

HISTORICAL CHINDIAN PARADIGM:

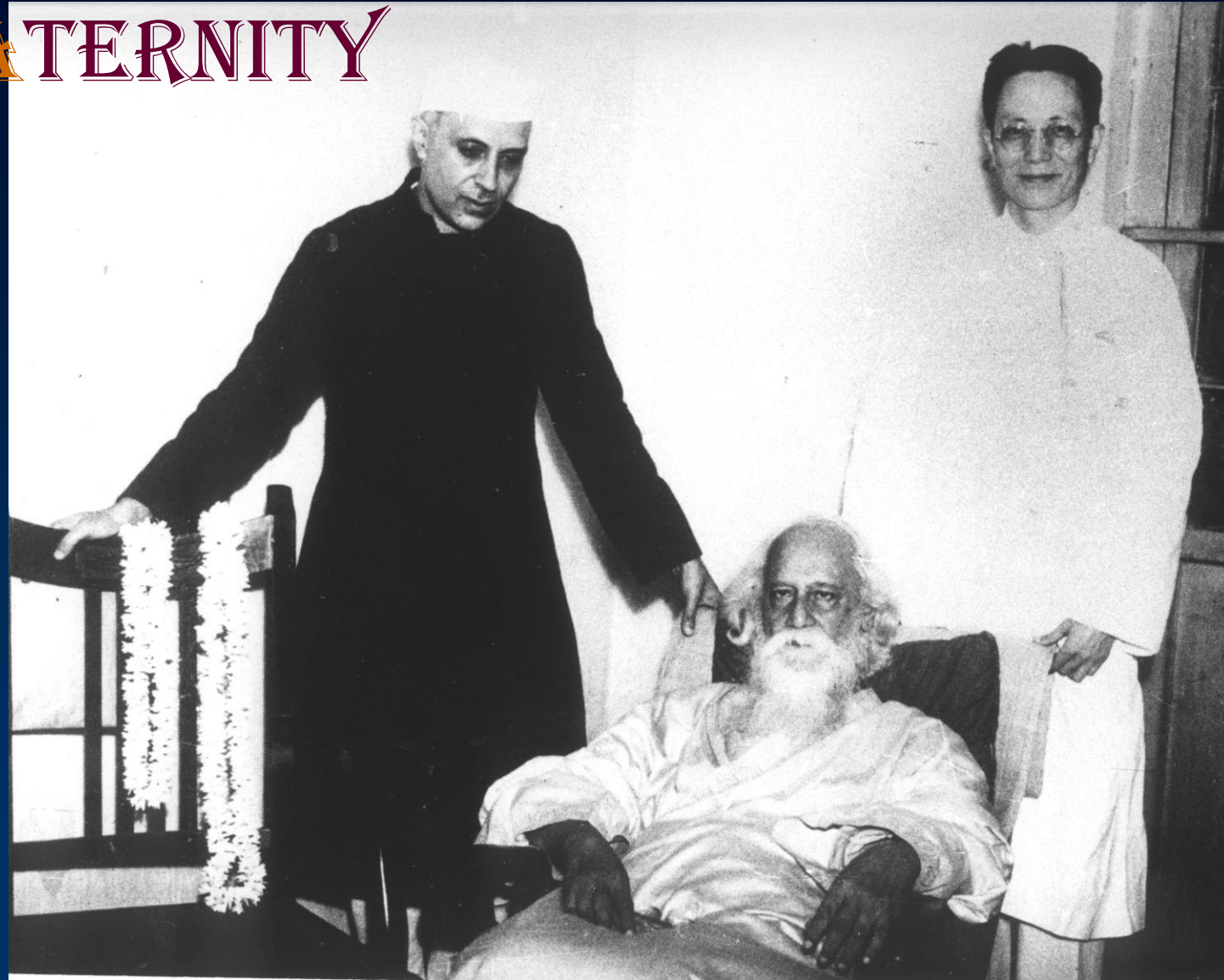
**INTERCULTURAL
TRANSFUSION AND
SOLIDIFICATION**

TAN CHUNG

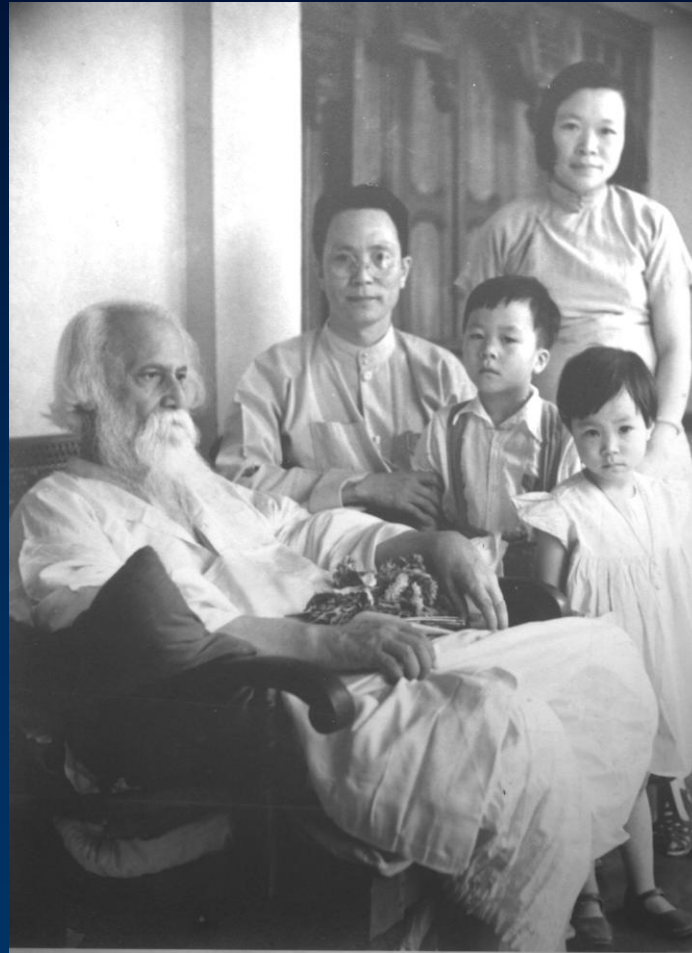
CHINDIA

Tagore, Nehru, Tan Yun-shan

FRATERNITY



Tagore Christened Me “Asoka”



MY CHINDIAN ENVIRONMENT



1929

Birth

Malaya

(Santiniketan
christened by
Tagore)



1931-1954

Raised

China



1955-1999

Career

India

季羨林 Ji Xianlin's observation:

China and India have stood together in the Asian continent and their neighbourhood is created by Heaven and designed by Earth (天造地设). Viewing from the entire history of the mankind, there have been four major cultural systems of which China and India have one each. That is to say, they occupy one half of the cultural treasury of mankind. This is excellent! ... These two cultural realms [China and India] have been mutually interactive like light and shade, enhancing each other's cultural development. We can even assert that had there not been the Sino-Indian cultural interaction ... the present day culture of both China and India would not have been what they are.

Ji Xianlin's 4 major systems:

- (1) Chinese “civilizational state”
- (2) Indian “civilizational state”
- (3) Islamic a number of nation-states
- (4) Euro-American (*inheriting ancient Greco-Roman heritage*)
a number of nation-states

India

From times immemorial to pre-colonial days:

About 100 countries sharing the Indian civilization---

the **“United Nations of Indian Civilization”**

After 1950:

the **“United States of Indian Civilization”**

Historical **India** vis-à-vis **China**

- 1) Small pacific states
- 2) Intellectual (mainly Brahmanic) *sannyasa* tradition
- 3) Buddhist monks going to China---“Age of Pilgrimage”

China

from 221 BC to date

the “**United States of Chinese Civilization**”

the “**universal state**”

- monopoly of the 3rd and 6th/7th great rivers (Yangtse & Huanghe/Yellow River) on earth
- superdome political structure
- native spiritual superstructure inadequate for maintaining the “**universal state**”
- inviting Indian monks and starting the Sino-Indian joint venture of converting the ancient Indian oral tradition into Chinese written tradition

*

“世上好言佛说尽，
天下名山僧占多”

*Shishang haoyan Fo shuojin,
tianxia mingshan seng zhanduo*

All good words of the world
have been said by the Buddha,
Buddhist monks have occupied
most of famous hills of China.

“世上好言佛说尽，天下名山僧占多”

Material benefit of Indian civilization

temple culture

tea & porcelain industries

printing & book industries

Spiritual benefit of Indian civilization

- 1) new ideological constructions
- 2) popular culture of pacifism, optimism, dynamism, fellow-feelings, a fighting spirit against injustice
- 3) cultural renaissance

Li Bai's famous poem “静夜思” *Jing ye si*
(Thinking in the tranquil night”) :

床前明月光，疑是地上霜；
举头望明月，低头思故乡。

*Chuangqian mingyueguang,
yi shi dishangshuang;
Jutou wang mingyue, ditou si guxiang*

The moon shines bright
Upon the bedside,
Frost on the floor?
I am not sure.
I see the bright moon
When I raise my head,
My head downward and
I miss my homeland.

床前明月光，疑是地上霜；举头望明月，低头思故乡。

**The moon shines bright
Upon the bedside,
Frost on the floor?
I am not sure.
I see the bright moon
When I raise my head,
My head downward and
I miss my homeland.**

Seen (& Unseen) symbols:

- 1) bed (“universe is a guesthouse” “天地一逆旅”)
- 2) bright moon (Buddhadharma)
- 3) frost on the floor (confusing mind)
- 4) missing homeland (Chinese reaction to *sannyasa* --- home in universe)

罗隐 Luo Yin's (833-909) “自遣” *Ziqian*
(Self Amusement)

得即高歌失亦休，多愁多恨亦悠悠；
今朝有酒今朝醉，明日愁来明日愁。

De ji gaoge shi yi xiu, duochou duohen yi youyou;
Jinzhao you jiu jizhao zui, mingri chou lai mingri chou

In success I sing my song,
At failure life goes on.
With worry and sorrow
I remain a jolly fellow.
When there's wine today
I enjoy it pretty thorough,
Come tomorrow trouble may
Let me worry tomorrow.

得即高歌失亦休，多愁多恨亦悠悠； 今朝有酒今朝醉，明日愁来明日愁。

In success I sing my song,
At failure life goes on.
With worry and sorrow
I remain a jolly fellow.
When there's wine today
I enjoy it pretty thorough,
Come tomorrow trouble may
Let me worry tomorrow.

Seen (& Unseen) symbols:

- 1) success and failure (life's rhythm)
 - 2) undaunted spirit (input of *Bhagvadgita's* "work-don't-stain-me")
 - 3) wine (enjoyment of life)
 - 4) Trouble in wait
- (devananda spirit)

崔护 Cui Hu's “题都城南庄” *Ti ducheng nanzhuang*
(Scribbling on the gate of a southern house
in capital, Chang'an)

去年今日此门中，人面桃花相映红；
人面不知何处去，桃花依旧笑春风。

Qu'nian jinri cimenzhong, renmian taohua xiangyinghong;
Renmian buzhi hechuqu, taohua yijiu xiao chunfeng.

Last year the same day
I was at this gate,
Greeted here by a pretty face,
Peach flowers all over the place.
Away, today, is the pretty face,
Where has she gone I can't trace.
Peach flowers there all the place
Smiling at me in spring breeze.

去年今日此门中，人面桃花相映红； 人面不知何处去，桃花依旧笑春风。

Last year the same day
I was at this gate,
Greeted here by a pretty face,
Peach flowers all over the place
Away, today, is the pretty face,
Where has she gone I can't trace.
Peach flowers there all the place
Smiling at me in spring breeze.

Seen (& Unseen) symbols:

- 1) gate (life's entry points)
 - 2) pretty face (attractions of life)
 - 3) peach flowers (Nature's favourable environment)
 - 4) missing face (life's rhythm of parting and reunion)
 - 5) spring breeze (the vibrant universe always)
- (真善美 *satyam, shivam, sundaram*)

Rabindranath Tagore on China

His 1924 China visit:

“I was deeply moved and felt that my own sail had caught the wind and was carrying me from captivity, from the sleeping past, out into the great world of man.”

Praise for Chinese culture:

“[C]an anything be more worthy of being cherished than the beautiful spirit of the Chinese culture that has made the people love material things without the strain of greed, that has made them love the things of this earth, clothe them with tender grace without turning them materialistic? They have instinctively grasped the secret of the rhythm of things, --- not the secret of power that is in science, but the secret of expression. This is a great gift, for God alone knows this secret. I envy them this gift and wish our people could share it with them.”

张载Zhang Zai's (1020-1077) observation #1:

乾称父，坤称母。...
天地之塞，吾其体。
天地之帅，吾其性。
民吾同胞，物吾与也。

Qian cheng fu, kun cheng mu...tiandizhi se,wu qiti.

Tiandizhi shuai, wu qixing. Min wu tongbao, wu wu yu ye

Qian is called father, *kun* is called mother....

The prevalence of the universe creates my body.

The commander of the universe forms my nature.

All human beings are my brothers/sisters.

All things of the universe are my species.

乾称父，坤称母。...天地之塞，吾其体。
天地之帅，吾其性。民吾同胞，物吾与也。

Chindian ingredients:

- 1) 乾“*qian*” and 坤“*kun*”
as father and mother
- 2) 吾“*wu*” (“I” or “me”), i.e., *atma*
- 3) the spirit of “*Brahmatmaikya*”
(unity of *Brahma* and *Atma*)

Zhang Zai's observation #2:

为天地立心，为生民命，
为往圣继绝学，为万世开太平

*Wei tiandi lixin, wei shengmin liming,
wei wangsheng ji juexue,
wei wanshi kai taiping.*

Foster the heart for the universe,
foster the life for human beings,
continue the forsaken learning of
past sages,
create the era of *taiping* for posterity.

为天地立心，为生民命，为往圣继绝学，为万世开太平

Chindian ingredients:

- 1) 心“*xin*” (“*citta*” and “*hrdaya*”)
- 2) 命“*ming*” (life, fate, mandate, order)
- 3) 太平“*taiping*” (“*Upeksha/ mahasamata*”)

- 4) 往圣“*wangsheng*”
(past sages, Chinese and Indian)

- 5) 绝学“*juexue*” (forsaken learning)

Need to replace the Geopolitical Paradigm with the Geo-civilizational Paradigm:

Rabindranath Tagore:

“I know that many will point to the weakness of China and India and tell us that thrown as we are among other ruthlessly strong and aggressive peoples, it is necessary to emphasize power and progress in order to avoid destruction....We must learn to defend our humanity against the insolence of the strong, only taking care that we do not imitate their ways and, by turning ourselves brutal, destroy those very values which alone make our humanity worth defending.”

“Progress which is not related to an inner ideal, but to an attraction which is external, seeks to satisfy endless claims. But civilization, which is an ideal, gives us power and joy to fulfil our obligations.”

“It is co-operation and love, mutual trust and mutual aid which make for strength and real merit of civilization.”