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Navigating the Tide: Localism, Transnationalism, and Historiography in Zhejiang Chao

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Navigating the Tide:
Localism, Transnationalism, and Historiography in *Zhejiang Chao*

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College

by
Lanna Gao

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
December 2022

Dedication

For Shuai Wang

For Our Shared Identity and Path

Acknowledgements

In 2020, when I was quarantined in Beijing, I accidentally learned the story of Lin Juemin (1887-1911) through a song called *Jue* written by a contemporary Taiwanese singer Chyi Yu (1957–) in his memory. Participating in Tongmenghui (Chinese United League) and the failed Second Guangzhou Uprising, Lin was arrested and executed by the Qing court in 1911. Before his death, Lin left a letter for his wife Chen Yiying (1891-1913). Reading his “Letter of Farewell to My Wife,” his words full of sensations struck me. Taking “Protest and Activism in China” with Prof. Robert J Culp around the same time, a question was raised – why would people a hundred years ago, around the turn of the 20th century, die for the “nation,” a community that we now perceive as “imagined?” With this vague yet sentimental inquiry in mind, I started my journey of tracing the lives and death in modern Chinese history.

I now wish to express my sincere gratitude to all those who helped me in this journey and without whom this project would be impossible. I wish first to thank two of my advisors, Prof. Robert J. Culp and Prof. Nate Shockey. I wish to thank Prof. Culp for leading me into historical studies and offering propelling suggestions for my work that always advanced my study to the next phase. I am grateful for Prof. Shockey’s detailed and precise comments on my work and his literary perspective that fundamentally influenced my approach to the project. I also wish to thank Prof. Omar Cheta for commenting on my first chapter and giving astute feedback and Prof. Dominique Townsend for kindly offering to be on my final board. Without their support and encouragement, I would not be able to keep pursuing my aspirations in modern Chinese history and accomplish this work. The inspiration and support I received from them will always guide

my future study and work. Bard was life-changing for me, and they played a big part in this process.

I want to acknowledge my peers who tremendously supported me during the last year of my college life. I wish to give special thanks to my friends at Bard, Ruohan Wu (Cherry), Kehang Xu (Keiko), Ziyi Zhong (Zizi), Mingxi Wang, Yimiao Zhang, and Yibai Shen, who constantly gave me something to laugh about when I buried myself in work, and who accompanied me through all the frustrations and breakdowns. I also wish to express my gratitude to Ziyue He – the inspiring conversations we had during the long nights always empowered me and kept me motivated; also to Hongman Zhang, whose sincere words and kind heart continuously gave me determination and whose presence brought me a sense of home; and to Xuanyi Wang and Zhanqi Zhang, who supported me through my first year at Bard.

I also wish to express my gratitude to my family, R. Tian, C. Gao, J. Wang, S. Wang, W. Gao, and my friend X. Li back home. Although unable to be with them at all times, I know their support is always with me. I hope this project can inform them of my intellectual progress since our last separation one and a half years ago.

Last but not least, I will end my acknowledgement with a special thanks to my partner Shuai Wang. In the past six years we have spent together, he has become the source of my courage and faith for life. He shares all my happiness, reflections, and frustrations in my transnational journey, and this project is also for him.

Language cannot capture all my gratitude. Space doesn't allow me to mention many people who have supported me along the journey. I know all the guidance, aid, and encouragement I gratefully received from my family, friends, and teachers will always

accompany me in my future adventure and keep me motivated in pursuing my questions and aspirations in modern Chinese history.

Now, let us begin navigating the tide.

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浙江潮

癸卯陽曆九月二十一日發行

第七期

Introduction

可愛哉浙江潮，可愛哉浙江潮。挾其萬馬奔騰排山倒海之氣力，以日日刺激於吾國民之腦
以發其雄心，以養其氣魄。二十世紀之大風潮中，或亦有起陸龍蛇，挾其氣魄，
以奔入於世界者乎。

——《浙江潮》發刊詞

The lovely tide of Zhejiang, the lovely tide of Zhejiang. The magnificent power of which carries its forces that resembles a thousand steeds galloping, that overturns mountains and seas, stimulates the minds of our people, broadens our ambition, and nurtures our courage. In the great trends of the twentieth century, will there be snakes and dragons that rise up from the hill to carry their forces and surge forward towards the world?

—— Foreword of *Zhejiang Tide*

In January 1903, the first issue of the journal *Zhejiang Tide* (*Zhejiang Chao*) was published in Tokyo by the Zhejiang Native Place Association (*Zhejiang tongxiang hui*), formed by students from Zhejiang province, China studying in Japan. The journal and its publisher are both products of late Qing Sino-Japanese cooperation to promote modern military, education, and infrastructure in China, beginning in 1898. According to Douglas R. Reynolds, China and Japan were able to form such cooperation so soon after the 1895 Sino-Japanese War was due to the political crises that both countries faced at the near turn of the century. After the Sino-Japanese War, the Qing court ceded Taiwan and the Liaodong Peninsula to Japan. In 1895, Russia, Germany, and France jointly applied diplomatic pressure on Japan to return the Liaodong Peninsula to China, known as the “Triple Intervention,” one of the causes of the Russo-Japanese war nine years later. Amidst this crisis, Japan and China sensed a mutual need. For Japan, uniting China provided a solution to prevent diplomatic isolation and the penetration of Western imperial forces. The Qing court likewise sensed the need to learn from Japan’s successful reform model and promote China’s military and education system.¹ In 1896, the Qing court first sent 13 students to Japan, and the number of Chinese students going abroad to Japanese schools

¹ Douglas Reynolds, 任达. *Xinzheng geming yuriben: Zhongguo, 1898-1912*, 新政革命与日本: 中国, 1898 – 1912, (Jiangsu Renmin Chubanshe, 1998).

increased sharply after the 1901 New Policy Reform issued by Empress Dowager Cixi (1835-1908), from 400-500 in 1902 to 8000-9000 in 1905.² Traveling to Japan was far cheaper than going abroad to America or Europe. Sharing a related writing system (*tongwen*), Japan became the ideal place for late Qing bureaucrats to advocate conservative reform for strengthening China. At the same time, Japan was also the place where revolutionaries such as Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), whose activities contributed directly to the 1911 Revolution that overthrew the imperial court, and reformers such as Liang Qichao (1873-1929), one of the thinkers and reformers who initiated the failed 1898 Hundred Day Reform, both of whom were expelled by the Qing court, spent their time absorbing new ideas to formulate theories for reform and revolution.

Zhejiang Tide, together with journals published by a variety of native place associations, published in 1903, in a foreign land, five years after the failed 1898 Hundred Day Reform, two years after the end of Boxer Rebellion in 1901, and eight years prior to the 1911 Revolution and the end of the imperial regime, provides a remarkable source for understanding the sets of translingual practices germane to the formation of modern Chinese nationalism and historiography in the early 20th century. Before detailing the specifics of the journal itself, I wish to introduce *Zhejiang Tide* by providing more background on the members who formed the Zhejiang Native Place Association, as well as the historical position of Zhejiang province in Chinese history. The Zhejiang Native Place association, the journal's publisher, was formed by figures that would go on to shape Chinese history in later decades. The closing pages of the third issue, contain an appendix called "Members of Zhejiang Study Abroad Association In Tokyo"

² Paula Harrell, *Sowing the Seeds of Change : Chinese Students, Japanese Teachers, 1895-1905*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

(*Zhejiang tongxiang liuxue dongjing timing*). Looking at the names one by one, it is not hard to find those who became milestone figures in modern Chinese history. For instance, Zhou Shuren (1881-1936), also known as Lu Xun, the literary giant and leader of the New Culture Movement, whose work still attracts great scholarly attention in both China and around the world, was a contributor of *Zhejiang Tide*. Jiang Fangzhen (1882-1938), who wrote the foreword to *Zhejiang Tide*, was one of the most well known military reformers in modern China. Zhang Zongxiang (1879-1962), who took a pro-Japan stance in the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, was directly involved in the May Fourth 1919 parade in Beijing that became a nation-wide youth movement. The names mentioned above are just a few among the numerous contributors who participated in the reform of China's education, publication, and military systems. Those historical actors, who later stepped on different paths and shaped Chinese history in various ways, were all members of the Zhejiang Native Place Association. A close reading of *Zhejiang Tide* thus can contribute to our understanding of the shifts and transformations of 20th-century Chinese intellectual history. Rather than focus on the later lives of the Association's members, however, this thesis looks to the student author's writing in their own historical moment and analyzes their crafted narratives of nationalist history, and the conditions for them to write and conceptualize history as such, which would have a formative influence on the Chinese historiography of the coming decades.

Zhejiang, the native place where those students were from, also possesses a particularly prosperous literary and material culture heritage. Located in the southern part of the Yangtze Delta, Zhejiang is in the middle of the Jiangnan region, which is famous for its silk, tea, and rice production. In the imperial era, the name Zhejiang also connoted a great Confucian tradition. The

major Ming dynasty Confucian scholar Wang Yangming (1472-1529), the founder of the *Xinxue* (心學) school of Confucianism, was born in Shaoxing, Zhejiang. There was also the *Zhedong Xuepai*, the so-called “Eastern Zhejiang” school of Confucianism, formed by different Zhejiangnese scholars from the Song dynasty through the Ming and Qing dynasties. This long history as a locus of Confucian learning also makes *Zhejiang Tide* worth investigating, as it shows how the Zhejiangnese students, standing in the midst of a crisis and attempting to theorize the nation for China’s reform, situated their local identity and its traditional cultural heritage into their conception of the modern nation.

Despite the significant role that Zhejiang Native Association members played in modern Chinese history and the particularities of the locality, what I ultimately wish to investigate in this study is neither the journal’s role in quickening the 1911 Revolution, nor the group’s criticism of the Confucian tradition that lead to the New Cultural Movement a decade later. Rather, I wish to use this journal as a focal point to understand the transnational practice in the production of history in early 20th century China, and the new light it sheds on our understanding of a different mode narrating and imagining the nation. For a long time intellectuals in East Asia have been perceived by scholarship as being integrated into the Hegelian Enlightenment mode of history writing in order to construct a modern nation. The discussion of 19th and 20th century China and other nations in East Asia such as Japan are centered around how the nations in East Asia proceed into modernity, respond to the Western impact, and demonstrate their compatibility with the West. Attention is rarely given to the innovation, initiative, and creativity in the historical discourse of those who stood in the turn of the century trying to position China into modernity yet striving to diverge from the Enlightenment mode of history. The *Zhejiang Tide* students’

conceivment of China as based on different local customs and history shows that the mode of writing history in 20th century China is not solely linear and nationalistic. Local custom and cultural pluralism played a significant role in *Zhejiang Tide* students' conception of the nation, which also makes their writing distinctive from the universal progress of the Enlightenment. Their writing thus casts a new light on the discussion of historiography and shows a way of narrating history that does not necessarily seize on the individuality and particularity of the nation. The *Zhejiang Tide* student cohorts, due to their unique experience as receiving classical education during childhood and then going overseas to pursue new forms of education, actually produced a different theorization of the nation that re-appropriated the techniques of writing history from the Hegelian Enlightenment tradition yet rejected its framework which narrates China as unable to attain modern nation state. The historical discourse in *Zhejiang Tide* thus demonstrates the modes of writing and imagining the nation that could not be subjected to the national paradigms in the Enlightenment mode.

Lydia Liu's milestone work *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity – China, 1900-1937*, explores modern Chinese literature via the question of commensurability of language and investigates the theoretical problems of *the condition and the practice* of translation in the early cultural transactions between China, Japan, and the West.³ Liu's work is illuminating, because her method in examining 20th-century Chinese literature moves away from the older methodologies bearing a sharp differentiation between China and West, as in John K. Fairbank's "Western impact-Chinese response" thesis and Pual Cohen's "China-centric" approach examines the formation of modern Chinese literature in the context of

³ Lydia He Liu, *Translingual Practice : Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity--China, 1900-1937*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995).

translingual and cultural intersection. This study will extend Liu's question to examine the production of history by these late Qing study-in-Japan students through an analysis of the journal *Zhejiang Tide*. I will look into how students theorize nation and nationalism, what role the concept of history played in formulating theories for strengthening modern China, and the transnational conditions that promote the *Zhejiang Tide* students' theorization of the nation and history. My study will show how these student authors seized on *guohun* (national soul or spirit), a seemingly Hegelian term at the first glance, to form their universal nationalism. Besides the group's theorization of the nation, I will also examine their technique of writing history with particular attention to linguistic choices and styles. My study will thus demonstrate the relationship between the *Zhejiang Tide* students' theory of the nation in counterpoint to existing modes of history writing – the Meiji Japanese Oriental school of history known as *Tōyōshi* and the Hegelian Enlightenment historiographic paradigm that held sway in Tokyo.

For a long time, scholarships on 20th-century China has focused on the formation of the nation and the nationalistic aspects of intellectual history. Therefore, much attention has been given to the revolutionaries and intellectuals whose activities led to the overthrow of the imperial court in 1911, as well as those individual thinkers who theorized a national identity and common citizenship for China. For instance, much attention has focused on focusing on Liang Qichao and his theory of the “New Citizen” (*xinmin*), and on revolutionaries such as Sun Yat-sen and his revolutionary group, name as Chang Hao's *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907*, Joan Judge's book *Print and Politics: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform In Late Qing China*, and Marius Jansen's book *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, to name just a few

among many.⁴ Influenced by this trend, journals published by late Qing study-in-Japan students are typically read teleologically by historians as a prelude to the 1911 Revolution, and special notice is given to the revolutionary and nationalistic aspects of those authors' writings. For instance, when examining the revolutionaries from Zhejiang in her book *Early Chinese Revolutionaries: Radical Intellectuals in Shanghai and Chekiang 1902-1911*, Mary Rankin points out that *Zhejiang Tide* contains both reformist and revolutionary articles.⁵ Rankin examines the journal to understand how those earlier activities paved the way for revolution. Paula Harrell's book *Sowing the Seeds of Change: Chinese Students, Japanese Teachers, 1895-1905* also looks into the study-in-Japan students' revolutionary organizations and political engagements while overseas.⁶ My study will read this journal in a different way. Rather than read towards the revolutions that took place nearly a decade later, I look into the theorization of history by these students, and the conditions and motivations behind their writing in its own moment. By taking this approach, I wish to show the multi-dimensionality of the students' writing of history, which cannot be reduced to solely revolutionary or nationalistic. I am not suggesting that the *Zhejiang Tide* students are not nationalists, nor that there is no nationalistic aspects in their writings. They were largely concerned with theorizing the nation and strengthening China and were certainly occupied with constructing a national identity for China. But, by reading the students' unique and diverse conceptions of nationality and the narration of

⁴ Chang Hao, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013). Joan Judge, *Print and Politics: "Shibao" and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996). Marius B. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-Sen*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954).

⁵ Mary Backus Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries: Radical Intellectuals in Shanghai and Chekiang, 1902-1911*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971). Chekiang is a variable spelling of Zhejiang.

⁶ Paula Harrell, *Sowing the Seeds of Change: Chinese Students, Japanese Teachers, 1895-1905*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

history, I hope to unfold the transnational and local intersections in students' writing in a way that is more nuanced than solely approaching nation-formation from the perspective of teleological national identity or citizenship. My study shows that through their seemingly nationalistic and revolutionary writings, the students actually constructed unique form of historical writing distinct from other Chinese intellectuals around the turn of the century who focused on theorizing a common "citizenship" or the the national character of China. On the contrary, locality actually plays a significant role in the *Zhejiang Tide* students' theorization of the nation and its history, and the nation they conceive is based on a cultural pluralism rather than a singular, unified national identity. Seizing on local identity as the foundation of the nation, the students also tried to connect themselves with overseas Chinese communities, such as those in Singapore, through their journal.

In *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, Prasenjit Duara suggests a bifurcated way of writing history which might preserve the histories that are deleted and dispersed amidst a nationalistic historical narrative. In order to ground his argument and criticize the sublimation of history into the nation, Duara points out that East Asian societies had most successfully adopted and subsequently situated themselves within the Hegelian mode of historiography, in which the nation-state becomes the telos of history, and histories that are not useful for reaching this telos are deleted and neglected.⁷ Duara's criticism of the modern nation-state is illuminating, but the argument that East Asian societies have situated themselves into the nationalist paradigm inside Hegel's tradition is worth further consideration. Despite its critical stance, this argument nonetheless re-confirms the hegemony of Hegel's Enlightenment

⁷ Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation : Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

model, and portrays Asian societies such as China as merely following a Western path. In criticizing the Enlightenment model, Duara reaffirms its hegemonic power. My study thus aims to re-examine Duara's argument by showing how the *Zhejiang Tide* students' theory of the nation diverges from that Enlightenment model, and then pinpoints the internal entanglement of different modes of the production of history that aims to construct a teleological narratives in which nations are particular and unilinear.

I chose to study the writings on history by these students of the late Qing era and their translingual historiographic practice not only because the concept "student" became a special cohort in modern China's political activism and social movement, but also the study-in-Japan cohort played significant roles in contributing to the construction of modern China's infrastructure and education system. Reynolds argues that China was not changed by the heroic individual revolutionaries, but rather by millions of study abroad students who became the vessel of new ideas and new concepts.⁸ My project aims to be an example and illustration of this process. It is through the study-in-Japan students' conception of the nation through a translingual practice that the construction of modern China became possible in the day-to-day life of the early 20th century. Therefore, I chose not to examine well-developed intellectuals or famous revolutionaries' theory of history, since I wish this study to show the conceptualizations of the nation and the world held by late Qing study-in-Japan students when they returned to China and participated in the construction of modern infrastructure, education, and publication networks for the purpose of strengthening the nation.

⁸ Douglas Reynolds, 任达. *Xinzheng geming yuriben: Zhongguo, 1898-1912*, 新政革命与日本: 中国, 1898 – 1912, (Jiangsu Renmin Chubanshe, 1998).

My study will thus attempt to decompose the nationalistic mode of writing history from two perspectives. First, to show the internal entanglement between three different types of mode of history writings – the *Zhejiang Tide* students’ theory of *guohun* as universal nationalism, Meiji Japan’s Oriental School of *tōyōshi*, and the Hegelian mode of Enlightenment history. Secondly, this thesis aims to rediscover the multi-dimensionality of the study-in-Japan students’ narrative of history, one that is not nearly so solely nationalistic and teleological as it is conventionally described. Overall, this work aims to open the discussions of transnationality and local particularity in the production of national history in the early 20th-century China, and to re-discover the initiative and agency inside the seemingly subjectivization of history into the nation-state model.

Chapter one, Breaking From the “Past”: *Guohun* and Indian History, seeks to to understand the relationship between the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors’ concepts of nation and national history and the Hegelian Enlightenment tradition that prevailed in Japan during the Meiji era. To grapple with this question, I focus on the article “Guohun” (National Soul or Spirit, 國魂), published in the first issue, and pay close attention to the terms used by the pseudonymous author Fei Sheng (飛生) to articulate the universal nationalism. Fei Sheng theorizes *guohun* as deriving from *texing* (special character, 特性), which is nurtured by local customs (*fengsu*) and history. This *texing*, in order to form *guohun*, must be promoted by the noble patriots who possess *jingshen* (the will and initiative to act). Only *guomin* (citizen/people of the nation), that is to say, people who possess *guohun*, can be truly counted as the people of a nation. Neither *minzu* (ethnic nation) nor *renmin* (people) from a nation spontaneously in the student author Fei Sheng’s writing. Distinct from the term *guominxing* (national character, 國民

性) used by other late Qing intellectuals such as Liang Qichao and the later New Culture Movement generation (including some figures involved in *Zhejiang Tide*) to identify the reasons for China's failure in proceeding into modernity and criticize traditional Confucian cultural heritage, the *Zhejiang Tide* students' theory of *guohun* is oriented around the functions of local custom and the special character of the Chinese people in forming the nation. Rather than rejecting cultural heritage nurtured by history, *guohun* is used by the student authors to confirm the particularity of "Chineseness" and China's potential to become a modern nation via the writing of history and local custom. The second part of the chapter deals with the student authors' translations of Indian history into their own language, and considers the motivation behind that translation. I will show how contributor Ye Gong (葉公)'s writing of Indian history supports the theory of *guohun* as a form of universal nationalism that China must realize in order to survive.

By theorizing *guohun* and translating Indian history to support its claim to universalism, the *Zhejiang Tide* authors break with the Enlightenment tradition of history writing and Meiji Japan's "Oriental School" of *tōyōshi*, in which China is frozen into a historical past from which it is unable to form a nation. By narrating *guohun* as a universal telos, the student authors appropriate Enlightenment methods of narrating history in order to write China a future and reject the paternalism of other nations. The theory of *guohun* re-appropriates the initiative and ability to form a nation back to the Chinese people. The *Zhejiang Tide* contributors never fully adopted the Hegelian Enlightenment mode of history, but attempted to theorize their own form of nationalistic discourse. Hegelian Enlightenment discourse, the Japanese *tōyōshi* paradigm and the *Zhejiang Tide* students' *guohun* and universalist nationalism all purport to support a clear

narrative of the nation, but the methods that each use to portray the nation actually re-appropriate and drive from each other.

Chapter Two The Translated Locality: The Social Approach to Nation investigates the student authors' understanding of their native place Zhejiang, and attempts to answer the question of what position the Zhejiang locality takes in the formation of China as a modern nation, as well as probe the meaning of local self-government. In this chapter, I examine contributor Wen Gui (文詭)'s article "The Voice of Zhejiang" (*zhesheng*) and Gong Fazi's article "Warnings To My Fellow Countrymen" (*jinggao wo xiangren*). I will show how Wen Gui's portrayal of Zhejiang narrates the local as constituted by larger movements of Chinese history, and thus positions it as where authentic Chineseness can be found. The students' searching for the nature of China through the authentic and unique characteristics of each locality instead of adopted themselves into the Enlightenment discourse corresponds to the Meiji thinkers who are identified as conservatives due to their rejection of the Enlightenment tradition and took a defensive position to Confucian ethics. My study will show the parallels between the student authors' views on locality and that of conservative Meiji thinker Kuga Katsunan (1857-1907). Then, I will focus on the languages of the journal's articles on Zhejiang as local place, and show that by how Wen Gui uses the term "society" (*shehui*) to translate locality as a the realm where public, commercial, and industrial activities take place. In other words, local society is where noble patriots with *jingshen* (the wish and will to act) spread the unique *texing* (special character) of the Chinese people. Here, local identity itself also connotes specific characteristics that can contribute to the formation of *guohun*. For the *Zhejiang Tide* students, the writing of local history no longer means the creation of a literati community centered in the locale and structured in the

traditional model. Instead, they perceive local provinces as social realms where public activity can and should be carried out. Since the local is the place where the authenticity of Chineseness is shown and where the public activities take place, local self-government becomes the only legitimate way of forming China's *guohun*. The student authors thus use a different approach to reform than contemporaneous intellectuals such as Liang Qichao. Different from Liang, who used an individual approach to reform in his writings on "New Citizen" (*xinmin shuo*), the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors use a social approach to formulate their reform strategy. Instead of advocating collective nationhood as the object and obligation for individuals, the *Zhejiang Tide* authors' conception of locality and nationhood suggests that the nation resides inside the activities and characters of different local societies, rejecting a linear and direct comparison between China and the West. The student authors' writings on locality thus also legitimize the position of local elites in public affairs, and further reject the integration of local society into the bureaucratic administration system by the central state.

The third chapter will look into the circulation of *Zhejiang Tide*, as well as connection between the journal and the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* (*Hangzhou baihua bao* 杭州白晝報, 1901). Sharing the same editor Sun Yizhong (courtesy name Jiangdong), *Zhejiang Tide* and the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* constituted a publishing network through which to practice the student authors' concept of *guohun* and the functions of locality in nation building. The circulation of the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* turns the language used in daily life by provincial residents into the language for political engagement. The circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* not only within Zhejiang but also in other major metropolises in China such as Beijing, Nanjing, and Chengdu indicates that these student authors not only had Zhejiang readers

in mind when composing the journal. By circulating across other provinces and cities in China, the ZT theory of *guohun* and local self-government is not only limited to Zhejiang. The staging of this concept of Zhejiang in other Chinese regions corresponds to the cultural pluralism of Wen Gui's and Fei Sheng's essays "The Voice of Zhejiang" and "Guohun." China is composed of different localities that have different characteristics, and the journals, by presenting those different localities, could make readers aware of other provinces in China and thus connect different provinces together to make the nation imaginable. The circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* was not only limited to mainland China, but also circulated in Japan, where the journal was published, and in Singapore. The deterritorialization of Zhejiang among overseas Chinese readers in Japan and Singapore shows the student authors' attempt to incorporate overseas Chinese into their theory of *guohun*. The circulation of the journal in Singapore shows the student authors' attempt to build an inter-connected cultural community through the journal by narrating an anti-colonial mission for overseas Chinese readers, and reminding them that their native local identities serve as a key means to prevent them from being exploited by imperial powers. The three linguistic styles of vernacular (*baihua*), "new prose style" (*xin wenti*), and classical Chinese (*guwen*) used by *Zhejiang Tide* and the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* also attempt to connect different social groups together through the publication network they created.

Chapter 1 Breaking From the “Past”: *Guohun* and Indian History

有土地，有人民，有政府，有法令，則謂之為國矣乎。
而識者曰，是非國也。傀儡也。何以故。無魂故。是以戮之割之勿知醒。
— 浙江潮第一期《國魂篇》⁹

Can a place with land, with people (*renmin*), with government and law, be called a nation (*guo*)? Those with knowledge would say – not really. Why? Because they process no spirit (*hun*). If you try to slaughter and divide it apart, there’s no awareness¹⁰

In January 1903, the first issue of *Zhejiang Tide* (*Zhejiang Chao*) was printed and published in Tokyo by the Zhejiang Native Place Association (*Zhejiang tongxiang hui*).¹¹ On the cover page of the journal, three Chinese characters for *Zhejiang Tide* are listed vertically and bold in red. The turbulent waves in deep blue colliding together behind the characters in the background express a sense of crisis, forcefulness, and grandeur. Turning over the cover of the first issue, the foreword, and the charter for the Zhejiang Native Place association, appears the contents page. For a reader from the 21st century trying to examine the transnational practice in the production of nationalistic history and how the prioritization of history as “the mode of being” unfolded in nations that are not privileged by the Enlightenment discourse, *Zhejiang Tide* presents itself as a perfect source due to its correspondence with Hegelian modes of history from the very first glance.¹² A reader like me would find two striking points on the contents page of the journal. First, the opening article of the journal is called “Guohun” (國魂), which translated

⁹ Fei Sheng. 飛生, “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903) 1:1. For all citations of *Zhejiang Tide*, the first is the issue number, while the second is the page number of the quote in the article rather than the journal. Each article has its own page number. The page numbers of the whole journal is not provided in every edition.

¹⁰ All quotes from the journal are translated by me.

¹¹ When referring to journal publication months I use the Chinese calendar used by the editors.

¹² “History as a mode of being” means the “incorporates the Other into the time of universal history and under the name of abstract reason.” It refers to the privilege of history over other forms of experiencing time and over space, in which the intelligibility of people without History is denied. Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation : Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 19.

into English means national spirit or national soul. The character *hun*, which means transcendent spirit or soul, might be read as a gesture towards G.W.F Hegel's *The Philosophy of History*, in which the Universal History is directed by the Spirit and the study of Universal History is to be acquainted with this Spirit.¹³ In the early 20th century, when the *Zhejiang Tide* students were studying abroad in Japan, the idea of using the concept of spirit to approach and narrate history was pervasive among Meiji intellectuals. In a study of Meiji Japan's Oriental school *tōyōshi*, Stefan Tanaka points out in his book *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History* that Shiratori Kurakichi (1865-1942), professor of history at Tokyo Imperial University who is primarily responsible for "the formation and formulation of *tōyōshi*," took German historian Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886) as his model and viewed the religious spirit in Ranke's works as the "unifying theme for the Japanese nation-state."¹⁴ Given the intellectual context of Meiji Japan, the *Zhejiang Tide* students' choice of proposing *guohun* as the focal idea for nation formation seems to suggest a possible influence of the Enlightenment framework on those young Chinese intellectuals through their study in Japan. In *Rescuing History from the Nation*, Prasenjit Duara suggests that East Asian societies had successfully adopted the mode of Enlightenment history more than other non-Western societies, and names the Chinese intellectuals' narration of Chinese history in the late 19th and early 20th century as "Chinese history in the Enlightenment Mode."¹⁵ Taking Hegel as the founder of Enlightenment narration of history, Duara analyzes the adaptation of a unilinear and teleological mode of history narration by the Chinese intellectuals. Did the

¹³ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and J. Sibree. *The Philosophy of History*, (Dover ed, Dover Publications, 2004), 17-21.

¹⁴ Stefan Tanaka. *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History*, (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1996), 64-65.

¹⁵ Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation : Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 17.

Zhejiang Tide students also adopt themselves into this framework of writing history? What motivated them to apply the seemingly Hegelian terminology and modes of writing? The first half of this chapter will deal with these questions regarding the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors' approach to history and their relation with the Enlightenment tradition.

Continuing examining the contents page, the second striking point is that in a journal purportedly introducing new knowledge from Japan to strengthen China, the first article in the history section is neither about Chinese nor Japanese history. Rather, it is about India and is named "The Reason for India's Extinction" (*Yindu Miawang zhi Yuanyin*). The writing of other countries is nothing unique or new to the Chinese students during the early 20th century. Rebecca Karl's *Staging The World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* demonstrates the process of constructing a global political stage by the Chinese nationalists in the 20th century.¹⁶ The question I am concerned with here is – how did the student author "translate" India's history into their own language? What role does history play for *Zhejiang Tide* students' theorization of nation?

As the first step to understand the theorization of nation and the translingual practice of history in the context of early 20th century China, this chapter will primarily focus on the articles titled "Guohun" and "The Reason For India's Extinction" in *Zhejiang Tide* by the authors Fei Sheng and Ye Gong. Since "translingual practice" in my study refers to the process of writing the history of another culture in one's own language, I will analyze and unpack the student authors' linguistic and stylistic choice to examine the implications behind their seemingly pro-Hegelian narration of history, and its tension with the historiography in Enlightenment tradition and

¹⁶ Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World : Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).

Japan's Oriental school *tōyōshi*. Therefore, I have elected to keep the words used by the *Zhejiang Tide* students in *pinyin* to emphasize that those words contain their specific value and meaning in the context of the journals' articles, and do not correspond to the common translation in English. Through a close reading of the definition of *guohun* and how to achieve it, I argue that Fei Sheng portrays *guohun* as a universal nationalism in which the formation of this spirit, the spirit or soul of nation, becomes the telos of history. I will show that this historical narration gives the initiative to form a nation back to the Chinese people and strives a possible future for China that breaks the limits of the Enlightenment discourse. Then, I will examine the article "The Reason for India's Extinction" in the second half of the chapter and show that the writing of Indian history by Ye Gong legitimizes Fei Sheng's theory of *guohun* as a universal concept. In other words, India becomes a "proof" for Fei Sheng's universal nationalism. In *Japan's Orient*, Stefan Tanaka points out that *shina* became Japan's "archive of *tōyō*" through which Meiji scholars of the Oriental school understood Japan and its position in the world.¹⁷ I will then conduct a comparative study on the way *tōyōshi* scholars portrayed *shina* and the way *Zhejiang Tide* students write about India's history to show the reason and form through which *Zhejiang Tide* student authors "translate" Indian history for their own historical discourse.

For the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors, the writing of other nations' history in a unilinear and teleological narrative was a necessary step in theorizing *guohun* as a universal nationalism, breaking China from "freezing into the past" in existing Enlightenment and *tōyōshi* historical

¹⁷ Meiji *tōyōshi* scholars viewed the Orient as the past from where Japan's modernity originated. *Tōyō* is thus the archive for Japan's cultural roots. *Shina* is the leading project in this archive, through which Japan's future and its equality with the West is constructed. "*Shina*" is a Japanese neologism for China used throughout the first half of 20th century China. It is heavily criticized by Chinese scholars as representing the imperial ambition of Japan and is no longer used after World War II. Ye Gong here adapted this word when referring to China. Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History*, (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1996), 3-4.

discourse, and putting the initiative of forming nation back to the hands of Chinese people.¹⁸ I will show that even though Fei Sheng's theory of *guohun* and Ye Gong's writing on India history support a unilinear and teleological historical discourse, their narration actually usurps, appropriates, and transforms existing historiographical tools to achieve their own purposes of narrating a possible future for China. The study of *Zhejiang Tide* students' narration of universalism shows that it is no longer possible to claim the hegemony and the integrating power of the Enlightenment discourse. The rhetoric and framework in the universal nationalism of *guohun*, Enlightenment discourse, and the Meiji Oriental history school *tōyōshi* derive from each other but appropriate and transform the original meaning of words and methods to their own purposes. The unilinear and teleological narrations of history that are supposed to support a clear-cut and independent nation-state as the telos of history are ironically interconnected and re-appropriated each other in their rhetoric and methods.

Theorizing *Guohun*

Let us now turn to the pages of “Guohun” to examine the meaning of this concept, understand the student cohort's positioning of it as the opening article of the whole journal project, and explore the relationship between the concept of *guohun* and the idea of Spirit in Hegel's philosophy. Through analyzing their terminology in narrating nationalism and history, I will show how the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors' theorization of *guohun* breaks China from the limit of the Enlightenment discourse.

¹⁸ “Freezing China into the past” means that in *tōyōshi* scholars' approach to history, China is portrayed as the past of Japan, a culture that leads to Japan's success but is unable to attain modernity by itself. Stefan Tanaka. *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History*, (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1996), 4.

The article “Guohun” is composed by the author with the pen name Fei Sheng (飛生), in literal translation means “fly and born”, which corresponds to and indicates the process of attaining *guohun* as I discuss below. First, let us focus on the author’s definition of *guohun*. When explaining the formation of nation-states, Fei Sheng defines *Guohun* and its function as such:

A *minzu* (race/ ethnic group /nation) that can form a nation and stand in this world must have one thing essential to its special character (*texing*). This essence is nurtured by history, heartened and practiced by heroes, and sowed in various societies.¹⁹ Relying on this essence’s infinite magic (*muoli*) allows a group to internally unify all people’s forces (*qunli*) and externally absorb the culture of other civilizations to fight against alien races (*yizu*). The expansion of the essence’s power can alter the world and reinforce the nation, while the lack of it will inevitably cause the extinction of a race (*zu*). I have nothing else to name this essence but *guohun* (national spirit/soul).²⁰

In Fei Sheng’s definition, *guohun* is the unique essence of a nation that externally distinguishes it from all other nations and internally unifies it. In order for a nation to survive in the world, it must attain and realize this essence since its lack will cause the extinction of a nation. Then, how to realize *guohun*? If *guohun* is pivotal for forming a nation, where does it come from and how to realize it? According to Fei Sheng, *guohun* comes from *fengsu* (local custom and lived experience). He says, “The relationship between *guohun* and *fengsu* is similar to that of the soul and the brain. There is a close connection between them. When the brain is sick, one’s soul will surely be lost. When *fengsu* becomes corrupt, *guohun* will suffer the same fate.”²¹ At the first glance, this definition of *guohun* as essential to a nation’s character and as a result of local custom may seem to overlap with the idea of *guominxing* (national character). Widely used by Chinese intellectuals from the late Qing era through the New Cultural Movement (1910s-1920s),

¹⁹ “一民族而能立國於世界，則必有一物焉。本之于特性，養之以歷史，鼓之舞之以英雄，播之于種種社會上。”

²⁰ Fei Sheng. 飛生, “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:6.

²¹ Ibid., 1:5.

guominxing was translated into Chinese from the Meiji Japan neologism *kokuminsei* (national character). Drawing on concepts from French and German thinkers such as Herder (1744-1803) in the 18th and 19th centuries, “the idea of national character subsumes human differences under the totalizing category of national identity...”²² According to Lydia Liu, the Chinese intellectuals around the turn of the 20th century adopted this idea of “essentialist notion of national individuality and consciousness” for the purpose of constructing China’s modern nationhood and criticizing tradition. Although the individual and essentializing nature of *guohun* and *guominxing* may seem similar, there is in fact a crucial divergence between the way that the *Zhejiang Tide* author Fei Sheng defines *guohun* and the idea of *guominxing* in the context of the the New Culture Movement. A comparison between *guohun* and *guominxing* can help us clarify their different meanings. *Guominxing*, according to Liu, is the concept through which late Qing intellectuals and New Culture Movement leaders such as Lu Xun and Chen Duxiu identified the causes of China’s purported weakness and criticized the Confucian tradition.²³ However, Fei Sheng’s idea of *guohun* is neither a unilinear character that is fixed or stable, nor a denial of the past and cultural heritage. According to Fei Sheng, *guohun* could arise naturally or could be constructed and animated (*guzhu*). He states, “The birth and occurrence of *guohun* can happen in two ways. It can happen naturally in nations that have intrinsic advantages, while it can also be constructed by hundreds or thousands of faithful patriotic men through bloody and tearful struggle.”²⁴ If *guohun* is something that can be constructed through struggle, it is thus malleable and can be changed by human forces and activities rather than inherited simply from tradition

²² Lydia He. Liu, *Translingual Practice : Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity--China, 1900-1937*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 47-49.

²³ *Ibid.*, 76.

²⁴ Fei Sheng. 飛生, “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:6-7.

without awareness. Moreover, as pointed out before, *guohun* in this figuration is also not the cause of China's weakness, but rather the essence that could unify and strengthen the nation. Therefore, the concept of *guohun* suggested by the student author here is not dispatched for the purpose of identifying the reason for China's weakness nor for criticizing tradition and cultural heritage. Rather, as Fei Sheng points out, *guohun* is the key concept which makes the construction of a nation possible and the future of a nation conceivable. Fei Sheng then moves on to elaborate how to construct *guohun* suggesting that noble patriots must "observe the special character of their race and guide the people to practice their character based on its trends (*shi*)."²⁵ This means that *guohun* is not inherently or spontaneously constituted by traditional heritage – as Lu Xun's *guominxing* is – but requires Chinese patriots to actively fight for it according to the perceived special character of Chinese people. In Fei Sheng's figuration, *guohun* thus signifies the agency and initiative of the Chinese people, which contrasts with *guominxing* that is constituted by China's traditional heritage.

Therefore, Fei Sheng argues that through the study of special character that is fostered by the history and the local custom, the patriotic heroes could construct *guohun* and preserve the nation. Since the noun *texing* contains the same word *xing* (character) as *guomixing*, do they entail the same meaning? Does Fei Sheng advocate the study of *texing* for the purpose of identifying the cause for China's weakness and thus essentialize China's cultural heritage for criticizing the Confucian moral tradition? I touch upon this question below, but here, I wish to elaborate further on the concept of *guohun* and point out two important aspects of it that allow

²⁵ Fei Sheng. 飛生, "Guohun Pian," 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:7.

the students to refuse paternalism from other nations and to claim the agency of the Chinese people in strengthening their own nation.

As pointed out above, *guohun* signifies the idea that “people,” the patriotic heroes, are the agents for constructing their nation. Meanwhile, Fei Sheng also implies that only people who share the same *fengsu* can form *guohun*. For him, “people” (*guomin*), the subject of a nation, is defined by *fengsu* rather than anything else. In other words, the matter of who are and who are not the people of a nation is assessed by whether they share the same *fengsu* through the same living conditions and experience. In the opening segment of “Guohun”, Fei Sheng writes:

Can we call all those who have the five organs, four limbs, roundheads and square toes humans (*ren*)? Not really. They can also be puppets. Why? Because they have no spirit (*hun*). If you slaughter or kill them, they don’t feel pain. Can a place with land, with people (*renmin*), with government and law, be called a nation (*guo*)? Those with knowledge would say – not really. Why? Because they process no spirit (*hun*). If you try to slaughter and divide it apart, there’s no awareness.²⁶

Here, the use of the word *renmin*, which is usually translated into “people” in English, does not mean the people of a nation since the author points out that a land with people (*renmin*) cannot be called a nation. Rather, “a *minzu* (race/ethnic group) that can form a nation and stand in this world must have one thing essential to its *texing* (special character).”²⁷ In Fei Sheng’s definition, people from the same *minzu* also do not spontaneously form a nation. *Minzu* means the racial group that makes the formation of a nation possible. Instead, Fei Sheng defines those who have *guohun* and become the subject of nation as *guomin* (national citizen/people), the “people of a nation.” When he explains the differences between nations, he says, “I know there must be one essential thing (*yiwu*), carrying infinite power that resides in the brain (*naozhi*) of *guomin*

²⁶ Fei Sheng. 飛生, “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:1.

²⁷ Ibid.

(people of a nation). The educators can foresee it and spread it according to its unique character. The result is, forcing the *guomin* of Germany to become like that of the French is impossible. Forcing the *guomin* of the British to become like that of the Japanese is likewise impossible.”²⁸ Fei Sheng here uses *guomin* to identify those who process *guohun*, in referring to the subject of the nation.

If race or ethnicity does not give people the potential to attain *guohun* spontaneously, then what makes a group of people able to form a nation? The answer is local custom (*fengsu*). When suggesting that *guohun* could evoke a patriotic heart (*aiguoxin*), Fei Sheng points out that there are three types of patriotism: intellectual patriot (*zhishide*), habitual patriot (*xiguande*), and emotional patriot (*qinggande*). Among them “habitual patriotism results from the system of *fengsu* (custom).”²⁹ Here, we can see that *fengsu*, means the environmental, cultural, and institutional experience shared by people from the same race, constitutes their similar living habits and makes them natural patriots that are able to form *guohun* for their nation. Thus, the subject of a nation, *guomin*, is defined by the shared customs and habits that are nurtured by the same experience of living in the same environment. Therefore, *guohun* is not something that could be realized through learning from other nations, since people from another different living condition have different customs and can not help a given group transform from an ethnic community (*minzu*) to people of their nation. Even though a nation could absorb the civilization and culture of other nations into their national spirit to reinforce their nation, the full realization of national spirit can only be done through the close study of their own national customs, characters, and habits, rather than importing knowledge and perspectives from foreign nations.

²⁸ Fei Sheng. 飛生, “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:2.

²⁹ Ibid., 1:4.

The idea that *guohun* could either occur naturally or be constructed by mindful patriots brings the equal possibility for China to form a nation in the system of universal nationalism. By defining *guohun* as a malleable character that derives from national custom and culture, Fei Sheng puts the agency and base of constructing a nation into the hands of the Chinese people, and confirms the function of local custom in the construction of the nation. This orientation distinguishes his theory from that of the Enlightenment thinkers, for instance, Fukuzawa Yukichi's idea that scholars should learn from the West in order to realize the duty of individuals.³⁰ Here, we can see how Fei Sheng, during his time in Japan, attempted to break from the role of "student" who were obligated to learn from the more advanced and "Westernized" nations such as Japan. Rather, he perceived himself as a mindful patriot who can claim China's future position in the globe. In other words, Fei Sheng demonstrates autonomy and initiative in constructing the idea of nation for Chinese people by giving their initiative and possibility back to those who share the same cultural and historical experience.

Another aspect of *guohun* which gives agency back to the people of the nation (*guomin*) is the individual will and initiative to act resides in this concept, which also makes it different from Hegel's concept of Spirit. Although *hun* (soul/spirit) resembles *Geist* (Spirit) in the sense that they both refer to the transcendent mechanism through which people can strive to obtain universal truth, the meaning behind Fei Sheng's idea of *guohun* is different from Spirit. In Hegel's idea, Spirit is the will of the conductor, the God. To realize true freedom, one must "know God" and be acquainted with Spirit through universal history.³¹ However, the concept *guohun* lacks the will of any higher being. Instead, it is the motivation, manifestation, and result

³⁰ Yukichi Fukuzawa, et al. *An Encouragement of Learning*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

³¹ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and J. Sibree. *The Philosophy of History*, (Dover ed, Dover Publications, 2004), 15-17.

of people's initiative. Fei Sheng points out that *guohun* must be constructed by mindful patriots, and even in those nations where *guohun* occurs naturally, the people of the nation must practice and strengthen their unique characters (*texing*) through activities.³² Fei Sheng analyzes the four spirits of the Europeans to prove this point, and uses the word *jingshen* (will/soul), instead of *hun*, to refer to individuals' will and spirit when manifesting the special character of the nation through their activities. For instance, when talking about the spirit of adventure, the author says, "this *jingshen* never disappeared even during the dark era."³³ Here, we can see that *jingshen* refers to individuals' initiative that is manifested through action, which further practice and enforce the special character of their ethnic group and make the formation of *guohun* possible. Therefore, the idea of *gunhun*, instead of manifesting the will of a higher being, is realized through the unification of individuals' will and initiative to act in a given ethnic group. As long as people do not lose their *jingshen*, any nation can attain *guohun*. The concept of *guohun* thus theorizes the will and agency of the people as the most crucial element in forming a nation.

Moreover, unlike Spirit, which exists in history that already happened, *guohun* represents the next phase of China's future. It is something waiting to be constructed rather than already existed in the past waiting to be discovered. History nurtures the special characters of a nation and paves the potential to form *guohun*. Therefore, it is malleable and constructable rather than fixed and defined by the past. Since, in Fei Sheng's words, the mindful and willful men (*zhishi*) have to utilize and guide *texing*, the special characters of a nation, to form *guohun*, *texing* is different from the unchangeable *guominxing* that is rooted in the "old" tradition and must be abandoned entirely in order to construct the new. *Texing* is "guidable" (*lidao*), meaning that the

³² Fei Sheng. 飛生, "Guohun Pian," 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:7.

³³ Ibid.

willful men could utilize and enhance the valuable part of *texing* while wiping out the harmful elements. At the end of “Guohun” segment in issue 1, Fei Sheng points out the concept of *exi* (evil/harmful habits) as rooted in the past that can prevent the formation of *guohun*. However, this concept of *exi* actually proves the possibility and malleability of *guohun*. Fei Sheng argues that if China does not wipe out the evil habits inherited from history, *guohun* will never be achieved.³⁴ He says, “what is called the conservativeness (*shoujiu*) of China is the defense of one’s own profits and evil habits, which are the result of the past.”³⁵ By referring to the defense of one’s own profits as *exi* (evil habits), Fei Sheng implies that Chinese people have the initiative and ability to strive for their own future, but so far have been focusing on individual gains rather than benefiting the collective and their nation. In other words, the student author Fei Sheng uses the concept *exi* to prove that the Chinese people still have the agency to initiate change and form *guohun*. Fei Sheng thus tries to present China with a future that can be realized by its own people through studying China’s customs and practicing their unique essence and characters. In this narrative of nation formation, China has the future or potential to form a nation by its own people, and should no longer be viewed as “past” without initiative or agent.

Usurping Agency: *Guohun* and Its Break With the Enlightenment Mode of History

Now we see the great divergence between Fei Sheng’s use of “*hun*” in and the idea of Spirit in Hegel’s terminology. Then, can we still agree with Prasenjit Duara’s argument in *Rescuing History From the Nation* that Chinese intellectuals in the late 19th and early 20th

³⁴ Fei Sheng. 飛生, “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:16-17.

³⁵ Ibid.

century adopted themselves “successfully” into the Enlightenment mode of history? Here, let’s dive more into Duara’s definition of Enlightenment and his analysis of Hegel to see whether our *Zhejiang Tide* student author was integrated into this framework of Enlightenment discourse.

First, as pointed out by Duara, the mode of Enlightenment History is founded by Hegel’s *Philosophy of History* in which History is privileged over other forms of experiencing time and over space as the mode of being.³⁶ “For Hegel, the telos of History – the structure governing its progress – is the unfolding self-awareness of Spirit which is Reason...Progressive self-awareness of the individual involves not only the recognition of the freedom of the self from the hold of nature and ascriptive orders, but most supremely, the realization of his simultaneous oneness with Spirit. This is true freedom, the end of History,...”³⁷ Duara argues that History is privileged as the mode of being in Hegel’s philosophy because the true freedom, which is the attainment of Spirit, is the end and the telos of History. Therefore, in Hegel’s epistemology, it was through and only through Universal History that the Spirit could be realized. Duara then points out the arbitrary effect of this narrative. Privileging History as the mode of being:

enables not simply the justification of world mastery by the West, but as Robert Young has pointed out, the appropriation of the Other as a form of knowledge. Thus the universalization of History subjects other social and epistemic forms into its own overarching framework and finds them severely wanting...Privileging History over other forms of experiencing time and over space is a double closure that denies intelligibility to people without History.³⁸

“History” here means universal linear progress whose telos is to realize oneness with Spirit. Any “Other” who could not realize this “oneness” would be freezed into knowledge in this narration and their intelligibility would be denied, just as China and India in Hegel’s narration. Then,

³⁶ Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation : Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 19.

³⁷ Ibid., 17-18.

³⁸ Ibid., 19.

through what mechanism does History unfold its power? The answer is, according to Duara, the nation-state. He says, “it is important to note that these powers emerged simultaneously as nation-states and empires,...My argument is that if History is the mode of being, the condition which enables modernity as possibility, the nation-state is the agency, the subject of History which will realize modernity.”³⁹ Therefore, Duara suggests that in Hegel’s philosophy, the telos of History manifests itself in nation-states. Those without History also do not have the potential to form a nation and have to be civilized through conquest. After giving this powerful interpretation of Hegel, Duara moves on to suggest that since the nation becomes the subject of History in this philosophy, Chinese intellectuals in the 20th century had to adopt themselves into the Enlightenment mode of writing “as their own and pursues its inseparability from the project of creating a national subject evolving to modernity.”⁴⁰ According to Duara, because Chinese intellectuals needed to construct the subject of modernity, they had to use the Enlightenment mode of history since it was only through this mode of being that the nation emerged as the agency of modernity. Duara thus builds a connection between Hegel’s Enlightenment history and the historiography produced by Chinese intellectuals in the 20th century, and named the latter as “Chinese History in the Enlightenment Mode.” For Duara, the way that Chinese intellectuals wrote history can be considered as Enlightenment mode because they have three similarities with the evolutionary model in the Enlightenment history – they all conduct a “reverse project of recovering the primordial subject of rejoining the present to the past through some essentializing strategy,” prove the “nation as the vehicle to modernity,” and “propel Chinese history into the

³⁹ Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation : Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 19-20.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 25.

progress of universal history.”⁴¹ According to Duara, Chinese history written by intellectuals such as Liang Qichao, Wang Jingwei, and Fu Sinina are in Enlightenment mode also because they tried to attain universality while maintaining the particularity of their nation.⁴²

Duara gives a precise description of the common methods used by the Chinese intellectuals in constructing “China” through history written in the first half of the 20th century. This analysis positions the Chinese intellectuals in the framework of Hegel’s Enlightenment history by suggesting that their writing of history projects the formation of modern nation as the ultimate telos of History. I agree with Duara’s analysis on the methods and purposes in Chinese intellectuals’ writing of national history. In fact, the above methods are also employed by Fei Sheng in his theory of *guohun*. As discussed above, Fei Sheng suggests that only nations with *guohun* can be counted as nations and those without “*hun*” are only puppets.⁴³ He also defines *guohun* as “essential to their (the nations’) character which is nurtured by history.”⁴⁴ Under this definition, *guohun* is the essence of a nation that resides in history and is realizable by the people who retain their *jingshen*, their initiative and will to act. The definition of *guohun* as nurtured by a nation’s history indicates that the realization of *guohun* means the rejoining of the present with its primordial past. At the same time, nation becomes the subject of History and history becomes the end in itself in the theory of *guohun*, since Fei Sheng gives a telos to history which is to realize *guohun* and form a nation. Since *guohun* is derived from the shared custom and characteristics nurtured by history, it also proves that the nation is an evolving entity that remains particular and even throughout history. Moreover, as I argued above, *guohun* in Fei Sheng’s

⁴¹ Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation : Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 25-26.

⁴² Ibid., 29.

⁴³ Fei Sheng. 飛生, “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:1.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 1:6.

writing is attained through studying and forging the characters rooted in local custom and therefore is not realizable by people from other nations because they do not share the same living experience. Therefore, Fei Sheng's narration of *guohun* and its relationship with history also fits Duara's definition of Enlightenment history, in which nations both celebrate their new mode of being and claim their uniqueness or particularity. *Guohun* thus also follows the logic of the Enlightenment mode of history in Duara's definition even though it does not focus on history but on the construction of the nation. Therefore, Fei Sheng urges China to form *guohun* and tries to propel China into this universalism constructed by his narrative. Similar to Duara's point, Fei Sheng also tries to theorize "people" for the nation since he claims that only people who still have *jingshen*, the initiative and will to act, could make the realization of *guohun* and the attainment of nationhood possible.

Although there are similarities in facilitating the idea of the nation as the telos of History between Fei Sheng's *guohun* and Hegel's Enlightenment narrative in Duara's interpretation, we also see how Fei Sheng tries to take the initiative, agency, and future back from the Enlightenment discourse by proposing *guohun* as a different model for nation formation. In Fei Sheng's narrative, *guohun* is a universal concept that gives all nations the potential to realize and attain nationhood without hierarchical differences between those who realize it through struggle and those who achieve it "naturally." This differs from the universality of Hegel's narrative, which treats History as simply the universalist and thus paves a hierarchy between nations and races. Instead, Fei Sheng narrates nationalism as a universal concept, and thus grants every nation an equal potential to attain *guohun*. Moreover, Fei Sheng does not differentiate between history and prehistory. For him, all nations possess history, but only those that are able to achieve

guohun possess a history with a future. He claims that China has the potential to attain *guohun* as other advanced nations have, and thus has the potential to become a nation with both history and future. By doing so, Fei Sheng rejects the structure of Hegel's narrative that puts China as "prehistory" without agency and initiative. Fei Sheng also rejects Hegel's idea that prehistoric nations have to be civilized through conquest by arguing that only those who share the same local customs can have the precise and authentic understanding of their nation's special character and only they are able to direct the characters of their nation to mold *guohun*. Therefore, by writing the universal nationalism of *guohun*, Fei Sheng gives China the equal potential to form a nation, places the initiative back with the Chinese people, and breaks from the historical discourse of the Enlightenment mode in which China does not possess history.

"Translating" Indian History: Consolidating Universal Nationalism

If the theory of *guohun* is for the purpose of usurping the possibility and initiative of forming a nation from the Enlightenment discourse, then what was the condition for the *Zhejiang Tide* student to "translate" the history of India and put it in the history section of the first issue? Now, let's turn to the history section of *Zhejiang Tide* and examine the language and narrative that the student author uses in composing the translation of Indian history.

The author of the article "The Reason for India's Extinction" gives himself the pen name Ye Gong, a name usually associated with the idiom "Magistrate Ye Loves the Dragon" (*ye gong hao long*), which comes from the Eastern Han (202 BC–9 AD) book *Xin Xu* written by an imperial clansman Liu Xiang (77 BC–6 BC). This idiom is used to satirize those who claim to

love something, but are frightened when the thing becomes real. It is not hard to read the author's pen name as a mockery of the Qing officials who claimed to "love the nation," as magistrate Ye claimed to love dragons, but were reluctant to contribute to the formation of the nation. Here, I will examine the language through which the author Ye Gong translates Indian history. In Ye Gong's analysis of the reasons behind India's "annihilation," we can see that "Indian" history serves multiple functions for the student author – it demonstrates the theory of *guohun* to be a universal truth, and frees China from its frozen state in the past in *tōyōshi*.

By using India as a reference for China to understand its position in the world and its own progress in the telos of *guohun*, Ye Gong fakes India as proof for the universality of the theory of *guohun*. His narration of India's history supports the universality of *guohun* in three major ways. First, Ye Gong narrates India as a "living example" of failing to realize *guohun*. In "Guohun," Fei Sheng points out that a nation's "*hun*" (soul/spirit) could only be molded by those patriotic heroes who have *jingshen* (the will to act). Only when those heroes spread a nation's unique special characters through their action and will, can the *guohun* of a nation be evoked and a nation becomes a true nation rather than a puppet. When listing the reasons behind India's extinction, Ye Gong first points out that the problem is India's geography. He suggests,

India is a state of torridity. Nowhere in the world can compare to the fertility of her agriculture. Due to this fact, the people's desire is easy to fulfill, and they have no other wishes. Moreover, the people's *jingshen* was constrained by the hot weather. They become lazy and satisfied with the peacefulness and do not wish to turn to their neighboring countries to learn the method of diplomacy and manners. Thus they have no traits of persistence and endurance. Their national strength also decreased and could not further spread their civilization.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Ye Gong. 葉公, "Yindu Miawang Zhi Yuanyin," 印度滅亡之原因, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:4.

Thus, Ye Gong locates the cause of India's extinction in the loss of *jingshen*, the people's will to act. They grew inactive and satisfied with what they already had. Then, Ye Gong moves on to describe the invasion of other ethnic groups as another reason that caused India's loss of unified *fengsu*, since different ethnic groups with different customs live mixedly. Then in the conclusion of the chapter, the author says, "If the people of India did not lose their unique *jingshen*, other ethnic groups could not invade them. If other ethnic groups did not invade them, then its people could maintain their consistency, and the great empire of India would still thrive in the land of East Asia."⁴⁶ The meaning of *jingshen* here corresponds to its meaning in Fei Sheng's article "Guohun," which means the unique character of a nation and the will to act to spread that characteristic. Besides the loss of *jingshen*, Ye Gong also narrates Indian people as losing their unique custom, which makes the people no longer able to be united because they do not share the same habit and customs anymore. He says, "Now the Aryan people gathered their forces and invaded the Indian river...Later on, they inhabited all of India's land, married indigenous people, and gradually combined their customs and habits. Therefore, they lost the unique *jingshen* of the Aryan people."⁴⁷ This use of *fengsu* also corresponds to its use in "Guohun," where the loss of a unique and consistent *fengsu* makes the unification of people impossible. In Ye Gong's figuration, India became extinct because they lost the necessary elements in achieving *guohun*. Therefore, by writing India's history, the student author attempts to prove the universality of their theory, since those nations that could not achieve this universal telos were already dead.

Secondly, the writing of Indian history and the analysis of why India failed to form *guohun* shows that Ye Gong narrates history in a unilinear and teleological way, since the causes

⁴⁶ Ye Gong. 葉公, "Yindu Miewang Zhi Yuanyin," 印度滅亡之原因, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:9.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 1:5.

in the past lead to the present death of a nation. When Ye Gong points out the key factor behind the fall of India, he suggests that Indian people cannot be united because their shared experiences and customs were dispersed into the mixture of other ethnic groups. Ye Gong explains India's inability to attain *guohun* as due to the invasions that happened in Indian history and proves that the nations that could not develop *guohun* will die in the future. Therefore, Indian history proves that History is unilinear, since the past and present are in a casual relationship – the history of being invaded causes the present “death” of India, which means the present is determined by the past, and nations are entities that exist at the very beginning of history whose survival is dependent on the realization of *guohun*.

Besides confirming *guohun* as the telos of history, the writing of India's history also creates a contrast with the narration of the Zhejiang locality that opens China's possibility to realize *guohun*. The student author Wen Meng gives a detailed portrayal of Zhejiang local history in “A General View on Zhejiang Culture” (*Zhejiang Wenming Zhi Gaiguan*). The author categorizes Zhejiang history into four progressive periods,

from Yu the Great to the Spring and Autumn period is the period of growth (*mengya shidai*); from Guojian (reigned 496 - 465 BC), the king of Yue (present-day northern Zhejiang near the end of the Spring and Autumn period, approximately 770 - 476 BC) to Western Jin (265-316) is the period of growth (*shengzhang shidai*); from the Jin to the development of Northern Song (960-1127) in the south is the period of progress (*jianjin shidai*); from Southern Song (1127 - 1279) to late Ming (1368 - 1644) is the period of prosperous (*fada shidai*).⁴⁸

The author then describes Zhejiang culture in detail, from the age of Yu the Great to the late Ming. This writing of Zhejiang history portrays the province as the origin and continuous center of Han culture that is never affected or disrupted by alien ethnic groups. Therefore, by creating a

⁴⁸ Wen Meng. 文猛, “Zhejiang Wenming Zhi Gaiguan,” 浙江文明之概觀, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 2:4.

contrast between India and Zhejiang throughout history, the student authors implicitly indicate China's possibility of forming *guohun*, since Zhejiang is implied to retain the pure Han culture that has never been disturbed. Therefore, in Wen Meng's figuration, Zhejiang preserves the customs, culture, and history of the Han ethnic group for China's attainment of *guohun*.

The student authors' writing of Indian history also supports *guohun* as achievable only through self-awareness. In "Guohun," Fei Sheng argues that *guohun* could either happen naturally or be constructed and heartened (*guzhu*) by hundreds and thousands of noble patriots through studying the special characters of their race and being aware of them. Then, Ye Gong figurates India as not being able to achieve self-awareness. Ye Gong writes:

The ethnic groups in India were mixed and chaotic, and the language was complex. Their religions were separated and opposite each other. The leaders indulged in entertainment while the people were lost in sensational pleasure and not concerned about humiliation of their nation. There were endless strict policies and violent actions. When the people realized their position was not equal to the servants, they started to feel pain and tried to break the constraint. However, during that time, their blood was all aborted and their throat was choked. There was already no way out...⁴⁹

The author suggests that the fall of India was not only because of the loss of *fengsu* and *jingshen*, but also because the Indian people lacked awareness of the humiliations that happened to their nation. The colonization of India by the West is not considered to be a civilizing process by Ye Gong but rather as the cause of the nation's death. Ye Gong's narrative of Indian history thus supports the theory of *guohun* that only the people's own self-awareness could save their nation. It further proves that only by looking back to the past and being aware of history can *guohun* be attained, which makes *guohun* a transcendental concept waiting for people to be aware of.

⁴⁹ Ye Gong. 葉公, "Yindu Miawang Zhi Yuanyin," 印度滅亡之原因, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:1.

Transforming *Tōyō*

The student author's writing of Indian history also helped them break the positioning of China as Japan's past in *tōyōshi*, an Oriental school of Meiji Japan for the study of "that which was not the Occident."⁵⁰ The *Zhejiang Tide* author Ye Gong must already encountered this concept, since the very first sentence in "The Reason for India's Extinction" is "If we turn to the page of *dongyang* history, only *shina* and India could be counted as ancient nations."⁵¹ Since the student already encountered the concept of *tōyō*, it is worth comparing his analysis of India's history with the historical narrative in *tōyōshi* to identify the difference between Ye Gong's definition of *dongyang* and the connotation of *tōyō* in Meiji Japan's Oriental school. Although sharing the same characters, *dongyang* only means the split of East and West based on national development, rather than a two geocultural entities that contrasts and contests with each other, as the definition of Meiji neologism *tōyō*. In *Japan's Orient, Rendering Pasts into History*, Tanaka points out that the *tōyōshi* emerged from Japanese intellectuals' acceptance of Enlightenment discourse and their attempt to diverge from it. Tanaka points out that in the early Meiji era, Japanese intellectuals "adopted the 'world history' of Europe so as to develop a history in which Japan, too, could be part of the universal order... Through their reading of the histories of Western civilization, they came to believe that universal laws existed that govern all societies, including Japan, and they attempted to place Japan into that universalistic framework."⁵² Meiji

⁵⁰ Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History*, (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1996), 4.

⁵¹ 東洋, same Chinese characters as the Japanese phrase *tōyō*, here means the geographical eastern continent rather than those that are not Occident. Ye Gong, 葉公. "Yindu Miewang Zhi Yuanyin," 印度滅亡之原因, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:1.

⁵² Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History*, (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1996), 36.

intellectuals strived to push Japan into this discourse as an equal entity with the West, but only to realize the hierarchy embedded within this discourse. Japan “quickly learns that the imported infrastructure has a logic all its own, and that the ‘mechanically propelled Trojan horse’ of alien civilisation drastically disrupts and reorganises the social fabric upon which the ideology of his traditional outlook rests.”⁵³ *Tōyōshi* was thus born through Japanese intellectuals’ attempt to counter Western history and to create a dialogue with it.⁵⁴ As Tanaka points out, “*Tōyōshi* emerged in the 1890s out of this recognition that European world history was merely *seiyōshi*, a history of the West that privileged European culture as superior to all other cultures.”⁵⁵ However, this discourse of *tōyō* is by no means a neutral study of non-Western countries, nor an exclusively anti-West narrative. In contrast, Tanaka concludes, “On the one hand, *tōyōshi*, which developed to fill the void of the Enlightenment’s ‘world histories’, and supplement Western history (*seiyōshi*), can be simply as Japanese oriental studies...It established modern Japan’s equivalence – as the most advanced nation in Asia – with Europe, and also the distinction from and cultural, intellectual, and structural superiority over China.”⁵⁶ Therefore, in a *tōyōshi* framework, China becomes *shina*, a place where “Japanese historians ‘discovered’ the beginnings of Japan’s historical narrative in *tōyō*, thereby locating its origins and its relation to *shina*.”⁵⁷ China is thus articulated as the past of Japan, the cultural source for Japan to establish their “archive of *tōyō*.”⁵⁸

⁵³ Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History*, (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1996), 31.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

Then, how could the writing of India's history help the *Zhejiang Tide* student break China from the limit of *shina*? As I argued above, Ye Gong figurates *guohun* as a universal truth through his narrative of Indian history. Since nations either attain *guohun* or die and *guohun* is rooted in each nation's own history and custom, none of the nations could be the past of other nations since they do not share the same national spirit and local custom. In issue 5 of *Zhejiang Tide*, when Ye Gong criticizes the British and French colonization of India, he narrated their colonial relation as the following, "The European people already penetrated into the lungs of India people like bacterias and absorbed their blood. Once the disease erupts, there is no way to heal it."⁵⁹ This strict dichotomy of living and dead nations refuses the idea of being the "living past" that supports the development of other nations and refuses any other form of "traditionalization" of China as the cultural source for Japan to reach modernity, as implied in Japan's Oriental school *tōyōshi*. For Ye Gong if a nation is dead, it is not possible for its tradition to be in the present. The student author therefore refuses *tōyōshi*'s construction of China as an archive of tradition.

Moreover, since *guohun* is configured as a universalistic idea that makes all nations equal once realized, Ye Gong and Fei Sheng maintain the possible equality between China and Japan. They thus refused *tōyōshi* historiography's attempt to freeze China into the past. This proof of nationhood as an universal concept, and nations as equal yet particular breaks the geocultural split of the West and the East as two geocultural entities in the historical narrative of *tōyō*. As Tanaka points out, *tōyō* indicates Japanese scholars' realization that "European world history was merely *seiyōshi*," which means that for the *tōyōshi* historians, *tōyō*, the orient, is a geocultural

⁵⁹ Ye Gong, 葉公. "Yindu Miawang Zhi Yuanyin," 印度滅亡之原因, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 5:11.

entity that shares the same historical and cultural base that is distinct from but equal to the West.

⁶⁰ However, for the *Zhejiang Tide* student author, the split between West and East as complete and self-sustained entities is unnecessary for their narrative of world history. With the idea that *guohun* grants each nation equality and particularity, the students refuse to categorize China into the geocultural entity of *tōyō*. By doing so, the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors changes the meaning behind the characters “東洋” (*dongyang*, the orient). Their use of *dongyang* here refers to the split between Western and Eastern nations in their progress of moving towards the attainment of *guohun*. When talking about European nations, both Fei Sheng and Ye Gong describe Europe as “with great inflation of nationalism” and greatly advocate nationalism/motherlandism (*zuguo zhuyi*).⁶¹ Therefore, rather than a cultural split between the East and the West that assumes all the East as sharing the same culture and is essentially different from the West, Ye Gong describes a split between East and West based on the stage of their national development. The *Zhejiang Tide* student author Ye Gong thus breaks the Japan-oriented geocultural entity that is articulated by the Japanese *tōyōshi* scholars, and creates their own perception for China that is equal to other nations in the world.

Universal Law vs. Cultural Relations

Beside breaking China from the limited framework of *tōyōshi* and assuming it the possibility of forming *guohun*, the *Zhejiang Tide* students’ writing of India also show a way of comprehending their own nation’s relationship with other nations in the world that is distinct

⁶⁰ History of the Occident.

⁶¹ Fei Sheng, 飛生. “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:9, 3:20.

from the way *tōyōshi* scholars comprehended Japan's relation with the rest of the world. Here, I will first analyze the difference between the *Zhejiang Tide* students' understanding of China and India's relationship in *Zhejiang Tide* and Japanese *tōyōshi* scholars' narration of the relation between *shina* and Japan. Then I will demonstrate the two groups' different ways of comprehending the world. In the *tōyōshi* historiography, *shina* generates a geocultural dichotomy between *tōyō* and *seiyō* and becomes the cultural root of Japan. However, in *Zhejiang Tide*, there is no such relationship of cultural indebtedness and geographical dichotomy in the relationship between India and China. From Tanaka's analysis, we can see this geographical split and the cultural indebtedness in the historical discourse of *tōyōshi*. As Tanaka quotes, Tsuda Sōkichi (1873-1961), who in his critique of *tōyōshi*, points out that "...their so-called *tōyō* is primarily China [*shina*]. They use Chinese thought in opposition to western thought, but because they are Japanese and the other is labeled Occidental [*seiyō*], they call it oriental thought [*tōyō shisō*]."⁶² Therefore, in *tōyōshi*, *shina* is viewed as the cultural ground from where the origin of all Asian cultures are rooted. *Shina* thus becomes the direct opposite of the West, and the West and East dichotomy is created in this discourse. In this geocultural entity of the *tōyō*, *shina* is also where Japan developed itself. According to Tanaka, "It (*tōyō*) established modern Japan's equivalence – as the most advanced nation of Asia – with Europe, and also the distinction from and cultural, intellectual, and structural superiority over China. While Europe, as the West, became an other, that against which Japan compared itself, *shina* became a different other: it was an object, an idealized space and time from which Japan developed."⁶³ This means that *tōyōshi* narrates *shina* as the root and soil of Japan's development. Japan's present prosperity thus grows from the

⁶² Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History*, (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1996), 5.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

idealized cultural past of China. The idea that China and Japan share the same cultural past legitimizes Japan's superiority since Japan has progressed into modernity, but *shina* is unable to change and thus remains stuck in the past. However, for the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors, there is neither such a geographical split that creates a coherent entity of the "East," nor a sense of cultural indebtedness. As pointed out above, Fei Sheng argues in "Guohun" that each nation has its unique *guohun* realizable only through studying their own *fengsu*. This means that one nation cannot be the cultural archive of others, since nations are realized and maintained by and through their own custom and history. China is neither culturally indebted to India, nor vice versa. Since each nation is an independent entity united by its own *guohun*, India and China do not share a common cultural base. As the previous quote from Ye Gong in paragraph one shows, for the *Zhejiang Tide* student, India is a reference for China to realize its relationship with other nations and its own developmental stage of *guohun*. For the students, since India's experience resembles the experience of China, the translation of India's history is for the purpose of understanding what might cause the loss of *guohun* and how to avoid the fate of a dead nation.

We can see here that the Japanese *tōyōshi* scholars use *shina* as the cultural source to create a geocultural separation of East and West and root Japan's development in the idealized cultural past of *shina*. However, the *Zhejiang Tide* students use the writing of India to support their theory of *guohun* as a universal concept and imply China's possibility of attaining this universal concept. Here, we see different epistemologies of comprehending the self and the world in those two narratives. In the *tōyōshi* paradigm, Japan recognizes the self and its position in the world through its cultural relationship with other nations. Its position of the self in this historical discourse is determined by its relative superiority to *shina* and its equality with the

West since its cultural base *tōyō* is viewed as equal to *seiyō*. For the *tōyōshi* scholars, *shina* is knowable because it shares the same cultural roots with Japan. This discourse thus legitimizes Japan's "paternalism" – Japan could help *shina* on the path of modernization because it fully understands the culture of *shina* and its problems. However, in Fei Sheng's theory of *guohun* points out that only people who live among the same local custom contain the potential to realize this national spirit. A nation cannot claim to help other nations since they do not share the same living experience. Therefore, different from the *tōyōshi* scholars, *Zhejiang Tide* students understand China and other nations by evaluating them under a universal theory of *guohun*, which means to comprehend other nations by looking at the developmental stage of their *guohun*. The student authors recognize China and the other nations in the world through their relationship with a transcendent universal law. Their narration of India is to prove the "truthfulness" of this universal nationalism. In other words, while *tōyōshi* historians put Japan into cultural relation with others, *Zhejiang Tide* students comprehend nations based on their relationship with the transcendent universality of *guohun*.

The Illusion of Enlightenment Hegemony and Intersecting Rhetoric

The difference between *tōyōshi* and the *Zhejiang Tide* students' historiography actually helps us perceive the divergence between *tōyōshi* and the Enlightenment discourse that Tanaka's study does not emphasize. Tanaka points out that the *tōyōshi* scholars discovered that the universal law of Enlightenment favors the West. However, rather than rejecting the Enlightenment mode, they accepted the methods of Enlightenment history. He says, "The major Japanese historians, in short, accepted the possibility of Truth, objectivity, and progress – a belief

in the scientific study of man generally and, more specifically, in Western Enlightenment and Romantic historiography – but not necessarily as set forth by Europeans.”⁶⁴ He further concludes that “these (*tōyōshi*) historians were seeking to prove that they were not ‘Oriental,’ as defined by the West, by using the same epistemology of the West.”⁶⁵ Tanaka here suggests the same logic as Duara does, which is to understand the *tōyōshi* paradigm as the result of integrating Japanese historiography into the Enlightenment mode. I agree with Tanaka in the sense that *tōyōshi* historians took some methods from Enlightenment history, but they also altered the methods of recognizing self and others by shifting from the universal law to a hierarchy of cultural relations. Therefore, it is not fully accurate to put *tōyōshi* as completely adapting or using the “same epistemology of the West.” Here, we can see Duara’s idea of “Chinese history in an Enlightenment mode” has the same logic as Tanaka’s. In my previous analysis, I argued that Fei Sheng uses the Enlightenment method of narrating history and nation to break the positioning of China as unable to form a nation in Hegel’s Enlightenment history. In other words, Fei Sheng uses the methods of Enlightenment history to push back against the purported universality of it.

Therefore, is it still fair to conclude that Fei Sheng adopts the Enlightenment mode of history? He appropriates methods of narrating history from the Enlightenment tradition to serve the purpose of constructing his universalism which is different from the Enlightenment mode. As shown before, the idea of *guohun* rejects the discourse of a progressive unilinear universal History that legitimizes the paternalism in which the modernized nations should help the less “civilized” ones. Rather, in the theory of *guohun*, Fei Sheng figurates nationalism as the universal law that does not endure in universal history but rather can only be realized in a unique

⁶⁴ Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History*, (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1996), 3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

cultural and historical heritage of each nation. By doing so, he emphasizes the plurality of the realization of universal law and grants China potentiality, agency, and a future. Duara's analysis of how 20th century Chinese intellectuals constructed national subjectivity through history is precise, but that does not fully unfold the divergence from the Enlightenment in history writing. Duara concludes the difference between Asian historians' and Hegel's narration of history as such, "The histories that we (including Asian historians) write of Asia continue to be enmeshed in this Hegelian conception, although shorn of much of his metaphysics and his brutal racism."⁶⁶ However, it is the method through which the "Asian" historians dispel Hegel's metaphysical and racist aspects that illustrate their break from Enlightenment history. I agree that those historical actors in 20th century China adopted some degree of the Hegelian Enlightenment methodology, just as it is not hard to find striking similarities between *tōyōshi* and *Zhejiang Tide* students' narrative of Indian history. The objectification of others as a method to prove one's own potential superiority is followed by both *tōyōshi* scholars and the *Zhejiang Tide* students. Here, the analysis of the *Zhejiang Tide* authors' narrative of history guides us back to Duara's criticism of modern history. When the nation is positioned as the telos of history, only history that is useful to the telos will be written. The historical Others would be intentionally dissolved or amalgamated into the unified narrative that will lead to the consistency and particularity of the nation. However, naming the Chinese intellectuals' writing of history at the turn of 20th century as Enlightenment mode conceals those historical actors' creativity and initiative. At the same time, this naming also confirms the hegemony of Enlightenment tradition since it implies the Enlightenment history's power of assimilating other historical writings. However, when we take

⁶⁶ Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation : Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 18.

a close look at how the historical actors such as the *Zhejiang Tide* students break from the absolute racism from Hegel, we can see that they could not fully be named as the “Enlightenment mode” of history anymore. Duara confirms the hegemonic power of Enlightenment in order to criticize it. In contrast, Fei Sheng’s narration of *guohun* shows us that Enlightenment history is never a holistic, unbreakable self-evident entity that fully retains the power of assimilating others into its own discourse.

What I am trying to show here is that the three historical discourses that I have discussed, Enlightenment, *tōyōshi*, and *guohun*, all usurp, appropriate, and change the discourse from the other for the historical actors’ own purpose. They break the illusionary hegemony of any particular historical discourse. They are neither integrated into nor oppose one another but are actually interconnected while divergent from each other. Therefore, it is impossible to conclude that *guohun* is an exclusively “Chinese” way of viewing history, *tōyōshi* belongs only to Meiji Japan, and the Enlightenment mode is a hegemonic and self-evident Western discourse that integrated all other historical narratives into its framework. Rather, the three history discourses that are supposed to support clear-cut and independent nation-states as their telos are actually interconnected and derived from each other in their rhetoric and methods.

Chapter 2 Translated Locality: A Social Approach to the Nation

廬山煙雨浙江潮，未到千般恨不消。
到得還來別無事，廬山煙雨浙江潮。

——宋 蘇軾《觀潮》

*The Mountain Lu and the tide of Zhejiang, the beauty of which make the yearning last.
Once reaching the sight to see, the mountain is the mountain while the tide is the tide.*⁶⁷

The poem above is called *Guan Chao (Viewing the Tide)*, composed by the prominent Song dynasty poet Su Shi (1037-1101). The poem describes the fame and beauty of Mount Lu and the Qiantang River (which was called Zhejiang in the pre-modern era) that always cast people's imagination and yearning. One can read the poem as an expression of the Zen Buddhist idea that "the mountain is mountain, the river is river," which means that in the state of meditation, one sees things as they are without the disturbance of desire and fame. I will put aside the interpretation of the poem's meaning, but note that the term "Zhejiang Tide" that Su Shi uses here suggests the illuminations and fantasies that pre-modern literati associated with the Qiantang River. In fact, the Qiantang River occupied a significant position in pre-modern literary culture. The countless poems that describe the river articulate it as a symbol of prosperity and magnificence. The students' use of *Zhejiang Tide* as the title of their journal thus derives from this classical literary tradition and its association. If *guohun*, the national spirit, is a pivotal concept for the *Zhejiang Tide* students to craft a possible future for China in their narrative of history, then why would they name their journal as *Zhejiang Tide*, which connotes both provincial prestige and the classical literati tradition? In this chapter, I will focus on the students' narrative of locality, which is crucial in their theory of *guohun*. I will turn to the student authors'

⁶⁷ Translated by me.

writing about their native province of Zhejiang and their advocacy of local self-governance to examine their conception of local – national relations and their position of the local in the nation. In the article “The Voice of Zhejiang” (*zhesheng*, 浙聲) and “Warnings to My Fellow Countrymen” (*jinggao wo xiangren*), this chapter will show that the local province became the foundation for forming China’s *guohun* in the students’ writing. Rejecting the universal yet progressive narrative of nations in the Enlightenment tradition, the *Zhejiang Tide* authors turned to locality as an alternative for theorizing the formation of China. This departure from Enlightenment discourse is by no means the students’ innovation as such, and this chapter will also examine Meiji Japanese philosophers’ influence on *Zhejiang Tide* students’ concepts of national identity. Distinct from other Chinese intellectuals around the turn of the century, who chose an individualist approach to the question of reform, such as Liang Qichao in his article series *The New Citizen* (*xinmin shuo*, 1902-1906), the *Zhejiang Tide* authors chose a social approach, which is the formation of the nation base on local societies, to pave the foundation of nation. They “translated” the local community into a realm for public activism, which not only legitimizes local self-government as a primary method for reform, but also confirms the role of the local elite in directing public affairs. For the *Zhejiang Tide* authors, provincial society thus becomes the base for national reform that is independent from the state’s central bureaucratic administration system.

Searching For What China Is: Locality as the Rejection of Universal Progress

Let us now turn to the pages where the student authors portray Zhejiang’s local culture and customs. The first article about native place is called “The Voice of Zhejiang” in section

New Zhejiang and Old Zhejiang (*xin zhejiang yu jiu zhejiang*) of the journal. “The Voice of Zhejiang” is composed of two parts in issues one and two. The author is called Wen Gui (文詭), which is a playful pseudonym meaning “literary sophism.” In the first installment, Wen Gui discusses two independent societies Zhejiang has — the business society (*shang shehui*) and the industrial society (*gong shehui*). In part two, Wen Gui talks about a third society, the so-called “subjugated” or dead society (*wangguo shehui*). The first two societies refer to the Ningbonese merchant community and the industrial developments in Wenzhou, while the “subjugated society” refers to the period when the Southern Ming dynasty (1644-1662) was overthrown by the Manchu “invaders”, who later established the Qing dynasty (1636-1912). Wen Gui portrays the bloody calamity that occurred in Zhejiang when the Manchus tried to occupy the cities, and how the *zhishi*, men of loyalty and will, fought against them until the death. Putting aside the anti-Qing attitude of the article, if we dig into the language used by the author Wen Gui to introduce the history and customs (*fengsu*) of Zhejiang, we can see how he uses local history and customs to demonstrate what unites China besides the changing regimes. For the student author, the feelings and sentiments provoked by local history unite people from the same province together and unite China as a nation. Wen Gui refuses to view China as a linear entity that evolves across universal progressive time, as Prasenjit Duara claims in *Rescuing History From the Nation*. Rather, the *Zhejiang Tide* authors turn to the concept of local identity that is created by common memory and shared sensations as an alternative for explaining the nature of China. Wen Gui and the *Zhejiang Tide* authors thus create a cultural pluralism to support the concept of *guohun* and explain the formation of a nation based on its particular experiences and custom rather than via progressive universal laws.

At the inaugural installation of “The Voice of Zhejiang” in issue one, the author Wen Gui suggests that people who read history can manage the vicissitudes of history. Those intellectuals are familiar with ancient history and can resonate with ancient thinkers, but have no ideas about the habits or customs of their own hometowns (*xiang*). They view daily life in the local sphere as trifles not recorded in books or classics. Wen Gui suggests that in this sense, scholars and intellectuals cannot be compared with housewives and servants. He says, “According to the elders, what the intellectuals disregard as gossip or trifles are what precisely could pique people’s patriotic emotions toward their hometown (*jifa xiangqing*) and stir people’s sensations. Alas, haven’t the intellectuals failed in emptiness?”⁶⁸ Wen Gui suggests here that what unites people of a shared native place is not knowledge or shared literary heritage such as the classics, but the emotions that are provoked by local customs and everyday interactions. Broad knowledge about nations and histories cannot connect local people with their fellow townsmen and therefore would lead only to emptiness. In the second segment of “The Voice of Zhejiang” in issue two, the author shifts his discussion of Zhejiang’s business and industry to the description of Zhejiang at the moment when the Qing overthrew the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). The author explains the reasons for this change as such:

Ah! I am not born in the era of peace and prosperity (*gewu shengping zhishi*). Industry and business were all based on tales and rumors without investigation. If I keep commenting on them, I might misinterpret and let important ideas flee. Then how can those traits strengthen Zhejiang in today’s condition? I contemplated and reflected, and decided to shift the tone and voice to another topic.⁶⁹

Thus, via this portrayal of the bloody calamities and persecution that happened in Zhejiang during the Ming-Qing transition, the author emphasizes Zhejiang people’s will to sacrifice for

⁶⁸ Wen Gui, 文詭. “Zhe Sheng,” 浙聲, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:1.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:7.

their native place and be loyal to their dynasty as the traits that could strengthen Zhejiang in the contemporary world. Here, compared to the Hegelian Enlightenment model that views reason as the guide and destiny of history, what connects the past (Zhejiang during the transition of the Ming and Qing dynasty) to the present (Zhejiang in the contemporary condition) in Wen Gui's narrative is the feeling evoked by the shared experience and memory throughout history. The author's purpose in writing about the specific period of Ming-Qing transition is to "Let the inlanders and the youths abroad know what makes today's circumstance."⁷⁰ Wen Gui uses the characteristics of loyalty and patriotism presented by historical actors of the late Ming to evoke Zhejiang readers' sympathy with them and thus inspire those in the contemporary world to strengthen Zhejiang in their own time. For Wen Gui, the patriotism and emotion stirred by common memory should unite the local as an entity and form the identity of the local people. This emphasis on feeling as the uniting force to found a nation refuses a view of history as structured by a progressive rationality. What connects the past and the present is not empirical evolution, but people's ability to feel the sensations evoked by historical events and actors. Therefore, as in the theory of *guohun*, the content of which varied from nation to nation and cannot be evaluated on universal progressive law, using feeling as means to create local identity denies the possibility of assessing a culture through evolutionary and progressive universal laws. In Wen Gui's description, feelings are generated by history. "Southern people are not born aggressive and frightening. Rather, history is the cause."⁷¹ In this schema, people from the same local province share the same history and experience, and thus are emotionally connected as an entity.

⁷⁰ Wen Gui, 文詭. "Zhe Sheng," 浙聲, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:8-9.

⁷¹ Ibid., 1:12.

Then what's the relationship between Zhejiang as a local entity and China as a nation? In the opening of "The Voice of Zhejiang," Wen Gui criticizes the slogan of "strengthening China."

He says:

Today there are many who say they want to strengthen China. In urban cities, there are many celebrities and scholars who become agitated and furious when talking about the life and death of China...In the countryside, some flippant youth hold books and wander around celebrity society (*mingliu shehui*) and shout, strengthen China! Strengthen China!...Even the ambitious, powerful neighbor country, also use friendship and shared race as excuses to make profit for themselves...China has a vast landscape. To strengthen it is not what celebrities and playful youth can use as excuses, and people from other nations cannot participate in it. We should talk about strengthen China based on actual content. Families are educated by different ideas, and people have different occupations. Within a hundred miles languages are also different. North and South have different cultures, and different societies have different characteristics...it is hard to unite China without unscrupulous strategies. However, since the Qin and Han dynasty, China has been under one master for two thousand years. This is how China became today's China. While the great tendency of the world frightened the people, nationalism pervades around the world. This is why we compose this *Zhejiang Tide*.⁷²

In introducing the discussion of Zhejiang, Wen Gui portrays China as possessing different cultures and societies in different regions, which Fei Sheng also mentions in the essay "Guohun." By suggesting that China became China only because all its regions were ruled under one emperor for two thousand years, Wen Gui turns to ask what China really is, given that different regions have drastically different cultures, and the imperial regime is the only thing that has united China in the past. In other words, how could the *Zhejiang Tide* students construct *guohun* if different regions of China are so distinct in their culture? Wen Gui states, the purpose for producing *Zhejiang Tide* is precisely to answer those questions. Wen Gui thus suggests that to be

⁷² Wen Gui, 文詭. "Zhe Sheng," 浙聲, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:2.

specific about the actual content of China in order to unite the nation, it is first necessary to talk about the various localities. Since in Wen Gui's argument, history makes the character of the Zhejiang people, to examine the history of Zhejiang is the first step in figuring out what constitutes the "content" of China. When Wen Gui chooses to portray the persecution that happened in Zhejiang during the Ming-Qing transition to demonstrate the emotion and character of Zhejiang people, the implication is that locality is constituted by the historical event that caused drastic changes in China. In Wen Gui's narrative, locality never exists by itself aside from the greater history of China. In fact, the first step in searching for the content of China is to investigate the locality produced by history. Here, Wen Gui presumes that the Ming-Qing transition is an event in China's history that serves to constitute the nature of China, which indicates that the nation has already been imagined, as locality is constituted via the history and regimes of that nation. Therefore, for Wen Gu, conversely, locality is the key to understanding China besides the shifting political regime. In Wen Gui's vision, each of those provinces are like pieces in the greater puzzle which together compose the nation. However, Wen Gui does not give an explicit answer of Zhejiang's position in a larger puzzle, or clarify the relationship between Zhejiang and other provinces. The foundation and the source for answering the question are identified, but no answer is provided. The question of local and national identity is a paradox in itself – if national awareness was born under the threat from other nations on the global stage, then how to reconcile domestic identities with this newly formed national awareness?

The idea that past and present are connected by feelings generated through Chinese history also explains why the *Zhejiang Tide* group's focal concept for nation-foundation is *guohun*, not citizenship or national character (*guominxing*). Since *guohun* stems from *fengsu*,

local custom, which resides in history, sensations, and to day-to-day interactions of people sharing the same local identity, the *Zhejiang Tide* authors seek a historical narrative that might unite China based on sensations generated by common memory, rather than defined by “national characters” that conceals the initiative of the people and freeze China in the eternal past.

The Influence of Meiji Conservatism

In *Zhejiang Tide* students’ theorization, the idea of China as constituted by locality and history is distinct from the construction of the local as units for national administration by a central bureaucratic system, as in the case of Meiji Japan. As Carol Gluck points out in *Japan’s Modern Myths*, after the Russo-Japanese war, the Meiji government tried to “cast its ideological net over the provinces (*chihō*) for the purpose of rousing the localities to more effective administration and fiscal ‘self-government’ (*jichi*).”⁷³ The local self-government program was utilized by the Meiji government to promote “moral exhortations in the name of economic and social programs” to the local areas nationwide.⁷⁴ Unlike the Meiji government’s attempts to administer local areas, the *Zhejiang Tide* framework did not attempt to impose new ethics onto localities via local identity and self-government. For the student authors, strengthening China does not mean imposing or advocating new ideas introduced from the outside. Locality was thus also a means for the students to refuse the introduction of foreign ideas and paternalism. As mentioned before, Fei Sheng mentions Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901) in the essay “Guohun,” which means that the students had encountered Meiji Enlightenment thinkers and their belief that

⁷³ Carol Gluck, *Japan’s Modern Myths : Ideology in the Late Meiji Period*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 191.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 193.

Japan should abandon all tradition in order to catch up with the West as the manifestation of the highest developmental stage of universal humanity. However, the *Zhejiang Tide* authors rejected the belief of universal progress and seized on local culture and customs as their foundation for strengthening China. This refusal of a universal Enlightenment through the searching for something authentic and unique to the nation is not the students' innovation. Even though the student authors did not mention any specific Japanese thinkers who influenced their ideas, it is not hard to find parallels between their writings on locality and the teachings of those Meiji scholars who reacted against Enlightenment discourse. Correspondences in these narratives suggest the possible influence that Meiji scholars may have had on the *Zhejiang Tide* students' political thoughts.

In Kenneth Pyle's study of Meiji conservatism, he defines this trend in Japan as taking form "in confronting individual elements and themes of the *bunmei kaika*" which attacks almost all values in Japan's tradition besides the imperial institution.⁷⁵ The beginning of modern Japanese conservative philosophy started with the defense of Confucian values of the Four Books by scholars such as Motoda Eifu (also known as Motoda Nagazane, 1818-1891), the tutor of the Meiji Emperor, and Nishimura Shigeki (1828-1902), advocates of Western institutions and also a lecturer for the Emperor. As Pyle points out, those scholars were those who "supported some of the Meiji reforms but who regarded the disappearance of a clear, accepted moral code as a failing of the new period. They concentrated their criticism particularly on the new education system, advocating instead a return to prescribed, Confucian based values."⁷⁶ Even though the formation of conservative thinkers started with the advocacy of Confucian values such as

⁷⁵ Kenneth B. Pyle, "Meiji Conservatism." *The Cambridge History of Japan*, edited by Marius B. Jansen, vol. 5, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 674-720), 686.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 681.

benevolence, filial piety, and loyalty, some later thinkers did not retain faith in Confucian ethics, but turned instead to a search for nationalistic values. It is in the shadow of those scholars' thought that the source of *Zhejiang Tide* students' writing can be seen. One Meiji thinker whose writing resonates with those of the *Zhejiang Tide* students is Kuga Katsunan (1857-1907). Pyle summarizes the thoughts of Kuga as such, "His editorials, which had a wide and influential audience, argued that the liberals failed to understand the meaning of history and of the nation-state that established the framework within which Japanese reform must take place if it were to be effective and enduring."⁷⁷ Here, Kuga implies that Japanese history contains the values that paved the formation of Japan as a nation-state. Therefore, the reform must be built upon the understanding of "authentic" Japanese history and values. The liberal *bunmei kaika* (modernization) is misleading because it is the application of methods that are not suitable for Japan's situation. This theme, which advocates that each nation possesses its unique framework and character, and the reform must take place based on the understanding of national history, resembles the *Zhejiang Tide* theory of *guohun*. Fei Sheng points out that each nation has its own distinct *guohun*, and to form this *guohun* is to "understand the nation's characteristics."⁷⁸ He writes:

I also suggest that the scholars from the East and West hold each other's arms as they maintain close relationships. Their axioms are high in the air and deep in people's minds. Those in the poor rural countryside who did not read many books might not be familiar with such ideas, but those teenagers with intellect and knowledge, in this moment of national crisis and this crucial moment of reform, blindly copy the phrase of liberty and equality, and advocate those ideas to whomever they meet. Alas, this will only decrease their love towards the nation and increase their fickle temper.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Kenneth B. Pyle, "Meiji Conservatism." *The Cambridge History of Japan*, edited by Marius B. Jansen, vol. 5, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 674–720), 686.

⁷⁸ Fei Sheng, 飛生. "Guohun Pian," 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:7.

⁷⁹ Wen Gui, 文詭. "Zhe Sheng," 浙聲, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 2:8.

Here, Fei Sheng suggests that blindly adopting the values of other cultures will not help to reform China – an explicit critique of those who actually adopted the Enlightenment approach. Similar to Kuga, the *Zhejiang Tide* authors advocate the search for values that belong to a particular nation. They all agree that reformation should be based on national character and values rather than the wholesale abandonment of all tradition and full adoption of Western values as universal. Moreover, although Kuga advocates traditional values such as filial piety, harmony and loyalty, he does not put them under Confucius' name but as "Japan's distinctive national ethics."⁸⁰ In "The Voice of Zhejiang," Wen Gui also advocates values such as patriotism and loyalty, but does not put those ethics via the name of Confucianism. Rather, Wen Gui portrays those values as the natural characters of Zhejiang people produced by history. Similar to Kuga who gives a justification for those ethics, Wen Gui also portrays the character of the local people as the traits that could strengthen China to prove the value of those ethics. Besides the parallel rejection of universal values and a turn to ethics to strengthen the nation, both Kuga and Wen Gui emphasize emotion (*xiangqing*) as a medium for people to connect and comprehend those values. As Pyle quotes, Kuga "concluded pointedly that these values 'cannot be deduced by academic reason (*gakuri*), but (only) by the emotions (*kanjō*) of the Japanese."⁸¹ Wen Gui also suggests that the shared habits and trifles of life in local culture can agitate people's emotions and stir patriotism towards their local hometown. Those aspects of the Meiji conservatism correspond with the *Zhejiang Tide* students' anti-universalism. The Meiji thinkers who reacted against the Enlightenment school turned to national ethics as the focal point of their

⁸⁰ Kenneth B. Pyle, "Meiji Conservatism." *The Cambridge History of Japan*, edited by Marius B. Jansen, vol. 5, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 674–720), 686.

⁸¹ Ibid.

anti-universalism, while the *Zhejiang Tide* students turned to local provinces to raise their rejection of the Enlightenment, putting their faith in China's future in local self-government.

Locality in Translation

But, how to construct the local province as an apparatus for national development? If the *fengsu* of a local province can pave the foundation for national identity and unity, then how should the local province be conceived to strengthen the nation? In Wen Gui's figuration in "The Voice of Zhejiang," the local province is translated through the word "society" into a realm for public activism in which the leading role of local elite is legitimized and the assimilation of the locality into central government is rejected.

As mentioned above, in the article "The Voice of Zhejiang," Wen Gui describes Zhejiang as having possessed independent societies (*shehui*). The first is business society (*shang shehui*). He says,

Our Zhejiang possesses three independent societies...The first is business society. The best representation of this society is Ningbo. Naive children who have the capability to understand things know that Ningbonese are famous in China for their business skills. When I take a step outside and look at Ningbo, their business spirit is truly formidable. The markets and business cycles of the eleven prefectures in Zhejiang are majorly controlled by Ningbonese...The places where Ningbonese go, there must be a solid and undividable group...The other is industrial society (*gong shehui*). Zhejiang is not famous for its industry. However, there are big factories gradually appearing in Wenzhou, the East of Zhejiang...The place where production happens must have special structure in their geography, society, custom and daily life, which could be a complete industrial city in the future. Wenzhou exists on the coastal border right next to the sea, which resembles an independent nation. If war happens and Zhejiang fails into destitution and calamity, Wenzhou can become independent. Grains and crops are also substantial. When famine happens and Zhejiang fails into calamity,

Wenzhou can become independent again. Furthermore, the morality and custom of Wenzhou also possess the tendency to be exclusive and emphasize on actual industry, and therefore not easily shifted by other societies and form their own habits.⁸²

In this paragraph, Wen Gui describes Zhejiang by articulating its “societies.” The term “society” is translated from the word *shehui* in the original text. Even though Wen Gui does not give an explicit definition of “society” in this paragraph, his explanation of the three “societies” refers to the functional public realm formed by people with the same characteristics and will, and is the realm where their autonomous activities take place. For Wen Gui, society forms naturally in the local prefectures. One province can contain several societies, which means that for Wen Gui, society does not refer to the holistic realm of public life opposed to the state. Rather, it means the social realms that are formed naturally and autonomously, which connotes specific features, activities, and identities such as the commercial and industrial societies. By describing Zhejiang as composed of those different societies, the *Zhejiang Tide* student author articulates local provinces as a public realm where different kinds of public activities happen autonomously, and where people form unique but shared identities. The author uses the phrase *shehui* (社會), “society” rather than industrial or commercial guild to describe Zhejiang, also demonstrates that the student author is not simply trying to describe Zhejiang as a local area that has such commercial institutions. Instead, “society” is a free realm for public activity where the unique *jingshen* (spirit and will to act) of the Zhejiangnese people is formed. In such narration, provinces and prefectures are no longer administrative units for the Qing court to advance state policy, but independent and autonomous realms for public activities.

⁸² Wen Gui, 文詭. “Zhe Sheng,” 浙聲, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:4.

Local Self-Government

When Wen Gui articulates Zhejiang as an independent realm where public activities and independent identities are formed, he also describes it as possessing societies that are compatible with the West and thus able to strengthen China. When commenting on the Ningbo and Wenzhou business and industrial societies, Wen Gui juxtaposes those local societies with characteristics of the West:

The Western (*taixi*) countries are well known for their commercial civilization of the past two hundred years. The gentry elite, scholars, and intellectuals complete studies and theories at all cost to promote their rights, spread and strengthen their advantages, and advocate for commercial freedom during that time. Alas! They can mold the world with their commercial force. What can our Ningbonese people depend on? They are the fish under the knife in our nation, and people strive to wipe the merchants away. One or two erudites with a stomach full of knowledge, or elder scholars despise them as philistines and feel disdainful to talk to them. There are one or two Ningbonese carrying foreign goods back from abroad, their relatives encumbering them with their families and trying to depend their life on the Ningbonese merchants. However public opinion views this behavior as just. This is because of the inherent ill habits of China. However, Ningbonese people still can endure all those hardships, view the turbulent ocean as their garden, and advance their heart of adventure.⁸³

When commenting on the situation in Wenzhou, Wen Gui praises the Wenzhou people as “forms their unique and consistent habits. Alas, this is why Wenzhounese have the qualities similar to those factory workers in the Far West.”⁸⁴ When articulating Zhejiang societies, Wen Gui picks up those characteristics which he views as the essential for the West’s success, and identifies the activities of the Ningbo and Wenzhou people as sharing these same qualities yet trapped by

⁸³ Wen Gui, 文詭. “Zhe Sheng,” 浙聲, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:4-5.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:5-6.

inherent habits and perceptions. In this narrative, Zhejiang hosts societies that are not only independent and autonomous but also possessing traits that could strengthen China to match the West, and thus should be the base for China's reform.

Besides narrating the local as a sociological realm and the base for China's reform, Wen Gui also suggests that only local self-government could amplify and advance the traits of local society to strengthen China. By suggesting that the unjustified treatment of Ningbonese merchants due to the ill habit of Chinese, he implies that the traditional ethnic of China is a yoke for localities' development, and thus blocks their ability to strengthen the nation. Therefore, local people should examine their own customs and cultivate their own *jingshen* (spirit and will to act). When commenting on the situation of Wenzhou, Wen Gui suggests the same theme. He says:

However, Wenzhounese lack knowledge of transportation, and thus cannot compete with the other metropolises for profitable markets. Wenzhou people's businesses are controlled by Ningbo people. When goods such as leathers, crops, grapefruits, when transported towards the North, all the profits are gained by people from other areas. Thousands of Wenzhounese who cannot sustain themselves in their hometown become field tenants in West Zhejiang. If Wenzhou does not implement self-governance, then I am afraid that after ten years there will be no wealth in Wenzhou.⁸⁵

We can see that for Wen Gui, self-governance is not only at a provincial level but must be conducted at prefectural levels for each society to bring their characters and *jingshen* into practice. Zhejiang is not the only unit for local self-government for Wen Gui. The Wenzhou people's commercial profits gained by the Ningbo people are not sustainable even though Ningbo is also part of Zhejiang. The purpose of local self-government is thus not for

⁸⁵ Wen Gui, 文詭. "Zhe Sheng," 浙聲, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:6.

strengthening the province as such but rather for the purpose of inspiring and advancing local *jingshen* and activities to strengthen China as a whole. Therefore, “society” for Wen Gui is a concept that supports the discourse of local self-government as the most appropriate reform method. This is where Wen Gui diverges from the ideology of Meiji Japanese conservative bureaucrats and scholars. For them, society is where problems arise that must be dealt with by the state. However, for the *Zhejiang Tide* authors, society is the place where the *jingshen* and the character that could push China into modernity develop by themselves without intervention from the state. As Joan Judge points out in *Print and Politics: ‘Shibao’ and the Culture of Reform In Late Qing China*, late Qing publicists tried to shift the loyalty of the people from the dynasty to China as a nation.⁸⁶ For the *Zhejiang Tide* students, local society is where the potential for China to become a nation resides.

However, different from the *Shibao* (1905-1930) publicists who viewed the transition into new citizenry as the main focus for forming the nation, the *Zhejiang Tide* authors rearticulate the local as the realm where the *jingshen* and traits for forming a nation already reside. In the article “Warnings to My Fellow Countrymen,” the author Gong Fazi admits that local self-government can promote people’s political awareness to prepare for a constitutional reform, but the major purpose of their advocacy for local self-government is not to construct locality as a new administrative unit.⁸⁷ The *Zhejiang Tide* authors were not searching for a completely “new” form of citizenship for China, as Liang Qichao’s *Shibao* group did. The different approaches that Liang and the *Zhejiang Tide* students used indicate their different perceptions of nation building,

⁸⁶ Joan Judge, *Print and Politics: “Shibao” and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China*, (Stanford University Press, 1996)

⁸⁷ Gong Fazi, 攻法子. “Jinggao Woxiangren,” 敬告我鄉人, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 2:5.

the comparison between which I will demonstrate in the following section. By conceptualizing locality through functional societies, Wen Gui implies that Chinese people inherently had the ability to form societies and traits compatible with the West. Therefore, the *Zhejiang Tide* students' conception of reform is different from the *Shibao* group who presented themselves as makers of new citizens suitable for constitutional reform. For the *Zhejiang Tide* student author, the initiative and resources for reform exist in the custom and activities in the lower realm of public life in the local areas, while intellectuals and elites should act as practitioners of local characters through self-government. This explains why the *Zhejiang Tide* students did not turn to "national character" even though this concept appeared as early as 1901 in Liang Qichao's *Qingyi Bao* and became a forceful method for scholarly critique. For the *Zhejiang Tide* students, what figures such as Liang Qichao view as the "sources of civil weakness" actually contains the initiative and *jingshen* for strengthening China, but just hasn't been utilized yet.

For the *Zhejiang Tide* group, locality is not contradictory to the formation of a nation, but rather precisely means to strengthen China. In an article "Non-Provincial Boundaries" (*fei shengjie*), Wen Gui's response to a letter from a mainland Zhejiangnese that questions the native place association formed by study overseas students. The letter asks whether the formation of native place associations promote the tendency of exclusiveness and disunity, since the associations exclude people from other provinces. Wen Gui's response clarifies the relationship between the local and national, he states explicitly, "We study abroad students can accept everything, but only the provincial boundaries are what all patriots abroad and inland should unite to eliminate."⁸⁸ Here, Wen Gui is clear that the native place association is distinct from the

⁸⁸ Wen Gui, 文詭. "Fei Shengjie," 非省界, "Non-Provincial Boundaries" *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 3:2.

provincial boundary that excludes people from other provinces and divides China. Wen Gui says, “Our youth, debating in front of elders and young children everyday, aren’t we advocating for unification (*hequn*)?”⁸⁹ The author goes further to explain why the seemingly provincial centric discourse is used when advocating for the strengthening and unification of China:

Only speaking of “strengthening China” (*qiang zhongguo*) as a slogan can do no good since China is vast and broad. Division into smaller sections would have practical help. We have to shift our voice to inform the later generation. Provincial ties and kinship is a habit that prevailed for a long time in China. We thus utilize and guide the trends to inspire progressive minds and make every individual realize that they have unresolvable responsibility and burden. Therefore people in each province can be responsible for provincial affairs, mutually respect each other, and peaceful and natural competition can form naturally in invisible spheres. Self-governance is essential for everything. This is supposed to be the core idea of so-called provincial boundaries. This represents the mindfulness of those with wisdom and the true blood of the patriots. We have no guilt in front of our ancestors’ deities and brothers and sisters.⁹⁰

Wen Gui demonstrates constructing provincial identities is not for the purpose of advocating local separation or provincialism, but the responsibilities to the province can be provoked for strengthening China. Therefore, rather than disunifying China, provincial identity serves as a mechanism through which an individual's responsibility towards the nation is fulfilled.

Wen Gui’s use of *hequn* (unite a group together) is also distinct from “society,” which suggests his perception of the local and the national. Wen Gui uses the word *he* (together) as a verb, which means that for the student author, *qun*, a group or entity, is waiting for an external force to unite. However, society means the local realm where the *jingshen* and activities for forming China could happen. By describing locality as formed by various functional societies

⁸⁹ Wen Gui, 文詭. “Fei Shengjie,” 非省界, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 3:4

⁹⁰ Ibid., 6.

that are in tension with each other, Wen Gui suggests that locality is not a unified entity that people must be loyal to, but rather, is a dynamic and organic society in which public activities happen. Therefore, self-government at the unit of provinces and prefectures contributes and promotes activities in the public realm, rather than merely advocating loyalty to the provincial identity. The local identity in students' narration is not simply for the purpose of identifying the public realm and societies. When narrating the locality as multiple functional societies, Wen Gui is at same time also connotating the prefecture and provincial identity with such shared *jingshen* and public characters. He is thus also informing the people in the provincial areas the meaning and national responsibility behind their local identity. The student author, as knowledge producer, did more than rearticulating the local — they at the same time also recreate locality and relabeling the people into such characteristics.

In “The Voice of Zhejiang,” while rearticulating the local society, Wen Gui also re-narrates the role and the meaning of elites. As pointed out before, in Wen Gui's description, the modern characteristics and the traits in local societies could only strengthen China when the evil habits inherited from the tradition was removed. The evil habits that Wen Gui argues against resides in the Confucian literati culture which despises the activities of the merchants and the commercial value they create in the public realm, which are crucial for China's modernity in Wen Gui's description. When comparing the situation of Ningbonese merchants with the prosperous businesses of the West, Wen Gui points out that “one or two elite and intellectuals with classical knowledge despise them (Ningbonese merchants) as philistines and disdain to talk to them.”⁹¹ Wen Gui also suggests that intellectuals and elites with knowledge about history and

⁹¹ Wen Gui, 文詭. “Zhe Sheng,” 浙聲, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:5.

classics have no awareness of local life and custom, while China's *guohun* dwells inside local customs and activities. Therefore, through constructing the role of local society, the author is at the same time also advocating for the transformation of elite culture. The traditional elite culture which centered around literati and knowledge has to be abandoned, and in order to practice and consolidate the *jingshen* and modern traits inside the local custom, local elites have to transform into activists in the public realm that could spread the *jingshen* and characteristics in the public realm. Within this transformation, we can see that the purpose of writing local history is already different for the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors than the intellectuals in the precedent dynasties. In his studies of Wuhou local historiography in the Ming dynasty, Peter Bol suggests a sequential development in the writing of local gazetteers, which manifests the development of the local literati community. The writing of local historiography suggests that "first, a local literati community emerged that recognized that its future was tied to its locale and, second, that community became actively involved in creating local institutions that it could dominate... They represented a discourse on the locale,...and encouraged local activism by ensuring that acts that benefited the locale and lineage would be remembered."⁹² The *Zhejiang Tide* authors still maintain the local literati or elites' leading role in local activism and institution building, while the meaning of writing local history changed. The composition of local history and culture is no longer for creating literati solidarity and culture as it was in the Ming dynasty. Rather, in the *Zhejiang Tide* discourse, the writing of local society is for transforming locality into a realm for public action where the elite can spread the traits and characteristics of local customs for strengthening China. In other words, what consolidates the local elite is not the literati culture

⁹² Peter Kees Bol, "The "Localist Turn" and "Local Identity" in Later Imperial China." *Late Imperial China*, vol. 24 no. 2, 2003, 1-50 (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), 9-10.

associated with local history, nor does local history equal the history of literati in this model.

What should unite, consolidate, and merge the local elite with the local people is the shared custom and characteristics in local life to further strengthen the nation. Here, the local history no longer represents literati culture but a social realm where the elite actively spread and strengthened the characters and *jingshen* in local custom.

***Shehui* vs. The New Citizen**

Juxtaposing *Zhejiang Tide* student authors' social approach with other thought trends in the late Qing era can further illustrate their translation of the provincial into the realm for public activism. As pointed out above, the students' approach to the national foundation is different from Liang Qichao and his *Shibao* circle. Liang uses the concept "new citizen" as the base for reform in his most famous journal series *Xinmin Shuo* (On New Citizen, 1902-1906). The idea of local self-government does not stand out in Liang's thinking, while the idea of new citizens is absent in the *Zhejiang Tide* students' writing. Composed at relatively the same period, Liang Qichao and the *Zhejiang Tide* students chose two different approaches to forming the nation. In 1903, the year when *Zhejiang Tide* was published, Liang was exiled in Japan for 4 years and started his trip to the U.S. to study the democratic institutions there. In 1903 Liang was already a well-developed intellectual, having a relatively holistic study on economy and constitution. Thus, it is hard to make a systematic comparison between Liang's complicated and continuously refined thinking with the *Zhejiang Tide* students' ephemeral writings in a journal that did not last a year. The new citizen approach indicates that for Liang, the nation is found through individuals' action and responsibility to it. In other words, strengthening the competitiveness of

the nation on the global stage is the ultimate goal around which individuals' responsibility and obligation orient. However, what the *Zhejiang Tide* authors wished to create through their writing is the nation as a public realm for action.

First of all, both Liang Qichao and the *Zhejiang Tide* writings are collectivistic. Liang's collectivism means that the individuals are obligated to and responsible for contributing to the collective. When analyzing the new moral system created in Liang Qichao's *New Citizen*, Hao Chang points out that "the concept of *ch'ün* at the core of his concept of morality" (Chang, 150-151).⁹³ As Chang's analysis suggests, Liang took an absolute collectivistic perspective in his moral system for the new citizen. In the second section of *The New Citizen*, Liang says

Let's take a family as a nation. If, in a family, brothers and sisters, man and woman, all have their own business and skills, act loyal and respectful, work hard and seek progress, then how could a family not thrive? On the contrary, if all the family members abandon their responsibility and only count on their parents while the parents are not wise, then the whole family will starve to death... Today, if we want to fight against national imperialism, to save life from havoc, then the only strategy is to construct nationalism. If we want to form nationalism in China, there's no other way besides advocating for new citizenship.⁹⁴

From Liang's words, we can see that the survival of the collective is an object and obligation for the new citizen to preserve and fight for. The survival and the strength of the collective is also the moral duty for the new citizen. In other words, the collective in Liang Qichao's discourse is the purpose and destination of new citizens' moral cultivation and action. As Chang points out, Liang uses the concept "self-mastery" (*zizhi*) to complement his collective standpoint.

⁹³ Chang Hao, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 150-151.

⁹⁴ Liang Qichao. 梁啟超, *Xinminshuo*《新民說》第二節, "論新民為近日中國第一急務"。"則試以一家譬一國。苟一家之中, 子婦弟兄, 各有本業, 各有技能, 忠信篤敬, 勤勞進取, 家未有不淳然興者。不然者, 各委棄其責任, 而一望諸家長, 家長而不賢, 固闔室為餓殍", "故今日欲抵當列強之民族帝國主義, 以挽浩劫而拯生靈, 惟有我行我民族主義之一策; 而欲實行民族主義于中國, 舍新民末由。Translated by me.

“Self-mastery, then, was regarded by Liang as a prime condition for the realization of popular participation and of national self-rule”⁹⁵. From Liang’s perspective, in order for the nation, the collective, to realize self-rule, the individual new citizen must self-discipline and sacrifice for the good of the collective. This means that the individuals are supposed to constrain themselves for the ultimate goal of the nation. However, in *Zhejiang Tide* discourse, the collective is the realm where actions happen. Wen Gui suggests that Zhejiang possesses three independent societies that existed before the Chinese people had an awareness of what a nation or *guohun* is. For the author Wen Gui, the three independent societies exist not because the local people were aware that they were being in the collective public sphere and have to contribute to it for its survival. Rather, societies exist because people act in the local realm and develop their shared characteristics. The development of society is not an external collective concept which the local people have to be constantly aware of and sacrifice for. For the *Zhejiang Tide* student author Wen Gui, society as a public realm exists spontaneously when collective activities happen.

This difference can also be seen in the different understanding of the phrase “society” in Liang’s and the *Zhejiang Tide* authors’ ideologies. In his study of “struggle” (*jingzheng*) and “progress” (*jindu*) in Liang Qichao’s thought, Hao Chang points out that for Liang, the basic reference for human progress “was always the group rather than the individual. In terms of native ability and intelligence an individual modern man was not necessarily superior to an individual ancient man. It was a modern society which was definitely an improvement over ancient society.”⁹⁶ In Liang’s understanding of progress, society is an evolving and collective entity that

⁹⁵ Chang Hao, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 205.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 172.

progresses through time. It could also be compared and evaluated, as what Liang did between Confucian and Western ethics. Liang says,

Now let's try to compare China's old ethic with the new ethics of the West. The old ethics categorize relationships as between the emperor and the official, the father and the son, between brothers, couples, and friends. The category of new ethics, includes family ethics (*jiazu lunli*), community ethics (*renqun lunli*), and national ethics (*guojia lunli*). What the old ethics emphasize is between an individual to another individual...However, what the new ethics emphasize is between an individual to the collective.⁹⁷

However, the *Zhejiang Tide* students seem to refuse such direct comparison between societies. Since society means the public realm where collective activities occur and multiple societies can co-exist in the same region, it is the space formed spontaneously by activities generated through local custom and the initiative of the people. Therefore, the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors tend to refuse such direct comparison between societies and view the unique custom of local areas as the foundation for China's particular *guohun*. The *Zhejiang Tide* students' approach to nation foundation is still in a collective perspective, since local self-governance is legitimized only when it is for strengthening China rather than for the selfish purpose of local leaders, but refuse such direct comparison between societies.

Another similarity between the *Zhejiang Tide* student author's conception of reformation and Liang Qichao's New Citizen is that they both identify the deficiency of moral ethics (*dao de*) as the core reason for China's backwardness. Hao Chang's study shows us that Liang Qichao perceived China as lacking social morals and thus is stagnated in its social development. From Liang's perspective, "What China needed most was public morality...Liang

⁹⁷ Liang Qichao, 梁啟超, *Xinminshuo*,《新民說》, 第五節, “論公德”今试以中国旧伦理, 与泰西新伦理相比较, 旧伦理之分类, 曰君臣, 曰父子, 曰兄弟, 曰夫妇, 曰朋友。新伦理之分类, 曰家族伦理, 曰社会即人群伦理, 曰国家伦理。旧伦理所重者, 则一私人对于一私人之事也...新伦理所重者, 则一私人对于一团体之事也。” Translated by me.

thought it was his role to point out what these civic virtues were and thereby to formulate a new personality ideal for Chinese people to follow.”⁹⁸ Fei Sheng uses the same rhetoric. In issue 3 of *Zhejiang Tide*, he identifies morality as the primary problem for today’s China:

If today I act as the teacher in a local village, sit down in a formal post to talk about life with you (*zhujun*), you must say, this is a far fetched topic, I don’t want to listen. If I act like a philosopher, investigate big issues through small angles and talk about ethics, then you must say, this is an alienating topic, I cannot understand. However, I am neither a teacher in the local village nor a philosopher. Today I want to talk about morality with minded patriots. Why? This is because morality is the primary problem for China’s future⁹⁹

Both Liang Qichao and Fei Sheng identify morality as the primary issue strengthening China, but there are still differences despite their seemingly similar rhetoric. Liang Qichao’s public morality is centered around anti-imperialism and competition. Hao Chang points out that Liang Qichao’s New Citizen ideal manifests a new recognition of the world order. He realizes that the world is composed of different nations in a competitive relationship. His nationalism was nurtured by a sense of crisis brought up by imperialism, and his thought is thus centered around anti-imperialism and competition. This is why, as Hao Chang explained, Liang turned to enlightened absolutism after his visit to the U.S.¹⁰⁰ For Liang, “it is similarly preposterous to claim equal status for all the people in a country, since leadership and hierarchical authority were implicit in the process of erecting a state.”¹⁰¹ Therefore, for Liang, an absolute and authoritative government is necessary for the nation to preserve itself. Since the nation is the collective that

⁹⁸ Chang Hao, *Liang Ch’i-Ch’ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 154.

⁹⁹ Fei Sheng, 飛生. “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 3:22.

¹⁰⁰ Chang Hao, *Liang Ch’i-Ch’ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 252-254.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 247.

the citizen is obligated to, the state's interference into public life is necessary for the anti-imperial mission in this competitive social-Darwinist world.

However, the morality indicated in the *Zhejiang Tide* student author's writing does not center on such anti-imperial and competitive missions. Fei Sheng suggests that "one of the fundamental deficiency of China's morals is the loss of the nation's self-awareness."¹⁰² For him, China could not form its *guohun* not because they lack the awareness of competition or imperialistic threat, but because they did not realize that they belong to the same nation. As shown in Chapter 1, what Fei Sheng points out through the universalism of *guohun* is a world in which nations attained their national spirits are all equal without the hierarchical differences. *Guohun* and national awareness definitely invoke a competitive mind, as Fei Sheng suggests, "A nation that can stand in the world must have one thing essential to their *texing*,...internally it can unite the big group (*qun*), externally it can absorb foreign civilization and fight against alien nation."¹⁰³ Nonetheless, the proposal of *guohun* is not for the purpose of competing with other nations. Rather, it is for forming national unity and invoke the preservation of its position as a nation equal to other ones in the world. In order to reach such a goal, competitions with other nations are definitely necessary, but they are the side effect after the moral of national awareness is evoked and the method for preserving *guohun* rather than the goal and purpose of it. This leads to another drastic difference between Liang and the students in terms of their understanding of government. As pointed out before, for Liang Qichao, government interference is necessary for the nation to compete with the outside world for China's survival. However, for the *Zhejiang Tide* students, such an integration of the public realm by the central administration system is not

¹⁰² Fei Sheng., 飛生. "Guohun Pian," 國魂篇, (The Spirit of the nation), *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 7:34.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 1:6.

acceptable. The advocacy of local self-governance indicates their intention to separate the local realm from the central bureaucracy system. Besides using local self-government as legitimation for the local elite activism, the student author is at the same time also using this rhetoric to preserve the public realm from state interference. Since society is the public realm where local custom and activities happen, the interference of the state into their realm will only destroy such dynamics and prevent the formation of *guohun*.

Therefore, by narrating *guohun* as rooted in local custom, portraying locality as the public realm for public activities, and urging local self-governance, the *Zhejiang Tide* author is trying to emphasize the significance of public realm and preserve such a sphere from the interference of the state. As Gong Fazi points out in his cohesive conception of the administrative system in the article “Warning to My Fellow Countrymen,”

Nations in the modern era usually contain two administrative organs. One is the official government and the other is the self-governance. Official government is for the purpose of direct administration. It can preserve the nation's rights directly... Self-governance is a nations' indirect administrative system. It uses the method of local people to govern local areas to reach indirect administrative purposes. Self-government can complement the deficiency of official governance and assist official government.¹⁰⁴

Here, Gong Fazi points out explicitly that official governance cannot step on self-government organs and interfere in local affairs. Rather, they should assist and complement each other in order to strengthen the nation. Unlike Liang Qichao's idea that absolute government rule is necessary for the preservation of the nation, the *Zhejiang Tide* students were trying to preserve local society as a realm for public activity away from state interference. In sum, Liang Qichao's observation on imperialism and social Darwinism caused him to pay attention to external

¹⁰⁴ Gong Fazi, 攻法子. “Jinggao Woxiangren,” 敬告我鄉人, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 2:3.

competition and of the state. He views the sovereignty of the nation as the primary goal for New Citizens and the government, and when necessary, the state can turn to a despotism to reach this goal. On the other hand, at relatively the same time, *Zhejiang Tide* students conceived the nation as based on the activities happening in the public realm without which China cannot preserve itself on the world stage. Besides legitimizing elite activism in local societies, the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors were also trying to create a public realm that is not innervated by the state and in which the public can initiate their activism for China. Liang Qichao systematically formulated moral requirements for individuals in the new China, while the *Zhejiang Tide* student was trying to create a realm where public action is allowed without state intervention. In other words, Liang paid more attention to the sovereignty of the nation as the collective goal that must be achieved, while the *Zhejiang Tide* student author viewed the nation as public realm in which individuals can act according to their unique characters (*texing*) and initiative (*jingshen*) and then consolidate the nation's position in the world.

Legitimacy in the New Realm: Transformation of Elite Culture

The translation of local provinces into a realm for public activism further legitimizes local elites' leading position in public affairs. In *Elite Activism and Political Transformation in China, Zhejiang Province, 1865-1911*, Mary Rankin proposes the concept of "public sphere" to understand the contention between the local elites and the central bureaucratic government. She suggests that "Public management by elites thus contrasted with official administration (*guan*), and with private (*si*) activities of individuals, families, religions, businesses, and organizations

that were not identified with the whole community.”¹⁰⁵ In late imperial Qing, the public sphere is where “the state and society met. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries it was a dynamic and expanding sphere, which neither governmental nor societal leaders could fully claim as their own.”¹⁰⁶ Rankin’s study focuses on the formation of local organizations and institutions where elites competed with the Qing court for political engagement and civil management. The study of *Zhejiang Tide* student authors’ narration on Zhejiang societies suggests that the students were trying to push the role of local elites in the provinces further in their writings: local elites as not only leaders of specific local organizations that contested with the state, but also indispensable and pivotal figures in the public realm.

First of all, the emphasis of locality as the focal point of China’s future in *Zhejiang Tide* legitimizes the political engagement of the local gentry and elites. Instead of emphasizing the unity and consistency of China as a whole, Fei Sheng and Wen Gui both point out that China is a nation with vast land and complex cultures that are drastically different from each other. The purpose of narrating China as such rejects a consistent and unified reform strategy that can be applied nationwide, since for those student authors, different regions have different culture and characters thus cannot be reformed and strengthened through unitary policies. Wen Gui points out that “to strengthen China...should start with the content of China. Families are different and people are varied. In a hundred miles languages are different. Between the North and the South customs also diverge from each other. Various societies all have their special characteristics and conservative habits.”¹⁰⁷ For Wen Gui, since different local societies have different characteristics,

¹⁰⁵ Mary Backus Rankin, *Elite Activism and Political Transformation in China: Zhejiang Province, 1865–1911*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 15.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 16.

¹⁰⁷ Wen Gui, 文詭. “Zhe Sheng,” 浙聲, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:2.

the reformation of China has to be based on the situation of different local societies. So who knows the situation of local society the best? Gong Fazi in the article “Warnings to My Fellow Countrymen” argues about the necessity of local self-governance and suggests that “Policies designed by the central government might be flexible in terms of application, but we cannot expect them to be suitable for the actual situation. Those who know local affairs the best are the local residents. And the local welfare has the most close connection to the local people.”¹⁰⁸ Then which group should participate in the local self-governance? Gong Fazi points out the history of China’s local self-government. He suggests that

the existence of China’s local self-government cannot be concealed. Let me point out a few points to prove this. In China’s local area there are gentry. This is what Mencius called *jushi*. All the local public affairs were all dealt with by the local gentry. If the local officials wish to construct anything, they have to consult with the gentry. The capability or not of the local gentry decides the prosperity or decay of local affairs. Therefore local gentry is the representation of local self-government. China’s local self-government is in local gentry.¹⁰⁹

For Gong, local gentry represent the historical heritage of self-government. They not only know the local situation well but also the method for operating local affairs. If China wishes to conduct effective reformation based on various local characteristics, the local gentry should be the leading figures in local self-government. Gong Fazi suggests that local self-government could only be realized by local gentry because “ordinary people are still not qualified enough to be citizens.”¹¹⁰ When Wen Gui argues that strengthening China cannot be conducted through those erudites with broad knowledge and those who only blindly copy foreign values, he also

¹⁰⁸ Gong Fazi, 攻法子. “Jinggao Woxiangren,” 敬告我鄉人, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 2:5.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 8.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 11.

emphasizes that only those elites familiar with local habits and participated in local affairs could be counted on to reform and strengthen China.

We can also see that the articles are not written for ordinary local residents without elite education. In contrast with the language used in “Guohun,” “Warnings to My Fellow Countrymen,” and “The Reason for India’s Extinction,” which is close to the “new prose style” (*xin wenti*) the articles on Zhejiang culture and local history such as “The Voice of Zhejiang” and “A General Description of Zhejiang Culture” are composed in classical Chinese. Many of the phrases in the articles derived from classics such as *Zhuang Zi* (3rd century BC) and *Spring and Autumn* (5th century BC). For instance, the idiom “*pi que dao kuan*”, which means solving a problem by identifying the key to it, is a phrase that first appeared in *Zhuang Zi*. In the second section, the author also uses the phrase “*gai xian geng gu wei bian zhen zhi sheng*” (to change the string and drum in order to shift the rhythm) to indicate the shift of the tone and language of the article, which combines two idioms come from *Book of Han* (111AD) and *Shiji* (*Records of the Grand Historian*, 91 BC). It is worth noting that the “translation” of local provinces and the role of the elite in the new realm for public activism are written in classical Chinese. A reader with classical education in 1903 might find the article “Guohun” or “The Reason For India’s Extinction” difficult to read since the structure of the sentences and the terminology were new during that time. The classical tone of the articles on Zhejiang identity might give the local elites a sense of inclusiveness and evoke their responsibility to construct their identity as Zhejiangnese. Moreover, the student authors chose to use a classical tone rather than Zhejiang dialect to provoke a sense of inclusiveness to local literati. Language was not the site for contesting specific local identity, but rather served as the glue to bind the traditional literati identity with the

new perception of local as “societies.” The student authors confirmed the elites’ position and function in the new realm. By translating Zhejiang provinces into societies through classical Chinese, the *Zhejiang Tide* tries to incorporate local elites into this new realm and legitimize their leading position in public activism.

Beside using the importance of local culture and characteristic for China’s reform to legitimize elite activism, the broader universal telos of *guohun* also promote the public activism of individuals outside the bureaucracy system. As Fei Sheng describes, *guohun* “could form naturally but could also be constructed by hundreds and thousands of men with faith through tear and blood.”¹¹¹ In Fei Sheng’s definition, *guohun* is not something that could be formed through bureaucratic policies from the top, but through various individual men with faith. Since *Guohun* resides in *fengsu* (local custom) and constructing *guohun* is to “observe and study the characteristics of the nation,” the formation of *guohun* also depends on the study of various characteristics and customs of local society.¹¹² For Fei Sheng, *guohun* resides in local custom rather than the traditional cultural heritage such as the classics and Confucian moral ethics means that he is creating a universal telos which give autonomy to local elites. Since Fei Sheng constructs *guohun* as the universal telos through which China could survive, China’s future thus depends entirely on the individual patriots familiar with local custom. Therefore, the theory of *guohun* also authorizes the political legitimacy of local elite activism and builds up an ideology that depends the future of China on individual elites who are outside the central bureaucracy and familiar with local provinces. *Guohun* is thus not only a concept students use to break the frozen

¹¹¹Fei Sheng, 飛生. “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:6-7.

¹¹² Ibid., 7.

of China into the past in existing historical discourse, but also a theory that legitimizes the autonomy of local activism.

While articulating the local society, the author Wen Gui is at the same time narrating the role and meaning of the elite. As in Wen Gui's conception, the modern characteristics and the traits of local societies could only strengthen China when evil habits inherited from tradition were dispelled. The evil habit that Wen Gui argues against resides in the Confucian literati culture which despises the value of the activities in the public realm that are crucial for China's modernity. Therefore, through translating the role of local society, Wen Gui advocates for the transformation of the elite culture. The traditional elite culture which centered around literati and knowledge has to be abandoned. In order to promote the *jingshen* and modern traits inside the local custom, local elites have to transform into the activists in the public realm that could spread the *jingshen* and characteristics in the public realm. The leading role of local elites still persists in the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors' discourse, although they reject the traditional values of classics and literati culture. Therefore, "society" not only "translates" locality, but also implies a necessary transformation of literati culture within society.

Rejecting State Integration

Besides legitimizing the elite activism in the public sphere, the selecting of local self government and custom as the method and material to strengthen and reform China also prevent the central integration of local gentry and elite activism in the local public sphere into the bureaucracy. Mary Rankin argues that the 1902 Xinzheng (New Policies) reformation was the Qing court's attempt to integrate the local institutions led by local elites into the bureaucratic

systems and to intervene into local governance.¹¹³ Rankin's study focuses on the institutional aspect of central integration, while the articles in *Zhejiang Tide* show that the study abroad students seized on local culture and self-governance as the reforming force for China in their attempt to prevent the institutional and cultural integration of local elites into the central bureaucratic system. In late Meiji Japan, family ethics became a powerful method for the central bureaucracy to facilitate state power and stabilize the social order. According to Pyle's study of the Meiji conservatism, conservative scholar Hozumi Yatsuka (1860-1929) contended that "The family is a small state; the state is a large family."¹¹⁴ However, *Zhejiang Tide* students did not seize on such ethics in the Confucian tradition as the base for China's reformation, but rather trying to find another cultural apparatus for constructing China's future that is away from the Confucian orthodoxy that the Qing government advocated. In his study of the New Policies Movement and the Sino-Japanese relationship in the late days of the dynasty, Douglas R. Reynolds points out in his book *China, 1898—1912: The Xinzheng Revolution and Japan*, reformers in the late Qing bureaucratic system advocated the idea of "Chinese learning as substance, Western learning for application" as a reform strategy. The late Qing conservative reformers in the bureaucracy used the Chinese classics as the core idea to maintain the Chinese values. However, the *Zhejiang Tide* students did not mention the classics as the national heritage that the Chinese people must maintain. Instead, the student authors suggest a cultural pluralism for China. In "The Voice of Zhejiang," the author Wen Gui suggests that Zhejiang has independent business and industrial societies. In the article "A General Description of Zhejiang

¹¹³ Mary Backus Rankin, *Elite Activism and Political Transformation in China: Zhejiang Province, 1865–1911*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 203-204.

¹¹⁴ Kenneth B. Pyle, "Meiji Conservatism." *The Cambridge History of Japan*, edited by Marius B. Jansen, vol. 5, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 674–720), 701.

Culture,” the author Wen Meng narrates four stages of Zhejiang history, which describes Zhejiang as an entity that has existed since ancient history and evolved through time. The narration of the local province as a historical entity indicates that for Wen Meng, China is composed of culturally and historically different localities. Therefore, the author advocates for a cultural pluralism which is impossible for the central government to dominate and intervene. He has not gone far enough to resolve the paradox of different local identities and a unified national identity, but reaches the conclusion that Chinese people do not all share the same cultural heritage but live in a culturally pluralistic nation. Wen Meng thus rejected the government’s reform strategy which wished to unite China under an orthodox culture that could support the imperial court as a center and maintain the order of reform under its control.

Even though the study abroad in Japan program was initiated by the Qing government as part of the conservative reform program, the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors were not integrated into late Qing reform discourse and instead attempt to strive for another reform ideology in which local intellectuals who both received classic education and learning new ideas like them became the major activist for public reform. Reynolds’s study names the Sino-Japanese relationship in the years between 1898 and 1908 as the “golden decade.” His study of the New Policies Movement, which he views as a revolution, and the Japanese intellectuals’ participation in China’s reformation in the decade before the fall of the Qing is convincing. However, the “golden decade” only describes the relationship between the Qing court, who wish to maintain the Confucian orthodoxy and social order, and the Japanese bureaucracy. From a close reading of the journal’s descriptions of Zhejiang, we can see that students diverged from Qing court’s emphasis of *tongwen*, “shared language,” and orthodox Confucian ethics toward a cultural

pluralism based on local custom and history in order to reject the Qing court's effort to integrate elite activism and maintain social order. The *Zhejiang Tide* authors also rejected a shared cultural identity with Japan, and Reynolds's "golden decade" seems not applicable to those overseas students and their relationship with Japan.

With this transformation, we can see that the purpose of writing local history is already different for the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors from their counterparts in the precedent dynasties. Peter Bol suggests a sequential development in the writing of local gazetteers, which manifests in the development of the local literati community. The writing of local historiography suggests that "first, a local literati community emerged that recognized that its future was tied to its locale and, second, that community became actively involved in creating local institutions that it could dominate...They represented a discourse on the locale,...and encouraged local activism by ensuring that acts that benefited the locale and lineage would be remembered."¹¹⁵ The *Zhejiang Tide* authors still persist in local literati or elites' leading role in local activism and institution building, while the meaning of writing local history changed. The composition of local history and culture no longer serves the purpose of creating literati solidarity and culture as it did in the Ming dynasty. Rather, in the *Zhejiang Tide*'s discourse, the writing of local society is for transforming locality into a realm for public action where the elite can spread the traits and characteristics of local custom for strengthening China. In other words, what consolidates the local elite is not the literati culture associated with local history, and local history is not equivalent to the history of literati. For them, what should unite, consolidate, and merge the local elite with the local people is shared custom and characteristics in local life which can further

¹¹⁵ Peter Kees Bol, "The "Localist Turn" and "Local Identity" in Later Imperial China." *Late Imperial China*, vol. 24 no. 2, 2003, 1-50 (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), 9-10.

strengthen China. Here the local history no longer represents the literati culture but a social realm where the elite actively spread and strengthen the characters and *jingshen* in local custom.

Therefore, through the narration of the local community as society, the student author not only translates locality as the foundation for the nation, but also changes the meaning for writing local history and rejects the domination of literati-centered cultural heritage in local areas.

Chapter 3 National & Transnational: *Zhejiang Tide* and Its Publishing Network

In the previous two chapters, I addressed the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors' conception of *guohun* as a universal nationalism rooted in local customs, and the student authors' use of the concept of "society" to translate the local into the realm of public activities and political engagement. Then how did the journal *Zhejiang Tide*, not only as a script for reform ideas, but also as a cultural-political product, facilitate the change that the student authors conceptualized? This chapter will examine the publication network established between *Zhejiang Tide* and its affiliated *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* (*Hangzhou Baihuabao*, 1901). The circulation of the two connected periodicals, horizontally, stages the local on the global political stage as the mechanism to realize a interconnected yet culturally pluralistic nation as theorized in "Guohun." By the horizontal circulation of the journal, I mean the national and cross-national distribution chain of *Zhejiang Tide*, which attempts to connect culturally pluralistic localities and local customs together as a nation. The *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* turned the speaking language of the local people into a mechanism for political engagement, and the circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* in other major provinces of China created a culturally pluralistic yet politically and commercially connected China. The circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* to overseas Chinese communities in Singapore demonstrates that locality was a means through which anti-colonialism could be situated and the incorporation of overseas Chinese speakers as "Chinese" could be realized. I will also show the circulation of both journals vertically, which means the function of it inside the dynamic of a given society. The three different linguistic styles used in those two periodicals aim to connect different levels of social groups – the

reformers with new forms of education, the classical literati, and the local residents in the local realm – together by mediating among those different audiences and by functioning as different roles for them.

Zhejiang Tide & Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper: A Transnational Publishing Network

Zhejiang Tide student authors were not the earliest group of journalists from Zhejiang who were concerned with the public activism and the political engagement of the ordinary residents in the local province. In fact, in 1901, two years before the publication of *Zhejiang Tide* in Tokyo, a newspaper aimed at constituting a common readership among the local residents in Hangzhou was published. This newspaper was *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper*, founded by Xiang Zaoxin (courtesy name Lansheng, 1873-1957) in Hangzhou with his co-editors, among them Sun Yizhong (courtesy name Jiangdong). In Elisabeth Kaske's study of language revolution, *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* became the model for a generation of vernacular journals.¹¹⁶ Moreover, according to the investigation given by *Zhejiang Tide*, the copies of *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* sold in Hangzhou surpassed other national circulation newspapers, such as *Shenbao* and *Xinmin Congbao*.¹¹⁷ The publication of the newspaper did not last long and ceased in 1904. Unlike other newspapers that were circulated between officials, merchants, academies and ordinary residents, the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* was exclusively consumed by normal local residents (*pu tong zhu min*).¹¹⁸ As its title indicates, the newspaper was composed in vernacular Chinese (*baihua*), which is different from *Zhejiang*

¹¹⁶ Elisabeth Kaske, *The Politics of Language in Chinese Education, 1895-1919*, (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 113.

¹¹⁷ "Diaocha Huigao," 調查會稿, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 3:1.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

Tide's interchangeably usage of "new prose style" (*xin wenti*) and classical Chinese. *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* was at the same time also consciously used by students in the Hangzhou Qiushi Academy, one of the earliest modern academies in Hangzhou, as a tool for public education. According to Qian Junfu's memory, after the failure of Tang Caichang's (1867-1900) rebellion in 1900, the students in the Qiushi Academy ordered 20 copies of the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* and distributed them to the nearby tea shop and wine house and then lectured based on the newspaper.¹¹⁹

Hangzhou Qiushi Academy was also the place where the connection between *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* and *Zhejiang Tide* was established. One of the editors of *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper*, Sun Yizhong (courtesy name Jiangdong), was a teacher in the Qiushi Academy.¹²⁰ According to the "Members of Zhejiang Study Abroad Association In Tokyo," he was from Qiantang in Hangzhou.¹²¹ In the year of 1901, classes in Qiushi Academy selected a few students that mastered in both sinological studies and Western knowledge to give lectures and comments to writings from students in other classes in response to the failed Tang Caichang Rebellion. Sun Yizhong, who was a teacher of class four, gave an essay topic "Zui Bian Wen" (Essay on Sinful Queue) to students, in which the Manchu court was dismissed as "traitor Manchus."¹²² A student in his class reported the essays to the local grand coordinator and

¹¹⁹ Qian Junfu. 钱均夫, *Hangzhou Qiushi Shuyuan Zuibianwenan Shimo Lueji*, 杭州求是书院罪辨文案始末记略, Jindaishi Ziliao Diyi, 60.

¹²⁰ *Xianglansheng Zidingnianpu*, 项兰生自定年谱, Guoli Zhejiang Daxue Lishi Wenku. <http://www.ncku1897.net/history/2018/09/26/1698/>

Qian Junfu. 钱均夫, *Hangzhou Qiushi Shuyuan Zuibianwenan Shimo Lueji*, 杭州求是书院罪辨文案始末记略, Jindaishi Ziliao Diyi, 60.

¹²¹ *Zhejiang Tongxiang Liuxue Dongjing Timing*, 浙江同乡留学东京提名, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 3:1-9.

¹²² Qian Junfu. 钱均夫, *Hangzhou Qiushi Shuyuan Zuibianwenan Shimo Lueji*, 杭州求是书院罪辨文案始末记略, Jindaishi Ziliao Diyi, 60.

charged Sun Yizhong as “disrespecting the Qing court.”¹²³ Sun was forced to leave Qiushi Academy, and in 1902, according to the appendix in *Zhejiang Tide*, Sun arrived in Japan at the age of 33.¹²⁴ According to Elisabeth Kaske’s study, Sun Yizhong was also directly involved in the *Zhejiang Tide*.¹²⁵ Then, the office of *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* also became one of the three major distributors of *Zhejiang Tide* (fig 1).

¹²³ Qian Bin & Song Peiji, 钱斌&宋培基, *Xinhai Geming Qianqi Cai Yuanpei Yu Qiushi Shuyuan Shiji Lueshu*, 辛亥革命前期蔡元培与求是书院事迹述略 <http://www.ncku1897.net/history/2017/12/29/914/>

¹²⁴ *Zhejiang Tongxiang Liuxue Dongjing Timing*, 浙江同鄉留學東京提名, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 3:1-9.

¹²⁵ Elisabeth Kaske, *The Politics of Language in Chinese Education, 1895-1919*, (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 229.

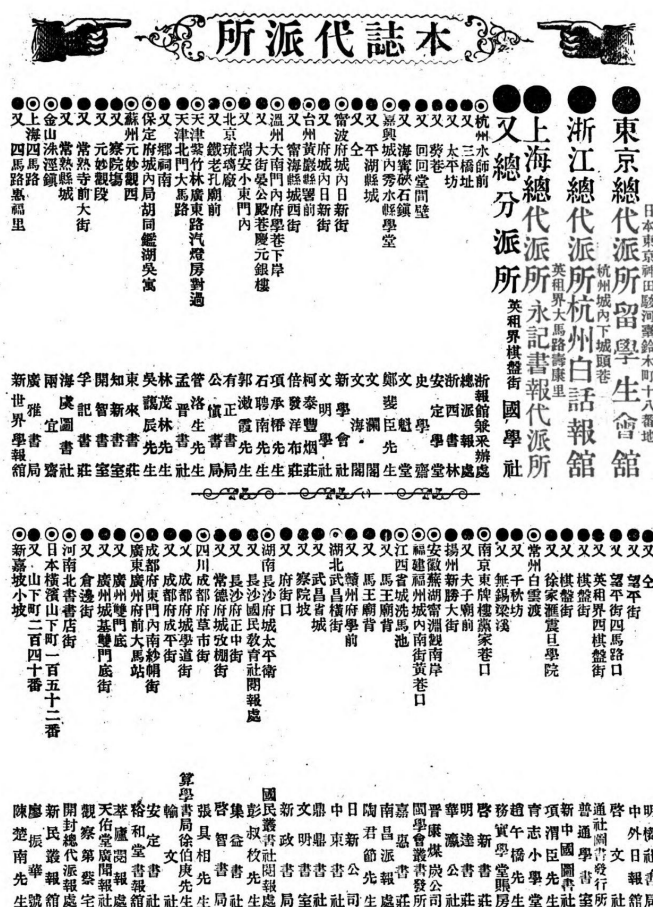


Figure 1

Since Sun Yizhong, one of the founders of *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* also contributed to *Zhejiang Tide*, the correspondence between *Zhejiang Tide* and *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* is worth exploring. If *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper*, practically speaking, already started to agitate for political awareness in the local realm for the ordinary residents, then why would the authors such as Sun still contribute to the *Zhejiang Tide*? What roles did the “trans-nationally” composed journals such as *Zhejiang Tide* play in facilitating the imagination of the globe and the political engagement that *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper*

attempted to establish in the domestic region? In this chapter, I will show that the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* transformed vernacular Chinese (*baihua*) into the mechanism of political engagement and the local realm as a space for public action as conceived by *Zhejiang Tide* student authors through the idea of “society.” The circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* around mainland China further consolidated the “cultural-pluralism,” the formation of China as a nation based on the pluralistic local customs that the student authors conceived in “Guohun” and “The Voice of Zhejiang.” The distribution of the *Zhejiang Tide* around Southeast Asia further staged China in the globe and attempted to constitute a transnational cultural community based on anti-colonialism and local identity. Together, the circulation of *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* and the *Zhejiang Tide* stages Zhejiang in a global stage, which is both the local realm where national activity happened and the identity through which a transnational cultural community is formed. The circulation of the newspapers and journals thus corresponded to the conceptual role of local society in forming China’s *guohun* on a global political stage, and shows the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors’ attempt to realize their theory of *Guohun* through the distribution chain of the journal.

Practicing *Guohun* in the Local Realm

The *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* constructed the local as the realm for political action by using vernacular Chinese as the medium for political awareness and engagement. As a vernacular newspaper whose main audiences were the residents in Hangzhou, the provincial capital of Zhejiang, *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* does not begin with introducing the benefits of local self-government or the local customs. Instead, the majority of issue one of

Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper was introducing the events that happened in other parts of the world. After using “The Benefits of Reading Newspapers” as the inauguration of the newspaper to encourage local residents to read newspapers, the newspaper then started to introduce the “News in China and Foreign Countries.” As a newspaper published in the post-Boxer Rebellion era, the news includes stories on the Guangxu Emperor and the Empress Dowager Cixi returning to Beijing after the Boxer Rebellion, China’s compensation to other countries, the famine in China, and the suffering of Poland people. After this section which is composed of short news, the newspaper then has a formal article talking about Poland. Rebecca Karl already did a thorough analysis of “Poland” as a metaphor to staging the world for Chinese people in her study of the Beijing opera “Guazhong Lanyin” (Planting the Melon, Cause of the Orchard).¹²⁶ The differences or similarities in how Poland was portrayed in the two sources is not the major concern here. It is the form and context through which the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* accomplishes this staging of the world that signifies its importance in creating political awareness in the local realm.

As mentioned above, the authors of *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* wrote as if they were talking. Under the title of each article, the authors put a word “*shuo*” (say) under their pen-names. It was like the author was talking to the audience through writing. In the actual articles, the author directly address to the reader by saying “All you readers are with clear mind” (*zhu wei shi ming bai de ren*), or “All you readers may not trust what we say right now” (*zhu wei ci ke hai wei bi shi fen xiang xin*). The use of the word “*zhu wei*,” which is not referring to one reader but a large audience, indicates that the writer of the newspaper articles was not writing to

¹²⁶ Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World : Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 26-29.

individual readers but to collective listeners. Their writing style thus closely resonated with those of the storytellers who tell a story to the audiences, and are almost like scripts for stories prepared to be told by someone. Written in such a style, the newspaper was designed to be read out loud and then heard by people in the tea house or wine shop collectively. The context and form through which the newspaper was read illustrates the newspaper's intended function as creating the social realm for political participation. Tea houses or wine shops were where people talk in the most plain and vernacular language they use in daily life in those places for entertainment. The writing of the news and events in the globe, in other words, the construction of the globe in vernacular Chinese, thus intended to transform the language used by ordinary residents in the public sphere as the language for imaging the globe and China's position. The *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* thus channeled the language used by the ordinary residents in the local areas as the language for political and national awareness. The discussion of politics was thus no longer limited to writing or to literati language that had to be learned through training and investment. Politics needed to be discussed through the language of the ordinary residents, in their speech and conversation. The *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* and the vernacular language used by the authors thus "politicized" the language used by the ordinary residents of Hangzhou as the language through which the globe and China's position could be imagined. The publication of *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* also created the local provinces and cities as the realm for political engagement. The use of vernacular language as the mechanism to imagine the globe further turned the public space as the realm that is potential for political action. By using vernacular style that mimicked the speaking language as the mechanism to construct national and global awareness, vernacularity became the tool through

which residents could discuss politics in the public where the daily life of the local residents happened. Political discussions were thus neither confined to the well trained literati nor administrative institutions or academies, but could and should happen in the wine shops or tea houses. The vernacularity of news writing thus provided the practical tool through which political action could be initiated in the public realm of the local society. Therefore, with the vernacularization of news writing, the conception of local society, the sphere where the daily life of local residents happened, as the public realm for public activity and political engagement was no longer just a conceptual argument but become a tangible realm where politics and national awareness were raised up and could be discussed through vernacular Chinese.

With the circulation of *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper*, the language of the ordinary residents in the local realm became the potential language for political engagement and the tool through which public activity could happen. Not only local society became a tangible realm where public activities take place, but the public activities in local society themselves were also transformed into national activities that represented “Chineseness” under a global background, and thus directly related to China’s survival in the global political sphere. With vernacular Chinese and spoken language becoming the means through which national awareness and political engagement were facilitated, we can again see that the local self-government that the *Zhejiang Tide* student advocated was not only about the governing of local life autonomously by the local people, but the governing of national affairs that could strengthen China since the public activities in local provinces become the national affairs of China as a nation in the globe. The use of vernacular Chinese as the means of political engagement thus made the translation of public activities in the local realm into national activities possible. Therefore, the *Hangzhou*

Vernacular Newspaper consolidated the local realm as the space for public activities that could strengthen China on the globe stage. Through writing in vernacular language, the publication network formed between *Zhejiang Tide* and *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* “translated” the local societies into a Chinese identity in the nationalistic globe that the article “Guohun” and “The Voice of Zhejiang” formulated.

Manifesting Cultural Pluralism

Zhejiang Tide also advertised for journals published by study-abroad students from other provinces. For instance, they advertised for *Jiang Su* (1903), the journal published by students from Jiangsu province, *Translations During Study Tour* (*Youxue Yibian*, 1902), a journal published by students from Hunan province (fig 2&3). The appearance of the advertisement for those journals in *Zhejiang Tide* itself built up a cross-provincial publication network. *Zhejiang Tide* advertised journals published by other provincial associations by showing the content page of those journals, which expressed the idea that different journals conducted by students from different provinces contained many overlaps in the topics they cover and thus correspond with each others’ work. For instance, similar to *Zhejiang Tide*, *Jiang Su* and *Translations During Study Tour* also discussed the history of those nations that were considered as “dead” and the future or essence of “Zhina.” The advertisements show that even though students formed their own native place associations, they were not exclusive in only presenting their own local culture. Rather, they wanted the reader of their journal to learn the features, provincial identity and writings of students from other provinces and at the same time realized that people from different local provinces were actually concerned about the same issue and crisis. Therefore, the journal

Zhejiang Tide shows that different provinces were not completely separate entities but were facing the same crisis together. A common memory and identity among different provinces were thus formed by the advertisements in *Zhejiang Tide*, since the readers would find that the journals composed by Jiangsu, Hunan, and Zhejiang students were actually concerned about the same things.

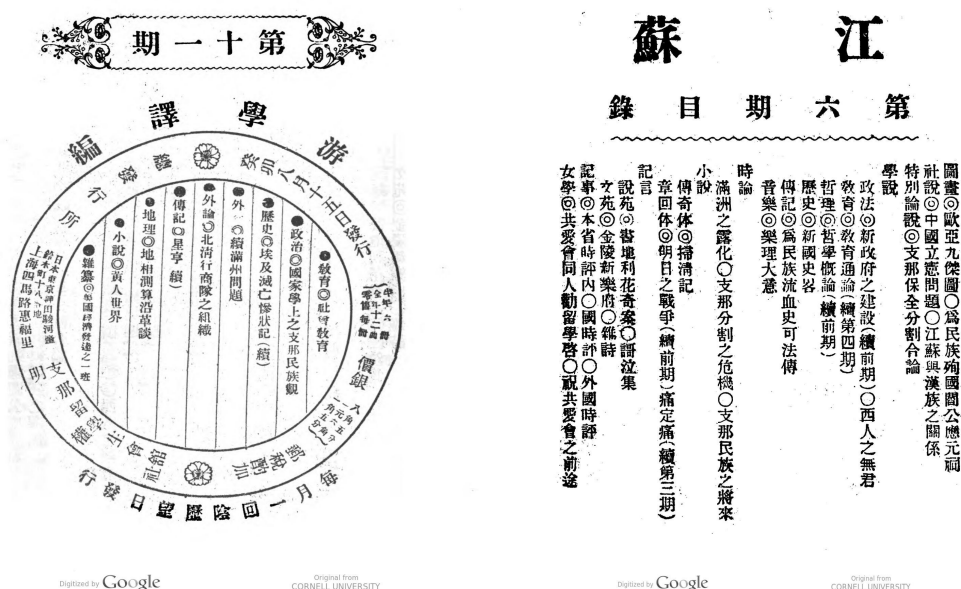


Figure 2&3

The circulation of the *Zhejiang Tide* in mainland China corresponded to the cultural pluralism that the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors conceptualized and the advertisements of the magazine manifested. Even though the title *Zhejiang Tide* presents a local centrism on the outset, the journal was by no means only facing the audience from Zhejiang. Looking at the distributors of *Zhejiang Tide*, the journal actually also circulated among other major metropolitan cities in the mainland (fig1). From the cities on the list, we could see that the journal *Zhejiang Tide* was distributed along the coastal line and the Yangtze River. Most of the distributors were newly

formed academies such as Zhejiang Anding Academy or Society of New Learning (*xinxue huishe*), modern bookstores (*shu she*), and individuals in the local areas. Therefore, the student authors of *Zhejiang Tide* sought a nation-wide readership for their articles. The reformation methods, universal nationhood, and the local society as public realm were advocated not for Zhejiang province alone but meant to be applicable to other provinces as well for the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors. Here, the journal served two different functions by bringing itself to other provinces. First is that it could inform readers in other regions about the local customs and activities that happened in the societies of Zhejiang. This demonstrates that the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors tried to tighten the imagination of China as a nation that was composed of different provinces and different local customs through the circulation of their journal. China is composed of different provinces and local cultures, but in order for a nation as an entity to be imagined while keeping its pluralistic culture to sustain its possible future and not to be integrated into the Enlightenment discourse, provinces had to be imagined as inter-connected yet different from each other.

The circulation of the journal could be seen as the student author's attempt to accomplish such realization. When discussing how overseas Chinese could be recognized as Chinese in her book *Staging The World: Chinese Nationalism At The Turn Of The Twentieth Century*, Rebecca Karl uses the concept "deterritorialization" in the following way. "I argue here that 'Chinese-ness' first became a global political topos and only after became a reified culturalist-ethnic one... This emergence brought to the fore of the theoretical conflicts over 'the people' the possibility of a deterritorialized political praxis in and through this new global

space.”¹²⁷ Here, “Chineseness” means a national identity that is not necessarily associated with the territory but born as a global political agenda. Only under this “deterritorialized” background could overseas Chinese be defined as “Chinese,” and only through a “deterritorialized” political engagement with this Chinese identity could a connection with territories outside China be possible. Through the circulation of *Zhejiang Tide*, “Zhejiang” province was also “deterritorialized” to facilitate the imagination of the nation. With the circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* in other provinces and cities of China, Zhejiang identity was no longer confined to Zhejiangnese who lived in the Zhejiang area. In other words, Zhejiang was not a locale in itself anymore, but a part of the Chinese identity that Chinese people living in other parts of the nation also should be aware of. As pointed out in the previous chapter, locality was no longer written for consolidating the literati’s community with its locale, but to make the nation that was composed of different provinces with different customs conceivable for the readers. Therefore, the circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* served as a glue that could tie local provinces together for realizing the student authors’ conception of China. Since Zhejiang no longer refers to the local area itself but part of Chinese identity, Zhejiangnese could engage in political action anywhere in the nation as well as in the global sphere as both Zhejiangnese and Chinese.

In addition, the circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* in other provinces demonstrated that the local self-government as a tool for reform was not limited to Zhejiang alone in the student authors’ conceivment. They had nation-wide readership in mind when they were advocating local self-government as a tool for reform, as indicated by the route of circulation. The *Zhejiang Tide* student authors thus advocate that even though provinces had different local customs and culture,

¹²⁷ Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World : Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 54.

there should be a unified reform method for all provinces in order to preserve China. Here, the nation-wide readership of *Zhejiang Tide* indicates that for the student authors, cultural pluralism did not mean political differentiation. The local self-government was by no means only applicable in Zhejiang, as the author Gong Fazi points out in article “Warnings To My Fellow Countrymen” (*jinggao wu xiangren*), when he says, “what I am saying is not limited to Zhejiang, but I want to say the same words to all the provinces in China.”¹²⁸ For the *Zhejiang Tide* students, they were trying to create a common and unified readership on the issue of local self-government and *guohun* throughout the nation by circulating the journal in other provinces of the nation. Therefore, the distribution chain of *Zhejiang Tide* in mainland China corresponds to the reform methods and the conception of the nation in *Zhejiang Tide* student authors’ writing.

Staging Zhejiang Overseas

Zhejiang Tide was not only circulated around mainland China but was also bought by Chinese readers in Southeast Asia and Japan. According to the distribution chart of *Zhejiang Tide*, the journal was also sold in Southeast Asia, such as Singapore. The circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* around other nations of the world represents the student authors’ attempt to form China’s *guohun* on the globe stage. If *guohun* was derived from the local societies and the achievement of which preserves China’s future, then the circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* in other nations nonetheless presented Zhejiang on the world stage, which in turn represented China within the global political sphere. The circulation of the journal thus pushed the locale onto the global stage and represented the nation through the local, which again demonstrated that the mechanism

¹²⁸ Gong Fazi, 攻法子. “Jinggao Woxiangren,” 敬告我鄉人, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 2:1.

through which China contested its survival with other nations in the world stage was the local societies.

Here, locality again found its position in the global sphere. First of all, the publication of the journal in Tokyo itself showed the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors' intention of staging the "local" in the global political sphere. By naming their journal as "Zhejiang Tide," which demonstrated a local-centrism at the outset, and publishing it in Japan, the deterritorialization of Zhejiang from its geological position shows its second function. As mentioned previously in the analysis of *Zhejiang Tide*'s circulation over mainland China, Zhejiang was deterritorialized and transformed to part of Chinese identity. Here with the publication of the journal in Tokyo and the circulation of it overseas, Zhejiang was also deterritorialized and appropriated to a global political sphere. This "appropriation" of Zhejiang to other parts of the world again shows that the locality, where the *guohun* derives from, was not a bounded territory, but a conceptual representation of China, which connoted the local customs derived from public activities and affairs. With the circulation of the journal, Zhejiang as China's local province was "deterritorialize" and brought to Chinese readers in the foreign land. This means that Zhejiang was started to be viewed as a "concept" rather than a territory in a specific geopolitical entity. The locale became a conceptual representation of China on a world stage. That the local could represent the nation meant that China precisely resided in the local customs generated by public activities in the local realm. In other words, the identity of China could be situated around the global political sphere through presenting the local activities and identity. Therefore, the publication and circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* in Japan manifested the student authors' conception that the survival of China under the universal nationalistic world should be derived from local

societies, and China could own its place on a global political stage because the local activities and customs preserved China's survival. Therefore, with the deterritorialization and transformation of the locale onto the world stage through circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* across national borders, the student authors again realized their conception of the local societies as the fundamental apparatus for national reform. The circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* thus was designed to resemble and correspond to the conception of the relationship between the local, national, and the globe in the journal itself. The circulation of the journal was thus not only the result of consumption, but an important step in performing the ideas in *Zhejiang Tide*. Through the publication network and the postal services, not only the global world was actualized because it became somewhere that the journal could reach to, but the ideas of reformation for China's survival on the newly imagined world were performed and consolidated.

The circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* among Southeast Asian Chinese communities is also worth noting. In the previous analysis, I argued that the circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* overseas demonstrated the staging of Zhejiang in a global political sphere, which presented the local province as the social realm through which China's position in the world was contested and China's survival could be sustained. Then a question must be asked. What effect would *Zhejiang Tide* have on overseas Chinese readers? How would the journal make the overseas readers feel that they are relevant to what *Zhejiang Tide* students were talking about? Here let's take a close look at the overseas readerships of the journal. Besides circulating around Japan where the journal was published, *Zhejiang Tide* was also sold to Singapore. Different from Japan, where many study abroad students and intellectuals were attracted in the late 19th century, the Chinese readers in Singapore were mainly job seekers or merchants from southern China, after Singapore

had become a British colony. Most job seekers were from the same native place with earlier immigrants and were introduced to Singapore for jobs, according to Gungwu Wang's study in *China and the Chinese Overseas*.¹²⁹ Therefore, local connection was crucial in constructing the overseas Chinese community in Singapore. However, most of the newcomers were from Southern Min, some also from Chao Zhou and Guangdong. All of those areas are far away from Zhejiang. In fact, the individual distributor of *Zhejiang Tide* in Singapore was revolutionary and publisher Tan Chor Nam (1884-1971), son of famous Singapore timber merchant Tan Tye (courtesy name Li Shan, 1839-1898) who later became the leader of Singapore *Tongmeng Hui* (Chinese United League).¹³⁰ Tan Tye immigrated to Singapore in the 1860s from Tongan county in Quanzhou, which now belongs to Xiamen.¹³¹ Then, why would *Zhejiang Tide* student authors want to appeal to readers in Singapore that were not necessarily Zhejiangnese or have any connection with Zhejiang, and how could their writings connect the overseas Chinese in Singapore with the theories in their writings?

Here, I will argue that the portrayal of colonized nation as having no *jingshen* (spirit and will to act) of its own in "Reason for India's Extinction" narrate an anti-imperial commonality among the overseas Chinese and the mainland readers of *Zhejiang Tide*, and reminds them that the only identity they have is the identity they carried from China. In "The Reason For India's Distinction," when describing India's current situation, the student author says, "Then European people penetrated into the lungs of India people like bacterias and absorbed their blood. Once the

¹²⁹ Wang Gungwu, 王赓武. *Zhongguo Yu Haiwai Huaren*, 中國與海外華人 (Hong Kong, Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1994), 199.

¹³⁰ *Sun Zhongshan Yu Wan Qing Yuan*, 孙中山与晚晴园, The Second Historical Archives of China, http://www.shac.net.cn/mgcq/mgmr/201809/t20180925_3922.html

¹³¹ *Jinmen Xianxia Lu Xinjiapo Pian*, 金門先賢錄新加坡篇, 46-48.

disease erupts, there is no way to heal it.”¹³² Then in the conclusion of the article in issue 1, the author says, “If the people of India did not lose their unique *jingshen*, other ethnic groups could not invade them. If other ethnic groups did not invade them, then its people could maintain their consistency, and the great empire of India would still stand in the land of East Asia.”¹³³ The *Zhejiang Tide* student authors here suggest a nation that is being colonized and has lost its *jingshen* is dead already. This message could remind the overseas Chinese in Singapore of their particular identity. Since in the *Zhejiang Tide* student author’s narration, a nation that is colonized has already died, the student author wipes out the choice for overseas Chinese to be loyal to where they are, which is Singapore. Then, if the overseas Chinese wish to prevent themselves from the exploitation of another nation, they have to be loyal to their original identity, and spread the *jingshen* of their local province overseas in order not to be exploited by the colonizer. By narrating India as extinct and its people as being exploited, the *Zhejiang Tide* student author could implicitly push the overseas Chinese to sustain their local identity in order to resist the colonizing forces. Their activities overseas would thus be the manifestation of their local *jingshen* and characteristics since they were connected by local identity. As argued in chapter one, *guohun* was seen to be derived from such characteristics and customs of the local province. Then overseas Chinese were incorporated into this discourse, since they faced the same colonial forces that were threatening to diminish the *guohun* of their home nation. *Zhejiang Tide*, as a journal produced by a group of students when they were studying abroad overseas, could thus become the model for other oversea communities in launching local communities and facilitating local *jingshen*. By seizing on local identity as the core idea for China’s reform and

¹³² Ye Gong, 葉公. “Yindu Miewang Zhi Yuanyin,” 印度滅亡之原因, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:1.

¹³³ Ibid., 1:9.

detritorializing it as mobile and not confined to a region, *Zhejiang Tide* thus incorporated the overseas Chinese into the process of forming *guohun* and sustaining China's future. *Zhejiang Tide* thus attempted to link overseas Chinese and China together as an inter-connected community through local identity as the focal point of resisting the threat came from other nations. Here, rather than a homogeneous Chinese identity, the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors used the local identity as the mechanism to detritorialize the boundary of the nation and as the means through which exploitation from other nations could be defended. By doing so, they further incorporated those who went abroad temporarily and permanently as Chinese, and the global Chinese community that was associated with local identities and based on anti-colonial forces was formed.

Incorporating the Nation Through Linguistic Style

Besides the attempt to create the social realm for public activities and the cultural pluralism conceived by the student authors through the circulation of *Zhejiang Tide* and *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper*, the different linguistic styles used by the two publications illustrate that the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors and the editors of *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* together attempted to act as mediator to incorporate people from different social groups, such as the reformers with new ideas, the literati who received classical education, and the ordinary residents of local area, into their theory of *guohun* and their conception of local society as realm for public activities.

First of all, the article "Guohun" and "Reason for India's Extinction" were composed in different linguistic styles than the article "The Voice of Zhejiang." The linguistic style in

Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper was also different from the one used in *Zhejiang Tide*. This difference suggests that the different portions of *Zhejiang Tide* and the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* were intended to face different social groups, such as those of the reformers, literati with classical education, and the common residents in the local area. At the same time, the publications served as different roles for each of those social groups. Three writing styles and the different roles that the publications played were intended to incorporate people from different social groups into their theory of *guohun* and social activism. The articles “Guohun” and “Reason for India’s Extinction” were not composed in vernacular Chinese as the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* was. Although it was different from the classical style, it was still not completely vernacular writing yet. Its sentence structure and word choice resembled Liang Qichao’s “new prose style”, which aimed to “break up the strict norms and restrictions of literary writing,” as Kaske phrases it.¹³⁴ The student author used phrases such as “*zhuzao guohun*” (making *Guohun*) “*dongcha texing*” (observing *texing*), syllabic action nouns as verbs, and mimicked speaking repetition in passages such as “*wuzhiqiyong, wuzhiqiyong*” (I know the reason, I know the reason). Therefore, the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors in “Guohun” and “The Reason For India’s Extinction” were applying a linguistic style similar to the “new prose style” of Liang Qichao. Even though the student authors dropped the use of classical idioms in their writing of “Guohun” and “Reason for India’s Extinction,” they still introduced neologisms that came from Japan but had roots in classical Chinese, such as “*guomin*” (citizen/people of the nation) in passages like “...therefore German citizens cannot forced to be French citizens, British citizens cannot be forced to become Japanese citizens...” and “*lishi*” (history) in “for those who study

¹³⁴ Elisabeth Kaske, *The Politics of Language in Chinese Education, 1895-1919*, (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 114.

history, geography is a very important component,” etc.¹³⁵ Those neologisms that were from Japan but derived from classical Chinese already connoted different meanings for those who had received classical education and thus might be hard for them to understand in the first place.¹³⁶ Since those neologisms were derived from classical Chinese, which meant the basic recognition of them requires certain literacy, the intended audience of those articles could not be ordinary residents without a high level of literary education. Since they were neither for the traditional literati nor for the ordinary residents who spoke vernacular Chinese, the writing style of “Guohun” and “The Reason for India’s Extinction” were thus facing those who were familiar with neologisms imported from different languages, which meant with a sufficient amount of knowledge about reform ideas and accumulated readings on articles composed by reformers. Therefore, the linguistic style used in articles such as “Guohun” and “Reason for India’s Extinction” demonstrated that the intended readers of the articles were those who received reformed education and were familiar with neologisms. By writing “Guohun” in this new style, *Zhejiang Tide* student authors were acting as theorists for China’s reform and the explainers of new reform strategies. The inauguration of “Guohun” says,

Can we call those who have the five organs, four limbs, round head and square toes humans (ren)? Not really. They can also be puppets. Why? Because they have no spirit (hun). If you slaughter or kill them, they don’t feel pain. Can a place with land, with people (renmin), with government and law, be called a nation? Those who know would say, not really. Why? Because there’s no spirit (hun). If you try to slaughter and cut it apart, there’s no awareness. My fellow men, my fellow men, do you think I am making mysterious statements that are blank in their meaning, and have no practical usages? Here I will unpack what I mean by that. Those with deep knowledge today, know that China’s trouble is not in one person, but in the collective. Then they anxiously urge for education. Truly,

¹³⁵ Fei Sheng, 飛生. “Guohun Pian,” 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903) 1:2. Ye Gong, 葉公. “Yindu Miawang Zhi Yuanyin,” 印度滅亡之原因, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:2.

¹³⁶ Lydia He Liu, *Translingual Practice : Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity--China, 1900-1937*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), Appendix D.

no nation can survive with its people's morals being contemptible, people's force weak, and people's minds being blocked. Similarly we all say we have to have education in people's morals, minds, and forces, but then why does Germany have its own education that is different from that of the United States, Japan has its own education that is different from that of France? Alas, I know there must be one thing that carries its endless forces and resides in the brain of a particular nation. Educators can see it with bright eyes, and spread it according to its special characteristics.¹³⁷

Here, the student author is defining what is the most important thing for a nation to be counted as a nation, and what the reformers and educators should do in order to strengthen the nation. The *Zhejiang Tide* student author is thus the definer and theorizer of what is the most crucial thing for China's reform for his audiences. Since the intended readers of this section were the readers who accumulated neologisms and were familiar with the new writing style, the student author Fei Sheng thus presented the theory of China's reform to their readers who were attracted by reformation ideas, urging them to think of China as a nation on the world stage and to cultivate and spread *Guohun* for China's survival. Therefore, the group with reformation ideas and intentions was included in *Zhejiang Tide*'s readerships, and *Zhejiang Tide* acted as a theorizer and definer of future directions for them.

Beside writing with neologisms for the reformers, the *Zhejiang Tide* also included writings in classical styles such as in "The Voice of Zhejiang," as mentioned in chapter two. The audience of this article was in classical language, with many uses of classical idioms and reference to classical figures in history that were hard to understand for those without training in classics, for instance, the phrase "pi que dao kuan" from *Zhuangzi*, which means finding a key point and a complex problem could be solved easily, and "gang ju mu zhang" from *Lüshi Chunqiu*, which means the find the key point of a web, and then the who network would appear.

¹³⁷ Fei Sheng, 飛生. "Guohun Pian," 國魂篇, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:1.

¹³⁸ Then the author also referred to Wu Zixu and Fan Li, politicians in the Spring and Autumn period, to illustrate the fame of the Zhejiang tide in China's history.¹³⁹ The text was thus hard to grasp for audiences who had no education in classics and Chinese history. Therefore, the language used by "The Voice of Zhejiang" demonstrated that the intended readers were those of the literati group with classical education. Here the *Zhejiang Tide* was intended to serve as the informer for local literati of the activities happening in local society where local customs reside. The author of "The Voice of Zhejiang" called upon local intellectuals with sufficient classical knowledge and pointed out the role of local literati by saying,

...but once ask them about the habits and relations of their hometown, the biography of the elder teachers, from the wars, the fire and flood happened in the native place to the trifles in households, those things that classics and book do not record, those that the gazetteers do not collect, then those (who read thousands of history books) can only stare their eyes without able to speak a word. They cannot even compare with housewives and servants. According to the elders, what the erudites disregard as gossip or trifles are what could pique people's patriotic emotion toward their hometown (*ji fa xiang qing*) and agitate people's sensation. Alas, don't the erudites fail in emptiness and broadness?¹⁴⁰

The student author directly questions the erudites in this article. Then, the author continues to introduce the commercial and industrial societies in the local area, and narrate the activities in the local realm as what constituted the characteristics of a local community. Therefore, in "The Voice of Zhejiang", the student author is informing the local erudites the activities and actions of the local residents and pushing them to pay attention to the activities in the local area. By using classical language in writing local activities, the journal *Zhejiang Tide* served as the informer to the intended audience who received classical education, and urged them to pay attention to the activities happening in the local area to investigate the local custom for the formation of *Guohun*.

¹³⁸ Wen Gui, 文詭. "Zhe Sheng," 浙聲, *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 1:1.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 1:3.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 1:1.

The *Zhejiang Tide* did not write in plain vernacular language, but referred to *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* for those who wish to read in plain vernacular language. In issue four of *Zhejiang Tide*, the journal advertised for *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper*. The advertisement says, “This newspaper narrates in purely vernacular language, those who did not have a high level of literacy can also understand with no trouble. Women and children can also read and understand” (fig 4).¹⁴¹ This advertisement for *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* demonstrates that the *Zhejiang Tide* editors’ awareness of their journal was not composed for students with no literary education. Therefore, they called upon *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* for incorporating the audiences who did not have high literacy into their readership. It also means that the *Zhejiang Tide* editors intended to use different languages to address different readers, since they stated that those newspapers composed in vernacular language were for the readers who did not have a high level of literary education. Therefore, the two different language styles used in “Guohun,” “Reason for India’s Extinction” and in “The Voice of Zhejiang” were intended to address different readers. *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* used plain vernacular language with neither idioms from classical text nor many neologisms. The first article in the newspaper is called “The Benefits of Reading Newspapers”, in which the author introduces the benefits of reading newspapers. The author of the article says,

The Chinese *dushuren* (students or men who depend on knowledge or study to earn a living) tend to be poor. There’s no money for us to buy books...If we don't read newspapers, then how can we know things happened outside? If we wish to see who become the *juren* and *jinshi*, what new books are published, and what’s the ethos of different provinces are all clear with newspaper...Now the class of farmers, craftsman, and merchants can also gain benefits from reading newspapers.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ *Zhejiang Chao*, 浙江潮 (Tōkyō: Zhejiang tong xiang hui, 1903), 4: n.p.

¹⁴² Fan Xuanzi, 樊宣子. “Lun Kanbao De Haochu,” 论看报的好处, *Hangzhou Baihuabao*, 杭州白晝報, Baihua Baoguan Bianji. (Hangzhou: Baihua Baoguan, 1901), 1:n.p.

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Figure 4

The author is here trying to establish the habit of reading for the local residents and their political engagement in daily life. By circulating around in local wine shops and tea houses, the *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* was trying to nurture the political engagement and readership of the local activities. The newspaper thus became the culturist for public political participation, and the space where this political engagement happened thus became the local realm for public action. Therefore, the three different linguistic styles used by *Zhejiang Tide* and *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* incorporated readerships from reformers with new education, local literati with classical training, and ordinary residents without high level of literacy. The two journals functioned as different roles for different audiences, as theorizers, as informers, and as culturists. Together, the different languages and different roles of the publications incorporated them into the theory of forming Guohun through the local realm as the space for public activities that *Zhejiang Tide* student authors proposed.

Even though the *Zhejiang Tide* student editors referred to *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* for audiences who did not receive a high level of literary education, they were nonetheless still strong advocates of the new education system which focused on acquiring the world rather than refining to classical education. Besides one advertisement for *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper*, most of the other advertisements in *Zhejiang Tide* were for new textbooks or books about Western history that were going to be published and sold soon. One thing worth noting about those advertisements is that most of them were for books and textbooks on world history, Western history, and foreign culture. For instance, in issue 6, there are advertisements for books such as *General World History (Shijie Tongshi)*, *Dictionary for Foreign Names and Toponyms (Waiguo Diming Renming Cidian)*, *History of Revolution in France (Falanxi Gemingshi)*, *Textbook of the West (Taixi Xuean)*, etc (see fig 5,6,7). Most of those books were published by academics in Zhejiang, translated by those who studied abroad in Japan, and sold in Shanghai. The content of those books show that the *Zhejiang Tide* editors emphasized introducing knowledge and culture from the West to Chinese readers. They did not perceive themselves as introducing new knowledge from Japan specifically, but stood at a broader international point of view to introduce knowledge from all over the world. Their status as students studying abroad in Japan does not mean that they limited themselves to this particular identity. Rather, they perceived themselves to be the translator and carrier of cultures and knowledge from all over the world. The student authors of *Zhejiang Tide* not only acted as mediators among different social groups and stages of Zhejiang on the global political sphere, but also channeled China to the “world.”

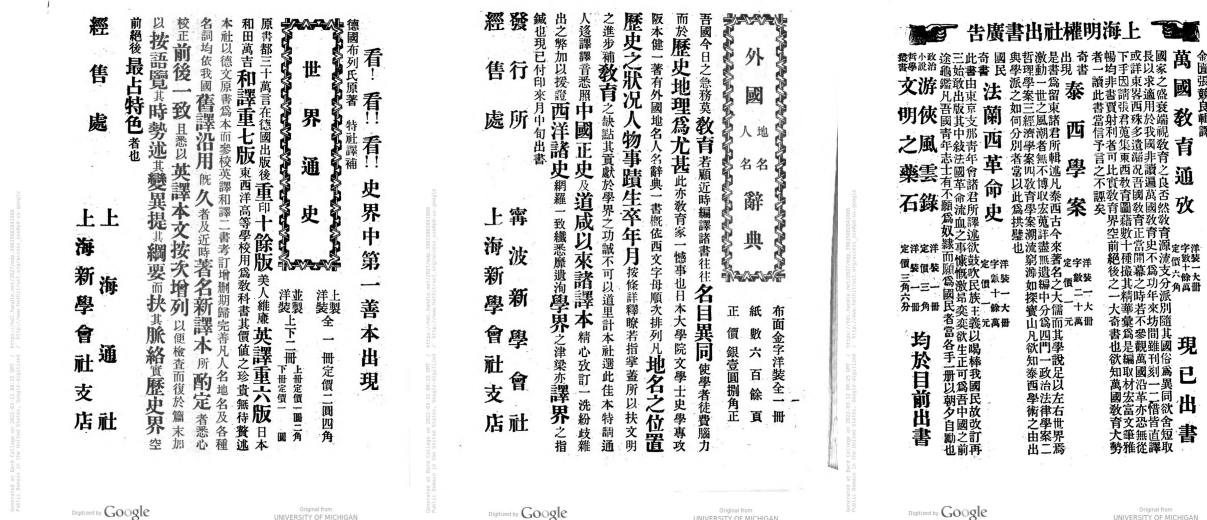


Figure 5,6,7

The circulation and the linguistic styles of this chapter shows that the publication network built up by *Zhejiang Tide* and *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper* attempted to realize the cultural pluralism in constructing *Guohun*. The staging of Zhejiang on the global stage not only glued China together but also attempted to relate overseas Chinese into their discourse. This chapter opens up more questions than it could answer. First, who were the readers of the journals such as *Zhejiang Tide* in Southeast Asian communities? This chapter shows that the distributor of *Zhejiang Tide* in Singapore is Tan Chor Nam, the son of a famous merchant and later a revolutionary acquainted with Sun Yat-sen. Then what's the dynamic inside the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, and what kind of readership *Zhejiang Tide* facilitated? What did it mean to be merchants, revolutionaries, and journal publishers at the same time for both Chinese and overseas Chinese? All those questions are still waiting to be answered, which make this project a continuing one.

Conclusion

This study starts with the question of whether history is translatable from one cultural context to another, and why we write the histories of one nation in the languages or modes of others. In this study, I examined the writing of the *Zhejiang Tide* student cohort, who theorized the nation through the idea of *guohun*, and examined their writings on Indian history and Zhejiang locality in order to understand the questions of transnational production of nationalistic discourse in early 20th-century China. In order to strive for a future for China distinct from the historical discourses of the Enlightenment and the Meiji Oriental school of *tōyōshi*, the student authors theorized the universal nationalism of *guohun* and fictionalized Indian history to argue for the universality of their concept. The concept of *guohun* gives the initiative and potential for forming a nation back to the Chinese people by claiming that local customs provide the soil for cultivating the nation. This divergence from the Enlightenment mode of writing history, through seizing on the idea of local customs as the focal point of imagining the nation, breaks the illusion of Enlightenment hegemony in the formation of historical discourse in 20th-century China. The *Zhejiang Tide* students' conception of the nation shows a different way of realizing the telos of history, which is based on local plurality and customs rather than the unilinear national character or identity. The student authors' narrative of Zhejiang then translated Zhejiang from the locale of the literati community to the autonomous social realm where public activities are formed and the initiative of the people is restored. The translation of other nations' history and the Zhejiang locality by the *Zhejiang Tide* students happened under the intersection of local identity with the transnational currents of historical discourses of the Enlightenment and the *tōyōshi*.

This study also looks into the publishing network established by *Zhejiang Tide* and *Hangzhou Vernacular Newspaper*, the circulation of which attempted to practice the ideas embodied in the theory of *guohun* and established a transnational cultural community connected by local identity. Localism is not only the mechanism through which the *Zhejiang Tide* authors staged and conceptualized China and broke with the Enlightenment, but also the nexus through which overseas Chinese were incorporated into their theory of *guohun*. Through localism, the students attempted to create a transnational Chineseness and an overseas Chinese community based on the local identity.

Overall, I have attempted to unveil the role localism played in these students' imagination of China, and the intersections of different modes of historical narratives that situated and conditioned the *Zhejiang Tide* students' writing of national history. For a long time, scholarship has paid attention to the formation of national identity and national character in 20th-century China, and focused heavily on the roles of late Qing intellectuals such as Liang Qichao and the New Cultural Movement, which later led to the formation of Communist Party. Nationalism also formed among the study-in-Japan students, but the ways that the nation is conceptualized and conceived diverged from these other forms of imagining the nation. My focus on the late Qing study abroad cohort hopes to shed new light on our understanding of the formation of 20th-century Chinese nationalism through examining local particularity and transnational experience. Rather than approaching Chinese intellectuals' encounters with and adaptation of the Enlightenment mode of writing history, this study proposes the examination of 20th-century Chinese nationalism from the newly constituted nexus of transnational experience and local identity.

Nationalism is never just a concept of conceiving the nation for the student authors at the turn of the 20th century, but at the same time also the re-conceptualization of the globe and local identity. I hope this work contributes to the study of modern Chinese nationalism and the production of nationalist discourse in the turn of the 20th century by introducing the dimensions of these local-transnational intersections. The conceptualization of China in the global political sphere by the *Zhejiang Tide* student authors is based on staging the local in the transnational currents. Much future research could be carried out based on this study. First, what did local customs (*fengsu*) mean for the study-in-Japan students? How did their transnational journeys and urban life experiences in Tokyo shape their perception of local identity? Second, how did their transnational perspective and localism transform and how was it integrated into the discourse of “national character” (*guominxing*) in the New Cultural Movement generation? Thirdly, how did different overseas Chinese groups, intellectuals, revolutionaries, and job seekers relate themselves to the localism portrayed in the journals produced by overseas students? Those are crucial questions waiting to be answered for interpreting the function of local identity and transnationalism in the formation of 20th-century China’s nationalism, and the construction of China’s urban infrastructure, education, and publication system that accompanied it.

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