

Articles

The Regional Structure of the 1911 Revolution: The North and the South in Chinese History

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The 1911 Revolution was a great political event marking the beginning of a new era in modern Chinese history. Yet as the end of 2,000 years of dynastic rule (imperial politics), it also has long-term historical significance that can be felt even in the present. Today, a century after the 1911 Revolution, we need to look at this event from a macro perspective, on a scale of centuries and millennia, in order to fix its place in Chinese history. In other words, we need to reexamine the significance of the modern in the full sweep of Chinese history by looking at the 1911 Revolution. This will involve critically reexamining not only the 1911 Revolution but also perceptions and theories of modern Chinese history. From the perspective of these issues, in this essay I would like to present my views of the historical significance of the 1911 Revolution as seen from changes in the regional structure of Chinese history.

1. The Chinese World and the Qing Dynasty

The Chinese world is a cultural sphere spread out on the eastern portion of the Eurasian landmass, a historical world that was called *Hua* or *Xia* during the Zhou dynasty (eleventh century-256 BCE), and that was governed by many political systems over a long stretch of time. Though a succession of dynasties considered themselves rulers of the “center of civilization” (*Zhonghua*, China), the culture of this area was strongly ethnocentric. This central region exerted great influence on surrounding areas and peoples, and it created a variety of diplomatic relations with these peoples through acceptance of tribute.

According to some Japanese scholars (for example, Nishijima Sadao, with his thesis of the “East Asian world”), leading to the formation of the Chinese world was a combination of political and cultural elements, such as Confucianism, Chinese characters, and Mahayana Buddhism (a variety of

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Buddhism translated into Chinese). Consistent with this view is the image of Confucian China. This image of China has become the received view in Japanese scholarly circles and is spreading widely in society at large. Yet it is important to note that the notion of the center of civilization in play here meant more than the diplomatic order between China and the “barbarians,” and more than the system of tribute and trade.

This larger significance is connected, of course, to the fact that regional order and international relations were frequently discussed in the context of relations of the Chinese court with the tribute states of Korea, Ryukyu, and Vietnam and with the Southern and Western states. For though commercial and military relations with these regions varied in intensity, court officials considered each of these regions worthy of attention. Also, by describing an order of Chinese and “barbarians” that made China central, the Confucian elite actively engaged in creating a Chinese world that defined the relation of center and periphery. From the perspective of the central elite, the Chinese world had a historically stable structure reflecting the two millennia of expansion and development since the Qin and Han dynasties.

Yet this Chinese world internally comprised a complex mixture of diverse elements related to different historical periods and regions that, geographically as well, gave rise to great changes. This is especially true of the great historical transition from classical China to early modern China in the ninth to twelfth centuries, as delineated in the thesis known as the Tang-Song transformation.¹ This transformation was marked by the following changes:

- In the political sphere, the transition from an aristocratic system to a despotic monarchy
- In the cultural sphere, the waning of aristocratic culture and the rise of popular culture
- In the military and economic spheres, the institution of a standing army of recruited soldiers, and the introduction of government finance to support such an army
- In international relations, the birth of the nation-state in China and the establishment of independent states among the peoples of East Asia
- In the realm of philosophy, the development of Neo-Confucianism by the literati and the reform movements in Buddhism and Daoism

In his reinterpretation of Naitō’s thesis of a Tang and Song transformation, Seo Tatsuhiko understands the millennium from the late Eastern Han dynasty to the Song dynasty as “a period of transition from the Northern and

1 Naitō Konan first presented his thesis of the Tang-Song transformation in “Gaikatsuteki Tō Sō jidai kan” (A Synoptic View of the Tang and Song Periods) (*Rekishi to chiri* 9, no. 5), published in 1922.

Southern Dynasties period, when nomadic-tribe movements directly gave rise to turning points, to the Sui and Tang dynasties, which saw the rise of continuous culture. Henceforth, development converged along a single path, namely, the formation of a common Han culture and the Han ethnic group.” And he presents the continuous changes in clothing, food, and housing, in coming of age, marriage, funerals, and ancestor worship, that produced the Han cultural identity.²

This early modern China also experienced changes in dynasties—from the Song to the Yuan, Ming, and Qing—and witnessed expansion of its territory and changes in lifestyles and culture. During the Qing dynasty, the extension of control over the peripheral areas of Mongolia, Xinjiang, Qinghai, and Tibet led to a compound system of rule that gave a different character to politics, the economy, society, and culture. This new character not only greatly defined perceptions of China and debates over reform during the nineteenth-century confrontation with the West. Even during the twentieth century down to the present, this expanded notion of China has provided the prototype for thinking about China’s national territory, Chinese ethnic minorities, and unification of China.

On this matter, the historical geographer Ge Jianxiong has offered the following interesting point. In Chinese history, the alteration of unification and division has frequently been discussed. Though the unification of China by the First Emperor in 221 BCE established a central government over the central plains, over the next more than 900 years, up to Mongol control during the Yuan dynasty, the territory controlled by the central government expanded and shrank, while autonomous governmental authorities continued to exist in Chinese territory outside the control of the central government. This state of affairs cannot be called “unification” in the strict sense. True unification of China occurred in 1759 with the success of China’s central Eurasian campaigns to pacify the Dzungars, but this unification lasted only till the Opium War, a total of a mere 81 years. Hence, in Chinese history, division and divided rule were the norm, and unification was rather short-lived.³

Here we can see that China of the Qianlong period (1736-1795) has been made the standard of how unified or divided China should be. Hence, with China at its largest extent (in 1759) as the yardstick, governments throughout

2 Seo Tatsuhiko, “Chūka no bunretsu to saisei” (The Division and Rebirth of China), in *Iwanami kōza sekai rekishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999), vol. 9, p. 73.

3 Ge Jianxiong, *Tongyi yu fenlie: Zhongguo lishi de qishi* (Unification and Division: Lessons from Chinese History), revised and enlarged ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2008), pp. 77-78.

Chinese history are compared in terms of power and territory, and in this way the geographical growth of China is measured. In this sense, while present-day China historically follows the China of 1759 after its expansion under the Qianlong emperor, it is seen as something more—the rightful successor to the power of a unified Qing China that lasted for a mere 81 years.

In the view of Yoshikai Masato, this contemporary geographical and territorial perspective, enunciated as a thesis on the historical China, was created by historians and geographers amid a modern crisis of tense relations with the outside world in the context of trying to preserve the territorial integrity of China, and has developed into its present form today.⁴ Such theses on the historical China are interesting not only for studying the Qing dynasty, which expanded China to its largest extent, but also for considering modern and contemporary views of China's past.⁵ Here I wish to emphasize a bird's-eye view of twentieth-century Chinese history as a continuation of the history of the Qing dynasty and prior central dynasties in the context of external factors (especially the global economy). Of particular concern have been the positive and negative effects on China's modernization, of "traditional" strengths that have continued as an undercurrent in China's system and culture, but that have surfaced amid China's pursuit of its Reform and Opening Policy since the 1980s.

In this context, the assumed tradition is not the legacy of the ancient past. Rather, it is usually the recent past, a period contiguous with but separate from the present, namely, Qing China of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. Thus, to understand present-day China, it is necessary to return to China of the Qianlong period. In other words, while looking at all the changes, we have to seek out unchanging structures and thinking, and reconsider present-day China in light of the last two to three hundred years.⁶

4 Yoshikai Masato, "Rekishigakusha to kokudo ishiki" (Historians and Territorial Perceptions), in *Shirīzu 20 seiki Chūgokushi*, edited by Iijima Wataru, Kubo Tōru, Murata Yūjirō, vol. 2: *Kindaisei no kōzō* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2009), pp. 81-102.

5 Kō Tōran (Huang Donglan), "Shinmatsu, Minkokuki chiri kyōkasho no kūkan hyōshō: Ryōdo, kyōiki, kokuchi," (Spatial Representations in Late Qing and Republican Textbooks: Territory, Borders, and National Humiliation), *Chūgoku kenkyū geppō*, no. 685 (March 2005): 24-39.

6 An important feature of the 1911 Revolution is that it began not in a metropolitan city but in the southern provinces. In particular, the New Armies seized the provincial government offices and proclaimed their independence. It was Mizoguchi Yūzō who first pointed out this peculiarity of the 1911 Revolution and the unique developments of modern Chinese history, in contrast to the French Revolution and the Meiji Restoration, which began in the central cities. From the late Ming and early Qing, the maturation of local

Relatedly, Philip Kuhn says that the modern era began for China with a series of sociopolitical crises that occurred in the 1790s late in the Qianlong period, and that prior to the confrontation with the West, some Chinese officials and literati were beginning to become aware of areas where China needed to modernize and beginning to conceive of reforms that might be instituted.⁷ He points to three structural dilemmas that imperial China faced late in the Qianlong period:

- Confronting the abuse of power
- The political energies of the cultural elite
- Governing a huge society with a small bureaucracy

As is well known, each of these dilemmas were problems calling for fundamental systemic reforms affecting the basis for operating a modern nation, and each became a widely discussed political topic during the late Qing Self-Strengthening Movement, Hundred Days Reform, and Constitutional Movement, and also in the Republican government after the 1911 Revolution. Yet the perception of crises and the search for solutions to overcome the crises had already begun among “traditionalists” as early as the late eighteenth century.

Seen in this fashion, the concept of the Chinese world—while including foreign relations based on the order between China and the “barbarian” states, and on the system of tribute and trade—can perhaps also be interpreted as a transcending concept directed at a high-level system of culture. In other words, this system of culture, while defining China as a country with a territory and border, also defines China as an arena opening up to oceanic Asia and the central Eurasian landmass.⁸ From this perspective, it becomes possible to reinterpret the concept of China-as-center thinking (*Zhonghua sixiang*), a concept frequently encountered in Japanese historiography to mean Han-Chinese-centered ethnocentrism. In contrast to the internal-oriented, exclusive concept of Chinese-versus-barbarian thinking (*Hua-Yi sixiang*), we can interpret China-as-center thinking as a universal ideology along the lines

space strengthened the provinces, making them capable of developing modern local self-government (“Shingai Kakumei no rekishiteki kosei” [Historical Peculiarities of the 1911 Revolution], *Shisō* [Iwanami Shoten], no. 989 [September 2006]: 88-107).

7 Philip A. Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 162.

8 Hamashita Takeshi, *Kindai Chūgoku no kokusaiteki keiki: Chōkō bōeki shisutemu to kindai Ajia* (Modern China’s International Moment: The Tribute Trade System and Modern Asia) (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1990). Peter Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005).

of its principle of openness and broadness.⁹

In short, the concept of China (*Zhonghua*) does not designate a physical body but rather proscribes the existing relationship between one's own culture and that of others. This notion began in ancient China and throughout Chinese history has influenced the content of thought and the order of discourse according to the social relations and mutual perceptions of one's own culture and that of the other.¹⁰ For example, in *Dayi juemi lu* (Record of Great Righteousness Resolving Confusion, 1729), Yongzheng, the mid-Qing Manchu emperor of China, transcended the distinction between China (*Zhonghua*) and barbarian (*yidi*) with his notions of "Chinese and barbarian as one family" (*Hua-Yi yijia*) and "China and the periphery as one body" (*Zhong-wai yiti*). The Qing court ruled over the empire not by reason of race, but by reason of its virtue. Similarly, the legitimacy of the Qing emperor's rule over the empire had nothing to do with force or origins, and everything to do with the emperor's present historically unprecedented benevolent governance. So asserted the Yongzheng emperor with supreme confidence. This work, together with the emperor's edicts aimed at relieving oppression of commoners and the system of talent selection based on merit, can be seen as the acme of open Qing China-as-center thinking.¹¹

China of the Qianlong period saw unprecedented expansion of its territory. If we view China of this period as the prototype for present thinking about unification of China, we can think of the Chinese world as a composite nation of several ethnic groups and cultures transcending the former distinction between Chinese and "barbarian." Moreover, this world is not a concentrically structured model of Han and non-Han Chinese. Rather, it is a pluralistic, stratified political order with spatially disparate elements.¹² If this is the case, the Chinese world is not a fixed body transcending history. It is a way

9 Seo Tatsuhiko, *Chōan no toshi keikaku* (Chang'an Urban Planning) (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2001), p. 66.

10 Watanabe Hideyuki, *Kodai "Chūka" kannen no keisei* (The Formation of the Concept of China [*Zhonghua*] in Premodern Times) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2010).

11 Kishimoto Mio and Miyajima Hiroshi, *Min Shin to Ri-chō no jidai* (The Age of Ming and Qing China and the Korean Yi Dynasty), *Sekai no rekishi* (History of the World), no. 12 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1998), pp. 318-320.

12 Oka Hiroki, *Shindai Mongoru meiki seido no kenkyū* (Studies of the Mongol League-Banner System during the Qing Period) (Tokyo: Tōhō Shoten, 2007). Sugiyama Kiyohiko, "Dai Shin Teikoku no Manshū tōji to teikoku tōgō no kōzō" (Qing Imperial Rule over Manchuria and the Structure of Imperial Integration), in *Kindai Tōhoku Ajia no tanjō: Kōkyōshi e no kokoromi* (The Birth of Modern Northeast Asia: Toward a Transborder History), edited by Sakon Yukimura (Sapporo: Hokkaidō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2008).

of expressing the compound political order created in a particular historical environment—that of Qing China, or more fully, the central Eurasian Great Qing Empire.

The southern revolutionaries in the 1911 Revolution sought to overthrow this Qing state and its accompanying political order.

2. The Nation and the State

In thus historically resituating the 1911 Revolution according to this perspective, we confront the new concepts of *minzu* (nation) and *guojia* (state) and the relation between these two concepts. The word *minzu*, a category that acknowledges the people of different groups as bound together, first appeared in China at the end of the nineteenth century. Around the time of the Boxer Rebellion at the turn of the twentieth century, nationhood became perceived as an essential element in progress, civilization, and national survival. As Chen Tianhua and Sun Yat-sen said, what was needed was nationalism, that cohesive force of the people, to bind scattered individuals together so that they could thrive in an age of imperial contention. Perception of this need could not be separated from criticism of and reflection on China's present and past circumstances, as seen early on in Liang Qichao's essay "Zhongguo jiruo suyuan lun" (The Sources of China's Weaknesses) (*Qing yi bao*, nos. 77-84 [1899]). In "Zhongguo-shi xulun" (An Introduction to Chinese History) (*Qing yi bao*, nos. 90-91 [1901]), Liang Qichao tried to refocus history on the people. And in *Xinmin shuo* (The New Citizen), he forcefully presented the pressing need for forming a citizenry. These two works thus show that Liang Qichao sought to form a modern state truly organized around the citizenry.

During the 1911 Revolution, revolutionaries, royalists, and constitutionalists, whether supporting or opposing the existing system, sought political influence to build a modern state capable of prospering and defending itself, and to create a constitutional form of government that encourages private enterprise. For this purpose, the revolutionaries pursued an ethnic revolution of overthrowing the Manchus and promoting Han Chinese, while the royalists and constitutionalists pursued a more moderate transition from imperial absolutism to a constitutional monarchy. At the time, the nationalism of the revolutionaries conveyed two meanings to people, whether they approved or disapproved, namely, a domestic ethnic revolution and opposition to foreign invasion and carving up of China. That is, the revolutionaries pursued a twofold nationalism comprising an anti-foreign-power statism (national imperialism, to use Liang Qichao's term) and a racial movement seeking to overthrow the Manchus and promote Han Chinese. Even prior to this topical

development, an ethnic nationalism comprising cultivation of national awareness and construction of a modern state organized around the people had been conceived and implemented in educational reforms at the end of the Qing period.

Yet in the history of late Qing revolutionary thought, not enough attention has been paid to how such new concepts as race, people, and nation affected actual revolutionary thought and political movements, particularly with regard to ethnic differences within the nation. One conceivable reason is that for China to resist foreign pressure, it was first necessary for China to drive out the Manchu “barbarians,” and that once China established a Han Chinese state and democratic republic, one desideratum of ethnic nationalism would be fulfilled, or so it was thought. Though some thought like Chen Tianhua in “Lun Zhongguo yi gaichuang minzhu zhengti” (China Should Institute a Democratic Form of Government) (*Minbao*, no. 1, 1905), most revolutionaries thought that China should integrate or exclude Manchus, Mongols, Turkic Muslims, and Tibetans according to abstract notions of the nation.

However, in the creation of a modern nation-state out of the multiethnic, multicultural Qing empire, a one-time, short political revolution could not provide the means to solve issues such as how to manage the territory and ethnic composition of the new China, or how to promote ethnic awareness among ethnic groups. In fact, tense relations and an interesting controversy broke out between revolutionaries and constitutionalists over the place of Manchus, Mongols, Turkic Muslims, and Tibetans in the future Republic of China.

As can be seen in the controversy in *Minbao* (People’s News) and *Xinmin congbao* (New Citizen Journal), one of the points of contention between the revolutionaries and the royalists (reformers) was whether to exclude the Manchus from the revolution or to not discriminate between Manchu and Han Chinese. The revolutionaries emphasized the history of Manchu suppression and exploitation of Han Chinese, and advocated a return to the nationalism of the Ming and earlier dynasties, when Han Chinese controlled the reins of government. In response, the constitutionalists asserted that the Manchus had already reigned over Han Chinese society for a long time, and that they have culturally and linguistically assimilated to Han Chinese society, and thus saw no basis for excluding the Manchus as a way of exacting revenge. The anti-Manchu racism of the revolutionaries around Sun Yat-sen was later pointed out as limited by its Han Chinese chauvinism and overly optimistic assessments about imperialism (and Japan in particular). Yet Sun Yat-sen’s nationalism was not limited to racial revenge, but was clearly aimed at forming a modern nation-state system. In other words, the goals of overcoming ethnic

differences and creating a new Chinese nation were closely tied together. But was it wise to seek to achieve these two aims through revolution? How should we today understand the nationalism of the time, with its intertwined notions of race, people, and nation?

If we look at the racial theories of the revolutionaries of the time, we can see that in the table on the “yellow race” in Zou Rong’s *Geminjun* (The Revolutionary Army), this race was broadly divided into the Chinese race and the Siberian race, and that Mongols and Manchus were included in the Mongolian race, which was subsumed under the Siberian race. As is obvious, the purpose of this division was to emphasize differences between Manchus and Han Chinese. At the time, this theory of racial classification was received as the latest science. There were also cases where racially tinged Sino-Japanese disturbances became politicized and even became diplomatic issues, such as the Anthropology Pavilion incident of the fifth National Industrial Exposition, held in Osaka in 1903.

Only after his exile to Japan did Liang Qichao begin borrowing ethnic and racial terms from Japanese and applying them to the Chinese revolution. Contributing greatly to the spread of such terms was his essay “Zhongguo-shi xulun.” In the fifth section of this essay, he divided China residents into the six ethnicities of “the Miao, the Han, Tibetans, Mongols, the Xiongnu, and Tunguses,” thus redefining the peoples of Chinese history. In addition, in his essay “Zhengzhixue dajia Bolunzhili zhi xueshuo” (The Theories of the Great Political Scientist Johann Kaspar Bluntschli) (*Xinmin congbao*, nos. 38-39), Liang Qichao also wrote, “China will not perish in the future. That being the case, we ought to adopt strong political tactics toward the outside world, uniting Han Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, Muslims, the Miao, and Tibetans into one great nation.” He thus advocated unity of the five ethnic groups located in Qing quasi-official ethnic regions (the Manchus, Han Chinese, Mongols, Muslims, and Tibetans), together with the Miao, to form one great nation. Needless to say, this nation largely included the same ethnic groups as the term “Chinese nation” of later periods.

In fact, the ethnic and racial arguments supporting the revolutionaries’ “ethnic revolution” echoes in various places Bluntschli’s theory of the state, as introduced by Liang Qichao. For example, a comparison of Wang Jingwei’s essay “Minzu de guomin” (An Ethnic Nation) (*Minbao*, nos. 1-2, 1905) with Liang Qichao’s “Zhengzhixue dajia Bolunzhili zhi xueshuo” reveals at a glance that the former essay builds on the ethnic and racial theories of Liang Qichao to come to opposite conclusions. Notwithstanding their withering criticism of the royalists on the correctness of the ethnic revolution, the ethnic theories of such revolutionaries as Wang Jingwei borrowed many concepts, terms, and frameworks of the issues from Liang Qichao’s previ-

ously published essay.

In short, the revolutionaries and the royalists, which had sharply opposed views on whether to preserve the Qing imperial system, were unexpectedly closely aligned on integrating ethnic differences. Even the foremost champion of excluding Manchus, Zhang Binglin (also known as Zhang Taiyan), though advocating revenge and Han political restoration during his editorship of *Minbao*, gradually abandoned his notions of ethnicity and increasingly spoke of building a China that integrated citizen Manchus, Mongols, and Tibetans into society. During that time, he held that preserving China's national essence (national characteristics) was crucial to Chinese nationalism, and thus he founded, together with such revolutionary classics scholars as Liu Shipai and Huang Jie, *Guocui xuebao* (Journal of National Essence) and worked to advertise and promote China studies. On this conception of China studies, traditional scholarship, reread in the modern framework of national essence acquired from Japan, was to provide backing for the revolution.

The term "Chinese nation" (*Zhonghua minzu*) spread around 1905, during the debates of the *Minbao* and the *Xinmin congbao*. There was divergence in the use of the term. It sometimes meant Han Chinese (thus lending support to nationalism in the narrow sense) and sometimes included the five (or six) ethnic groups of China (thus lending support to nationalism in the broad sense). Yet in general, revolutionaries gradually came to accept this notion in the broad sense, and as a result of the 1911 Revolution, the term came to suggest that the ethnic groups would integrate and blend together.

3. North and South in Chinese History

In the controversy over the Chinese race, the 1907 debate between the constitutional monarchists and the revolutionary Zhang Binglin is interesting. Yang Du, in "Jintiezhuyi shuo" (The Theory of Economic Militarism), asserted that "the five ethnic groups—Han, Manchus, Mongols, Turkic Muslims, and Tibetans—are all Chinese nationals," and that these five ethnic groups should be united to form the Chinese nation. Yang Du opposed a revolution that excluded Manchus; saw Manchus and Han Chinese as equal; wanted to assimilate Mongols, Turkic Muslims, and Tibetans; and proposed a policy of uniting China's ethnic groups. Writing in rebuttal was Zhang Binglin in "Zhonghua Minguo jie" (Explaining the Republic of China). Here we can see his tone shifting from a racially inflected call for revenge to something more subtle. It was not that his revolutionary thesis based on a confrontation between Manchus and Han Chinese had changed. Rather, in his criticism of economic militarism, this peerless revolutionary theorist here turned his attention to the complicated relation between ethnic differences and

the formation of a nation. Here Zhang Binglin definitely defined the Republic of China as a republic organized around the Chinese race.

Moreover, Yang Du's argument was by no means an isolated statement. There were many sympathizers, including royalists such as Liang Qichao, as well as the capital intellectuals and country gentry who moved for a provisional constitution. Moreover, it was noticed that some Manchu aristocrats studying in Japan supported Yang Du's call for uniting the five ethnic groups into the Chinese race, and that they also advocated constitutional reforms allowing a multiethnic nationalism (Wuzesheng, Preface, *Datong bao*, no. 1, 1907). Of course, as beneficiaries of the Qing imperial system, these Manchu bannermen were politically up against the nationalism excluding Manchus. Indeed, bannermen foreign students were enemies in the eyes of revolutionaries. Nonetheless, Yang Du and Wuzesheng were without doubt Chinese nationalists in that they conceived early on how the new state should relate to the ethnic groups.¹³

If we look at these developments regionally, we can see that Yang Du was led to a nationalism of uniting the five ethnic groups in large measure because he was active in Beijing, where relations were tense between Manchus and Han Chinese. Since he worked in the Xianzheng Biancha Guan (Office to Draw Up Regulations for Constitutional Government) and saw at first hand the ramifications of constitutional reform, he must have been keenly aware of the dual structure of the Qing empire consisting of a central region and periphery. In contrast, most revolutionaries were based mainly in the south and had little sense of the reality of events in Mongolia, Tibet, and other peripheral regions. For them, events in these regions were those of a distant world, or they were negatively associated with Qing court corruption or "barbarians." Such was the context in which the 1911 Revolution occurred.

From this perspective, the difference in views toward ethnic groups of the revolutionaries (Zhang Binglin) and the constitutionalists/royalists (Yang Du and Liang Qichao) consisted of more than just a difference in attitudes toward the Qing court, for in the development and growth of the Chinese world, we can see north-south regional differences.

As touched on above, Seo Tatsuhiko calls the millennium from the third to thirteenth century the age of "Chinese division and rebirth," and he places the historic epoch-making events of the Tang and Song transformation amid

13 Murata Yūjirō, "Chūka minzoku ron no keifu" (The Genealogy of Theses on Chinese Ethnic Groups), in *Shirīzu 20 seiki Chūgokushi*, edited by Iijima Wataru, Kubo Tōru, Murata Yūjirō, vol. 1: *Chūka sekai to kindai* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2009), pp. 81-102.

the transition from the nomadic-tribe movements and southern incursions of the Northern and Southern Dynasties period to the continuous culture of the Sui and Tang periods. He then presents the historical undercurrents of the formation of Han ethnic identity. This ethnic identity had two cultural features bequeathed to later ages. They were “the nomadic and livestock-farming culture of the dry regions of the north, and the crop- and produce-farming cultures of the wet regions of the south.” After the Sui and Tang dynasties, the Liao and Jin dynasties (contending with the Song dynasty to the south), and later the Yuan and Qing dynasties, based themselves in the northern natural climes and historical environment and controlled not only China proper but also Manchuria and Mongolia. These northern dynasties had cultures widely seen on the Eurasian steppes. They deployed nomadic mounted armies and worshipped world religions (Buddhism, etc.), and they ruled linearly over their peoples from scattered cities. In contrast, the Han Chinese dynasties that ruled over the south and that succeeded the Southern Dynasties (the later Tang, the Song, and the Ming) produced cultures that were continuous with Southeast Asia, cultures based on fertile farm land and southern sea trade. These dynasties had infantry armies and navies, and they worshipped traditional religions (Daoism). They ruled directly on a face-to-face basis, bringing government down to the local level. So writes Seo.¹⁴

If we thus look at Chinese history since the Northern and Southern Dynasties, or since the Sui and Tang dynasties, as being a confluence of influences from cultures of the north and south, then it is not too far off the mark to say that the revolutionaries’ view of China’s ethnic groups and the state was based on southern crop- and produce-farming culture, whereas the constitutionalists’ view of China’s ethnic groups and the state was based on northern nomadic and livestock-farming culture.

Viewed in terms of its regional structure, the historical event that was the 1911 Revolution produced a dynamism of these two strong intertwined and conflicting threads running through Chinese history. We can say that politically, the southern revolutionaries won the abdication of the emperor and the establishment of the republic, but we can also say that the northern constitutionalists achieved their aim of continuing the legacy of a multiethnic nation. The contest of strength between the contrasting cultures of north and south seen in the 1911 Revolution unleashed an active dynamism in Chinese politics. In the future as well, we can expect China’s multiethnic complex cultural environment to determine the course of Chinese history.

14 Seo Tatsuhiko, “Chūka no bunretsu to saisei,” p. 76.