ANTONIO GRAMSCI* 206–09 (1971).

²⁵ See Zhang, *supra* note 1, at 164.

²⁶ See *id.*, at 167.

In Japan, the arrival of the US warships commanded by Commodore Matthew Perry in the late Edo period (1638–1867) was so shocking to the Tokugawa shogunate that it went down as a landmark event in Japanese intellectual history. A significant change since then was the Dutch language and Dutch studies (蘭学) were mostly replaced by English and English scholarship. Comparing to the earlier Dutch studies scholars who passively acknowledged the reality of Japan being forced to open up, scholars under the influence of Anglo-american expansionism were advocating a more aggressive version of opening up.²⁷ Yoshida Shōin (吉田松陰, 1830–1859) was one of the main figures with this view.

Yoshida's worldview resembled today's hegemonic stability theory. He argued that Japan should defend itself against the Western expansionism by expanding to other parts of Asia such as Ryukyu Islands, the Philippines, Korea, and China.²⁸ To him, the destiny of a state was either expansion or being invaded. Henceforth, expansionism was the only way for Japanese self-preservation. When the Taiping rebellion (1851–1864) against the Qing Empire swiped through the southern provinces in China, Yoshida was concerned that the leaders of the Taiping rebellion would attack Japan after taking over China and gaining support from Korea.²⁹ Therefore, in a letter to his brother in 1855, Yoshida proposed that Japan had to maintain the status quo with the US and Russia, but actively expand to Asia. Losses sustained when trading with the US and Russia should be compensated by taking over lands from Korea, Manchuria, and Shina (支那).³⁰ Yoshida's thought was the intellectual inspiration for most of the leading reformists in Meiji government. Among them was the first Prime Minister of Japan, Itō Hirobumi (伊藤博文, 1841–1909).

Another crucial figure in the development of Japanese pan-Asianism was Fukuzawa Yukichi (福泽谕吉, 1835–1901), who introduced the Civilization as a singularity into Japanese. His *Bunmeiron* (文明論) depicted in his widely

²⁷ See Zhou Songlun (周颂伦), *Wenming "Ru'ou" yu Zhengzhi "Tuoya": Fuze Yuji "Wenming Lun" de Luoji Gouzao* (文明"入欧"与政治"脱亚"——福泽谕吉"文明论"的逻辑构造) (*Civilisation "Joining Europe" and Politics "Leaving Asia": The Logic Structure of Fukusawa Yukich's "Civilisation Theory"*), *ERSHIYI SHIJI* (二十一世纪) [TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY], Apr. 2014, at 29.

²⁸ See Tang Liguang (唐利国), *Lun Jitian Songyin de Yazhou Qinlue Sixiang* (论吉田松阴的亚洲侵略思想) (*On Yoshida Shōin's Idea on Invading Asia*), 5 *BEIHUA DAXUE XUEBAO* (SHEHUI KEXUE BAN) (北华大学学报(社会科学版)) (J. BEIHUA UNIV. (SOC. SCI. EDITION)) 28 (2017).

²⁹ See YOSHIDA SHŌIN (吉田松陰), *YOSHIDA SHŌIN ZENSHŪ* (吉田松陰全集) [COMPLETE WORKS OF YOSHIDA SHŌIN] 424 (1939) (Japan).

³⁰ See *id.*, at 422–23. *Shina* was a derogative term used in Japan. It refers to China, or in Japanese *kanji* “中国,” in which “中” also means centre. The use of the *Shina* (支那) is to avoid the implication of Chinese centrality. It also indicates a smaller geographic region than the word “中国” entails. Roughly, “支那” covers mostly the regions along the Chinese East coast, which is known in English as the “China proper”. In Japanese, it is also referred as “十八省” (*jū-hassei*, literally meaning eighteen provinces) or “中国本部” (*chugoku honbu*, China proper). It covers only part of the Qing Empire's territory, excluding Manchuria (today's Jilin, Liaoning, and Heilongjiang Provinces in China), Tibet, Xinjiang, and Mongolia (today's State of Mongolia and Inner Mongolia in China). For the genealogy of this concept in Meiji Japan, see Chen Bo, *Riben Mingzhi Shidai de Zhongguo Benbu Gainian* (日本明治时代的中国本部概念) [*The Concept of China Proper during Meiji Period in Japan*], 7 *XUESHU YUEKAN* (学术月刊) (ACADEMIC MONTHLY) 157 (2016).

circulated book *Bunmeiron no Gairyaku* (文明論の概略, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 1875, hereafter refers as “Outline”) aims to provide a path for Japan in the time of great transformation to become a “civilised nation” (文明国) like the “most civilised nations in Europe and the United States of America.” His teleological view on the development of Civilization is made very clear with the title of the second chapter in the Outline, which says “taking the Western (西洋) Civilization as the destination.”³¹ He accepted the popular three-tier hierarchy order in the Western theory of civilization and divided the nations of the world into categories of “the civilised,” “the semi-civilised,” and “the savage.”

Scholars have already convincingly shown that Fukuzawa’s understanding of Civilization mainly came from high school Geography textbooks published in the US around the 1860s and 70s.³² However, Fukuzawa’s categorisation of Civilization has a subtle but crucial difference from its Western source. The Civilization theory popular in the then Euro-american world was deeply rooted in the study of ethnography. The three-tier division was a categorisation of the world’s people. This ethnocentric view of civilization can be understood as the *raison d’état* of an empire. It always emerges when an empire is on an expansionist trajectory, providing justification for the domination of one race over the others. The standard of civilization forms the foundation for the justification of a European expansionism. It originated in 18th century France.³³ Later it was made popular with the global expansion of the British Empire. In his famous lecture series on the history of the expansion of England, John Seeley’s interest is to connect the development of Britain as a global empire with the “general drift” and “goal” of the entire human civilization. To him, the expansion of England is inevitable as it is determined by the uniqueness of English environment and biological evolution of the Anglo-Saxon race. The expansion of the “English State” is fundamentally the “diffusion of our race” and will transform the other races morally and socially to an advanced stage.³⁴ This rhetoric at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries quickly sunk into political and popular discourse in the Anglo-american world. As a superior race, the white man, or to be more specific in the eyes of Anglo-american imperialists, the Anglo-Saxon, has the moral duty to carry the other races to the top of human civilization. The main way to achieve this goal is through both indirect dominance of the semi-colonies in Afro-Asian world and building “White Man’s country” in settlement colonies such as the US, Canada, Australia, and South Africa.

³¹ FUKUZAWA YUKICHI (福沢諭吉), *BUNMEIRON NO GAIRYAKU* (文明論の概略) [AN OUTLINE OF A THEORY OF CIVILISATION] 21 (1875).

³² See ALBERT M. CRAIG, *CIVILIZATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT: THE EARLY THOUGHT OF FUKUZAWA YUICHI* 41–53 (2009).

³³ See BRETT BOWDEN, *THE EMPIRE OF CIVILIZATION, THE EVOLUTION OF AN IMPERIAL IDEA* 27–28 (2009).

³⁴ See J. R. SEELEY, *THE EXPANSION OF ENGLAND, TWO COURSES OF LECTURES* 4–10 (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1914).

However, to Fukuzawa, his vision of transforming Japan into a “civilised nation” would not work with such an ethnocentric view of civilization placing the White race at the top of human civilization and evolution. Therefore, Fukuzawa downplayed the centrality of race in his version of civilization theory. Instead, he placed, *kuni* (国, state) rather than “people” as the fundamental unit to evaluate the level of development. In this way, the hierarchical order only denotes the different levels of development of state. A semi-civilised state could transform into a civilised one if applying the modernisation model proved to be useful by the success of the civilised Western countries. Unlike the ethnocentric civilization theory, which suggests the other races need to be enlightened by the White race, the Japanese take on civilization theory gives importance to self-transformation through reform and learning. Therefore, around the same time when Fukuzawa’s civilization theory was published, Nakamura Masanao’s (中村正直, 1832–1891) translation of Samuel Smiles’ *Self-Help* became widely popular too, forming as another vital component in the Japanese modernisation discourse.³⁵ To Fukuzawa, for Japan as a “state in the East” (東洋の一国), the source for modernisation comes from teachings offered by “*seiyō bunmei*” (西洋文明, Western Civilization), which was “already introduced to Japan over a hundred years ago.”³⁶ This notion of modernisation by transforming Japan less like an Eastern nation but more like a European state was later coined famously as “leaving Asia and joining Europe” (脱亜入欧).³⁷

Fukuzawa’s vision of modernisation by “leaving Asia” does not imply detaching from Asian geopolitical affairs. Asia in his civilization theory mainly implies a Sino-centric regional order sustained by a narrowly defined Confucian hierarchical moral structure. Fukuzawa considered China as an intellectually barren place under authoritarian theocracy, whereas Japan was much more vibrant with potential to develop an advanced civilization. The advanced state consequently has a moral obligation to suppress the backward nation in the development of human civilization through trade competition and warfare.³⁸

By the early 1880s, Fukuzawa began to actively express the idea that “Asia should work together to fend off the Westerners’ bully and invasion”. This marks the emergence of his civilization theory has matured into a geopolitical strategy later known as “*Nihon meishu-ron*” (日本盟主論, literally means Japan as the

³⁵ See Hirakawa Sukehiro, *Japan’s Turn to the West*, in MODERN JAPANESE THOUGHT 30, 80–85 (Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi ed., 1998).

³⁶ Yukichi Fukuzawa, *Rangaku Kotohazime Saihan Zyo* (蘭学事始再版序) (Forward for the Reprint of *The Origin of Dutch Studies*), in FUKUZAWA YUKICHI ZENSHŪ (福沢諭吉全集) (THE COMPLETE WORKS OF FUKUZAWA YUKICHI) 770 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten (岩波書店), 1962).

³⁷ See Urs Matthias Zachmann, *The Foundation Manifesto of the Kōokai (Raising Asia Society) and the Ajia Kyōkai (Asia Association), 1880-1883*, in PAN-ASIANISM, A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY 53–60 (Sven Saaler & Christopher W. A. Szpilman eds., 2011); Hirakawa Sukehiro, *supra* note 35, at 30–97.

³⁸ See FUKUZAWA, *supra* note 31, at 36–39.

leader in the union).³⁹ In the early 20th century, the growing power of the Japanese nation-state and growing Japanese self-confidence, emerging as a consequence of growing power, eventually militated against a return to Asia, but led instead to ever-strengthening Japanese claims of superiority over Asia and leadership in Asia culminating in the “new order” of the 1930s and the “Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere” of the early 1940s.

III. PAN-ASIANISM IN CHINA

Intellectuals in the late 19th China were also attracted to the discourse of pan-Asianism and the hierarchical civilization theory translated by the Japanese reformists.⁴⁰ Chinese reformers turned dissidents in the late Qing period Kang Youwei (康有为, 1858–1927) and Liang Qichao (梁启超, 1873–1929) were received by Japanese pan-Asianists in 1898 when they were forced to flee Beijing.⁴¹ Revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen (孙中山, 1866–1925) was a frequently-seen guest in pan-Asian circles in Japan during the Meiji period.⁴² According to Zhang’s historical survey, some of Sun’s political writings were clearly under the influence of Monroe Doctrine, or at least the Japanese adaptation of it.⁴³ However, the transnational travel of ideas was far from being a simple story of intellectual transfusion or even diffusion. Particularly in the case of the spread of civilization theory from the dominant to the oppressed, it ignites a global process in which generations of intellectuals begin to aspire the future of their own nations through rewriting, crossbreeding, interpreting, adapting, criticising and resisting those discourses of dominance.

In the case of the spread of pan-Asianism by the end of 19th century, the Chinese elites were particularly interested in the idea that Asia could work together to fend off the growing Western penetration. The US occupation of the Philippines in 1898 and the Anglo-Boer War in 1899 were two major global events reminding the Chinese about the real possibility of China being broken up by the Western expansionism. In respond to such a concern, elites in both Japan and China began to take strong interests in the Monroe Doctrine. To Japan, the Monroe Doctrine’s appeal was predominantly on its potential of justifying Japan’s claim to Asia. In 1898, soon after the First Sino-Japanese

³⁹ See Zhou, *supra* note 27, at 29–41.

⁴⁰ See Guo Shuanglin (郭双林), *Cong Jindai Bianyi Kan Xi Xue Dong Jian: Yi Xiang Yi Dili Jiaokeshu Wei Zhongxin de Kaocha* (从近代编译看西学东渐——一项以地理教科书为中心的考察) [*Understanding Western Knowledge Moving to the East via Modern Translation: A Investigation of Chinese Translations of Western Geography Textbooks*], in SHIJIE ZHIXU YU WENMING DENGJI: QUANQIU SHI YANJIU DE XIN LUJING (世界秩序与文明等级: 全球史研究的新路径) (ORIGINS OF THE GLOBAL ORDER: FROM THE MERIDIAN LINES TO THE STANDARD OF CIVILIZATION) 237–90 (Lydia H. Liu ed., Shenghuo Dushu Xinzhi Sanlian Shudian (生活·读书·新知三联书店), 2016).

⁴¹ See ZHANG, *supra* note 1, at 218–19.

⁴² See Sven Saaler & Christopher W. A. Szpilman, *Introduction: The Emergence of Pan-Asianism as an Ideal of Asian Identity and Solidarity, 1850-2008*, in Sven Saaler & Christopher W. A. Szpilman eds., *supra* note 37, at 20–26.

⁴³ See ZHANG, *supra* note 1, at 222.

War (1894–1895) and Japan occupying Taiwan, the Tōa Dōbunkai (東亜同文会, East Asia Common Culture Society) was established by Duke Konoe Atsumaro (近衛篤磨, 1863–1904) with the conviction that Japan should lead Asia out of the crisis inflicted by the Euro-american “great powers” expansion in Asia. Its founding principle, “the Orient for the Orientals” (東洋は東洋人の東洋なり), was inspired directly by the rhetoric of Monroe Doctrine.⁴⁴

The idea of the Orient (*Tōyō*, 東洋, literally means the East of ocean) unified against the West (*Seiyō*, 西洋, literally means the West of ocean) was appealing to many Asian countries which were under threat of Euroamerican imperialism at the time. By the end of the 19th century, intellectuals from China, Korea and Vietnam were particularly attracted to a part of the “Asianism” (*Tōyō Shugi*, 東洋主義) that addressed the shared cultural identity (*Dōbun*, 同文, literally means same language)⁴⁵ and the ethnic relationship among the Asian races (*Dōshu* 同種, literally means same ethnicity), briefly forming a transnational imagination of the “Yellow race” unifying against the “White race.”⁴⁶

This rosy image of Asians unified against the West was quickly shattered. In 1894, during the First Sino-Japanese War, Japanese expedition force conducted a massacre at Port Arthur (in Chinese *lǚshunkou*, 旅顺口). The killing lasted for four days, leaving more than 20,000 Chinese unarmed service men and civilians dead. This atrocity was among the first widely reported massacres in Western media in modern history. When the news about the massacre appeared in the US media, Japan turned from the “light of civilization” in the “darkness of the Far East,” to just another “Asian barbarian.” As the *Kansas City Journal* observed, “[t]he barbarities perpetrated by the civilized Japanese at Port Arthur are just as revolting as if they had been committed by

⁴⁴ See Fujita Yoshihisa, *Tōa Dōbunkai – Kyōiku-sha To Shite no Konoe Atsumaro* (東亜同文会—教育者としての近衛篤磨) (East Asia Common Culture Society: Konoe Atsumaro as an Educator, 26 DōBUN SHOIN KINENHŌ (同文書院記念報) [J. OF COMMEMORATING THE COMMON CULTURE ACAD.] 85 (2018); ZHANG, *supra* note 1, at 160–210.

⁴⁵ This expression refers to the fact that Chinese character is the cultural *lingua franca* among the educated people in Asian countries such as Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and China. Regarding Chinese as the *lingua franca* in the anti-colonial movements in Asia, see Luo Jingwen (罗景文), *Dongya Han Wenhua Zhishi Quan de Liudong yu Hudong: Yi Liang Qichao yu Pan Peizhu dui Xifang Sixiangjia yu Riben Weixin Renwu de Shuxie Wei Li* (东亚汉文化知识圈的流动与互动——以梁启超与潘佩珠对西方思想家与日本维新人物的书写为例) [*Transfers and Interactions among the Intellectual Communities of East Asian Chinese Character Culture Sphere: The Description of the Western Thinkers and the Meiji Restoration Intellectuals by Liang Qi Chao and Phan Bội Châu*], TAI DA LISHI XUEBAO (台大历史学报) [HISTORICAL INQUIRY], Dec. 2011, at 51–96.

⁴⁶ See Frédéric Roustau, *From Oriental Studies to South Pacific Studies: The Multiple Origins of Vietnamese Studies in Japan, 1881 to 1951*, 6 J. VIET. STUD. 1 (2011); Cemil Aydin, *Beyond Civilization: Pan-Islamism, Pan-Asianism and the Revolt against the West*, 4 J. MOD. EUR. HIST. 204 (2006); Liu Xianfei (刘先飞), *Dong You Yundong yu Pan Peizhu Riben Renshi de Zhuanbian* (东游运动与潘佩珠日本认识的转变) [The Changes in Phan Boi Chau's Understanding of Japan after the Movement of Traveling about Japan], 5 DONGNANYA YANJIU (东南亚研究) [SOUTHEAST ASIA STUD.] 69 (2011).

the uncivilized Chinese.”⁴⁷ Fukuzawa was extremely upset by the American media reaction toward the Japanese action at Port Arthur. He continued to defend that the Japanese military action in China was a war to advance world civilization by eliminating the backward forces. China should be thankful for the Japanese as a civilising leader. He also condemned the reports of massacre as false, which originated from the long-lasting bias and arrogant disbelief toward the fact that a “backward nation could transform itself into prosperity.”⁴⁸

It did not take very long for the intellectuals from other Asian nations to realise that the Japanese idea of Asianism was firmly centred on the Japanese domination of Asia. Dr Sun Yat-sen once warned Vietnamese anti-colonial revolutionary Phan Bội Châu (1867–1940) that Japan was interested in “power” (*qiangquan*, 强权) rather than “humanity” (*rendao*, 人道). Therefore, Japan would not be a reliable ally in the cause of global anti-colonialism.⁴⁹ Instead of relying on the hierarchical civilization theory, Chinese intellectuals were more interested in seeing Asia as a union against imperialism. In 1898, *Qingyi Bao* (清议报, The China Discussion), a reformist periodical published in Yokohama by Liang Qichao, Mai Menghua (麦孟华, 1875–1915), and Ou Jujia (欧榘甲, 1870–1911) published a short article titled “New Monroeism from the Far East” (《极东之新木爱罗主义》). It claims to be a translation of a news article published in the U.S. The article calls the New Monroeism as a “new imperialism excised by the US and Britain to dominate the world.” Such a new imperialism is different from the “Roman imperialism” as it calls for “justice and peace, self-determination and rule of law.” The international order under such a new Monroe doctrine is “under the governance of an international arbitral institution, jointly led by Britain, the U.S.A. and Netherland.” This world order advocates “open door policy” and “free trade.” It will also prevent the colonial expansion of European powers in China and “take China under the joint protection provided by the U.S.A., Britain and Japan.”⁵⁰

There are no further comments associated with this article, showing how the Chinese reformists think about the “new imperialism” from the U.S.A., Britain and Japan. However, other texts published in the same period by intellectuals in the inner circle of these Chinese reformist thinkers are helpful in piecing together a comprehensive picture of Chinese attitude toward Asianism. One of the significant features is that the ethnocentric view among Euro-american advocates of social Darwinism such as Benjamin Kidd and

⁴⁷ Jeffrey M. Dorwart, *James Creelman, the “New York World” and the Port Arthur Massacre*, 50 JOURNALISM Q. 697, 699 (1973).

⁴⁸ See Dong Shunbo (董顺擘), *Lun Fuze Yuji dui Liishun Datusha Shijian de Pinglun* (论福泽谕吉对旅顺大屠杀事件的评论) [*Fukuzawa Yukichi’s Comments on the Port Arthur Massacre*], 7 SHEKEZONGHENG (社科纵横) [SOC. SCI. REV.] 107 (2014).

⁴⁹ See Liu, *supra* note 46, at 72.

⁵⁰ See Ji Dong *Zhi Xin Mu Ai Luo Zhu yi* (极东之新木爱罗主义) [*New Monroeism from the Far East*], Kataoka Tsuruo (片冈鹤雄) trans., QINGYI BAO (清议报) [THE CHINA DISCUSSION], Jan. 2, 1899, issue 2, at 21–22.

Walter Bagehot was either omitted or altered in Chinese translations and introductions of their works.

A famous interpretation of Benjamin Kidd comes from Liang Qichao, which focuses on the importance of cooperation in the national progression. In Liang's reading, Christianity, which Kidd placed in a crucial position in his narrative was omitted. Instead, Liang elaborates on the general function of "religion" in "combating against the inherited evil of mankind," "promoting the unification of different groups," and "serving the future interests of the entire mankind."⁵¹ Liang believes that Kidd's theory moves a step further from the natural selection theory of Charles Darwin. Although a single organism can perish, the development of the entire species is eternal. Liang therefore argues that "death" serves an important evolutionary function as long as "each individual could die for the benefit of the entire race and the current generation of a race would die for the future generation." In this sense, death becomes a form of sacrifice, which aims to "give birth to the future." Different from the Western reception of Benjamin Kidd, Liang believes that it is the philosophical thinking about death that establishes Kidd as a "revolutionary figure in the development of evolutionism."

To Liang Qichao, Kidd's discussion on the relation between individual and society is intriguing. Liang argues that within a species group, the number of individuals who hold the spirit of "sacrificing now in exchange for a better future" determines the group's level of evolution. He believes that the path of evolution is always forward looking. The past and present are merely "gateway to the future." Therefore, Liang suggests that Kidd is reminding readers not only to focus on seeking for the wellbeing now but also think about the "bigger picture for the future." To Liang, "nation" is a present-facing institution which is only responsible for looking after the interests of a certain group. "Society," on the other hand, beholds the future general wellbeing of the entire human kind. However, Liang did not envision a clear solution for humankind's transformation from fragmented nation to a universal global society. He simply rejects Herbert Spencer's conviction which argues for the destined abolishment of national boarder and arrival of a cosmopolitan world. In Liang's reading, by embodying presence with future-looking destiny, Kidd manages to save the present from its temporality. This makes Kidd's thought more valuable. Chinese intellectuals should also respond to this development and recognize that any discussions about the present have to have a future-facing purpose. Only by doing so, we can then transcend from the 19th century, an "era focusing only on the present existence" (现在主义之时代) and make the "thinking about current society, nation, and morality" more "meaningful and

⁵¹ Liang Qichao (梁启超), *Jinhua Lun Geming Zhe Jie De Zhi Xueshuo* (进化论革命者顿德之学说) [*Introducing Benjamin Kidd, a Revolutionary Thinker on Evolutionism*], in 1 YIN BIN SHI WENJI DIANJIANG (饮冰室文集点校) [COLLECTION AND ANNOTATION OF LIANG QICHAO'S WORKS] 423, 424 (Song Wu (吴松) et al. eds., Yunnan Jiaoyu Chubanshe (云南教育出版社), 2001).

valuable.”⁵² Through Liang’s interpretation, Kidd’s justification for Anglo-Saxon global economic and military expansionism became a philosophical enquiry of a series of more dialectic and universal relations, namely life and death, presence and future, nation and society, individual and community.

Most Chinese intellectuals in the early 20th century show concerns about imperialism. In 1901, *Kai Zhi Lu* (开智录, Enlightenment Recording) published an article titled “On the Development of Imperialism and the Future of the 20th Century World.” The author suggests that the Afro-Asian cooperation against imperialism will reshape the course of the 20th century historical development. The author takes imperialism as an “expansionism (膨胀主义),” an “ism advocating territorial acquisition (版图扩张主义),” a “militarism (侵略主义),” and a “Dick Turpinism (狄塔偏主义).” The rise of imperialism leads to an “era when liberty decays.” Imperialism began in the late 19th and early 20th century when “the European powers recovered from revolutions.” It feeds upon the “inequality of national powers across the global.” The author, using the pseudonym Zi Qiang (自强, literally means self-strengthening), specifies that imperialism refers to the “expansionist global doctrine of Britain, the USA and Germany.” It is different from the “territorial expansionist policy that Russia and France always embraced”. Japan should also be viewed differently, as it “merely follows the European powers.” The author emphasizes that combating against imperialism should rely on “waving the flag of self-reliance and liberty, encouraging national people’s spirit of independence and love of freedom.” The resistance against imperialism and the pursuit of national independence and self-reliance (独立自主) will have the momentum, which is “tens and hundreds of times larger than the one driving the European revolutions,” and eventually transform “Asia and Africa” into a “big battlefield of the 20th century.”⁵³

Such a criticism against imperial world order and an awareness of achieving independence through some forms of cooperation among the weak and the small nations can be spotted at the time across many Third World intellectuals. Probably to the surprise of the 19th century Anglo-Saxon imperial elites, the hierarchical world order they envisioned based on the dichotomy between center and peripheral, advanced and backward, developed and underdeveloped achieved its “universality” in their most unintended manner. The empire and its knowledge become the “Other” in the “peripheral” and “semi-peripheral” world. By writing back against and writing through the imperial knowledge, the broader Third World create its own modernization experience and modern world view.

⁵² See *id.*, at 426–27.

⁵³ See *Lun Diguo Zhuyi Zhi Fada Ji Nian Shiji Shijie Zhi Qiantu* (论帝国主义之发达及廿世纪世界之前途) [*On the Development of Imperialism and the Future of the 20th Century*], in 25 *QINGYIBAO QUANBIAN* (清议报全编) [COMPLETE COLLECTION OF THE CHINA DISCUSSION] 178 (Shen Yunlong (沈云龙) ed., Taipei: Wenhai Chubanshe (文海出版社), 1985).

IV. FROM NEW ASIANISM TO AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY, A CHINESE COMMUNIST VIEW

A major cliff-hanger in Zhang's book is his answer to the why question. Why China did not become another Japan despite facing a similar threat from Western imperialism? Why did the Chinese take the pan-Asian imagination onto a completely different path? He did notice Li Dazhao (李大钊, 1889–1927) in this decisive moment of intellectual rupture.

The Chinese interests towards pan-Asianism, particularly its underlying theory of hierarchical civilization soon withered in the early 20th century, especially after the outbreak of the World War I in Europe.⁵⁴ Zhang notices this major transformation too.⁵⁵ Instead, a more internationalist imagination of an Afro-Asian anti-imperial and anti-colonial unity quickly gained intellectual and political attentions in China. After 1949 when the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established, cultural exchanges, political engagements, and economic cooperation within the framework of Afro-Asian internationalism quickly became a dominant theme in PRC's worldview, contributing to Chinese nation-building mobilisation in the 1950s and 60s.

One of the earliest criticisms against the Japan-centric pan-Asianism and the "Monroeism from the Far East" came from Li Dazhao (李大钊, 1889–1927), who was one of the founding fathers of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC). In 1912, Li Dazhao and his colleagues at the Peiyang Law and Politics Association (北洋法政学会) translated Nakajima Hata's (中島端, 1859–1930) *The Destiny of China Being Divided* (支那分割の運命) with annotations and commentary. In the commentary, Li and his colleagues considered Japanese "Asian Monroeism" (亚洲孟罗主义) as the equivalent of "pan-Asianism" (大亚细亚主义), which was "merely a synonym of Japanese ambition of dominating Asia."⁵⁶ To Li Dazhao, ideas for regional domination in the forms of "Pan...ism" are fundamentally "in conflict with democracy." It is "nothing more than the cant term for despotism."⁵⁷ Regional domination in forms of "pan-Europeanism," "pan-Americanism," "pan-Asianism," "pan-Germanism," and "pan-Slavism" are all selfish hegemonic ambition, seeking to subjugate other people.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ See Torsten Weber, *From Versailles to Shanghai: Pan-Asianist Legacies of the Paris Peace Conference and the Failure of Asianism from Below*, in *ASIA AFTER VERSAILLES, ASIAN PERSPECTIVES ON THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE AND THE INTERWAR ORDER, 1919–33*, 77–97 (Urs Matthias Zachmann ed., 2017).

⁵⁵ See ZHANG, *supra* note 1, at 279–81.

⁵⁶ Li Dazhao (李大钊), *Zhina Fenge Zhi Mingyun Bo Yi* (支那分割之运命驳议) [Against the Destiny of China Being Divided], in 1 LI DAZHAO QUANJI (李大钊全集) [COMPLETE WORKS OF LI DAZHAO] 260, 479 (Hebei Jiaoyu Chubanshe (河北教育出版社), 1999).

⁵⁷ Li Dazhao (李大钊), *Shumin de Shengli* (庶民的胜利) [The Triumph of the Common People], in LI DAZHAO XUANJI (李大钊选集) [SELECTION OF LI DAZHAO'S WORKS] 109, 109 (Renmin Chubanshe (人民出版社), 1959).

⁵⁸ See Li Dazhao (李大钊), *Pan...ism Zhi Shibai yu Democracy Zhi Shengli* (Pan...ism之失败与Democracy之胜利) [The Defeat of Pan...ism and the Triumph of Democracy], in LI DAZHAO XUANJI (李大钊选集) [SELECTION OF LI DAZHAO'S WORKS] 105 (Renmin Chubanshe (人民出版社), 1959).

In comparison, Li Dazhao proposed his own “New Asianism” (新亚细亚主义) as a counter argument to the Japan-centric pan-Asianism. Li considered that “pan-Asianism” was not aiming to promote national self-determination. Instead, it was “an imperialism aiming to absorb the small and weak nations.”⁵⁹ A true Asianism, according to Li Dazhao, should come from a unified action against imperialism. All the Asians under oppression should work together, striving for “justice (*gongli*, 公理, literally means truth acknowledged by the public) and equality (*pingdeng*, 平等),” even “at the cost of armed resistances.”⁶⁰

Through “New Asianism,” Li Dazhao has envisioned a spatial order which does not involve hegemonic domination of space. Instead of having a dominating power filling the geopolitical “void,” Li believes that the national independence movements in Asia will transform the nations formerly dominated by hegemonic powers. Only with self-determined nations filling up the space of Asia can a true union of equality could form. This will then turn Asia into a “larger union” on equal footing with Europe and America, leading the world into a “federation of equals” that could “advance the wellbeing of humankind.”⁶¹

Li Dazhao believes that the future of Asianism is the union of the world. It should not be understood as a regionalism or even narrow-minded nationalism which opposes the ideal of “globalism” (*Shijie zhuyi*, 世界主义). Differ from the state-centric view in Japanese pan-Asianism, Li Dazhao sees the future of China in the context of a broader liberation of all oppressed Asians. Our “common enemy” is “hegemony” (*qiangquan*, 强权). Our “common friend” is “justice” (*gongli*).⁶² These early discussions on Asianism form the foundation for the later discourses sustaining the imagination of an Afro-Asian solidarity order in the PRC.

Li’s depiction of a new “Asianism” adds another layer to the complexity of this transnational diffusion of ideas in modern time. It entails an innovative understanding of the dialectic relation between nationalism and internationalism (or in Li Dazhao’s word “globalism”), reminding us that concepts as such could only acquire their limited universality in certain socio-historical contexts. In this case, it reminds us that the contradiction between nationalism and internationalism is only true in the European historical context.

⁵⁹ Li Dazhao (李大钊), *Da Yaxiya Zhuyi yu Xin Yaxiya Zhuyi* (大亚细亚主义与新亚细亚主义) [*Pan-Asianism and New Asianism*], in LI DAZHAO XUANJI (李大钊选集) [SELECTION OF LI DAZHAO’S WORKS] 119, 119 (Renmin Chubanshe (人民出版社), 1959).

⁶⁰ See *id.*, at 120.

⁶¹ Li Dazhao (李大钊), *Guomin Zhi Xin Dan* (国民之薪胆) [*The Great Revival of the National People*], in LI DAZHAO XUANJI (李大钊选集) [SELECTION OF LI DAZHAO’S WORKS] 8, 12 (Renmin Chubanshe (人民出版社), 1959).

⁶² See Li Dazhao (李大钊), *Zai Lun Xin Yaxiya Zhuyi* (再论新亚细亚主义) [*On New Asianism Again*], in LI DAZHAO XUANJI (李大钊选集) [SELECTION OF LI DAZHAO’S WORKS] 278, 280 (Renmin Chubanshe (人民出版社), 1959).

The concept of internationalism has largely been investigated as a subject in the history of globalisation, utopianism or international socialist movement. When it was firstly used in Victorian England, internationalism was considered as a synonym of “civilization.” As a “desideratum,” internationalism can only be effectually produced by “rendering the drama, or picture of life, or each country familiar to the inhabitants of another, by the works of the portrait-painters.”⁶³ The booming of printing industry, telegraph communication, urbanisation, industrial revolution and entertainment business enable the emergence of what J. A. Hobson called the “simultaneous sympathy” among the “reading public.”⁶⁴ Scholars of critical studies and global literature invest significant attention to this phenomenon as part of the grand attempt to unravelling mankind’s experience of modernity. In this context, we also see the concept of internationalism being used interchangeably with “cosmopolitanism.”

The Eurocentric understanding of internationalism originates from a long tradition of *ius gentium*. To Kant, *ius gentium* addresses two legal personalities, namely *Völkerrecht* and *Völkerrechtssubjekt*. The existence of the latter logically entails a supra-national civic state founded on the consent of free will of “citizens of the earth” (*Erdbürger*) rather than as citizens of a particular state. Consequently, Kant draws a distinction between *ius gentium* (laws which govern the interaction of individual states) and *ius cosmopolitanicum* (law for world citizens). To Kant, the content of *ius cosmopolitanicum* is the right to hospitality, or to be more specific, “the right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility because of his arrival on someone else’s soil.”⁶⁵ According to Kant, mankind demands an authority to prevent individuals from abusing their freedom. Such an authority will tame mankind’s individual will and enforce a Rousseauian concept of the *volonté générale* which enables the freedom of everyone.

However, in the non-European world, the nationalist agenda of independence would only be possible when it became a transnational movement. Revolutionary leaders and progressive intellectuals in Asia came to this understanding when they began to understand that hegemonic powers were already operating on a global level. To the CPC, liberation as a transformation for the oppressed world only gains its momentum in the modern history of anti-imperialism.⁶⁶ It is a “part” of a global transformation associated with the historical development of imperialist warfare and anti-imperialism across the world.⁶⁷ Henceforth, liberation could not just be a nationalist transformation. It

⁶³ *Her Majesty’s Theatre*, ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS (Jun. 24, 1843), at 436.

⁶⁴ See J. A. Hobson, *The Ethics of Internationalism*, 17 INT’L J. ETHICS 16 (1906).

⁶⁵ Quoted in Pauline Kleingeld, *Kant’s Cosmopolitan Law: World Citizenship for a Global Order*, 2 KANTIAN REV. 72, 75 (1998).

⁶⁶ See Mao Zedong (毛泽东), *Xin Minzhu Zhuyi Lun* (新民主主义论) [*On New Democracy*], in 7 MŌ TAKUTŌ SHŪ (毛泽东集) [COLLECTED WRITINGS OF MAO TSE-TUNG] 143, 148 (Minoru Takeuchi (竹内実) ed., Tokyo: Hokubōsha (苍苍社), 2nd ed., 1983).

⁶⁷ See *id.*, at 147–55.

is, by nature, a universal mission rooted in the shared experience of suffering from the imperialist hegemony among the world's peoples, particularly peoples from what is later known as the "Third World nations." This narrative of a shared historical experience caused by the 19th century global expansion of imperialism consequently becomes the foundation for the understanding and practices of sovereignty among the Third World nations.

Liberation does not only mean gaining the Westphalian sovereignty.⁶⁸ Without the capabilities "which enable governments to be their own masters," states could at most be recognised as possessing the "negative sovereignty."⁶⁹ In the PRC's understanding, liberation does not arrive with national independence in the sense of gaining the "territorial sovereignty." It is a long global transformation which requires mutual-support among the sovereigns. Hence, to the PRC, advocating sovereignty does not only convey a principle of legal autonomy free from interventions from other nations, it also represents a conviction in the necessity of transforming the global order into an egalitarian one. We could observe the practices of this dimension of sovereignty in the Chinese involvement in the Afro-Asian solidarity movement in the 1940s and 50s.

This idea that sovereignty could only emerge through an act of liberation by the people against all forms of oppression, foreign and domestic alike, is deeply rooted in the modern Chinese experience of social revolution. It was given constitutional status in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (hereafter refers as the "Common Programme") in 1949. As the first constitutional document of the PRC, it proclaims at the beginning that the "glorious triumph of the Chinese people's liberation war and the people's revolution" marked the "end of an era under imperialist, feudalism and crony capitalism in China." With the establishment of the PRC, an old nation of China is made anew. Its hallmark is the transformation of the "Chinese people" from being oppressed into the "master of the new society and the new nation."⁷⁰ All its state power "belongs to the people."⁷¹

The Common Programme pays more attention to defining the centrality of the people in all the state institutions. Such a position is not received a form of empowerment but a result of their own revolutionary struggle. This notion is

⁶⁸ See STEPHEN D. KRASNER, SOVEREIGNTY: ORGANIZED HYPOCRISY 73–104 (1999).

⁶⁹ See ROBERT H. JACKSON, QUASI-STATES: SOVEREIGNTY, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THE THIRD WORLD 27 (1993). Jackson also uses the term "negative sovereignty" to describe a formal legal condition of a state enjoying the freedom from external interference. It resonates with Krasner's categorisation of the Westphalian sovereignty.

⁷⁰ *Zhongguo Renmin Zhengzhi Xieshang Huiyi Gongtong Gangling* (中国人民政治协商会议共同纲领) [Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference], in 18 ZHONGGONG ZHONGYANG WENJIAN XUANJI (中共中央文件选集) [COLLECTION OF THE DOCUMENTS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY] 584, 584 (Zhongyang Dang'an Guan (中央档案馆) ed., Zhonggong Zhongyang Dangxiao Chubanshe (中共中央党校出版社), 1992). The Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference was passed at the first Plenary Session of the Chinese People's Consultative Conference on September 29, 1949.

⁷¹ *Id.*, at 586.

reflected in the narrative of the 1949 Common Programme. It defines the newly formed nation in the historical dynamics of socio-political transformation. The “will of the people” to establish the PRC is a consensus reached through this historical process and becomes the political foundation of the new nation.⁷² History does not stop with the establishment of the new republic, with the territorial transference between the old rulers and the new sovereign. The protection of the territorial sovereignty by the “military force of the people” is certainly a major responsibility of the newly formed government.⁷³ However, it is more important for the new regime to carry out the missions of the people’s sovereign and “strive for independence, democracy, peace, unity, prosperity and strength of China.”⁷⁴ The means of achieving this mission is by “develop new democracy people’s economy,” “transforming China into an industrial nation,” promoting the “public morality” (*gongde* 公德) among the “national people” (*guomin* 国民) and “defending the perpetual peace of the world” and “friendly cooperation among peoples of all nations.”⁷⁵ Until the recently 2018 Amendment, the Chinese Constitution has always maintained this historical approach and placed the history of revolutionary struggle of the Chinese people since 1840 at the central of its source of law.⁷⁶

The PRC’s understanding of the Afro-Asian solidarity reflects its own domestic experience of liberation through revolution. It is viewed as a segment in a long history of the ongoing struggle for national and social liberations in the Third World, which stretches back to the early 20th century and forms the post-WWII Afro-Asian and later the Tricontinental solidarity movement.

This solidarity movement embodied the hope for a new world order envisioned by the former colonised world. It challenges the traditional Euro-centric diplomacy that resonates on the notion of the balance of powers. The newly formed nations and nations seeking for independence were actively pursuing a democratic and equal international order that did not discriminate against the weak and poor nations. The confidence in the possibility of achieving such an idealistic global order contextualises the nation-building practices in many of those nations. To the PRC, this international call for an egalitarian global order signifies a historic moment in which the weak nations could unite and make their own fate.

As Zhou Enlai stated in his Bandung Speech in 1955, with more and more “Afro-Asian nations freeing themselves from the constraint of colonialism,” the “Afro-Asian region” has transformed tremendously. The Afro-Asian peoples’ rising awareness of “regaining control of their own fates” after a “long struggle”

⁷² See *id.*, at 584.

⁷³ See *id.*, at 586.

⁷⁴ *Id.*, at 585.

⁷⁵ *Id.*, at 586 & 595.

⁷⁶ See ZHONGHUA RENMIN GONGHEGUO XIANFA (中华人民共和国宪法) [Constitution of the People’s Republic of China] (amended by the Nat’l People’s Cong., Mar. 11, 2018), XINHUA NET (Mar. 22, 2018), http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2018lh/2018-03/22/c_1122572202.htm.

against colonialism symbolised that “yesterday’s Asia and Africa” being made anew. The common historical experience of suffering and struggle enables the Afro-Asian peoples to envision their *volonté générale* to achieve “freedom and independence,” and to “change the socio-economical backwardness caused by the colonial rule.”⁷⁷ In this long historical process of transformation, the Afro-Asian peoples have developed a sense of “empathy and solicitude” that enable the Afro-Asian nations to peacefully coexist and achieve “friendly cooperation.”⁷⁸

The historical narrative in Zhou’s Bandung speech contextualise the proposal of Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence recognised in the Final Communiqué of the Afro-Asian Conference. Sovereignty does not only convey principles of non-intervention and territorial integrity; it also exists in the context of the recognition of a set of collective international responsibilities. These responsibilities, as coined in the *Final Communiqué of the Asian-African Conference of Bandung*, are “recognition of the equality of all races and ... all nations large and small,” “promotion of mutual interests and co-operation”, and using “peaceful means” “in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations” to settle “all international disputes.”⁷⁹

V. CONCLUSION

“Africa and Asia are close to each other, divided by only a small water, the Suez Cannel. (We can) cross it in just one stride”, said Mao Zedong during a meeting with the visiting “Black Africa Youth Delegation” in July 1958. The geographic closeness between the two continents was nothing more than a romantic exaggeration. However, in Mao’s mind, what really brings Asia, Africa and even Latin America together is the shared experience of “being oppressed by imperialism.” He particularly challenged the dualism between the “civilised” and the “barbaric” as being a set of “self-righteous notions” created by the “Western imperialists.” In fact, he believes that expansionism makes imperialism as the “barbaric one.” Whereas a “civilised nation” would “never occupy other countries.” To Mao, the liberated people should be free from the “superstition in believing that only (the model set by) imperialism is civilised, noble, and hygienic.” He emphasised that “there is no certain model for liberation, as different nation has its own history and environment.”⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Zhou Enlai (周恩来), *Zai Yafei Huiyi Quanti Huiyi Shang de Fayan* (在亚非会议全体会议上的发言) [Speech Delivered to the Plenary Session of the Bandung Conference], in ZHOU ENLAI WAIJIAO WENXUAN (周恩来外交文选) [COLLECTION OF ZHOU ENLAI’S WORKS ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS] 112, 112–14 (Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe (中央文献出版社), 1990).

⁷⁸ See *id.*, at 120.

⁷⁹ See *Final Communiqué of the Asian-African Conference of Bandung*, in ASIA-AFRICA SPEAK FROM BANDUNG 161 (Djakarta: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia, 1955).

⁸⁰ See 3 MAO ZEDONG NIANPU, 1949-1976 (毛泽东年谱, 1949-1976) (ANOTATED CHRONICLES OF MAO ZEDONG, 1949-1976) 385, 386 (Pang Xianzhi (逢先知) et al. eds., Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe (中央文献出版社), 2013).

The spread of the concept of civilization among non-Western elites from the age of imperialism to the mid-20th century is one of the most influential and controversial intellectual phenomena in modern global history. Mao's use of civilization should be understood in the long history of anti-imperialist modernisation and nation-building in the non-Western world. A commonly accepted understanding of civilization is that the idea originated from eighteenth-century French thinkers as the opposite of the concept of "barbarism." Since its inception, the concept of civilization has been widely taken as a set of criteria for "development," providing standards for political institution, material advancement, and even cultural transformation to evaluate non-European societies' fitness to join the European-dominated international system.⁸¹ Mao's understanding, however, rejects the Western domination of the interpretation of civilization. He believed that the liberation of the oppressed people would put an end to such an imperialist monopoly of civilization. More importantly, he advocated that "there is no certain model for liberation."

Comparing to the hegemonic view, which sees the world space as empty void being filled by dominant powers, the world order coming from the oppressed believes that the world space should be filled by the liberated people. The former believes that global stability comes from the balance of powers, whereas the latter envisions a world federation formed by the autonomous people through acts of liberation. In the closing remark at the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference, Guo Moruo (郭沫若, 1892–1978), the chairman of the Chinese Delegation gives sincere regards to the Egyptian people, as they "defeated the joint imperialist aggression."⁸² Guo quotes Mao's words and says "unity is power." The imperialists have "a consistent policy of dividing us," hoping to "conquer us one by one". Hence, we need to "unite together."⁸³ The final declaration of the conference takes the similar line and suggests the capability of "solidarity and mutual support among the Afro-Asian people" is key in defeating imperialist order and achieving perpetual peace of the world.⁸⁴ Zhang's historical investigation of Monroe Doctrine, or to be more specific, its final antinomy in China is latest academic addition to this

⁸¹ See SAMUEL P. HUNTINGTON, *THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS AND THE REMAKING OF WORLD ORDER* 40–41 (1996).

⁸² See Guo Moruo (郭沫若), *Zhongguo Daibiaotuan Tuanzhang Guo Moruo de Fayan* (中国代表团团长郭沫若的发言) [*Speech of Guo Moruo, the Chairman of the Chinese Delegation*], in YAFEI RENMIN TUANJIE DAHUI WENJIAN HUIBIAN (亚非人民团结大会文件汇编) [COLLECTION OF DOCUMENTS OF THE AFRO-ASIAN PEOPLE'S SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE] 187 (Shijie Zhishi Chubanshe (世界知识出版社), 1958).

⁸³ See *id.*, at 190.

⁸⁴ See *Yafei Renmin Tuanjie Dahui Xuanyan: Gao Shijie Renmin Shu* (亚非人民团结大会宣言：告世界人民书) [*Declaration of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference: An Open Letter to People of the World*], in YAFEI RENMIN TUANJIE DAHUI WENJIAN HUIBIAN (亚非人民团结大会文件汇编) [COLLECTION OF DOCUMENTS OF THE AFRO-ASIAN PEOPLE'S SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE] 217, 219 (Shijie Zhishi Chubanshe (世界知识出版社), 1958). An editorial about the conference in the *People's Daily* adopts the similar line. See *Yafei Tuanjie Dahui de Weida Chengjiu* (亚非团结大会的伟大成就) [*The Great Achievement of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference*], RENMIN RIBAO (人民日报) [PEOPLE'S DAILY], Jan. 4, 1958, at 1.

unbreakable line of anti-imperialist discourse. The exploration will go on. It must be.