

China “Asleep” and “Awakening.”

A Study in Conceptualizing Asymmetry and Coping with It.

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Introduction: concept, word, metaphor, and image

Basic political concepts such as “state,” “nation,” or “people” are highly complex. A clear understanding is hard to pin down, and it is even harder to extract from them a specific course of action to pursue at a given time and place.¹ This is true for most of the key concepts, which are shared among the recast modern languages the world over and structure our perception of the world. The reason for their lack of concreteness is that these concepts frame experience rather than being framed by it. Their manifestations are as manifold and changing over time as are the efforts to define their core. Thus, these concepts are the topic of discussion and the objects of exploration rather than providing neat, generally accepted definitions.

Such basic concepts are expressed in many ways. “State” may serve as an example. It might come in the form of:

- words such as state, nation, government, dynasty, polis, court, or, to use Chinese examples *guo* 國, *bang* 邦, or *chao* 朝. These abstract words are themselves often just forgotten metaphors. An example is “government,” which is taken from Latin *gubernare*,

¹ Christoph Harbsmeier made many valuable suggestions for improving and clarifying this essay. Andrea Hacker was of great and critical editorial help. Mareike Ohlberg has shouldered the burden of helping with image copyright clearance. Profs. Jin Guantao and Liu Qingfeng have been kind enough to give me access to their rich database of Chinese works of the crucial period between 1850 and 1930. Many colleagues have contributed valuable references, to wit Prof. Peil (Munich) a reference on the use of the sleep metaphor in European political thought, Prof. Maissen (Heidelberg) the reference to the Swiss asleep, Prof. Sinn (Hong Kong) a *Shiju tu* postcard in her possession, Prof. Higonnet (Harvard) a reference to the Tiers État asleep, Prof. Geyer (Bonn) a reference on the Petrarch reception, and Prof. Parel (Calgary) a reference on Gandhi. I am deeply grateful for this help, which in this kind of enterprise, that actually should be a collective work from the outset, is indispensable.

- and Greek κυβερνήειν, both of which mean “steering a ship;”²
- metaphors or complex dynamic similes such as body, ship, stage, island, house, farm;
- allegorical figures such as human or animal figures (dragon, eagle, lion, Marianne, John Bull);
- allegorical narratives such as Mandeville’s *Fable of the Bees*.

It might be expressed:

- in the medium of image. As the “words” are not easily translated into images, the images would rather take their material from – and feed into – the reservoir of metaphor/simile and allegory. Political cartoons, allegorical depictions, and graphic representations of structures (on the “House” analogy) come to mind.
- in silent structures such as state bodies with their responsibilities and legal institutions, or in architectural constellations as we see them in the Washington Mall or the New Delhi.
- in equally silent practices of exercising and checking state authority, which may or may not be sanctioned by formal institutions, and may receive their legitimacy from past habituation on the sides of both the administrators of the state and the subjects. Tax dodging on the one side and mandatory inoculation or school attendance on the other, are examples.
- through the structure of a musical piece or a game and the un verbalized interaction among its segments. The symphony’s form has been read

2 In the Chinese case, the metaphorical nature is more deeply hidden. The study of Chinese word families, based on the phoneme of the word, is not yet advanced enough to allow precise statements. The “etymology” traditionally used in China probes the written character as the etymon, although it may best be read as an effort to represent the content of the word. Given the difficulty in representing abstract concepts such as “state” or “family” this approach yields little. In the case of the state, this “etymological” reading of the character *guo* 國—, which is a character composed of a square □ that could be read as representing an enclosed realm or a walled capital, and the character *huo* 或, which is the phonetic indicator leading to the reading *guo*, inside this square, and has a meaning of “perhaps,” “or,” or “some”, led to a rejection of this form in the writings of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom in the mid-nineteenth century. They wrote the character in the form 囯, replacing the “perhaps” *huo* 或 with “king” *wang* 王 to emphasize the hoped-for permanency of their kingdom. In this form it has been incorporated by the Chinese Communist Party into the modern Chinese standard script for both the complex and simple characters.

in this manner, and Chinese discussions on the political implications of the prevalence of “correct” *zheng* 正 music and the “heterodox” tunes from the state of Zheng may serve as a similar example.

These concepts are part of a vast transcultural and translingual flow and exchange in a process through which cultures constantly constitute and transform themselves. This takes place on all the levels indicated. The cultural adaptation processes needed to turn such a concept into a genuine part of the intellectual tools available to a community differ for various media. At the level of the word, neologisms have to be formed, which then exist in a tense relationship with older conceptual and linguistic material.³ At the level of metaphor, the material environment upon which the metaphor draws might be unfamiliar to the new environment and thus be itself in need of explanation to enable it to become meaningful. The originally more or less homogenous relations between the different media through which an issue is being discussed in one community gets very messy, once these different media migrate across linguistic and cultural borders.

The study of conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*) has largely remained fixed on the study of words in a single language (or in what was conceived as a “homogenous” cultural environment, such as Europe or East Asia), and has eschewed other media such as metaphors, similes or images. In turn, studies of metaphors have focused on their linguistic and philosophical aspects,⁴ or on the history of their use with only marginal reference to the history of ideas and concepts of which they are a part.⁵

3 Even when extant older terms are used to express newly imported items, such as 革命 *geming* for revolution in Chinese, these are new words in the sense that their old content is replaced with the implications of the word they translate.

4 See, for example, Hedwig Konrad, *Étude sur la Métaphore* (Paris: Librairie Philosophie J. Vrin, 1958); Max Black, *Models and Metaphors. Studies in the Philosophy of Language* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962). George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors we live by* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

5 Nevertheless there are some very fine studies of this type such as Alexander Demandt, *Metaphern für Geschichte. Sprachbilder und Gleichnisse im historisch-politischen Denken* [Metaphors for history. Images and parables in the language of historical-political thinking] (Munich: Beck, 1978); and Dietmar Peil, *Untersuchungen zur Staats- und Herrschaftsmetaphorik in literarischen Zeugnissen von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* [Studies for metaphors of state and governance in literary sources from antiquity to the present time] (Munich: Fink, 1983). Peil offers an appendix with images that illustrate the similes he studied. My own study of the globalization of the notion of “movement” as a form of social action has not explored the metaphorical aspect of this term in any detail. R. Wagner, “The Canonization of May Fourth,” in *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital. China’s May Fourth Project*, ed. Milena Doleželová-Velingerová (Cambridge: Harvard East Asia Center, 2002), 66-122.

Among the group that produced the seminal *Historische Grundbegriffe*, Hans Blumenberg has paid most attention to the decisive role of metaphor in conceptual history.⁶ In ancient Greece, he originally claimed, no deep chasm separated *logos* from *kosmos*, and there was an assumption that the *logos* could fully define the structures and processes of the *kosmos* in a manner freed from the vagaries of historical, linguistic, or cultural diversity and change.⁷ As a consequence, the rich array of verbalized, visualized, built, or practiced articulations listed above, would be marginal to the definitory core, at least in this Greek perspective. Blumenberg saw “the relationship of metaphorology to conceptual history as being one of subservience.”⁸

The available evidence does not support this claim. When in Book VI of Plato’s *Republic* Socrates tries to convince an interlocutor of a *polis*’ absolute need for a qualified leader, Socrates claims he can make his argument “only with the help of a parable.” He then proceeds to show that a ship is doomed if everybody on that ship claims to be qualified to steer and struggles for control. Only a qualified navigator, who stands in metaphorically for the philosopher-king, will secure safe passage.⁹ Socrates underlines the crucial role of metaphor to produce an environment where not only a complex structure becomes understandable, but practical conclusions can be deduced. There is ample evidence of this metaphor’s further use by Plato’s contemporaries and writers in Europe to this day.¹⁰

After several more years’ study, Blumenberg changed his take on the functions of metaphor. He now described it as “an authentic manner of grasping connections (eine authentische Leistungsart der Erfassung von Zusammenhängen).”¹¹ Even this much-enlarged definition falls short.

6 Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, and Reinhart Koselleck eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe:historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: E. Klett, 1972-1997).

7 Hans Blumenberg, *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Publishers, 1998), 8. An English translation of this work was published by Cornell University Press in 2010.

8 “Das Verhältnis der Metaphorologie zur Begriffsgeschichte (im engeren terminologischen Sinne) als ein solches der Dienstbarkeit,” *ibid.*, 11.

9 Plato, *Republic*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1871), 233.

10 See C.W. Mendell, “Horace I .1,” *Classical Philology*33, no. 2 (Apr. 1938):147. The interpretation of Horace 1.14 as referring to a “ship of state,” which is an old reading quoted by Blumenberg as the origin of the state/ship metaphor, has been abandoned as implausible. For the history of the state/ship metaphor in Europe, see Helmut Quaritsch, “Das Schiff als Gleichnis,” in *Recht über See*. Festschrift Rolf Stödter zum 70. Geburtstag, ed. Hans Peter Ipsen and Karl-Hartmann Necker (Hamburg: R. v. Decker’s Verlag, G. Schenck), 250-286.

11 Hans Blumenberg, “Ausblick auf eine Theorie der Unbegreiflichkeit,” in *Schiffbruch mit*

Concepts are notoriously open-ended with regard to practical steps that have to be taken at a given moment and place. While the situation described by Plato's Socrates involves concepts such as "state," "authority," "social order," "division of labor," "crisis" and more, this metaphor, which has been developed into a full simile, provides a parallel dynamic, namely to associate a set of concepts with a particular time and place for which it suggests and justifies a particular course of action. This bridge to applicability makes metaphors not just an "authentic manner of grasping connections" but also an authentic manner to proceed from concept to action.

Thus, we can be more precise in the questions we ask. Metaphor, simile, and image do not simply illustrate existing concepts, but, given the primacy of the pragmatics involved in taking a particular course of action over the purely analytical effort,¹² they can be crucial elements of historical experience that enter into the constitution of these concepts. If this is so, then they not merely illustrate their subject matter without impact; they are, or can be, the primary and highly structured material with which these concepts are discussed. These metaphorical discussions would therefore impact on the theoretical definitions of concepts to the point that the latter become, to a large extent, just efforts to articulate in abstract terms outside of space and time what the metaphors, similes and images have long before and on their own planes explored in concrete terms and in their implied courses of action.

The dream of a clean slate of hard definitions has not died out, but has been driving efforts of generations of philosophers and political scientists. Even they, however, have never been able to omit the concrete forms of expression that lie beyond abstracts. Various stories have been told that account for the palpable inability of human beings to develop succinct and reliable definitions of complex structures and processes that also take care of their specification in concrete action. God, says a Christian story, has created the world, and he alone understands all of its workings. He has given man, however, enough brains to grasp the regularities of nature so as to make him feel basically secure in a largely predictable environment, and he has given him enough variety of articulation to touch on some key features. The Sage Kings, so says a Chinese story, were great and rare "events" of the deep past. They were

Zuschauer. *Paradigma einer Daseinsmetapher* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1979), 87.

12 Jerry Fodor, *The Language of Thought* (New York: Crowell, 1975) argued for the primacy of concepts innate in human thought. I can see no evidence supporting such a claim. It would strip concepts of their linguistic, rhetorical, cultural and pragmatic contexts.

“naturally” endowed with a complete understanding of the universe and society. This allowed them to infer the steps needed at any given moment to keep the volatile part in this universe—state and society—in conformity with the order of the whole universe. Their nature cannot be inherited by historical man, but they left behind a record that would allow later-born rulers to at least have a general orientation in their management of the state and their personal affairs. This record is thought to show the Sages fully aware of the weaknesses of definitory language. Their bequests, which are the Chinese “classics,” used the whole range of non-abstract articulation, from dreary annals (*Spring and Autumn Annals*, Chunqiu) to poetic songs (*Book of Songs*, Shijing); from mantic handbooks (*Changes*, Zhouyi) to government organigrams (*Ritual of Zhou*, Zhouli) and even “drumming and dancing,” to provide operable guidelines for action for the later-born. The common element in these stories is the primordial importance of using concrete forms of articulation to explore complex and dynamic structures and processes.

At the same time, metaphors in language as well as in images are an anomaly. They are a challenge to the mind that is forever trying to construct a homogenous world, because metaphors state something to be relevant and true that is most certainly not. The state is not a ship and to say a governor is steering the state requires the reader who reads this for the first time to undertake a complex decoding operation. As these metaphors, similes and associated images become more widely used and familiar, the shock of the first encounter wears off and they become what has been called, in the German discussion on newspaper language and imagery, *Kollektivsymbole* (collectively shared symbols), a shared canon of expressions and images upon which a writer or illustrator can draw, as he can with common words or image associations.¹³ The process restarts once the metaphor crosses linguistic, cultural and even historical borders.¹⁴ If the reader in the new environment is unfamiliar with the

13 For this concept, see Jürgen Link, *Die Struktur des Symbols in der Sprache des Journalismus. Zum Verhältnis literarischer und pragmatischer Symbole* [The structure of the symbol in the language of journalism. The relationship between literary and pragmatic symbols] (Munich: Fink, 1978).

14 The metaphor of the state as a ship was not used in premodern Chinese political debates. It was first used in the early twentieth century. For an example see the first chapter of Liu E's 劉鶚 1904-7 novel *Laocan youji* 老殘遊記 [The travels of Laocan] (Beijing: Renmin wuxue chubanshe, 1987). At the same time, even in Europe, it is a petrified artifact frozen in time and space and has never been modernized. Perennially, it is the ancient Greek vessel, transporting goods and men around the Mediterranean. The storms that howl around it, and the rocks, gods and monsters that threaten it, highlight the urgency for everyone on board to abide by the orders of the captain, even if he is not a sage.

real-world object or process adduced in the metaphor, or is unaware of their metaphorical potential (which is the case, for example, in pre-modern China with the simile of a ship on the high seas, or, in medieval Europe, with the emblems woven into imported Chinese silks), the text or image remains incomprehensible. The metaphor or image is therefore in dire need of text to explain and “translate” it. Text allows the mind to re-homogenize the world after the irruption of the metaphorical oddity by explicitly linking the image or metaphor to the more or less abstract concepts and it does so with a more or less substantial enrichment of insight or information.¹⁵

We are not interested here in providing the one and only authoritative definition of a concept such as “the state”; instead we are studying efforts all over the world to grasp the structures and dynamics of this “thing”—if indeed it is that—and to develop strategies to operate, change, or abolish it. Our focus is on the historically concrete practice of dealing with this “thing.” We are therefore well-advised not to marginalize *a priori* the “other” non-verbal forms of articulating concepts by treating them, for example, as cheap and subsidiary ways of instructing the great unwashed. Instead, we need to test the evidence for the interaction of these different forms, and their impact on each other as well as on the overall understanding of the concepts they articulate.

The case study chosen for this article fulfils the following criteria:

- The conceptual discussion is articulated on different levels, in this case word, metaphor, and image.
- The relevant material is relatively small in volume to allow for economy of research and presentation.
- The circumstances are seen as pressing enough to prompt a great many players with different perspectives to join the discussion on a variety of media platforms.

¹⁵ See Hans Blumenberg, “Ausblick auf eine Theorie der Unbegrifflichkeit,” in *Schiffbruch mit Zuschauer* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1979), 87-91. Historical cartoons from Britain, or texts, for example, in Chinese, which employ images, allusions, or metaphors from sources now lost or forgotten, highlight the fact that the “past is a foreign country” and the need for such explanatory text. Gillray’s cartoons from the early nineteenth century, to give one example, are largely incomprehensible to the modern, including British, reader. To cross the historical distance, scholars now draw on German explanations given at the time of the cartoons’ original publication in the Weimar journal *London und Paris* since 1798. Christiane Banerji and Diana Donald, eds., *Gillray observed: the earliest account of his caricatures in London and Paris* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Obviously, there is no proof that such a test case is “typical”. Consequently, any drawn conclusions will be hypotheses that need further testing.

The metaphor and the image of asymmetry in agency and power: the cartoon “The Situation in the Far East” *Shiju (quan) tu* 時局(全)圖

On July 19, 1899, a political cartoon appeared in Hong Kong (Figure 1). It was called “The Situation in the Far East” in English and *Shiju quantu* 時局全圖 (Complete illustration of the contemporary situation) in Chinese. As a political cartoon it signals a pressing political issue; as a cartoon describing the situation of China vis-a-vis the world powers it deals with an issue considered pressing not just by people with a China-centered perspective, but also by the Powers. The focus of this cartoon on the asymmetries in agency and power between China and the Powers will allow us to address the abstract issue of the relationship between concept, metaphor and image in the very specific context of a debate that has shaped Chinese political imagery to this day.



Fig. 1: Tse Tsan Tai 謝纘泰 (1872-1937), *Shiju quantu* 時局全圖 *The Situation in the Far East*, Hong Kong, July 1899.

The cartoon shows the Powers, symbolized by animals such as the bear, the bulldog, the frog and the eagle, taking control of parts of Chinese territory. The Chinese text on top is a key to identify the animals with the countries; the Chinese text at the bottom describes the Powers' respective aims and strategies. These explanations signal that at least parts of the envisaged audience were still in need of a key for such drawings.

The animals on the *Shiju tu* are inscribed with English language statements of purpose, which are summarized in the Chinese text at the bottom.¹⁶ All the statements deal with the Powers' interaction with each other in regard to their China policy: The Russian bear is out for "conquest" in the north, that is, Manchuria, Mongolia, and Korea. Its ambition is not simply to have a sphere of influence or a colony there, but to expand its own territory through hegemonial and humiliating control. The British bulldog ('John Bull') sits in the rich Yangtse valley where British influence is dominant, and favors an "Open Door" policy for China that gives equal commercial access to all; the British also wish to keep the "Territorial Integrity of China" to prevent other countries from establishing exclusive colonies there.¹⁷ The bulldog looks threateningly to the south, where the French are represented in the form of a frog.¹⁸ The frog suffers from the "Fashoda" syndrome, which it caught from the British in the Sudanese town of that name, where the British efforts to establish a South/North axis from Kapstadt to Cairo clashed with the French efforts to get an East/West continuum of control across Africa, and the French were forced to cede. France seeks "colonial expansion," stretching out its arms towards South China and Hainan Island. The American eagle has just turned the Philippines into its protectorate after the war with Spain in 1898, and is already showing a keen interest in China. Inscribed on its neck is the motto "blood is thicker than water"—quoting the American Admiral Josiah Tattnall, when, in 1859, he broke American neutrality during the second Opium War to give logistic support

16 The Chinese text is hard to read, but I deciphered what I could: Russia 俄妥霸篡耽: Striving for hegemony, imposing humiliation; England: 英保同(?)通商 Maintaining [China's] territorial integrity, securing trade; France: 法志拓已屬 Striving to expand what it already controls; United States: 美念親助英 In consideration of family connections, supporting England; Japan: 日助英拒霸 Supporting England in warding off hegemonic control [by Russia]; Germany: 德(?)量大欲. Insatiable, great greed.

17 This is a policy articulated by Britain against Russian and German claims following the Chinese defeat in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-5. When the poster was printed, Britain had partially retreated from this position by getting 99-year leases on Kowloon opposite Hong Kong island, and the sea port of Weihaiwei.

18 This might go back to a common English language slur for the French, the inclusion of frog legs in the French diet, or both.

to England—suggesting that the US will side with John Bull in its China policy. Japan, like the US represented by its official symbol, in this case the sun, has its rays reaching Taiwan in the south and, via Taiwan, Fujian on the mainland, while in the north they are directed towards the former Chinese tributary state of Korea. Its motto “John Bull and I will watch the bear” is also signaling an alliance with the British position, but with an exclusive emphasis on Russia. Finally, a small snake inscribed “Germany” is curling around the Shandong Peninsula.¹⁹

The size of the animals reflects their power. The image depicts the political developments during the previous two years, during which Russia, France, Germany, Japan (and even England, although this does not appear here) secured long-term leases and other privileges on Chinese soil, while England opposed Russia's, France's, and Germany's outright colonial appropriation of China.²⁰

19 There is some scholarship on animal imagery in the late Qing. John Fitzgerald, who had dealt with the imagery of “awakening” and the “lion” in his *Awakening China*, went back to the origins of the “awakening” metaphor in his “‘Lands of the East Awake!’ Christian Motifs in Early Chinese Nationalism,” in *公與私：近代中國個體與群體之重建* [Gong and Si: Reconstructing Individual and Collective Bodies in Modern China], ed. Huang Kewu 黃克武, Zheng Zhejia 張哲嘉, (Nankang: Academia Sinica, Institute of Modern History, 2000), 362-410. The article details some of the Western, including Australian, reception of Marquis Zeng's piece to be discussed later, and traces the metaphors used in the debate back to their Christian origins. Dr. A. Hacker was kind enough to alert me to the origin in St. Paul's “Letter to the Romans”, “Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.” (Romans 13:11). Sin Kiong Wong and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, “Animal Imagery and Political Conflict in Modern China,” in *Hanxue congheng – Excursions in Sinology*, ed. James St. André, (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 2002), 233-275, focus on the use of animal imagery for slander. Dan Zhengping 單正平, *近代思想文化语境中的醒獅形象* [The image of the awakening lion in the cultural concepts of modern thinking], *Nankai daxue xuebao* (Zhhexue shehuike xue ban) 4 (2006): 29-36, traces the use of the “sleeping lion” image especially after 1902 and adds information about the shifting Chinese associations of the “lion.” A more extensive version is in his *晚清民族主義與文學轉型* [Late Qing nationalism and the literary transformation] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2006), 113-145. Yang Ruisong 楊瑞松, “睡獅將興? 近代中國國族共同體論述中的‘睡’與‘獅’意象” [Will the sleeping lion awaken? The images of “sleeping” and “lion” in debates about the common essence of the national race in modern China], *Guoli Zhengzhi daxue lishi xuebao* 30 (2008): 87-118, deals with the different images of China asleep in the Chinese discussion. Yang Ruisong had access to the same database used in the present article. Ishikawa Yoshihiro 石川祐浩, “Wan Qing ‘shui shi’ xingxiang tanyuan,” *晚清“睡獅”形象探源* [Exploring the “sleeping lion” image during the late Qing], in *Zhongshan daxue xuebao* (Shehuike xue ban) 5 (2009): 49, 88-96, is tracing the use of the “sleeping lion” and its association with “Frankenstein” further than did Dan Zhengping.

20 A dry and factual account that reads like a textual key for the map can be found in Appleton's *Cyclopaedia for 1900*: “In 1897 Russia, having intervened after the Japanese victories to preserve Manchuria for China, obtained, in connection with the privilege of building a branch of the Siberian Railroad through Manchuria to a seaport on the Gulf of Pechili, a lease for ninety-nine years of the seaport of Talienwan to serve as the terminus of the railroad and also of the military harbor of Port Arthur. Germany, in the guise of retributory damages for the

The difference between the implied audiences is evident from the difference between the English and Chinese texts. The English language reader no longer needs a key to identify the animals with nations, but the Chinese language reader does need one. The English language reader is expected to be able to identify the inscriptions on the animals as allusions to official policies, although the allusions are often indirect. To decode “Fashoda” on the French frog presupposes as much English language newspaper familiarity over a considerable span of time as does the inscription on the American eagle and even the bulldog. In the Chinese decoding, none of these allusions are adopted, implying that they would be unfamiliar to a Chinese language reader.

China itself is the dead territory in the middle, the inert object of the Powers’ stratagems. While all the other nations—Russia, France, England, Japan, and the US—have a “national agency” that enables them to act with a unified will like a single being, China is a blank space reduced to being the object of their desires. It is devoid of all national agency to defend its

murder of two missionaries by a mob, demanded and obtained the port of Kiao-chau, after landing troops there in the spring of 1898, and preferential commercial and political rights throughout the peninsula of Shantung, thus establishing a claim to a sphere of influence in China. The British Government, receding from the position of the open door which it had first taken in opposition to the Russian and German claims to exclusive spheres, acquired a lease of Wei-Hai-Wei, a naval port on the Gulf of Pechili, on the identical terms of the lease of Port Arthur to Russia, and an agreement by the Chinese Government never to alienate any of the territories in the provinces adjoining the Yangtse Kiang to any other power, whether under lease, mortgage, or any other designation. The French Government, which as protector of Roman Catholic missionaries and as an active and important military power formerly had more frequent diplomatic dealings with China than any other, though French trade in the country was comparatively small, and which had engaged in hostilities with China on account of the participation of the Black Flags in the Tonquinese rebellion, now demanded and obtained a coaling station on the mainland opposite the island of Hainan, also on a ninety-nine-year lease. The nonalienation assurances which had already been obtained regarding Hainan were extended to the Chinese provinces adjoining Tonquin. Great Britain, asserting that parts of these provinces of Kwangtung, Kwangsi, and Honan lie in the Yangtse valley, and unwilling to concede to France preferential treatment in the trade of the West river or in territory adjacent to Burma as well as to Tonquin, demanded compensation in the shape of an extension of the Kaulung settlement opposite Hong-Kong, and an assurance, identical in terms with that given to France, that two of the provinces would not be alienated. Japan, which after the victorious war of 1895 had been forced by European intervention to be content with the cession of Formosa, secured the promise now that the provinces opposite that island would never be alienated to any other nation, but did not seek any preferential economical advantages in those provinces. Italy put forward a demand for a coaling station on lease, and this, though formally supported by Great Britain, was contemptuously refused. Thirteen out of the 18 provinces of China have thus been marked out as spheres of influence by various European powers, and innumerable mining, railroad, and commercial concessions have been granted to foreigners. The number of treaty ports has gradually been increased to 32, some of them situated far in the interior, where the people have never yet come into contact with Europeans.” *Appleton’s Annual Cyclopaedia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1900* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1901), 90.

sovereignty and is not represented by a living being endowed with a will. Thus, the image optically and symbolically represents an asymmetry in agency as perceived by its “Chinese” author, Tse Tsan Tai (Xie Zuantai 謝纘泰) (1872-1937): from his perspective, all agency concerning China lies with the foreign powers, and none with “China” itself. In this respect the cartoon reflects an assessment of China that was shared by many commentators including Chinese reformers. Demetrius Boulger, a man with great China sympathies, who was the editor of the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* at the time, summarized this asymmetry in agency through a different metaphor. In 1897 he published a programmatic article titled “The Sick Man of the Far East”, where he writes:

The general view of China, now, it would be scarcely going too far to say, is not merely that she is a *quantité négligeable*,²¹ but that she will have to obey the dictates of others and thus surrender the power to work out her own destiny. Unless the Chinese awake to the gravity of their situation there will be no resisting the accuracy of that conclusion.²²

Going back to “The Situation in the Far East”, we find on the upper left side a text in Chinese without an English counterpart, which solely addresses Chinese readers. While the image and the inscribed texts defined the “Situation in the Far East,” this text spells out the message of the cartoon for readers identifying with “our China.”

沉沉酣睡我中華
那知愛國即愛家
國民知醒宜今醒
莫待土分裂似瓜

Deep in sleep is our China,

how should they know that loving one’s country is as natural as loving one’s family!

²¹ A reference to a much-quoted statement by the French Prime minister Jules F. Ferry.

²² Demetrius Boulger, “The Sick Man of the far East,” *The New Century Review* 10 (October 1897): 258.

[You] citizens/The Nation²³ should know that as to waking up
you have to wake up now

and not wait until the land is carved up like a melon!

This text presents a mixture of abstract concepts such as “citizen,” “state,” “family,” and “China”, and metaphors such as “being asleep” and “cutting up a melon.” The image and the text interact. The text shows that the purpose of the image is anything but a neutral assessment of the power and agency relationships between China and the Powers, but is, in fact, a call for action. It translates the scene in the image into the notion of China being divided up by the Powers “like a melon,” but above all it translates China’s depicted lack of agency and “organic” national identity into the notion that “our China” is “asleep”, and then comes up with the urgent appeal that to prevent “our China” from being cut up in its sleep, “citizens have to wake up now” to care for their China with the same intensity as for their family. Chinese citizens are to feel ashamed of their lack of patriotic commitment, the consequence of which is the absence of China on the map as a nation. In short: the cartoon uses its depiction of a glaring asymmetry in agency at this critical juncture as a tool to shame “our China” into becoming a true nation.²⁴

The notions of sleep and awakening do have religious overtones both in Buddhism and Christianity. Many of the late Qing reformers, such as Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, had close connections to the lay Buddhist revival led by Yang Wenhui (1837-1911) in Nanjing²⁵ and some of the terminology they used to describe the social reformer is taken from descriptions of the bodhisattva with his commitment to “save all sentient beings”. They also had close connections with Christian missionaries such as Timothy Richard (1845-1919) and Young John Allen (1836-1907), who had decided to focus on the reform of the Chinese polity rather than conversion. The terms used for awakening in Buddhist and

23 The term *guomin* also served to translate Bluntschli’s “Staatsvolk”, which in the English edition became “nation.”

24 The understanding that Chinese nationalism was promoted through such shaming rather than a spontaneous commitment to the country was first suggested by Paul Cohen in his fine study on Wang Tao, “Wang T’ao and Incipient Chinese Nationalism,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 26, no.4 (1967): 559-574. It was further developed by Kathryn Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron: Cultural Responses to Famine in Nineteenth Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

25 Gabriele Goldfuss, *Vers un bouddhisme du XXe siècle: Yang Wenhui (1837-1911), réformateur laïque et imprimeur* (Paris: De Boccard, 2001).

Christian Chinese terminology, however, are not the same as those used for China asleep or awoken.

The cartoon shows some signs of political compromise as any verbalized statement might. By the time it was published, Great Britain had joined the race to acquire long-term leases; only later in the year did it cede to US pressure and returned to its original stance, without, however, abandoning the leases. The reason why this fact is omitted and British commitment to the “territorial integrity” of China is highlighted, may be because Tse Tsan Tai was a public servant in the colonial administration and thus probably reacting to the Hong Kong’s particular political situation. The depiction of Japan is also guarded. It is not an animal, and its insistence at the time that no other power should be allowed to include the province of Fujian (opposite the new Japanese territory of Taiwan) into its zone of influence is likewise not illustrated. The background might be the close connection of the Hong Kong revolutionaries in Tse Tsan Tai’s environment to the Japanese consulate, which, as Tse himself explicitly noted, was supporting their actions.²⁶

The purpose of the cartoon is confirmed in a later memoir by its creator: “This cartoon was designed to arouse the Chinese nation and to warn the people of the impending danger of the partitioning of the Empire by the Foreign Powers.” In other words, it was to appeal to Chinese citizens to wake up and cope with the asymmetry in agency and the resulting asymmetry in power. The addressee is someone who would be speaking of “our China.”²⁷ The bilingual nature of the cartoon and the difference between the Chinese and the English texts needs further exploration.

The study of images and metaphors, as part of conceptual history in a broader sense, must match requirements similar in their core features to those established for the study of concepts and words, while being adjusted to the particulars of a different medium. At the level of metaphor and simile, the logic of the metaphor, the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of its actual use, its functions, and its relationship with concepts and images need to be explored. At the image level, the same criteria apply. Because the emphasis on text in historical studies (and the ensuing development of databases featuring large bodies of text) vicariously also includes metaphor and simile, research in these fields is

²⁶ Tse Tsan Tai, *The Chinese Republic: Secret History of the Revolution*. (Hong Kong: South China Morning Post, 1924), 9: “We obtained the secret support of the Japanese Government through the Japanese Consul.”

²⁷ Tse, *Chinese Republic*, 15.

greatly facilitated. With images the situation is different. It will not suffice to point out that “The Situation in the Far East” cartoon was meant for the public and publicly available, if we wish to support a statement about the cartoon’s actual impact on framing perceptions of the situation in the Far East and on steps Chinese patriots-to-be were encouraged to take. Given the difficulty of documenting print runs, distribution patterns, and reactions to such a cartoon, we have to make the best of scattered pieces of evidence. Luckily enough, there is a relatively rich record. Unfortunately, the burden of assembling and documenting this record is on this essay, which has contributed to its undue length.

Tse Tsan Tai claimed that his cartoon “appeared in many foreign illustrated newspapers.”²⁸ As most information in his memoir can be verified, he is generally credible in his factual statements. I have, however, not been able to find any of these reprints. Tse also wrote that he “allowed Yeung Ku-wan to publish in Japan a coloured travesty of my cartoon, which led to my being questioned by the Colonial Secretary of Hongkong.”²⁹ Indeed, a greatly altered color version of Tse’s cartoon survives (Figure 2)³⁰ and the graphic as well as its political elements seem to suggest that this might be the Japanese version he alluded to. A copy of this color print was found by Zhu Shijia 朱士嘉, the historian of geography, during his search for historical maps of China in the US National Archives in 1940. It came with a detailed key in Cantonese.³¹ In this form, but without the key, the image has found its way into countless PRC schoolbooks as an illustration of the evil plans of the imperialists.

28 Tse, *Chinese Republic*, 15. Yang Qyun 楊衢雲 (=Yeong Ku-wan) (1861-1901) had been involved with Tse Tsan Tai in the founding of an underground anti-Manchu revolutionary organization in Hong Kong in the early 1890s. When this group merged with Sun Yat-sen’s organization Xing Zhong Hui, he became the first president.

29 Ibid.

30 The images can be found on many web-sites; they are copied from Wikipedia, accessed March 31, 2011, <http://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/File:%E6%97%B6%E5%B1%80%E5%9B%BE.jpg>.

31 *Shiju tu* 時局圖 and Anon, “*Shiju tu tici*” 時局圖題詞 [The situation in the Far East with explanatory notes], *Jindai shi ziliao* 近代史資料 1 (1954): 6-12. The Cantonese text in this reprint is annotated to allow for Mandarin reading, and the notes have been merged with the text to produce a readable version for non-Cantonese readers in Wang Yunhong 王云虹, “Youguan <Shiju tu> de jige wenti” 有關<時局圖>的幾個問題, *Lishi jiaoxue* 歷史教學 9 (2005): 74 n. 1. In a letter dated Oct. 26, 2010, Mr. D. Bottoms from the Cartographic Section of the Special Media Archives Division of the National Archives wrote that “the map specified has not been identified among the holdings of this office.” Localizing a better copy would allow decipherment of the inscription in the bottom line, which probably would be that of a publisher traceable to either Japan or Hong Kong. Tse mentions the Japanese print with his record of 1899, which could suggest a publication date in or close to this year.

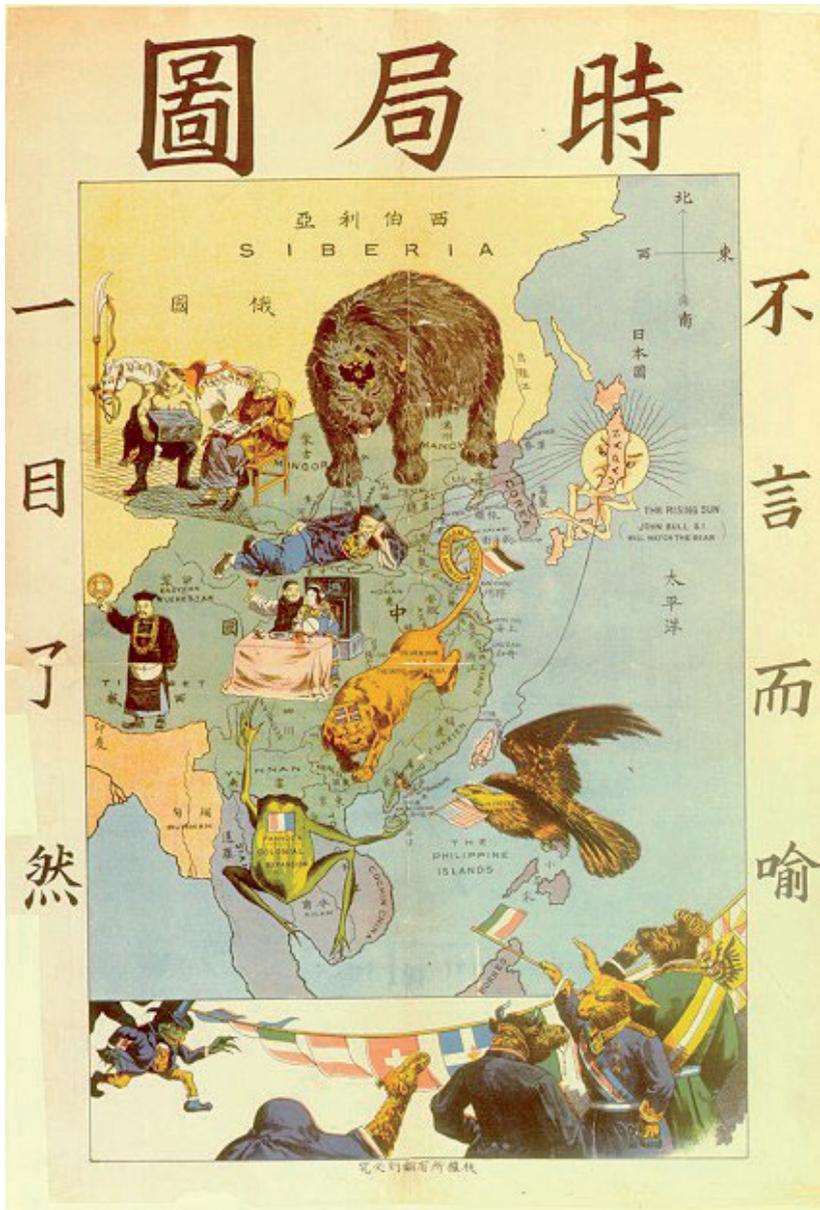


Fig. 2: Shiju tu, 1899 or 1900, probably Japan.

This version follows the older, black and white one in the general layout—symbolism, and slogans on the animals—but relies much more on visualization. It does so explicitly, promising in the slogan on two sides that “being an indirect expression without words [this image] makes all things clear at a single glance 不言而喻，一目了然。”³² The use of the term *yu* 喻, which in the modern vernacular translates as “metaphor,” shows the close link between metaphor and image. The cartoon replaces the Chinese texts of the first version with a lengthy key in Cantonese for deciphering the symbolism.³³ It adds national flags to the animals for easier identification. It changes the British bulldog into a veritable tiger, and has the tiger’s tale inscribed “Germany.” This is comprehensible only with the key, which claims that Britain got hold of the port of Weihaiwei to offset the strong position that Germany acquired in Shandong. The Cantonese key goes into great detail about the areas claimed by the Powers as their spheres of influence.

The denunciation of Russia is especially harsh. If its plans succeed, the entire north, including Manchuria, Mongolia, and Korea, will be under its heel. “When they see people they just slaughter them, and when they come upon villages they burn them, treating the lives of you Chinese as cheaper than sand and mud.”³⁴ The sequence is reset here according to the threat the Power posed to China with Russia coming first, followed by France, England, and Japan. France might be making a deal with Russia, and Great Britain is mostly occupied with preventing France from establishing itself in the Southern provinces. The Japanese sun now extends its rays into China itself to the man resting in the middle, and the key denounces Japan’s babbling about having the “same writing, being of the same race and being of mutual support,” while grabbing Taiwan. Germany is treated as a minor understudy of England. The fine satirical drawing at the bottom shows the minor powers—including a little toad with a top hat rushing in

³² This is a combination of two colloquial expressions. The first half goes back to the *Mengzi* VII.I.21. There it is used for the gentleman who embodies virtue in such a manner that his entire body, mien and movements exude it without it having to be spelled out. The second is attested in *The Sayings of Zhu Xi*, *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類, ed. Li Jingde 黎靖德 and Satō Hitoshi 佐藤仁 (Kyōto: Chūbun shuppansha, 1984), 137.

³³ Anon, “Shiju tu tici” 時局圖題詞 [The Situation in the Far East with explanatory notes], *Jindai shi ziliao* 近代史資料 1 (1954): 6-12. A transcription into Mandarin Chinese can be found in Wang Yunhong 王云虹, “Youguan <Shiju tu> de jige wenti” 有關<時局圖>的幾個問題, *Lishi jiaoxue* 歷史教學, 9(2005): 74 n. 1.

³⁴ This phrase has led some commentators to assume that this cartoon and its key must be dated between 1900 and the Russian-Japanese War. There were, however, polemics against Russia already before 1900 in Japan and no political development of 1900 (Boxers or foreign intervention) is alluded to. If this is indeed the Japanese print, Tse Tsan Tai’s chronology would place it in 1899.

from the left—crowding in to get some of the spoils. But they are reduced to being onlookers behind a fence. Italy, for example, is already raising its flag for a bid, yet it remains behind the barrier—its bid, for the support of which it sent a lone cruiser, was turned down. Austria, standing to its right, is pondering whether it, too, should join the hunt.

While eliminating the Chinese text that begins “deep in sleep is our China,” this cartoon version fills the Chinese map with a visual reading of what “China asleep” might signify. The key figure on the map, the man in the center with the “sour mien,” is a Manchu official.³⁵ He is described in the key as “altogether not caring for the things that need doing,” “in big sleep and endless slumber without getting up” in the Central Plains.³⁶ The net he casts towards the figures in the top left corner traps the Chinese in the pursuit of official civilian or military careers, which makes them “confused 迷住” through endless study of empty writings, and “vicious 頑皮” through the study of antiquated military arts; they end up as corrupt and gluttonous officials.³⁷ At the same time, this Manchu government is touched by the rays of the Japanese “sun”. This would suggest a time when Japanese influence markedly increased.

The cartoon offers a different reading of “China asleep” to a different audience. While the threat to China still comes from the Powers and especially from Russia and France, the image shows the Manchu officials as being “asleep” with regard to the national crisis, trapping the Han-Chinese into wasting their energies on governmental examinations and then squandering the country’s wealth with their debauchery, corruption, and oppression. China is not simply asleep; its government is indifferent to the national danger. The cartoon is not trying to mobilize the sleeping Manchu, but is directed at the trapped Chinese—not just the Cantonese. The key ends with the words: “How long are you Chinese 華人 still going to wait until you do something?” There is no hope here that the Manchu

35 “Ai, what a funny teaser we have there in this ‘eldest son’ (=Manchu)/.../ look how he is lying there all asleep and drowsy like this without bestirring himself.” *Ibid.*, 11.

36 The key refers to him with some subterfuge as a 蝦仔, a Cantonese term for “eldest son.” As opposed to Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, who maintained a—probably tactical—loyalty to the Manchu Dynasty, Tse Tsan Tai and his group were strongly and explicitly anti-Manchu.

37 The emptiness of traditional education is symbolized through the “empty” Chinese characters 者, 也, 之 and 乎, which are in the text, but probably also on the old man’s book. The age of the old man shows how long it takes to even get a basic understanding of classical Chinese. The antiquated weapons are the bow, the sword and the big stone in the text, and on the image the halberd, the horse, and the big stone (for lifting). The man in military training also seems beyond his prime.

Court and the trapped Chinese elite can be shamed into waking up to the nation and its needs. The only group that can be shamed into “doing something” about the nation are the “Chinese.”

Unlike the first version, this cartoon is aimed at Cantonese readers who are less experienced at deciphering the new medium of the cartoon, have little familiarity with the new concepts such as “citizen” and “state” or metaphors such as “cutting up the melon” (both of which were used in the earlier version, but are not used here), and are only marginally Chinese/English bilingual. The two cartoons suggest different kinds of action. The first offered itself as information regarding the current situation with a stronger emphasis on the threat from Russia in the hope that people will “wake up” once they see the cartoon. However, it remains unspecific as to the steps to be taken once this awakening has happened. The second cartoon seems to direct the awakening anger against the Manchu Court.

The more critical stance concerning Japan, as well as Britain, was not lost on the Hong Kong authorities. They were probably not the intended addressees, but they definitely took notice. Since Tse Tsan Tai was the creator of the original draft and lived in Hong Kong, he was reprimanded by the British Colonial Secretary, which explains why he refers to this print as a “travesty.” The Colonial Secretary’s reaction is an indicator of the British (and perhaps the Japanese) authorities’ assessment of the potential impact such a print may have.

This second version also survives in some variants. For example, it appeared as a colored postcard (Figure 3).³⁸

³⁸ I have only had access to this black and white copy of the colored original.



The Situation in the Far East

Fig. 3: *The Situation in the Far East*, Postcard, 1899 or 1900.

This postcard reproduces the color version, but all sides are cut off and it comes without a key. No printer's name is preserved. This kind of postcard featuring political cartoons about pressing current events (such as war) had been spreading since the 1890s in Europe, the US, and Japan.³⁹ The genre

³⁹ A selection of Western war postcards dealing with Japan and, marginally, China, was pub-

became instrumental in spreading familiarity with a code of imagery used in political cartoons beyond high-brow readers of the prominent papers. The postcard reproduced here might be one of, or even the first of its genre, addressing readers of Chinese. Its existence implies a market as well as a new medium for disseminating the implied message among acquaintances or relations (in China or abroad) by sending them the postcard.

A Chinese language newspaper set up by Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868-1940) in 1903 to warn against the “Russian threat” throws further light on the dispersion process. Introducing another variant of this later cartoon version it states: “This image is referred to as the image of dividing up China like a melon 這一張圖叫做瓜分中國圖。” Obviously, the cartoon was widely known and had acquired a name that was different from its original Chinese or English title. The text continues: “Some years ago it was put together by someone translating from English newspapers.” This seems not to refer to the image, but to the textual information. In the end, the report comes back to this: “The man translating this image has Xie (Tse) as his family name. It was printed in Hong Kong in a fine color print. It is on sale in Shanghai at [the bookstore] Kelly and Walsh. You all might want to buy a sheet and take it home to show to your children. Probably after explaining a bit, even a six or seven year old kid will have its indignation raised. Given that you [readers] are already so grown-up, this should make you think.”⁴⁰ Obviously, the information available to Cai Yuanpei was hazy about the origins of the cartoon—which is not Tse Tsan Tai’s version—and about the full name of Tse Tsan Tai, but precise regarding the fact that a colored print version from Hong Kong was on sale in Shanghai, and that readers in that city were familiar with the print. Kelly and Walsh (別發洋行) is a Shanghai publisher and bookstore (founded in 1876) specializing in English or bilingual Chinese-English books about China.⁴¹ The implied reader was obviously familiar with this bookstore, which offered a large selection of Western books about China, and he was not surprised that the most patriotic Chinese poster available could only be found in a Western-run bookstore.

lished by Sepp Linhart, “*Niedliche Japaner*” oder *Gelbe Gefahr?* “*Dainty Japanese*” or *Yellow Peril?* (Vienna: Lit Verlag), 2005.

40 “Xianshi” 現勢 [the present situation], *E shi jing wen* 俄事警聞 [Alarming news on Russian actions] 1 (Dec. 1903), reprinted in *Zhonghua Minguo shiliao congbian* A12, (Taipei: Zhongguo Guomindang Zhongyang Weiyuanhui dangshi shiliao bianzuan weiyuanhui, 1983), 7-9.

41 A list of Kelly and Walsh publications has been compiled by the firm, which still survives in Hong Kong. It can be found at http://www.defyse.com/kelly__walsh_publications.htm. Accessed Oct. 20, 2010.

Referred to in Chinese as the image of “China carved up like a melon” instead of the original “The situation in the world”, this version spread to Japan, Shanghai, and Hong Kong. Different readers in different places felt free to attach their own interpretations and to change the drawing accordingly.

A source from 1900 gives us a glimpse at the ways audiences interacted with the print, when the poet Huang Zunxian 黄遵憲 (1848-1905), who had been instrumental in making detailed information about the Japanese Meiji Reforms available in China,⁴² referred to the cartoon in two of his poems. Huang, we should add, had been sidelined after the coup that ended the ‘Hundred Days Reform’ in 1898, and had retreated to his home near Meizhou, east of Guangzhou in Guangdong Province.

The first poem, “Yang tian” 仰天 (Raising the eyes to heaven [in frustration]) (1900), which is studded with classical allusions, begins with an angry “Eyes to heaven, hands flying, I howl wuwu/Hitting at random, I smash the spittle pot.” It ends with the defiant: “Hidden in the box the incriminated works of the famous scholars [Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao]/ [but] mounted on the wall the image of the Powers dividing up the pie” 篋藏名士株連籍，壁掛群雄豆剖圖。⁴³ Interestingly, the term translated as “mighty powers” is in the original Chinese closer to “the group of heroes”, i.e. a positive term. In other words, the anger is not directed against the Powers. The name given to the cartoon on the wall uses a variant of “dividing up the melon.”⁴⁴

In the second poem from the same year, Huang returns again to the cartoon, which he had mounted on his wall. Entitled “While sick, I noted down a dream that I sent to Liang Qichao,” Huang dreams about Liang coming with his head under his arm while being pursued by Qing assassins. Two spirits or souls of reformers, who had been executed after 1898, transport Liang to heaven. In a reference to people associated with Sun Yat-sen, Liang then proceeds to outline the young revolutionists’

42 Huang Zunxian 黄遵憲, *Riben guozhi* 日本國志 [A record of Japan], (Yangcheng: Fuwenzhai, 1890). See Kamachi, Noriko, *Reform in China: Huang Tsun-Hsien and the Japanese Model* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, 1981).

43 Huang Zunxian 黄遵憲, “Yang tian” 仰天 [Raising the eyes to heaven], in *Renjing lu shi cao qianzhu* 人境廬詩草箋注, ed. Huang Zunxian, with annotations by Qian Zhonglian 錢仲聯 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1981), 797. Thanks to Mr. Li Man for his correction.

44 The full phrase for “dividing up the melon” is 豆剖瓜分 or 豆分瓜剖, “the *doufu* split up, and the melon divided.” In this case only the first half is used.

criticism of his continued support for the dynasty. The poem ends as Huang suddenly sees an image of Liang on his wall:

Your head was against my wall,
 Covering the wall with diffuse red.
 Sitting up I rubbed my eyes to see,
 Alas – it was the image of dividing up the melon 瓜分圖⁴⁵

This second reference to a picture on the wall features the same elements as the quotation about the print on sale in Shanghai. For the author, the cartoon has become short-hand for the situation of China, and the implied reader of the poems is expected to catch the reference. While the available editions do not make it clear whether either of the two poems were published in a paper or journal—that would have publicly linked Huang to the cartoon—there is an early record of the second poem in Liang Qichao's own publication of his works.

The association of Liang Qichao with the name of the cartoon comes from a highly influential article Liang published in August 1899 entitled “Words of alarm about being divided up like a melon,” 瓜分危言, which did much to popularize the metaphor in Chinese-writing circles.⁴⁶

By chance, the image hanging on Huang's wall seems to have survived in Huang's home, which has now become a cultural preservation site (Figure 4):⁴⁷

45 Huang Zunxian 黄遵宪, “Bing zhong ji meng, shu ji Liang Renfu” 病中紀夢述寄梁任父 [While sick, I noted down a dream that I sent to Liang Qichao], in Huang Zunxian, *Renjing lu*, 1071. For a translation with a different strategy, see J. D. Schmidt, *Within the Human Realm: The Poetry of Huang Zunxian 1848-1905* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 301-302.

46 I am preparing a study on this metaphor. For some details, see further down.

47 Douglas Reynolds was kind enough to inquire about details for this image during a visit to Huang's old home in 2010. A photograph of the image is still on display; the original is stored elsewhere and has not been made available to him.



Fig. 4: Shiju tu, [water?] colored hand drawing. Photograph taken in former home of Huang Zunxian by Hon Kwong. Inscription below has been added by the administrators of Huang's home.

This cartoon draws on both Tse Tsan Tai's original and the later changed version. It has the Chinese text on the left side, which is only in Tse's, and it has part of the motto from the later color version on the right side. It also borrows the smaller nations looking on at the bottom and the shorter title from this later version, and introduces its own elements and priorities. All of the explanatory matter is gone, and this

version requires the spectator to do his own decoding, for example of the snake in front of the lion. Most significant, however, is the change in the animals. The bear, frog and eagle remain iconographically close to the earlier version, but Japan is now simply a bright sun without any visible designs on China. The bulldog, or tiger (England), as well as the Manchu official, are no longer in the center. The tiger reappears instead in the top left corner in Europe, while the center is now occupied by China in the form of a sleeping lion, blissfully unaware of the threats to its territory.

From what can be recognized on this photograph, the object is likely to be a watercolor done by someone familiar with both versions. As Huang refers twice to this image—if indeed this was his image—in poems written in 1900 and the first version of the cartoon itself is dated July 1899, the dating of this image has a *terminus post quem* of July 1899, and a *terminus ante quem* between July 1899 and the end of 1900. Furthermore, neither poem refers to the Boxer disturbance or the foreign intervention, which means that the likely *terminus ante quem* lies in the middle of 1900. Finally, the fact that this image in Huang's home draws on the colored version with the key in Cantonese, this latter version can also be confidently dated to between July 1899 and the middle of 1900.

The changes in the image seem to match Huang's attitude as well as the Chinese political environment. His very positive experiences in Japan fit the country's representation in the cartoon. And given the continuing crackdown against associates and sympathizers of Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, caution probably advised against displaying a direct attack on the Manchu Court on the living room wall. As a privately displayed image, it expressed Huang's personal concern about the threats to the country, and signalled it to his visitors. The image sees the crisis not in differences in potential strength—a lion certainly is potentially strong—but in actualized agency. Circumspect, it carefully avoids any specific suggestion about the actions that have to be taken.

The sleeping lion suggests a China that potentially equals or exceeds the other nations' power and fierceness. Being a lion, but asleep, China is unable to translate its potential into actual agency. While retaining the other versions' strategy of shaming the audience into nation building, Huang Zunxian's image has a much higher appreciation of China's potential lion-like organic unity and power. This "sleeping

lion” image obviously engages in a branch of the discussion about symbolical representations of China, which we will have occasion to explore.

A third variant of our second cartoon, which has no text in either Chinese or English, but is accompanied by a very lengthy explanation, appeared in the first issue of the Shanghai paper *E shi jingwen* 俄事警聞 (Alarming news about Russian actions), which has already been mentioned (Figure 5).⁴⁸ Run by Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868-1940), the paper began publication in December 1903 during the months leading up to the Russian-Japanese War in China’s northeast. Its intention was, to quote the opening announcement, to “arouse 喚起 citizens and to prompt them to jointly make sure to resist the [Chinese] policies in this affair,” namely the Russian occupation of the Chinese northeast.⁴⁹

Like Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, Cai belonged to the first generation of Chinese reformers who still had a full classical education and only later in their careers became interested in exploring new offerings from the West and Japan. Cai had been appointed to the prestigious Hanlin Academy in 1898, and it was his exposure to Chinese translations of Western works, which in 1903 prompted him to set up and join revolutionary organizations, and in 1907 to go to Europe where he studied psychology and art history in Leipzig. His journal pioneered the use of the Western genre of political cartoons in the Chinese language press.

48 “Xianshi” 現勢 [The present situation], in *E shi jing wen* 1 (1903): 7-9.

49 “Benshe guanggao” 本社廣告 [Announcement from our publishing company], in *E shi jing wen* 1 (1903): 2.



Fig. 5: *Gua fen Zhongguo tu* 瓜分中國圖 (*Carving China up like a Melon*). The title is only given in the accompanying explanatory text as *Xianshi* 現勢 (*The Present Situation*).

The journal's opening editorial, "A General Appeal to Citizens" 普告國民, which precedes the image, starts with the words:

Woe! The country is going under! The
 country is going under! But our compatriots
 are still in deep slumber and do not wake up!
 嗚呼！國亡矣！國亡矣！我同胞猶酣睡而不
 覺耶⁵⁰

The “citizens” (or “nation”) of the cartoon’s first version reappear here in the “compatriots,” which also includes those Chinese living overseas. The immediate danger depicted now comes from Russia, rather than from all the Powers. England has reverted to being a bulldog, fiercely staring at the viewer, but preserving the *status quo* by sitting and not moving to change anything; Japan is not radiating on a declining Manchu official, but now exerts influence via Taiwan to Fujian province on the mainland. Germany has developed into a veritable little snake that reaches inland from Shandong, and down the coast towards Shanghai.

The detailed commentary on the cartoon entitled “The present situation” explains the image step by step to an implied reader who is unequipped to decode it (and is harangued as having less patriotic fervor than a six-year old child). The complicated relations between the Powers and Russia are confusing the Chinese state leaders, who are afraid of the popular reaction if they sell out, which results in “millions of people being as muddle-headed as the state leaders” and the need for both to be awakened by this newspaper. The “resistance”, to which the paper’s call tries to awaken the “compatriots” and “citizens”, is directed against the Chinese government’s eagerness to accommodate the Russians by giving in to their demands.

While this paper was published in the Chinese media capital of Shanghai (where readers would be familiar with this type of communication and, as we learned, people could buy the colored poster in a foreign bookstore) this commentary and its simple language suggest that the paper primarily tried to reach and mobilize people from “the entire country,” i.e. beyond Shanghai, who were not bilingual.⁵¹ The paper took this aim to reach “the entire country”

50 Editorial *sheshuo* 社說 “Pugao guomin” 普告國民 [A general announcement to the citizens/nation] *E Shi jing wen* 1 (1903): 3-4.

51 In its first issue the paper announced that the articles would even use different language registers according to the implied readers. The basic registers were documentary Chinese, *wen* 文, and vernacular, *bai* 白; the language for itinerant practitioners and craftsmen, as well as settlers in the three northern provinces would be Mandarin *guanhua* 官話; for examina-

seriously,⁵² which shows the difficulties of crossing the divide between places such as Shanghai and the rest of the country. We will have to discuss the non-homogeneity of the public sphere, the significant imbalance between the contact zones in the foreign settlements and the Chinese hinterland, and the relationship of the public sphere to the “national” territory.⁵³

In combining the impending threat—the Powers dividing up the melon, the problem of China being asleep—and the appeal for action, this cartoon and its accompanying texts share the agenda of the earlier versions. But the commentary is particular, first in its single-minded concentration on Russia’s administrative integration of China’s northern provinces into its state administration and, secondly, in designing a strategy that sees the key for thwarting Russia’s designs in fostering popular resistance to the government’s sell-out to Russia.

The short foray to the *Shiju tu* has shown that abstract words are neither the only nor the most effective method of communication. Far from being merely the “hand maiden” of concepts, restricted to introducing abstract matters to a wider audience, metaphors and images offer a genuine path to specific understanding and legitimized action. They offer a platform for a focused and controversial debate.

Concepts are in need of metaphors and similes for their integration with other concepts in a manner specific enough to suggest a course of action. Metaphors and similes cry out for images to make explicit the complex envisaged scenario. As we shall see, they even offer the wherewithal for allegorical narratives that, in the form of fiction, spell out the implications of a metaphorical characterization of the present. Such narratives in turn might be illustrated and commented on with a different verbiage. The images are, however, not self-explanatory. Instead, they beckon the creation of text with concepts and metaphors to explain them, or a verbal pun that will highlight the issue at stake through the medium of language.

tion candidates and Peking residents, Peking dialect 京話, and for Hunanese, it would be the Hunan vernacular 湖南白. *E shi jing wen* 1 (1903): 3. It would be an interesting exercise to check this announcement against the actual articles.

52 *Ibid.*, 2.

53 Both Jürgen Habermas and Benedict Anderson fail to take into account the extreme chasm between a media capital like Shanghai and the rest of China, as well as the close links between these centers and similar centers in other countries. For further development of this argument, see below.

The nation “asleep:” transcultural archaeology of a metaphor and image

Out of the rich array of concepts, words, metaphors, images and scenes presented in the single cartoon *Shiju tu*, I will now select one element for closer study: China asleep. This selection will make for an economic as well as detailed analysis.

The notion that a collectivity such as a nation, class, or gender could be “asleep” presupposes a violent operation, namely the transformation of this collectivity into a living entity with a potentially unified will, a will that is for the duration of the sleep out of practical operation. The sleep metaphor defines an asymmetry in agency either between the sleeping and waking state of the same organism, or between one sleeping organism and others that are awake.

This form of sleep metaphor spread in the Chinese language after the 1880s. Searching a large Chinese language database, that is particularly rich in texts associated with reform, yields the following graph for the use of the sleep metaphor between 1820 and 1930:

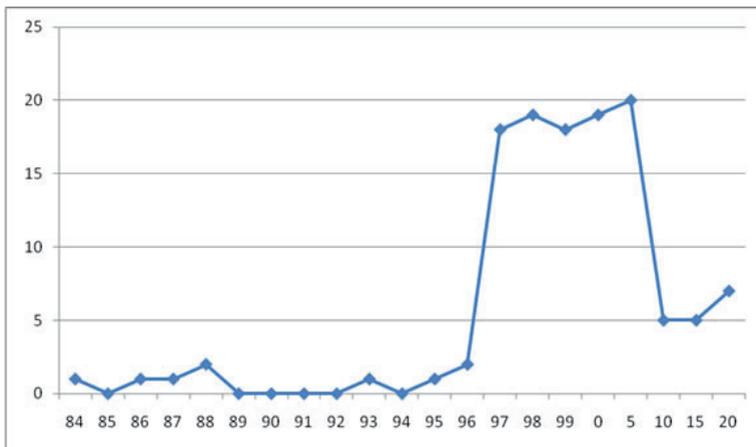


Fig. 6: Use of the “sleep” metaphor for nations or peoples—mostly China—in Chinese language articles contained in the database *Zhongguo jinxindai sixiang shi zhuan yeshujuku* 中國近現代思想史專業數據庫 for the years 1884-1920.⁵⁴ (Note: No hits before 1884, sequence 1884-1900 annually, then in five-year steps.)

⁵⁴ I am much obliged to Profs. Jin Guantao and Liu Qingfeng for having granted me permission to make use of this database, to Prof. Zheng Wenhui for having introduced the database to me and for transferring my queries to her graduate student Mr. Zhang Jingyi 張靖怡, who extracted the data.

The earliest Chinese language use of the metaphor that I was able to locate occurred in an 1884 record of the Sino-French confrontation in Vietnam. It was put together by a group of authors including the Japanese Sone Shōun 曾根嘯雲 (1848-1910) as the compiler who also added Japanese reading marks to this Chinese language text; Wang Tao 王韜 (1828-1897), the editor of the *Xunhuan ribao* 循環日報 (Global Daily) in Hong Kong, who was responsible for selecting the excerpts; and the Vietnamese Ruan Heting, who proofread the result:

When Westerners invaded China recently, they came upon Qing officials who were slumbering in their dreams, and the Qing people were also not yet aware of their own potential. Now, however, the Qing officials have awoken from their slumber and have prepared [for a confrontation] for over twenty years. They harbor deep anger and grind their teeth in enmity towards the French.⁵⁵ 前者西人之侵清國，適值清國官員睡在夢中，而清人又未悉清人伎倆。今清官既已夢醒，又預備二十餘年，含憤已甚，皆切齒而仇法。

The graph shows occasional references, and then a sudden steep rise after 1896. These incidences occur in a very restricted number of publications, nearly all of which are connected to reformers such as Kang Youwei, Yan Fu, Liang Qichao, Ho Kai, and Tang Caichang.⁵⁶ The leading newspaper of the time, the *Shenbao*, which is not in the database consulted, but for which a digital full text version exists for the years 1872 to 1893, shows very limited use of the sleep metaphor for China around 1887, and no further incidences in the years up to 1893. A cursory check in other Chinese language reform writings of the late nineteenth century confirms that the metaphor was, for a long while, primarily used in the small circle of authors mentioned above and became influential mainly due to their profuse newspaper and periodical publishing. Only after 1900 the sleep-metaphor spread to a greater variety of publications.⁵⁷

55 Sone Shōun 曾根嘯雲, Wang Tao 王韜 et al. eds., *Fa Yue jiaobing ji* 法越交兵記 [Record of the French-Vietnamese military confrontation], (1886) repr. in *Jindai Zhongguo shiliao congkan*, (Taipei: Wenhai, 1971), vol. 615, chapter 4, 439.

56 These would be *Shiwu bao* 時務報, *Zhixin bao* 知新報, *Qingyi bao* 清議報, *Guowen bao* 國聞報, *Xiangxue bao* 湘學報, *Wanguo gongbao* 萬國公報 as well as collected essays by Kang Youwei, He Qi, and Tang Caichang.

57 As of March 2011, the *Shenbao* database was not yet accessible for the period between 1893 and 1937.

In short: the metaphor was initially shared and spread by a very small group of Chinese reformers, yet amply used in their influential writings. Its time of peak usage is defined by the aftermath of the quick Chinese defeat in the war with Japan in 1894-95, as well as the Court's push for a major reform effort that culminated in the 'Hundred Days Reform' of 1898. As far as images are concerned, representations of China asleep and variations thereof had become understandable enough to be included in cartoons in vernacular Chinese newspapers after 1900.⁵⁸

One might think of the spread of metaphor as an anonymous and collective process. The creativity and counter-intuitiveness involved in the development of a metaphor, however, often point to individual actors who either created the metaphor in a widely read and used text, or were instrumental in introducing it in a different cultural context. The very uneven use of the sleep metaphor in a restricted set of Chinese language journals in a narrow time window suggests that the above-mentioned group of authors played a crucial role in the metaphor's distribution and popularization.

On closer inspection of the actual texts, however, it turns out that they were only reviving an earlier Chinese debate. By 1897, writers such as Tang Caichang (1867-1900) were explicitly and disapprovingly referring to an 1887 essay by Zeng Jize 曾紀澤 (1839-1890), the then Chinese ambassador to London, Paris and Petersburg, entitled "China: The Sleep and the Awakening." It was written in English and published in London's *Asiatic Quarterly Review* in January 1887. A large number of the articles that used the sleep metaphor for China between 1897 and 1910 referred to this source. While they agreed with Zeng Jize that China had been asleep, the Chinese defeat in the war with Japan caused them to reject his claim that with the recent development of the Chinese navy and coastal fortifications during the 1870s and 1880s, China had finally awoken, was able to defend her claims even concerning her tributary states, and had created the conditions for a brisk internal development without foreign interference.

At this point, the anomalies pile up to such a degree that we are forced to seriously reconsider the viability of our approach. Zeng Jize's article in English alerts us to the simple fact that the entire process analyzed here is part of a transcultural exchange with its particular dynamics.

So far, we have traced the spread of a metaphor and its graphic representation, which deals with an asymmetry of agency in mutual relations, as well as an asymmetry of power. We have seen how cartoons were used to mobilize

⁵⁸ The documentation will be provided further down in this study.

people to cope with the resulting crisis. However, this approach has followed the old routine of using the nation state as the default mode of analysis. This routine has its origins in the obsessive focus on the “nation” during the nineteenth century, a focus that has had a lasting impact on the division of labor in the humanities. It has led to odd creations such as a “German,” “Chinese” or “Croatian” history, literature, art, or music with the increasingly silent and self-understood assumption that there is such as thing as a cultural process that can be sufficiently circumscribed by what is fashionably called an “imagined community” of language and image held together by print media.

To tell the story as we have done up to now, we had to sideline the vast evidence for the prevalence of transcultural flow in every single aspect of our endeavor. I will now reexamine the issue with the basic premise that transcultural flows are normal and relevant, in other words, from a “default mode” of transculturality. This, however, cannot be simply a matter of belief. The viability and scholarly productivity of this approach has to manifest itself in a substantially enriched analysis of the sources.

The metaphor “asleep” or “awakened” for nations, states, societies, governments or classes is part of the overall use of the body as a complex and dynamic structure that can serve to conceptualize and discuss the complex operations of such collectivities. In this conceptualization, physical and temporary features of the body, such as disease, were often used to discuss the ailments of the other “body”, as well as the remedies needed. The body metaphor has been in use throughout Eurasia since at least the sixth or fifth century B.C.E.⁵⁹ Since the European Renaissance, continents such as Europe, Asia, or Africa were often represented allegorically in word and image.⁶⁰ But while these images might go as far as depicting the “Rape of Europe” against the background of the 30-years war,⁶¹ or allegorize their

59 Dietmar Peil, “Der Staatskörper,” chap. C in *Untersuchungen zur Staats- und Herrschaftsmetaphorik in literarischen Zeugnissen von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1983). Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, “Politischer Körper, Organismus, Organisation. Zur Geschichte natürlicher Metaphorik und Begrifflichkeit in der politischen Sprache,” (Ph.D. dissertation, Bielefeld University, 1977).

60 Examples are Jan van Kessel, Allegories of the continents, 1664-1666. See <http://cgfa.acropolisinc.com/k/k-2.htm#kessel> and <http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/k/kessel/index.html>, or Giovanni Tiepolo’s depiction of the continents in the staircase of the Würzburg Palace.

61 Peter Paul Rubens, “The Rape of Europe,” ca. 1630, accessed March 31, 2011, <http://www.peterpaulrubens.org/The-Rape-of-Europa-c.-1630.html>. This reading is questionable since the picture is a close copy of Titian’s painting on the same theme in the Gardner Museum, Boston, which is dated 1559-1562, and which Rubens had seen in the collection of Philip II of Spain.

view of a cultural hierarchy between the continents,⁶² they do not describe this entity's state of mind at a given time. In other words, states of mind of such collectivities—whether asleep or awake—had not yet become a regular part of this metaphorical system.

Still, on the verbal level, its use goes back at least to the early Renaissance works of Petrarch (1304–1374). In one of his poems he called upon the spirit of ancient Rome to wake up “Italy that is not even feeling its misfortune. Old, lazy, and slow, will she sleep forever, without anyone waking her up?”⁶³ Interestingly enough, no “Italy” existed at the time beyond a geographical name. Here we have a collectivity sleeping and unaware of itself and its own misfortune, and a poet “in tears” calls on the “spirit” of ancient Rome to “shake her mightily” (*scuoter forte*). Nearly all the elements we have observed in the use of the sleep metaphor for China are already present. While foreign powers are not explicitly mentioned here, the contention of various forces for power in this region at the time is notorious. However, the focus and blame is on the internal condition of the country, not on some overpowering foreign intrusion. The implication is that such intrusions become only possible because the country is asleep. As a consequence, the critique deals with this state of internal affairs, and the appeal is for the country to wake up.

Only since the late 18th century have nations and classes become categories that were regularly assigned a state of mind and a specific historical agency.⁶⁴

62 See Joachim von Sandrart in his *Neue Archontologia Cosmica*, 1638. For the iconography of the continents see Sabine Poeschel, “Studien zur Ikonographie der Erdteile in der Kunst des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts,” (Ph.D. dissertation, Muenster 1985).

63 Francesco Petrarca, *Rerum Vulgarum Fragmenta*, ed. Rosanna Bettarini (Torino: Einaudi, 2005), 1:53. “Italia che suoi guai non par che senta./ Vecchia otiosa et lenta/dormirà sempre, et non chia fi la svegli.” I am grateful to Prof. Dietmar Peil for alerting me to the helpful entry on sleep in the *Metzler Lexikon Literarischer Symbole*, ed. Günter Butzer and Joachim Jacob (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2008), 322–324. Petrarch was greatly denounced as a stalwart of the old order by the Italian Risorgimento. This might be the reason why Mazzini, Garibaldi, Ruffini and others did not pick up this potentially “patriotic” quote. See Amadeo Quondam, “A proposito di identità nazionale, di Petrarca e di Dante” in his *Petrarca, l'italiano dimenticato* (Milano: Rizzoli, 2004), 35–92. I am grateful to Prof. Geyer (Bonn) for helping me locate this study on the Petrarch reception during the nineteenth century. At the same time, satirical journals published during the *risorgimento* of 1848–1849 depicted Italy routinely as being “asleep.” See Ilaria Torelli with Antonello Negri, “Die Jahre 1848–1848 in den italienischen Satirezeitschriften—ein Überblick,” in *Politik Porträt, Physiologie. Facetten der europäischen Karikatur im Vor- und Nachmärz*, ed. Hubertus Fischer and Florian Vaßen (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2010), 279.

64 The use of the sleep/awakening metaphor for Christian religious awakenings refers to other values, but also refers to collective events. Here sleep is associated with the dark night of sin and the “awakening”—such as the mass events in Germany, the Netherlands, the Brit-

This endowment seems to be connected to the revolutionary changes in North America and France with their recent discovery of public opinion as a relevant and articulate player, and with the wider involvement of the population in socio-political affairs through the expansion of the printed word and image. A fine early example is a British 1778 magazine print about the “State of the Nation”, which concerns the American war and the international situation (Figure 7).⁶⁵ It was critical of Lord North’s “Conciliatory Propositions” to North America and came with an explanatory key. The image not only features the British lion asleep, but also the two British commanders, the Howe brothers, shown against a background of Philadelphia without either an operative fleet or army.



Fig. 7: [View of the State of the Nation for February 1778], Etching. Text in French.

ish Isles and North America in the 1730s to 1750s, or the second great awakening in the same Protestant areas since 1800—refers to the collective awakening of the faith. These awakenings contain a critique of the rationalist enlightenment agenda and its associated theology of virtue. For background, see my *Reenacting the Heavenly Vision. The Role of Religion in the Taiping Rebellion* (Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, University of California, 1982), 10-18. In the Buddhist context relevant for South, Southeast and East Asia, the sleep/awakening metaphor refers to the state of mind of individuals.

65 For the background on this print, see M. Dorothy George, *English Political Caricature to 1792. A Study of Opinion and Propaganda* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 152-153.

America, represented by a Native American, is cutting off the horns with which the “poor tame cow” of British commerce could defend itself—a reference to the defunct British army and navy in the background. A Dutchman is milking the cow and a Spaniard and Frenchman happily walk off, each with a bowl of milk. The sleeping British lion is oblivious to this plunder of the nation’s “natural defense and strength”. He is so soundly asleep that a (Dutch) pug dog brazenly urinates on him without him noticing. A “Free Englishman in mourning” cries out to the viewer in frustration. He is not in this poster, nor does he interact with the other figures; he is the poster itself, calling out to the viewer, who will find himself reflected in the sleeping lion. Only an awakening lion of British public opinion can force a rectification of this situation. The metaphorical meta-language has, furthermore, developed its own meta-consistency, where a “lion” can be called upon to come to the rescue of a “cow,” whose ‘natural’ defenses—the horns—have been cut off.

The centerpiece of this cartoon is the dairy cow of British commerce. The cow is a symbol of a rich source of goods with commercial value that passively accepts exploitation. It has a long history as an emblem of a country’s tolerating exploitation by others.⁶⁶ Here the cow is surrounded

66 The 1587 engraving “Die Khue auß Nider Landt” [The cow from the Netherlands] is an example of the early use of this iconographic ensemble with the cow in the center. The “feiste Khue” (fat cow) of the “Volckreich” (populous) Netherlands, which is fat, peaceful, and non-militant, is the object of “grosse muhe” (great efforts) of four armed men who are identified by inscriptions as representatives of Spain, France, Germany and Scotland. Each is trying to appropriate and milk the cow.



Fig. Fn 1: Die Khue auß Nider Landt (The Cow from the Low Countries), 1587. The image of a country as a passive cow being milked by others also migrated. An example of Egypt as the cow from an Egyptian satirical journal:

by the representatives of different nations who feast on her. We see the already fully developed strategy of using image and language to instill guilt in the public compelling them to patriotism and the formation of a national will. The nations surrounding the cow just exploit England's internal weakness, rather than violently imposing their will. Therefore, the protest is not directed against them. This is an iconographic model, which, as we shall see, was widely used with many variants throughout the nineteenth century.⁶⁷ It is also the model underlying the *Shiju tu*.

While the sleep/awakening metaphor was most widely used for nations, it was also used for other collectivities. An example is a 1789 French cartoon that prompts the lower classes to awaken and shows the potential benefits of such an awakening (Figure 8).



Le Français dit à Riaz "La vache est maigre, toi et l'Anglais ne lui avez plus laissé de lait."

Fig. Fn 2: The Frenchman says to Riaz, "The cow is meagre, you and the British have not left any milk in it. From *Le Flutiste* (=Le Journal d'Abou Naddara), 1880.

67 Another early example of this iconographic model is a 1780 print entitled "Argus." It has George III sleeping on the throne while royal advisors try to take his crown (to give to Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender). On the right side of the image, the British lion is asleep. Britannia sits next to him with a gesture that might be either despair or sleep, but she has her shield lying idly beside her, which suggests the latter. Reproduced in Tamara Hunt, *Defining John Bull. Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 127.



Fig. 8: *Reveil du Tiers État* (The awakening of the third estate), hand-colored etching, 1789. Text below: “Ma feinte, il étoit tans que je me réveillisse, car l’oppression de mes fers me donnions le cochemar un peu trop fort.” (My golly, it was time for me to wake up, because the pressure from the irons had given me too much of a nightmare). In the background is the stormed Bastille and decapitated heads swing above the crowd. Nobility and clergy are both in shock.

Sympathizers of the French Revolution’s anti-feudal agenda in other European countries were noting the asymmetry between the awakened French and their own slumbering populations. Events in France were depicted as a wake-up call for both ideals of liberty and active defense of the nation. A Swiss example may illustrate this (Figure 9).⁶⁸

68 The role of the French Revolution in “awakening” other nations from their slumber is emphasized by Robert Mackenzie in his *The Nineteenth Century, a History* (London: Nelson and Son, 1880). He writes on page 62 that it was Napoleon “who roused Italy from her sleep of centuries, and led her toward that free and united national life which she at length enjoys.” I am much obliged to my Heidelberg colleague Thomas Maissen for introducing me to this Swiss image, which he discussed in “Der Freiheitshut. Ikonographische Annäherungen an das republikanische Freiheitsverständnis in der frühneuzeitlichen Eidgenossenschaft,” in *Kollektive Freiheitsvorstellungen im frühneuzeitlichen Europa (1400 bis 1850)*, Jenaer Beiträge zur Geschichte 8, ed. Georg Schmidt, Martin van Gelderen and Christopher Snigula (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2006), 133-145.



Fig. 9: Laurent Midart, *The Awakening of the Swiss*. The French text reads: “After its victories the Swiss rested on his laurels for such a long time that he fell asleep. During his sleep his weapons deteriorated and his strength waned. The rooster’s call wakes him, the sun gives him clarity, and freedom gives him new weapons with which he will show the universe that he still has the virtues and valor of his ancestors. Dedicated to the Executive Directorate of the Helvetic Republic by Laurent Midart, citizen of Soleure (Solothurn).”

The combination of French revolutionary ideals and Napoleon’s expansionist policies in Europe and North Africa eventually led to “nationalist” polemics that focused on the nation’s state of mind rather than that of class. Good examples are James Gillray’s (1757-1815) cartoons

against the French and their British “sympathizers”, who try to keep Britannia asleep rather than awaken her (Figure 10).



Fig. 10: James Gillray, *The NURSERY—with Britannia reposing in PEACE*, 1802.

Britain is put to sleep by crafty British “Jacobin” sympathizers of the French revolution. The head nurse, Prime Minister Addington, is supported by Lord Hawkesbury and Charles James Fox. PEACE refers to the Treaty of Amiens with Napoleon, in which Gillray thought the British government had accepted humiliating conditions.

The shield and arms to defend national interest are idly lying on the bed.⁶⁹ Britannia, who is actually a lively-enough “baby” with her outsized body and her armory and weapons, needs three nurses to prevent her from becoming active. These nurses do not just put her to sleep with the help of French pie, the opiate on the chimney sill, and the peaceful lullaby; the

⁶⁹ A superb and knowledgeable decipherment of every item in this cartoon for people in a different country not familiar with many of the characters can be found in the German language journal *London und Paris* 15 (1802): 331-343. The illustration here is taken from the copy made for reproduction in this journal.

inscription above the crib “*requiescat in pace*” is normally found above a tomb, an insinuation that the nurses are trying to make sure that Britannia will never again wake up.⁷⁰ Again, Britannia herself is the problem, she is asleep, and British politicians try to make sure that she stays this way.

After the defeat of Napoleon, the Congress of Vienna started a far-reaching crackdown on liberal opinion. The conflicts between the different European nation states, however, became exacerbated. A fine and exceedingly popular German print from the few months between 1842 and 1843, when the Prussian king Frederic Wilhelm IV suspended the ban on pictures (“*Bilderverbot*”), plays on these themes (Figure 11).



Fig. 11: R. Sabatky, *Der deutsche Michel*, chalk lithography, 1843.

The “*deutsche Michel*”, who had long become an emblem of “Germany”,

⁷⁰ Gillray, an inveterate supporter of Pitt’s radical measures against “republican” articulations, also used the same theme in another print about the Amiens peace treaty. James Gillray, “Political Dreaming: Visions of Peace! Perspective Horrors,” 1802.

is deeply asleep. The cartoon called for a detailed explanation, which was offered in a fine 1843 booklet. The text was delivered in the form of a bystander's comment to Berliners, who are standing in front of a Berlin cartoon shop wondering about the meaning of the figures.⁷¹ Michel's sleep allows foreign powers—represented by what is by now standard iconography—to get the better of him. His mouth is locked by the Karlsbad Decrees, which had introduced rigorous censorship in the 38 German states; these states make up the patchwork of his shirt. The Austrian Chancellor Metternich, who engineered the Karlsbad Decrees, holds the little key for the lock, and is busy bleeding Michel, whose blood turns into gold.⁷² John Bull, who is depicted as a bulldog, is pulling Michel's purse out of his pocket, a reference to the trade deficit between the German states and England. The French soldier is cutting off the sleeve of Michel's jacket, a reference to territorial claims on the Rhine. On the left, the nightmare of the pope riding on the clouds of eternity with his huge key is described in the booklet as the night watchman of Europe. In the background we see the military of the German states with their officer disregarding Michel's plight while maintaining perfect military posture.

Michel is not the government, but the control and exploitation of Michel's land and goods by the neighbouring nations hinges on his innate drowsiness. They do not put him to sleep, but try to make sure that he stays this way. A 1843 article in the *Berlinische Zeitung* had this to say about the cartoon: around "one single figure, which alone is in total passivity, all the others are engaged in the most lively activity, which has no other purpose than to make sure this poor figure remains passive."⁷³ In other words, the double meaning of Michel's sleepiness and the Powers' efforts to prevent him from waking up was well understood.⁷⁴

71 *Der Deutsche Michel, erläutert von einem seiner Freunde und Leidensgenossen* (Leipzig: Renger'sche Buchhandlung, 1843).

72 While in many aspects exceedingly knowledgeable, the identification by the key of this figure with Karl August Varnhagen von Ense (1785-1858) is not convincing (p. 18). Von Ense was editor of a romantic journal before embarking on a military and diplomatic career during which he was in Austrian, Russian and Prussian service.

73 "Abermals eine Berliner Carrikatur," reprinted from *Berlinische Zeitung* in *Politische Karikaturen des Vormärz* (1815-1848), ed. Remigius Brückmann (Karlsruhe: Badischer Kunstverein, 1984), 85.

74 The theme of Michel asleep was repeated in other prints of the time. In 1842, Anton Klaus, obviously aware of the Gillray print, drew Michel as a huge infant tied to a crib, his mouth stuffed with a sugar bag inscribed "politisches Selbstbewusstsein [political self-awareness]" with the Powers led by Metternich surrounding him singing a lullaby. It combines words with

The cartoon is far from being simply descriptive. Addressed to an audience that was to find itself satirized and shamed for its sleepy absence of patriotic energy required to defend the burgeoning German nation, the image's purpose was to prompt Michael's awakening. During the same months when Sabatky drew the cartoon, he also produced a science fantasy counterpart (Figure 31), in which Michel is waking up with a club in his hand. The Prussian eagle on his breast replaces the shirt with the checkered German states. He takes on the Powers, which are represented in an iconographic quotation from the other print.⁷⁵ In another science fantasy answer to the Michel asleep, W. Winckler, a Koenigsberg artist with a lithography shop, likewise drew a cartoon of the awakened Michel. These cartoons highlight the fact that the depiction of Michel asleep was never a simple analytical statement, but an appeal to overcome the asymmetry in agency between sleeping Michel and the alert Powers by shaming German compatriots into waking up to a nationalist commitment (Figure 12).⁷⁶



Fig. 12: W. Winckler, No title (*Michel Awakened*). Lithograph, 1843.

images: "Sleep, Michael, sleep, you were and are a (image:) sheep, sleep on a little while, as you don't know any (image:) owl," (a pun on the similar pronunciation of the German word for owl-*Eule* and hurry-*Eile*). Reproduced in *Politische Karikaturen*, ed. Brückmann, 83.

75 R. Sabatky, without title; Chalk lithography (Berlin: Julius Springer 1843), reprinted in Brückmann, *Politische Karikaturen*, 86.

76 City Museum, Cologne, RM 1928/91. Reproduced in Brückmann, *Politische Karikaturen*, 88.

While the cross-references to Sabatky's print and iconographic arrangement explain most of the allusions, Winckler adds a new element. Michel's proverbial nightcap (the German Schlafmütze, which also means sleepyhead) has flown off and shows Michel's former dreams: a church procession, a carriage full of war decorations, the Prussian royal couple, "father Rhine" taken prisoner by the French, Cologne Cathedral (that was still being built) walking on human legs, etc. In this case sleep is not just empty absence of conscious perception and action, but it is filled with "backward" dreams. These dreams are Michel's own and not induced by others. While the cartoon marks the "traditional" dreams that held Michel back, it does not show a reason why Michel should wake up. There is no reason, only hope. We will return to these projections of hope in a while.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the notion of a "nation" being asleep—either due to its own inertia or with a little help—while being threatened by outside actors, who may be in cahoots with internal agents such as the Manchu, the British Jacobins or the German military, had become fairly routine in writing and creating images. German authors such as August von Platen, Emanuel Geibel or Heinrich Heine would routinely refer to Germans being "asleep" and being oblivious to their national crisis.⁷⁷ For example, the second stanza of Heine's 1844 poem "Doktrin" goes:

Trommle die Leute aus dem Schlaf,
trommle Reveille mit Jugendkraft,
marschire trommelnd immer voran,
das ist die ganze Wissenschaft.⁷⁸

Drum the people out of their sleep
Drum the wake-up call with youthful vigor
Always march ahead drumming
that is what scholarship is all about

The drum and bell, which we will meet again in East Asia later in this

⁷⁷ Heinrich Heine, *Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. Klaus Briegleb (Munich: Hanser, 1974), 5:210. This discussion about sleep differs from that about dream, which operates on another register. For a discussion see Bernard Dieterle and Manfred Engel eds., *The Dream and the Enlightenment. Le Rêve et les Lumières*, International Eighteenth Century Studies 7 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2003), and Peter André Alt, *Der Schlaf der Vernunft. Literatur und Traum in der Kulturgeschichte der Neuzeit* (Munich: Beck, 2002).

⁷⁸ Heinrich Heine, "Doktrin," *Vorwärts! Pariser Deutsche Zeitschrift* 48(July 20, 1844):1.

essay, are natural enrichments of the sleep/awakening metaphoric field. German republicans were even dreaming about the potential for agency through the legend of Emperor Barbarossa. Sleeping for centuries deep in a mountain with a fully equipped army that even included sleeping horses, he was waiting for the right moment to wake up, burst forth, and make Germany strong.⁷⁹

Already in the European context the sleep/awakening contrast was linked to a time delay. The French rooster is already crowing and the sun of reason and liberty is rising, but the Swiss and, even later, the Germans are just waking up. In the master narrative of modernization, this time delay was exacerbated by cultural and physical distance of Asian nations. They were not constant witnesses of developments unfolding in France or England, but were often confronted rather suddenly with the results of a decade-long development that had gone on beyond their horizon of awareness. This double distance and the accompanying lack of information and familiarity made for a deeper sleep and the need for a greater shock.

By the end of the 19th century, the metaphoric transition from sleep to awakening was used in Japan to frame a general master narrative that described the sudden and shocking transition from traditional ways to modernity in nations that were characterized by this double distance, which they had further increased by a conscious policy of closing themselves off from the rest of the world. What in Europe had developed as “modernity” in a gradual, contentious and messy way with many variants, now appeared in Asia as a finished package deal that could be rejected only at great cost. An 1897 Japanese narrative, which was also translated into Chinese in the reform journal *Shiwu bao*, put it this way:

The [Japanese, R.W.] people slumbered in peace and although during the Bunka bunsei period (1800-1826) there were warnings from the borders, they remained in dreams without waking up. When, however, the American admiral Perry came to Edo [in 1853], the long sleep was interrupted for the first time, and from this moment on, the patriotic feeling of

79 See Emanuel Geibel, “Barbarossas Erwachen” [The awakening of Barbarossa], in *Geibels Werke*, ed. Wolfgang Stammeler (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1918), 1:183-186. Heinrich Heine poked fun at these fantasies. See his *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen*, ed. Ursula Roth and Heidemarie Vahl (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1995), 98-120, sections XIV to XVII.

people rose mightily and theories about saving throne and country spread in the country and the habits of hundreds of years [stopped].⁸⁰

The text is not a protest against foreign intrusion; it even accepts that the “awakening” of Japan occurred when Admiral Perry’s black ships entered the Tokyo harbor, and then shows how the awakened Japan got a hold of itself by vigorously pushing for reforms along Western lines. The main argument of the article, however, is the absence of a similar Chinese reaction to the Western forays.

For India, Robert Mackenzie used the metaphor in much the same way in his *The Nineteenth Century, a History* (1880), the Chinese translation of which (1898) served as a blueprint for China’s modernization. After a chapter on Christian missions that detailed the development of English language education in India and its impact on the position of women especially, Mackenzie sums up:

Through the open gateway of the English language, English knowledge and ideas and principles are being poured into India. The educational progress already made is large, and the desire for education steadily increases. The Hindu mind is awakening from its sleep of ages.⁸¹

Gandhi used the metaphor in 1909 and saw the Partition as the shock that produced the awakening. He even referred to the mental state of India. Answering the question “when and how did the real awakening [of India, R.W.] take place,” Gandhi answered, “We have to be thankful to Lord Curzon” [for the partition of Bengal in 1905, which was at the origin of much unrest and led to the founding of the Congress Party, R.W.]. Upon the question “Then you consider the Partition to be a cause of the awakening? Do you welcome the unrest which has resulted from it,” Gandhi answered:

When a man rises from sleep he twists his limbs and is restless. It takes some time

80 “Ji Dongbang xuehui shi” 記東邦學會事 [Report about the Study Society of Japan], translated into Chinese by Zhenji 貞吉, in *Shiwu bao* 時務報 17 (January 13, 1897).

81 Robert Mackenzie, *The Nineteenth Century, a History* (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1880), 217.

before he is entirely awakened. Similarly, although the Partition has caused an awakening, the comatose condition has not yet disappeared. We are still twisting our limbs and are still restless, and just as the state between sleep and awakening must be considered to be necessary, so may the present unrest in India be considered a necessary, and therefore proper, state...Rising from sleep, we do not continue in a comatose state, but according to our ability, sooner or later, we are completely restored to our senses.⁸²

The story of the awakening from sleep eventually became part of a master narrative that was even valid for describing England from the vantage point of East Asia. The article “The Immediate Future of Chinese Education” in the *North China Herald* in October 1897 does not deal with the very recent British reforms of the public service or the educational system, but with England in the Renaissance. The translation of the relevant section in the *Shiwu bao* reads:

The situation of China today is like that of England at the beginning of the reforms [note of Chinese translator: after 1500]. Of dark times England certainly has the experience. The English were in deep sleep, but when they suddenly woke up, they saw that education was in the hands of priests, and these priests again had to get their information from Latin and Greek texts. Thereupon [the English]

82 M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*, originally published in the Gujarat columns of *Indian Opinion* (11th and 18th Dec., 1909). Translated by the author. Accessed March 31, 2011, <http://www.mkgandhi.org/swarajya/coverpage.htm>. This text has been described as a transcultural exchange, namely a reaction to the weekly “Our Notebook” entry by G. K. Chesterton in the *Illustrated London News* (Sept. 18, 1909), 387. See, Martin B. Green, Gandhi: *Voice of a New Age Revolution* (New York: Axios, 2009), 266; Ramachandra Guha, “A prophet announces himself. Mahatma Gandhi’s ‘Hind Swaraj’ a hundred years on,” *Times Literary Supplement* (Sept. 4, 2009), 14-15. Gandhi had substantial parts of this Chesterton article translated into Gujarati and published it in his journal *Indian Opinion* on Jan. 8, 1910. From there it has been retranslated to be included in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Ahmedabad: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1963), 9:425-427 under the title “White’s Views on Indian Awakening.”

threw themselves into education, and built schools everywhere. However, though the English at the time were capable of being learned, they also still were like Chinese scholars today, reading ten thousand chapters, but being ignorant of foreign affairs, talking in their seats, but unable to get up and act.⁸³

China, the article notes, is second to none in the world with regard to emphasizing education. The danger described here is that China will try to spread its inherited learning to the wider populace in a way similar to England during the Renaissance, which was an awakening of sorts, but not one that would work today. The article argues for an education of the “masses” in vernacular Chinese, and the use of English for the “elite.”

The metaphor of China and other nations asleep (or worse) already crops up as an image in the contact zone environments by the 1870s. For China, we see it in an 1872 sketch from the first foreign journal of satirical cartoons appearing in Shanghai, *Puck, or the Shanghai Charivari* (Figure 13).

83 “Zhongguo jiaoyang” 中國教養 [Chinese education], *Shiwu bao* 時務報 45 (November 15, 1897), trans. Sun Zhao 孫超 and Wang Shi 王史. This is a translation of “The Immediate Future of Chinese Education,” *North China Herald*, Oct. 29, 1897, 776-777. In the original, this section read: “Educationally the present position is not unlike that of England at the period of the Renaissance. In common with other lands, England had passed the Dark Ages in a state of intellectual torpor. She woke to find that not only all knowledge was in the hands of priests, but that even for them the search for it had to be through the secret syllables of unspoken tongues. To gain knowledge of these hidden mysteries became the aim of every thinking man of means. The grammar schools of Edward VI were the result, and the English “scholar” soon became what the Chinese “scholar” is today, literally a reading man and no more.”

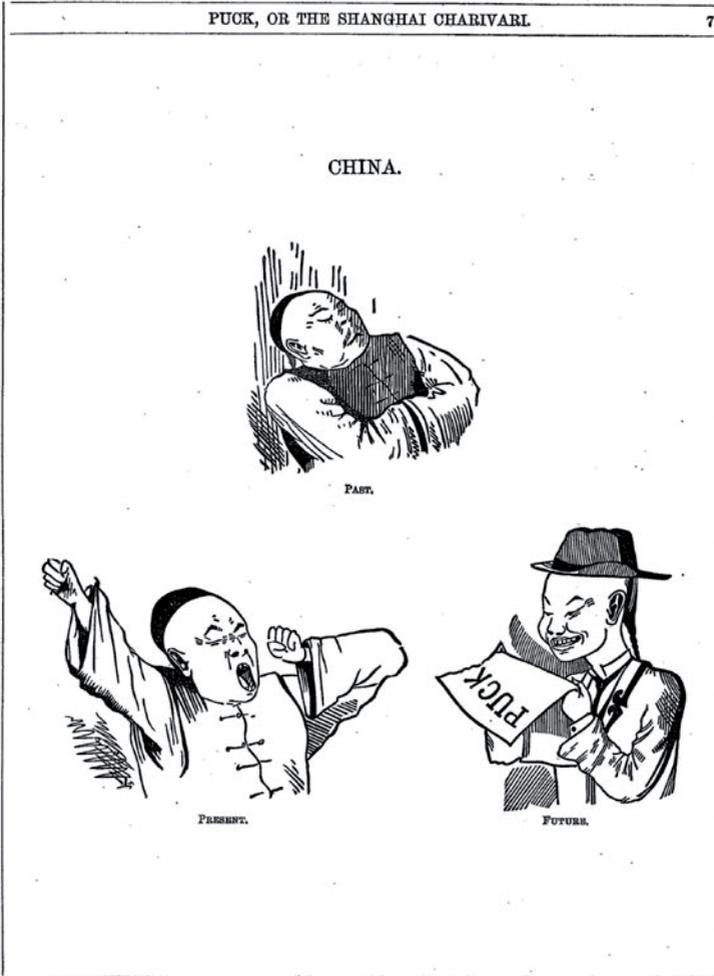


Fig. 13: Puck, or the Shanghai Charivari (Shanghai), Feb 1, 1872.

In the “past,” China was asleep and mired in tradition, as can be seen by the clothing. In the “present” it is just waking up. In the “future,” however, reading *Puck* will give China a fresh perspective, enabling it to understand foreign cartoons and their texts, while wearing “modern”, foreign garb, including hat and tie.

The metaphor also surfaced in Egypt when the bilingual French-Arabic satirical journal *Abou Naddara*, published by an Egyptian in Paris, used it in 1882 (Figure 14).



Fig. 14: First act of the people of Egypt ... The punishment... The genius of Egypt awakens from its long sleep and drives out the evil government officials, Tewfik and his courtiers flee, 1881.

The “genius of Egypt” is embodied by the members of the Chamber of Delegates on the right, which was installed after British-sponsored reforms. The Tewfik Pasha (1852-1892) government is sent to exile (and an effort is made to install Hakim Pasha, who had been sidelined). The Abbu Naddara (نرادن وبأ), sometimes with the subtitle “Organe de la Jeunesse d’Egypte” (Organ of Young Egypt), was a bilingual Arab-French satirical journal published in Paris by James Sanua (Sannū’, Ya’qub ibn Rāfā’īl, 1839-1912).⁸⁴ The circumstances of this cartoon reflect the same process as our initial examples from China: from the bilingualism of the cultural broker, to the import of the cartoon form, to the place of publication outside of the country, to the publication’s audience of exiles and citizens within the country.

84 A reprint is *Abū Nazzarah* (Beirut: Dār Šādir, 1974).

In Turkey, international perceptions had made use of the metaphor as early as the 1850s. By the late 1890s, the country's dismemberment had become a warning to Chinese reformers about the possible fate of China. During the "Hundred Days" in 1898, Kang Youwei wrote that while England's "steamships, railways, electrical lines and gas bulbs swept the globe, and the Europeans used them to envelop the world and cover the universe without a place being left out," Turkey "trusted its size and snored in sleep for centuries right next door."⁸⁵ In 1920, the *Eastern Miscellany*, *Dongfang zazhi*, the leading Chinese opinion journal of the time, reproduced a Western cartoon entitled "Turkey Today." Here, the sleep metaphor is pushed towards the extreme of disease, debility, and old age (Figure 15).

日 今 之 其 耳 土



國 夫 病 之 息 一 奄 奄

Fig. 15: Jacques Rawson (?), *The state [of Turkey], a sick man who is just barely breathing*, 1920.

The gestures of the foreign powers—recognizable from the emblems on their uniforms—are a mixture of helping and grabbing. The cartoon was reprinted as a warning against the extreme Chinese reliance on foreign credits.

⁸⁵ Kang Youwei 康有為, "進程突厥削弱記序" [Preface to the Record of the Weakening of Turkey], chap. 1 in *Kang Youwei zhenglun ji* 康有為政論集, (repr. Beijing: Zhonghua, 1981).

The sleeping giant

As the above survey of examples shows, the sleep metaphor was increasingly used to describe those big empires (Ottoman Empire, China), which were gradually pulled into the orbit of international diplomacy, law, and power politics. However, political essayists felt a particular variant of the sleep metaphor to be more appropriate: the “sleeping giant.” It had been widely used since the late eighteenth century in English language publications to describe something with a vast and unsettling potential that is as yet untapped and dormant. Examples include the Irish government (1797),⁸⁶ the British Fleet (1876),⁸⁷ or Texas (1881),⁸⁸ but also “conscience” (1850)⁸⁹ or medical salaries in Ireland (1857).⁹⁰

The metaphor of the sleeping giant probably owes its ascendancy to Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, a novel that was very widely read by the educated classes in the 18th and 19th centuries (Figure 16).

86 “Letters from the mountains. Letter VII,” *The Press* 3 (1797).

87 Editorial, *Freeman’s Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* (Dublin, Ireland), Friday, November 24, 1876.

88 “Letters to the editors,” *Liverpool Mercury* (Liverpool, England), Tuesday, August 30, 1881; Issue 10495.

89 “Varieties,” *The Derby Mercury* (Derby, England), Wednesday, May 1, 1850; Issue 7046.

90 “The dispensary doctors,” *Freeman’s Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* (Dublin, Ireland), Wednesday, August 26, 1857.



Fig. 16: Gulliver the giant among Lilliputians, 1727.

A shipwrecked, sleeping Gulliver is put into fetters by the minute Lilliputians, but since both sides abide by civilized manners, he eventually becomes their ally and serves them with his mighty powers. Gulliver provided a good potential image for the relations between the small European countries and the huge Ottoman and Chinese Empires, and it was routinely used to describe both.⁹¹ At the same time, the “sleep”

⁹¹ At the end of the Crimean War in 1856, Turkey became a full member of the group of “civilized” states for whom “international law” was to provide guidelines. In a sermon on peace given on April 6, 1856 in Dublin, the preacher is quoted as saying: “Turkey has been called a ‘sick man dying’, perhaps it ought rather be called a sleeping giant. We must no longer suffer it to be drugged with its own drought. The nation must be regenerated, or un-done.”

metaphor signaled that these big empires had not “awoken” to modernity in their institutions, customs, or industry.

China and the Ottoman Empire later shared the metaphor of being the “sick man” of East Asia and the Bosphorus respectively, or of “decaying” and even “dying.” These metaphors resort to a different image to describe and discuss the asymmetry in agency between these countries and the West. At the same time, both the Ottoman Empire and China had their land “carved up” like a melon or cake into spheres of influence or colonies by the Powers.⁹² The notion of China being “sick,” “dying,” or a “sleeping giant” became widely shared in Western writings about China after the Opium War.

In summary: the conceptual framework of the nation state, the metaphor of the nation asleep, and the imagery that went with it, developed in Europe from the early Renaissance. It has been widely used to characterize national attitudes of European nations since the late eighteenth century, and eventually became part of the shared metaphorical code used to define the lack of modernity and the inability to mobilize the energies of the people for national interests, both of which seemed to characterize Turkey and China in Western sources.

The Chinese giant asleep, for which we will provide documentation below, is therefore a simile for the asymmetry in agency in the relations between China and the West as it was developed by Westerners in the context of an increasingly linked world. With its open timeline—the giant may wake up at some point—it signals the West’s (and Japan’s?) anxiety about the viability of the present order of things. Their comfortable superiority could be in jeopardy because it is a potentially vicious giant, not a meek little mouse that will wake up. Incidentally, much of the imagery used to describe China’s economic ascent since the 1990s evinces similar anxiety in the sometimes hysterical language used.

The Chinese language discussion, with which this essay started, thus interacts with a Western discussion. The latter in turn receives its daily

“The Peace,” in *The Belfast News-Letter* (Belfast, Ireland), Monday, April 14, 1856; Issue 123819.

92 I am working on a study of this rhetorical feature, its transcultural migration, and its re-configuration. Napoleon is credited with being the first to have called China a “giant asleep” in a conversation with Lord Amherst on St. Helena in 1816. See, William Safire, *Safire’s New Political Dictionary. The Definitive Guide to the New Language of Politics*, 3rd ed. (New York: Random House, 1993), 715. However, I have seen no references to this in nineteenth century sources, and was unable to find a record of Lord Amherst’s conversation.

input from the profuse volume of Western language writings about China that was produced by people with experience of the country: diplomats, missionaries, military men, naturalists, and merchants.

In terms of location, these Western writings about China were available in China itself to an increasing number of bilingual Chinese readers in the form of Western language newspapers in Shanghai and Hong Kong; others were translated into Chinese. The methodological flaw of our earlier statistical table charting the use of the sleep metaphor is now evident: it operates on the assumption that there is a Chinese language public sphere that is coterminous with the Qing territory and a few emigrants in Japan.

To study the development and use of the “China asleep” metaphor in a Chinese language context, we therefore have to redefine the framework within which this discussion takes place. China related books, articles, and newspapers in languages other than Chinese, as well as their translations into Chinese, which were published both in China and abroad, must be included along with sources in whatever language, relating to the use of this metaphor.⁹³

Zeng Jize: “China: The Sleep and the Awakening”

As mentioned above, the first and most important Chinese person to join in this Western debate about China asleep was Zeng Jize (Tseng Chi-tse, Marquis Tseng), the Chinese ambassador in London, Paris, and St. Petersburg. His 1887 article “China: The Sleep, and the Awakening” was written in English so as to reach and reply to those who were discussing this question; its publication marked a seminal point of transition in the Chinese and Chinese language debate.⁹⁴

The simile of China asleep had by then become Western shorthand for a complex assessment of relations with China. This assessment included a definition of the present state of the Chinese polity, which was directly

93 Sadly, we cannot substantiate the result of this with a new and inclusive statistical curve. It is one of the unhappy consequences of an approach using a “nation state default mode” for database development that it excludes the ample multilingual resources available to show the transcultural and translingual connections in all realms of life. The database used for the statistics above contains exclusively Chinese sources and none of the treasure trove of English or other foreign language publications coming out in China.

94 Tseng Chi-tse, “China: The Sleep, and the Awakening,” *Asiatic Quarterly Review* 3, no.1 (1887): 1-12.

The action takes place in the dream of a foreigner, not a Chinese. The foreign powers, which are identified through the initial letters of their names, are sitting around a table to feast on China, which is the roasted pig in their midst. The iconographical arrangement is already familiar from other images. Japan is missing in this group and the caption emphasizes that it is foreigners who have such dreams. China is not just asleep here; it is the inanimate (dead) but big and succulent object of foreign appetites.

Zeng Jize's reply in English to this perception becomes one of the symptoms of China's awakening, which he claims has begun. There is no Chinese text of his article. Zeng, who was one of the very few Chinese officials to have acquired a relatively good knowledge of English, outlined the content to his secretary Halliday Macartney, who seems to have written a draft "in concert with his chief".⁹⁵

Zeng's article engages directly with the Western discussion, which is represented by an essay by one of the Westerners most familiar with Chinese language, culture and institutions, Thomas Wade, later to become British Ambassador to China. In 1849 Wade had written an overview of the "Condition and Government of the Chinese Empire in 1849" that was based on one year's reading of the Chinese government periodical, the Peking Gazette. In language closely matching the terms used at that time to describe the Ottoman Empire Wade wrote:

With a fair seeming of immunity from invasion, sedition, or revolt, leave is taken to regard this vast empire as surely, though it may be slowly, decaying.⁹⁶

By 1887, this had become an ironical quote. Wade predicts a "fair immunity from invasion, sedition, or revolt" at the very moment when the largest series of revolts (by the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom in the south, the Nian in the north, and the Muslims in the Southwest) was about to start, and only ten years before the invasion of northern China by Western powers during the Second Opium War. Perhaps ironically, Zeng compliments "a writer whose knowledge of China and its literature is perhaps unequalled,

⁹⁵ Demetrius Boulger, *The Life of Sir Halliday Macartney* (London: John Lane the Bodley Head, 1908), 431.

⁹⁶ Tseng, "China," 2. Thomas Wade, *Note on the Condition and Government of the Chinese Empire in 1849* (Hong Kong: printed at the China Mail Office, 1850), 83.

and certainly not surpassed”⁹⁷, because he concludes drily: “as events have shown, they who reasoned thus were mistaken”. But Zeng also concedes that China might have been “asleep” while rejecting the option that she was “decaying” and “dying”:

China was asleep, but she was not about to die. Perhaps she had mistaken her way, or, what is just the same, had failed to see that the old familiar paths which many centuries had made dear to her did not conduct to the goal to which the world was marching.

We see the content of Michel’s nightcap in its Chinese variant of the “familiar paths”. China, Zeng claimed, had been woken up by exactly those events that Wade had claimed were unlikely to happen:

It required the fire of the Summer Palace [started by British and French troops, R.W.] to singe her [China’s, R.W.] eyebrows, the advance of the Russian in Kuldja and the Frenchman in Tonquin [=North Vietnam, R.W.], to enable her to realize the situation in which she was being placed by the ever-contracting circle that was being drawn around her by the Europeans. By the light of the burning palace which had been the pride and the delight of her Emperors, she commenced to see that she had been asleep whilst all the world was up and doing; that she had been sleeping in the vacuous vortex of the storm of forces wildly whirling around her.

After this fine picture of the situation of China, which foreshadows the graphic arrangement of the cartoon discussed at the beginning of this study, Zeng argues that the efforts to “wake up China” and secure China’s sovereignty had to concentrate on developing coastal defenses and a navy, rather than political and educational reform and industrial development.⁹⁸ This argument is too close to the one quoted above from the *Record of the French-Vietnamese Military Encounter* about the “more than twenty

⁹⁷ Tseng, “China,” 2.

⁹⁸ Zeng Jize’s late father, as well as Li Hongzhang, who was dominating Chinese foreign policy when the article was written, were the key figures in the “Foreign learning” (Yangwu) current that had been pushing for some self-strengthening reforms since the 1860s.

years” which the Qing officials had used to prepare coastal defenses after “waking up from the slumber” in which the Westerners had found them when they first attacked. Going back to the source, the quotation is from the “assessment of the Guangdong defenses from a Westerner at the time” (此時西人論粵防云), which, as mentioned before, was translated by Sone Shōun and Wang Tao for their own compilation.⁹⁹ Zeng was familiar with this volume, which had been published in 1886, because as ambassador to London and Paris, he had been directly involved in the negotiations with the French to end this war and was furthermore extensively quoted in the documentation. Zeng’s own 1887 article thus silently agrees with a foreign assessment of the improved state of the Chinese defenses that had been brought about by Qing officials, who indeed had been formerly “asleep” but were now, so Zeng, awakened. This improvement, which Zeng attributes to the efforts of people (such as him and his father) at Chinese self-strengthening, had been so marked that in 1884 China was able to turn down a French request for indemnity after the Sino-French confrontation over Annam. In a further and amazing claim—given the loss of Annam to France just two years prior—Zeng announces that China was now willing and able to defend her rights even with regard to her “outlying provinces.” Among them, Korea is mentioned first.

But Zeng then also placates the anxieties concerning the behavior of the “sleeping giant”, should he wake up:

We have seen the sleep; we come now to the awakening. What will be the result of it? Will the awakening of *300 million* who become aware of their strength not be dangerous to the continuance of friendly relations with the West? Will the memory of their defeats and the awareness of their newly discovered power not make them aggressive? No; the Chinese have never been an aggressive race.¹⁰⁰

As a unique and strategic “state paper” (*New York Times*) on Chinese domestic and foreign policy, Zeng’s article, written in English, was an international media event.¹⁰¹ He was a man reputed to be a likely

⁹⁹ The quotation begins on page 436, line 9.

¹⁰⁰ Tseng, “China,” 4.

¹⁰¹ The *North China Herald* notes on March 2, 1887, that “the article...attributed to the Marquis Tseng continues to attract, as is only natural, considerable attention.” The paper assumed the article was an official policy peace vetted by the Court in Peking.

candidate to succeed the supreme Li Hongzhang, and directly engaged with the international assessments and apprehensions about China. The article was widely read, quoted in newspapers and in diplomatic circles,¹⁰² reprinted in Hong Kong (*China Mail*), Shanghai (*North China Daily News and Herald*), and Tianjin (*China Times*), even before the issue of the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* featuring the article had arrived there—an indication that the editor Demetrius Boulger had made sure it would get maximum coverage. In short: the article was widely familiar to Westerners in and concerned with China.¹⁰³

A small but important segment of Chinese society, consisting of many Chinese high officials, who had dealings with Westerners and employed Western secretaries to go through the papers and correspondence for them, and an increasing number of readers of English among Chinese merchants, officials and men-of-letters, was informed about Zeng's essay even before the first Chinese translation appeared in Shanghai's *Shenbao* in mid-June 1887.¹⁰⁴ Interestingly, the *Shenbao*, the most important and respected Chinese language newspaper at the time, was owned by a consortium of Englishmen and Scots, and run by Ernest Major (1841-1909): Even the Chinese translation of Zeng's article was organized by a foreigner and appeared in a foreign-owned paper.

102 Zeng rejoiced in the echo. He wrote about it and about translations into German and Russian being under way in a letter to Halliday Macartney, his secretary, who had drafted the article. Demetrius Boulger, *The Life of Sir Halliday Macartney* (London: John Lane the Bodley Head, 1908), 431-437. The British reaction can be found in the reviews of Zeng's article by Sir Rutherford Alcock and W. Lockhart under the title "China and its Foreign Relations," in *Asiatic Quarterly Review* 3 (1887): 443-466 and in *The Spectator*. The American reaction is detailed in Chiu Ling-Yeong, "Debate on National Salvation: Ho Kai versus Tseng Chi-tse," *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 11 (1971): 38-40. See also Lee En-Han 李恩涵, *Zeng Jize de waijiao* 曾紀澤的外交, *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo zhuankan* 15 (1966), chap. 5.3. An anonymous reader kindly pointed out that copies of the *Shiju tu* are in the French Foreign Ministry Archives, and that others could most likely be found in the corresponding archives of the other Powers. I have not followed up on this important suggestion, which might also lead to comments by diplomats on the cartoon. I might convey the results of further researches in this field in a later "addendum".

103 Prints of the English language article are in the (Hong Kong) *China Mail*, Feb. 8, 1887, the *North China Herald* in Shanghai, Feb. 16, 1887, 181-182, the *China Times* (Tianjin), and the *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* 18, no.4 (April 1887). On Feb. 18, 1887, the *New York Times* printed a lengthy summary of the main points that were of interest to the US together with an encomium of the man and the document itself, which was seen as "practically a manifesto of the future aims and policies of his government." The *Asiatic Quarterly Review* was widely read in the Asian community and reviewed in the British periodical press.

104 Zeng Jiegang, 曾劼剛 (=Zeng Jize), "Zhongguo xian shui hou xing lun" 中國先睡後醒論, *Shenbao*, June 14 and 15, 1887.

Western reactions were friendly but often also critical. Allegedly, the Russian foreign minister, Alexander Guchkov, was so stunned by Zeng's assertions about an awake China that he accepted Zeng's demand for a return of Chinese territory.¹⁰⁵ China specialists in Britain, such as Sir Rutherford Alcock, felt, however, that Zeng overstated his case, that there were actually very few signs of China's "awakening", and that the priorities of first developing coastal defenses without political and institutional reform overrated the power of technical devices.¹⁰⁶ "The sleep, if sleep it was," writes Sir Alcock, "must certainly have been very profound, more resembling the hypnotic state induced by mesmeric experiments than any normal state of conscious existence and vitality". But he concedes that during the war with France China discovered an unexpected source of strength—its sheer size:

That the Chinese did learn much in the conflict forced upon them by events in Tonquin, I have no doubt. Especially in perceiving the strength derived from her size in the capacity for bearing punishment which is only given to some nations, and to them a power of passive resistance to any attacking force where more active means are wanting. The French were enabled to inflict, with little active resistance on the part of the Chinese, a vast amount of injury, and great loss in life and property and trade, in addition to the destruction of one of their great dockyards only created after many years of lavish expenditure. But neither on the bulk of the population, nor on the Government at Peking, did this make any serious impression;

105 A 1905 Japanese article claimed that Zeng's article "made quite the round in diplomatic circles at the time. The Russian foreign minister Guchkov was so stunned by it that he accepted Zeng's demands." "Lun Zhongguo waijiao benlun," 論中國外交本原 [On the foundations of Chinese foreign policy], translated into Chinese in *Waijiao bao* 外交報 130 from the fourth part of the article 清国外交の活歴史 [The History of Chinese Foreign Policy], *Tōkyō Nichinichi shinbun*, Nov. 5, 1905, 6. The time sequence is wrong here: the negotiations in St. Petersburg were concluded in 1881.

106 Sir Rutherford Alcock, "China and its Foreign Relations," *Asiatic Quarterly Review* 3 (1887): 443-460. This is a detailed review of Marquis Tseng's arguments. A critical summary can be found in the *North China Herald* 38, May 27, 1887, 569. Similar criticism was voiced by *The Spectator* in London, quoted in Chiu, "Debate on National Salvation", 37, in the same issue of the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*. In his article "China and its Foreign Relations", W. Lockart challenges Tseng on the issues of labor emigration, extraterritoriality, and navy leadership.

or in any way advance the French cause. Nor did they in the end succeed in imposing upon the Chinese Government the terms on which they first insisted. The exhaustion caused after two or three years of active hostility was much more with the French than with the Chinese. And the ultimate victory rested in consequence with these, and not with their enemy.¹⁰⁷

Reviewers in China's Western language press were more critical. Speaking of Zeng's depiction of China "as if she were a rejuvenated, reformed State of great power," the *North China Herald* qualified this as "merely the old boasting relacquered to suit the times. But it is different when English papers adopt all the ignorance of the Marquis as to the condition of his own country, and seriously consider his speculations as to her future." The paper approvingly quoted the French premier Jules F. Ferry saying that China was not only continuing in her sleep, but on the verge of death and an altogether *quantité négligeable*.¹⁰⁸

It makes little sense to characterize these articles as reflections of Western "imperialist" interests, because very similar criticisms were proffered by Chinese reformers. Once it was read as a part of the Chinese discussion about the state of the nation and the way forward, the question was not simply whether Zeng's assessment was correct, but whether opting for the Yangwu approach, i.e. to prop up defenses, sidelined and delegitimized proposals for a deeper structural change in the polity and thus were not simply ineffective, but positively damaging to the interests of the country.

The most detailed and important critique of the article was written by Ho Kai (He Qi 何啟) (1859-1914) under the pseudonym Sinensis, published in the *China Mail* in Hong Kong a few days after the reprint of Zeng's article in the same paper.¹⁰⁹ Ho Kai was a Christian with a Hong Kong English education. He had studied law and medicine in Aberdeen, married an English woman and wrote in English. He rose to high stature in Hong Kong, where he founded a hospital which he

107 Alcock, "China and its Foreign Relations," 449.

108 *North China Herald*, March 2, 1887.

109 Sinensis (He Qi), "Letter to the editor of the *China Mail*," prefaced by a short introduction to Zeng Jize's article "China: The Sleep and Awakening," *The China Mail*, Feb. 16, 1887, 2.

named in honor of his recently deceased wife (and where Sun Yat-sen received his medical education). He played an important role in the founding of Hong Kong University, an English language university for Chinese students. At the same time, he became indirectly involved with other English speaking and English writing Chinese, who partook in underground “revolutionary” activities designed to establish a separate state in Guangdong Province and bring about faster reforms.¹¹⁰ Ho Kai wrote extensively in Hong Kong’s English language papers about the reforms he thought were needed in China.¹¹¹ He was also in close contact with the liberal British editors of the English language newspapers *China Mail* and *Hong Kong Telegraph*, where his essays were published and supported in editorials. Many of these writings were translated into Chinese by a friend and a book-length collection of them became a key ingredient in the discussions surrounding the “Reform of Governance” pursued by the Qing court since 1901.¹¹² Eventually, he was made Sir Ho Kai.

Ho Kai’s English language article took Zeng to task for a basic mis-assessment of the Chinese situation and a flawed approach to coping with the prevailing asymmetry in agency and power. Ho Kai instead offered a blueprint for renovating the Chinese polity by focusing on transparent and equitable political institutions and education, rather than on imported technical equipment. He agrees with the assessment of China being “asleep” and with the hope that it might wake up. “I have long looked forward to her [China’s, R.W.] awakening from her lethargic slumber of centuries.” However, he sees no signs of it: “Until I see China earnestly at work pushing on her internal reforms, and thus striking at the root of these evils that have beset her for ages—evils which have made her what she is—so weak and unmanly—and which were the frequent and sole causes of her numerous humiliations, I shall not believe that

110 Gerald H. Choa, *The Life and Times of Sir Ho Kai: A Prominent Figure in Nineteenth Century Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1981). On He Qi, see also Woo Sing Lim, *The Prominent Chinese in Hongkong* (Wanchai: Five Continents Book, 1937), and Lin Qiyuan 林啓彥, “Yan Fu yu He Qi—Liangwei liu Ying xuesheng jindai sixiang moshi de tantao” 嚴復與何啓—兩位留英學生近代思想模式的探討, *Jindaishi yanjiu* 近代史研究 3 (2004): 1-21.

111 Anon. [He Qi], editorial, in *The China Mail*, March 12, 1895. The supporting editorial was published on March 18 in the same paper.

112 He Qi 何啓, *Xinzheng zhenquan* 新政真詮 [A true exposition of the reform of the polity] (1898, 1900) (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1994). According to Tse, Ho Kai is the author of an important program for a reform that involved replacement of the Manchu dynasty. It was anonymously published in lieu of an editorial in the *China Mail* on March 12, 1895, 2.

she is really awake, in spite of her improvements in her Coast Defense, her Army and her Navy.” The basis of a viable Chinese polity would be:

Equitable rule and right government. China can never be what her many well-wishers fondly desire her to be unless she will first cast aside all her unjust dealings with her own children and learn to dispense justice with an impartial hand, - to discountenance official corruption in every form and to secure the unity and happiness of her people by a just and liberal policy.¹¹³

The ideas put forth by Ho Kai show his exposure to, and espousal of, Western notions and standards.

For men like Ho Kai or Tse Tsan Tai, Hong Kong and the treaty ports offered an excellent environment conducive to translingual and transcultural information and opinion exchange, as well as public articulation. Not only were the major journals, papers and books from the West available here, the local English language press, and eventually much of the Chinese language reform press, saw it as their duty to keep their readers abreast of important international discussion and information. This was done through weekly detailed summaries of the contents of important journals and newspaper editorials, as well as discussions in the emerging Chinese language press and memorials from the *Peking Gazette*. These were a part of the regular content of these papers. Some, such as the *London and China Express*, focused almost entirely on gathering opinion and information related to China and its interaction with Britain from the most diverse Western sources.¹¹⁴

Ho Kai ends his critique of the mismanagement of the Sino-French War in 1884 and his suggestions for a reorganization of the army with the following statement, which today to both Chinese and many foreign ears

113 Sinensis (He Qi), “Letter to the editor of the *China Mail*,” *The China Mail*, Feb. 16, 1887, 2.

114 Three issues of the *North China Herald* in Shanghai in January and early February 1898 brought out summaries and excerpts of articles from no less than 83 newspapers and periodicals from more than 18 countries and territories (Great Britain 27, United States 9, China 8, Japan 7, Germany 6, Hong Kong 5, Russia 4, France 3, Singapore 3, Korea 2, Ceylon 2, Denmark 1, Spain 1, Thailand 1, Burma 1, Vietnam 1, Canada 1, and South Africa 1). All eight papers from “China” came out in the treaty ports. It was widespread practice in the British press at the time to provide an overview of the recent papers and journals, and some of them, such as the *Review of Reviews*, did nothing else.

would be highly politically incorrect: “I cannot leave this topic without calling to mind the achievements of the Ever-Victorious Army when under the distinguished leadership of that renowned chief, the late lamented General C.G. Gordon.” The notion that a foreign military leader might be needed to bring out the best in Chinese troops had been suggested two years before by the Chief of Staff of the British Army, Viscount Wolseley, but that someone like Ho Kai would latch on to this highlights the helpless irritation felt by these elite reformers in the face of what they now perceived as the sleepy lethargy of the Chinese masses.¹¹⁵

Although we do not have a reply from Zeng Jize, it is quite clear that he was closely following the impact of his essay, and that included reading the Western language papers appearing in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Tianjin.¹¹⁶ Thus we see the unfolding of communication and debate, in English, between high Qing officials, and newly emerging public intellectuals in the contact zones.

Far from restricting debate about the state of China to a single scenario, the range of the metaphor “China asleep” reaches from a dying China to the notion that China is fast asleep and needs a fundamental internal remake of its polity, to Zeng Jize’s sunny assessment that it is already fully awake and able to take on the foreign powers. As we shall see, for some the sleep metaphor proved unable to fully express their thought, and they further explored adjacent metaphorical concepts such as death, debility, and old age. Already in Ho Kai’s “weak and unmanly” we see this process beginning.

As it turns out, the “China asleep” discussion develops in English in 1887 in the key contact zones between China and the foreign powers, namely Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Tianjin. Politicians and public intellectuals such as Zeng Jize and Ho Kai, who have a political commitment to China, are of Chinese origin, but also conversant in foreign languages, join in what starts as an English language discussion. They are the cultural

115 See note 128. At the time such thoughts were far from uncommon, because the initial reorganization of the Chinese navy was entrusted to a British naval officer by the Qing Court.

116 We know this from a curious letter written by Zeng’s physician Dr. Dudgeon to the *Chinese Times* in Tianjin. Dudgeon complained of unfair insinuations against the Marquis in a report that accused the latter of associating with foreigners who were no better than “the scum of the earth”. Claiming that “H.E. the Marquis Tseng having wisely resolved never to take any notice of newspapers articles,” Dr. Dudgeon wrote to the *Chinese Times* in Tianjin to protest against this “flagrant,” “coarse” and “libellous” accusation that was, he said, without foundation. Part of this letter was reproduced in the *China Mail*, Sept. 9, 1899, 3, which had carried the news from the *Chinese Times*.

brokers bringing this discussion into the Chinese language orbit and articulating opinions from their China-focused perspective. The new media subsequently turn this discussion into a public and international event, even though their audience is initially restricted to people with access to English language writings. With these conditions in place, the diffusion and diverse appropriation of the “China asleep” metaphor in the Chinese language environment was the next step.

The process of transcultural flow is anything but a foggy abstract notion. We see in our modest example the very specific directions it takes. The first step in the diffusion of the “China asleep” metaphor in the Chinese language world is, of course, translation. By May 1887, Zeng Jize’s essay had appeared in Chinese in Shanghai’s *Shenbao* newspaper; another translation followed, this time by the official translator school of the Chinese foreign office, the Zongli Yamen, which was then headed by another foreigner, W.A.P. Martin.¹¹⁷ A translation of Ho Kai’s critical essay came out in the Chinese language version of the *China Mail* in May 1887.¹¹⁸ Our diagram above, which had been based on a strictly Chinese language database, had shown only one instance of using the “China asleep” metaphor before 1887, namely a reference in the volume compiled by Sone Shōun and Wang Tao that was published in Hong Kong. Permitting the inclusion of the foreign language press appearing in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Tianjin as well as China-related or -focused publications, such as Boulger’s *Asiatic Quarterly Review* or the *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, corrects this image and shows that we are dealing with the gradual spread of a translingual and transcultural discussion. Any facile and fashionable associations of ethnic, national, or linguistic appurtenance with a particular opinion turn out to be solidly unsupported by the sources.

The Chinese language discussion was initiated by the translations of Zeng Jize’s essay, Ho Kai’s critiques, and an editorial comment in *Shenbao* in

117 The Chinese translation, done orally by Yan Yongjing 顏詠經 and written down by Yuan Zhuyi 袁竹一, was included under the title 中国先睡后醒论 into the *Shenbao*, 申报 on June 14-15, 1887. Eventually, the Zongli Yamen version was also included into the *Huangchao xu'ai wenbian* 皇朝蓄艾文編 (Shanghai: Guanshuju, 1903), chap. 1.

118 Anon. (He Qi), “Shu Zeng Gong hou Zhongguo xian shui hou xing lun hou” 書曾襲侯中國先睡後興論後 (Written after reading Marquis Zeng’s ‘China: The Sleep and the Awakening’), translated by Hu Liyuan 胡禮垣 (1848-1916), *Huazi ribao* 華字日報, 11 May, 1887. The information about the *Huazi ribao* translation is from Chiu Ling-Yeong, “Debate on National Salvation.” I am not aware whether a copy of this paper still exists for this period.

June 1887.¹¹⁹ At that time, Chinese participation in such strategic public debates was just beginning. It seems that it died down quickly, but resurfaced after the shocking Chinese defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, which delivered the ultimate blow to Zeng Jize's assertion about awakened China's coastal defenses and the new Chinese navy. The revival of this discussion after 1895 followed frequent references to Zeng Jize's earlier assertion in the foreign press. The majority of the Chinese references reflected in the statistical graph for 1896 and 1897 came from translations of Western language and Japanese articles into Chinese.

In other words, the discussion in the Chinese language press continues to interact closely with the international discussion and is not confined to one language. This coincides with observations on the translingual flow of concepts and practices. In my own studies of the "movement" as a form of social action, the various local enactments of such "movements" continue to talk to each other, copy forms and contentions from each other, and seek to enhance their legitimacy by consciously evoking association with other or earlier "movements" that were marked by a high public and/or international approval rate.¹²⁰

The translations of foreign articles on "China asleep" after 1895, however, already signaled a shift: They were selected and published by new press organs set up by Chinese reformers to become part of the Chinese language debate. As we shall see, the people doing the selecting are the same who now increasingly used the metaphor in their own writings to describe China.

In the wake of the war with France in 1884, expectations that China would now finally wake up were once again expressed. But with the disaster in the war with Japan in 1895, the notion gained wide currency that not only the political structure as a whole had to be remade, but that without foreign pressure this was unlikely to happen. China, in terms of our metaphor, would not wake up on its own: it needed massive foreign pressure. This argument is again first articulated in the English language press in 1897, and is brought into the Chinese language discussion by the translation of

119 "Shu 'Zhongguo xian shui hou xing lun' hou" 書中國先睡後醒論後 [Writing after 'China: The Sleep and the Awakening'], *Shenbao*, June 19, 1887, 1. We are unable to document the oral discussion of the time in any detail. However, the revival of the discussion about Zeng's article a decade later shows that it did leave a lasting memory among the then still very young Chinese reformers.

120 Wagner, "Canonization," 69-95. See also Rudolf Wagner, "Political Institutions, Discourse and Imagination in China at Tiananmen," in *Rethinking Third World Politics*, ed. James Manor (London: Longman, 1991), 131.

a dialogue from a London paper published in Liang Qichao's advocacy newspaper *Shiwu bao*. A blunt answer was given here to a question about whether China could not succeed by simply accepting the harsh words of the West and follow the Western model on its own initiative:

No. This would be a failure. China at present is in the midst of a dream; even if it occasionally tosses about, it definitely will not suddenly wake up. As to reform, if there is no foreign pressure on it to get aroused and get things going, nothing will come about.¹²¹

The selection and inclusion of this article without commentary into a leading reform journal signals a basic acceptance of its premises.

In a similar vein, we see a new variant of the “giant asleep and awakening” theme emerging. The article on education in China from the *North China Herald*, quoted above,¹²² also offered an outline of missionary schools in China that ended on an upbeat note: now, after the defeat by Japan, the giant might finally stir and, hopefully, the foreign and domestic creditors will not let it fall asleep again. “They [the schools] have done admirable work, but the nation has never arisen to welcome them or to show that it appreciated their labors. But the scene has changed. The sleepy giant has at last awoken, and we may leave it to his creditors to see that he does not go to sleep again.”¹²³ The Chinese translation, for the moment, left out the giant: “However, as China's millions have all regarded these Western methods as irrelevant affairs and nothing to pursue enthusiastically, the missionaries and the Educational Association have done one thing, but

121 “Lun Zhongguo jianglai qingxing” 論中國將來情形 [On the future situation of China], *Shiwu bao* 時務報 6 (June 29, 1896), translated from the London *Dongfang bao*. This assessment of a need for foreign pressure was shared by Li Hongzhang and Prince Qing. In the wake of the Boxer rebellion and the foreign intervention the Powers established a committee to draft demands for a reorganization of China's foreign relations establishment and the upgrading of the Tsung-li Yamen into a Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Li Hongzhang submitted a proposal for this reorganization with the explicit oral request that it be presented, if acceptable, to the Qing Court as a foreign demand and not as his proposal. See Fabian Münter, “Das Waiwu Bu 外務部—Reform des chinesischen Außenministeriums 1901-1911,” (M.A. dissertation, University of Heidelberg, 2009), 27, quoting a confidential memorandum of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs of April 1901 about this discussion. In Chinese historiography, the reorganization of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been routinely described as an imperialist imposition, that therefore carried the “mark of shame.” See Wang Licheng 王立誠, *Zhongguo jindai wajiao zhidu shi* 中國近代外交制度史 [History of the Modern Chinese Foreign Policy Establishment] (Lanzhou: Gansu renmin chubanshe, 1991), 175.

122 *North China Herald*, Oct. 29, 1897, 776-777. See note 83.

123 “Zhongguo jiaoyang,” 11.

the interests of the Chinese have not been on this one thing. Although what [the missionaries] have done is good, it did not help. However, China most recently is about to change; [Chinese translator's note: this refers to the Sino-Japanese military confrontation] she is like someone who first awakens from a long sleep and we deeply hope that China, once awoken, will not fall asleep again." Possibly the notion of the "sleeping giant" had not yet made it from English into the Chinese language metaphorical canon and therefore the Chinese readers of the translation were spared the giant because without further explanation it would have been incomprehensible.

Just before the famous "100 days" of reform started in 1898, the *Guowen bao* 國聞報 (National News) published a Chinese translation from an English language article in a London newspaper on January 1st of the same year, which I have not been able to identify.¹²⁴ The editor of the *Guowen bao* was Yan Fu 嚴復 (1853-1921), a man mostly known for his influential translations of English language works of political and social philosophy. The article is a classical example of the deep ambivalence in the perception of the instability of asymmetries in power and in cultural exchanges, an ambivalence heightened by translating the article into Chinese and by a commentary penned by the editor Yan Fu himself. After referring to the difference between the peace message of the Christmas season and the concurrent efforts by the Powers Germany, Russia, England, France and Japan to "divide up China," the English paper continued according to this Chinese translation, which I retranslate here:

A few years ago, our present British commander-in-chief of the army [Lord Wolseley, R.W.] said in an article on Chinese affairs that the 400 million Chinese were of the highest quality ["equal to heaven"]. If from their midst they brought forth a Napoleon who would arouse their talents and courage, become their leader and develop a long-term plan to impose their will on the world, the Europeans would, after a few years, be turned out of the places in the Far East [now] controlled by Western nations. These words were quite unexpected.

¹²⁴ The article is said to come from an English language paper the title of which is translated as *Guoyun bao* 國運報. Unfortunately, my searches for relevant key words from the Chinese translation in databases of contemporary British newspapers and journals were unsuccessful.

The quote refers to an 1895 article in which Lord Wolseley had been dealing with the China's prospects just as news of its loss to Japan spread. Wolseley had been an active officer during, and written a memoir about, the so-called Second Opium War (1859-1860).¹²⁵

Wolseley's promotion to chief of staff of the British Army in 1895 greatly added to his stance, —as did his frequent contributions to widely-read journals. The 1895 article referred to in the Guowen bao translation was published in *The Cosmopolitan* in the US. Just as China experienced another strategic defeat, he repeated his basic assessment: regardless of China's present weakness, it has tremendous strategic potential if a leader emerges who can galvanize the nation like Peter had done in Russia or Napoleon in France.

This hardy, clever race, whose numbers are to be counted in hundreds of millions, needs only the quickening, guiding, controlling hand and mind of a Napoleon to be converted into the greatest and most powerful nation that has ever dictated terms to the world! But a Napoleon does not always appear when wanted.¹²⁶

Wolseley sees no such figure in China, but knows what kind of person is needed:

At this moment we all know of Englishmen whose services would be worth a prince's ransom to China, and who, if trusted, as General Gordon was, would soon provide the emperor with another "Ever-Victorious Army," and with a first-rate fleet. What

125 Garnet Wolseley, *Narrative of the War with China in 1860* (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Robert, 1862).

126 Viscount Wolseley, "China and Japan," *The Cosmopolitan; a Monthly Illustrated Magazine*, February 1895, 417-423. In 1904, Wolseley elaborated on this assessment with an even stronger, but also more ominous statement. "There is no nation, numerically as great as China, whose customs and modes of life are so generally common to all parts of their vast empire. To me they are the most remarkable race on earth, and I have always thought and still believe them to be the great coming rulers of the world. They only want a Chinese Peter the Great or Napoleon to make them so. They have every quality required for the good soldier and the good sailor, and in my idle speculation upon this world's future I have long selected them as the combatants on one side at the great Battle of Armageddon, the people of the United States of America being their opponents." Field-Marshal Viscount Wolseley, *The Story of a Soldier's Life* (Toronto: The Book Supply Company Limited, 1904), 2:2.

China stands most in need of at this moment is the help of another Gordon.

The Chinese had experience with one such leader. Wolseley refers not to Hong Xiuquan, the Christian leader of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, but to the Englishman who helped the Qing dynasty to eventually prevail against the Taiping, "General" Gordon (1833-1885).

Wolseley also gives voice to the anxiety of other powers who would want China dismembered rather than a China that might reform and threaten them.

Are we justified in assuming, that it would be in the interests of Japan and of some other nations to render China as weak as possible for the future, if not, indeed, to split her up into several independent states? A very strong China would doubtless be a new, and, to some, a startling factor in the great politics of Asia. Speculation upon these points opens out a vast vista of possible contingencies great in their bearing, not only upon Japan, but upon all European and American interests in Asia.

Being a military man, Wolseley sees things in a sober manner. Britain as a trading nation would be the ideal partner for a strengthened China.

I mention my own countrymen as the best suited for the present emergency because I believe that no other nation has so great an interest in preventing China from being broken up into several states. It is commonly said that some nations desire this disintegration of China, but if this be the case, England, at least, is not one of them. Most Englishmen who have studied the Chinese question wish to see China strong for English reasons, if for no other reasons.

Wolseley also dealt with the strange British quandary of having to worry about the break-up of the defeated opponent and therefore having to refrain from excessive demands.

[In 1860, R.W.] we were met by a novel difficulty, namely, the inherent weakness of the emperor's

government and the frail nature of his hold upon China. Those who were best acquainted with the condition of the empire assured us that any very serious blow, any overwhelming defeat inflicted upon his so-called military power, would certainly lead to revolution and anarchy, and very probably to the overthrow of his dynasty. This would leave us with no constituted government or recognized authority to treat with when we had taken Peking or overcome the Chinese army.

I analyzed Wolseley's article in some detail because the quoted passages not only had an immediate impact but remained a frequent point of reference in the China discussion over the next decades.¹²⁷ The article translated in the *Guowen bao* quotes Wolseley because it shares his assessment, as well as his anxiety and ambivalence about the consequences of China's possible awakening. The Chinese translation of the English article continues:

During the 1895 war [with Japan], the Chinese army was defeated and tiny Japan pressed on with overwhelming force; had not the European states resisted, Japan would have put China under its full control. At this moment, China's true situation was exposed and its agency was at an end. This awakened appetites and the Powers plotted the partition [of China].

Earlier, we called Turkey Europe's 'sick man', and now we call China by this name. However, the situation of these two countries is utterly different and should not be regarded in the same way. Luckily, the politicians in charge took notice of this. It is a well-established fact that Europeans had long determined a partition of Turkey[...] [Turkey] does not have millions of people waiting for instruction about who might reform a policy, and it does not have thousands of miles of uncultivated land that might be profitably exploited. [...] But China has

¹²⁷ The article was summarized in the British *Review of Reviews*, March 1895, 237; the British article translated in the *Guowen bao* assumes readers' familiarity with its argument; and the English language *National Review* (Shanghai) again referred to it as late as 1912. "What Lord Wolseley thought," *National Review*, Nov. 12, 1912, 411.

hundreds of millions of hard working, intelligent people; has thousands of miles of uncultivated land, and if it makes use of the methods of Western civilization to take advantage of what nature has given her, I am afraid the result might not be what we wish to hear. If the Europeans regard the Chinese as marionettes—fun to look at, but unable to do anything—this is another fallacy.

It is a general truth that the Chinese disease is a governmental disease, not a disease of the people. If they have not been able to make great advances towards civilization, the blame lies with those who hold political power. These men have known one thing, and that is to stubbornly hold on to the old and block in every way the new Western European methods with the consequence that they have brought about the present crisis situation. But the much-blamed Europeans will also have to wake up.

While China certainly relishes its slumber, and the Europeans will have to rouse them to wake up, once awakened, China will become a Frankenstein monster. This monster will be calm and do nothing as long as it is left to sleep, but once woken it will fight tooth and claw and will be a plague for others. The millions of Chinese are unsurpassed in their hard work and thrift and whatever they are put to, they will be up to it. Once the people in the entire nation will enjoy the benefits of Western learning for fine engineering, quality production, and agriculture, they will—with the cheapest manpower—get the wondrous effects of machinery to open up rivers and build railroads to connect their internal and external [markets]—and then the benefits of train and steamship transport will carry their goods to fill the European and American capitals. Their prices will be cheap and their goods pretty so that they can compete with European products—and the result will be that the Chinese goods sell well, while sales for European goods will be sluggish. Once things have come to this, the European workmen will have nothing to do with their feet and hands and the resulting disaster will

be worse than even knowledgeable people are able to anticipate.

Nowadays, the Europeans are talking about getting equal commercial rights and [passing?] laws. They struggle for the eight hour day and demand eight shilling hourly wages. But once this day comes, what will they have to live on?

Woe! China's disease cannot be compared to that of Turkey. A governmental disease can be handled. But the disease of a people that is intelligent, thrifty and decent cannot be handled at all! How could something be more grievous than all states wanting to divide up China's land to fatten themselves? But even if the Powers all slander China, it still dwarves slandering [a giant] from Longbo. Do not overestimate yourselves. If one trusts that he [the giant, R.W.] is asleep and one disturbs him, it is only appropriate that one draws disaster upon oneself.

From that moment on, before our children and grandchildren have grown up, the commerce of different European states will already have shrunk, the common folk will be in dire straits and the bitter complaints that their show of virtue [sharing technology and knowledge with China, R.W] was the beginning of disaster will come too late.

Alas, such a Frankenstein monster is a most sophisticated machine. If one is aware of this, there is nothing to be afraid of. If, however, China with its rich resources and masses of people makes use of Western methods to make trouble for the people in the West, the damage it will do to Europe will be truly something to be afraid of, quite incomparable even to a Frankenstein monster.¹²⁸

Frankenstein's monster was a common rhetorical trope in the 19th century English-speaking world. The creator of this artificial human giant was its first victim and he eventually set out in pursuit of his creation to put an

128 "Ruhou huan he 如後患何 [What future trouble], translated by Wang Xuelian 王學廉, *Guowen bao* 國聞報, March 22, 1898, 2. It quotes the Jan 1, 1898 edition of the English paper translated as *Guoyun bao* 國運報, which I have not been able to identify.

end to it. In time, the Frankenstein metaphor became an analytical tool to discuss self-regulatory systems (such as organisms) that maximize their own impulses (such as the killing instincts Dr. Frankenstein implanted into his creation by giving it the head of an executed murderer). These “monsters” usually lacked any regard for consequences of their actions, although Dr. Frankenstein did try to instill some civilizational elements into his creation by making him read Goethe’s *Sufferings of Young Werther*. This complex and powerful simile was used to analyze the workings of political entities, markets, and, above all, of science, all of which have no in-built civilizational restraint.

Soon after its publication, Wolseley’s assessment of the Chinese potential evoked direct critical responses. The summary of the *Cosmopolitan* article in *The Sun* (Baltimore) in 1895 ended on an ominous note. The author argued that given British commercial interests in China, which Wolseley had highlighted, Britain might ultimately contribute to its own demise:

The drift of English feeling on this subject is clearly revealed in Lord Wolseley’s article, and it seems pretty certain that China would not have to call very loudly to secure the good offices of Englishmen in developing her military strength. But after all, might it not prove a dangerous undertaking and result in the end in the creation of a national Frankenstein, carrying ruin to the interests of its creator, as well as to those of others?¹²⁹

In Great Britain, the China/Frankenstein link was far from unique to the article translated in the *Guowen bao*. In September 1898, the *London Times* reported in an article on the annual meeting of the British Association. After a lecture about the wealth of mineral resources in China, which could—the low cost of labor notwithstanding—be extracted at an acceptable cost only by greatly developing river transport, the president of the section—possibly in an indirect reference to the article from January of the same year—pointed out:

But there was another point in connexion with the development of China, and that was by urging on the development of that country, we might, perhaps, be raising a Frankenstein. China might become the great

¹²⁹ “Lord Wolseley on the War between China and Japan,” *The Sun* (Baltimore), Feb. 8, 1895, 4.

manufacturer of the world, and we might take the place of China, so that they would supply us instead of our supplying them.¹³⁰

Wolseley's "China and Japan" and the nervous reactions quoted here are fine examples of the mix of the West's self-confident superiority and the anxious helplessness felt even in Britain that its asymmetric advantages were finite and that there was nothing much that could be done about a coming shift in their balance. This helplessness is visible in the course of action proposed. Neither Wolseley nor the authors of the other articles advocate a colonization of China; at best they caution of the possible effects of Chinese access to modern knowledge. Wolseley comes out in favor of Britain supporting China's modernization, including its military modernization. The American voice from the *Baltimore Sun*, however, sees a blunt British interest at work that disregards the possible outcome not only for itself but also for others. The article translated in Yan Fu's paper, and the comment quoted by *The Times*, strongly and helplessly warn of the possible marginalization of Britain and a host of domestic problems to boot.

At the same time, they are all intensely aware that the British competitors might draw other benefits from China's sleep. A jocular remark by the German Kaiser about his future title of emperor of China led to floods of nervous commentary about a China that would become the "India of Germany".¹³¹ The anticipated Japanese victory in the 1894 war with China led the *New York Times*—with ample references to Wolseley—to speculate about China as a well-organized province of the Japanese empire that would in turn be a matchless power in the world and take over the rest of Eurasia, including Europe.¹³²

All these publications and statements show a clear understanding of the different and interlaced dynamics of an asymmetry of power as well as

130 "British Association," *The Times*, Sept. 14, 1898, 8, col. 3, quoting Colonel G. L. Church.

131 "The German Emperor's Joke," an article purporting to report about a dream of the Kaiser in *The Spectator*, was extensively summarized and discussed in the *North China Herald*, Feb. 7, 1898, 162. "Of course, "[China] may wake up; but Germany has a good and large base in Kiaochou...; it can raise a force of Malays officered by Europeans, and have a quarrel any time with Peking," comments the *North China Herald* and ends with a quote from the article: "China is dead; there are no Princes in China with standing armies; there is no trustworthy Militia; the population is wholly unaccustomed to battle; and the Mandarins could not even resist the Japanese."

132 "Looking Forward," *New York Times*, Dec. 9, 1894.

an asymmetry in cultural flows. At the core of the anxiousness about the potential effects on the existing asymmetry of power lies the expectation that China would wake up and capitalize on the huge boost, which a large-scale, mostly asymmetrical import of Western concepts, institutions and practices could give to the country's wealth and power. It would lead to China's renewal, like Japan's before it. Frankenstein's monster is the image that best captures the way informed Westerners see this dialectic and their anxiety about the possible outcome of their actions. The implied assumptions that a modernized China would be as much the product of the West as the monster was Frankenstein's; that such a modernized China would be an 'unnatural' oddity because its modernization would not have grown out of its own traditions; and that this monster would therefore be unable to control itself in a civilized manner naively translates power asymmetry into the capacity for imposing far-reaching changes. It loses sight of the fact that agency in such appropriations and adaptations lies in the pull and not the push—although the US and British narratives are also dimly aware of the seat of agency because they do not propose an imposed solution, but wait for the Chinese to “wake up.” The British defense of China's integrity was not a way to cope with the existing asymmetry of power, which was easy for the British to accommodate, but to grapple with the unsettling potential of a reversal in fortunes. Needless to say, the echo in some of today's nervous commentary on China's rise is deafening.¹³³

Yan Fu added a comment to his translation. This comment shows how this text is read from the perspective of a Chinese who has been one of the key figures to develop the agency of a Chinese pull for modernization and prompt others to do the same. He introduces the metaphor of Frankenstein to his readers with a reference to Mary Shelley's novel, of which no Chinese translation had yet been made.¹³⁴ The monster would, he wrote,

when set in motion jump up and kill people with
no one daring to stand up to him, but when left

133 This even includes references to a China/Frankenstein link. In a debate on China in the House of Representatives in 2007, the Republican House member Dana Rohrabacher is quoted as saying that the consequence of the US giving China access to advanced technology of military uses was that “we have built up a Frankenstein that now threatens us.” “China ‘Frankenstein threat’ to US,” in Aljazeera News, May 2, 2007, accessed Jan 20, 2010, <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia-pacific/2007/05/2008525125941866484.html>. A keyword search on Google News for “China” and “Frankenstein” yields a plethora of references to the trope made during World War II and the Cold War.

134 Yan Fu also refers to Wolseley's statement about a “Gordon” being needed to develop the Chinese army. As the translated article does not include such a reference, Yan Fu must have read the Wolseley article in the *Cosmopolitan*.

asleep he would not do anything. Writers compare this with China, saying in other words that our latent strength is truly great. The reason why the Europeans can hold sway over the world is exactly that we are still asleep and have not woken up. The statement that China is richly endowed by nature is a fact and not empty chatter. If she got someone capable to rely on for an upsurge, she would indeed be awesome!

Yan Fu identifies the “Chief of Staff” as Lord Wolseley “who often argued in the same way about China’s great need, [saying] she might get it from a Gordon.”¹³⁵

Yan Fu’s emphasizes that underlying the monster image is the Western recognition that China had tremendous but unawakened strength. He is neither interested in the self-congratulatory Western vanity implied in the artificiality of the monster’s genesis and the impact this unnatural origin had on its uncontrollably violent behavior, nor in the critical take on the Frankenstein image in scientific forays with unpredictable and possibly terrible consequences. For Yan Fu, China’s strength and the promise of Western modernity to enhance it were issues that neither needed nor would tolerate critical reflection. In an indirect way, however, he picks up the deprecatory aspect of the Frankenstein image that implies a Chinese modernity would be a foreign-generated unnatural monster:

As to methods of governance, in the past they went from Asia to Europe; from Europe they went to America; and now again they go further West from America and come into Asia. This is what is called [in Newton’s Third Law] “every movement will by necessity have a counter movement.”¹³⁶ During the last two hundred years, natural and human affairs were all [moving towards] linking up, not towards

135 *Guowen bao* 國聞報, March 22, 1898, translated from the *Guoyun bao* 國運報 in England, Jan 1, 1898. See also Ishikawa Yoshihiro 石川祐浩, “Wan Qing ‘shui shi’ xingxiang tanyuan,” 晚清‘睡獅’形象探源 [Exploring the image of the “sleeping lion” during the late Qing], *Zhongshan daxue xuebao* (Shehuikexue ban) 5 (2009): 49, 88-96.

136 The actual formula is “*For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.*”

sealing off. Since the steam engine and electricity have come into use, the earth definitely has become a small ball...to say that on these five continents a place as fertile as China could seal itself off to preserve its old customs from the last four thousand years—even a dimwit will recognize that this will be impossible.¹³⁷
 可治化之事，往者由亞而歐，由歐而墨，今者由墨而復西行入亞，此所謂凡動必復者也。二百年來之天運人事，皆為其通，而不為其塞，汽機電氣既用，地球固彈丸耳。夫…謂五洲上腴如中國者可深閉固距以守其四千年舊俗，雖至愚者知其不然矣。

In the long historical view, Yan Fu argues, these great cultural flows are the rule and not the exception. Europe's initial installment of its culture with the "neolithic package" —from domesticated plants, agricultural implements to governance patterns—was based on the Near East before developing it in its own way. The initial instalment of European settlers' culture in North America was based on Europe before they developed it further. And now modernity continues its journey further West and across the Pacific Ocean to reach Asia in the Far East. In this sense, everybody has at some moment started off as somebody else's Frankenstein monster, depending only on the time span one is willing to take into account. The implications of the Frankenstein story even apply, because, as the monster attacked its creator, Europe turned around and started to dominate much of Asia, while America eventually sidelined Great Britain and Europe altogether. Yan Fu applies Newton's third law to the dynamics of social evolutionism¹³⁸ to show that starting off as someone else's Frankenstein monster is the way in which history progresses. Eventually, Yan Fu implies, Asia will turn around and sideline the US.

Just a week after Yan Fu's article appeared in the *Guowen bao*, Liang Qichao developed the story further in a speech he gave in Peking. After complaining about the stubborn complacency and opportunism of the

¹³⁷ *Guowen bao* 國聞報, March 22, 1898, translated from the *Guoyun bao* 國運報 in England, Jan 1, 1898.

¹³⁸ Yan Fu used the same expression, 凡動必復, in the preface to his translation of Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*, where he set out to prove that ancient Chinese works, especially the *Zhouyi* [Book of Changes], had long before developed Newton's and Spencer's core arguments. See Yan Fu 嚴復, "Tianyan lun zixu" 天演論自序 [Preface to *Evolution and Ethics*], in Yan Fu ji 嚴復集 (Beijing: Xinhua shuju, 1984), 5:1319.

officials who had “the entire country stalled, waiting for it to be cut up”, he continued: “Alas! Years ago Marquis Zeng had a theory of China asleep and then awakening. The Englishman Wolseley said that China was like a Frankenstein monster; letting it sleep, it would be calm and do nothing, but waking it up would have it stretch out its claws and fangs. They [Zeng and Wolseley] still had some leftover hope for China.”¹³⁹ But these expectations, Liang argued, were only due to these men’s ignorance of China’s real weakness.

After the coup of Empress Dowager Cixi, which ended the “100 Days” in fall 1898, the reformers’ hope evaporated completely from the metaphorical fate of China. In 1899, Liang Qichao, now in exile in Yokohama, returned to the theme.

Distressed-About-The-Times (=new pen name of Liang Qichao) was resting; in the next room four people were talking in whispers about animals.... The fourth said: “I was once in the British Museum where someone had manufactured a strange monster which looked like a lion, but it was lying there without a spark of life. Someone told me: ‘Don’t take this thing lightly, there is a mechanism inside, once triggered it bares its teeth and stretches out its claws to grab and bite, and even a thousand people are not its match.’ I asked what it was called, and he said: ‘In English it is called “Frankenstein.”’ Some time ago, the Chinese ambassador to Britain, Marquis Zeng, translated this into “sleeping lion” and also said it was a giant who was formerly asleep and then awake.”¹⁴⁰

I tried to start this mechanism; it did not react, but suddenly something cracked and stung my hand. However, this mechanism had been broken already

139 Liang Qichao 梁啟超, “Baoguo hui yanshuo [run sanyua chuyi ri di er ci yanshuo] xinhui” 保國會演說 [開三月初一日第二次集說]新會 [Second Speech at the Meeting of the Association for Saving the Nation 保國會, Peking, (April 21, 1898)], published with some alterations in *Zhixin bao* 知新報 55, June 9, 1898. Liang obviously had not carefully read the article in the *Guowen bao*, which does not attribute the Frankenstein monster reference to Wolseley.

140 Dan Zhengping misquotes and then misreads this phrase. He quotes the 曾侯紀澤譯其名謂之睡獅 without the 謂 and then reads it as “translated its name sleeping lion” [into Frankenstein], *Wan Qing minzuzhuyi yu wenxue zhuanxing*, 126.

for a long time, it had corroded and it had been something else that had stung. If it does not get a new mechanism, then this Frankenstein will sleep long without ever waking up. How sad.”

Distressed-About-The-Times had heard all this very clearly. He silently thought about it and then, alarmed and excited, he exclaimed: “This might be said about our 400 million people!”¹⁴¹

China only looks like a lion that might wake up, but its people are internally so “corroded” that there is no hope that this will ever happen. Even in exile, Liang maintained a public posture of supporting the Qing dynasty and asked for the reinstatement of the Emperor rather than the overthrow of the dynasty. In his reading, the corroded lion is not the government, but the people.

Taking up the same issue shortly thereafter in the same year in an essay about China being in danger of being cut up like a melon, Liang added: “Once Marquis Zeng made big words towards the English, saying China was a giant who was earlier asleep and now has awoken. That is why the English have this comparison with Frankenstein.”¹⁴² The English misjudge China in their fear of producing a Frankenstein. There is no danger of this, and Liang asserts that actually it is not the foreign powers who do the “cutting up of China like a melon,” but the Chinese government officials themselves.¹⁴³ The above-mentioned sleeping lion depicted on the version of the *Shiju tu* in Huang Zunxian’s house reflected this discussion.

The conceptual discussion of the state as an organism

We have hitherto focused on tracing and documenting the discussion on the platforms of metaphor and illustration. We see the emergence of a conceptual discussion on the agency of the state using many of the same components, but a different register,. Interestingly enough, all the efforts notwithstanding, in this more conceptual discussion neither the Western nor the Far Eastern discussions can deny their indebtedness to metaphor and image

141 Anon. (Liang Qichao 梁啟超), “Dongwu tan” 動物談 [Talking about animals], pt. 4, *Qingyi bao* 4, April 1899.

142 Liang Qichao, “Guafen weiyan” 瓜分危言, pt. 4, *Qingyi bao* 33.

143 Liang, “Guafen,” pt. 4, 1469.

In February 1900, Liang Qichao published his seminal essay “Shaonian Zhongguo shuo” (On Young China), which addressed the nature of the Chinese state:

Is our ‘State in the Center’ (China, Zhongguo) indeed old (=outdated, laoda 老大)?¹⁴⁴ Today, this is one of the big questions of the entire globe. If it is, then the ‘State in the Center’ is a state of the past—such states existed all over the world in antiquity, but nowadays they are gradually going under, and soon their fate will come to an end. If [China is] not [antiquated] then the ‘State in the Center’ is a state of the future, a state such as it has never appeared on the earth in the past, but which is now gradually emerging and will be further expanding in the future. To judge whether today’s ‘State in the Center’ is antiquated or young, we first have to clarify the meaning of the word ‘state’. 我中国其果老大矣乎？是今日全地球之一大问题也。如其老大也，则是中国为过去之国，即地球上昔本有此国，而今渐渐灭，他日之命运殆将尽也。如其非老大也，则是中国为未来之国，即地球上昔未现此国，而今渐发达，他日之前程且方长也。欲断今日之中国为老大耶？为少年耶？则不可不先明“国”字之意义。

The term “Zhongguo” (China) has two components, “middle” and “state.” In antiquity, this referred to the “states in the center”, that is the North China Plain. In the late nineteenth century, it was rarely used for “China.” China was either referred to by the name of the Qing dynasty, or a newer term with cultural overtones, *Zhonghua* (Flowery Center), from which we get the many references to the “flowery kingdom”. The “antiquated” or “old” empires would primarily refer to the international discussion about China and the Ottoman Empire of the time. Liang asks in the essay, whether there is still hope for the rejuvenation of this decaying body:

What, in general terms, is a state? It has a territory, and it has a people. To regulate matters of the people living in this territory and

144 The term, also used for China as the “old empire” in figure 20, refers to Western discussions about the modern fate of old empires such as the Ottoman Empire and China.

the territory in which they live, it sets up laws, and gets them accepted; it has sovereignty and law abeyance, every single one of its citizens [supports] sovereignty, and every single citizen abides [by its laws]. As a matter of general principle, only if all these conditions are fulfilled, can we speak of a fully established state. Fully established states have existed on this globe only in the last hundred years. To be 'fully established' is associated with the prime of life. Not yet being fully established, but gradually nearing it is associated with youth. This is why I declare in one phrase: The European states today are states in the prime of life, while our 'State of the Center' is a young one.

夫国也者，何物也？有土地，有人民，以居于其土地之人民，而治其所居之土地之事，自制法律而自守之；有主权，有服从，人人皆主权者，人人皆服从者。夫如是，斯谓之完全成立之国。地球上之有完全成立之国也，自百年以来也。完全成立者，壮年之事也。未能完全成立而渐进于完全成立者，少年之事也。故吾得一言以断之曰：欧洲列邦在今日为壮年国，而我中国在今日为少年国。

The "Young China", which Liang represents as the "Youth of Young China", will replace the old and outdated empire. China never actually was a state.

Generally speaking, although in olden times the State in the Center [-China-] had the *name of a state*, it had not completed the *form of a state*. At times, it was the state of a clan, sometimes that of a tribal chief, of fiefs, feudal lords or an autocratic ruler, and although these are all variants, most important is that as far as the essence of a state is concerned, if they had one part, they lacked another. [...] How then could our 'State in the Center' have ever had a state? It only had dynasties!¹⁴⁵ 夫古昔之中国者，虽有

145 Liang Qichao, "Shaonian Zhongguo shuo" 少年中国说 [On Young China], (Feb. 10, 1900),

国之名，而未成国之形也。或为家族之国，或为酋长之国，或为诸侯封建之国，或为一王专制之国。虽种类不一，要之，其于国家之体质也，有其一部而缺其一部…且我中国畴昔，岂尝有国家哉？不过有朝廷耳！

In other segments of this article, he develops the state/body metaphor in an evolutionist context, comparing historical stages with stages of the body's growth. In short: issues debated in cartoons and similes were paralleled and followed by discussions on a more conceptual level, often by the same authors.

By 1900, Liang Qichao became interested in the work of Johan Kaspar Bluntschli (1808-1881), whose relevant works were available in translation in Japan. Bluntschli's theory of the "organic unity" of the "state" conceptualizes and systematizes approaches that were available in Europe, and in particular in the German-speaking world, since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Bluntschli's doctrine saw the state's "organic" nature, which went hand in hand with a critique of Rousseau's notion of a *contrat social*, in the people's patriotic subordination to the overall goals of the state.¹⁴⁶ While Bluntschli was willing to accept some entities as states that lacked such a unity of will among the citizens, Liang went further. China was not a state and only might become one if the demands of the Young China activists were met. The Liang passage quoted above, Bluntschli's doctrine, and the Tse Tsan Tai cartoon in its various transformations— all address the question of the state's organic agency and the impersonation of this agency—or its absence. The litmus test for the existence of a true Chinese state is the mindset of the people. If they are asleep and lack patriotic commitment, there is no Chinese state with an organic agency.

Bluntschli is clearly the author with the deepest impact on the formation of the concept of the state in East Asia between 1880 and 1910.¹⁴⁷ After 1902, Liang switched completely to Bluntschli's etatist model and from then

in *Liang Qichao quanji* 梁啟超全集 [Collected works of Liang Qichao], ed. Zhang Pinxing 張品興 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe 1999), 1:410.

146 Yong Lei, *Auf der Suche nach dem modernen Staat: die Einflüsse der allgemeinen Staatslehre Johann Caspar Bluntschlis auf das Staatsdenken Liang Qichaos*, [In search of the modern state: The influence of Johan Caspar Bluntschli's theory of the state] (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010), chap. 2, 95-116.

147 Cheng Kuangmin 鄭匡民, *Liang Qichao qimeng sixiang de Dongxue beijing* 梁啟超啟蒙思想的東學背景 [The Japanese Learning background to Liang Qichao's enlightenment thought] (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 2003), chapter 3.

on, various reform media outlets published articles using the conceptual framework he offered. In a fine summary of Bluntschli's "organic theory of the state", one of the early and most influential reform papers published by Chinese students in Japan, the *Zhejiang chao* 浙江潮 (Zhejiang upsurge), introduced its readers to this new theory:

However, one may say that a state is similar to an organism in these [above-mentioned characteristics], but to think it is a full organism is completely inadmissible in this time of advanced thinking about the state. Why? Because the state's existence and development depends completely on the agency of human beings (全賴人類之作用); it is not able to exist and develop like other organisms by means of its internal powers. Therefore it is acceptable to say that some aspects of the state are similar to those of an organism, which does not mean that one can take [the state] altogether as an organism. In summary, the most appropriate and reasonable explanation is that the state is not an aggregate of constituent elements; it is not an organism, but merely similar to an organism and it has organic characteristics.¹⁴⁸

雖然，以國家有此等性質而似有集體，則可。若以為全然之有機體，則在近日國家思想發達之時代，所必不認也。何則？該國家之生存發達，全賴人類之作用，非若有機之物能以自己固有之力生存而發達也。故謂國家之或點似有機之或點，則可，非能全以此為有機體也。要之，國家者非分子集合體，非有機體，惟似有集體，具有有機的性質，是實最適當最合理之說。

The organism metaphor is also much present in the social-Darwinist writings of sociologist Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), who was crucial

148 "Organic theory [sic] of the state" 國家有機體說, in Zhen Kui 斟葵 "Xin mingci shiyi" 新名詞釋義 [New concepts explained], *Zhejiang chao* 浙江潮 2 (March 18, 1903). See Pan Guangzhe 潘光哲, "Bolunzhili yu Liang Qichao: sixiang mailuo de kaocha" 伯倫知理與梁啟超: 思想脈絡的考察 [Bluntschli and Liang Qichao: An investigation of hidden intellectual connections], in *Liang Qichao yu jindai Zhongguo shehui wenhua* 梁啟超與近代中國社會文化 [Liang Qichao and society and culture in modern China], ed. Li Xisuo 李喜所 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 2005), 295-301.

for the formation of evolutionary thinking in East Asian politics. State and evolutionism, are merged in this image. In 1906, Liang Qichao summarized his thinking about the state in a terse formula, which combines the state-as-organism and social-Darwinism by placing the state into the jungle:

The state is an organism. (Note 2:) That is, as an organism, it cannot but follow the general rule of living matter and exist in the jungle of the survival of the fittest. 國家者，有機體也。（注二）即為有機體，則不得不循生物質公例，以竟生存於優勝劣敗之林。¹⁴⁹

While Bluntschli was very explicit in saying that this explanation used a metaphor with limited applicability, as opposed to an organism or the collective organisms of bees and ants explored by some of his contemporaries, the state's organic quality hinged on the quality of its citizens (including its officials) as visible in their conscious patriotic subordination of their personal interests to that of the state. In a pragmatic turn, he also accepted states that did not really fulfill this criterion. For Liang Qichao, however, a state is an organism only if this criterion is met. Liang's state is not protected by Bluntschli's international law, but has to survive in the jungle where only the fittest survive.

As we see from both Bluntschli and Liang Qichao, the conceptual discussion on the nature of the state remains much indebted to the discussions on the other platforms of metaphor and image. As a general rule, the conceptual discussion would seem to follow, rather than precede them, and borrow their language and metaphors. This would suggest that the main platform for a public discussion of such an important body as the state is indeed the action-oriented metaphor and the cartoon, and that their parameters become the framework for a more conceptual discussion.

The use of the body metaphor to discuss the state has several Chinese antecedents. However, traditionally, the metaphor focused on the division of labor between the ruler and his ministers, which was likened to that of the head or heart to the organs of the body. Only rarely did it

149 Liang Qichao, 梁啟超. "Kaiming zhuanzhi lun" 開明專制論 [On Enlightened Despotism], in *Xinmin congbao* 新民叢報 [Reform of the Citizen Miscellany] 74-75, 1906. Reprint in *Liang Qichao quanji* 梁啟超全集 [Complete works of Liang Qichao], vol. 2 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1999), 1451-86.

address the organic agency of the state body.¹⁵⁰ However, no trace of a conscious and direct link with this familiar metaphor can be seen in the writings by the China-focused authors studied here. As in many other areas, the promise and authority of the foreign dispensation was such that it prompted a wholesale adoption of the new, rather than a mix of inherited and new features.

The Shiju tu, cultural brokers and contact zones

We finally return to the 1899 cartoon with which we started. Alerted to the transcultural flow of the metaphor and imagery of a “nation asleep,” we will now explore the background of the author, Tse Tsan Tai, in an effort to understand his qualification and role in this exchange.

Tse Tsan Tai was a Christian Australian of Chinese descent. His father had been active since the 1850s in a strongly anti-Manchu organization—later referred to by Tse as the “Chinese Independence Party of Australia”¹⁵¹—and a member of the Chinese Masonic Society.¹⁵² Tse Tsan Tai seems also to have been active in both associations. After his family moved to Hong Kong in 1887, Tse was educated at the English language Queens College and, after graduation, entered the colonial government service. The language of his written communication was English, but he could communicate orally in Cantonese.

150 In the military context, the dependency on the “people” being of one mind is sometimes stressed. Advising the king against a military strategy that relied on finding the right moment, knowing the terrain and observing the opponents manoeuvres, Xunzi said: “No. The general rule in antiquity as I have heard it is that the basis of using soldiers for warfare lies in unifying the people. [...] If the six horses [in front of the imperial carriage, R.W.] are not in harmony, [even a charioteer as capable as] Caofu will not be able to get far. When gentry and people are not closely knit [even sage rulers such as] Tang and Wu will not be sure of their victory.” Xunzi, chapter “Yi bing” 議兵 [Discussing the military], *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1988), 265-266. According to Xunzi, military strength depends on the people being “closely knit” for a common goal, but our late Qing discussions do not take this option of linking with past discussions. For a study of early Chinese state metaphor, see Rudolf G. Wagner, “Treating the Body Politic. Political Aspects of the Medical Metaphor in China,” in *The Body Metaphor*, ed. Susan Richter (Heidelberg: Springer, forthcoming).

151 Tse Tsan Tai, *The Chinese Republic: Secret History of the Revolution* (Hong Kong: South China Morning Post), 1924, 7.

152 Rodney Noonan, “Grafton to Guangzhou: The Revolutionary Journey of Tse Tsan Tai,” *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 27, no.1-2 (2006): 103. On the Chinese freemasons in Australia, see John Fitzgerald, “Revolution and respectability: Chinese Masons in Australian History,” in *Connected Worlds. History in Transnational Perspective*, ed. Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake (Canberra: Australian National University E-Press, 2005), 89-110.

Tse developed close links to other Hong Kong figures with foreign educations, English as their primary language, and revolutionary propensities. One such figure was Ho Kai (He Qi, 何啓), whose critique of Marquis Zeng's article was discussed above. Tse Tsan Tai was also in close contact with foreigners known for their strong commitment to reform in China, such as the Protestant missionary and journalist Timothy Richard, the *London Times* correspondent G. E. Morrison, Thomas Reid, the editor of the *China Mail*, and Chesney Duncan, the editor of the *Hong Kong Telegraph*. Both Hong Kong papers published Tse's manifestoes and letters.¹⁵³ Tse also maintained close contact to Japanese government officials,¹⁵⁴ as well as southern Chinese revolutionaries in Japan, such as Liang Qichao.

Together with Yeung Ku-Wan (Yang Quyun 楊衢雲) (1861-1901), also an English-speaking Chinese with missionary education,¹⁵⁵ Tse had been instrumental in setting up a revolutionary association with the cover name *Furen wen she* 輔仁文社 (Society for the Promotion of Benevolence). The group operated in Hong Kong and counted some sixteen members in 1890. When, in 1895, Sun Yat-sen created the *Xingzhong hui* 興中會 (Revive China Society), the *Furen wen she* joined forces with it. Tse and Yeung set up secret headquarters for this new organization. When a chairman was to be elected, Yeung—to Sun's irritation—became chairman, but had to flee to South Africa after the failed Canton uprising of 1895. After another failed Canton uprising, this time in 1902, Tse also left the ranks of active revolutionaries and co-founded the English language newspaper that to this day is the main source of information for Chinese members of the Hong Kong elite, the *South China Morning Post*. For some years, Tse was the paper's co-editor. He later wrote a very informative memoir of his days as a revolutionary that also details the background of his growing animosity toward Sun Yat-sen.¹⁵⁶ Feng Ziyou, whose memoir is one of

153 A Chinese Sufferer (= Tse Tsan Tai), "Manifesto of the People to the Emperor of China," *Hong Kong Telegraph*, May 30, 1895, 2. Tse Tsan Tai, "A Chinese Protest," *Hong Kong Telegraph* May 30, 1894, 2. Duncan wrote a biographical sketch of Tse. Chesney Duncan, "Tse Tsan Tai: his political & journalistic career: a brief record," (London: Globe Encyclopaedia Co., 1917).

154 In his memoir about his revolutionary activities, Tse claimed that he enjoyed the "secret support of the Japanese government through the Japanese Consul" for their attempted uprising in Canton in 1895. Tse, *Chinese Republic*, 9.

155 Hsueh, C., "Sun Yat-sen, Yang Ch'ü-yün, and the Early Revolutionary Movement in China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 19, no.3 (1960): 307.

156 See Tsan Tai Tse (Xie Zuantai) 謝繼泰, *The Chinese Republic. Secret History of the Revolution* (Hongkong: South China, Morning Post, Ltd., 1924), 15. Dates advanced in PRC studies

the main sources for these early revolutionary groups, describes Tse's activities in some detail.

From this brief biographical sketch, which includes Tse's transcultural and translanguing entanglements, it is evident that Tse, as well as his closest associates, not only spoke Cantonese and English, but also read and wrote mostly in English; Tse lived in an important "contact zone" in Hong Kong, where a strong physical, political and media presence of foreigners brought everyday exposure to and interaction with foreign ideas, institutions and practices. Tse himself and his associates from different "Western" and "Chinese" backgrounds can be described as "cultural brokers".¹⁵⁷

Through their upbringing and education these cultural brokers were familiar with the international discussion about China, the metaphors used to pinpoint her actual situation, and the imagery in which it was presented. They—and this includes people such as Boulger, Reid, Richards, Duncan or Morrison—felt a strong commitment to China and wished to contribute to a speedy reform of the Chinese political system, be it through writings, organizational activities or even underground actions. Their cultural mediation was not reduced to words and ideas; they also drew on their intense transcultural exposure and competence to make available in the Chinese context foreign forms of organization (mostly emulating anarchist models) and political propaganda (such as the *Shiju tu*).¹⁵⁸ While in a sense these cultural brokers were outsiders both in China and in foreign communities, their strong identification with China's progress, their background and their language skills secured them an inordinately large impact in both directions.

Those with a Chinese background like Tse Tsan Tai could bank on a shared and strong commitment to China with many—and often wealthy—overseas Chinese. Their role as cultural brokers who were active on the fringes of

are ignorant of the information provided by Tse himself and are based on Feng Ziyou 馮自由, *Geming yishi* 革命逸史 [Reminiscences of the revolution] (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Press, 1977), 62. Feng reprints the cartoon and claims it was drafted in July, 1898, that is, before the coup that ended the Hundred Days of 1898. The date on the print itself confirms Tse's own dating. See, for example, Wang Yunhong 王雲紅, "Youguan 'shiju tu' de jige wenti 有關<時局圖>的幾個問題, *Lishi jiaoxue* 历史教学 9(2005): 71.

157 The term has been coined to describe the role of "natives" familiar with "white" culture that allowed them to help with the communication between the two. It is here used without the random ethnic marker for people who fulfil this role, independent of their ethnic and linguistic background.

158 At the time, this term was still exclusively used for Christian missionary work. However, the *Shiju tu*, together with its inscriptions, must in substance be clearly be defined as propaganda.

Chinese society allowed them to mediate between these overseas Chinese communities and the Chinese reforms. Their Western friends networked similarly among people critical of official China policies in their home countries. In very practical terms, a large part of the “revolutionary” activities in China were financed with contributions from overseas Chinese and supported by Westerners with a strong commitment to China.

The term “cultural broker” draws on elements from the discussion of cultural contact, but, most importantly, offers an alternative to other terms while challenging their implications as simplistic. Two different sets of terms have been used for the type of persons described here depending on their appurtenance. In the Chinese case, “comprador”, with its derivatives of “comprador ideology,” “comprador patriotism” and the like were widely used to describe/denounce the “native” actively interacting with the foreigner and his/her presumable lack of revolutionary or patriotic fervor. In the context of the Indian subcontinent, however, various compounds containing “colonial” or “Anglo” were used.¹⁵⁹ For the foreigners engaged in the reform of the polities of East or South Asia, education, translation or other cultural work, the standard terms derive from “imperialism” such as in “cultural imperialism.”¹⁶⁰ Both are derived from a linear reductionism that is based on a basic imperialism/nation state dichotomy. In this logic the citizen of an “imperialist” state is defined as an imperialist whatever he or she thinks or does—with the exception of card-carrying revolutionaries who are praised for “betraying” the (bourgeois) class and (imperialist) state of their origin. The true “native” is anti-imperialist, revolutionary and patriotic. Otherwise, he is bought or brainwashed into becoming a traitor to these lofty aspirations. These closed constructs need elaborate explicatory schemes to explain the overwhelming evidence against their analytical viability and explanatory power. They are utterly inappropriate for a description of, for example, Central Asian Buddhist monks coming to China as transmitters of Buddhist ideas and practices. Both “native” and “foreign” cultural brokers, however, have to deal with suspicions among contemporaries as to their loyalty. The economic metaphor of “broker” is chosen because the life (and often livelihood) of a broker hinges on the willingness of one side to “sell” and the other side to “buy” without instruments of power being wielded and, in the case of cultural goods, even money often being of marginal importance. The broker must know both sides well enough to see what is available on the one side that might be of interest to the other.

159 Jung-Fang Tsai, “The Predicament of the Comprador Ideologists: He Qi (Ho Kai, 1859-1914) and Hu Liyuan (1847-1916),” *Modern China* 7, no. 2 (April 1981), 191-197.

160 This has been for many years the standard term used, for example, for the founder and editor of China’s most important early newspaper, Ernest Major, in PRC publications.

The group discussed in this paper enjoyed the advantages of high information access through newspapers, letters, and travelers; dense contacts with media in different languages, political activists from different countries, and state officials from different nations; and, last but not least, the protection offered by the fact that Hong Kong (and, to a large degree, Shanghai) were outside the jurisdiction of the Qing court. Places such as Hong Kong, Shanghai, or Yokohama are properly qualified as cultural contact zones for the Chinese-speaking world. These cultural brokers themselves might be described as living, breathing contact zones.

The notion of the “contact zone” has originally been suggested by anthropologist Mary Louise Pratt to describe “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today.”¹⁶¹ Her centerpiece was the letter written in Spanish in 1613 to King Philip III of Spain by an Andean convert to Christianity, who might have been an employee of the colonial administration. The contacts are there in terms of language, religion, position and addressee.

Contact zones such as Hong Kong or Shanghai between the 1860s and 1930s have important additional features. They differ from other places in the extreme imbalance between them and the Hinterland. This pertains particularly to media being published and distributed from there; to foreign media in many languages available for sale or subscription; to journalists, authors, translators, editors, and readers with multilingual qualifications and multicultural exposure; to entertainments that made them attractive for merchants to live, trade, and spend money there; to institutions that provide a modicum of “modern” platforms of political and cultural articulation and legal guarantees. Openly accessible to people living in the Hinterland, they become the sites where one can experience the West in the safe environment of a Chinese-speaking community; and, being openly accessible to trade, tourism, knowledge and information from overseas, they become the key link to the “world”.

These contact zones present a challenge to the popular notion of the “imagined community” that suggests a nation held together by simultaneous reading of the same papers. The public sphere, these contact zones show, is not of homogenous density, but is characterized by a deep split

161 Mary Louise Pratt, “Arts of the Contact Zone,” *Profession* 91 (1991): 33-40, and since reprinted many times.

between mostly coastal urban centers and the hinterland. Recalling the “dual economy” prevalent in many developing countries,¹⁶² the platforms of public articulation in the Chinese territory between 1860 and 1949, as well as contributors or recipients making use of these platforms, were to an extreme degree concentrated in Shanghai, and to a smaller extent in Hong Kong and Tientsin. Even after the explosive development of print media in the 1910s and 1920s in China, more than three quarters of all newspapers, journals and books appeared in Shanghai.

These contact zones also signal that the public sphere is not coterminous with the national space. In the Chinese case, the contact zones deftly straddle not the borders between two states but the border between China and the “world.” As port cities, they are connected to international communication lines (ships, cables) and are the place where information and opinion between the Chinese territory and the world is exchanged. Their populations largely consist of Chinese immigrants (like Tse Tsan Tai), and to a smaller degree immigrants from other countries that also speak and read other languages.¹⁶³ The platforms of articulation in these contact zones come in different languages, and the contributors and readers have different principal languages. These sub-communities might each have a higher level of inside rather than outside communication. However, multilingualism on different levels is the rule in these contact zones, which makes it possible for the multilingual and multiethnic communities within them to communicate with each other and form a public sphere in which they all participate, albeit to different degrees and intensity. Into the public sphere of these contact zones flow opinions and information from all over the world as well as from different parts of the Hinterland. In turn, media products from these contact zones recycle this condensed information and opinion (as well as entertainment matter) and send it to the Hinterland, but also, increasingly, to a wide network of overseas contacts. At any given moment these flows are asymmetrical, in this particular case with a vastly larger flow coming in from abroad than going out. The *Shiju tu* is a good example. It was produced in Hong Kong, but was conceptually and iconographically linked to discussions and illustrations in Europe, the US, the English language media in Hong Kong and the Treaty Ports.

162 For a short overview of this concept and its history, see Gary Fields, “Dual Economy,” (Working Papers 17, Cornell University ILR School, 2007), accessed Feb. 28, 2011, <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1016&context=workingpapers>.

163 Both Hong Kong Island and the area where the Shanghai International Settlement developed were uninhabited before the Opium War, after which they became colony and Treaty Port respectively. In this sense, the Chinese moving there were as much immigrants as those coming from elsewhere.

The *Shiju tu* cartoon draws on a translingual and transcultural arsenal of concepts, metaphors, and images that, over the course of the nineteenth century, had become a shared global rhetoric. The cartoon makes this amply clear. Its allegorical expressions are strongly integrated into what was already at that time a widely shared transcultural imagery in the West and Japan. Tse Tsan Tai applied this imagery to China, while others used it for places such as Germany, the Ottoman Empire, or India.

The inscriptions on the animals are only in English and they presuppose a familiarity with political events and their articulation by political leaders that could only be gained by regularly reading the English language press. The implied reader, who was to make sense of this and other similar allusions, was a person sharing the translingual and transcultural experience of Tse Tsan Tai. The recasting, elimination of bilingualism, and addition of commentary in later editions show the efforts to expand the implied audience.

In other words, our cartoon fits the model of a transcultural diffusion: it is published in one of the key contact zones; it makes use of the new media of the newspaper, and even the printed image; its author is a model of a cultural broker, someone committed to the betterment of China, who is at the same time fully at home in the international discussion about China; it addresses the asymmetry in agency and power and tries to energize people to cope with it; and it appears at a moment that is critical for the country, when such an image could have sizeable impact on forming people's mental image of their nation's perilous state .

Tse Tsan Tai's cartoon and the flurry of references to China being asleep and divided up like a melon had been published outside the Qing Court's jurisdiction after the debacle that ended the 1898 'Hundred Days Reform.' It adopted the iconography of depicting international politics that had been developing in Europe during the nineteenth century and applied it to China.

Another example, which addresses the same theme and was published within a month of the *Shiju tu*, comes from the satirical journal *Puck* in New York. Published in August 1899, it shows Uncle Sam holding a trade treaty with China in his hand whilst blocking the Powers who are, scissors in hands, ready to divide up China. The Powers are England, Russia, France, Italy, and Germany with Austria in the background. Japan, however, is not part of the group (Figure 18).¹⁶⁴

164 J. S. Pughe, "Putting his foot down," *Puck* XLVI no. 1172, Aug. 23, 1899.

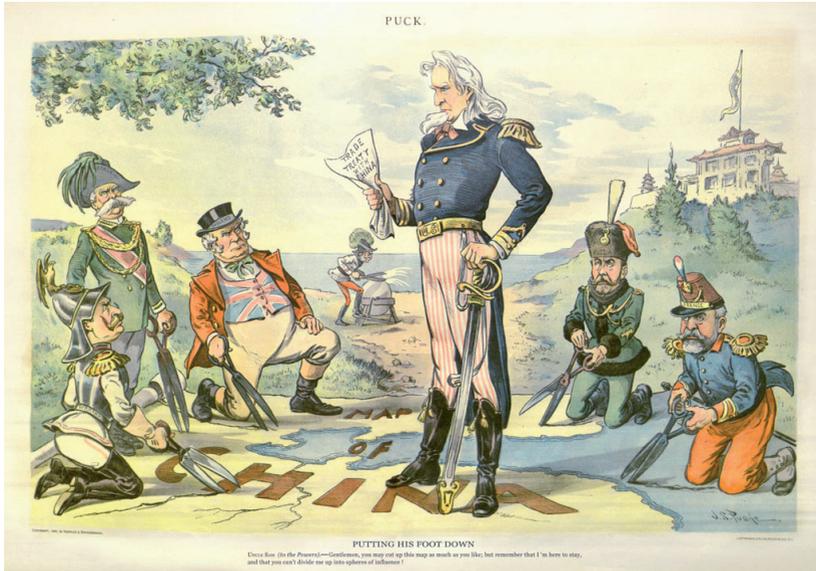


Fig. 18: J. S. Pughe (1870-1909), *Putting his foot down. Uncle Sam (to the Powers): Gentlemen, you may cut up this map as much as you like; but remember, I'm here to stay. And that you can't divide me up into spheres of influence, colored lithograph, 1899.*

In this line-up, China is just the dead map to be cut up by the Powers; it has no agency of its own. The US commands center stage and establishes a new obstacle for the Powers: its new trade treaty with the Qing dynasty secured the right to trade over the entire Qing territory. The US now had a vested commercial interest in preventing China from being cut up. In this moment of ultimate weakness, the territorial integrity of China is maintained by the antagonism between the Powers and the Americans. This was to play a significant role in a mechanism that the Qing were able to use skillfully and very successfully.

Following the foreign military intervention in 1900 to lift the siege of the Peking legations by the Boxers and Muslim rebels, the court, which had supported the anti-foreign action, fled Peking. In a dramatic reversal, it accepted the proposal from a number of high Han Chinese officials to implement a wide-ranging “reform of governance” Xinzheng. This included the reform (1902) and later abolishment (1905) of the Imperial Examination System 科舉 (Keju); reforms in the schools and the military; a fully-fledged Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and eventually, the first steps toward a

constitution and a parliament. While the government tried hard to keep the public discussion under control, it had no control over the key transcultural contact zones such as Hong Kong, Shanghai or Yokohama, where, since 1901, a veritable media explosion had been taking place that swept newspapers, periodicals and even images into those areas of China that were furthest from these centers. These media quickly abandoned the reluctance still visible in Tse Tsan Tai's cartoon and took on the court directly.

We will now follow the spread of the discussion of "China asleep" and "China awakening" in the Chinese language press after 1900. Compared to texts using the metaphor, images of political cartoons were perceived by authorities, as well as activists, as having the greater virulence and public accessibility. As a consequence more efforts were made to control them, but also to distribute them.

In 1904, the *Alarming Bell News* 警鐘日報 (*Jingzhong ribao*), the paper that succeeded the aforementioned *Alarming news about Russian actions*, followed its predecessor in its political focus as well as its use of cartoons. Edited also by Cai Yuanpei, the paper likewise alerted its readers to the Russian threat to the north, and the attitude of both China's government and people towards this threat (Figure 19).

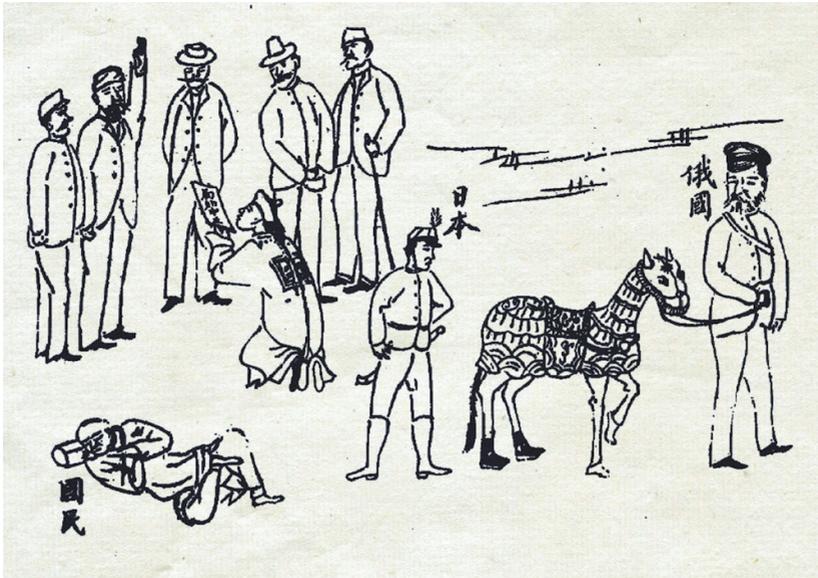


Fig. 19: *Taking a Neutral Stance* 局外中立, 1904.

Russia (on the right) walks off with a preciously adorned horse (Manchuria, part of China's territory), while Japan (in the middle) looks on in irritation. The Chinese Manchu official kneels in front of the foreign powers with an assurance that he will take a neutral stance in this conflict, which was heading towards war.¹⁶⁵ The Chinese "nation/citizens", *guomin*, in the left lower corner are firmly asleep while Russia walks away with their property.

During the "Reform of Governance" period from 1901 through 1909, the metaphor and image of "China asleep" spread further into mainstream media. To deal with the precipitous political changes and accommodate the growing public interest in them these media started absorbing much of the rhetoric, as well as the earlier reform papers' mix of image and text. The *Shishi bao* 時事報 (China Times) was among the first of these "big" newspapers to make use of cartoons beginning with a cartoon supplement.¹⁶⁶ In one of the early issues, it published a cartoon about the sleep disease among the people of a Sub-Saharan state which contained a harsh pun on the contemporary situation in China (Figure 20).

165 The term on the writ in the hands of the Qing official, 局外中立, is a translation for "neutrality" that Japanese scholars of Dutch learning had produced by the 1860s. It is made up of two character pairs, each of which had been used as a translation for different aspects of "neutrality". The first is from W.A.P. Martin's translation of Wheaton's *Elements of International Law*, the second from Nishi Amane's 1868 summary of the lectures on international law of his Leiden teacher Vissering, *Fisuserinku-shi bankoku kōhō*. For details, see Douglas Howland, "Japanese Neutrality in the Nineteenth Century: International Law and Trans-Cultural Process," *Transcultural Studies* 1, 2010, 4-7.

166 The China Times had been published in Shanghai since the end of 1907. The supplement was first called *Shishibao tuhua xunbao* 時事報圖畫旬報 [China Times Illustrated Weekly], and was soon renamed *Tuhua xinwen* 圖畫新聞 [Illustrated News].



Fig. 20: Are they awaking from their deep slumber or are they not? 睡魔醒未, 1907.

The text reads:

The people of the state of Congo (Kongke) in Africa are asleep all day and never get anything done to the point that the race is deteriorating and about to come to an end. A European doctor found a method to cure this and now has already cured several dozen people.

Note: in the East of Asia there is also a state, the people of which are asleep all day as if drunk or in a dream. Recently, as they suddenly started to come to their senses, they were suppressed by an autocratic faction [in government]. Their anger cannot find expression and they get depressed.

Now there are six medical specialists of the highest caliber curing [the sleep disease], but it is unknown whether they will be able to achieve their goal.¹⁶⁷

The “note” is a comment on a news story that featured in the *Illustrated News*. The illustration shows a very Chinese environment with a *kang* brick bed and even some Chinese features and dress. The sleepers are in various stages of sleeping and awakening: from the sleeping pair at the far end to the chirpy fellow sitting on the bed and waving near the bottom of the image. The doctor is European in dress and physical features. The “note’s” pun alludes to the efforts of a group of five high officials, who toured Europe in search for a possible model for a Chinese constitution, for which there was a rising clamor. Their report had just been made public with Wu Tingfang, who had edited it, perhaps as a sixth contributor.¹⁶⁸ The persons “suddenly” waking up, only to find themselves suppressed, are a probable reference to 1898 reformers such as Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei. The association of the “country in the East of Asia” with a country in Sub-Saharan Africa, such as the Congo, which is considered “backward”, suggests that China is just as “backward.”

The most important among these “big”, “revolutionary” papers was the *Shenzhou ribao* 神州日報 (National Herald), which began publishing in Shanghai in 1907.¹⁶⁹ Its extensive advertising section shows a substantial commercial viability that was further buttressed by sales of over 10 000 copies a day. Its founding editor was Yu Youren 于右任 (1879-1964), one of the most politically active journalists at the time, who was also a member of Sun Yat-sen’s political organization, the aforementioned Tongmeng hui. Resisting efforts by Sun Yat-sen to turn *National Herald* into a party organ from the outset the paper retained an independent but quite “revolutionary” position in strong opposition to the Qing court, and picked up the use of political cartoons from the advocacy papers of Cai Yuanpei and others.

167 For more on this cartoon, see Yu Shiling 俞士玲, “Wan Qing <Tuhua xinwen>zhong 1907 nian de zhengti gaige” 晚清《图画新闻》中一九〇七年的政体改革(图) [Reform of the political system in the late Qing *Illustrated News*], accessed Feb 20, 2011, http://cathay.ce.cn/history/200908/17/t20090817_19799922.shtml. Prof. Yu was kind enough to share a copy of the image with me.

168 See Zhu Jinyuan 朱金元, “Shilun Qing mo wu dachen chuyang” 試論清末五大臣出洋 [A study on the political investigation abroad of five ministers in the late Qing dynasty], *Xueshu yuekan* 學術月刊5(1987), 68-75.

169 It was published until 1947. Its revolutionary credentials and credibility made it a take-over target for Yuan Shikai, and later for the Japanese occupation force.

The *National Herald's* main cartoonist, who in 1910 also became editor of the *Shenzhou huabao* (The National Herald Illustrated), was Ma Xingchi 馬星馳 (1873-1934). A man from the (largely Muslim) Hui community in Jining, Shandong Province, Ma Xinchu moved to Shanghai in 1893 to earn a living by selling paintings. A year later he was busy in Canton helping to prepare the uprising against the Manchu, which Tse Tsan Tai and his friends were planning with Sun Yat-sen. It is likely that he met Tse Tsan Tai, but we have no direct evidence. When their plan was leaked to the Qing governor and the arrests started, he left China with Sun Yat-sen. Ma seems to have spent most of the following years in Europe. It is reported that he became the representative of Chinese Painting at the Paris World Fair in 1900, and it is likely that he used this opportunity to familiarize himself with Western painting technique in general, and with the coding and drawing techniques of political cartoons in particular.

When he returned to Shanghai around 1904, his experience and revolutionary credentials made him one of the first Chinese professional cartoonists. He had a strong impact on the viewing habits of newspaper readers and the next generation of cartoonists.¹⁷⁰ He kept abreast of developments in the cartoon world, as can be seen from his many cartoons for the *Shenzhou huabao*, which are explicitly said to have been done “after” a Western model.

For the first anniversary of the *National Herald*, Ma Xingchi drew a programmatic cartoon about the contemporary situation: China in the world, the Chinese government, the foreign Powers, the Chinese people, and the newspaper itself (Figure 21).

170 This sketch is largely based on the information provided on “Jining personalities” in the Shandong sheng ziliaoku [Materials on Shandong Province], an official provincial website, accessed on Nov. 17, 2010, <http://sd.infobase.gov.cn/bin/mse.exe?seachword=&K=a&A=84&rec=1350&run=13>. While information is given there on his involvement in the preparations for the Canton uprising and his close contacts with Sun Yat-sen, no connection with Tse Tsan Tai is mentioned. I have not verified the information on his role in Paris.



Fig. 21: [Ma] Xingchi 馬星馳, *The First to Awaken from the Great Dream* 大夢先覺. In *Commemoration of the First Anniversary of the Shenzhou Ribao*, 1908.

The action takes place on “sacred” Chinese soil, *Shenzhou*, and under the brilliant sun of “civilization,” *wenming*, that shines on the present. The Westerner on the left is entering the sacred place with a “greedy look” on his face, while the Manchu official on the right is just “idly standing by.” The actual owners of the place, the Chinese citizens in the middle, *guomin*, are deeply asleep and quite oblivious to both, the threat to their land and the light of civilization. The first to awaken to this light and the country’s situation is the press, particularly the *Shenzhou ribao*. The journalist with the writing brush inscribed “Newspaper” is sitting next to the citizen “loudly appealing” to him to wake up and do something. The critique of the paper, as seen from the tip of the writing brush, is directed against the Manchu government rather than the foreigners.

Shortly after this cartoon's publication, Ma Xinchu drew a series of small cartoons illustrating China's crisis. In the middle, under the heading "All day dozing in confused dreams" sits a man in deep sleep (Figure 22).



Fig. 22: Ma Xingchi 馬星馳, All day dozing in confused dreams, 1908. The sleeping man is defined as "The "Organizations of China."

The first organizations of teachers and students had just formed, but even these potential nuclei of concerted social action did not live up to their promise.

Ma routinely used the sleep metaphor to illustrate the lack of popular resistance to the railway concessions that foreigners sought in China. In the following version, he combined the notions of "old", "big [giant]", "Manchu official," and "sleep" (Figure 23).



Fig. 23: Ma Xingchi 馬星馳, *The Danger of Foreigners Using Railways to Invade China*, 1908.

Foreigners use railway lines to get into the Chinese “melon” (= territory) while “the old [=outdated] empire” is asleep on top of it. Russia, Japan and England already have control over railways, and England as the biggest and most powerful holds the knife with which to divide up the melon. Russia on the left is defiant and stared down by both England (with top hat) and Japan on the right.

The same theme is treated in a different cartoon, with “giant”, “Manchu official” and “sleep” in prominence (Figure 24).



Fig. 24: Ma Xingchi 馬星馳, The Expansion of Railways across the body of a sleeping Manchu official, 1910.

Although much of the popular anger, which eventually led to the dissolution of the Qing dynasty in 1911, focused on the Court's handling of railway concessions, critics continued to claim that the nation was asleep. The next example stems from one of the flurry of political advocacy papers that sprang up during the transition period between 1910 and 1912, most of which made ample use of the newly discovered propaganda tool—the political cartoon—by adding illustrated supplements or by separately publishing an illustrated paper (Figure 25).



Fig. 25: Qian Binghe 錢病鶴 (1879–1944), *Melon Theater*, 1912. Foreigners drape vines (railway lines) across the Chinese “melon” (= territory) while the officials and the people are asleep.

The sleep metaphor still comes with the promise of and the potential for waking up. Although the link of temporary and eternal sleep had already been explored by Gillray in the text accompanying his “*Britannia Asleep*” cartoon, and Liang Qichao had played with the idea in his comment on the rotting Frankenstein lion, death is a very radical and hopeless variant of sleep and carries a different metaphorical meaning. In Gillray’s cartoon *Britannia* is to be put to eternal sleep, meaning that the *Amiens Treaty* with France was the first step in a threatened invasion of England by

Napoleon and the end of the sovereign British state. In his depressive and well-hidden comment quoted above, Liang Qichao did not identify the decrepit Frankenstein lion with the Manchu dynasty, but with the 300 million Chinese people. They lacked the wherewithal to ever wake up. This line of thinking rendered any further “revolutionary” action meaningless, and therefore ended up with little traction among reformers and revolutionists. The notion that the Chinese state might be, for all practical purposes, considered dead, held more potential. Again, it was Ma Xingchi who explored this option by looking once more at the spheres of influence that foreign powers carved out of the gigantic Chinese territory (Figure 26).

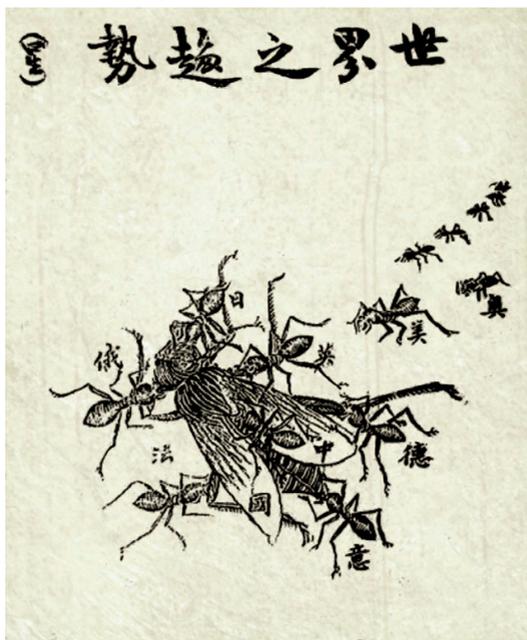


Fig. 26: Ma Xingchi 馬星馳, *The Situation of the World*, 1908.

China is the gigantic dead fly in the middle, and the ants—Russia and Japan—are nibbling away at the head in the north; England is at the fat middle of the Yang-tse valley; France, Italy and Germany are in the southern parts, while the US and Austria are on their way to join in the feast with some smaller ants following. If the fly were alive, it would have no trouble from the ants, nor would it pose any threat to them. On the other hand, the ants have no way of catching and killing a live fly. The fly died from internal causes.

Newspapers have a short shelf life and little of them remains in the memory of the readers. Three years after the previous cartoon, Ma felt free to use the same harrowing iconographic constellation in another more general cartoon on the Social-Darwinist notion of the survival of the fittest nation (Figure 27).



Fig. 27: Ma Xingchi 馬星馳, *The Weak Are the Flesh, the Strong Eat It* 弱肉強食, 1911.

A dead “mole cricket” is being cut apart by “ants”. The cricket died from internal causes, not because the ants killed it. Alive, this mole cricket would be out of the ants’ reach and they would not pose a threat to it.

The same paper used another potential emblem for China, the tiger, in a cartoon that offered a historical narrative of China’s past strength and present weakness (Figure 28).



Fig. 28: *A Look at China Now and in the Past*, *Shenzhou ribao* 神州日報, 1911.

The first image in the upper right corner, “China during the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors [17th and 18th century],” shows a roaring Chinese tiger rushing at the foreigners as they run. In the second image on the lower right side, “China during the reign of emperors Xianfeng and Tongzhi [first half of the 19th century]” the tiger sits immobile, and the unarmed foreigners are approaching it like children taunting him; in the third image on the top left side, “China of today”, the tiger still looks big, but the foreigners now treat it like the Frankenstein lion in the British Museum with its dead internal mechanism; the fourth image on the lower left side, “China in the future” shows each gleeful foreigner marching off with a part of the dead tiger. The cartoon suggests that China was not always passive and immobile; during the 18th century it was still dynamic and strong and easily kept the foreigners at bay. For unexplained but completely internal reasons, it then corroded from the inside and lost all agency. This memory of a different asymmetry in agency that favored China in the past exacerbates the criticism of China’s present-day internal conditions.

We observed earlier that the channels through which the ‘China asleep’ metaphor entered the Chinese language domain were a very small number of journals linked to Liang Qichao. The related depictions underwent a similar process. Again, an individual’s, namely Ma Xingchi’s, repeated use of this image in the very widely read *Shenzhou ribao* was crucial in adding

this image to the canon of symbolic images that were familiar at least to the politically articulate class of the few abovementioned contact zones and their surrounding areas.

In all of these depictions, China's weakness is self-inflicted. This is a widely shared assumption among Chinese reformers. China is a big country and no foreign power is honored with the credit of bringing about its present abysmal state. China's crisis is caused by the lethargy of a people disinterested in "national" issues, and a government (consisting mostly of officials who see it as their job to line their own pockets) afraid to confront foreign demands. This line of reasoning was one way of coping with the asymmetry of power between China and the Powers. According to it, the crisis was not caused by foreign powers that were intrinsically stronger than China, but by the corrosion of China's internal structures, which made the country easy prey for outsiders. Chinese descriptions attribute the same kind of internal cause to Great Britain's colonization of India. Although not yet articulated in this manner, the argument fits the later Stalinist mantra of Chinese Marxist historiography, which claims that external factors can only become effective if certain internal conditions are in place. At the same time, this line of reasoning opens a field of meaningful action for reformers and revolutionists who may dare to take on their own enfeebled government, but shy away from taking on the Powers, especially because the latter are also the source of the "civilization" towards which these rebels are trying to push their own polity.

As mentioned previously, the spectrum of interpretations of metaphors and images in the Chinese environment, as well as that of the envisaged or actually pursued action, remained largely within the broad parameters of the international debate and continuously interacted with it. This continuous interaction is not a particularly modern phenomenon, but can also be observed, for example, in the historical spread of Buddhist concepts, metaphors and iconic traditions (as well as practices) into the central, southern, southeastern, and East Asian regions.

The interpretation that the nation's sleep is not just prolonged by foreign interests—which we saw in Gillray and Sabatky—but foreign-induced is not part of the canon. Only during the last years of the Qing Dynasty do a few examples emerge that deviate from the canonical framework of the nation asleep metaphor and consensus that "China's sleep is self-inflicted" and engage with the "induced sleep" narratives. The reasons for this deviation are twofold: during the 1910s China took out massive foreign loans; it also increasingly emulated the foreign anti-opium movement,

which eventually led to the Chinese ban on opium consumption in 1906. This presented commentators and cartoonists with an opportunity to treat the foreign loans, or opium, which was associated with foreign imports from India and the Opium War, or both together, as foreign ways to keep the Chinese lion asleep.

I was able to locate only one example for such a charge, and it is nicely hidden in a story about a circus, which was published in the short-lived paper *Zouyan bao* in 1910:¹⁷¹

The Westerners say China is a sleeping lion. Saying a lion is asleep implies that the time will eventually come when it will wake up. When I confronted Westerners with this implication, they grinned and did not reply, and thus no one knows what is on their mind. Later I asked a lion trainer [for a Western circus, R.W.] for an explanation.

This trainer, himself a foreigner, then explains to the Chinese author that circus lion pups are given to a “mother dog” for feeding so that when they grew up, they “looked like lions but had the character of dogs, and it was very easy to train them to perform.” But for more daring experiments, like a man putting his head into such a lion’s mouth, the trainer would put a little opium into the lion’s food. This was gradually increased until, as the trainer explained:

...the lion was in a daze as if asleep, and would do all that was asked of him. If he would open his mouth and roar, it was only like talking in a dream, and he was quite unable to bite. He still looked like a lion, but no longer had the character of one; even the dog nature he had once acquired was gone. In this way, the lion sleeps forever and never wakes up. Your great country is certainly much bigger than a lion, but as to the extent to which you are willing to take poison, how would this be restricted to just taking opium?”

171 Originally in the *Zouyan bao* 鄒言報 newspaper, which Wang Kangnian edited between November 1910 and November 1911. Quoted in Shan Zhengping 單正平, “Jindai sixiang wenhua yujingde xingshi xingxiang” 近代思想文化語境中的醒獅形象 [The Awaken Lion Image in Modern Cultural Context], *Nankai daxue xuebao (Zhaxue shehuihexue ban)* 4 (2006): 32-33.

This parable gets close to explaining [what the Westerners have in mind]. Ai, how shocking. I only wished the Chinese would awaken to this insight!

The perception of a China asleep is not spontaneous but derived from a reading of Western assessments. “The Westerners all say China is asleep.” But, as this conspiratorial story has it, they also try to make sure that it stays this way. They do so cunningly: China looks like a lion, and it even roars like one, but inside it is in deep sleep, drugged with opium. This is one of the few texts to put the blame for China’s deplorable state on the secret action of foreigners. This, still rather indirect, claim adds a new twist to different strategies of coping with the asymmetry in agency, which we have extracted from earlier utterances and images.

There are many ways of coping with asymmetry, but while all sides have to deal with it in one way or the other, a basic difference remains between those on the opposing ends of the exchange or the relationship. Developing a strategy to deal with a sleeping China was not just a challenge for those committed to the country’s betterment, but also for the Powers, because the newcomers, Russia, Japan, Germany and Italy, all rushed to the table thinking in traditional colonial terms. The option of a partition of China was considered far too risky and too costly for the dominant British and their American allies. A flurry of conferences between 1898 and 1900 was designed to find a consensus for the Powers or to impose certain rules how to deal with China. The inscriptions on Tse’s animals, with which we began this study, were taken from these negotiations. Again, this Western perception of the prevailing asymmetry and of the options for coping with it finds its way into images. An American cartoon from 1900 may serve as an example (Figure 29).



Fig. 29: *The Real Trouble Will Come with the 'Wake'*, 1900.

This cartoon has a tight timeline. The Boxers and their Muslim allies had started the siege of the Peking legations in June. After heavy fighting, a relief contingent consisting of units from different Western countries broke through to the city and eventually overcame the Boxer resistance on August 14. The Manchu Court had already fled. This news did not make it into the August 15 issue of *Puck*, but the defeat of the Boxers, who had the support from the Court, had been palpable.

For all practical purposes, Peking was occupied, the Court was on the run and China was as “dead” as the dragon in this image. The title of the cartoon contains a pun. There had been much talk in the past about the sleeping and awakening of China. Now with the death of the dragon, a “wake” ceremony is called for, but instead of the wake’s participants being in silent mourning, they confront each other fully armed, especially Russia (the bear) and England (the lion). The real problem that these Powers face is not the awakening of China—this is a threat from the past—but what will happen during the “wake” after its death. The Powers will try to stop each other from taking a chunk of the dragon. The inscription shows the double nervousness about the awakening and the wake. The face of the dragon is reminiscent of

contemporary American posters that denounced Chinese immigrants.¹⁷² The perspective of both image and text is that of the foreign Powers—in this case that of the US eagle—sternly looking on this scene from the top left. There is a danger that the Powers will go to war over this dead giant.

Somewhat later, another reading of the Boxers' relation to the "China asleep" metaphor made it into one of the most popular Western mediums of the time, opera. In *Turandot*, which Puccini left unfinished when he died in 1924, one of the comic ministers, Ping, wonders about the turmoil brought about by the Chinese princess Turandot's refusal to marry a foreign prince. He sings:

O China. O China

Now astounded and confoundedly restless!

How peacefully thou hast slept culled in thy seven
thousand centuries!¹⁷³

There is no equivalent of this passage in either Carlo Gozzi's 1762 drama, from which much of the language was taken, nor in the 1801 adaptation by Friedrich Schiller, which informed the character of Turandot in Puccini's opera. In the overall story, China asleep is stirred to "restlessness" when the Chinese princess Turandot goes on a spree of slaughtering her foreign suitors who fail to solve the riddles with which she challenges them. This is reminiscent of the anti-foreignism of the Boxers in 1900. Eventually, Turandot, torn between her desire to be free of foreign/male domination and her secret love for an unknown prince, gives in to his forceful wooing as he tears off her veil and kisses her. As she yields, he sings, "it is dawn, it is dawn and love awakens with the sun". In a triple metaphor of dawn, awakening, and civilization (the sun), love with the foreign prince can finally blossom.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² They have been assembled from late nineteenth century and early twentieth century issues of US cartoon papers in Philip P. Choy, Lorraine Dong, Marlon K. Hom, *Coming Man: 19th century Perceptions of the Chinese* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 1994).

¹⁷³ Giacomo Puccini, *Turandot*, libretto by Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni (New York: Ricordi, 1926), 36. The Italian text is: "O China, o China/che or sussulti e trasecoli/inquieta/come dormivi lieta/gonfia dei tuoi settantamila secoli!" Thanks to Franco Moretti for alerting me to this passage. The scene may be seen and listened to on Youtube in a performance of the Teatro Civico in Vercelli in April 17, 2009 with Valerio Garzo singing the role of Ping. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xHOPnsXYmg&feature=related>

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 82.

In Ping's song, China asleep is still peaceful and non-threatening. "Astounded and confoundedly restless" because of the anxiety brought about by foreign princes incessantly wooing her, China reacts with a collective flash of hostility once she wakes up, an echo of the Frankenstein theme. But this will not last and love triumphs in the end. Puccini's intriguing take on China's mysterious beauty, hysterical anti-foreignism and secret love for the unknown foreigner coupled with the adamant, but caring insistence of the prince to win the princess' hand was long banned in China. Only in 2003 was the opera eventually performed—in great pomp—in Beijing's imperial palace as a sign of China's active and positive engagement with the "foreign prince."

The same speed with which foreign journalists declared the Chinese giant dragon dead led them to pronounce it resurrected when the Qing court's "Reform of Governance" produced first results. In 1906, just a few years after the Puck cartoon, the Frankenstein image resurfaced. The *Illustrated London News* reprinted a French cartoon, which was in turn reprinted and commented upon in Britain (Figure 30).¹⁷⁵



Fig. 30: Charles Garabed Atamian (1872-1947), *The Chinese Giant Rouses Himself and Shakes the Other Nations off the Counterpane of the World*. A French Artist's Idea, 1906.

¹⁷⁵ Charles Atamian was an artist of Armenian origin. While mostly known for his book illustrations and sunny images of women and children on the Deauville beach in the 1920s and 1930s, he produced quite a few illustrations and images of political propaganda, particularly during World War I.

Lying “asleep” under the map of China, the “giant” is waking up; his facial expression suggests that he is alert and even angry, which can be seen as an iconographic link to the Frankenstein illustrations. The symbolical representations of Russia (top left with knout and vodka bottle, thrown out of Manchuria and Mongolia), England (left, slipping from Tibet into India), France (bottom left, restricted to Indochina), and Japan (right, stuck on its knees in Korea) are all shaken off the counterpane. Germany (middle) has not yet noticed what happened behind its back and stands in pompous arrogance on its Kiautschou concession. The accompanying article emphasizes Chinese modern military drills, modern dress, a modern press and modern contraptions, such as telephones, as signs of China changing. It starts with a dire warning:

At last Western ideas have penetrated the Chinese mind and the awakening is likely to be swift and of extraordinary importance to the world. The sleeping giant is rousing himself, and when he shakes the counterpane of the world, the nations will do well to look to their supremacy. For behind the exclusiveness of ages lie forces that need only be set in motion to become overwhelming.

While the drawing shows China shaking the Powers from its own territory, the English text insists that China is shaking the Powers from the “counterpane of the world”. The nervousness is exacerbated by the fact that, unlike the Chinese images that generally supported a particular course of action, there is no suggestion that China’s awakening could or even should be prevented. There is only an ominous premonition that the “supremacy” of the Powers—the asymmetry of power relations between China and the leading nations of the world—is not going to last. At the same time, China’s awakening is a “great awakening to Western ideas.” This asymmetry in cultural flows results from a growing Chinese awareness of the usefulness of these Western ideas and the Chinese energies invested in making them work in China. To put it bluntly, the broad asymmetry in cultural flows is the key factor in reversing the asymmetries in power relations and the human agency in this reversal lies entirely on the Chinese side. In the words of this cartoon “the Chinese giant rouses himself.”

The fantasy of a future awoken

On the Chinese side, the vocabulary and imagery of China asleep was part of recognizing the prevailing asymmetries of agency and power. This perception of asymmetry is not a simple process of cognition, but it releases substantial historical energies to deal or cope with this asymmetry and overcome or even reverse it. Tse Tsan Tai's cartoon, as well as the many articles by Chinese authors, but above all the unending efforts to reverse the declining fortune of the country, to deny the problem, to assign the blame to someone else, to treat it as a blessing and an enrichment etc. are all fuelled by this release of historical energy. One more option remains to be explored: public utopian dreams.

Gradually, Chinese reformers started to claim their own primary agency in "awakening" China, although the purpose remained largely tied to prompting China into adopting "Western" (then the word for "modern") ways. Cursing their countrymen for failing to awaken to patriotism was not enough, they had to be shown the promise of what would happen if indeed they would wake up. This development can be observed elsewhere, for example in Germany. We have already seen that together with the harsh print of the German Michel asleep there also appeared daydreams of Michel awake, sometimes done in the same year and by the same artist. In writing we find the same, hard-hitting satires about Michel in slumber paralleled by glowing fantasies about a future Germany that has woken up (Figure 31).



Fig. 31: R. Sabatky, 1942, colored chalk lithograph, 1842.

An oversized German *Urmensch* joyously lifts his oak cudgel crowned with a Prussian helmet. He has dropped his weapons and made peace with elegant France over the contested Rhine amid general celebration. The Cologne Dome is finally being demolished and French and Germans are dancing around a liberty tree full of wreaths. The cartoon's agenda is anti-clerical and focuses on the "national" territory. No element of social or technological utopia is visible, but there is a strong hope for peaceful relations with France.

In the Chinese context, the most elaborate fantasies about a China awoken, which were created during the first decade of the twentieth century, can be found in the flurry of political novels published at this time. Emulating a genre first employed by Benjamin Disraeli in the 1840s

and supposedly instrumental in reforming the English polity,¹⁷⁶ Chinese political novels were serialized in newspapers and offered up-to-date allegorical narratives of China's present dismal situation, the way out of it, and the glories of the future.

In the political novels of the "Reform of Governance" (*Xinzheng* 新政) period (1901-1909), which began with the Qing court's *Xinzheng* edict in 1901, a preferred placement of symbolical, allegorical or metaphorical coding was in a "wedge" 楔子 chapter at the start. Such wedge chapters cannot be found in English or Japanese political novels of the time. As Catherine Yeh has shown, they are a Chinese innovation designed to curb the unpredictability of the novel form by sketching out the entire story at the beginning. Chen Tianhua's 陳天華 novel "The Roar of the Lion", (*Shizi hou* 獅子吼, 1906) may serve as one such example.¹⁷⁷

The wedge-chapter is told by a first-person narrator deeply worried about his country's ability to survive amid the fierce competition between contemporary nations. At stake is the "survival" or "demise" of the country, *xing wang* 興亡. The narrative is set in the present time. Social evolution is discussed in terms of natural evolution. As the narrator/ implied author tries to comfort himself by wandering in nature, he observes that nature operates on the same principle that prevails among nations: "The weak are the meat, and the strong eat it" (*ruo rou qiang shi* 弱肉強食). At this point, he finds a book. It takes him a few days to decipher the text until he realizes that it is a book about the demise of an "ignorant and dumb, or *Hundun*, race," (*hundun renzhong* 混沌人種). In this book, the wedge chapter seems to start over again, albeit with the past as its time frame. It tells of events that took place 4,500 years ago. The *Hundun*, once a great civilization, were conquered by "the barbarians," (*yeman zu* 野蠻族), a small neighboring tribe. The barbarians took away the livelihood of the *Hundun* people, and imposed celibacy on them. As a consequence, the *Hundun* race was on the verge of extinction. Those who managed to survive were gradually reduced to being semi-barbaric, then to complete barbarians, and finally to mere "low class animals without any self-consciousness," (*wu zhijue de xiadeng dongwu* 無知覺的下等動物). Whenever a country needed laborers for construction or human shields

176 Catherine V. Yeh, *A Literary Fashion Goes Global: The Political Novel in Late Qing China* (Cambridge: Harvard Council of East Asian Studies, forthcoming). I am grateful to have had access to a draft of this study, from which I have culled the references. Similar stories about China's sleep and awakening abound in this genre.

177 Chen Tianhua 陳天華, *Shizi hou* 獅子吼 [The Roar of the Lion]. (Originally serialized in *Minbao*, issues 2-5, 7-9, 1906; repr. Nanchang: Jiangxi Renmin Chubanshe, 1988).

in wars, these people were the natural candidates. Thus, over the course of three hundred years, the race completely disappeared. This past stands for one of the possible futures of China.

After this allegorical treatment of China's conquest by the Manchu 300 years ago, and the worldwide use of Chinese "coolie labor," the wedge chapter seems to start yet again with the first-person narrator re-entering and bringing the reader back to the present. Alarming reports of Russia's encroachment on China's northern provinces and the English navy entering the Wusong port have reached the narrator and prompt him to join the fight against the foreign invaders. The enemy soon overwhelms any Chinese resistance and the narrator must flee into the mountains; his pursuers turn into a pack of tigers and wolves. As they rush at him, pushing him to the ground, one of the beasts bites his right arm; the excruciating pain makes him cry out in despair. This cry produces a dramatic result. A lion, which has been asleep for many years, is awoken and lets out a roar that shakes heaven and earth. The book's author himself comments: "This loud cry of despair [by the narrator] indeed achieved great effect!"¹⁷⁸

At this point, a third timeframe appears. It unfolds when the narrator has a vision of future China, an obvious reference to the first Chinese political novel, *A Future Record of New China* written in 1902 by none other than Liang Qichao.¹⁷⁹ In this future, the first-person narrator does not recognize where he is. To him, a person from the "past", the great urban center in which he finds himself is utterly unfamiliar and its prosperity overwhelms him.

[its]streets [are] ten *zhang* (about 30 meters, R.W.) wide, made of white stones, without a trace of dust. All buildings are seven stories high and defy any description of their luxury and beauty. The streets are busy with electrical cars moving like weaving shuttles. Up in the sky, trains are traveling over iron bridges, and deep under the earth underground trains rush by. [In short,] this is a scene of prosperity and wealth adorned with extraordinary ingenuity and workmanship.¹⁸⁰

178 Chen Jihua, *Shizi hou*, 1988, 31-32.

179 Liang Qichao, "Xin Zhongguo weilai ji" 新中國未來記 [The Future of New China], *Xin xiaoshuo* (Nov. 1902 – Sep. 1903).

180 Chen Jihua, *Shizi hou*, 1988, 32-33.

For the first-person narrator this could only be London or Paris. But, as he enters into a great hall, a placard announces in Chinese the “Celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Glorious Renaissance [of China]” (光復五十年紀念會), which is another cross-reference to Liang Qichao. China now has a national flag with the lion in the middle. An opera performance with the leading male role sung by a character called “the youth of new China” (新中國之少年) evokes in detail the history of the revolutionary wars through which the renovated China was created. Much impressed by this opera, the first-person narrator finds yet another book with the title *The History of the Glorious Renaissance [of China]*. Needless to say, on its cover is the roaring lion. The reader is told that the book has two parts, the first dealing with the struggles to recover China, and the second with the country’s regaining sovereignty and independence from foreign domination. This second book is the very novel the reader now has in his hands. It represents an alternative future to the Hundun fate described in the book he found first. This second part is the possible future of China’s awakening and rise.

We see here, in the form of allegorical fiction, the same arsenal of references at work as in our cartoons. The Chinese lion is “asleep” and the pained cry of the person who has awoken to the true state of the country wakes him up, and we march into a glorious future. The allegorical language has fully absorbed a global imagery that includes the understanding that the culprit of the crisis is to be found in the country itself, rather than among the foreign powers. At this point, the implied reader no longer needs a guiding hand to decipher the information.

Metaphor, image, and crisis

Similes and images, such as the ones discussed here, have a timeline. For readers today this becomes apparent in the dense references to actualities that were familiar to the implied reader then, but are unfamiliar to us now. The use of metaphor, simile and image is in itself a statement on the extreme urgency of the problem addressed, especially before the use of cartoons became a routine part of newspaper sensationalism. These rhetorical devices and images are forms of public communication that largely hinge on what might be called a high temperature problem, or, in common parlance, a crisis. They appear naturally when the community experiences a crisis that is perceived by some who feel it urgently needs to be perceived by the public—including the state authorities. Only then will the energies needed to cope with the crisis be mobilized and the proposed

course of action be followed. In other words, the images that arise in such a situation combine a pointed depiction of a crisis' key factors in a manner accessible to a larger public with the dissemination via print, or other means of mass reproduction, and the suggestion of a course of action. The simile and image offer a platform for situation- and action-oriented thinking by linking many different concepts to practical steps in a concrete manner, which an abstract concept alone cannot achieve. I suggest the hypothesis that it is the manifold specific analyses contained in these publicly traded similes and images that are in turn the material on the basis of which abstract concepts are formed in the first place. Similes, metaphors, images and narratives do not merely serve as illustrations of these concepts. They are the concrete material upon which the concepts draw and they offer an independent platform of discussion that allows for the exploration of a wide array of interpretive options.

In the Chinese texts and images, the urgency of the crisis is articulated in manifold ways. They appear in the titles of essays, such as Liang Qichao's "A Crisis Warning About Being Cut up Like a Melon," which itself can become a simile. In 1898, Wang Kangnian wrote an essay in which he complained about the foot-dragging of the officials and their insistence on due bureaucratic process and decorum in the face of Germany's demand for territory in Shandong:

This is like a fire breaking out in a house and these befuddled people still sweetly sleep in their rooms. Even if one urgently calls on them, I am afraid they still will not wake up—are you saying that one should still proceed decorously to get them out of there?¹⁸¹

In such a crisis situation fast and unconventional means are needed to wake up the Chinese, but they are blocked by officials. Even the names chosen by the Chinese language reform press of the "Reform of Governance" period after 1900 signaled the commitment to awaken "the people". Newspaper or journal names, such as the abovementioned "Alarming Bell Daily" (警鐘日報, 1904) or "The Awakening Lion" (興獅, 1905), are as indicative of this as the cover images on reform journals. An example is the cover of a journal edited, needless to say, by Liang Qichao (Figure 32):

181 Wang Kangnian 汪康年, "Lun Jiaozhou beizhan shi" 論膠州被占事 [On the occupation of Jiaozhou], *Shiwu bao* 時務報 52 (February 21, 1898).



Fig. 32: New cover for Liang Qichao's paper *Xinmin congbao* 新報叢民 (*Reform the People Collectanea*), Yokohama, 1903.

This utopian lion, itself an avatar of the lion representing the state in England, takes on the entire world with a leap and a mighty roar. Against the assumption that China was “old” and in decay—which was also articulated in some of the cartoons reproduced above—many of the journals, revolutionaries’ pen names, or fictional characters also used the image of youth’s vitality, strength, and the willingness to go new ways, which match this bold lion image very well. For the imagery of youthful vigor, a vast transcultural arsenal was available in translation, which drew on European national reform movements since Giuseppe Mazzini’s *Giovine Italia* (Young Italy) and Disraeli’s Young England.

Even someone seeing China as an “awakened lion” after the founding of the Republic in 1912, however, would be able to use the lion image to also express the ongoing difficulties and suggest solutions. The following 1912 cartoon is by “Valdar”, the pen-name of the man who drew most of the cartoons for the English language *National Review* in Shanghai during the last years of the Empire and the first years of the Republic (Figure 33).¹⁸²

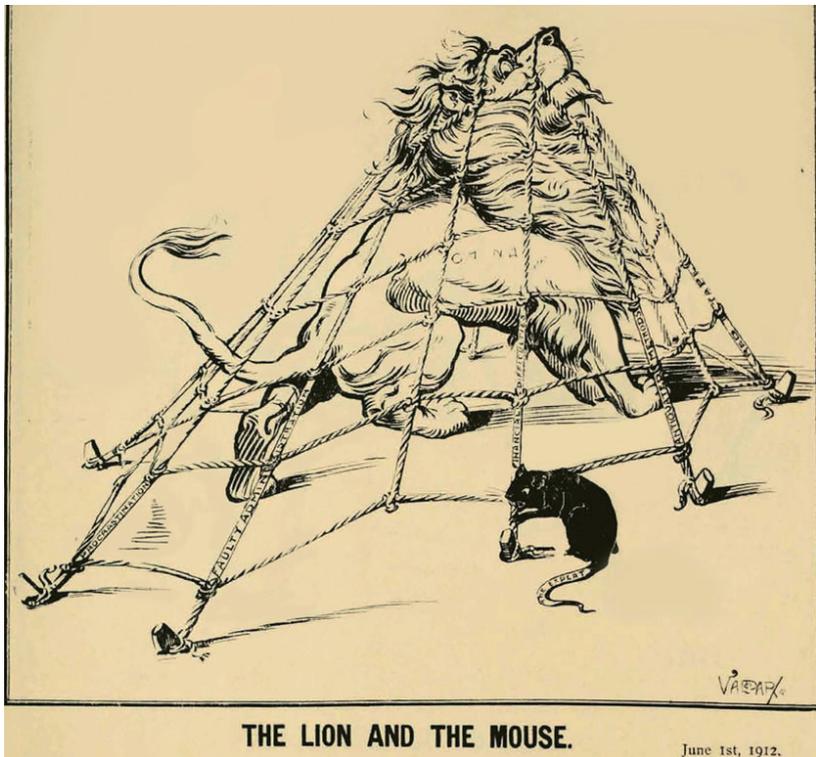


Fig. 33: Valdar, *The Lion and the Mouse*, cover page, 1912.

The China lion—who just a few months after the founding of the Republic was very much awake—is tied down by (from the left) “procrastination,” “faulty administration,” “financial difficulties,” “antiquated methods,” and “red tape.” All its power cannot break these strings. Only a mouse—

¹⁸² This journal had close connections to Yuan Shikai who had become President of the young Republic.

“foreign experts” with their own bellies in mind perhaps, rather than the desire to help—can gnaw through the string representing the most pressing financial difficulties. The Aesopian fable of the lion and the rat—albeit with a different meaning—had been copied into Chinese illustrated papers decades earlier from an advertisement for a Western product.¹⁸³

183 J. Henningsmeier, “The Foreign Sources of *Dianshizhai huabao*, a Nineteenth Century Shanghai Illustrated Magazine,” *Ming Qing Yanjiu* (1998): 74-76. The Aesopian fable was continuously used in Powell’s advertisements in the London press as the trademark for its “Balsam Aniseed” cough medicine

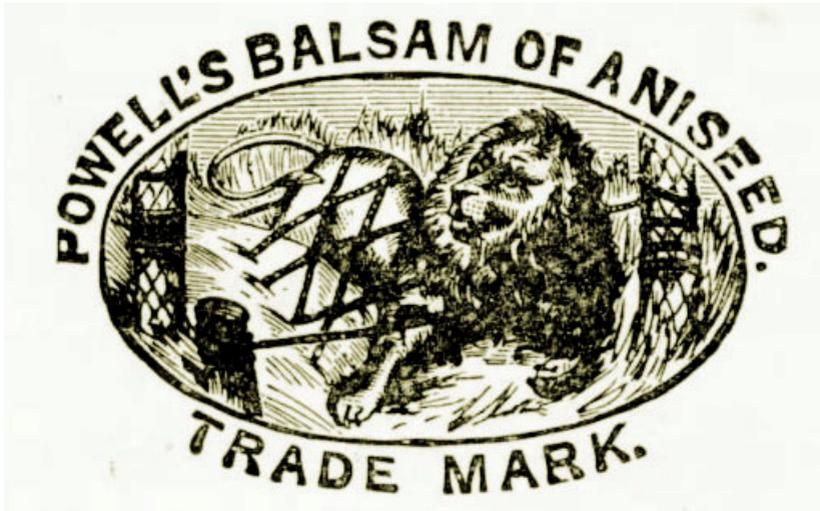


Fig. Fn 3: ‘Balsam Aniseed’ cough medicine, advertisement, 1886.

The message for the consumer was that a small capsule of Powell’s balsam (the mouse) would liberate the entire big body (the lion, tied down by strings) from the pain of the cough that was tying it down. The Dianshizhai huabao used the image to illustrate a story entitled “a smart way to tame a lion.” It refers to the wife of the Song dynasty official and poet Su Shi, who would roar like a lion if he brought guests, but, tied by the strings of marriage, as she was, there was little else she could do. In the Dianshizhai image by Wu Youru, three mice (Su Shi and friends) are happily eating the helpless lion’s food.

Unsurprisingly, it was the then budding writer Lu Xun, who remembered—if briefly—that things might go awry and that the young hotheads carried a huge responsibility. In a direct reply to Wang Kangnian’s story about the burning house, Lu Xun drew on a Buddhist metaphor of people being trapped in the prison house of their senses. He voiced his jarring, if momentary, doubt about the great hopes of the Republican awakening in the 1922 preface to his collection of stories



Fig. Fn 4: Wu Youru 吳友如, *A smart way to tame a lion* 制獅法, 1886.

with the vigorous title *Nahan*, which is often translated as “A call to arms.” Asked in 1915 whether he would be willing to contribute a story to the new progressive journal programmatically called *New Youth* (Xin qingnian), he answered:

Imagine an iron house without windows, absolutely indestructible, with many people fast asleep inside who will soon die of suffocation. But you know, since they will die in their sleep, they will not feel the pain of death. Now if you cry aloud to wake a few of the lighter sleepers, making those unfortunate few suffer the agony of irrevocable death, do you think you are doing them a good turn?

But if a few are awake, you can't say there is no hope of destroying the iron house.

True, in spite of my own conviction, I could not blot out hope, for hope lies in the future.¹⁸⁴

The same *New Youth* for which Lu Xun was asked to write, also explored the philosophical dimensions of what it saw as the somnambulistic state of the Chinese nation. This state was linked to the claim by Cheng Yichuan (1033-1107), one of the founding fathers of the neo-Confucian revival, that man's basic nature is “pure and tranquil.” This was read in 1915 as a normative statement promoting tranquility or calmness, which led men to become “cripples”, “weak and fearful” and “unable to live out [their] human character.” In a counterargument the journal claimed that “the basic character of man is definitely movement,” because everything in the “cosmos started with movement and will end with it.” The Chinese neologism “movement”, yundong 運動, was derived from the Japanese and had already been used in China for physics and as the word for “sports”, but was now transposed to describe political and social “movements.”¹⁸⁵ After the May 4th Movement in 1919, in which the *New Youth Journal* played a decisive role, Chinese activists and/or the state have promoted an unending series of such “movements” to awaken the populace.

The Republican state eventually laid claim to the duty and capacity to

184 Lu Xun, preface to the collection *Nahan* (December 1922), in *Selected Stories of Lu Hsun*, trans. Yang Hsien-I and Gladys Yang (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1960). This is a reference to the Buddhist story of the burning house in the *Lotus Sūtra*.

185 For details see Rudolf Wagner, “Canonization,” 74-76.

awaken the Chinese people and to guide them with stern supervision into a bright future. It inherited much of the imagery from the late Qing reformers and revolutionaries, but maintained that with its arrival the times of emphasizing the tragedy of China asleep were now over. To awaken the nation, it proceeded to fully use the instruments of state for purposes of propaganda in a manner similar to the Soviet Union, Italy, and eventually Germany. Some fine studies have appeared that deal with this new situation.¹⁸⁶ When Sun Yat-sen was buried in Nanjing in 1929, the Kuomintang government commissioned, in the form of a huge bell, a landscape architecture for the grounds of the mausoleum to represent Sun Yat-sen's thought which would awaken the Chinese (Figure 34).

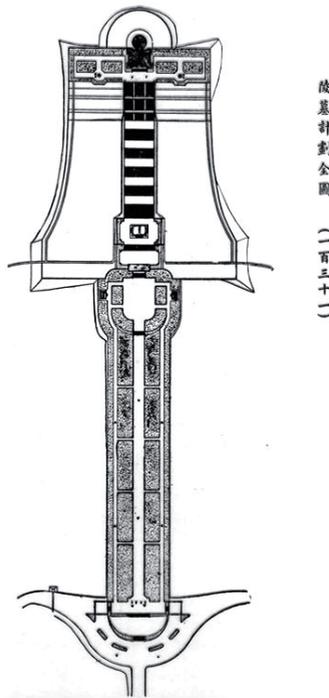


Fig. 34: Li Yanzhi, Master plan for layout of Zhongshan Ling Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum, 1925. From *Feng'an shilu*, Nanjing 1928.

186 John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: politics, culture, and class in the nationalist revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996). Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen: political ceremonies and symbols in China, 1911-1929* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

The original plan had been to build a new capital below the mausoleum, which would have visually transformed the entire government machine into what it set out to do with its policies, namely to “awaken” China’s masses to modernity.¹⁸⁷ Needless to say, the Communist Party, which had been challenging the Kuomintang Republic with sundry “movements”, eventually won out. It inherited, however, the basic notion that the Chinese were a people that needed mobilization to wake up.

All the tumultuous movements of China notwithstanding, the idea that the people or the country might wake up or needed to be “awoken” has remained a key element in the conceptualization of the state of the Chinese polity and the legitimization of political action to this day. Alain Peyrefitte is one among the many to have played with the metaphor of China awakening in the titles of his widely-read and -translated narratives about China, confronting “l’empire immobile” of the pre-modern period with the disquieting “Napoleonic” quote, “when China awakes, the world will tremble”¹⁸⁸ in the title of his book about the post-1949 period. But even in 2011, the “awakening of China” is still not completed.¹⁸⁹

In the PRC itself, the basic assumptions underlying the metaphor about an asymmetry between those asleep as the nation faces grave danger, compared to those who are awake, have also remained alive. However, the asymmetry is now less defined as one of agency vis-a-vis foreign powers; it now is marked by enlightened or progressive consciousness and action. The soldiers who were sent to clear Tiananmen Square on June 3, 1989, were ordered to take the following oath before setting off:

If I can wake up the people with my blood, then I am
willing to let my blood run dry;

187 On this building and the symbolism involved in the landscape design see my “Ritual, Architecture, politics, and Publicity during the Republic: Enshrining Sun Yat-sen,” in *Chinese Architecture and the Beaux-Arts*, ed. Jeffrey W. Cody, Nancy S. Steinhardt, and Tony Atkin (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2011).

188 Alain Peyrefitte, *L’Empire immobile, ou le choc des mondes. Reçit historique* (Paris: Fayard, 1989). Alain Peyrefitte, *Quand la Chine s’éveillera—le monde tremblera: regards sur la voie chinoise* (Paris: Fayard 1973).

189 See, Minxin Pei, “China’s Political Awakening,” *The Diplomat*, July 14, 2010, accessed February 10, 2011, <http://the-diplomat.com/2010/07/14/china%E2%80%99s-political-awakening/>.

If I can wake up the people [by giving] my life, then I will happily go to my death.¹⁹⁰

如果能以血醒民，我愿把血流干；如果能以命醒民，我愿慷慨赴死

Their action would be the wake-up call for the sleeping and deluded populace to realize that the danger for the nation and its future was coming from the demonstrators. On the opposite end, we see the same imagery in a congratulatory note for the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize to Liu Xiaobo, who was incarcerated first for his being a “black hand” behind the scene in 1989, and then for having been involved in drafting the Charter 08.

The Nobel prize is a call on governments to turn to the good, using the strength of reason and justice through Western civilisation, to rouse the people of the nation from their slumber and discover their good nature, to liberate the spirit from material restraints and seek to break down obstacles on the road. Awarded a year ahead of the 100th anniversary of the Xinhai revolution that ended the imperial system, the prize relights the flame of the first republic in Asia and washes clean the shame of a dictatorship. This prize is a milestone in the march of the Chinese race towards democracy.¹⁹¹

Conclusions

As a conclusion I will offer a series of propositions that include, but go beyond the case analyzed above. These are formulated as falsifiable hypotheses. They will deal with three elements: the relationship between

190 Jie Chi 解犀 and Shi Lu 施路, “Ping bao <beiwang lu> - jian da ‘Jieyanbudui buru cheng shifu hui fasheng fangeming baoluan’ den yiwen” 平暴“备忘录”—兼答“戒严部队不入城是否会发生反革命暴乱”等疑问 [A memoir on pacifying the disturbance—also answering doubts whether without the martial law troops entering the city [of Beijing] a counterrevolutionary disturbance would have occurred], *Renmin ribao* July 26, 1989, 1.

191 Jin Zhong (editor of *Kaifang* journal, Hong Kong), translation of an article in *Kaifang*, in “Medal Contention,” *South China Morning Post*, Oct. 12, 2010. In Taiwan, the sleep and awakening pair have been used in DPP critiques against Ma Yingjiu’s policy towards the mainland. See, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubwYeCgxZdA&feature=related>. Accessed March 31, 2011.

political concept, metaphor, and image; the translingual flow of political metaphors and the transcultural flow of political images; and the dynamics of perceiving asymmetries and coping with them.

a. Political concept, metaphor and image

- Metaphor and image are instrumental for thinking and for communicating the links between concepts and space, time and action.
- Metaphor and image form a platform *sui generis* to deal with complex and dynamic situations in a manner leading to and legitimizing a particular course of action. They loosely interact with concepts, especially in the keys attached, but more easily cross to other related metaphors (such as crossing from “sleep” to “debility” or “death”), if the author or artist feels that the actual situation has gone beyond the spectrum covered by the metaphor/image.
- Metaphor cries out for illustration, cartoon illustration cries out for a textual key. The illustration might pick up the image implied in the metaphor, and the key for the illustration might use metaphors or concepts to unlock the meaning.
- The pool of collectively shared metaphors and, in the age of print, images that characterize situations and suggest courses of action forms as a sizeable part of the material and experience on the basis of which abstract concepts are synthesized; these concrete forms of presentation turn abstract concepts into potentially powerful political engines. This translates into a hypothesis that conceptual generalizations succeed rather than precede metaphorical or visual articulations, and that the conceptual discussions retain traces of these origins.
- Metaphor and image focus on situations in specific and often critical situations in a given time and place. They impact the audience by suggesting an urgently needed practical action. In the case studied here, the agenda was to awaken nationalist commitment, and the strategy was a combination of shaming the audience/onlookers into such a commitment, and showing the potential utopian result.
- Metaphor, simile and image operate with an iconographic (rather than semantic) field. This presets argumentative parameters for defining the problem’s location (in our case this is in the state of mind of the nation/government/elite/dynasty rather than the foreign Powers) and what action would be needed.

b. Translingual and transcultural flow

- Concepts, metaphors, and images all migrate across linguistic and cultural borders.
- For the political concepts, metaphors, and images the developments of the nineteenth century led to an increasingly shared canon across languages and cultures, an underground Esperanto, or, to put it less provocatively, an underlying translingual code—underlying/underground because the surface textual expressions, metaphorical features and images might and often do differ by using local codes.
- This translingual and transcultural flow is mediated by the global spread of text and image media; by cultural brokers who are doubly familiar with a place they would call “our” country, and globalized public discourses in text and image occurring in the “world”; by the options of translingual and transcultural contact available in contact zones such as ports, or, as so often in the past, royal courts or religious centers.
- The speed, focus, and intensity of translingual and transcultural flows in a given field and region hinges on the “temperature” of the issue involved at a given time. In high-temperature crisis moments, their speed, focus and intensity tends to peak. These peak times might be termed periods of massive transcultural flow.
- Massive transcultural flow periods are characterized by not simply “translating” foreign concepts, metaphors and images into a vernacular of words and images that have a stable and firmly implanted grammatical, rhetorical and iconological canon of its own. Rather, the harvested linguistic, rhetorical and visual material completely recasts the vernacular language, rhetoric and imagery.
- Such massive transcultural flows presuppose an external resource (such as texts, images, sets of ideas, institutions, and practices) that had enough time to mature to provide enough, and sufficiently consistent, material for such a massive flow.
- The dominant agency driving the flows is not in the push or imposition by an external power, but in the pull exerted by people who assume the role of cultural brokers. In any given context, these brokers come from different ethnic groups, nationalities, and linguistic background. They act for reasons of personal preference, political or religious commitment, social and political standing, to secure their livelihood, or a combination of these.

- The agency of these brokers hinges on a “market bet”, namely that their cultural products (translations, images etc.) will find buyers or followers. This means that an ultimate and passive agency pulling the flow is in the hands of an anonymous and silent group of people who are potentially interested. The eventual interest evoked, or the failure to evoke it, is the test for these “bets.”
- The material carried in translingual and transcultural flows consists of media content and practices, which, if successful, will spread further inland from the brokers and the contact zones through print or other media and human examples. This spread highlights the pervasiveness of a highly uneven density of the public sphere to the point of a dual public sphere with one part integrated in the global flow, while the other, the hinterland, is very much cut off and only thinly fed by the contact zones.

c. Dynamics of perceiving asymmetries and coping with them

- At any given moment flows of concepts, metaphors, and images are characterized by an asymmetry with an unequal quantity and quality of exchanges. In the case under consideration, the concepts, metaphors and images are part of the transcultural flow, while at the same time thematizing its asymmetry.
- This asymmetry in exchanges or flows in both directions might, and might not, parallel an asymmetry in power relations.
- Asymmetrical flows between cultures, once perceived as such, will release vast energies to cope and deal with them. These might range on the one hand from emigration to the ‘other’ place, learning foreign languages and befriending foreigners to denying the existence of asymmetry and xenophobia, and, on the other hand, from imperial disdain and efforts to use an asymmetry in power to defend an asymmetry in cultural flows, to efforts at contributing to the “other” side’s betterment, to identifying with the underdog. To be specific, the metaphor of “China asleep”, and more so of China the sleeping giant or lion, is an effort to conceptually grasp the instability of a complex asymmetry in agency and power vis-à-vis the Powers. The perception of this asymmetry and the resulting historical energy differs depending on which side one identifies with. For the speaker/artist/onlooker identifying with the “sleeping China” in this critical environment, the scenario suggests an anxiety, which might end up mobilizing his or her energies to “wake” up and, depending

on the reading, realize the potential buried in the sleeping giant, level or inverse the asymmetry in agency and power, or to avoid the issue. For the speaker/artist/onlooker identifying with the surrounding Powers, the scenario presented in the metaphor and image suggests an anxiety, which might prompt efforts to keep China asleep so as to maintain the asymmetry in power and flows, to prepare for a confrontation over the spoils should China not wake up at all, or, to the contrary, follow an utopian path by actively contributing to a leveling of the prevailing asymmetries.

- The asymmetries in relations, such as power, and in flows, such as concepts, institutions and practices, are not functions of one another. They often have inverse dominant directionalities, but they will always interact.
- In the Chinese and Japanese cases, the energies invested in the pull to select, translate, and adapt Western concepts, institutions, practices and images are released by a perception of an asymmetry in power relations that results from an asymmetry in national agency. This weakness of agency in turn is to be overcome through the massive translation of those concepts, institutions and practices, which are seen as being at the root of the stronger agency of the other side and the resulting power. In the inverse case, where a conqueror, who is superior in power, opts for (or was attracted in the first place by) a culture seen as superior (such as the Roman elite's attitude towards Greek language and culture, or Manchu attitudes towards Chinese language and culture), efforts are made to assign a place to the other culture and its best agents (such as artists, poets or scholars) that makes the best of its enhancement of the quality of life, while not threatening the asymmetry in power relations.

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