CHAPTER 6

Alternative Visions of World Order in the Aftermath of World War I: Global Perspectives on Chinese Approaches

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World War I and Conceptions of World Order

> The Great War is not the manuscript for a new world history, but it is a transition that continues many elements from above and opens up new ones for the space below.[1]

With these words the Chinese scholar Liang Qichao (1873–1929) expresses a sentiment that was quite common during the years following the armistice of November 1918. In many parts of the world the Great War was understood as a watershed, a turning point that opened up possibilities for a new world order and new forms of internationalism. Many intellectuals in China, India, Europe, and other regions went even farther beyond Liang's assessment and predicted that the dusk of the war would be followed by the dawn of a new epoch. The disasters in Europe appeared to have shaken the foundations of the international structure enough to make profound adjustments palpable. The immediate aftermath of the war seemed to be the right time to promote great visions for the future and to critically reassess the recent past.

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Understanding, contextualizing, and interpreting the Great War was believed to provide one of the keys that could open new doors toward a better future. Consequently, in such divergent societies as China, Germany, and Korea the war quickly acquired a highly symbolic power—its meaning was evoked, constructed, and instrumentalized by competing political camps, and it was done so in profoundly different ways.

There was a common belief that the fundaments of the international system had been eroded and that enormous opportunities for much of the non-Western world would emerge from the destruction in Europe. Even for cautious observers it appeared likely that the days of the previous Europe-centred global system were numbered and that many nations could be freed from Western domination. Many groups even assumed that the Great War had created a clean slate on which a uniform international system could be designed, finally replacing the complicated structure of regional, colonial, and national orders that had come to characterize the world. For most observers it seemed unthinkable that the world would again disintegrate into an uncoordinated system at a time when technological innovations such as the telegraph and the steamship had profoundly changed communication across vast distances, and when global economic patterns had started to emerge. A coherent world order also seemed likely since the colonial powers had long demonstrated the possibility of militaries with a worldwide reach.[2]

The wave of anticipations of a new world order also fostered the expectation that local political systems could be fundamentally reshaped. For example, in Germany, Italy, and other European societies, revolutionary movements sought to break with a traditional sociopolitical order, which in their view had proven to be detrimental in so many regards. In many colonies, such as India and Korea, and in states like China that were threatened by imperialism, the negotiations in Versailles were observed with great, Wilsonian hopes.[3] However, these were quickly shattered, since the American president's program had been primarily designed for Southeastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire, but not for the European colonies. Yet the wave of expectations created by the war had a lasting impact on political cultures in many societies outside Europe and the United States. Due to the allegedly open international situation and the new sense of urgency, the gap between rivalling political visions widened significantly in many societies during the years following the Great War.

Most of the competing efforts for national independence and cultural self-renewal were intrinsically connected with visions for the entire world. This

only seemed to make sense since the great social, political, and cultural crises that had ravaged across many societies in Asia, Africa, and other continents had been closely connected with the expansion of the West and the formation of the prewar order. Thus, it was almost commonsensical to assume that national liberation or cultural emancipation could only be achieved by reordering the world at large. Consequently, within each country or region, multiple political and ideological forces worked on reshaping local polities in conjunction with restructuring the international community. Most political camps applied the same categories, the same interpretations of society and history to the levels of the global and the local. For example, socialist circles, which at the time started to grow significantly in many parts of the world, referred to the same Marxist concepts such as class struggle or modes of production when envisioning a postcapitalist international and domestic order.

After the Great War European civilization, or what was often closely associated with it, "modernity," continued to fascinate a large number of intellectuals and political activists in the non-Western world. In Europe, the intellectual climate after 1918 was largely characterized by doubts about the promises of Western civilization and modernity. Here the Great War aggravated a wave of cultural pessimism that two decades before had come to be labelled with terms such as *fin de siècle*, or "age of anxiety." By contrast, in the United States[4] and parts of East Asia, where the war in Europe had caused a short economic boom, optimism about the potentials of Western modernity prevailed—here much of society believed that although Europe had been weakened, some core facets of its civilization remained credible. Many thinkers in most parts of the non-Western world expected an end to colonialism but—quite different from today's situation—movements against Western dominance only rarely appeared in the form of cultural or religious countermovements. The war did not profoundly challenge the position of the West as the global source of cultural as well as political models. For example, most anticolonial or anti-imperialist movements in Africa, India, and other parts of the world continued to couch their agendas in Western terms such as nation building or class struggle. Around the time of World War I many self-strengthening programs were characterized by secularization efforts and at least some degree of antitraditionalism that was supposed to provide an answer to the sociocultural crises of the time. The March First Movement in Korea, Kemalism in Turkey, and the May Fourth Movements in China are examples of this trend. In these and other countries the war was followed by fierce political struggles between political visions and ideologies.

The great political tensions and social upheavals that many societies witnessed during the 1920s and 1930s were often among the consequences of World War I. If we include the rise of fascisms, the intensification of decolonization movements,[5] as well as the beginnings of socialism as existing alternatives in the picture, it may be not far-fetched to state that the war's implications for political cultures were arguably far greater than its immediate economic, military, and diplomatic consequences. The shockwaves of the Great War were less immediate and vehement than many had expected, and the lights did not truly go out for Europe after 1914.[6] Yet the Great War's consequences were profound, since the events in Europe triggered a cascade of tectonic movements in a substantial number of Western and non-Western societies. A global history of the Great War's impact on political movements as well as images of modernity and the West has yet to be written.[7] Already existing research provides us with a good understanding of the reactions within single world regions, but the transcultural connectedness of many political movements has not yet been sufficiently explored.[8]

This chapter will show how competing ideas about the future of China were inseparably connected with ideological visions of world order circulating on an international level. It will furthermore show that interpreting the meaning and implications of the Great War had become an important aspect of political theorizing and even social mobilization. Focusing on the immediate postwar period, the chapter will put a particular emphasis on intellectual movements that supported certain political ideologies as well as their sociocultural environment. It will mainly explore visions that emerged from politicized student movements and publications by prominent scholars. In all cases this chapter will sketch out some of the international dimensions that linked the rivaling political and intellectual camps in China with likeminded forces in the outside world.

The Chinese Context

Like many other societies China experienced a series of rapid and profound transformations during the decades leading up to World War I. In the eyes of many contemporary observers the changes that China underwent amounted to an unprecedented set of historical ruptures. Due to an unfavorable (but certainly entangled) combination of domestic turmoil and foreign encroachment that had erupted in events such as the Opium Wars and the Taiping Rebellion, the country had become politically destabilized during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Confucian state education system had been discontinued, which in conjunction with some other developments accelerated the demise of the scholar-official elite. In contrast to the last

dynasty the new republic was now primarily led by men trained in modern sciences.[9] The rising importance of scientists within China's political sector is only one example for the wave of sociocultural changes that—to varying degrees—could be felt in all parts of Chinese society.[10] Thus, at a time when various Chinese governments sought to reshape China's outward connections into the diplomatic relationships of a sovereign country, the relationship between inner and outer, foreign and domestic, had become increasingly complex.[11]

Around the time of World War I political ideologies were hungrily absorbed, transformed, and adapted by Chinese intellectuals and political leaders. Political and intellectual elites were filled with a sense of urgency fuelled by the general perception that China's independence was doomed to further erode in a world that seemed to guarantee a dignified international status only to the most dynamic societies, particularly the fastest in changing. Sino-centric conceptions of world order could no longer be upheld, now that the former Middle Kingdom was seen as a developing country or even as—after the Ottoman Empire—another Sick Man of the East. Chinese nationalism developed, at least partly, out of a new global consciousness that seemed to place China on the lower rungs on the worldwide scale of power, influence, and development.[12] Consequently the educated sectors of Chinese society sought new sociopolitical models and apt ways of applying them to the specific situation in China. Around the turn of the twentieth century the number of Chinese translations of Western social theory had started to swell visibly.[13]

In the midst of this difficult domestic and international situation, almost all political, intellectual, and ideological camps in China resorted to discourses of national humiliation[14]—discourses that were based on new forms of political and cultural identities.[15] It seemed evident that if China would not be able to respond quickly and aptly to the challenges of the time, it would be further bullied by the international environment. The rise of Japan, which had defeated China in 1895, seemed to indicate that modernization was the only means to secure power and independence. Two decades later, the sense that China had to change in order to survive, that it had to advance in order to maintain some degree of autonomy, was common to most political and intellectual forces in the country. However, there was little consensus on which elements China should adopt from the outside and which aspects of its past it should keep and continue. It was not even clear what constituted the cores of "Chinese tradition," "modern culture," and "the West."

As in many colonial and semi-colonial structures, in China too the coastal cities and urban centers were the most immediately affected by the set of

changes that in some cases have been labeled the "internationalization of China."[16] Here one could witness the transformations of urban life, mass politics, modern transportation, and the growing presence of international corporations almost on a daily basis.[17] Starting from the late nineteenth century significant changes in the urban public sphere were characterized by a growing internationally connected Chinese press.[18] Parallel to this process the first decades of the twentieth century saw the emergence of a intellectuals as a new milieu within China's social fabric. These people were highly educated and politically concerned, but in contrast to earlier Chinese scholar-officials they typically did not have a close connection with the political power center.[19] They did have, however, have access to international knowledge through translations of foreign works or by attending English-speaking institutions of higher learning. In addition, mass migration brought thousands of students mainly to Japan, but also to Europe and the United States.[20] Their exposure to internationally circulating ideas imbued a young generation of Chinese intellectuals with the confidence that their discussion rooms and seminars would be the laboratories from which the future of China would emerge. From their knowledge of the world and its systems of thought they staked their claim for playing a central role in shaping the future of China. Many intellectuals believed that their real or alleged cosmopolitanism represented the future toward which China needed to go.

Thus, the belief in the great potential of Western influences as catalysts for change was particularly popular among the younger generations of students.[21] At the same time, the disillusionment with the malfunctioning republic and the personal distance from political decision makers made many Chinese intellectuals increasingly receptive to radical ideas. Therefore, to the young pro-Westernization forces, nationalism did not necessarily mean defending their past heritage, but rather carried the potential to energize the nation by freeing the masses from both foreign and domestic oppression.[22] In their opinion China needed to adopt a new culture from Western examples that would prepare it for the modern world.[23] The concepts of "saving the country" (*jiuguo*) and "Enlightenment" (*qimeng*) became closely intertwined with each other. Many young intellectuals believed that China needed to unleash a great amount of creative social and cultural energy in order to keep the country afloat in the high tidal waves of international power politics. However, these basic commonalities were just an umbrella covering a wide spectrum of positions that associated themselves with the New Culture Movement.[24]

Like many other leading figures of the New Culture Movement, Chen Duxiu, one of the founders of the journal *New Youth* (*Xin Qingnian*) and later of the Chinese Communist Party,[25] regarded domestic traditions more than

foreign encroachment as the root cause of China's maladies. However, it would be inappropriate to label the position of May Fourth leaders and others as unabashedly antitraditional. Most of the New Culture Movement's proponents had at least some of their intellectual roots in traditional Chinese scholarship, and did not tend to support iconoclasm and attacks on Chinese culture *in toto*.[26] For example, in an article entitled "What is the New Culture Movement," Chen Duxiu states that the new culture should complement and not replace Chinese tradition "with movements for new sciences, religions, virtues, as well as new forms of art, literature and music."[27] In the same article Chen asserts that relying on scientific evidence instead of hereditary teachings would help them overcome cultural isolationism and develop an open mindset capable of learning from the world. In his opinion the West was primarily denoted by a spirit of experimentalism, progress, and a daring desire to move ahead and leave the past behind. According to Chen Duxiu, Chinese culture would not be destroyed by scientism and progressivism, but rather gain the momentum and energy to break free from alleged societal shackles that had been locked for centuries. In fact most adherents of the Chinese student movement believed that only China's young intellectuals would be able to create a new culture and follow the footsteps of the European Enlightenment, from which a new nation could triumphantly emerge.[28]

The Great War—Reactions from the New Culture Movement

For student circles in Beijing and in other metropolitan areas the Great War became a defining moment: the events in Europe triggered the metamorphosis of parts of the New Culture Movement into the May Fourth Movement. In 1917 China had joined the war after long public debates and grave political tensions between Chinese leaders. Participating in an international war far from the home shores was indeed a historically unprecedented act for China,[29] and the expectations were high when China indeed emerged as part of the winning coalition. For example, on December 1, 1919 the prestigious newspaper *Morning Post* carried the headline "Congratulations: The Great Victory of the Entente Countries [leads to] World Peace."[30] The Chinese public followed the peace negotiations at Versailles and Wilson's programs with great anticipation and hopes. It was a common expectation that foreign concessions and other impingements on Chinese sovereignty would finally come to an end. The situation in China is just one example of the long waves of enthusiasm that the end of the war and the Wilsonian moment had generated.[31]

The May Fourth Movement, one of the intellectually most effervescent periods in modern Chinese history, gained its name from the student protests and strikes following the day when news of the humiliating conditions for China in the Versailles Peace Treaty reached the public. Hopes for full national sovereignty were shattered when it was announced that the German colonies in Shandong province had been secretly promised to Japan. Large parts of the Chinese urban public regarded this continuation of colonialism on Chinese soil as a severe blow to their country's national honor, particularly since China had supported the allies during the war and thus stood, at least nominally, in the ranks of the victorious nations. Student groups responded with protests that quickly found the support of other social groups and grew into nationwide demonstrations, strikes, and boycott movements.[32]

Before May 1919, the anticipation for a new, better world order had also run high among prominent Chinese intellectuals. For example, renowned scholars such as Hu Shi and the director of Beijing University, Cai Yuanpei, regarded the war's outcome as a triumph of democracy over militarism, authoritarianism, and imperialism. For them the slaughter at the Marne, Tannenberg, the Somme, and countless other battlefields was not senseless bloodshed but had a historical purpose for the entire world. In an article entitled "The European War and Philosophy," published in 1918, Cai portrayed the Great War as a battle of ideas. Germany, which according to Cai had adhered to the Nietzschean creed in the survival of the fittest, lost to the more altruistic philosophies of Russia and Western Europe. Whereas the Russian Revolution had tried to implement Tolstoy's principle of selfless love, the Entente countries had adopted the principle of mutual help. Cai concluded that the ultimate victory was to be in the hands of Western countries, since the Russian radicals disregarded the fact that Tolstoy's theory of selfless love had been developed for self-cultivation rather than as a political program for entire societies.[33] Similarly, Tao Lügong believed that the war had destroyed the "four old ideas" of secret diplomacy, militarism, dictatorship, and contempt for the rule of law. He predicted that future politics in Europe and the world at large would no longer adhere to any of these dated features of the old order, for an era of governance by ethical principles was in the offing.[34]

In many regards the end of the war and the surge of Wilsonian hopes led to an unprecedented support for liberal-democratic visions in China, particularly within circles of students and intellectuals.[35] Certainly Chinese liberalism was not a blunt copy of Western theories—even Chinese translations of Western authors such as John Stuart Mill and Adam Smith tended to focus more on social organisms or the invisible hand than on theories regarding the individuality of human actions and the pursuit of self-interest.[36]

The reception of internationally circulating ideas in China was always selective and cocreative. Nevertheless, prominent figures such as Hu Shi, who went to college in the United States and was a professor of philosophy at Beijing University, believed that it was possible to establish an American-inspired liberal democracy on Chinese soil, albeit in a modified form.[37] Hu's teacher at Columbia University, John Dewey, whose stay in China from 1919 to 1921 was a highly publicized event, cautioned that the special circumstances in China had to be taken into account when reflecting upon modernization and democratization efforts. Dewey and Hu commonly assumed that mass education would provide the fundaments for a flourishing liberal democracy.

Supporters of liberal-democratic models in China were driven by the belief that democracy, international law, and diplomacy would provide the best means for a peaceful transformation of the world. Their vision, which primarily focused on cooperation instead of conflict, needs to be seen in the context of the numerous intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations flourishing during the 1920s, despite the initial setbacks suffered at the Versailles conference.[38] Even though some Chinese government circles actively pursued these pragmatist-liberal approaches,[39] the tide turned against moderate liberalism rather quickly after May 4, 1919. Certain prominent liberal philosophers continued to be influential thinkers, but an increasing number of students and other urban milieus started to favor more sudden and forceful approaches to China's transformation.[40] As in many other countries, the Wilsonian disillusionment strengthened the conviction that Western dominance could not be modified by working through the international institutions the West had created. In the eyes of many Chinese, more radical solutions were necessary for stabilizing China and reformulating international order. Faced with more radical opposition, moderate liberalism around leading figures such as Hu Shi was increasingly pushed toward more conservative positions.[41]

In the dozens, if not hundreds of journals affiliated with the New Culture Movement, the number of articles representing liberal-democratic worldviews declined significantly after May 1919. That is not to say that they disappeared entirely—a fair number of publications still continued to advocate the belief in an open world community of democratic nation states, and some writers even assumed that the Great War had brought the world closer to this ideal. For example, in an article published in late 1919, Wei Siluan, a member of the Young China Association,[42] refuted the notion that World War I had put a question mark on the eschatology of progress and sustained development. For him the atrocities in Europe did not reduce the modern European project to ashes. Arguing against cyclical theories of civilization that interpreted the Great War as the collapse of an overstretched cultural

system, Wei Siluan suggested a model of spiral development. Admittedly Europe had been hurt, been thrown back, and some of its naïve optimism had been shattered; however, according to Wei the continent's physical destruction and economic crisis were outweighed by the spiritual benefits of the war. In his opinion the benefits and glimmers of hope that had emerged from the purgatory of the European battlefields, included the foundation of the League of Nations and the waves of democratization following the truce of 1918.[43] Along similar lines, Chen Qitian, another early member of the Young China Association and representative of its right wing, wrote five years later that the Great War had replaced "old nationalism" revolving around militarism, chauvinism, and imperialism, with "new nationalism," a form of collective identity characterized by cosmopolitanism, pacifism and humanitarianism.[44]

In the eyes of the majority of Chinese students and young intellectuals, however, the events of May 4, 1919 had shown that liberal-democratic rhetoric was only a veil for power politics. Many argued that, contrary to the high expectations of many Chinese, secret diplomacy, *realpolitik*, and other pillars of the prewar order had not disappeared from the world stage. A growing number of students now channeled their disillusionment with the new international system into renewed waves of attacks on Chinese customs and traditions. The outcome of the peace negotiations seemed to verify the assumption that only dynamic societies could grow strong enough to hold their own. Revolutionary changes in the international system thus had to be accompanied by revolutionary changes in non-Western societies. In the eyes of many young activists, Versailles seemed to have demonstrated to the world that international justice and dignity were luxuries only for the strong. According to the same activists, the very progressive spirit that appeared to form the basis of Western superiority and that Japan seemed to have copied so successfully, had to be injected into Chinese society and culture. The support for republican, democratic approaches that had grown among Chinese intellectuals after the Chinese Revolution in 1911, started to erode.

Together with the waning faith in the prospects of a liberal international community, Social Darwinism once again became influential among the educated parts of Chinese society. During the late nineteenth century, influential modernizers and reformers advocated evolutionary theories that were often only loosely related to notions of national competition. Some of the 1898 reformers such as Liang Qichao or Yan Fu had seen Social Darwinism as a tool to enhance the condition of the entire human species that also included the emancipation of women.[45] But around the time of the Chinese Revolution, when resentments against the Qing-dynasty were accompanied by anti-Manchu movements, racial concepts and identities started to become

more influential in China.[46] The social groups that popularized racial and ethnic concepts in China were actually Chinese students returning from Western societies, where they had been exposed to racial theories and ethnic prejudices.[47]

With the enthusiasm surrounding the successful revolution of 1911 and Sun Yat-sen's advocacy of ethnically pluralistic forms of nationalism, the salience of Social Darwinism as an ingredient for political programs and ideologies had declined.[48] When Social Darwinism reemerged around the time of May Fourth, its parameters no longer appealed to the great reformers of 1898, but instead to the younger generations of intellectuals whose hopes for a new, open world order had proven to be mere illusions. Journals published in the aftermath of May Fourth contain a fairly large number of articles that perceive the events in Europe primarily from a Social Darwinian perspective. Some authors even went as far as to argue that the events between 1914 and 1918 were yet another indication of European superiority. Such individuals shared the opinion of writers such as Ernst Jünger, who asserted that only a supreme martial spirit in Europe could have led to such unprecedented warfare. In some eyes, the storms of steel between 1914 and 1918 had heightened national sentiments and revolutionary energies in the West that—when combined with materialism and industrialization—could provide societies with the necessary strength to survive in a merciless world.[49]

In many cases such interpretations of the war unabashedly referred to racism as a framework for placing the Great War into a historical and global context.[50] For example, an article written for the journal *New Youth* argued that Chinese culture was impeded by its own pacifist tendencies. Only a militaristic culture, aggressive spirit, and offensive mindset could prepare China for the great future conflicts between the white and the yellow races. For the author, both races that inhabited the Eastern and Western fringes of the Eurasian landmass were natural enemies and future conflicts were inevitable. He opined that different races could gain an advantage over each other by reaping the fruits of sciences, which were universal and laying on an open field of competition for different human groups. The article further states that those peoples who could not conquer nature through science were doomed to be conquered by others in the great Darwinian struggles looming over the horizon. Despite the war and through the war the West seemed to be still in an advantageous position.[51]

However, not all Social Darwinists interpreted the Great War as a bloody learning process that prepared Western powers better for the world orders to come. Some intellectuals, who shared the idea that the future would be characterized by a competition of civilizations or races, predicted that China would have a clear advantage over the West. For instance, an article published

in November 1919 argued that China was in the unique position to learn from the West and combine the best elements of both cultures. By being able to pick and choose, to incorporate beneficial elements and reject potentially detrimental influences, China would be able to build a superior, in the author's words, "fitter" civilization. The West, the author predicted, would turn out to be unwilling and unable to learn from the East, mainly because of its own illusion of superiority, in addition to its language barriers.[52] Surrounded by mirrored cultural walls and too proud to learn, Europe would be unable to use other experiences as sources of inspiration. The article goes on to predict that this proud tower, into which Europe had retreated, would become a cultural prison and block Europe from learning, growing and changing. These examples show that Social Darwinism was not necessarily related to the notion of impermeable civilizational boundaries. Rather, cultural learning could be seen as a function of adaptation and thus make a human group more likely to proceed faster than its competitors. The different positions on the question of cultural learning reveal the great diversity that characterized Social Darwinism as an international school of thought.[53]

Social Darwinist theories remained influential after its surging prominence around the time of May Fourth, but the fastest growing political and intellectual milieu in China during the early 1920s were socialist and communist groupings.[54] Even Guomindang (Kuomintang) politicians had greeted the revolution of 1917 as a milestone on the way toward global justice, yet at that time, communist ideas were hardly known in China. But the October Revolution was far from an effective rallying call in China—only the great disillusionment with international standards and Western politics after Versailles turned an increasing number of Chinese intellectuals and activists toward the socialist camp. The Karakhan manifesto of 1919 that promised that the Soviet Union would relinquish all privileges and rights of Russia in China, was perceived as a marked contrast to the politics of the established international powers. In addition, the Leninist idea of the communist party's vanguard role tended to resonate with a sense of mission among many educated Chinese, a mission to mobilize the masses and awaken China.[55] Furthermore, the idea to partake in a global counterprogram to Western imperialism, to fight for an alternative vision that was rooted in the Enlightenment tradition, greatly attracted intellectuals who typically had been exposed to Western concepts since their early youth, and at best had rather tormented feelings toward Chinese political and cultural traditions. Lastly the internationally coordinated partification of the communist movement and the organizational as well as strategic support by the Comintern appealed to a generation of intellectuals whose faith in the ideal of open, democratic

societies had been greatly shaken by the events following the end of World War I.

From its very beginning Chinese communism had been closely entangled with nationalist identities. The Leninist idea that proletarian nations needed to liberate themselves from imperialist-capitalist oppression was shifted further toward nationalist perspectives in Chinese communist circles. The positive benefits of communism for Chinese modernization and liberation were usually more in the foreground than the *telos* of a world revolution. It is thus not a great surprise that theories of the decline and fall of civilizations that had been an essential part of Social Darwinist and similar approaches, could also be found in early socialist or communist-inspired reactions to the Great War. Furthermore, Chinese thinkers often interpreted Lenin's vision of an imminent collapse of capitalism in ways that were close to theories of future competitions between different world regions.

Many early Chinese advocates of communist ideas believed that the Great War had revealed major disadvantaged of Europe, which had been hidden behind a façade of geopolitical dominance and cultural influence. For example, Li Dazhao, the head librarian of Beijing University who became one of the leading figures of the early Chinese Communist Party,[56] argued that the great powers of Western Europe had already reached their peak and were now in a stage of decline. By contrast—according to Li—countries such as Russia and China that had been rather slow in development were now filled with a surplus of energy that could catapult them to the top of the international system. He even assumed that in Russia a new civilization had emerged, which, founded upon the concepts of freedom and humanity, would offer many advantages to China and other underprivileged parts of the world.[57]

In a text entitled "The Victory of the People," Li Dazhao followed Lenin's interpretation of the war as a triumph of the common people and democracy over the capitalist class and despotism. Li Dazhao argued that now the social and political foundations for a new era of human existence, a higher and better stage of the human condition, had been laid.[58] This sparkling sense of optimism started to give way to visions of a more long-term struggle, but the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) remained committed to interpreting the war as an important transition point in human history. According to communist theory the war had brought an end to the unchallenged hegemony of imperialist and capitalist powers, particularly since now internationally coordinated countermovements of the oppressed classes and peoples had emerged. Expressed in Hegelian terms, European history had a purpose and hence the events after August 1914 also had to have a purpose.

Among those ideologies and political programs that had a great impact on China, none was as internationally coordinated as communism. As early as 1920, the Soviet Union dispatched two agents, Yang Mingzhu and Gregory Voitinsky, to China in order to prepare the founding of the CCP. A little later, prominent agents like Henk Sneevliet (alias Maring)[59] were supposed to help create a solid core of orthodox Marxists in the midst of the convoluted political situation exemplified by shifting alliances and overlapping ideologies. Initially the CCP ideology remained rather close to Moscow's doctrines, until Mao Zedong and others shifted the ideology's main emphasis away from the urban proletariat to the peasantry. The kind and degree of such intellectual and ideological coordination efforts may have been exceptional. But it should be considered that other systems of thought and ideologies that were prominent in China, also enjoyed international prominence and support structures.

Doubts about Modernity and Westernization Programs

For a considerable number of Chinese intellectuals the Great War was not another, admittedly atrocious, stage of human progression that despite all bloodshed, seemed to confirm the position of the West as the center of global transformations. A fair number of publications painted a picture of total economic decline and social instability in Europe,[60] and a group of thinkers referred to such reports when they argued that Western modernity was not only a promise, but also a threat.[61] Doubts about large-scale Westernization efforts that are often labeled as "conservative," reached back to the time before World War I and were as old as Chinese discourses of modernization. Against the rhetoric of revolutionary change, more cautious thinkers had long argued that transformations had to occur through moderate reforms and organic growth rather than quantum leaps.[62] The Great War strengthened such critical attitudes toward the notion that Europe was the world's only teaching civilization.

It would be wrong to assume that those groups, which sought to defend Chinese culture and tradition against iconoclastic national mobilization programs, were quite inimical to all internationally circulating discourses. Many theorists who voiced doubts about the project of Western modernity did not resort to blunt civilizational protectionism but rather promoted the goal of mutual cultural inspiration. At a closer look it even becomes apparent that traditionalist notions were connected with similar intellectual and political currents in the outside world.[63] On an international level no other non-Western public figure symbolized the notion of an Eastern remedy for the supposedly burned out, decaying European civilization as prominently as the Indian Nobel Prize Laureate Rabindranath Tagore.[64] The Indian poet

maintained a great network of exchanges with supporters in North America, Europe, the Middle East, and other parts of the world. His connections with Chinese intellectuals eventually culminated in a visit to China in 1924, which however, was not well received in student circles.[65]

Some essential elements of traditionalist or culturalist thinking in China were thus being imported and adapted by internationally connected intellectuals. However, looking below the level of people who were actively engaged in international dialogues, it is certainly true that the bulk of Chinese people who shared certain reservations about the prospects of Westernization tended to have a Confucian educational background and little to no international exposure.[66] Their personal experiences may help explain why some thinkers were more sensitive to the cultural losses caused by modernization and internationalization than many young students of the New Culture Movement, who had been educated in the West or in "modern" Chinese schools. Older scholars and individuals who had been primarily trained in the Confucian education system experienced a combination of disadvantages that could be labelled as a "triple marginalization": in addition to the marginalization of China within the world and the marginalization of Confucian teaching within China, many had suffered from a personal marginalization within Chinese society—the great prestige and the main professional opportunities were at the hands of those who had some access to modern sciences and foreign languages.[67]

It is hardly surprising that the Great War became a major trope in the ranks of those who had long doubted the prospects of large-scale Westernization efforts. In many cases the events in Europe fortified such intellectual positions. For example, Yan Fu, who, like Liang Qichao had been known as a prominent advocate of Social Darwinism two decades before, experienced a major paradigm shift from the "Weberian" question of which elements of the West were missing in other cultures, to asking which elements in other cultures were missing in the West.[68] Referring to the Great War and Western Civilization, he noted that "three hundred years of evolutionary progress have come all down to nothing but four words: selfishness, slaughter, shamelessness and corruption."[69] Like many other thinkers Yan held that the today of the West could no longer symbolize the tomorrow of the rest since European civilization had collapsed morally, culturally, and politically. Now, he believed, the yesterday of East Asia could help the today of Europe. Such ideas circulated widely during the aftermath of the Great War.

Quite a substantial number of Chinese scholars had the chance to acquire a personal impression of Europe in the years following 1918. Some of them were visiting scholars at European universities, and others were accompanying diplomatic missions. Liang Qichao and the philosopher Zhang Junmai

(otherwise know as Carsun Chang) were among the cultural delegates of the Chinese mission to Versailles. During their stay in Europe both traveled extensively through various countries and met intellectuals such as Romain Rolland, René Guénon and Thomas Mann. These public figures shared their doubts about the viability of the modern European path of continued industrial development, political revolutions, and social transformations. In Europe, critical voices arguing that modernity was little more than an empty, materialistic process were doubtlessly as old as modernity itself and had intensified during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Still, the experience of World War I further accentuated this tradition of voicing doubts about modernity and progress. For many thinkers, the events between 1914 and 1918 revealed the destructive potential of modernity, proving that the West's claim to civilizational superiority was specious.[70] Now an increasing number of poets and thinkers called for the salvation of Europe from its own culture, which they described as superficial, purely technological, rational, and dangerously naïve and brutal.

One of the most productive ensuing contacts between Chinese and European critics of "Western modernity" resulted from the exchanges between Zhang Junmai and Rudolf Eucken, a philosopher at the University of Jena and Nobel Prize Laureate in literature.[71] Eucken tirelessly averred that society needed to balance materialism and progressivism with self-cultivation and spiritual growth. Zhang Junmai was so impressed with Eucken's work that he decided to stay in Jena for several years to work with him on several common projects. He and Eucken even co-authored a book entitled *The Problem of Life in China and Europe* that was published in China and Germany.[72] The work presents China and Europe not as hermetically sealed civilizations but rather as organically grown cultural realms that had always been closely entangled with the world beyond. Zhang and Eucken then contrasted the allegedly communal traditions of Germany and China with the creed in the power of reason and individualism that, in their eyes, characterized the United States as well as a number of Western European societies. Stemming from these hypotheses, the book discusses the necessity to be "on guard against the Anglo-American notion that their way of life is the only possible, natural and superior one."[73]

After his return to China, Zhang Junmai continued to pursue his intellectual agenda. In later writings, such as the essay *My Political Impressions During my Stay in Europe From 1919 to 1921*,[74] Zhang warned of blindly copying European ideas and institutions. Arguing that Europe experienced a "kind of cultural crisis," he held that conscious choice and selection should be the guiding spirits for the modernization of China. For him China was now in the privileged position to have insight into the constructive and destructive

potentials of European modernity. The Chinese now had the option to import only those elements that were compatible with their own situation and beneficial for the future. Zhang argued that such cultural eclecticism was possible, since the idea of coherent Eastern and Western cultures were nothing but gross generalizations. In this manner there was an alternative route for China between the options of wholesale Westernization on the one hand, and the complete denial of any European influence on the other. However, in contrast to intellectuals such as the aforementioned Wei Siluan, who believed that the war had actually strengthened European civilization, Zhang promoted the ideal of cultural learning not as an advantage of China in a cultural competition but as a necessary step toward global cross-fertilization. In Zhang's opinion the crisis-ridden nations of Europe and Chinese society could mutually benefit each other without completely losing their distinctive features and characteristics.

The idea that Europe needed to learn from China was now also advocated by the highly influential historian and public intellectual Liang Qichao. Decades before, he had been a staunch defender of Western learning but over the years had grown doubtful about radical modernization programs.[75] Liang was certainly one of the internationally most well connected Chinese intellectuals of his time, and in many regards he served as a transaction point between intellectual debates in China, Japan, and the West.[76] The war in Europe moved Liang further away from his previously rather teleological understandings of European civilization.[77] After returning home from a trip to Britain, France, Germany, and other countries from 1919 to 1920,[78] Liang Qichao published a monograph entitled *Impressions of My Travels in Europe*. The first part of this book, "Europe Before and After the Great War," is an account of Liang's stay in Europe and provides vivid accounts of the conditions in Europe.[79] For example it contains descriptions of pauperization in European cities, the growing gaps between the social classes as well as between urban and rural areas. The second part, "The Self-Awakening of the Chinese People," outlines the implications of the European crisis and the consequences of the new geopolitical constellation for Chinese society, culture, and politics.

In a similar way one can understand Liang's detailed accounts of the widespread pessimism among European intellectuals whom he described as "yelling about the end of the world and the decay of civilization."[80] He actually regarded Europe's overall dark cultural and intellectual climate as a more severe symptom of crisis than the material shortage from the destructions of war. For him, Europe was a continent that had awakened from a dream, that was devoid of any ideals or clear visions for the future, and that was desperately searching for new directions, commonly shared values and some sort of

sociopolitical consensus. Before the war, Liang had praised Europe's endless resources of ambitious energies and cultural curiosity to discover the new and unknown as major advantages over China. During the 1920s, his accounts depicted Europe as intellectually as well as physically devastated—far more so than the Far East or any other civilization that had been shaken by European expansionism.

According to Liang Qichao, the dream of a man-made, scientific golden age had revealed itself as a nightmare, and the European project had turned into a pathological process. The specters that now haunted Europe were the growth of violent forces, the emergence of extreme contradictions, and the loss of any communal connectedness. According to Liang, Europe's revolutionary restlessness was now in the process of splitting up into a multitude of national and class-related protest movements. This in essence meant that the revolutionary energy that had driven Europe to the top was now in the process of turning against itself. If this process was not stopped and Europe would not change its historical trajectory, the Great War would be followed by additional, possibly even greater disasters and crises. In the same text Liang suggested that in the near future, national and socialist movements might merge and throw the continent into another lapse of severe domestic and international conflicts. He opined that it was mainly the method and the mentality of systematic scientific doubt that had robbed Europe of its spiritual stronghold: the consequences of scientific culture such as industrialization, urbanization, and social fragmentation had largely disintegrated the communal glue and cultural consensus that in the past had formed the bedrock of European societies.

His observations and theories prompted Liang Qichao to conclude that China could no longer learn from Europe but rather from Europe's fall. Like many Chinese intellectuals he believed that China's status as a "latecomer" and developing country now became an advantage, since, in Liang Qichao's own words, "knowing the disease is a good medicine."[81] According to him, communal values and traditional ties had the potential to enrich a culture focused on science and progress that could possibly prevent modernizing forces and energies from turning against themselves. For this reason, he admonished the Chinese youth movements to be patient and to carefully select between Chinese and Western elements when building the national culture of the future. He maintained that in the process of nation building "one should be neither bound by old Chinese thoughts nor by new Western thoughts." Any form of iconoclasm could be the wrong answer to the challenges of the time, since "what we consider to be new thoughts are criticized and regarded as outmoded in Europe itself." In the *Impressions of My Travels in Europe* Liang added that even if some ideas and concepts were completely

new and propounded by the intellectual and political avant-garde of Europe, it would be a grave mistake to confuse "new" with "true."[82]

Still, just like Zhang Junmai and many other thinkers of his time, Liang Qichao did not simply prophesize the decline of the West. On the contrary, he predicted that European culture would critically reconsider its own civilizational premises and finally start approaching a more cautious, humble, and gentle form of modernity. Europe would learn to listen to the voices of less expansive and dynamic cultures such as China or India. For Liang, Europe had not only been dethroned as the world's great teacher, but was now placed in the role of a disoriented student who had to learn from other world regions that were culturally more intact and had more viable visions for the future. In other words, thinkers such as Liang Qichao or Zhang Junmai did not become cultural projectionists. Rather they remained committed to the ideal of cross-cultural exchanges but reversed the civilizational hierarchy that had been propagated since the nineteenth century. In their accounts, it was now the West that was primarily described through the cultural attributes it seemed to lack. Eastern cultures were now posited as alternative universalisms that could help stabilize a disintegrating West as well as an ever more fragile world. Efforts to maintain Chinese culture were intrinsically connected with a wider, global agenda.

Chinese Reactions to the Great War—A Transcultural Perspective

World War I was a global moment whose shockwaves could also be felt in those parts of the world that were only marginally affected by the military confrontation in Europe. The global economic and cultural consequences of the Great War have not been sufficiently explored by modern research yet, particularly from a transregional perspective. As the case of China indicates, the events in Europe could also have profound consequences for societies that did not play a central part in the four-year war effort—consequences that went far beyond new debates on world order. The shadows of doubt that the war cast on an imperialist world order and the ensuing Wilsonian hopes greatly energized the Chinese public. Whereas the Chinese Revolution of 1911 had mainly been the product of small elites, the protest movements in the wake of May Fourth forged an alliance between the new social milieu of young intellectuals and larger parts of society ranging from factory workers to clerks. Nationalist sentiments were further channeled into political movements that were not under government tutelage.[83]

However, Chinese reactions triggered by the war and Versailles were far from being similar to each other. Different intellectual and political

groupings fiercely disagreed about the implications of the war and the directions of future changes. The number of supporters of liberal democratic ideals quickly thinned out after the disillusioning outcome of the Versailles peace negotiations, and programs that sought to mobilize the nation by radical means grew in strength. Coherence and collective power were increasingly seen as the true guarantors of dignity and independence for a country in a violent, immoral, and unstable international system. Particularly for younger Chinese intellectuals, the Great War and the Versailles negotiations actually confirmed the necessity to push ahead with revolutionary changes. However, the vision of these changes varied greatly among the polarized right-wing and left-wing groups, both of which had emerged from the New Culture Movement.

Contrary to the New Culture Movement, thinkers such as Zhang Junmai and Liang Qichao, who had both grown more doubtful of the prospects of Westernization, cautioned against naïve trust in the potentials of revolutionary transformations. Like many likeminded European thinkers they tended to see a connection between the atrocities after the French Revolution and the Great War, where—in their opinion—Europe had descended into an abyss of mud, blood, and steel. Supporters of this camp came to understand European civilization as a Faustian process that carried such a destabilizing potential so as to lead the world into yet another series of disastrous collapses. For these thinkers, the Great War was not a trumpet signal for another series of revolutions but rather a clear warning that the global tide of transformations needed to be critically reconsidered. In their eyes the project of modernity could benefit from a revitalized Chinese past and from a reversed cultural learning process that would no longer regard the West as the world's only teaching civilization. This implied that China and other non-Western cultures would now be in the position to universalize their cultures, and to put an imprint on the value-systems and ideals that would underlie future world orders.

An important feature of all political positions discussed in this chapter is the global consciousness that characterized them. By the time of the May Fourth Movement it was definitely impossible to conceive of China as its own isolated universe, and to discuss the main directions for the future of China, without paying due attention to the international situation at large. Consequently, during the early 1920s all rivalling political as well as cultural programs combined visions of world order with visions of domestic order. The international constraints on the former Middle Kingdom made it clear that the world needed to create an international environment allowing for a repositioning and reconfiguration of China. For example, theories that cautioned against blind faith in revolutionary change could only present

themselves as credible programs if they also developed visions for a world without imperialist rivalries. Likewise, early Chinese communists had to present their ideal of a proletarian revolution as part of a rising worldwide Hegelian tide in order not to be discarded as a group of blind idealists.

Most intellectual positions turned the humiliating new status of China as a developer into an asset.[84] The tool for shifting China's international position from a latecomer to a member of a group of frontrunners was usually a revision of the discourse of civilization. Followers of Social Darwinist, communist, and conservative ideologies could equally claim that China was an essential part of an alternative civilization that would rise up and replace at least parts of the allegedly burned out culture of Europe that in the past had attained a worldwide reach.[85] Across a wide range of political camps Chinese thinkers argued that their country had learned enough from the West to be internationally relevant, but that it was also untouched, unspoiled, and different enough to belong to the seeds of a better future be part of a true alternative. However, whether this alternative vision aimed at the globalization of Eastern ethics, a proletarian world revolution, or a Darwinian amalgamation of forces depended on one's individual viewpoint.

The increasing international entanglement and education of Chinese intellectuals was an important aspect of their rising global awareness. Most political groupings in China strengthened their exchange networks with likeminded forces in Europe and other parts of the world. The Chinese reception of internationally circulating ideologies and visions of world order was thus closely related to new worldwide sociocultural patterns and landscapes of knowledge. In the aftermath of World War I, political ideologies intensified their levels of international cooperation. The Soviet Union and the Communist International supplied likeminded groups around the world with financial support, agents, and ideological material. Furthermore, liberal forces were actively supported by government agencies, universities, associations, and other institutions in the United States and Western European countries. However, as a matter of fact, socialism, liberalism, and other global ideologies were not the only visions of political order being promoted by global networks of support. Quite to the contrary, even movements with a strictly anti-internationalist rhetoric that claimed to defend notions of "tradition" and "heritage" against global ideologies, were engaged in closely entangled transnational networks. This was true for traditionalist scholars, nationalist movements,[86] and also for the international fascist networks, which started to form a few years later.[87]

During the 1920s many advanced and developing societies were characterized by a tense political situation that was structured around the ideological triad of liberalism, socialism, and nationalism.[88] Needless to

say, in all cases right-wing, left-wing, and liberal ideologies had overlapping agendas and mutually influenced each other. Furthermore, all international ideologies were altered and adapted to specific local contexts. Yet, it remains a remarkable matter of fact that during the 1920s, the rivaling political forces in such divergent countries as China and Germany, for instance, were divided into camps that in principle were quite comparable to each other.[89] Global moments and crises such as the Great War evoked a wide range of reactions around the world. Much of these different reaction patterns were embedded in political ideals and intellectual convictions that circulated in transnational networks of knowledge. The competing Chinese responses to World War I tended to be part of wider, transnational opinion networks.

Notes

1. Liang Qichao: "Ouyou Xinying lu jielu" [Condensed Record of Travel Impressions in Europe], in vol. 7 of *Yinbingshi heji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989), p. 2968.
2. For a more detailed description of this period and the emergence of levels of global consciousness see Michael Geyer and Charles Bright, "World History in a Global Age," *American Historical Review* 100, no. 4 (1995): 1034–60.
3. See the chapter by Erez Manela in this volume.
4. See, for example, David M. Kennedy, *Over There: The First World War and American Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980). Needless to say, some American intellectuals shared European doubts about Western Civilization—for example Henry James in his novel *The Ivory Tower* (New York: Scribners, 1917).
5. For example Prasenjit Duara, "Introduction: The Decolonization of Asia and Africa in the Twentieth Century," in idem, ed., *Decolonization: Rewriting Histories* (New York: Routledge, 2004). Such a periodization is somewhat problematic since it does not account for the Latin American revolutions during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
6. After the famous quote by British foreign secretary Viscount Grey of Falloden during a blackout in July 1914 that was part of the war preparations: "The lights are going out all across Europe, and we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime."
7. A pioneering study, which focuses on doubts about Western modernity, is Michael Adas, "The Great War and the Decline of the Civilizing Mission," in L.J. Sears, ed., *Autonomous Histories, Particular Truths: Essays in Honor of John R.W. Small* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Monographs on Southeast Asia, 1993), pp. 101–21.
8. See, for example, about Africa: John Steele Gordon, "What We Lost in the Great War," *The Journal of African History* 44 (2003): 73–94; About Iran: Ali Mirsepassi, *Intellectual Discourse and the Politics of Modernization: Negotiating Modernity in Iran* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000); about Europe: Belinda

Davis, "Experience, Identity, and Memory: the Legacy of World War One," *The Journal of Modern History* 75 (2003): 111–21.

9. See Hui Huang, "Overseas Chinese Studies and the Rise of Foreign Cultural Capital in Modern China," *International Sociology* 17, no. 1 (2002): 35–55.
10. Still a very valuable overview of China's economic and social transformations is Jürgen Osterhammel, *China und die Weltgesellschaft vom 18. Jahrhundert bis in die Gegenwart* (Munich: Beck, 1989).
11. Compare Wang Hui, *Xiandai zhongguo sixiang de xingqi* [The Rise of Modern Chinese Thought], vol.1 (Beijing: Sanlian Shudian, 2004), chapter 1.
12. For a discussion of the early 1900s see Rebecca E. Karl, "Creating Asia: China in the World at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century," *American Historical Review* 103, no. 4 (1998): 1096–118.
13. The rise of translations and the ensuing lexical changes in China are covered in Michael Lackner, Iwo Amelung, and Joachim Kurtz, eds., *New Terms for New Ideas: Western Knowledge & Lexical Change in Late Imperial China* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).
14. See Paul Cohen, "Remembering and Forgetting National Humiliation in Twentieth-Century China," *Twentieth-Century China* 27, no. 2 (2002): 1–39.
15. The concepts and categories for the new nation states such as ethnos, citizenship, or territorial sovereignty were taken from transnational discourses. For China see, for example, Prasenjit Duara, "Transnationalism in the Era of Nation States: China, 1900–1945," *Development and Change* 29, no. 4 (1998): 647–70.
16. For example, William Kirby, "The Internationalization of China," *China Quarterly* 150 (1997): 433–58.
17. See, for example, Leo Ou-fan Lee, "The Cultural Construction of Modernity in Urban Shanghai: Some Preliminary Explorations," in Wen-hsin Yeh, ed., *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 1–30.
18. See, for example, Bryna Goodman, guest ed., "Networks of News: Power, Language, and Transnational Dimensions of the Chinese Press, 1850–1949," *The China Review* 4, no. 1 (2004): 1–10.
19. For more details see Wen-hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy: Culture and Politics in Republican China, 1919–1937* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990). See also Timothy B. Weston, *The Power of Position: Beijing University, Intellectuals, and Chinese Political Culture, 1898–1929* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).
20. A statistical analysis is provided by Hui Huang, *The Chinese Construction of the West, 1862–1922: Discourses, Actors and the Cultural Field* (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 1996).
21. See, for example, Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).
22. John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

23. See, for example, Weili Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1920–1927* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).
24. Recent scholarship is becoming increasingly aware of the highly pluralistic character of the New Culture Movement. See, for example, the overview by Hung-Yok Ip, Tze-Ki Hon, and Chiu-Chun Lee, "The Plurality of Chinese Modernity: A Review of Recent Scholarship on the May Fourth Movement," *Modern China* 29, no. 4 (2003): 490–509.
25. Lee Feigon, *Chen Duxiu: Founder of the CCP* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).
26. A seminal study of the New Culture and May Fourth movements is still Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960).
27. Chen Duxiu, "Xin Wenhua Yundong shi shenme?" *Xin Qingnian* 6, no. 1 (1920), p. 4.
28. See, for example, Gao Yuhan, "The Republic and the Self-Consciousness of Youth" [Gonghe quojia yu qingnian zhi zijue], *Xin Qingnian* 1, no. 1 (1915), pp. 1–8; Gao Yuhan, "Youth and the Future of the Nation" [Qingnian yu quojia zhi qiantu], *Xin Qingnian* 1, no. 5 (1916), pp. 1–7; Gao Yuhan, "The Enemies of Youth" [Qingnian zhi di], *Xin Qingnian* 1, no. 6 (1916), pp. 1–4.
29. See Xu Guoqi, *China and the Great War. China's Pursuit of a New National Identity and Internationalization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). See also Klaus Mühlhahn, "China," in Gerhard Hirschfeld, Gerd Krumeich, and Irina Renz, eds., *Enzyklopädie Erster Weltkrieg* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2002), pp. 412–16.
30. Chen Bao, "Gongzhu: xieyue guo da shengli shijie heping." *Morning Post*, December 1, 1919, "Congratulations: The Great Victory of the Entente Countries [leads to] World Peace."
31. A transcultural perspective of the hopes for independence in the aftermath of the Great War is provided by Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
32. See, for example, Elizabeth Perry, *Shanghai on Strike: The Politics of Chinese Labor* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).
33. Cai Yuanpei, "Ouzhan yu zhexue" [The European War and Philosophy], *Xin Qingnian* 5, no. 5 (1918): 491–96. A similar argument is provided by Tao Lügong, "Guanyu Ouzhan de yanshuo san pian—Ouzhan yihou de zhengzhi" [Three Lectures about the European War: Post-War European Politics] *Xin Qingnian* 5, no. 5 (1918): 470–72.
34. Tao Lügong, "Ouzhan yihou de zhengzhi " [Politics after the European War], *Xin Qingnian* 5, no. 5 (1918), pp. 439–41.
35. An account of Chinese liberalism is provided by Benjamin Tsai, *Enemies of the Revolution: Ideology and Practice in the Making of Chinese Liberalism, 1890–1927* (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2001).

36. "Generally on the topic of translations and cultural reformulations see Lydia He Liu, *Translingual Practice. Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity – China, 1900–1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995). For the case of Yan Fu, (1853–1921) who translated many key works of Western social theory into Chinese, see Benjamin Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yan Fu and the West* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964).
37. About Hu Shi see Jerome B. Grieder, *Hu Shi and the Chinese Renaissance: Liberalism in the Chinese Revolution, 1917–1937* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970).
38. See Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), chapter 2.
39. See, for example, S.H. Tan, "China's Pragmatist Experiment in Democracy: Hu Shih's Pragmatism and Dewey's Influence in China," *Metaphilosophy* 35, no. 1 (2004): 44–64.
40. Compare Wen-hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy*, chapter 7.
41. See, for example, Zhang Zhongdong, "Similarities and Differences between Hu Shi and Yin Haiguang during the Initial Stage of Anti-Communism," *Chinese Studies in History* 38, no. 1 (2004): 77–93.
42. After May Fourth, the Young China Association that was founded in 1918 and mainly recruited its members from students returned from overseas, started to split into right and left factions. The difference grew so big that the association fell apart in 1921. See Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement*, pp. 251–53.
43. Wei Siluan, "Renlei jinhua de geminghuang" [Aspects of Human Evolution], *Shaonian Zhongguo* 1, no. 1 (1919): 14–34.
44. Chen Qitian, "Xin guojiazhuyi yu zhongguo qiantu" [New Nationalism and China's Future], *Shaonian Zhongguo* 4, no. 9 (1924).
45. For more details see James Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983).
46. See, for example, Kauko Laitinen, *Chinese Nationalism in the Late Qing Dynasty: Zhang Binglin as an Anti-Manchu Propagandist* (London: Curzon Press, 1990).
47. Compare Weili Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name*.
48. Ethnic and racial forms of nationalism were not really suitable as official state ideologies, since they would have inevitably put the political boundaries of China into question.
49. For example: Hua Lu, "Lessons and Warnings Derived from World War One," *Dongfang Zazhi* 21, no. 14 (1924): 17–22.
50. For the spread of racist theories in China see, for example, Kai-Wing Chow, "Imagining Boundaries of Blood: Zhang Binglin and the Invention of the Han 'Race' in Modern China," in Frank Dikotter, ed., *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (London: Hurst, 1997), pp. 34–52.
51. Liu Shuya, "Ouzhou zhanzheng yu qingnian zhi juewu" [World War One and the Awakening of Youth], *Xin Qingnian* 2, no. 2 (1919): 119–26.

52. Zong Zhikui, “Zhongguo Qingnian de fendou shenghuo yu chuangzao shenghuo ” [Struggling Life and Creative Life of the Chinese Youth], *Shaonian Zhongguo* 1, no. 5 (1919), pp. 1–11.
53. See, for example, Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997).
54. For a general account of the topic see, for example, Arif Dirlik, *The Origins of Chinese Communism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).
55. Consequently the relationship between Communist intellectuals and workers was often somewhat contradictory in the China of the early 1920s. See Daniel Y. Kwan, *Marxist Intellectuals and the Chinese Labor Movement: A Study of Deng Zhongxia, 1894–1933* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997).
56. For more details see Maurice M. Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967). See also Michael Y.L. Luk, *The Origins of Chinese Bolshevism: An Ideology in the Making, 1920–1928* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1990).
57. Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism*, pp. 64–65.
58. Li Dazhao, “The Victory of the People” [Shumin zhi shengli], *Xin Qingnian* 5, no. 5 (1918): 467–69. The article is part of a series entitled “Three Lectures on the European War.”
59. See Anthony Saich, *The Origins of the First United Front in China: The Role of Sneevliet* (*Alias Maring*) (Leiden: Brill, 1991).
60. For example, Wang Guangqi, “Quan'ou geguo caizheng gaiguan” [A brief Summary of the Fiscal Situation in the Whole of Europe], *Shaonian Zhongguo* 4, no. 3 (May 1923): 1–7. In the following three issues of “Young China” Wang published a series of articles on the situation in Europe.
61. See Roland Felber, “Berichte von Chinesen über die Verhaltnisse in Berlin nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg,” in Christoph Kaderas and Meng Hong, eds., *120 Jahre chinesische Studierende an deutschen Hochschulen* (Bonn: DAAD, 2000), pp. 128–38.
62. See Charlotte Furth, “Culture and Politics in Modern Chinese Conservatism,” in idem, ed., *The Limits of Change: Essays on Conservative Alternatives in Republican China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 22–56.
63. For example, see Michael Adas, “The Great War and the Decline of the Civilizing Mission,” pp. 101–21.
64. About aspects of Tagore's intellectual agenda see Ashis Nandy, *The Illegitimacy of Nationalism: Rabindranath Tagore and the Politics of Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
65. Tagore was even forced to cancel parts of his planned lecture series due to the wave of student protests. See Stephen N. Hay, *Asian Ideas of East and West: Tagore and His Critics in Japan, China, and India* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), pp. 148–49. See also Dominic Sachsenmaier, “Searching For Alternatives to Western Modernity. Cross-Cultural Approaches in the Aftermath of World War I,” *Journal of Modern European History* 4, no. 2 (2006): 241–59.

66. Huang, *The Chinese Construction of the West*, pp. 179–83.
67. Compare Ying-shih Yu, "The Radicalization of China in the Twentieth Century," *Daedalus: China in Transformation* 122, no. 2 (1993): 125–50, who speaks of a "double marginalization" (excluding personal marginalization).
68. See Benjamin Schwarz, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 229–36.
69. Quoted in Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (London and New York: Norton, 1990), p. 302.
70. See Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).
71. See Werner Meißner, *China zwischen nationalem "Sonderweg" und universaler Modernisierung: Zur Rezeption westlichen Denkens in China* (Munich: Beck, 1994). Eucken's works later became prominent in the early German Fascist movement.
72. Rudolf Eucken and Carsun Chang, *Das Lebensproblem in Europa und China* (Leipzig: Quelle and Meyer, 1922).
73. Ibid., p. 193.
74. Zhang Junmai, "1919 zhi 1921 nian lü Ouzhong zhi zhengzhi yinxiang ji wuren suode zhi jiaoxun" [My Political Impressions During My Stay in Europe from 1919 to 1921, and the Lessons that I Learned There], *Xinlu Banyuekan* 1, no. 5 (1928): 19-27.
75. For an intellectual biography see Tang Xiaobing, *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).
76. See Joshua A. Fogel, ed., *The Role of Japan in Liang Qichao's Introduction of Modern Western Civilization to China* (Berkeley: China Research Monograph Series 57, 2004).
77. Compare Tang Xiaobing, *Liang Qichao*, chapter 2.
78. For more details about Liang's travels in Europe see the classic account by Joseph R. Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953).
79. Liang Qichao, *Ouyou Xinying lu jielu*, p. 2961.
80. Ibid., p. 2978.
81. Ibid., p. 2980.
82. Ibid., pp. 2980–81.
83. See Jürgen Osterhammel, *Shanghai, 30. Mai 1925. Die chinesische Revolution* (Munich: DTV, 1997), chapters 2 and 3.
84. About the global discourse of late development see Reinhard Bendix, "Strukturgeschichtliche Voraussetzungen der nationalen und kulturellen Identität in der Neuzeit," in Bernard Giesen, ed., *Nationale und kulturelle Identität: Studien zur Entwicklung des kollektiven Bewusstseins in der Neuzeit* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1991), pp. 39–55.
85. In that sense two different definitions of civilization, civilization as a potentially universal culture and civilization as a Spenglerian category for cultural distinctiveness,

were brought into the same theoretical frameworks. About the two main discourses of civilization during the early twentieth century see Prasenjit Duara, "Civilizations and Nations in a Globalizing World," in Dominic Sachsenmaier, Jens Riedel, and Shmuel Eisenstadt, eds., *Reflections on Multiple Modernities: European, Chinese, and Other Approaches* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 79–99.

86. A rich account of research approaches is provided by Craig Calhoun, "Nationalism, Modernism, and their Multiplicities," in Elizer Ben-Rafael and Yitzak Sternberg, eds., *Identity, Culture and Globalization* (Leiden: Brill, 2001): 445–70.
87. See, for example, Stein Ugelvik Larsen, ed., *Fascism outside Europe: The European Impulse against Domestic Conditions in the Diffusion of Global Fascism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).
88. Compare Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914–1991* (New York: Vintage, 1994).
89. See Dominic Sachsenmaier, "Politische Kulturen in China nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg—Gedanken zu einer globalhistorischen Perspektive," *Zeitschrift für Weltgeschichte* 4, no. 2 (2003): 55–68.