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Jeannie Chiu

The period of the Cold War coincided with post-World War II struggles for independence by "Asian and other Third World peoples" (McMahon 36), ending often centuries-long colonial rule. The term "Third World" itself emerges out of Cold War definitions of the United States as the First World and the Soviet Union as the Second World, each of them competing for influence among the non-aligned countries of the Third World. These independence movements had an impact beyond geographical boundaries of the Third World, influencing minority American writers who were part of contemporaneous political, legal, cultural, and literary ferment to achieve equality and recognition in the United States. Many who opposed colonialism around the world responded to China's rhetorical attempts to place itself at the center of a Third World coalition; on the other hand, China was often viewed as a closed, mysterious, and brutal country. As we will see in the cases of W.E.B. Du Bois and Maxine Hong Kingston, an imagined China played a significant role in the thought of these two prominent

African American and Chinese American writers, with their common humanistic interest in cross-ethnic identification and world peace.

According to Bill V. Mullen, African American intellectuals have long looked towards connections to Asia: "The first cultural and intellectual contact points were established by nineteenth-century African American nationalists looking to Asiatic sources in antiquity as a means of recuperating a racial identity beyond the sphere of classical 'Western' models" ("Persisting" 248). China's non-Western lineage appealed to Du Bois' sense of third world solidarity, long before "third world" even came to be used as a term. In his 1940 autobiography *Dusk of Dawn*, Du Bois explores a diasporic racial identity while placing himself in sympathy with other victims of colonial power:

> What is Africa to me? Once I should have . . . said "fatherland" or perhaps better "motherland". . . Yet neither my father nor my father's father ever saw Africa . . . But one thing is sure . . . since the fifteenth century these ancestors of mine and their other descendants have had a common history; have suffered a common disaster and have one long memory. . . But the physical bond is least and the badge of color relatively unimportant save as a badge; the real essence of this kinship is its social heritage of slavery; the discrimination and insult; and this heritage binds together not simply the children of Africa, but extends through

> yellow Asia and into the South Seas. It is this unity that draws me to Africa. (116-117)

The particular history of enslavement links Du Bois to Africa, while the incidence of colonial domination globally engenders his pan-ethnic and international identification.

Du Bois continued to develop his thought along these lines, and indeed China became a central figure in his Marxist critique of imperialism. In his 1944 article in the *American Journal of Sociology*, "Prospect of a World Without Racial Conflict," Du Bois asserts that the most dangerous problem of the day was "the problem of relations between Asia and Europe" (Du Bois 130). Du Bois was certainly prescient considering the military conflicts that would arise in Asia in the next decades. He considers the dark history of Western relations with China: "The impudence, browbeating, robbery, rape, and insult is one long trail of blood and tears, from the Opium Wars to the kowtowing before the emperor in Berlin" (131). Du Bois sees US policies maintaining military bases in Asia as a check on self-governance and autonomy, growing out of a "deep-seated belief among Europeans and Americans that yellow people are the biological inferiors to the whites and not fit for self-government" (131). Du Bois recounts how his international identification with people of color grew out of the evolution and expansion of his thought on race in the course of his life, as he moved from the hills of Massachusetts where "there seemed to be no future for [him]" to working at the age of seventeen among the

former slaves of the South. At Fisk University, Du Bois "first became aware of a world of colored folk and. . . learned not only of the condition of American Negroes but began to read of China and India; and to make Africa the special object of [his] study" (154). This sense of a shared experience of European exploitation most certainly informs Du Bois' attitudes and turn towards "a materialist analysis of imperialism, race, and capitalism" (Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* xxxviii).

Du Bois' rhetoric on anti-colonial alliances is in no way unique during this time period, and soon was reflected on the international stage. In 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia, a conference was held on the decolonization of African and Asian nations (Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* 59), attended by the heads of state of twenty-three Asian and six African nations, many of them newly independent (Mullen 60).[1] These countries were united, according to host Indonesian President Sukarno, by "'a common detestation of colonialism in whatever form it appears'" (Mullen 60). Bandung is seen as marking the starting point of the Non-Aligned Movement of nations affiliated with neither block during the Cold War (Mackie 12). The meeting was of international importance, coming to the attention of American expatriates such as Richard Wright and even the American military. In 1956, Colonel Culley, a US military intelligence G-2 officer, remarked, presumably in reference to the Bandung Conference, that the "Africo-Asian Conference might have some interesting indications" (Qing 170)

on China's commitment to international communism as opposed to nationalism.

In fact, Sukarno saw China as having set some of the parameters for discussion at the conference, dating to the 1949 Communist revolution in China and Liu Shaoqi's statement at the World Federation of Trade Unions Conference in Beijing that the development of an armed struggle and a united front were "'[f]or many colonial and semi-colonial peoples. . . the only way in their struggle for independence and liberation'" (Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* 63). The ideal of gaining autonomy against imperial control was a compelling one, a cause that China promoted rhetorically internationally. It was in response to a letter from an African American in exile, Robert F. Williams, that Mao Zedong put out and distributed worldwide his famous 1963 statement, "Support for the American Negroes in their Struggle against Racial Discrimination and for Freedom and Equal Rights" (Mullen, "Persisting" 252). Williams, who was purportedly framed for his advocacy of "armed self-defense against racist attacks in North Carolina" (Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* 75), began his letter writing campaign to Mao after the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, in September 1963, which killed four African American girls (Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* 75).

China's Cultural Revolution and the writings of Mao inspired the Black Arts Movement, and the ideology of Third World liberation also influenced other American minority groups

(Mullen 252): "the Black Panthers, the Red Guard, and the Young Lords, and … the example of the Third World Women's Alliance (TWWA) … identified themselves as the 'Third World' in political solidarity with that dynamic of national liberation …" (Prashad xiii).[2] A decade or more earlier, Du Bois was also enamored of radical changes taking place in China. His attitude towards China was influenced by not only ideology, but by his own experiences traveling in China.

Du Bois was one of several prominent African Americans—such as Paul Robeson and Robert F. Williams--to run into trouble with the US government due to their leftist political activities.[3] One of Du Bois' projects, chairing the Peace Information Center to publicize the Stockholm Peace Appeal for nuclear disarmament in the United States, led in 1951 to his trial for purportedly failing to register as an agent of a foreign power, allegedly the Soviet Union (Lewis, *W. E. B.* 546-548). The case was dismissed, but Du Bois' reputation was damaged and his passport was taken away (552). He was disappointed to find that, given the Cold War climate enforcing national loyalty, most Americans "of education and stature" were afraid to stand up in his defense (*Autobiography* 388). With the return of his passport in 1958, Du Bois embarked on a tour of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and China. He praised China on his 1959 visit as a land of honest leaders safeguarding the well-being of their people ("China" 478-9). In retrospect, we know that, unbeknownst to Du Bois, agricultural policies, dictatorial purges, and great works projects of the Great Leap Forward, combined with natural disasters, were inflicting a massive famine,

so that by the time Du Bois arrived in China, nearly ten million people had perished (Lewis, *W. E. B.* 563). It is true that due to the closed nature of Chinese society at that time, even scholars studying China appeared to be unaware of the full range of the catastrophe.[4] Chinese-born biracial writer Han Suyin, who was also traveling in China in 1959, attests to the difficulty of seeing or hearing about the true extent of the shortages (Han 247).[5] Yet, to the degree that evidence became available of flawed policies and human rights abuses in China, this example brings out the shortcomings of focusing too exclusively on utopian rhetoric.[6]

Du Bois was in part responding to China's strategy to set itself up as a model for Third World countries, particularly of Asia and Africa, that wished "for peace and non-alignment" in the Cold War competition between the two superpowers (Ismael 513). While a united coalition of Third World countries did not in fact materialize, Mao's rhetoric of anti-colonialism did succeed in winning the admiration of intellectuals. Du Bois composed a poem, "I Sing to China," on the subject of this 1959 trip to China, where he was warmly received as a foreign dignitary. He expresses his feeling of kinship with the "dark brethren" (45) of China, whom he associates with the triumph of "Science, Truth, Right and Reason" (49). He vilifies the European and American Devil, "Preaching Freedom, practicing Slavery" (50), but overlooks the totalitarianism of China, which in his eyes "half-shared [Africa's] slavery" (51) due to its long history of colonial and military exploitation by the West. As Gerald Horne admits, "one senses Du

Bois' naiveté in being seduced by certain precursors of the disastrous cultural revolution" (325). Given Du Bois' long interest in a pan-ethnic struggle against oppression, it is easy to see why Mao's rhetoric of China's "common interests with all Asian and African countries and its common experience of the evils of colonialism" appealed to him (Halpern 6). Du Bois' reaction is also better understood within the context of his life.

Du Bois' views in 1959 reflect the degree of his disenchantment with America as he began his ninth decade. Born in 1868 in the wake of the Civil War, Du Bois witnessed not only the early twentieth-century "mob murder and lynching of [his] people; … [but also] gross discrimination in civil and political rights; and … persistent insistence by American science that Negroes were sub-human" ("Foreign" 412-3). He was disillusioned by two World Wars, which he saw to be caused by colonialism and racism, and lived to see the burgeoning Civil Rights struggles of the 1950s and early 1960s. Du Bois was understandably dubious about progress for the culture of the segregated American South, where "a people insults, murders, and hates by hereditary teaching" and jails are "full of the innocent" ("Will" 984).[7] Inspired by Nkrumah's successful revolution in Ghana, Du Bois moved there two years before he passed away in 1963 (Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* 30; "William"). He contrasted the evils he knew and fought in the United States against the lesser known good he believed would come of Chinese and Soviet ideals of social equality (Lewis, Panel).

Indeed, enthusiasm about populist Third World struggles against oppression grew in the United States over the next decade. Glenn Omatsu recounts the Third World Strike at San Francisco State University in 1968, "the longest student strike in US history…. Under the Third World Liberation Front—a coalition of African American, Latino, American Indian, and Asian American campus groups—students 'seized the time' to demand ethnic studies, open admissions, and a redefinition of the education system" (25). Omatsu rightly questions later generations' ability to "understand the urgency of Malcolm X's demand for freedom 'by any means necessary,' Mao's challenge to 'serve the people,' the slogans of 'power to the people' and 'self-determination' … the conviction that people—not elites—make history" (21). Despite the flaws of many revolutionary regimes, ideals of liberation resonated in 1968: empowering the working class, linking the academy with the community, confronting fundamental questions of power and oppression, and drawing inspiration from past activists and "from international Third World leaders and revolutions occurring in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East" (26). Yet, of course, minority American views of China during the Cold War were far from monolithic.

In contrast to Du Bois, Maxine Hong Kingston provides a negative or mixed view of China during the Cold War. While a bond of ethnicity presents a natural affiliation between Chinese Americans and China, revolutionary excesses, the secrecy

shrouding China as a closed society, Cold War American ideology, family experiences, and ongoing dangers all influenced how Chinese Americans perceived China. China's closed borders made it inaccessible to Chinese Americans as well as others. Born in Stockton, California, by the mid-1970s, Kingston had not yet been to China: "I want to compare China, a country I made up, with what country is really out there" (*China* 87). Kingston lacks first-hand experience, yet from her mother's gruesome stories and her parents' reactions to letters from relatives who were being purged by Communists, China seems a place of ruthless oppression and tangible ghosts to the young narrator of *The Woman Warrior*.

Born in 1940, Kingston's early childhood was infused with fearful memories of World War II and the Cold War. When she was nine, the year of the Communist revolution in China (1949), her parents began to receive letters about her relatives suffering under the new regime. Her uncles were made to kneel on glass and forced to confess to being landowners: "They were all executed, and the aunt whose thumbs were twisted off drowned herself" (50). Other relatives disappeared or fled. One of her uncles was killed by Communists when he climbed a tree to trap nesting birds to feed his family (51). Given what Kingston's relatives suffered during the Communist revolution, it is no wonder that she betrays skepticism about Communist ideals.

Chinese Americans' views of China during the Cold War were often confused and secretive. This is seen in the strangeness

of Kingston's contemporary section in *China Men*, "The Making of More Americans."[8] The narrator's conflicted feelings about China—a mother country of monstrous report—and the Cold War are played out in bizarre incidents in the lives of her extended relatives, recent immigrants from China. Literary critic John R. Eperjesi argues that *China Men* is a "route text [rather than a root text], less concerned with the linear tracing of roots back to an origin in China than with their dispersal across the Pacific and North America [the routes that they traveled]" (132). Kingston's tales of ghosts and supernatural occurrences lead not to an originary mystery or story to be resolved, but to a moving center of ideological conflict. Kingston portrays an imaginary China so as to illuminate the lives of emigrants, those she knew in her childhood.

Kingston's first story illuminates the denial and guilt of immigrants when confronted with the suffering of those they left behind in China. Uncle Sao is living the American Dream while his mother starves in China. Confronted with her accusatory and melodramatic pleas for assistance during a famine (possibly during the Great Leap Forward), Uncle Sao wonders whether it would be kinder to give the little he can spare or nothing at all (174). In Uncle Sao's silence, he seems indifferent to her pleas until she dies and her ghost crosses the ocean to hound him with guilt. He ends up spending a small fortune to return to China and to shower his mother posthumously with money and attention. The story portrays the haunting of immigrants by the hardships they

had sought to escape; in a larger sense, it suggests how a consumerist society can never be fully insulated from those life and death struggles to which much of the world's population is more vulnerable than we.

The next story suggests the follies of pro-Communist fervor. Uncle Bun advocates wheat germ and Communism as parallel panaceas. While his suspicion that the US government is surveilling him is possibly justified given FBI tactics of the 1950s, the particular form of his paranoia is ludicrous: he fears that American authorities are collecting garbage to force-feed to him (196). He ultimately returns to China. Upon his departure, he asks Kingston's young sister to remember him; but she quickly forgets who he is. In Uncle Bun's eyes, consumerist capitalism plots its vicious revenge in that he must consume its waste products, particularly white food. Kingston seems most obviously to satirize Third World revolutionary zeal, what Kingston's father terms "dreams fermenting" (193). Yet, once again, in madness lies the truth of our connectedness to other systems and to that which we would overlook or forget. What we throw "away" must go somewhere and will have an effect on our environment.

A third story reflects the traumatic displacement many experienced during this time of social and political upheaval in China. Kingston listens to the harrowing tale of her aunt, whose husband was killed by being pressed between millstones. This aunt lost not only her husband, but all wealth and possessions

during the Communist Revolution (208). Traversing the wheel of fortune, she was able to work her way up from being a beggar, remarry in Hong Kong, and amass another fortune through a small business. In an unexplained twist, her second husband unconsciously withdraws all of their savings and gives them to unknown strangers. Even aware that this has happened, he falls prey to the compulsion a second time. Not until they move to the US do they feel safe (214). The moral of this story seems to be one of uncertainty and flux and the strange power of Cold War ideology. The story also reminds us of the vicissitudes of entrepreneurial capitalism that has so long been a part of Chinese culture. Individual strivings fall prey to the whim of markets and ideological forces.

Like Du Bois, Kingston also focuses on structural similarities among struggles to obtain race and class equality, relating these parallels back to her own experiences as a Chinese American. In *China Men*, Kingston depicts her brother, serving in the Vietnam War, as having nightmares about the resemblance between the enemy and his own relatives (291), thus bringing up the added layer of identification and uneasiness for many Asian Americans during the Vietnam War. In one of the last sections of *China Men*, "The Wild Man of the Green Swamp," Kingston presents parallel stories of a man from Taiwan living in a swamp in Florida and a black man living in a slough in her neighborhood (221). The men are labeled as dangerous or crazy by the authorities, but the narrator calls into question the veracity of the police by noting

inconsistencies in official reports (223). The man from Taiwan commits suicide when he learns he will be deported to China (222-3). Kingston here makes reference to the political antagonism between US-aligned Taiwan and Communist China, suggesting American officials' conflation of the two countries, despite the divisive Cold War alignments supported by US military strategists.

In her third major work, *Tripmaster Monkey*, Kingston suggests parallels between minority groups in Wittman Ah Sing's theatrical production. A protagonist of the play, Li Kwai, is "Chinese and black" (257), bandits, played by Chicanos, settle Vietnam to become the ancestors of the Vietnamese (306), and due to the casting, the runaway slave has a Chinese face (297). Like Du Bois, Kingston indicates her identification with other people of color, but brings this to the point of parody in the postmodern interchangeability of identities in Wittman's play.

Kingston continues her fictional construction of an Asian American perspective on 1960s movements in her next major work, *The Fifth Book of Peace*. The work focuses on pacifism, as well as the role of art in helping to come to terms with the trauma of war. The third section, "Water," is a reconstruction of Kingston's original manuscript of this book, "The Fourth Book of Peace," which burned along with her home in the 1991 Oakland/Berkeley Hills Fire. In this fictional segment, Wittman Ah Sing and his family go to Hawai'i hoping to escape the culture of violence that had infected the anti-war protests and government responses on

mainland America. A more mature Wittman reflects on tensions within the peace movement. After arriving on O'ahu, as a passerby, he joins a small anti-war demonstration, which he assumes is made up of Quakers and Buddhists (128). When two Communists join the demonstration, Wittman and other protesters regret it, since the large red flag they carry seems to coopt the demonstration and will, in the words of one of the protesters, "scare away any more demonstrators" (129). Wittman is suspicious of the Communists, who trick "you into being their political bedfellows. You can't chase them away or lock them up; you can only protect yourself against their convincing ideas by remembering: they believe in violent revolution, international warfare, killing people as the means to a fair world" (129). Kingston thus puts forward a skeptical view of Communism in her fictional account of 1960s activists and Asian Americans.

China in the Cold War and today still engenders extreme and polarized reactions. Some characterize the Cold War as a period when "China exported revolution internationally like it now exports toys and TVs, and Chairman Mao topped the Western world's rogues' gallery" (Wehrfritz). Yet not all would agree with this wholly negative assessment. China aimed in its strategy to form a third world coalition, which, as we have seen, resonated with US anti-racist movements: "Motivated by real and imagined affiliations between race and civil rights struggles in the United States, anti-colonial movements in the Third World, the Cuban Revolution, and the … Cultural Revolution in China, and … war in

Vietnam, black and Asian radicals circulated among themselves a conception of political simultaneity and indebtedness meant to inform developments on opposite sides of the world and in so doing change it" (Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* 76). Yet, China's revolutionary proselytizing contributed to the protracted conflict between the United States and China during the Cold War: "U.S. policymakers took more seriously and paid closer attention to Maoist revolutionary propaganda and the alleged successes and popularity of the Maoist economic model in the Third World than to China's actual military and economic capabilities" (Ross 12). A changing understanding of China's international influence may have contributed to alterations in America's military strategy in the Vietnam War:

> American Leaders had feared that Maoism might not only provide economic support for Chinese military expansionism but also appeal to leaders throughout the Third World, posing an ideological challenge and offering an economic alternative to capitalist democracy. But during the Johnson administration, policymakers perceived that Maoism had failed to solve China's economic problems and that its revolutionary implications had alienated many Third World Leaders … [US policy makers'] assessment of the cost of defeat [in Vietnam] declined and made reduced hostility toward China possible. (12-13)

Robert Ross, Professor of Political Science at Boston College, here has the benefit of hindsight when he implies that, had the US been

less blinded by ideological claims, they could have ended the Vietnam War earlier.

But there is no consensus on this issue. Thomas M. Nichols, Chairman of the Department of Strategy and Policy at the US Naval War College, argues that it is wrong to overlook the ideological nature of the Cold War and current conflicts. He asserts, "it is the worst kind of self-delusion to ask what ideological opponents, whether Islamic terrorists or Chinese tyrants, 'want,'" because they are motivated not by pragmatism but by founding "principles" (234). Other China scholars would disagree with this based on their study of increasingly accessible diplomatic archives in China and the US (Ross 1). Arguing that China during the Cold War was more pragmatic than we had believed, Ross asserts, "When conflicts are a matter of pragmatic national interest considerations rather than ideological or domestic impulses, they can be managed, and even resolved, through negotiation" (21). Simei Qing, Professor of History at Michigan State University, speculates on the relevance of Cold War lessons to the complex international stage today:

> Could American misunderstanding of international affairs profoundly influence the destiny of modern democracy in the United States? … In observing world events, citizens often create for themselves a pseudo reality that is more consistent with their preexisting beliefs, misconceptions, or prejudices than with the *actual* reality of the world. (1)

Both sides have their valid points. Given cultural differences and the distorting lens of Orientalism, it is worth looking more deeply to see if our enemies are really who we believe them to be. On the other hand, it is difficult to overlook the power of ideology. In the past and present we have seen how attractive ideologies such as anti-imperialism or liberation have been used to justify atrocities.

Today, China continues to be a major power of consequence and contradiction. Some scholars, such as James Mann of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, focus on China as a promoter of dictatorial regimes, such as Zimbabwe and Burma (Elliott). Others, like China expert and incoming director of the Asia Society's new center on U.S.-China Relations Orville Schell, see hopeful signs that China recognizes that to gain respect in the world, it ought to take on the role of global citizen, with the willingness to participate in international efforts to stop nuclear proliferation, to mediate longstanding dangers such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, and to place pressure on Sudan to stop the genocide in Darfur (Schell). While journalist James Fallows emphasizes the benefits to US companies of flexible Chinese manufacturing, Robert J. Samuelson critiques Chinese trade as "mercantilist: it's designed to benefit China even if it harms its trading partners" (Fallows, Samuelson). Moreover, lately in the news, defective, adulterated, and unregulated products from China have called into question China's viability as a global trading partner, though it is true that China is not the only source of unsafe imports (Martin and Palmer). China continues to be seen

as opposing US global policies: Michael Green, senior director of Asian Affairs at the National Security Council until 2005, "agrees that China 'wants to build speed bumps on the road to political globalization and liberalization' and is 'particularly against any attempt to spread democracy" (Elliott). Writer Michael Elliott asserts, "Until recently, China's foreign policy consisted of little more than bloodcurdling condemnations of hegemonic imperialism" (Elliott). This statement suggests China's continuing rhetoric of anti-imperialism, as well as opposing attitudes that would dismiss the critique of colonialism as "bloodcurdling."

Yet it is interesting to consider not just contrasts with US stated ideology, but the perspective of international opinion. A recent international poll conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and WorldPublicOpinion.org found that the majority of citizens in 8 out of 14 countries believe that China will catch up with the US economically, and do not find this prospect to be frightening. This level of optimism was not shared by Chinese citizens themselves, however. In addition, the majority of people in most countries "don't trust China to act responsibly beyond it's borders immediately" (Wehrfritz), and ranked China similarly to the US, which is not saying much considering that the US has slipped in ranking largely due to the Iraq War (Wehrfritz). Many in Asia feel threatened by the US military presence, yet nevertheless advocate its bases as a counterbalance to Chinese intervention (Wehrfritz). On the other hand, Joshua Kurlantzick, visiting scholar at the China Program of the Carnegie Endowment

for International Peace, claims that "[o]rdinary people across the planet now view China more warmly than they do the United States" (Kurlantzick), according to polls taken by the Program on International Policy Attitudes and the BBC. In a way similar to how Cold War competition and US concern with its public image abroad "forced American leaders to promote stronger civil rights reform" (Dudziak 250), China has also been trying to improve its international image. This analysis of China's image abroad should also remind us of the spotlight on American domestic as well as international actions, for "justice at home will have an impact on [America's] moral standing in a diverse and divided world" (Dudziak 254). Ironically, when President Clinton criticized China's human rights record in 1999, China countered by releasing a report on human rights in the United States (253).

Needless to say, China continues to exert an important influence, and provoke strong, ideological views. American minority views of China during the Cold War often drew a kinship or connection to China as a neighbor, an inspiration, or a motherland. This analysis has shed light on the ongoing dynamic of polarized views of a distant, mysterious, yet important nation. We are reminded of the history of racial oppression and colonialism, and of how dynamics of culture and power shaped and continue to shape international relations, in the excesses of exploitation and of response. Du Bois and Kingston illuminate the draw of Mao's liberatory rhetoric, but also highlight the

importance of means as well as ends—means that respect human life and self-determination on both individual and national levels.

Notes

[1] There was tension at the Bandung conference between supporters of Indian Prime Minister Nehru's principles of non-alignment and the larger group of US-aligned anti-communist countries (Mackie 19, 22). Although the proposed unity of postcolonial countries was later fragmented by international conflicts, such as the Sino-Indian border war of 1962 (108), Professor of Indonesian and Southeast Asian Studies George Kahin assessed that the Bandung conference did help to create a political climate of lessened aggression and tension between the US and China (69). The conference also helped member countries to resist pressure from US Secretary of State John Dulles to choose one side of the Cold War divide (124-5). The six African countries in attendance at Bandung were Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Libya, and Liberia (22). The sponsor countries were Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan. And the other Asian countries in attendance were Afghanistan, Cambodia, China, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Nepal, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, North Vietnam, South Vietnam, and Yemen (Mackie 30).

[2] The Black Panther Party advocated armed resistance to police brutality in Oakland, California, and became an inspiration to an Asian American organization in the San Francisco Bay Area, the Red Guard Party (Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* 171). The Young Lords were a Puerto Rican activist group in the 1960s and 1970s that sought independence for Puerto Rico and economic justice in the United States (*Social*). The Third World Women's Alliance evolved out of the Black Women's Liberation Committee, which was established within the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in 1968 (Vogel).

[3] Paul Robeson, a celebrity singer and actor, is one of the most prominent African Americans to be censored by having his passport taken away on account of having criticized US race relations to international audiences. In 1949 he delivered a speech at the Congress of World Partisans for Peace in Paris, in which he purportedly drew parallels between US racism and the Nazi regime. In 1950, he spoke out against US military action in Korea. Robeson was restricted from leaving the US, State Department

Officials reported, because, "Robeson's travel abroad at this time would be contrary to the best interests of the United States" (Dudziak 62). Robert F. Williams was known for his writings supporting armed self-defense against racist attacks, and his supporters believed he was framed when he was charged with kidnapping during the Monroe, North Carolina uprising in 1961 (Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* 75). He later lived in exile in Cuba and in China (80).

[4] One article published in *The China Quarterly* in 1961 only mentions the Great Leap Forward in passing (Halpern 7). Also in 1961, *The China Quarterly* "Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation" notes the abandonment of the Great Leap Forward and the agricultural crisis, but does not draw the connection between the two events.

[5] Han Suyin, otherwise known as Elizabeth Comber, was a doctor and writer, best known for her novel, *A Many-Splendoured Thing*, made into a 1955 Hollywood film, *Love is a Many-Splendored Thing*. She was born to a Chinese father and a Flemish mother and raised in China. A long time resident of Hong Kong, Singapore, and Europe, she is well known for her sympathy with communist China, to the extent of apologism, and her critiques of western imperialism ("Han Suyin"). Thus, Du Bois was not alone in his strong but at times ill-considered identification with China.

[6] Du Bois had also traveled in China in late 1936, and his focus then on opposing European colonialism also warped his assessment of Japanese imperialism and aggression as preferable to European colonialism or even as anti-imperialist (Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* 25-6).

[7] Along with his sympathy for "the colored peoples of the world . . . [, proposing] a vast unity of interest among them, because of their common experiences of suffering from color prejudice, race discrimination and economic exploitation" (Zhang 142), Du Bois also sympathized with the socialist project of the Soviet Union, identifying with the Russian "peasants who had been freed from serfdom at almost the same time that [his] people had been emancipated from slavery" (Aptheker, *Correspondence* 417). In 1861 with the coming to power of a new tsar, Alexander II, the Russian state began the abolition of serfdom, freeing serfs from their servile

status and putting forth a procedure that would enable them to become landowners. However, pressure from the upper classes resulted in a compromise settlement that gave terms largely unfavorable to the serfs (Stephenson 77-82).

[8] Kingston was also drawing upon a modernist literary influence. In an interview, Kingston states, "'I used the title, 'The Making of More Americans,' from Gertrude Stein, because when I read *The Making of Americans*, I thought, 'Yes, she is creating a language that is the American language; and she is doing it sentence by sentence. I am trying to write an American language that has Chinese accents; I will write the American language as I speak it'" (Rabinowitz 182).

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