

# Chinese and Taiwanese Perspectives on Japan's Racial Equality Proposal\*

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## Abstract

The issues of racial equality and the eradication of racial discrimination, raised by Japan, became major points of discussion at the Paris Peace Conference. But racial equality was not a particularly important topic for China because China had other priorities. It was interested in regaining its own possessions and sovereign interests, and in finding a solution to the problem of Shandong in the Twenty-One Demands. China used its approval of the racial equality proposal when it was submitted for the second time as a tool to ensure that the bare minimum of its relationship with Japan would be maintained. Giving its approval to the proposal was a way of showing that although China was highly critical of Japan and skeptical of its intentions, it did not intend to risk an all-out confrontation and a total breach of relations. Across Chinese society, most people were extremely critical of Japan's actions and saw its efforts on race as fundamentally connected to Japanese Pan-Asianism.

On the other hand, in Taiwan, the racial equality proposal was viewed within the context of the policies of assimilation and equality. There were some people, both within Japan and Taiwan, who argued that Japan should put its house in order before raising the issue of racial equality or the eradication of racial prejudice with the world. Nevertheless, it did not necessarily mean that the racial equality proposal was at the forefront of what intellectuals were discussing in Taiwan, or that it was part of what inspired them to organize a petition movement to establish a Taiwanese parliament or to debate educational problems.

## Comparing and Contrasting China and Japan

**W**e have heard discussions from the Japanese perspective about the country's racial equality proposal. Now the question is, how did the Chinese government and society view the proposal submitted by Japan? How did the issue fit into China's perceptions of history? As well as mainland China, I also want to discuss how Taiwan viewed the proposal. Let me begin by outlining a few background points.

First, it is important to remember that immigration and race had been prominent issues in China for a long time, beginning with the Chinese Exclusion Act passed into law by the United States in 1882. The Act was renewed at ten-year intervals, in 1892 and 1902. The renewal in 1902 came amidst widespread fear of China in the United States, as evidenced by Yellow Peril

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xenophobia, and provoked protests in China and among Chinese students abroad.

At the time, most Chinese immigrants to the United States were Cantonese. The Cantonese in America suffered prejudice and discrimination of various kinds, and this triggered widespread anger among Chinese, including those who were not from Canton. Examples include an incident of suicide by self-immolation in front of the US consulate in Shanghai and a protest movement among Chinese students in Tokyo. The protests went far beyond Canton and involved many people who were not Cantonese. It can be argued that the protestors' identity as Chinese nationals, regardless of their local origin, led to such acts.

Previous discussions on immigration and discrimination had focused on nationalism and particularly on the idea of China, rather than on a universal idea of race or ethnicity. When it came to the racial equality proposal put forward by Japan in response to policies that excluded Japanese immigration to the United States, the Chinese response was that China was already familiar with these issues from its own experience, which went back much further than Japan's. People in China saw things from a slightly different perspective. The way they saw it, the Japanese had enjoyed special dispensation by being permitted into the United States until recently, while Chinese workers had been excluded for decades by this stage.

The second point that should be noted is that China and Japan had different perspectives about World War I. China was initially neutral in the conflict. This was not only because China lacked the strength to take part as an active combatant, but also because troops from most of the major powers were stationed in China. This meant that if China became a combatant, it would be faced with a situation in which troops from both sides, already present within Chinese territory, would start fighting each other. Or worse, China would have to fight a war against foreign troops within its own country. German forces were in Qingdao, and the British had troops in Weihaiwei. This meant that whichever side China chose, it would be forced to fight within its own borders. Chinese territory could easily have become a new front in the war. These were some of the factors that encouraged China to refrain from taking sides.

Japan honored its treaty commitments with Britain by entering the war on the British side. An Anglo-Japanese force occupied the German base in Qingdao and all of Shandong. The German garrison and elements of the Austro-Hungarian military at the base were almost totally destroyed. After the Siege of Qingdao, there were now almost no armed forces from the German side left in China. Japan supported China entering the war even though it had been originally reluctant. From 1917, the United States started to push China quite hard to enter the conflict. So a debate started within China, on the question of whether the country should get involved. In 1917, momentum started to build for China to join the war. At the time, Sun Wen (Sun Yat-sen) was opposed to any Chinese involvement—or at least, did not argue in favor of getting involved.

China ended up joining the Allied Powers in the war. But before doing so, it issued some conditions. These included a moratorium on reparation payments for the Boxer Rebellion and a commitment not to send troops to Europe or anywhere else. So China was free from the obligation to send troops, and Premier Tuan Chi-jui (Duan Qirui) was able to get assistance from Japan when China joined the conflict. The Japanese aid enabled him not only to reunite China but also to strengthen his country's armed forces and reclaim Outer Mongolia, which had been under Russian influence. China sent troops to Ulaanbaatar, and also took part in the Siberian intervention. Eventually, China emerged from the war on the winning side. Germany and Austria held concessions in Tientsin and in Hankow as well, and by joining the war, China not only terminated reparation payments to Germany and Austria for the Boxer Rebellion, but also was able to reclaim these concessions.

While China emerged on the victorious side at the end, the important point was the Twenty-One Demands that were presented on January 18, 1915 to China's Yuan Shih-kai (Yuan Shikai)

by Japan's minister to China, Hioki Eki, as Professor Nakanishi Hiroshi mentioned earlier.<sup>1</sup> Considerable debate remains about the true aim of these demands. It seems likely that Japan's biggest priority was its interests in South Manchuria, though its interests in Shandong were also important, as well as Group Five of the Demands.

China perceived Group Five to be a Japanese negotiating tool and steadfastly refused to negotiate. China was aware that Japan was ultimately seeking to secure its interests in Manchuria. The Chinese side knew that it might have to compromise and give in on Manchuria. China acceded to the demands related to Manchuria and at the last moment also gave way on Qingdao, while succeeding in getting Group Five of the demands removed. Japan added several more articles to make a total of 26 in its ultimatum to China, and on May 9, China agreed to the Japanese terms. In late May, treaties based on the 26 demands were signed by the two countries. The agreements are known in China as the Treaties of the Fourth Year of the Republic.

While China had some success in pushing back against the Japanese demands, these events stirred strong reactions in the country. Around 1915, feelings were running extremely high against Japan. While the May Fourth Movement arose in 1919, after the end of World War I, anti-Japanese perceptions in China had begun to significantly harden right after the start of the conflict. Although Yuan Shih-kai endured criticism for seemingly having caved into Japanese pressure, with the rise of a Chinese ethnic and national consciousness, Japan was perceived as an invader to many people.

In Japan, the governments of Okuma Shigenobu and Terauchi Masatake knew that anti-Japanese sentiment was worsening in China. It was precisely for this reason that Japan sent assistance to Tuan Chi-jui in an attempt to improve Sino-Japanese relations. Even though the Tuan Chi-jui government did depend on Japan, Chinese society started to take an increasingly critical view toward Japan, and Japan could not reverse this trend. The deterioration in the relationship led to fallout such as the May Fourth Movement. Unless you understand these developments, it is impossible to understand why China was never likely to go along with Japan's proposal for racial equality, or any approaches from Japan to join a movement to eradicate racial discrimination.

It is vital to understand that the Twenty-One Demands mark a watershed transition in the history of Sino-Japanese relations, a change even bigger than the First Sino-Japanese War. For example, people who had studied in Japan were made to feel embarrassed, and within the Chinese diplomatic corps, the so-called "Japan school" was exposed to ridicule and criticism before the start of the Paris Peace Conference. Symbolic of this was the famous secret exchange of notes between Chinese Foreign Minister Lou Tseng-Tsiang (Lu Zhengxiang) and the Japanese government. The incident demonstrated that in the lead-up to the Paris Peace Conference, the Japan school had lost much of its influence in Chinese diplomacy. It is important to understand this background before discussing our main subject.

## **The Response of the Chinese Government and Society to the Racial Equality Proposal; Historical Perceptions**

### **The Racial Equality Proposal and Pan-Asianism**

What was the response to the racial equality proposal in China at the time? How does the proposal relate to the awareness of historical issues in China?

Not much research has been done on the proposal in China. I have written a little on the subject myself, but because Chinese diplomatic papers do not contain much on the topic at present there has not been any deep research on the proposal. We can find discussion and debate

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<sup>1</sup> For more detail, see, Nakanishi Hiroshi, "Japan at the Paris Peace Conference," *Japan Review* 3. 3-4 (Winter / Spring 2020), pp. 1-8

in the media of the time, of course. It is possible to engage in research based on such discussion and debate, but such research may be fragmentary or lead to only tentative findings.

The norm in most Chinese-language scholarship is to understand the racial equality proposal through the prism of Pan-Asianism. This provides a paradigm for research. Since Japan ultimately drew connections to Pan-Asianism in its racial equality proposal, it has become common to understand the proposal as a steppingstone to the development of what became a Japanese strategy of Pan-Asianism.

China's understanding of Pan-Asianism is generally negative in general, unlike in Japan, where attention is paid to the different stages of the development of Pan-Asianism. Japanese scholars tend to differentiate the phases Pan-Asianism went through. They see quite a lot of variation over time among individuals in their interpretation of the concept as well. For example, Konoe Fumimaro's essay published in 1918 that called for the elimination of racial discrimination was an early example of Pan-Asian thinking. In research on Chinese history in China, there is a tendency to look at concepts made up of different events and individuals from a holistic or general perspective.

### **The Paris Peace Conference and the Chinese Response**

There was a major argument among the five Chinese plenipotentiaries about who would represent their country at the Conference. In the end, as is well known, it was decided that Lou Tseng-Tsiang and Koo, Wellington (Gu Weijun) would be China's representatives. Wang, C.T. (Wang Zhengting) and the rest lost out.

In his memoirs, Koo wrote, "When [Baron] Makino [Nobuaki] of the Japanese delegation raised the issue of racial discrimination, he looked in my direction. But I remained silent and did not respond." That is to say, Koo did not react at all, not even with a nod of his head. In other words, he did not disagree with the proposal either. Of course, there is no reason why he would have been opposed to the content of the proposal, or to the idea of opposing racial discrimination. Japan's sponsorship of the proposal was what China found difficult to accept. So when the proposal was put forward in February 1919, Koo refrained from committing himself to a response. In April, he decided to lend his support after changes were made to the content of the proposal. The vote count was 11 in favor of the proposal and 6 against, and the Republic of China came around to supporting the motion. This was done to signify that although it was not pleased with the motion, China could not oppose the proposal on principle. Japan had two votes, and the Republic of China represented one-eleventh of the votes in favor of Japan's proposal.

The aims of the Republic of China at the Paris Peace Conference were to resolve the disputes over possessions and foreign interests in the Shandong Peninsula, to find a solution to the Twenty-One Demands problem, and to achieve a comprehensive resolution of the unequal treaties. As is well known, China ended up not signing the Treaty of Versailles. China's refusal to sign the Treaty was not prompted by the May Fourth Movement. The decision not to sign the Treaty was initially made in the latter half of April 1919, before the May Fourth Movement. In fact, as a result of the Movement, the government in Peking (Beijing) instructed its plenipotentiaries to sign the Versailles Treaty. But the plenipotentiaries in Versailles refused.

The chief sticking point was the idea that Germany's former possessions in Shandong were to go to Japan. The complications did not end there. The situation was difficult because China knew that unless it signed the Treaty, China would not be able to join the League of Nations. Article One of the Treaty declared that the "original Members of the League of Nations shall be those of the Signatories which are named in the Annex to this Covenant and also such of those other States named in the Annex as shall accede without reservation to this Covenant." One interesting aspect here is that in Japan, there was apparently discussion about possibly not joining the League if the problems surrounding the racial equality proposal could not be cleared. But there

was no similar debate in China. China was extremely eager to enter the League, whatever it took.

From the Chinese perspective, the founding of the League of Nations was seen as a continuation of international movements that dated back to the Hague Peace Conferences held in 1899 and 1907. China saw joining the League as an extremely important step for increasing its international prestige. By becoming a founding member of this group, and as one of the victorious powers, the League offered an opportunity for China to project itself on the international stage and boost its prestige as a nation. The influence of Wilsonianism also led many people to dream of the world-changing potential of the League of Nations, and expectations were high within Chinese society that the Chinese people's aspirations for a fairer system of international justice would be realized under the League.

Koo and the other young diplomats who attended the Paris Peace Conference soon realized that these ideals would not be easily realized. Originally, they had great expectations of Woodrow Wilson, and Wilson himself was extremely friendly toward the Republic of China. Secretary of State Robert Lansing and other members of Wilson's brain trust were also well-disposed to China, leading to hopes that China would succeed in getting its demands approved at the Conference. But these hopes were to be dashed. It is likely that the Chinese delegation understood that getting all of its demands accepted would probably be difficult, but decided to make joining the League its top priority.

Before the question of the Versailles Treaty came to a head, a similar clause was inserted into Article One of the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, signed between the victorious powers and Austria, stating that the signatory countries would be considered founding members of the League of Nations. China was delighted to understand that it would be able to join the League by signing the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, and this led to its decision not to sign the Versailles Treaty with Germany in June 1919. By signing the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, China became a founding member of the League of Nations and a party to the negotiations on the Covenant of the League. It was during the voting that arose as part of those negotiations that the events about the racial equality proposal described earlier by Professor Nakanishi transpired.

### **The League of Nations and China**

Even after becoming a League member, China continued to be active on a number of fronts. The thing it was most insistent on was that China should become a non-permanent member of the League's Council. China proposed that the members of the Council should be selected on a geographical basis to represent the different regions of the world, such as Europe, South America, and Asia. Because the Covenant of the League of Nations had no stipulations about the geographical composition of the Council, China would raise this issue at every election, and take on the role of representing Asia. Since Japan was already a permanent member, there were not many other Asian countries left over: China, Siam (Thailand), and Persia. This meant that the likelihood that China would be selected was high. China managed to become a non-permanent Council member on several occasions.

Another matter concerned payments of contributions to the League. China initially proposed shouldering a financial burden commensurate with that of Japan, in other words on the level of a permanent member of the Council. This was based on the logic that payments should be proportional to population; since China's population was so large, it should pay for a larger part of the League's expenses. China's aim was to expand its influence by volunteering to shoulder a large part of the financial costs in this way.

But at the end of 1922, the Republic of China became more or less bankrupt. One of the reasons was the end of the five-year moratorium that started in late 1917 on Chinese indemnity payments for the Boxer Rebellion. The moratorium was one of the conditions offered by the Allied Powers as an incentive to urge China to take part in World War I. Of course, once China

declared war on Germany, its payments to that country would no longer be applicable. The payments to Germany were the largest of any of the indemnities China was compelled to pay. This was because of the death of the German minister to China, Clemens von Ketteler during the uprising. But the payments to other countries were also large. By joining the war, China escaped having to make payments to Germany and Austria, and payments to Japan, Great Britain, France, and the United States would be suspended for five years. The prospect of a moratorium on reparations was one of the major factors that induced China to become involved in the war. When the moratorium expired five years later at the end of 1922, China's government finances collapsed, and it became impossible for it to pay the large indemnities it owed the Allied Powers. This led to a further erosion of trust in China.

### **The Racial Equality Proposal and Sino-Japanese Relations**

The question of racial equality was not seen as particularly important from China's perspective. Nevertheless, the racial equality proposal does come up time to time in the history of relations between China and Japan. For example, there is a record of questions and answers between Obata Yukichi, the Japanese minister in Peking, and Chinese Foreign Minister Yen, W. W. (Yan Huiqing) on December 15, 1920. In a passage where China says it cooperates with Japan, the proposal is mentioned, Yen says "Japan made the proposal, and China supported it." The proposal often comes up in this kind of context, as an example of cooperation between the two countries. So even if the proposal was not a particularly important diplomatic issue between the countries, China's support for Japan's second attempt to submit its proposal is cited as evidence of bilateral cooperation on the diplomatic level.

There was considerable animosity toward Japan in some quarters in China. But partly because of the slightly more moderate approach that Japan's Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijuro adopted in his country's China policy, there were still elements of a more conciliatory attitude in diplomacy on both sides, as seen in this type of language.

### **The Racial Equality Proposal and Pan-Asianism**

At a different level, that of society, people in China continued to be skeptical and critical of the opinions put forward on racial equality by Japan. We heard earlier about Chen Duxiu, one of the founding members of China's Communist Party. Li Dazhao, a colleague of Chen, was also sensitive to Japan's Pan-Asian discourse, as can be seen in Li's piece on "Greater Asianism and New Asianism" that was published in 1919 in the *Guomin* magazine.<sup>2</sup> Li insisted that the ideas put forward by Japan on Asia were based on putting Japan's own interests first. Of course, he wasn't talking specifically about racial equality, but nevertheless his skepticism about Japan's Pan-Asian rhetoric was clear.

This kind of discourse frequently appeared in newspapers and other forums for debate in Shanghai and other cities. The notion of racial equality and the idea of "same script, same race" even now can be heard in the discourse on Sino-Japanese relations. An article in the *Shen Bao* newspaper dated July 24, 1926 argued that "Japan was using a pretense of friendship as a tool to deceive and demean China." So any mention of "same race" in the context of Sino-Japanese relations was met with some skepticism in China.

The speech on Pan-Asianism delivered by Sun Wen in 1924 is extremely well known in Japan. At the end of the speech, Sun Wen talks about a conflict between "the rule of right and rule of might," and asks whether Japan will "be the hawk of the Western civilization of the rule of might, or the tower of strength of the Orient." But these words did not appear in the Japanese text of

<sup>2</sup> Li Dazhao (李大釗), "Da Yaxiya zhuyi yu xin Yaxiya zhuyi (大亞細亞主義與新亞細亞主義)" ["Greater Asianism and New Asianism"], *Guomin* 1.2 (February 1, 1919). Also see, *Li Dazhao Xuanji* (李大釗全集) [*Selected Writings of Li Dazhao*] (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1959), p. 127.

the speech. They were added later when the speech was printed in Chinese in the *Minguo ribao* newspaper. So a little more caution is needed in how we look at and interpret the words of Sun Wen.

In China, this strong distrust of Japanese Pan-Asianism started around the end of the 1910s, and the discourse on racial equality or racial solidarity tended to be understood in this context of distrust. But within diplomatic circles, China's support for Japan's second attempt to pass its racial equality proposal in 1919 was sometimes invoked as a symbol of cooperation between the two countries.

### **Japan and China at Cross Purposes over Anti-Japanese Immigration Laws**

I would like to raise another important point concerning immigration. As Japan's conflict deepened with the United States over legislation that excluded Japanese immigrants, the Chinese side took a detached and often critical view of Japan's actions. Just because Japan and China were on the receiving end of the same treatment did not mean that the two countries became friends. The truth was rather the opposite. A significant factor explaining why Japan was so offended by the United States policy, in addition to the race issue, was a sense of outrage at the idea that the Japanese should receive the same treatment as the Chinese, whom many people in Japan tended to look down on and disparage. Hirobe Izumi discusses this in his book *Japanese Pride, American Prejudice*.<sup>3</sup> The restrictions imposed on Japanese migrants in 1924 by the United States were basically the same as the treatment given to Chinese people since 1882. Naturally, many Chinese people were upset by this kind of Japanese thinking, and it is not surprising that China's stance against Japan hardened in response. The Immigration Act of 1924 might have brought about a shift in Japan-China relations, since immigrants from Japan and China were now being treated the same. But in fact, we see that the reverse was true.

Similar examples of lost opportunities for improving ties can be seen in a number of other areas. Immediately after the Great Kanto Earthquake that struck the greater Tokyo area on September 1, 1923, the Chinese expressed a great deal of sympathy over the disaster. But in the chaos and lawlessness that followed the tremors, more than 400 Chinese people were massacred in Japan. When news of these deaths reached China, it caused a backlash and put an end to any chance that the disaster might be used as an opportunity to improve relations between the two countries.

### **The Empire of Japan's Racial Equality Proposal from the Perspective of its Colonies**

Let us turn to Taiwan. We heard earlier about the Japanese journalist Kiyosawa Kiyoshi, who questioned how Japan could discriminate against other ethnic groups for the sake of its own national survival. People did not object to Japan's raising the problem of race in the international community. But at the same time, using logic that was similar to Kiyosawa's, they asked questions about the situation within the Japanese empire. Was Japan trying to suggest that racial discrimination was not an issue within its own empire? Around the time of the government of Hara Takashi in Japan, and particularly when Den Kenjiro was Governor-General of Taiwan, there was a steady shift toward a policy of bringing Taiwanese systems more closely in line with those in place in Japan. A specific example of this was in education. Under the Taiwan Education Act, which was codified in January 1919 and put into effect in April that year, enthusiasm for education surged, including among the Taiwanese.

<sup>3</sup> Hirobe Izumi, *Japanese Pride, American Prejudice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001). For Japanese language publication, see 廣部泉, 『人種戦争という寓話』 (名古屋大学出版会、2017) .

At the same time, the basic policy of separating Japanese from the mainland who lived in Taiwan from the native Taiwanese, which was called *naitaibunri*, still continued. In response, a movement started among the young elite, who were the writers and audience of a magazine called *Taiwan Seinen* (台湾青年 /Taiwan youth), which was launched in 1920, calling for assimilation and equality. There were some moves in favor of independence too, but by and large the focus was on campaigning for assimilation and greater equality.

Although Taiwan became a Japanese possession in 1895, Taiwan and mainland Japan were administered separately in legal terms, as illustrated by the Law Relating to Laws and Ordinances to Be Enforced in Taiwan (Six and Three Law). By World War I, as part of the growing tendency to bring the two systems closer together, we start to see movements in Taiwanese society.

Numerous texts exist on the subject. Lin Seisen, who wrote a piece for *Taiwan Seinen* called "What We Want of Japanese in Taiwan" in August 1920, said that regardless of how hard a person from Taiwan worked, he would be consigned to the bottom rungs of society.<sup>4</sup> "Even if he may have talent to surpass the world and skills that surpass those of the ordinary crowd, the depressing fate of a person from this island will be always to occupy the lowest level of society," Lin wrote. Greater access to educational opportunities tended to increase the frequency with which people expressed feelings such as this. This was true in government bureaucracies and also in the professions.

Another famous example is the piece contributed by Sai Baika called "Our View of Assimilation" for *Taiwan Seinen* in August 1920.<sup>5</sup> "Merely having a small understanding of practical concerns is of no use except to work in slavish service at a low level. Under such a situation, I cannot be anything but hopeless about realizing the aimed assimilation" Sai wrote, in expressing his disappointment at Japan's assimilation policies. Shimada Saburo wrote an item for the October 1920 edition of the same magazine called "On the Issue of Harmony between Japanese and Taiwanese."<sup>6</sup> "If the Japanese intend to spread this idea around the world, they should practice racial equality at home first, and then announce what they have achieved and call on the rest of the world to follow; only then will the argument carry any persuasive proof behind it," said Shimada. In other words, Japan should put its ideas into practice at home first and only then start to preach to the rest of the world.

While there was considerable discussion in Taiwan on educational issues, the question of racial equality was not a major topic of debate in the Taiwanese media, or in *Taiwan Seinen*. The focus in the local media tended to be questions of equality with the mainland Japan, especially with regard to education.

An unusual case occurred when an article was carried in the *Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpo* on December 9, 1920 with the title "On Not Submitting the Race Proposal."<sup>7</sup> This was to do with the report that Japan had decided not to submit the proposal. Although the piece was only a reprint of an article that had originally appeared in the *Osaka Asahi Shimbun*, the article said:

The speech by Ambassador Ishii [Kikujiro] is attracting attention for having broken the silence of the Japanese delegation at the General Assembly of the League of Nations. . . . This

<sup>4</sup> Lin Seisen (林濟川), "Zai tai naichijin ni nozomu (在内地人に望む) [What We Want of Japanese in Taiwan]," *Taiwan Seinen* 1,2 (August 1920).

<sup>5</sup> Sai Baika (蔡培火), "Gojin no dokakan (吾人の同化観) [Our View of Assimilation]," *Taiwan Seinen* 1,2 (August 1920).

<sup>6</sup> Shimada Saburo (島田三郎), "Nитай yuwa no konpon mondai (内台融和の根本問題) [On the Issue of Harmony between Japanese and Taiwanese]," *Taiwan Seinen* 1,4 (October 1920).

<sup>7</sup> "Jiron Ippan: Jinshuan Futeishutsu (時論一斑: 人種案不提出) [On Not Submitting the Race Proposal]," *Taiwan NichiNichi Shimpo*, December 9, 1920.



reference to the race proposal was perhaps unavoidable given the sequence of events since last year, but if Japan's representatives are really determined to raise the subject, surely it would be better to do so with "clean hands," so to speak, having implemented racial equality within Japan; one would wish at least that Viscount Ishii might have noticed the logical contradiction that necessarily arises if this is not the case.

To summarize, people in Taiwan did not generally treat racial equality as a major issue. The subject did come up in smaller ways, often in connection with education or some other problem with Japanese rule in Taiwan, but the main points of concern in public debate were generally related to achieving assimilation and equality between mainland Japanese and Taiwanese.

The *Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō* was essentially a Japanese-language newspaper for Taiwan, and was read by many Japanese residents in Taiwan. If we ask ourselves to what extent the Japanese living in Taiwan were concerned with the question of racial equality, it may be that they were not that interested. When the Japanese in Taiwan thought about how they were seen by the local population, to what extent were they aware that the racial equality question could come back to bite them? This is an important question to ask. Since the subject was raised infrequently in the *Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō*, it is likely that either people simply lacked awareness of the issue, or discussion of the subject was avoided. It is difficult to evaluate what does not remain in the written record, but since some articles like this reprint do exist, my view is that the relative paucity of such pieces is probably not caused by a simple lack of awareness.

## Conclusion

We have seen that Japan raised the issues of racial equality and the eradication of racial discrimination at the Paris Peace Conference, and the subjects became major points of discussion. But racial equality was not a particularly important topic for China, if we look at it from the perspective of why the Republic of China took part in World War I, what it was looking for at the Paris Peace Conference, and what it expected from the League of Nations. China had other priorities. It was interested in regaining its own possessions and sovereign interests, and in finding a solution to the problem of Shandong in the Twenty-One Demands.

One way of viewing China's actions is to conclude that it used its approval of the racial equality proposal when it was submitted for the second time as a tool to ensure that the bare minimum of its relationship with Japan would be maintained. Giving its approval to the proposal was a way of showing that although China was highly critical of Japan and skeptical of its intentions, it did not intend to risk an all-out confrontation and a total breach of relations.

Across Chinese society, most people were extremely critical of Japan's actions and saw its efforts on race as fundamentally connected to Japanese Pan-Asianism. On the issue of immigration, China had long received basically the same treatment, and the more Japan protested about being treated the same way as the Chinese, the more likely it was that China would look askance at Japan's moves.

Professor Nakanishi spoke earlier about the United Nations and the UN Charter and touched on the fact that China raised issues of race and religion and other matters in the Charter. This reflects the position of China at the time when the United Nations was being formed. China declared war on Japan on December 9, 1941, and in January 1942, became one of the four major Allied powers. When the United Nations was being formed in 1944 and 1945, through a series of conferences from Dumbarton Oaks to San Francisco, China was responsible for submitting numerous suggestions that were incorporated into the UN Charter. Among the suggestions made by China was the idea that non-permanent members of the Security Council should be selected by region, with members to represent Asia and the other regions of the world. China also submitted

a number of other proposals, including one on racial equality. You could say that China made the content of the original racial equality proposal a reality in the UN Charter, in Japan's place.

Of course, when we discuss China in this period, we are talking about a time when Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi) traveled to India in 1942 and 1943. This is when Chiang Kai-shek was trying to position China as the leader of Asia. Ultimately, he had to flee to Taiwan and lost his position, but in 1943, at the Cairo Conference, and as late as 1944 and 1945, Chiang Kai-shek believed that he would be the leader of Asia after the end of World War II. Chiang Kai-shek took quite seriously the question of how to think about Asia and what Asia meant. In this context, it is easy enough to understand why China put forward proposals regarding racial equality and representation for an Asian bloc during the drafting of the UN Charter in 1944 and 1945.

In Taiwan, the racial equality proposal was viewed within the context of the policies of the Hara government and Den Kenjiro, as well as the policies of assimilation and equality. But there were already some people in Japan, who argued that if Japan was going to make proposals about racial equality or the eradication of racial prejudice, it would be better to put its own house in order before preaching to the world.

Similar things were said within Taiwan as well. This does not necessarily mean that the racial equality proposal was at the forefront of what intellectuals were discussing in Taiwan, or that it was part of what inspired them to organize a petition movement to establish a Taiwanese parliament or to debate educational problems.

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