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Abstract: Zhang Jian was one of the most famous entrepreneurs of the first half of the twentieth century. Less well known is that his primary model for the many institutions he built in his home town of Nantong was Japan, a country with which he had a love-hate relationship. He employed many Japanese advisors and teachers to guide in his projects, but always remained wary of Japanese state designs on China.

Zhang Jian's Nantong Project and the Meiji Japanese Model

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Meiji Japan provided one of the modernization models for late Qing and early Republican China.¹ Nantong 南通, a testing ground for modern education and social welfare in early twentieth-century China, was strongly influenced by the Meiji Japanese model. Fusing Western and Chinese elements with their own traditions, the Meiji Japanese created an education and social welfare model of their own. The Meiji Japanese model was characterized by its emphasis on providing fundamental education to children and basic social welfare to the needy as well as promulgating traditional morality. Due to its limited financial commitment and appeal to Eastern ethics, the Meiji Japanese model was regarded as the best option by many Asian leaders and intellectuals at the turn of the twentieth century, popularized by Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese students and visitors to Japan as well as Japanese teachers and advisors to Asia. It is unquestionable that the modern educational system in China was under the Japanese influence.² However, the Japanese impact on social welfare in modern China has been largely overlooked.³ Using Zhang Jian 張謇 (1853-1926) as a case study, this essay will demonstrate how important Meiji Japan was in the making of education and social welfare in modern China and how the Chinese modified the Japanese model to suit the needs of late-Qing and early-Republican China.

Zhang Jian is remembered as an entrepreneur, educator, and philanthropist in modern Chinese history. Using the profits from his enterprises in Nantong 南通 in Jiangsu Province, he built modern education and social welfare facilities largely based on

¹ See Noriko Kamachi, *Reform in China: Huang Tsun-hsien and the Japanese Model* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1981); Douglas R. Reynolds, *China, 1898-1912: The Xinzhen Revolution and Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1981); and Kubota Bunji 久保田文次, ed., *Chūgoku kindai no kaitakusha: Sei Senka to Nihon* 中国近代化の開拓者・盛宣懷と日本 (Pioneer of Chinese modernization, Sheng Xuanhuai and Japan) (Tokyo: Chūō kōron jigyō, 2008).

² See Abe Hiroshi 阿部洋, *Chūgoku no kindai kyōiku to Meiji Nihon* 中国の近代教育と明治日本 (Education in modern China and Meiji Japan) (Tokyo: Fukumura shuppan, 1990); and Wang Wan 汪婉, *Shinmatsu Chūgoku tai-Nichi kyōiku shisatsu no kenkyū* 清末中国対日教育視察の研究 (Investigations of Japanese education in late-Qing China) (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1998).

³ Regarding the origins of social welfare in modern China, scholars usually trace them to modern Western institutions or traditional Chinese practices. For a historical account of the impact of traditional Chinese practices on modern Chinese social welfare, see Zhou Qiuguang 周秋光 and Zeng Guilin 曾桂林, eds., *Zhongguo cishan jianshi* 中國慈善簡史 (A brief history of social welfare in China) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2006). For a study of the launch of social welfare in modern China by Western churches, see Gu Changsheng 顧長聲, *Chuanjiaoshi yu jindai Zhongguo* 傳教士與近代中國 (Missionaries and modern China) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1981).

the Meiji model. Japan remained a great inspiration for Zhang throughout his life. He paid special attention to education and social welfare during his sojourn in Japan in 1903. Upon his return to China, he wrote *Kuimao dongyou riji* 癸卯東遊日記 (Diary of my trip to Japan in the year of *kuimao*, 1903) as a reform blueprint for China. Using primary sources such as *Kuimao dongyou riji* and *Zhang Jizi jiulu* 張季子九錄 (Records of Zhang Jian in nine parts, 1931) as my principal references, this essay will examine how Zhang's education and social welfare projects were shaped by his experiences in Japan, and this has implications to our understanding of the role of Meiji Japan in the modernization of education and social welfare in late-Qing and early-Republican China.

Zhang Jian's Reformism and Japan

Zhang Jian was by no means pro-Japanese in his political and intellectual orientation.⁴ Emotionally, he hated Japan for its political, economic, and military penetrations into China, but rationally he saw Japan as a model of modernization for China. "China and Japan are relatively close," he remarked, "and therefore China should learn from Japan. Japan adopted the German model and also used Great Britain as a referent."⁵ Zhang believed that China should use Meiji Japan as a model to introduce constitutional monarchy, the parliamentary system, education, and social welfare. The Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) was a turning point in his thinking. After a period of intellectual shock and soul-searching, Zhang concluded that learning from Japan and the West to build modern industry and education was the key to China's independence and territorial integrity. As he put it: "After the Sino-Japanese War, I came to realize that industry and education are interdependent."⁶

Although Zhang acquired the status of *zhuangyuan* 狀元 (first place in the national civil service examinations), he did not take up official posts in order to pursue his dream of building modern enterprises and institutions for China. In response to the Treaty of Shimonoseki (1895) that allowed the Japanese to build factories in China, Zhang believed that China should engage in *shangzhan* 商戰 (commercial war) with the

⁴ Zhang repeatedly expressed sadness over the humiliation that the Chinese suffered during the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the Boxer Uprising (1899-1901). Besides, he rebuilt the Cao Ding Temple 曹公祠 in Nantong in memory of Cao Ding 曹頂 (1519-63), a local hero who expelled the Japanese pirates in the Ming period (1368-1644). Zhang opposed Sun Zhongshan's 孫中山 (1866-1925) proposal to cede half of the share of the Han Ye Ping Company 漢冶萍公司 to the Japanese in 1921 and expressed his anger over the Twenty-One Demands in 1915. The coexistence of the alarm over Japan's territorial ambitions and the desire to learn from Japan was common among late-Qing and early-Republican Chinese officials and scholars, and this mentality can also be found in Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909), Huang Zunxian 黃遵憲 (1848-1905), and Sheng Xuanhuai 盛宣懷 (1844-1916).

⁵ Zhang Jian, "Wei shizheng zhi Tie shangshu han" 為時政致鐵尚書函 (A letter to Minister Tie to address issues in current affairs), in Zhang Yizu 張怡祖, ed., *Zhang Jizi jiulu* 張季子九錄 (Records of Zhang Jian in nine parts, 1931) (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1965), 1: 9.

⁶ Quoted from Zhang Jian, *Kuimao dongyou riji* 癸卯東遊日記 (The diary of my trip to Japan in the year of *kuimao*, 1903) (Hangzhou: Hangzhou daxue chubanshe, 1999), p. 539.

Japanese and the West by building Chinese factories.⁷ He himself built many modern enterprises in Nantong; the Dasheng shachang 大生紗廠 (Dasheng Cotton Mill, founded in 1899) was particularly important. Introducing Japanese methods to counterbalance Japanese competitors in China was the formula adopted by Zhang in running his business. Many of his enterprises employed Japanese advisors and used Japanese methods or machines. For instance, Dasheng Cotton Mill had Japanese advisors and used automatic machines purchased from Japan, Nantong Tongsui huochaichang 南通通燧火柴廠 (Nantong Tongsui Match Factory) purchased machines from Japan, and Tongrentai yanye gongsi 同仁泰鹽業公司 (Tongrentai Salt Company) introduced the Japanese method of salt basking and recruited three Japanese advisors.⁸ He even sought to borrow money from Japan. Zhang's enterprises were mostly domestic market-oriented, but a few could export overseas. For instance, Nantong guangsheng youchang 南通廣生油廠 (Nantong Guangsheng Oil Factory) and Fuxing mianchang 復興面廠 (Fuxing Noodle Factory) exported cottonseed meal and flour to Japan, respectively. It was a kind of counterattack in the lens of *shangzhan*.

The year 1903 was another turning point in Zhang Jian's thought. His trip to Japan was an eye opener.⁹ Although he had wanted to visit Japan to study its industrialization and modernization as guidance for China even before the Sino-Japanese War, the opportunity did not arise until 1903 when he was invited by Amano Kyōtarō 天野恭太郎, the Japanese consul in Nanjing, to attend the Fifth National Industrial Exposition (第五回内国勸業博覧会) in Osaka.¹⁰ Aside from a mission to Korea in 1882, this was the only overseas trip in his whole life, and thus the impact on him was strong. During his seventy-day sojourn in Japan, Zhang left his footsteps on major educational and social facilities all over Japan, including primary schools, secondary schools, kindergartens, normal schools, vocational schools, medical schools, agricultural schools,

⁷ *Shangzhan* was a national discourse in response to the foreign economic penetration in the late-Qing and early-Republican periods. It was an extension of Wei Yuan's 魏源 (1794-1857) famous slogan: "Learn the superior techniques of the barbarians to control the barbarians." For a discussion of *shangzhan*, see Wang Ermin 王爾敏, *Zhongguo jindai sixiang shilun* 中國近代思想史論 (Articles on intellectual history of modern China) (Taipei: Huashi chubanshe, 1977), pp. 233-382.

⁸ Zhang Jian, "Yanye zhengdun gailiang beie ji" 鹽業整頓改良被厄記 (Records of difficulties in improving the salt business), in Cao Wenlin 曹文麟, ed., *Zhang Jian shiye wenchao* 張謇實業文鈔 (Zhang Jian's selected articles on enterprises) (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1971), 2: 70-73. See also Zhang Jian yanjiu zhongxin 張謇研究中心, ed., *Nantong difang zizhi shijiunian zhi chengji* 南通地方自治十九年之成績 (Achievements in regional autonomy in the Nantong region over the past nineteen years) (Nantong: Zhang Jian yanjiu zhongxin, 2003), p. 11.

⁹ See Jiang Guohong 蔣國宏, "Zhang Jian Kuimao dongyou Riben ji qi yingxiang yanjiu" 張謇癸卯東遊日本及其影響研究 (A study of Zhang Jian's trip to Japan in 1903 and its impact), *Henan shifan daxue xuebao* 河南師範大學學報 4 (2000), pp. 48-52.

¹⁰ See Wang Hong 王紅, "Zhang Jian Kuimao dongyou Riben yuanyin shentan" 張謇癸卯東遊日本原因深析 (An in-depth investigation of the reasons behind Zhang Jian's visit to Japan), *Sichuan ligong xueyuan xuebao* 四川理工學院學報 19.1 (2004), pp. 21-26.

commercial schools, homes for the blind and deaf, libraries, museums, charity organizations, aquariums, presses, companies, banks, factories, farms, botanic gardens, parks, and power stations. In addition, Zhang collected Japanese school textbooks and official documents, recruited Japanese teachers and advisors, and ordered Japanese machines. Upon his return to China, he asked the Nantong hanmolin yinshuju 南通翰墨林印書局 (Nantong Publishing House) to translate and publish the Meiji Constitution, Public International Law, school textbooks, and books on politics that he had brought back from Japan.¹¹ These publications inspired many Chinese leaders and intellectuals to advocate political and educational reforms.

As an entrepreneur, Zhang Jian might not have been as influential as official businessmen such as Sheng Xuanhuai 盛宣懷 (1844-1916). However, perhaps no entrepreneurs in his times could compare with Zhang in terms of promoting education and social welfare.¹² Zhang paid equal attention to economic development and socio-cultural modernization, comparable to the Meiji entrepreneur Shibusawa Eiichi 澀澤榮一 (1840-1931) in this regard.¹³ Both Zhang and Shibusawa were close to political leaders, but they built industrial, educational, and social ventures out of their own initiatives and resources as ordinary citizens. They used part of the profits from business to support education and social welfare. Their major difference was that Shibusawa used the American model as the main reference, whereas Zhang borrowed heavily from Japan. Zhang's venture in Nantong was a hybrid modernization model that downsized the Japanese prototype and added Chinese and Western elements to the Japanese model.¹⁴

¹¹ Some of these publications included *Riben xianfa yijie* 日本憲法義解 (A commentary on the Japanese constitution), *Riben yihui shi* 日本議會史 (A history of the Japanese Diet), *Riben quohui jiyuan* 日本國會紀原 (A record of the origins of the Japanese Diet), *Difang zizhi gangyao* 地方自治綱要 (An outline of regional autonomy), *Xinyi guoji gongfa* 新譯國際公法 (Public international law, new translation), and *Riben tongjixue wubaili* 日本統計學五百例 (Five hundred examples of Japanese statistics).

¹² Having compared official businessmen (such as Sheng Xuanhuai and Zhang Zhidong) with non-official businessmen (such as Zhang Jian and Zhu Paosan 朱葆三, 1848-1926) in modern China, Fu Guoyong 傅國涌 concluded that the former were much more enthusiastic about social welfare. See Fu Guoyong, *Da shangren: yingxiang Zhongguo di jindai shiyejiamen* 大商人：影響中國的近代實業家們 (Great businessmen: Influential entrepreneurs in modern China) (Beijing: Zhongxin chubanshe, 2008).

¹³ Their similarities have drawn scholarly attention. Comparative studies can be found in Zhou Jian 周見, *Jindai Zhong-Ri liangguo qiyejia bijiao yanjiu: Zhang Jian yu Seze Rongyi* 近代中日兩國企業家比較研究：張謇與澀澤榮一 (A comparative study of modern entrepreneurs in China and Japan: Zhang Jian and Shibusawa Eiichi) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2004); and Yu Chen 于臣, *Shibusawa Eiichi to giri shisō* 澀澤榮一と義利思想 (Shibusawa Eiichi and the righteousness-profit discourse) (Tokyo: Perikansha, 2008).

¹⁴ See Qin Shao, *Culturing Modernity: The Nantong Model, 1890-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

Modern Education and Japan

Zhang Jian's educational reform in Nantong differed from that of official policy. Unlike the late-Qing government that put an emphasis on tertiary education, Zhang, inspired by the Meiji experience, regarded primary education and normal education as most fundamental and urgent. He maintained that industry and education were the keys to the rise of a modern nation and that they were interdependent, because education could not be carried out without support from industry, and education provided talent for industry. That was behind his coining the slogan: "Education is the father and industry is the mother."

Using 10% of the profits from the Dasheng Cotton Mill for normal education in Nantong, Zhang founded Tongzhou shifan xuexiao 通州師範學校 (Nantong Normal School, 1902), the highest educational institution in the Nantong region and the first private normal school in China. It became a model for normal education in China, visited by Chinese officials, journalists, scholars, and foreign guests. Japanese educational organizations and scholars also came for cultural exchange.¹⁵ Its design was based on the Meiji Japanese standard of a normal school, in particular using Osaka Normal School and Tokyo Normal School as the main points of references. Zhang asked Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866-1940) and Japanese teachers at the Shanghai dongwen xuetang 上海東文學堂 (Shanghai Japanese school) to help him with the school's design.¹⁶ In his "Nianpu" 年譜 (Chronological biography), Zhang noted: "I built [Nantong] Normal School, adopting the Japanese School Building Codes (*Gakkō kenchiku hō* 學校建築法) from design to construction."¹⁷ He adopted the Japanese standard so faithfully that even the size and interior design of the classroom, as well as the shape and height of the tables and chairs, were exactly the same as those used in Japanese public schools. Likewise, lecture hall, assembly hall, canteen, dormitory, general office, and principal's room followed its Japanese counterparts closely. Like Japanese public schools, the Nantong Normal School took tidiness, diligence, frugality, and faithfulness as key virtues for the students' moral code.

The Nantong Normal School relied heavily on Japanese teachers in its early years. Eight Japanese teachers were recruited to teach various subjects, such as science, mathematics, geography, and agriculture, making them the majority of the teaching team. These eight Japanese teachers were Yoshizawa Kaju 吉澤嘉壽 (science and mathematics), Morita Masako 森田政子 (music, arts, and kindergarten education), Kozukuri Takatoshi 木造高俊 (Japanese language), Endō Tamijirō 遠藤民次郎

¹⁵ Zhang Jian, "Huanying Riben qingnianhui lai Tong cangan yanshuo" 歡迎日本青年會來通參觀演說 (A speech to welcome the Japanese Youth Association's visit to Nantong), in Zhang Yizu, ed., *Zhang Jizi jiulu*, 1: 328-31.

¹⁶ Luo, a scholar of oracle bones and the founder of the Shanghai Japanese School, was a close friend of Zhang's. In 1901, Zhang and Luo tried in vain to persuade Liu Kunyi 劉坤一 (1830-1902), a prominent late-Qing statesman, to build a normal school in Beijing, and therefore they decided to do it themselves in Nantong. Luo also encouraged Zhang to take a trip to Japan in 1903.

¹⁷ Zhang Jian, "Nianpu," in Zhang Yizu, ed., *Zhang Jizi jiulu*, 6: 11.

(geography), Nishitani Toraji 西谷虎二 (Japanese language), Terui Yoshimi 照井喜三 (agriculture), Miyamoto Ikuji 宮本幾次 (civil engineering), and Kimura Chūjirō 木村忠治郎 (physics and biology). With the exception of Yoshizawa who was the head teacher of the Tōa dōbun shoin 東亞同文書院 (East Asia Common Culture Academy) in Shanghai, most were recent graduates from universities in Japan and many were recommended by Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877-1927) who himself taught Chinese at Nantong Normal School. In order to accommodate Japanese teachers, Japanese-Chinese interpreters were hired. Japanese teachers were employed because they were familiar with the Japanese model, had similar cultural backgrounds, and were relatively affordable.¹⁸ Zhang believed in the Japanese system so much that he asked Morita Masako to be his son's private tutor and sent outstanding students of Nantong Normal School to study in Japan on scholarships. For instance, in 1904, 1905, and 1907, fourteen students were sent to study normal education at Kōbun Gakuin 宏文學院 and Waseda University and most of them later became teachers of the Nantong Normal School.

The Nantong Normal School was by nature a school to train primary school teachers. Following the Japanese normal school standard, its curriculum was divided into compulsory subjects (such as social ethics or *xiushen* 修身, history, mathematics, and physical education) and elective subjects (such as political economy, agriculture, chemistry, and English).¹⁹ *Tongzhou shifan xuexiao xueke zhangcheng* 通州師範學校學課章程 (Curriculum of the Nantong Normal School, 2000) is said to be a Chinese edition of *Jinjō shihan gakkō no gakkō oyobi teido* 尋常師範學校ノ學科及其程度 (Subjects and levels of normal schools), issued in 1892 by the Ministry of Education of Japan.²⁰ Trained in the military style like their Japanese counterparts, students were required to wear uniforms, live in dormitories, receive military marching training, do the school cleaning, and eat simple meals. Using Japanese primary and secondary school teachers who retired at the age of sixty with pensions as an example for reinforcement, Zhang told his students that their hard training would pay off in the long run.

Seeing normal education and primary education as the two pillars in education, Zhang paid special attention to primary education. Although the Qing government promulgated the plan to launch four-year compulsory primary education for children between six and ten years of age in 1903, no nationwide compulsory primary education was carried out due to budgetary constraints. Zhang decided to implement it with his own resources in the Nantong region and began to build primary schools from 1902. Thanks to his endeavors, 350 primary schools were built in two decades, making Nantong one of

¹⁸ For a study of Japanese teachers and advisors in late Qing and early Republican China, see Wang Xiangrong 汪向榮, *Riben jiaoxi* 日本教習 (Japanese teachers) (Beijing: Sanlian shuju, 1988).

¹⁹ Zhang Jian, "Tongzhou shifan xuexiao yi" 通州師範學校議 (A proposal for the normal school in Nantong), in Zhang Yizu, ed., *Zhang Jizi jiulu*, 3: 10.

²⁰ Du Yue 都樾, "Shilun Zhang Jian chuanguan xuexiao di jingfei chouji fangshi" 試論張謇創辦學校的經費籌集方式 (An attempt to discuss the ways that Zhang Jian collected money to build schools), *Twenty-First Century* 二十一世紀 (Institute of Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong) 7 (October 2002). Online at: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/21c/supplem/essay/0208032.htm>

the most educationally advanced regions in modern China. The Jiangsu provincial government also accepted Zhang's proposal to use part of the tax monies for primary education. His primary education used the Meiji Japanese system as the main referent in terms of curricular design, textbooks, and construction plan. For example, primary schools were built in proportion to the population, while social ethics, Chinese, mathematics, and physical education were made compulsory. Some textbooks were directly translated from those used in Japan. Social ethics textbooks about the life and thought of great historical figures were adopted to replace the reading of Chinese classics.²¹

According to Zhang, there were three important elements in primary education, namely basic knowledge, social ethics, and physical training. Hence, he stressed the importance of physical education to train the body and mind of children. Impressed by the discipline of Japanese soldiers during the Boxer Uprising, he believed that it was the result of physical education in Japanese primary schools.²² He was also inspired by his visit to the Osaka Primary School where he was touched to see the pupils marching as if in the military.²³ Hence, following the Japanese practice, Zhang made a decision that all primary schools in Nantong must have a playground for physical education and marching training.

On the top of normal and primary education, Zhang also promoted professional education and women's education. Although the Qing government established some professional schools at the advanced level during the Self-Strengthening Movement of the 1860s, Zhang preferred the Japanese model that put emphasis on vocational schools to provide basic training for workers. He visited many Japanese vocational schools during his visit in 1903 and built a large number of similar schools in Nantong, including a police training center, traffic police academy, jailer school, marine engineering school, fishermen's school, seamen's training school, agricultural school, textile school, and medical school.²⁴ Many of these institutions recruited Japanese and Chinese trained in Japan as teachers. For instance, Hehai gongcheng cehui yangchengsuo 河海工程測繪養成所 (Training center for mapping river and sea) employed Japanese experts to train Chinese students to survey and draw maps of the rivers and the sea, producing the first group of marine engineers in China. Nantong nongye xuexiao 南通農業學校 (Nantong Agricultural School) was founded in 1907 following the Japanese standard. He sent its graduates to Japan and Korea to survey the Japanese cotton planting methods and then experimented with it in Nantong, making Nantong was the most productive region in cotton production in Jiangsu Province. Nantong yike zhuanmen zuexiao 南通醫科專門學校 (Nantong Medical School) employed Chinese doctors trained in Japan as well as Japanese doctors. The head of the school, Xiong Fulong 熊輔龍, was a military doctor who had graduated from Chiba University in Japan. Students at the school were required to learn Japanese, and outstanding students were sent to study in Japan on scholarships.

²¹ Zhang Lanxing 張蘭馨, *Zhang Jian jiaoyu sixiang yanjiu* 張謇教育思想研究 (A study of Zhang Jian's education thought) (Shenyang: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 1995), pp. 126-27.

²² Zhang Jian, "Shifan xuexiao kaixue yanshuo" 師範學校開學演說 (A speech at the opening ceremony of the normal school), in Zhang Yizu, ed., *Zhang Jizi jiulu*, 3: 29.

²³ See Zhang Jian, *Kuimao dongyou riji*, p. 542.

²⁴ See *Nantong difang zizhi shijiunian zhi chengji*, pp. 122-23.

The school maintained academic exchanges with universities (such as University of Tokyo, Osaka Medical University, and Kobe Medical University) and hospitals (such as Mitsui Hospital, Juntendo Hospital and Kamii Hospital) in Japan.²⁵

Inspired by his visit to women's schools in 1903, Zhang believed that women should receive education and the first step to establish such education was to train female teachers. In 1905, he founded the Nantong zuzi shifan xuexiao 南通女子師範學校 (Nantong Women's Normal School), the first private women's normal school in China, to train kindergarten and primary school teachers. In addition, Zhang sent twenty young women to receive intensive normal training in Japan.

Clearly, Zhang Jian's education project was largely modified from the Meiji model, particularly in the areas of normal education, primary education, vocational education, and women's education. Due to geographical and financial reasons, Zhang downsized the Japanese model to make it affordable and feasible in the context of a prefectural-level city.

Modern Social Facilities and Japan

Zhang was a representative social reformer and philanthropist of his times. He established public facilities (museums, libraries, town halls, parks, stadiums, and prisons) and social welfare facilities (schools for the blind and deaf, factories for the poor, orphanages, and homes for the elderly) in Nantong, adopting the Japanese system and hiring Japanese and Chinese trained in Japan as advisors, teachers, and administrators.²⁶ Having visited similar facilities during his sojourn in Japan, he decided to experiment with them in his hometown. As he grew older, Zhang became increasingly enthusiastic about socio-cultural activities. He believed that building modern social facilities not only improved the livelihood of the people, but also promoted regional autonomy.²⁷ In Zhang Jian's social welfare project, the Japanese system, Chinese morality, and Western functionalism were perfectly fused together.²⁸

Nantong bowuyuan 南通博物苑 (Nantong Museum) was the largest social venture Zhang undertook. Impressed by the Tokyo Imperial Household Museum 東京皇室博物館 in Ueno, Zhang wrote to Zhang Zhidong, Governor-General of Liangjiang 兩

²⁵ See Li Mengxun 李明勳, et. al., ed., *Kaituo yu fazhen: Zhang Jian suochuang qiye shiye jinxi* 開拓與發展：張謇所創企業事業今昔 (Starting and developing: The enterprises founded by Zhang Jian, past and present) (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1993), p. 81

²⁶ See Samuel C. Chu, *Reformer in Modern China, Chang Chien, 1853-1926* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), pp. 162-75.

²⁷ Zhang was influenced by the concept of regional autonomy during his stay in Japan. See Wu Yiye 伍貽業, "Zhang Jian yu Nantong jindaihua mushi," 張謇與南通近代化模式 (Zhang Jian and the modernization model in Nantong), in Nanjing daxue Jiangnan jingji shi yanjiushi 南京大學江南經濟史研究室, ed., *Lun Zhang Jian* 論張謇 (About Zhang Jian) (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1993), p. 42. See also Qin Shao, *Culturing Modernity*, pp. 25-26.

²⁸ Regarding the hybridity of Zhang's social welfare project, see Zhao Youmei 趙有梅, "Zhang Jian cishan sixiang tanxi" 張謇慈善思想探析 (An analysis of Zhang Jian's philanthropic thought), *Nanjing linye daxue xuebao* 南京林業大學學報 5.3 (September 2009), pp. 69-72.

江總督, to propose the founding of an imperial household museum in Beijing based on the Japanese model to preserve cultural heritage and educate the populace. “The Imperial Household Museum of Japan is better than its counterparts in other nations,” he claimed. “The [Meiji] government gathers the best collections by the imperial family and also encourages the people to exhibit their collections. It is such a great idea. My country should use it as a reference to build an imperial household museum in the capital.”²⁹ As the Qing government was undecided about what to do, Zhang used his own resources in Nantong to build the first private modern museum. Built on a 40-acre piece of land in 1905, the Nantong Museum consisted of four components: history museum, natural science museum, space museum, and zoo. Its design resembled a miniature version of Ueno Park in Tokyo. Sun Yue 孫鈺, a graduate of the Nantong Normal School who returned from a period of study in Japan, became the first curator of the Nantong Museum. Japanese experts were employed to authenticate and classify collected items. No wonder its classification system was exactly the same as that of the Tokyo Imperial Household Museum.³⁰ Kimura Chūjirō, a teacher at the Nantong Normal School, served as an advisor in the field of botany. Students at the Nantong Normal School were assigned to visit the Nantong Museum as a requirement of their study. Following the Japanese practice, Zhang set up rules for the visitors to promote proper public manners.³¹

Zhang also built libraries, parks, and theaters in Nantong to enrich the cultural and social lives of the people. Nantong tushuguan 南通圖書館 (Nantong Library) was the first modern library opened to the general public. It had Chinese, English, and Japanese collections. Students could borrow books for free, whereas the public paid a small rental fee. Nantong wugongyuan 南通五公園 (Five Parks of Nantong) provided public space for the people to engage in different cultural and social activities. It had five zones: east zone for the elderly to relax, south zone for the children to play, west zone a swimming pool, north zone a playfield, and the central zone a garden. Turning the park into a cultural and social hub was also an idea inspired by Japan.

Zhang sought as well to modernize theater culture in China. He built the Gengsu juchang 更俗劇場 (New Customs Theater), a modern theater with a capacity of 1,200 seats for dramas, operas, and musicals, either traditional or modern, eastern or western, in 1919 for this purpose. Like the Nantong Museum, the New Customs Theater asked its audience to obey some “civilized” rules, such as no spitting on the floor, no talking, and no eating watermelon seeds. Zhang invited Ouyang Yuqian 歐陽予倩 (1889-1962), the “founder of modern Chinese drama” who had studied in Japan and was influenced by Japanese drama, to head Linggong xueshe 伶工學社 (School for Drama Artists, founded in 1919), the first performing art school in modern China. At Zhang’s initiative, a journal of modern drama, *Gongyuan riji* 公園日記 (Diary of the park) was issued to promote the

²⁹ Zhang Jian, “Zhang Nanpi xiangguo qing jingshi jianshe diguo bolanguan yi” 張南皮相國請京師建設帝國博覽館議 (Submitting a proposal to Minister Zhang to build an imperial museum in the capital), Zhang Yizu, ed., *Zhang Jizi jiulu*, 3: 8.

³⁰ Kim Haeyon 金海蓮, *Chō Ken to Nihon: Nantsū hakubutsuen no sōsetsu wo megutte* 張謇と日本：南通博物苑の創設をめぐる (Zhang Jian and Japan: The making of the Nantong Museum), unpublished masters thesis (2006), Kyoto Notre Dame University, p. 43.

³¹ Qin Shao, *Culturing Modernity*, pp. 149-50.

modernization of Chinese drama. Wu Wozun 吳我尊, a Beijing opera expert who had studied in Japan, was asked to be the editor.

For the underprivileged, handicapped, and needy, Zhang built many social welfare facilities in Nantong. For instance, Nantong sili mangya zuexiao 南通私立盲啞學校 (Nantong Private School for the Blind and Mute) was the first special school in modern China to provide training for the blind and mute. Students learned to read raised characters or use sign language for communication, and received vocational training in massage, carving, and typing. The objective of this school was to turn the handicapped into independent and productive members of society. The school was designed in the image of schools for the blind and mute in Osaka and Kyoto that Zhang had visited in 1903. After his visit to such an institution in Osaka, Zhang remarked: "We arrived the [Osaka] School for the Blind and Mute. Blind students were taught by blind teachers to read, calculate, and massage. They also studied music, history, and geography. Deaf and mute students were taught by deaf and mute teachers to draw, sew, embroider, use sign language, and exercise."³² The spirit of these schools in Japan was, as he put it, "to cultivate useless people and turn them into useful people."³³ In addition, Zhang also built orphanages, homes for the elderly, centers for the handicapped, hospitals, and cemeteries. The social welfare project in Nantong became a showcase of modernization or "exhibitory modernity," visited and reported on by foreign investigators, reporters, and investors. For instance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan sent Komai Tokuzō 駒井徳三 (1885-1961) to visit Nantong and he wrote a highly positive report on Zhang's achievements in education and social welfare.

Concluding Remarks

As Zhang was a pragmatic reformer rather than a systematic thinker, we have tried to understand the impact of Meiji Japan on Zhang's reformism through an examination of his activities and ventures in education and social welfare in Nantong. The significance of Zhang's project in Nantong was that he introduced the modified version of the Meiji Japanese model to his hometown, setting an example for other regions in China. Based on his visit to Japan and reading of translated works, Zhang's understanding of Meiji Japan was somewhat limited.³⁴ To make up for this shortcoming, he hired many Japanese to come to Nantong as teachers and advisors.

The Meiji Japanese model, in a sense, was an Asian version of the American-European model. Although the latter model in education and social welfare was comprehensive, it was not easy for East Asian nations in the early twentieth century to implement them due to their financial and administrative requirements. Hence, the Meiji Japanese model that laid emphasis on the most fundamental matters (such as primary education and basic social facilities) and traditional values (such as loyalty, patriotism, endurance, and frugality) was appealing to Japan's neighboring nations. It would not cause too heavy a financial burden nor too strong an intellectual resistance. Zhang's Nantong project was largely based on the Meiji Japanese model with modifications. He

³² Zhang Jian, *Kuimao dongyou riji*, p. 549.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 498.

³⁴ See Zhou Jian, *Jindai Zhong-Ri liangguo qiyejia bijiao yanjiu*, p. 183.

should be remembered as a pioneer in introducing and domesticating the Meiji Japanese model for modern China.