

THE PRINCETON JOURNAL
OF EAST ASIAN STUDIES

VOLUME II

SPRING 2012

PRINCETON JOURNAL OF EAST ASIAN STUDIES

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Yunsuk Chung '12 Natalie Kim '12

COPY EDITORS

Charles Fortin '15 Heidi Yi '15

LAYOUT EDITOR

Jiweon Kim '15

FINANCE MANAGER

Eric Wang '12

IT TEAM

IT MANAGER

Eeh Pyoung Rhee '13

STAFF

Thomas Truongchau '14

PUBLICITY TEAM

PUBLICITY MANAGER

Alex Kim '12

OPERATIONS MANAGERS

Tanny Kang '14

Jenna Song '14

CHINA EDITORIAL TEAM

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Eddie Skolnick '12

EDITORS

Gavin Cook '15

Charles Fortin '15

Adrienne Fung '14

Rebecca Haynes '15

Tzu-Yung Huang '15

JAPAN EDITORIAL TEAM

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Rafael Abrahams '13

EDITORS

Tzu-Yung Huang '15

Shiro Kuriwaki '14

Ryohei Ozaki '14

KOREA EDITORIAL TEAM

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Anji Shin '13

EDITORS

Jennifer Cho '15

Jisoo Han '14

Lydia Lim '15

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. RETRIEVING LITERATI IDENTITY ACROSS MING-QING TRANSITION THROUGH WRITING OF PLACE: ZHANG DAI'S <i>SEARCH THE WEST LAKE IN DREAMS AND HIS SOURCE</i>	
KAIJUN CHEN COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY	1
2. DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY OF JAPANESE WRITING SYSTEM LEO HUMMEL CARLETON COLLEGE	12
3. REASSESSING THE EARLY MEIJI SCRIPT REFORM MOVEMENT KATHRYN CWYNAR COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY	18
4. ESCAPING OR INTERNALIZING COLONIALISM: THE CHOSON POBINGSA (1883) IN COMPARISON WITH THE JAPANESE IWAKURA MISSION (1871) SEUNGYOP SHIN COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY	36
5. EXAMINING “EMPTINESS” IN BUDDHISM AND DAOISM ANDREA DILLON	53
6. ALTAN URAG JONATHAN HEINS UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH	58
7. COLLEGE STUDENTS’ USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND THEIR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN CHINA SUN HUAN MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	78
8. THE CURSED GENERATION AND THE ‘AHN CHUL-SOO SYNDROME’ INSUNG CHUNG WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS	103
9. AN ANALYSIS OF THE VIDEO GAME WORKS OF FENG MENGBO VALERIYA SAFRONOVA	119

RETRIEVING LITERATI IDENTITY ACROSS MING-QING TRANSITION THROUGH WRITING OF PLACE:

Zhang Dai's Search The West Lake in Dreams and his Source

Kaijun Chen

Columbia University

ABSTRACT

Through a case study of Zhang Dai's (1597-1689) memoir of the West Lake region in lower Yangtze delta, this paper address the strategies and the rhetoric that "literati" employed to preserve their cultural identity over the Ming-Qing dynastic transition. By closely comparing and analyzing Zhang Dai's *Search The West Lake in Dreams* and its understudied source Tian Rucheng's (1503–1557) *Xihu youlan zhi* (Record for traveling around the West Lake), I will identify Zhang Dai's modifications and explain their rhetorical significance. I will argue that by means of selective adaptation and modification, Zhang Dai transformed the original local gazetteer into a memorial text. He retrieved literati's ephemeral world in the previous dynasty by subtly weaving living experience into the seemingly factual records of West Lake and therefore constructed a mental monument commemorating the literati cultural identity.

INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses on literati's preservation of their identity under drastic political and economic transformations from the Ming to Qing dynasty. By employing the term identity, I mean both the way in which a group of educated people regarded themselves and the way they broadcasted their profile as literati,

and how their statuses were taken as convention by others. If not every one of this alleged community necessarily held official positions after succeeding in civil examination (*Keju Kaoshi* 科舉考試), based on what did they claim to maintain their status over the social transformation?

I would argue that particular to the period of Ming Qing transition, by memorializing a series of cultural practice, the members on the periphery of the "literati" community tried to conserve something that cannot be easily carried away by temporal and geographical displacements. At the turning point of two dynasties, here from Ming to Qing, 'literatus' like Zhang Daiⁱ (張岱) witnessed such dynastic transition, and expressed strong will to retrieve the past in his writing. The issue I would like to explore is what exactly he retrieved. For sure, it was a part of his life in the previous dynasty, yet it was also about a living world where the community of 'literati' claimed and fully performed their status by being involved in various scholarly, artistic, religious, regionally governmental and consumptive practice.

This paper concentrates on *Xihu meng xun* (西湖夢尋 *Search The West Lake in Dreams*, XHMX hereafter) and will briefly mention another of Zhang Dai's other works, *Tao'an mengyi* (陶庵夢憶 *Dream Reminiscence of Tao An*, TAMY hereafter). I would argue that we should see them as complementary works. Together with Zhang Dai's other

works, they constructed an organic whole endeavor to maintain literati identity outside central political power or even without any sort of formal governmental service.

Search The West Lake in Dreams or Xihu meng xun (XHMX hereafter) is prefaced on the 16th day of the 7th month in year Xinhai (1671).ⁱⁱ Zhang Dai collected seventy-two short essays about various scenic sites around the West Lake. Each essay is followed by several poems or inscriptions composed by ancient poets and more often by contemporaries. The essays normally consist of brief geographic description, historical records or anecdotes about this site. In some rare occasions, factual records are mixed with personal experience or colored by mood. And there is minimized commentary if any at all. Like some of Zhang Dai's other works, this book is not easy to categorize into a traditional genre.ⁱⁱⁱ In order to have a specific idea what it is, we shall analyze Zhang Dai's preface.^{iv}

I didn't live in a fortunate time. And I'm away from the West Lake for twenty-eight years, but it doesn't stop reappearing in my dream every single day. And the lake in dream has never been away from me. I went back to the West Lake in year of Jiawu (甲午1654) and year of Tinyou (丁酉1657). I visited the Shang's Lou Wai Lou (商氏樓外樓 mansion outside mansion) at Gate of Yongjin (湧金), the Qi (祁)'s temporary residence, Qian (錢)'s and Yu (余)'s villas and my Ji Garden (寄園). All garden estates along the lake were in sheer ruins. Thus what appears in my dream is what the West Lake lacks nowadays. From the view on Broken Bridge, none of supple willows, shining peaches, musical halls and ballrooms by water exists. They are just like washed by flood. I went away in a hurry since I come for West Lake but what I can see is like this, which is rather worse than the safe and sound West Lake in my dream. It makes me to compare my dream with Li Gongfeng's (李貢奉 Li

Bo). The heavenly lady he dreamt is goddess or eminent beauty. He did not see her in dream and therefore his dream was illusory. The West Lake I dream is like my hometown and family. It is imaged in dream and therefore it is real. Up till now I have been moved to another location for twenty-three years. However, I am still in hometown when I dream. The servants who came early are in white hair now but in my dream they are still wearing teenager's black turfs and behave the same way when they were young. From now on, I can only live lonely in the shelter of butterfly and slowly fall asleep. May my old dreams get conserved and the beauty of the West Lake untouched. When children ask me about it, I tell them occasionally, yet was always describing a dream in another dream. They are either nightmare or babbles so I compose Meng xun including seventy-two episodes to pass to later generations as the image (Ying影) of the West Lake. I'm like a man from mountain, who returned from maritime excursion, keeping praising the taste of dishes from sea. Villagers run to lick my eyes. Alas! Golden meat and column of elixir vanish into void the moment they touch our tongue. How can licking eyes fulfill our appetite!

On the 16th day of the 7th month in year Xinhai (辛亥), in shelter of ancient sword and butterfly (古劍蝴蝶), old man Zhang Dai scribed.^v

As can be seen in the preface, Zhang Dai claims to retrieve from dream what was lost in reality. Firstly, they are destroyed private garden estates, natural sight seeing. These geographic traces were erased by transdynastic turmoil. Nevertheless, they were conserved in memory. Secondly, what was saved in dream were also spaces animated by living activities. Zhang Dai also wants to immortalize those entertaining singers and dancers "in constitution of supple willows and shining peaches." He was dreaming of those pleasant moments in music hall or pavilions over water. And he wants to keep servants always young as they were

in former residence. All that dynamic life full of cultural practices is in sharp contrast to what is called loneliness (Cengji岑寂) here. In brief, the scene in Zhang Dai's dream was his existential experience together with his 'literati' in that spatial and temporal past. He aims to eternalize the ephemeral experience in the previous dynasty by writing, which can also explain his inclination of historiography in this work and Shi Gui Shu.

Nevertheless, to follow the generic convention of historiography and geography, he had to employ a more impersonal style for his writing. As I would reveal later, he seldom mentioned his personal activities in XHMX. He wrote much more elaborately about literati's various activities in Dream Reminiscence of Tao An. In XHMX he made effort to provide a rather clear description of scenic spots around the West Lake on their complex historical layers. Close to the end of his preface, he claims that he compiles this book to answer children's question about the West Lake. And to avoid indulging too much in the dream of reminiscence (telling the dream in dream 夢中說夢) when describing the location, which rendered all stories either nightmares or babbles, he tries to keep a distance from direct experience and presents things in a more systematic way.

However, though there is little vivid storytelling of contemporary literati's activities, the compilation of the book, including copying from previous works, was by itself one typical kind of literati's practice in Zhang Dai's mind. Furthermore, though the major part of the book is composed in an impersonal style, his modification of the texts that he copied from previous sources often betrays his emotional engagement, personal experience and moral judgment.

I would expose the tension between his impersonal gesture and scattered intimate emotional expression in this book. I would argue that impersonal as it appears to be at first sight, the book was by no means intended as an objective history of the West Lake. It was rather literatus' meticulously calculated praxis to ensure the persistence of a living world, which was only possible due to social and economic change in early modern China. And in this way, they can preserve their identity by linking it to a repertoire of activities rather than the ephemeral political powers.

As I have suggested, Zhang Dai may consider compiling this book itself as a kind of literati's activity, for example, historiography or anthology editing. In order to imitate the objective style of historiography, he followed several writing conventions.

Firstly, he copied without explicitly acknowledging the source, but it is more interesting to consider it as textual conservation rather than plagiarism. The book Zhang Dai incorporated is Tian Rucheng (田汝成1503–1557)'s Xihu youlan zhi (西湖遊覽志 Record for traveling around the West Lake, XHYLZ hereafter)^{vi}. In the preface Tian claimed that his book is a historical and factual record of the West Lake and urban area around it.^{vii} In the Annotated catalogue of Siku library (四庫全書總目提要), the entry on Xihu youlan zhi provides us not only a clear idea about the nature of this book but also a continuous tradition of literati's writing on Hangzhou (杭州), the capital of southern Song dynasty.^{viii}

Though this book [XHYLZ] is entitled as tourism (Youlan遊覽) and claims to record beauty of lakes and mountains, in fact it records a large part of information about Song dynasty and therefore even in one short essay Tian mentions leisure stay in one corner of China since Gaozong's reign.^{ix} During the years of

Qiandao (乾道) in Song dynasty, Zhou Cong 周淙 wrote Lin'an zhi (Gazetter of Linan) in 15 volumes. During the years of Xianchun (咸淳), Qian Shuoyou compile 100 volumes. [Records on] lakes and mountains is under one column of it and there is no detail according to the genre. Wu Zimu wrote Meng Liang Lu (夢梁錄 Record of Dream on Rice Pillow). Zhou Mi wrote Wulin Jiushi (武林舊事 Old Story about Wulin). They recorded customs in details but are very brief about mountains, rivers and historical sites. It is till in Rucheng's book, he collects anecdotes based on famous sites and verifies every detail. This book can not only open our eyes but is also useful for philological documentation. It is written in style of gazetteer and miscellaneous history. It is not like Ming people's travel logs merely to express their sentimentalism and appreciation of natural beauty. The Xihu youlan zhiyu (西湖遊覽志餘 Sequel of XHYLZ) consists of 26 volumes. It includes anecdotes from Song dynasty and records them in different categories. Most of them are about Hangzhou, not necessarily about the West Lake so it is separately compiled as appendix. The sequel deals with the less important things to free the main book from triviality, which is good. The problem is that he does not tell the origin of his quotation and therefore it becomes impossible to trace the origin of anecdotes and verify its validity. This is common deficiency of Ming people. Rucheng was not able to avoid it.^x

We can see from this comment how XHYLZ differs from previous writing. Some earlier works mention lakes and mountains as part of their record of landscape and therefore they are not as specific as XHYLZ. Others pay more attention to customs and contemporary activities but neglected natural and historic sites. Having made up for both sides, in XHYLZ Tian almost exhaustively enumerates the famous sites and collects relevant historical and literary texts about each of them. Zhang Dai not only employs exactly the same arrangement

(essay followed by poems), but also directly copies significant amount of texts from XHYLZ.

Does Zhang Dai intentionally disguise his copying XHYLZ in his writing? If not, what is the meaning of his integrating XHYLZ into his own book? First question is difficult to answer but we have two evidence in XHMX. Zhang Dai overtly mentioned Tian Rucheng in the essay called "flying hill".^{xi} In this essay he claims to participate a righteous vandalism action.

The bald Yang (monk) used himself as model to have statues of arhat sculpted by the brook. They are made as riding lions or elephants. Naked maidens gifts them flowers and so on. TIAN GONG RUCHENG broke one statue by drill. When I was young, I studied at Goulou studio (岣嶁山房). And I also broke one.^{xii}

The interesting thing is that Tian Rucheng never claims to smash the statues by drill. In Tian's XHYLZY (supplement of XHYLZ), Tian Rucheng records Chen Shixian, a local official's such action. Zhang Dai mistook it as Tian's deed. Another possibility is that Zhang Dai had a look at a different version of XHYLZY. Another fact is that there are three extant editions of XHYLZ of 1547, 1584 and 1611.^{xiii} In the last one, editor Shang Weirui (商惟睿) notably modified the original texts according to what he had access to of the day. In other words, Zhang Dai was not the only one to feel free to modify Tian's XHYLZ. By doing so, he sets himself in this tradition of literatus' writing on this site. However, distinction of XHMX is obvious. Shang Weirui's edition, though heavily edited, is still the same book of factual records. XHMX, though makes use of large part of previous records, is a totally different book that functions in a literary way.

Furthermore, XHYLZ is probably not the only record Zhang Dai used. In the essay "Brook with nine zigzags and

eighteen ravines,”^{xiv} Zhang Dai writes as follows.

The brook of nine zigzags is on the west of the hill of mist, south to dragon well. Its water winds nine times and was therefore name Jiu Xi. The land around is rough. Grass and trees flourish there yet no people reside. It is quiet like another space rather than human world. Below the brook lie the eighteen ravines. They are deep. Even for monk, if he does not abandon the world and cut off all mundane thought, he cannot stay here for long. According the RECORD (Zhi), there are sites like temple Liyan, Songyang and Wang's garden and path of plums. All vanished now and nothing exists. And [this site] is far away, situated at an obscure place by the river. Those who are very familiar with the West Lake have visited most famous sites. However, when asked about brook of nine zigzags and the eighteen ravines, they all get lost and don't know how to answer.^{xv}

The record (Zhi志) here is not Tian's XHYLZ. And neither can Zhang Dai's description of this site be found in Tian's XHYLZ where the entry is very concise.

The brook of nine zigzags is south west to hill of mist. A path connects it to Xu village. Its water comes from the main river. The dragon well is on its north....The eighteen ravines is west to dragon well. And a path connects it to Liuhe pagoda.^{xvi}

Thus Zhang Dai's point is to distinguish ordinary tourism experts who ignore the site from true connoisseurs like him who conserve its being even as it disappeared. He is obviously concerned with something other than the accuracy of factual records.

XHMX covers much fewer sites than its source book XHYLZ does. Although it is impossible to sort out the criteria according to which Zhang Dai selects the sites to present. The difference of Tian's exhaustive enumeration and Zhang's selectiveness certainly reveals

their different agendas. I have discussed Zhang's purpose stated in his preface. Tian's purpose seems less sophisticated. In his preface he praises the beauty and prosperity of the West Lake, and he felt obliged to fill a blank in the library of gazetteers of famous places. A friend Huang Mianzhi (黃勉之) expressed the same idea. When the friend passed away yet the beauty is still there. Tian decided to start the overdue task. And then several officials expressed interest in it. The last one among them evaluated the book as a creditable history of the county that should be passed down. Thus the official ordered the subordinates to raise fund and had it published.^{xvii} The whole process rendered Tian's book closer to an official commission in comparison to Zhang's spontaneous work.

Secondly, though copying Tian's book, Zhang Dai rearranges the texts to create the narrative effect he wanted. For instance, he pays much attention to the cyclic construction and the destruction of buildings, pagodas, dams; discovery and disappearance of springs; flourishing and withering of flowers and trees.

The first example is in the entry “Zhao Qing temple.”^{xviii} According to Zhang Dai, the temple was built in 936 (first year of late Jin dynasty) for the first time and was destroyed in 967 (last year of first Song emperor Taizu's reign). It was rebuilt in the same year, first year of the succeeding emperor, Taizong. The name of the year was kingdom of peaceful prosperity (太平興國). Then it was burnt in 1017. After a long gap, the temple was rebuilt and destroyed several times during the reign of Hongwu (洪武1368-1398) and Chenghua (成化1465-1487) in Ming dynasty. In 1555, 34th year of Jiajing (嘉靖) reign, it was burnt to prevent pirates' use. After the conflict it was built again but collapsed in 1569. In 1589 an

official of high rank helped to rebuild it and mobilized the local market. Shortly before the fall of Ming dynasty, in 1640, it fell down in a big fire that lit the water of West Lake. Though we cannot deny that there is no factual mistake in Zhang Dai's enumerations, and many of them come from previous records, Zhang Dai juxtaposes them in such a repetitive manner that we cannot miss the rhetorical effect. And he always chooses moments of historic significance and in this way implies a correspondence between these historical events and state of the temple. This kind of echo definitely reminds us of natural disasters as ominous messages. It is not a coincidence that intentionally or unconsciously, Zhang Dai mentions geomancy twice in this short essay.

And Zhang Dai catches every chance to show us this kind of cyclic flow of cosmos. He did the same thing to Baochu pagoda (保俶塔),^{xx} Lingyin temple(靈隱寺),^{xx} temples on the North Peak (北高峰 Beigao Feng),^{xxi} buildings on Upper Tianzhu (上天竺 Shang Tianzhu),^{xxii} Temple of running tigers (虎跑廟),^{xxiii} to name a few. What is more, Zhang Dai also emphasizes the on-and-off of springs such as Spring of six-one (六一泉),^{xxiv} Spring of running tigers (虎跑)^{xxv} and prosperity of flora zone.^{xxvi} He usually explains how the specific sociopolitical situations influence the status quo of these rises and falls. However, several phases are densely gathered one after another following a pattern weaved by Zhang Dai. That guides our reasoning to go beyond historical explanation of the ebbs of history, into a metaphysical rumination. Though the unfolding of various rise and fall still operated in a convention of historical narrative, it is pushed to such a limit that it is easy to detect a lyrical voice there. I assume that Zhang Dai is trying to

represent the perpetual ephemerality, which is the essence of Zhang's whole project. That is to solidify the ephemeral by acknowledging the heydays and its swiftness and therefore to build a mental monument of the past.

Thirdly, it is not an imperial past, but a past colored by extensive individual projection. That is to say in XHMX, faithful historical picture sometimes matters less than Zhang Dai's memory or imagination of the past. For example, in "Agate temple"(瑪瑙寺):^{xxvii}

In the temple there is a big bell with proper diameter and can be heard far away. Seven volumes of Lotus Sutra and thirty-two chapters of Diamond Sutra are carved on it. Six monks are in charge of knocking it twelve hours day and night. Every knock is [a recitation of] seven volumes of Lotus Sutra and thirty-two chapters of Diamond Sutra. Every word transforms into sound. I think that hearing the bell in clear night arouse people's intent to follow the Way. As soon as dawn comes, the intent disappears. Now I hear the bell in daytime and am suddenly reminded. The earth, mountains and rivers seem being shaken. The resounding of one knock is one turn of Lotus Sutra and one turn of Diamond Sutra. Inner canons (Buddhism texts) says, when the sound of bell is lingering in human world, it is the time that all being in hell are temporarily free from punishment. After the turn of dynasty, I'm afraid that monks in temple become lazy and can no longer do it as

^{xxviii} before.

My question is based on what evidence does Zhang Dai assume that monks would become lazy after the change of dynasty. And his conviction that ordinary people's faith is strengthened by bell at night and fades in daytime is no more than his own mindset projected on others. And how can we avoid guessing that the apathetic mood after the fall of golden old time is not Zhang Dai his own mindset about the exterior world?

And Zhang Dai is not afraid of conflating locations. What matters is the location in his mental map rather than it in reality. In the essay “Xiling Bridge”^{xxxix} he writes as follows.

Another name of Xiling (西泠) bridge is Xiling (西陵) (different Chinese character). Some says it was the place where Su Xiaoxiao (a sensational courtesan) fell in love. And I saw Fang Zigong’s poem saying, several tones from flute tell where it is, I suspect that’s the first bridge of Xiling. Ling (陵) is written as Ling (冷), Lady Su might have mistaken them. But I’ll say, it doesn’t matter. Xiling is fine. And Bai Gong has a poem for Duan (断) bridge, willow color green conceals Su Xiao’s home. Duan bridge is not far from here. Why shouldn’t we borrow its story as anecdotes of Xiling [bridge]?^{xxx}

Here it does not matter whether Zhang Dai actually mixed up Xiling bridge and Duan bridge. What is worth attention is his easy attitude to these factual blunts. Zhang Dai is mainly concerned about using poems and anecdotes of a famous courtesan to craft a charming bridge near the West Lake, be it Xiling bridge or Duan bridge. Thus Zhang Dai made use of and turned away from geography to draw his own mental map of the site.

As a map drawn by lingering loyalties (遺民) from the previous dynasty, it can never be free from loyal flags. At least two can be identified in XHMX. They are “Tomb of Yue Wang”^{xxxii} and “Tomb of Yu.”^{xxxiii} The first essay is dedicated to Yue Fei, who died to defend the Song dynasty against Jurchen’s attack. The second is about Yu Qian, who sacrificed himself in defensive battle against Oirats’ intrusion in the early Ming dynasty. Both of them fought against foreign intruders. Their deaths were more due to partisan conflicts in the ruling house than failure in war. And it is obvious that Zhang Dai is alluding to Manchou’s invading China by

mentioning previous foreign invaders and generals fighting them. Zhang does not venture one word on his opinion on the new dynasty. These two essays are vivid reconstructions of these two loyal figures’ life. The more highly Zhang Dai speaks of them, the deeper resentment he implies against Manchou’s ruling.

However, he would not get into trouble for overtly expressing his anti-Manchou sentiment. In at least two places, he carefully changes the way of addressing Ming dynasty as they appear in the source. In “Su Gong Dam” (蘇公堤)^{xxxiv} and “Fenghuang Mountain”(鳳凰山),^{xxxv} he changed Tian’s “my dynasty” (我朝 Wo Chao) to “Ming dynasty” (明朝 Ming Chao) when he copies Tian’s texts recording these two sites.^{xxxvi} I suppose that these are not merely an acceptance of historical facts or strategic self-protection. Firstly, Zhang Dai must make this impersonal gesture to match his self-esteem as a historian. Secondly, this also reveals Zhang’s weak commitment to political nostalgia in his writing. His nostalgia was not constrained to specific political handover, but it concerned a lost way of living. The world in reality cannot remain the same for him by keeping the name of a period if the living experience changed. However, he can retrieve this world by writing down his feeling and activities.

The activities he was involved in, the friends he met, are nowhere to be found in factual record like XHYLZ. The author’s personal experience is reasonably ruled out in historiography or local gazetteer, but it is crucial in a book like XHMX. Though Zhang’s activities are told in full variety in Tao’an meng yi. In XHMX, I still find a few details in this regard. The first thing I notice is that whatever activity Zhang is engaged in he is usually with a group of friends. In

“Goulou Shanfang”^{xxxxvi} (岣嶁山房 mansion on hill) he writes,

On the year Jiazi of Tianqi reign (1624), I and Zhao Jiechen, Chen Zhanghou,^{xxxxvii} Yan Xubo, Zhuo Keyue, my brother Pingzi studied in it [goulou shanfang]. Head of monks cooked vegetables in garden and mountain for us by himself. They were tasteless and the life was lonely but fresh. I hate myself because my mind was still not free from mundane fame and interest. And I must have offended the spirit of mountain and feel guilty even till now.^{xxxxviii}

Zhang was 27 years old in 1624. And it is reasonable to infer that the word “Dushu”(讀書) means to prepare for the bureaucratic examination. But the study does not seem intense enough to impede them from paying attention to the quality of food, the living ambiance, etc. Time can be spent on appreciation of innovative beautiful estate in “Yanxia Shiwu” (煙霞石屋 Stone Chamber in Mist),^{xxxxix}

A new retreat house was built on the right wing of hill You. Wang Wei and Chen Hongshou used to study there. I went to visit. The stones are like those on the ‘flying peak’. The dust on them has just been washed off. The stones look clean but the texture on surface is not rubbed out and thought carved the inner structure is not damaged. They are wholly free from such disaster as being made into statues of Buddha by bald Yang. Steep cliff and extraordinary peak startlingly show their new face. I’m so pleased by all this.^{xl}

In Tao'an meng yi, there is more of what these wealthy officials to-be did when they were young in such a commercialized society. Zhang Dai and his entourage traveled, grew and appreciated flowers, were involved in drama (as play writer, troupe leader, amateurish actors, patrons or casual audience), tasted tea and special springs, watched waves, evaluated and dealt garden estates, fought chickens, visited prostitutes, went hunting, attended festivals in villages, collected antiques,

viewed military exercise, played Qin zither, and of course, held all kinds of banquets. All these activities require spare time, wealth, and special knowledge. Though the requirements were not easy to fulfill, for a certain community they were easier than a governmental position after success in bureaucratic examination.

I assume that an official post at last still guaranteed an examinee his status as a literatus. As we can see, the community to which Zhang Dai eagerly wants to connect consists of highly established officials of his grandfather's generation in “Liuzhou Pavilion.”^{xli} Despite Zhang's gesture, he ironically does not belong to this community. And as time went on, the linkage between post and status started to loosen, to be negotiable. Given the exploding population of examinees, there were not enough official positions. Yet for this large population of literate examinees, the link to literatus as a prestigious social status must be preserved for various reasons. Some, like Zhang Dai, consumed economic and cultural wealth accumulated by earlier literati-officials in lineage, others actually made a living under this name since they inherited little from parents except for talent and fortunately received good education. To put it concretely, dandies like Zhang Dai took advantage of their good education and wealth to have fun. It turned out that they started a lot of cultural innovations.

Educated yet unsuccessful examinees of lower birth also had to survive. They had several options as career. The first one is education and business related to examination. The second one is entertainment business including publication, production and circulation of artifacts (calligraphy, painting and other objects plus career as dealers, sometimes called connoisseurs), theatre, and so on. The third one is religion. Most people in this community may switch among these options or practice them at the same time

in different phases of their life, depending their cultural equipment and projects at hand. And even the boundary between well-off dandies and examinees from lower origin is also elusive and technical.

The point is that when less concerned about survival, people like Zhang Dai in his early life cared more about their *raison d'être* when they were participating in various cultural activities. For unlike their ancestors, they no longer served at court; they had to sometimes model their literatus-official ancestors' (sometimes imagined) out-of-office activities. However, I would argue that they were not merely imitating the previous literati but also forging them out modeling themselves. We should note some common early models for 'literatus' in late period. Su Shi, for example. Among the poems collected in XHMX, there is no piece written by poets before the Song dynasty and very few before the Ming dynasty. Su Shi is frequently quoted. As their common model, it is not surprising that they chose a person who seems brilliant at all aspects in his life except a successful career in the government. On the other hand, examinees of less prestige tended to be more concerned about their *façon d'être*. That is to say, they were together with dandies in the market but relied more heavily on their performance in market in order to maintain their well-being. Usually we probably see a mixture of these two persona in different phases of a member's life in this community. On one hand, this community overlapped with scholar-officials, on the other hand, they mingled with merchants and craftsmen.

CONCLUSION

To end my analysis, I would quote a symbolic refusal in "Xiao Penglai" (小蓬萊),^{xlii}

In the year Binyin (丙寅1626), I went to Yulin xlivi. The pavilions were pulled down. His body was buried in the hall. I can't help but feel lonely and out of place.^{xliv} Now it is year Dingyou (丁酉1657). I went there again. The wall collapsed. Eventually this place becomes a ruin. I'd like to build an ancestral altar here in memory of master Dongpo (Su Shi). And I went to buy the land but was refused by the owner.^{xlv}

Zhang Dai wanted to purchase master Huang's land and to honor Su Shi, the common idol of literati. He obviously set himself in the lineage of traditional literati of which he was ironically not a part. We can also see his sense of identity if we notice his recurring regret for his undisciplined life because according to traditional standard, he should have worked hard and been a scholar official. In spite of this, he was involved in other attractive activities. His writing retrieves the literati's living world and transforming identity, which was more connected to cultural practice than political commitment.

ⁱ 1597~1689, Biography by Jonathan Spence, Return to Dragon Mountain : memories of a late Ming man. See bibliography. Tao'an meng yi was completely translated and studied by Philip Kafalas in his In Limpid Dream: Nostalgia and Zhang Dai's Reminiscences of the Ming. Some passages are also translated in Ye Yang's Vignettes from the late Ming : a hsiao-p 'in anthology.

ⁱⁱ It was published for the first time in 1717 in east Canton. Information about its early publication can be found in Huang Guilan's Zhang Dai shengping jiqi wenxue, p89

ⁱⁱⁱ For studies of these miscellaneous writings as a genre, Xiao Pin (小品), see Cao Shujuan's Wan Ming xing ling xiao pin yan jiu. Wu Chengxue's Wan Ming xiao pin yan jiu and Kafalas's In Limpid Dream.

^{iv} XHMX, p1. If not specified, the quotation in this paper is my translation Another translation of preface is in Return to Dragon Mountain, p250-52

^v 余生不辰，闋別西湖二十八載，然西湖無日不入吾夢中，而夢中之西湖，未嘗一日別余也。前甲午、丁酉，兩至西湖，如湧金門商氏之樓外樓，祁氏之偶居，錢氏、余氏之別墅，及余家之寄園，一帶湖莊，僅存瓦礫。則是余夢中所有者，反為西湖所無

。及至斷橋一望，凡昔日之弱柳夭桃、歌樓舞榭，如洪水淹沒，百不存一矣。余乃急急走避，謂余為西湖而來，今所見若此，反不若保我夢中之西湖，尚得完全無恙也。因想余夢與李供奉異。供奉之夢天姥也，如神女名姝，夢所未見，其夢也幻。余之夢西湖也，如家園眷屬，夢所故有，其夢也真。今余僦居他氏已二十三載，夢中猶在故居。舊役小僕，今已白頭，夢中仍是總角。夙習未除，故態難脫。而今而後，余但向蝶庵岑寂，蘧榻於徐，惟吾舊夢是保，一派西湖景色，猶端然未動也。兒曹詰問，偶為言之，總是夢中說夢，非贊即囁也。因作《夢尋》七十二則，留之後世，以作西湖之影。余猶山中人，歸自海上，盛稱海錯之美，鄉人競來共舐其眼。嗟嗟！金齎瑤柱，過舌即空，則舐眼亦何救其饑哉！歲辛亥七月既望，古劍蝶庵老人張岱題。
vi Information about publication is discussed later in this paper.
vii XHYLZ p3 “Yet I consider Zhi as one genre of history. If history doesn’t offer factual record, what can reader base on?”

(予則以為志者，史家之一體也，史不實錄，則觀者何稽焉？)

viii Tradition of monographic writing on capital cities goes back to northern Song dynasty. See Stephen West, “The Interpretation of a Dream. The Sources, Evaluation, and Influence of the ‘Dongjing Meng Hua Lu’” in T’oung Pao, Second Series, Vol. 71, Livr. 1/3 (1985), pp. 63-108

ix XHYLZ, p1 quotes Siku zongmu tiyao.

x

是書雖以遊覽為名，多記湖山之勝，實有關於宋史者為多，故於高宗而後偏安逸豫，每一篇之中三致意焉。宋乾道間，周淙撰臨安志十五卷，咸淳間，潛說友又續成一百卷，湖山特其中之一目，例不當詳。吳自牧作夢梁錄，周密作武林舊事，於歲時風俗特詳，而山川古蹟又在所略。惟汝成此書，因名勝而附以事蹟，鴻纖巨細，一一兼該，非惟可廣見聞，併可以考文獻，其體在地志雜史之間，與明人遊記徒以觴詠登臨流連光景者不侔。其志餘二十六卷，則拾南宋軼聞，分門臚載，大都杭州之事居多，不盡又關於西湖，故別為一編，例同附錄，蓋有此餘文以消納其冗碎，而後本書不病於蕪雜，此其義例之善也。惟所徵故實，悉不烈其書名，遂使出典無徵，莫能考證其真偽，是則明人之通弊，汝成亦未能免俗者矣。

xi XHMX, p70

xii

且楊囗沿溪所刻羅漢，皆貌已像，騎獅騎象，侍女皆裸體獻花，不一而足。田公汝成錐碎其一；余少年讀書岣嶁，亦碎其一。

xiii XHYLZ, p21st edition I Jiajing 26th year, re-edited by Fan Minqian, last one heavily edited by Shang Weirui
xiv XHMX, p248

xv

按志，澗內有李岩寺，宋陽和王梅園、梅花徑等跡，今都湮沒無存。而地復遼遠，僻處江干，老子西湖者，各名勝地尋討無遺，問及九溪十八澗，皆茫然不能置對。

xvi p56 XHYLZ

xvii p3 XHYLZ Xu, statement

xviii XHMX p21

xix XHMX p35

xx XHMX p79

xxi XHMX, p85

xxii XHMX, p108

xxiii XHMX, p254

xxiv XHMX, p153

xxv XHMX, p254

xxvi XHMX, p161

xxvii XHMX, p39

xxviii

寺中有大鐘，侈弇齊適，舒而遠聞，上鐫《蓮經》七卷，《金剛經》三十二分。晝夜十二時，保六僧撞之。每撞一聲，則《法華》七卷、《金剛》三十二分，字字皆聲。吾想法夜聞鐘，起人道念，一至旦晝，無不牿亡。今于平明白晝時聽鐘聲，猛為提醒，大地山河，都為震動，則鏗囗一響，是竟《法華》一轉、《般若》一轉矣。內典云：人間鐘鳴未歇際，地獄眾生刑具暫脫此間也。鼎革以後，恐寺僧惰慢，不克如前。

xxix XHMX, p49

xxx

西冷橋一名西陵，或曰：即蘇小小結同心處也。及見方子公詩有云：“數聲漁笛知何處，疑在西冷第一橋。”陵作冷，蘇小恐誤。”余曰：“管不得，只西陵便好。且白公斷橋詩‘柳色青藏蘇小家’，斷橋去此不遠，豈不可借作西冷故實耶！”

xxxxi XHMX, p52. about tomb of Yue Fei

xxxxii XHMX, p225. about tomb of Yu Qian

xxxxiii XHMX, p161

xxxxiv XHMX, p257

xxxxv XHYLZ, p20 and p70

xxxxvi XHMX, p95

xxxxvii Chen Hongshou (1598 - 1652), prominent painter and calligrapher

xxxxviii

天囗甲子，余與趙介臣、陳章侯、顏叔伯、卓珂月、余弟平子讀書其中。主僧自超，園蔬山蔽，淡薄淒清。但恨名利之心未淨，未免唐突山靈，至今犹有愧色。

xxxix XHMX, p215

xl 余往訪之，見石如飛來峰，初經洗出，
潔不去膚，雋不傷骨，一洗楊囂鑿佛之慘。峭壁奇
峰，忽露生面，為之大快。

xli XHMX, p182

xlii XHMX, p204 in, but also in TAMY, p34, the way
Zhang Dai shapes it. Some textual contradiction exists.

xliii Master Huang's studio. Master Huang Huheng won
his Jinshi degree in 1598 and held post of high rank. He
was an established scholar-offical and was also good at
archaic style poetry. He was a typical literatus in
traditional sense.

xliv Zhang Dai used an anecdote about lamentation in
Shi shuo xin xu, a record of aristocrats' exquisite words
and idiosyncratic behaviors. The story is as follows.
Wang Xianzhi (Zijin) went to lament his brother, Wang
Huizhi (Ziyou). And he tried to play his Qin zither only
to find that it does not work very well. He was so sad
that he smashed the Qin and signed that both his
brother and his Qin passed away.

xlv

天囂丙寅，余至寓林，亭榭傾圮，堂中窀先生遺蛻
，不囂人琴之感。今當丁酉，再至其地，牆圍俱倒
，竟成瓦礫之場。余欲筑室于此，以為東坡先生專
祠，往鬻其地，而主人不肯。

REFERENCES

Zhang Dai. Xihu meng xun. (Search the West
Lake in Dreams). Hangzhou : Zhejiang wen yi chu ban
she, 1984.

Zhang Dai. Tao'an meng yi. (Dream and
Reminiscence of Tao An). Beijing : Zuo jia chu
ban she, 1995

Zhang Dai. Ye Hangchuan. (Ferry at
Night). Hangzhou : Zhejiang gu ji chu ban she ;
1987.

Tian Rucheng. Xihu youlan zhi. Beijing:
Zhong hua shu ju. 1958

Spence, Jonathan. Return to Dragon
Mountain : memories of a late Ming man. ew York:
Viking, 2007

Kafalas, Philip. In Limpid Dream:
Nostalgia and Zhang Dai's Reminiscences of the
Ming. Norwalk, CT : EastBridge, 2007

Ye Yang. Vignettes from the late Ming :
a hsiao-p 'in anthology. Seattle : University of
Washington Press, c1999

Wu Chengxue. Wan Ming xiao pin yan
jiu. Nanjing Shi : Jiangsu gu ji chu ban she. 1998

Cao Shujuan. Wan Ming xing ling xiao
pin yan jiu. Taipei Shi : Wen jin chu ban she. 1988

Huang Guilan. Zhang Dai shengping jiqi
wenxue. Taipei : Wen shi zhe chu ban she. 1977

Stephen West, "The Interpretation of a
Dream. The Sources, Evaluation, and Influence of
the 'Dongjing Meng Hua Lu'" in T'oung Pao,
Second Series, Vol. 71, Livr. 1/3 (1985), pp. 63-108

DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY OF JAPANESE WRITING SYSTEM

Leo Hummel

Carleton College

ABSTRACT

This paper is a compilation of the history of the development of writing in Japan, focusing on the evolution of the hiragana and katakana syllabaries from classical Chinese. Starting from the introduction of the Chinese writing system in Japan during the early first millennium, I have traced the system through its various stages in history to the system we find in place today. The purpose of the paper is to explain and pinpoint the origins of the system's complexities and to tackle both how and why each stage of the evolution process succeeded the previous and gave rise to the next. For both the hiragana and katakana systems I have given multiple graphical examples showing the type of changes that occurred and for what social reasons. This paper is intended for those interested in how the system came to be; no previous knowledge of the Chinese or Japanese language is required.

The Japanese writing system is commonly known to be one of the most complicated of any world language. It has been described anywhere from “innately superior to all other writing systems” (Gottlieb, p. 78, 2005) to “inordinately difficult and perversely involved” (Gottlieb, p.78, 2005), and even jokingly as “not fun or even remotely sensible” (Barrett, 2001). This wide range of opinions on the system is a reflection of the complexities it contains; therefore, I have written this paper in to attempt to pinpoint the origin of such

complexities. My goals are to explain for each stage of the writing system how it was an improvement from the last, and the weaknesses that led to the rise of the next stage of the system.

Written Japanese makes use of not just one set of characters, but rather 3 (or arguably as many as 5 or 6, if the roman alphabet, Arabic numerals, and outdated characters known as *bentaigana* are taken into account). It features 2 moraic syllabaries called hiragana and katakana respectively, which represent an identical set of sounds, yet are used for different semantic purposes. The individual kana represent only their respective pronunciations, and have no inherent meaning within them, much like our letters in English. The third system is kanji, which are Chinese characters adapted for Japanese use. The Kanji system contains a large portion of the complexities of the Japanese writing system, as there are quite literally thousands of characters, a majority of which has at least two different readings unrelated to one another that are used in different contexts. However in this paper I will be dealing primarily with the development of hiragana and katakana, and how the syllabaries emerged and were changed over time.

The main source of the complexities of writing in Japan today is that the system was based on a different, incompatible writing system. Writing in Japan began in the fifth century AD with the arrival of Chinese Buddhist missionaries who arrived in Japan through Korea, bringing with them written Chinese (Twine, p.9, 1991). There is no evidence of a writing system present in Japan

previous to the arrival of Chinese characters (The *Jindai-Moji* or “God-Age Script” claimed to have been invented by Japanese and to outdate the Chinese system, but is today largely accepted to be a hoax created in the 1930’s to stimulate Japanese Nationalism (Seeley, p.3, 2000)). Without a writing system of their own, it seemed only natural for the Japanese to attempt to use this new “writing” to represent their own language. However, due to the vast genetic distance between the two languages (Chinese being of the Sino-Tibetan language family and Japanese suspected of being of the Altaic family), there are fundamental differences between them that did not allow for consistent or sensible usage of the characters (Habein, p.20, 1984). Some of the differences to which I am referring include general phonology discrepancies, a SVO word order in Chinese and SOV order in Japanese, as well as differing morphology types. Morphological type is a way to classify languages based on their morpheme-per-word ratio. Japanese is described as an agglutinating language, meaning that its morpheme-per-word ratio is relatively high, while Chinese is an isolating language, having a very low morpheme-per-word ratio (Seeley, p.59, 2000). Therefore during the earliest years of the system, “literacy” in Japanese actually meant being able to read and speak, basically fluency, in Chinese. However it quickly became clear that the effectiveness of the system was less than ideal, and the system began to change.

The first system that the Japanese used that differed from Classical Chinese was called *kanbun*. *Kanbun* was only marginally different from Chinese; the Japanese merely changed the word order of the characters slightly to reflect the syntactic structure of their own language (Bullock). The example below shows how this method was employed to indicate changes in word order. The following is the opening line from a *Han Feizi* storybook, written in Chinese characters.

楚人有鬻盾與矛者 上
下 二 一 レ

(Aldridge, 2000)

Ignoring the subscript characters added in by Japanese scholars translating the script, the text can be broken down (in Chinese) into the following:

楚人有鬻盾與矛者

Chǔ rén yǒu yù dùn yǔ máo zhě

Chu man was selling shields and spears (nominalizer)

This is a perfectly grammatical Chinese sentence. Now turning our attention to the subscript characters, we find that they are the following: 下, 二, 一, レ, and 上. The characters 下 and 上 mean bottom and top respectively, but in this case they do not have that specific meaning, rather they are used simply as a correspondence set. What this means is that the character marked by 下 (appearing in front of it) is to be “moved” to the location marked by 上. Similarly, 二 and 一 (meaning “two” and “one” respectively) also form a correspondence set, so the character marked by 二 is to be moved to the location specified by 一. The other symbol, レ, much resembles the modern katakana character pronounced *re*. This symbol means that the two adjacent characters are to be “swapped” in the Japanese reading. With those changes taken into account, the sentence can now be read in Japanese as the following:

楚人盾矛與鬻者有

So jin jun mu yo juku sha yu
Chu man shields spears and sell (normalizer) was

While the necessary particles and *okurigana* are missing from the sentence, its word order now reflects Japanese orthography, and the text is much more easily decipherable by a Japanese speaker. This was the first form of real written Japanese, as the previous system was a completely different language altogether. Despite being a breakthrough towards the naturalization of writing in Japan, *kanbun* still did not account for the morphological differences between Chinese and Japanese. As previously mentioned, Chinese is an isolating language, and lacks the large number of suffixes and modifiers that contain so much information in spoken Japanese. Japanese postpositions are comprised of many single phonemes, which individually lack meaning, but together have the ability to create a vast array of connotations such as tense or politeness/formality levels. In order to satisfy this demand, there needed to be phonetic characters that would not add their own inherent meaning distorting the message.

This was the need out of which the *man'yōgana* method of writing was developed, named after *Man'yōshū*, a book of poetry compiled in 759 that relied heavily on this new writing style (Bullock, 1.3.10, 1994). *Man'yōgana* attempted to use the Rebus Principle to solve this problem. It took Chinese characters for their phonetic, rather than their semantic value, to use as *okurigana* (suffixes and modifiers following kanji). *Man'yōgana* is an improvement towards Japanization of Chinese characters in that with this system, written Japanese had the ability to write the phonemes that added subtle meaning to the sentence without additionally importing the semantic value of the kanji. The postpositions, modifiers and

suffixes could be written with these now semantically meaningless characters, which was a much more suitable method for capturing the structure of the Japanese language. However, this system also created an equally large problem. *Manyōgana* is a method of employment of existing kanji, so while the *man'yōgana* is supposed to be used purely for their phonetic value, they could easily be misinterpreted as having intended semantic value.

子, 之, 四, 司, 思, 次, 此, 死, 事

The above characters are all kanji with different pronunciations and meanings in Chinese, but pronounced *shi* (し) in Japanese. Additionally, when used as *man'yōgana* the original Chinese meaning (and existing Kanji meaning) of the characters were ignored. As shown by the multiple characters representing the single syllable, not only was there rampant homophony, but the system also lacked features to differentiate characters being used for semantics and those being used for phonetics. It was easy for the writer to choose a character to represent a sound, but the burden was on the reader to identify the character, know its pronunciation, and identify it as being intended solely for its phonetic value.

Due to the difficulty of differentiating meaning-intended kanji from phonetic-intended kanji in the *man'yōgana* system, this method of reading and writing was initially restricted to the predominantly male educated elite, as much studying and time was necessary to arrive at a proficient level. However, this is not to say that it was only highly educated men who were writing in Japan. The hiragana syllabary was developed in simpler imitation from the cursive *sashō* forms of the *man'yōgana*, likely by those outside the educated elite class of men, though not far outside (Habein, p.21, 1984). Long known to be associated with women, the earliest evidence found of

hiragana have all been personal letters or poems, rather than official engravings or documents, and was used widely by the noblewomen of the Heian Court (Gottlieb, p.58, 2005). Hiragana developed slowly between the 8th and 9th centuries as we can see in historical examples from literature of the time. This example shows the progression of several *man'yōgana* characters into *soshō* calligraphy, and finally into hiragana, with the stroke order indicated:



The first column shows the development of the Chinese character 奴 (pronounced *nu*) into the hiragana ん (pronounced *nu*), and the second shows the Chinese 衣 (pronounced *yi*) into hiragana 衣 (pronounced *e*). This diagram shows how the *soshō* character began to run strokes together while retaining the shape, and the hiragana even furthers the connectedness of the strokes to the point where the hiragana are no longer identifiable as forms of the kanji from which they began. Hiragana developed this way over the 8th and 9th centuries, with different characters developing at different speeds. For example, the *Abidatsuma zojuron* glosses, a collection of Buddhist teachings from around 800 AD, contain phonograms almost identical to the modern hiragana for *chi*, *nu*, and *ta*. Similarly, the *Joitsuron* from ~883 AD contains phonograms closely resembling modern hiragana of *chi*, *nu*, *ko*, *ni*, and *we* (Seeley, p.73, 2000). A letter from the mid 10th century contained as many as 16 hiragana-like graphs. As Seeley points out in “A History of Writing in Japan”, evidence for early

examples of hiragana are rare, as the nature of the documents (mostly personal letters and similar types) were not such that would survive through the ages to modern day in original form. However, the documents that have survived show a clear increase in the number of phonetically used modern hiragana-resembling graphemes from the 8th century onward.

The katakana syllibary developed in a similar manner to that of hiragana. The Japanese term *kutenbon* refers to a large number of texts composed entirely in Chinese from the late first millennium, both religious and secular (Seeley, p.62, 2000). The common factor of the *kutenbon* is that these documents, though all composed entirely in classical Chinese, contain extra markings aimed to assist the text being read in Japanese. These markings originated slightly earlier than did hiragana, and were developing at a faster rate. This first evidence of these markings is from the late 8th century, the earliest stage being merely punctuation, where markings and symbols indicating the word order required for the text to be interpreted as Japanese as we saw in the *kanbun* system. A second stage of *kutenbon* saw symbols indicating pronunciation of difficult characters using fragments of the *manyōgana* Rebus characters (in Japanese, the “*kata*” in katakana literally means “incomplete” or “fragmentary”). A third stage saw these simpler characters representing diacritics and grammatical particles (Habein, p.23, 1984).



The example above shows 5 katakana with the kanji they came from on the right, with the specific fragments of the original kana highlighted in red. The speed at which katakana grew was remarkable; the first stage (punctuation and word order) was in the late 8th century, yet by the early 9th century katakana was almost fully formed, as a the

characters from a 828 AD document match more than 90% with today's katakana syllibary (Seeley, p. 63, 2000). In 1956, three poems in katakana were found painted into the roof of a Kyoto temple built in 951 using a similar paint to what covered the interior of the temple, suggesting that they were the work of a layperson involved with the construction of the temple. This implies that by the mid 10th century, the katakana system had spread into the grasps of those in manual labor, those who were most likely not highly-educated (Seeley, p.82, 2000). This is clearly a huge step in accessibility from the Kanbun and *manyōgana* systems, both of which required extensive studying for proficiency.

The next question to be answered is how the writing system of the 11th and 12th century became the system that we see today, and from a chronological perspective, we have arrived at a period of time in which that resemblance is beginning to take place. There are two distinct kana syllibaries used for grammatical particles and other syntactic functions, with Chinese kanji characters being used for most verbs and nouns. However, today's system has specific functions for each of the kana systems, and a one-to-one ratio for kana and the sounds they represent. How did this system develop?

Throughout most of the history of Japanese writing, mixed kana-kanji orthography was widespread but not standardized. The kana syllibaries developed from kanji in the *manyōgana* system, but there were multiple kanji that represented a single sound; that was one of the discussed weaknesses of the system. So logically, the kana we see today were not the only simplifications from kanji; almost every single sound could be represented by multiple hiragana or katakana without a standard. It wasn't until 1946 that the government officially reformed the writing system to allow for a standard nationwide system (Gottlieb, p.55, 2005). One hiragana

and katakana was chose for each mora (syllable), and those not chosen fell out of usage. These obsolete kana are known as *hentaigana*, and are today unrecognizable to a vast majority of literate Japanese. Though some are still used in certain regions of Japan or for special ceremonial purposes, these character are not taught in school and understood by very few.

The post-war reform made several other changes to kana usage. It mandated that hiragana be the standard system for grammatical functions and particles, especially *okurigana* (the kana suffixes following kanji). It was very common in pre-war Japan for documents to be written using katakana as okurigana, or mixed with both syllibaries sharing this function (Bullock, 1.1.9). The reform saw katakana being restricted to foreign borrowed words, scientific names, onomatopoeia, and as a way to italicize of stress hiragana (Bullock 1.3.2). Syllable telescoping was also regularized with this reform. Syllable telescoping is the use of two existing kana together to form a new phoneme. Any of the morae that consist of a consonant sound followed by the vowel *i* can be followed by a small ゃ(ya), ゑ(yu), or ゑ(yo) to result in to palatalization of the consonant combined with the specified vowel sound. For example, in today's Japanese orthography:

き+よ = kiyo (kijo) while き ょ = kyo (kio)

(DeFrancis, p.136, 1989)

This type of syllable telescoping was not in used before the reform. Instead, a normal sized き and ょ would have been used to represent both *kijo* (kijo) and *kyo* (kio), the proper reading (whether or not to palatalize) to be determined by the context of the word in the sentence. In today's usage, katakana has less strict telescoping rules to accommodate for transcribing foreign words (which contain non-Japanese syllables). This

reform, undergone both to make written Japanese more consistent for the Japanese and accessible to foreigners, brought written Japanese to the point where we find it today.

In conclusion, with the development and spread of the kana syllabaries, Japanese went from writing in an entirely separate and unrelated language that had to be learned before using, to producing its own system that allowed even lesser-educated commoners to freely express their creativity. While immensely complicated due to the initial incompatibility of the Chinese writing system with the Japanese language, through the process of linguistic natural selection, written Japanese has developed into a difficult yet beautifully expressive form of communication. This expressiveness is something we find in many world languages that absorb and modify others rather than replacing them outright. This is the expressiveness that we find in Japanese with its Chinese, American, and European influence. While expressiveness is difficult to learn and master, there is a gracefulness to how and why the Japanese writing systems dances between kanji, hiragana and katakana, such that the claim that the system is “innately superior to all other writing systems” (Gottlieb, p. 78, 2005) is by no means without its truths.

REFERENCES

- Aldridge, Edith. *Principles of Hentai Kanbun Word Order: Evidence from the Kojiki*, in “Language Change in East Asia”, ed. Thomas McAuley, Stanford University Press, 2000
- Barrett, Dan. *New Years Resolution*, “So you want to learn Japanese”, <http://web.archive.org/web/20041204143657/www.enemieslist.net/nyr/>, November 2001
- Bullock, Ben. *Sci.langjapan* “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)”, <http://www.sljfaq.org/afaq/afaq.html>, 1994
- DeFrancis, John. *Visible Speech: The Diverse Oneness of Writing Systems*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii press, 1991.
- Gottlieb, Nanette. *Language and Society in Japan*. New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2005

Habein, Yacko Sato. *The History of the Japanese Written Language*. Tokyo, University of Tokyo Press, 1984.

Seeley, Christopher. *A History of Writing in Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2000.

Twine, Nanette, 1991. *Language and the Modern State: the Reform of Written Japanese*. London, T.J. Press

REASSESSING THE EARLY MEIJI SCRIPT REFORM MOVEMENT

Kathryn Cwynar
Columbia University

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the discourse centering on Japanese script reform in the first decades of the Meiji Period. The tendency of modern scholars is to characterize the reshaping of written Japanese during this time as a “movement” progressing toward a particular end: the creation of a simplified, unified written Japanese, and to assess the efficacy of said movement by examining from various perspectives the desirability and completeness of the written form that was created. Though useful, the sense of narrative created by placing early Meiji script reform efforts into an overarching movement which can be seen only in retrospect is misleading and often causes us to assign to reform advocates and opponents motives that did not exist. This article presents an alternate perspective, complicating the traditional narrative through close examination of the historical moment in which the discourse over language reform began to take shape and reevaluating the works of key figures such as Maejima Hisoka and Fukuzawa Yukichi.

The Meiji period (1868-1912 C.E.) was a time of sudden and rapid change for Japan. The inability of the Shogunate to resist foreign forces resulted in the “opening” of Japan after several centuries of

relative isolation. Previously, Japan's only substantial communication had been with the Chinese and the Dutch, but with the Meiji restoration came the exposure of Japan to the rest of the world. This resulted in a large influx of information—political, cultural, and linguistic—from foreign countries with which Japan had previously had little contact. The influence of the Western nations was particularly strong due to the global dominance of the Western nation-state at the time.

The process of rapid modernization and adoption of Western concepts that followed required increased flexibility in areas that had previously been firmly defined by tradition, and forced the examination of systems that had previously gone largely unchallenged. The Japanese language, both spoken and written, was one such system.

Benedict Anderson defines a nation as an imagined community, whose members “will never know their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Anderson 2006: 6). Nations, then, cannot exist before a national consciousness. Similarly, a national language cannot exist without linguistic consciousness. This was one problem which Japan faced in building its new nation: the lack of one language which united its people as Japanese at heart.

According to Lee Yeounsuk's evidence, before the Meiji period there was no national Japanese language to speak of.

When Japanese scholars of the Kokugaku (native studies) school spoke of “Japan’s language,” they meant a language that Japan ostensibly had before it imbibed China’s influence: the language of the Yamato people. Otherwise, pre- and early Meiji documents discussing the Japanese language use the term “kokugo” for a variety of purposes, and additionally use various other words to talk about the Japanese language. Yeoun Suk asserts that “Kokugo did not exist *a priori*: the idea of Kokugo was absent from early Meiji” (4). Rather, the institution of Kokugo as the national language, the language of Japan, was constructed during the Meiji Period. This newly constructed Kokugo “had a two-track mission: to reconcile the written and spoken languages [...] and to seek support for the premise of Kokugo in the people’s sense of the political nation” (Yeoun Suk 2009: 20).

The institution of Kokugo that eventually formed in the Meiji period was, in this way, the immediate consequence of language reform in the Meiji period. The language reform efforts indeed eventually reconciled the written and spoken languages and produced a national Japanese language. That reconciliation, however, only came about after years of dialogue between the would-be reformers of prior Japanese language forms. Without, specifically, the script reform movement, the style reform movement might not have established the Kokugo which defined Japan’s nationalism in the first half of the 20th century.

In the common narrative of Meiji-era language reform, Tokugawa-era written Japanese is often described as impossibly complex for non-scholars attempting to learn it, and therefore utterly impractical for a nation attempting to unify. Scholars such as J. Unger look scornfully on the way the script reform movement eventually played out,¹ and even those who take a more moderate view, such as Nanette Twine, tend to assert that though a few key players and groups tried for decades, they ultimately

achieved only small victories in overhauling written Japanese. This view of events, that the reforms that did happen were inevitable in light of the deplorable state of pre-Meiji Japanese, and that the language theories advocated by the script reformers had little relevance to how Meiji events (both language-related and otherwise) eventually played out, is too often taken for granted by those retelling the historical narrative. In fact, the goal of the script reformers was never merely script reform in itself, and their works did ultimately have an impact both on language change and other Meiji-era reforms. By understanding the actual goals of these reformers and the real results of the movement, instead of positing language reform as an end in itself, we may find that we need not call the script reform movement a failure. Instead, we can begin to examine the movement and its key figures more closely, and move toward a better understanding of what the script reform movement meant in the context of the Meiji period and how it did, in fact, play a role in the language reforms that created modern Japanese.

Political leaders and scholars in the early Meiji period grappled with the challenges of bringing Japan, an agricultural society divided by a political structure characterized by inherited status and a lack of social mobility, into relevance in a world where the western Nation-state ruled. Western-style nationalism had not been cultivated in the Japanese common people, so the formation of a competitive nation-state required the reformation of the traditional status quo—politically, economically, and culturally. The cultural ideal created to achieve these reforms was bunmei kaika: “civilization and enlightenment.”

Bunmei kaika is a blanket term which did and does indicate a wide variety of reforms, including everything from the adjustment of business measures to support a capitalist system, to the drafting of new

civil codes. Bunmei kaika is often considered to be synonymous with “Westernization,” and it is indeed the case that Westernization tended to be the reformer’s primary goal. Many early reformers adhered to the position that only Westernization was equivalent to both civilization and enlightenment.ⁱⁱ

Nevertheless, it is worth remembering that although, from a historical perspective, all of the individual efforts comprising the bunmei kaika movement ultimately created what we see as a more modern country able to participate on the level of Western powers, the thrust of these efforts at the time was not necessarily one-directional.

Bunmei kaika thinkers did not always agree on how to best modernize, or even Westernize, Japan. More to the point, the concept of bunmei kaika also describes efforts that pursued goals outside of simple Westernization. As will become clear, this was the case with the script reform movement. Despite the influence of English and other Western languages on the proposals of script reform proponents, the movement never aimed for simple Westernization; however, it was most certainly a movement toward the reformation of Japan into a modern nation-state.

Many of the bunmei kaika thinkers who played a key role in Meiji-era language reform believed that language reform and educational reform went hand-in-hand. With this in mind, we may observe that language reformers were not merely attempting to avoid the failures of pre-Meiji Japanese, but were actively looking toward a new model in which language and education would go hand-in-hand to reach each and every member of the nation.

Those able to pursue education in the Tokugawa period tended to focus their efforts through one of three primary schools of learning: Confucian studies, Kokugaku (native/Japanese studies), or Dutch studies (Hirakawa 1989: 435).

Though Confucian scholarship was arguably the best-recognized type of learning, it is clear from the existence of the other schools that neither nationalist studies nor foreign studies were unprecedented in Japan. In fact, several important bunmei kaika thinkers came from, and were prepared by, these schools.

Kokugaku, established in the 18th century, sprang up in protest of the dominant position of Confucianism and Chinese studies in Japan. It sought to uncover a more authentically “Japanese” spirit by focusing on the earliest Japanese texts, which Kokugaku scholars considered to be the least bound by Chinese influence.ⁱⁱⁱ Though it can hardly be argued that this nationalism was the same as that which drove the western nation-state, the Kokugaku movement at least touted a fervently positive attitude toward Japan.

Dutch studies set its own sort of precedent. It sprang from the communication of developments in the West via the Dutch outpost at Deshima. These developments were initially of great interest to those Japanese studying medicine and science, and eventually grabbed the attention of Japanese scholars in other fields. Though Dutch studies was not considered a school of learning until the Tokugawa Period, its popularity increased remarkably quickly. Scholars of Dutch began actively translating Dutch works and developing theories on the challenges and means by which to best assimilate non-Eastern cultures. In fact, the first popular Japanese-English dictionary was created by adapting a Dutch-English dictionary.^{iv} These scholars’ experiences would pave the way for bunmei kaika and the assimilation of Western culture.

The advanced nature of the scholarship of these three schools cannot be denied; however, popular education was much a different story. Japan’s educational system under the Tokugawa required substantial reform both in terms of teaching

methods and the content being taught. To understand why this is true, it is crucial to first understand the state of popular education as it was when the Meiji era began.

The general conception of the state of education in the Tokugawa period presented by Twine and others is that though the population at large was by no means illiterate, the barriers to understanding written styles presented often prohibited less educated people from reading government documents or participating in the political dialogue. Though this generalization is more or less accurate, the situation is revealed upon closer examination to be rather more complex.

The Tokugawa period saw a tremendous increase in the availability of general education in the form of public schools and temple schools (*terakoya*), and because of this, marked gains to general literacy were certainly made. The rise of a class of what Richard Rubinger calls the “Provincial Literati” demonstrates that education had become more widespread between different geographical areas, and, as the writing in evidence from scholars, women, and merchants of the commoner class suggests, between classes as well (Rubinger 2007: 118). Foreign observers also often made note of how many Japanese could be found reading popular fiction, and generally seemed impressed by the level of literacy they encountered in Japan (Rubinger 2007: 137-138), though as always their writings must be taken with a grain of salt due to the human tendency to exaggerate.

In general, the literacy rate of the period is acknowledged to have been higher than that of other nations in similar periods. J. Unger questions this assertion, asking: what constituted “literacy” in pre-Meiji Japan? The data shown in the table of “Skill Categories in the 1881 Tokiwa Literacy Test” seems to indicate that while 41.2% of people tested could read or write “one’s

name, address, or numbers,” only 15.3% of people had the ability to keep personal records, and only 1.7% could read the newspaper with full comprehension (Unger 1996: 34). Rubinger agrees that the Tokiwa Test calls into question what literacy consisted of in the Tokugawa period, noting that the test categories indicate only entrepreneurial types of literacy (Rubinger 2007: 145). This data of course comes from an extremely small sample and should by no means be extrapolated to assess literacy rates across Japan; however, what it suggests about the difficulty of making assertions about Tokugawa period literacy is extremely valuable.

The evidence we have as to Tokugawa literacy is thus inconsistent at best. The fact that this inconsistency exists; however, does tell us one thing: literacy was experienced differently by people across Japan, varying widely between classes and areas of residence. While the Provincial Literati may have been able to competently read government discourse, other commoners may not have been equipped to understand even news or notices directed at them, and might have needed them to be read and interpreted for their benefit by local priests or educated members of the village.

The main difficulty in evidence, then, was the lack of standardization in popular education. The non-standardized literacy levels contributed to problems in creating the Japanese nation-state and a comprehensive educational policy for its people. Early script reformers recognized that it was this combined difficulty of *bungotai* (classical written Japanese) and the difference in education between common people and samurai, for instance, that made inter-class communication extremely difficult.

Though pre-modern written Japanese is now collectively referred to as *bungotai*, during the Edo Period (1603 - 1868 C.E.) written Japanese had no single

form; rather, there existed a variety of styles each with particular purposes. Nanette Twine identifies the four major strains as kanbun, *sōrōbun*, wabun, and wakankonkobun.

Kanbun, in use in government documents since the Nara period (710-794 C.E.), was the main script of official and scholarly writings. Kanbun eventually came to include the style of using Chinese characters and conventions together with Japanese syntax, but it primarily consisted of pure Chinese writing, sometimes annotated with Japanese for clarity. Regardless of the strain, kanbun relied almost entirely on Chinese characters, grammar, and conventions.

Wakankonkobun was an offshoot of kanbun, which developed from annotated Chinese into a style that combined Chinese and Japanese elements. Readers of modern Japanese would recognize at a glance the familiar mixture of Chinese word-compounds and interspersed kana. Wakankonkobun was also notable in that it followed Japanese grammar and syntax, and employed some colloquial Japanese.

Sōrōbun was another form commonly used in official correspondence, as well as in official announcements and notices. *Sōrōbun*, though technically a mixture of kanji and kana, in practice overwhelmingly used traditional Chinese kanji compounds and *atēji*: kanji compounds used to phonetically represent words and sounds despite the meaning of the characters not being traditionally associated with the word or sound being represented.

Wabun, which originated in the Heian period (794-1185 C.E.), was arguably the most “Japanese” of the scripts. Its tone and phrasing were similar to those of Heian period colloquial speech, most recognizably in the common use of honorific expressions which were not present in the more brusque styles that developed more closely from

Chinese. The influence of Chinese was still clear, however: even in wabun, kana-only writing held little appeal for the educated classes, as it had developed into the means for “women’s writing,” whereas men continued to favor orthography featuring Chinese characters.

There were other variants, but knowledge of these four is sufficient to understand the state of written Japanese before the Meiji Era.^v It is clear that, despite their syntactical and orthographical differences, each of the common written styles were extremely archaic. All were originally developed at least eight centuries prior to the Meiji period, and all relied heavily on Chinese elements and kanji compounds. The complexity of written pieces was further compounded by the fact that long centuries of maintaining the written language and working knowledge of elite classes that had existed hundreds of years before had led to the perception that writing was not meant to reflect or interact with daily life. Those who were trained in the art of written communication often only made the problem worse: not only did they exert no effort to bring written language into the realm of common understanding; they often intentionally convoluted their own written pieces, using more complicated kanji compounds to emphasize their own expertise and sophistication (Twine 1991: 33).

The vast separation between the written forms and the spoken language of the time—a collection of highly disparate dialects which had through the centuries undergone natural phonetic and grammatical changes—as well as the knowledge of Chinese classics and rote memorization of kanji required to understand them, meant that educating every Japanese person in bungotai would be impossible without sufficient systematic, mandatory education. As explained above, this sort of educational system had not been present in the Tokugawa period, so despite

the gains in literacy that had been made over the course of the period, many were still completely unequipped to read documents written in the classical forms. The fact that the problematic elements of bungo went hand in hand with issues in education did not fail to draw the attention of early reformers.

One of the first and Meiji-era advocates for moving away from kanji use was Maejima Hisoka, who held several offices in the new government and is known as the founder of Japan's modern postal service. Born in 1835, Maejima traveled Japan during his youth, participating in both classical and Western studies. He was a strong believer in bunmei kaika, preferring change and innovation to the worship of the past which was so common in pre-Meiji scholarship.^{vi}

Maejima's position was a nationalist one in the sense that he wished for Japan to participate actively as a world power. He wanted Japan to be capable of asserting itself in Asia and among Western nations (Hunter 1986: 102). Maejima focused on Japan's internal development, particularly education, as a means of building a strong nation. For Maejima, language and script were "mere instruments to convey knowledge" (Yeounsuk 2009: 25). He saw script as a mere means, not an end in itself, and therefore believed that it needed to be streamlined in order to further Japan's educational—and national—development.

Maejima's position on language reform was representative of many would-be reformers in the Meiji period. He is credited as one the main figures who ignited the language reform debate, though his proposals are often dismissed as failures simply because the government declined to implement his ideas for language reform. Though it is true that his many proposals were largely ignored by those in power, once published they continued to inspire thought about script reform and provided a basis to argue for language reform as a vital

component to the success of other bunmei kaika reforms.

Maejima advocated the use of kana, and proposed that kanji be done away with altogether as it was non-phonetic, too difficult to learn, and unnecessary. Despite his firm standing as a proponent of reform in favor of kana script, Maejima was never a leader of any of the kana-advocating societies that formed during the Meiji era—likely because of ideological differences. He did, however, write and submit several proposals on kana reform himself.

Maejima's first work on language reform was a proposal addressed to the shogun, Tokugawa Keiki, dated 1867: "Concerning the Abolition of Characters," or Kanji Gohaishi no Gi. At the time that he wrote it, Maejima was working as a translator for the Shogunate (Yeounsuk 2009: 24).

In Kanji Gohaishi no Gi, Maejima asserts the need for a simpler script, claiming that the West's success (as opposed to the comparative failure of Asian countries) could be accounted for in large part by the difference between scripts. He discusses education at length, promoting it as the foundation of the nation, and goes so far as to criticize Japan's traditional attitudes both toward education and language. The submission of such a proposal in 1867 was rather bold on Maejima's part, as the Shogunate was still attempting to resist against Western influence at the time, and the climate was not favorable to criticism of tradition.

The very first sentence of Kanji Gohaishi no Gi encapsulates the main theme of Maejima's thoughts on education and script:

A country's foundation is its people's education, so general education must be made for both samurai and commoners, and in implementation ought to use simple characters and styles, so that deeply refined encyclopedic study may come only second to the knowledge of the characters.^{vii}

Here we clearly see that, for Maejima, education was key to nation-building, and this was the primary purpose for which he wished to abolish kanji. He goes into detail, stating that, “If we do not improve the methods of general education throughout the country, we cannot develop the general level of knowledge, and it is doubtful whether we can deepen people’s feelings of patriotism” (Hunter 1986: 111). Maejima continues on to challenge traditional views of education by criticizing its elevation above and away from daily life. He indicates that, if only practical education were taken more seriously, improvements could be made not just to national spirit, but to practical areas such as industry as well. He says:

Because learning is merely regarded as a function of morality the study of subjects such as physics has traditionally had no place in education, and technical education has been regarded as the humble occupation of a workman, not to be introduced within the walls of schools. Thus today our industrial skills are inferior. (Hunter 1986: 111)

As is in evidence above, Maejima felt that myriad goals could be accomplished if only kanji and similar barriers to education could be removed. He was not simply interested in education as an end in itself. For Maejima, education was the key to both allowing the populace to excel and enrich the country, and in developing nationalistic feeling.

Maejima goes on to speak more about education as one of the primary goals of script reform: he writes that schoolchildren could be educated at least 3 years more quickly, and thus progress into specializations that much faster, given the abolition of kanji. He bases this theory on his observations of China, saying:

Completion of their studies is, for most Chinese, ten years later than in the West [...] in ten generations the retardation is a hundred years, in a hundred generations a thousand years. China is the leading country in East Asia [...] but despite [her] advantages her national strength has declined over the centuries and she can no longer stand above the West. This decline is, alas, probably due to the use of characters (Hunter 1986: 108)

The natural conclusion of this line of thought is that each year saved in education is a year saved in national advancement. Clearly, Maejima's interest in script reform here is largely based on expediency.

In his 1869 works, Maejima gave a detailed plan for the implementation of the teaching of simplified Japanese in schools, which again aimed for the quickest route to widespread education. The first step of Maejima's educational proposal was to codify a new, kana-based written system. He thought that this ought to be accomplished by well-respected scholars from each of the three schools of learning, who would determine the “rules” of the new system and create dictionaries to prevent the confusion of homophones (Twine 1983: 119). The fact that such extensive work was necessary before the process of education could even begin is telling. The lack of precedent in this area was one difficulty that would not only contribute to a general lack of enthusiasm for Maejima's proposals on the part of the government, but also prevent the pro-kana movement as a whole from being a more dominant force in language reform.

The way in which Maejima planned to disseminate his reformed script is interesting. Though he seemed to realize that a reform of the educational infrastructure would be necessary, he also was realistic about the fact that spreading reforms to every part of Japan would be extremely difficult to accomplish. He

thereby proposed a multi-phase dissemination plan, in which two “students” from each “district” around Japan would gather in Tokyo to learn the new grammar. These students would then return home to teach other students, and train them to continue the teaching of the new language primers. According to Maejima’s theory, this would eventually lead to the dissemination of the new written form to all corners of Japan, possibly even before schools could be established in all areas (Twine 1983: 119).

This plan reveals a great awareness on Maejima’s part of the failings of the previous structure of education in Japan, which provided schooling—particularly of the government-funded sort—most often to those of the urban upper-class. More populous areas, especially those with pre-established schools, would be the natural priority for the first phases of educational reform. Maejima’s plan, though still a largely top-down policy, would (if successful) serve to ensure the accessibility of at least the new script to those living in less populous and less wealthy areas.

Maejima ran up against the problem of spoken language reform in his pro-kana proposals. He realized that without kanji, the large number of homophones in Japanese could be easily misinterpreted. Thus, a last crucial note about Kanji Gohaishi no Gi is Maejima’s acknowledgement of the difficulties with the current written style beyond those created by kanji: he notes that knowledge of the Chinese texts was also a necessity to understand contemporary writings, and calls for the classical writing style to be done away with as well. He goes on to also criticize the split between written and spoken language, emphasizing the point that “we want to make it so that there is no great difference between the two” (Hunter 1986: 109).

Maejima’s understanding of the need to deal with all aspects of language reform as a whole, rather than taking on the

kanji issue and syntax issue separately, goes a long way toward explaining why he would have been less interested in kana societies, which generally failed to deal with issues outside script. Maejima showed remarkable foresight in mentioning these issues in his first proposal, especially considering that a main stumbling block for the script reformers would prove to be their inability to tackle the language reform problem as a multifaceted issue.

After Kanji Gohaishi no Gi, Maejima wrote other petitions pertaining to script reform and the role of education such as Kokubun Kyouiku no Gi ni Tsugi Kengi (1869) and Gakusei Goshiko ni Sakidachi Kokujii Kairyō Ainaritaki Hiken Naishinsho (1873). Additionally, he published a newspaper, the Mainichi Hiragana Shinbun (1873), which was written in the all-kana script that Maejima advocated (Twine 1983: 120). His persistence in the face of the apathy of the government toward his efforts illustrates the depth of Maejima’s commitment to the reform issue, and the passion he must have had for education and the Japanese nation for which he felt reform was so sorely needed.^{viii}

Another proponent of kanji reform was Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901), famed scholar of Western studies. Fukuzawa’s ideas were not that radically different from those of the kana advocates, and most certainly were not as radical as those of Maejima. Nevertheless, Fukuzawa’s role as one of the most often-read and prolific bunmei kaika reformers lends significance to his proposals. Fukuzawa’s work on the subject frequently figures into modern narratives of Meiji-era language reform, and thus its role and meaning are worth examining.

The son of a low-ranking samurai, Fukuzawa was well-placed to observe the disadvantages of Japan’s pre-Meiji class-conscious system and at a young age began to appreciate the freedom learning offered

him from the stringent social strata. Fukuzawa began by studying the Chinese classics, but became an avid scholar of Dutch studies once he left home for Nagasaki, and then Edo (Nakayama, in Kiyooka 1985: viii). Fukuzawa retained a deep respect for Dutch studies and its role in establishing a precedent for studies of the West, even as he moved on to advance his scholarship in other areas.

Upon discovering that, after the “opening” of Japan, the new waves of foreigners entering the country spoke English, rather than Dutch, Fukuzawa devoted himself to the study of English (Hirakawa 1989: 438-439). He had the fortune to travel to the United States, Europe, and Russia, and in 1866 published his first book: *Seiyō Jijō* (“Things Western”) (Kiyooka 1985: 3).

Seiyō Jijō covered many subjects and institutions which Fukuzawa observed, and also included discussions of education in the West. As he was a scholar, reformer, and one who had undeniably benefited from education himself, it is unsurprising that education would come to be one of Fukuzawa's chief concerns.

Fukuzawa was a fervent advocate of the merits of education. In *Gakumon no Susume* he states that disparity in education, as opposed to birth or some “decree of heaven,” creates the distinction between those who are rich and those who are poor, those who are noble and wise and those who are not. According to Fukuzawa, only through education can men raise themselves to all such measures of success. His large corpus of works pertaining to education—ranging in form from recommendations for his own children to public addresses—include such titles as “Confucian Doctrine” to “Do Not Lose Yourself in Learning.” This body of works gives clear evidence that Fukuzawa did not merely touch on the subject of education, but persistently and passionately concerned himself with it.

Despite his strong advocacy of education, Fukuzawa did not assert education or learning for its own sake to be a practical goal. Instead, he advocated education insofar as it aids one in matters of import. In *Gakumon no Susume* he goes so far as to criticize the Confucian and Kokugaku schools for placing so much emphasis on obscure classics and the writing of poetry, which he calls “impractical learning” (Fukuzawa 1872-76: 2). To Fukuzawa, men who focus on these types of learning to the exclusion of others—as was overwhelmingly common among scholars before the Meiji period—are no more than “food-consuming dictionaries” (Fukuzawa 1872-76: 9).

Instead, Fukuzawa advocates the study of subjects that he calls “closer to ordinary human needs,” such as the abacus, history, ethics, and physics. Significantly, he groups the kana syllabary and the learning of Western languages into the category of practical and necessary learning. Fukuzawa concerns himself with script mainly because he considers letters to be “the instruments of learning” (Fukuzawa 1872-769). He writes that though they are not the end goal of learning, letters are nonetheless absolutely indispensable to it. This view reflects Fukuzawa's educational background as a member of the Western studies school, but also the value he places on written language.

Fukuzawa valued practical education highly, but as significant is the reason for which he did so. From *Gakumon no Susume*, it is clear that Fukuzawa considered a nation to be the sum of its individuals: within the work, he repeatedly declares that individual independence will lead to national independence. Fukuzawa makes the claim that only those who are able to function as independent individuals in the nation, rather than as dependent “guests” who require guidance on every issue, will be willing to defend their nation against threat and have the courage to

participate in exchanges with foreign nations from an equal, rather than subservient, position.

Fukuzawa requires multiple things from the independent individual. To be considered independent, according to Fukuzawa, a man must be educated in practical affairs. The man uneducated in practical matters, no matter his skill with letters, is “useless to the nation,” precisely because he cannot manage his individual affairs (Fukuzawa 1872-76: 9), and therefore not only does not contribute to the independent national character, but actively holds it back. This man is not capable of seeing himself as part of a nation, and only seeks guidance for himself.

The man educated in practical affairs, on the other hand, manages himself and his business well, contributing in his own small way to both the enlightenment and economic success of the nation. Fukuzawa, however, indicates that an independent person must fulfill external obligations as well, by “striving together with their countrymen to secure the free and independent status of Japan” (Fukuzawa 1872-76: 64).

In this way, Fukuzawa builds the concept of a successful, independent nation as a sum of every one of its citizens: only when enough citizens are independent will the nation be able to declare independence itself. He also stipulates nationalism as a requirement for a successful nation-state, promoting the importance of awareness of one’s position as a Japanese citizen and active participation in its establishment as a competitive nation-state. Given this view, Fukuzawa could not but take interest in spreading practical education to the masses through a common language.

Fukuzawa's first piece that spoke not only about education, but script reform as well, was *Moji no Oshie*, published in 1873. *Moji no Oshie* was foremost a primer of sorts targeted at school children learning the basics of kanji. It demonstrated the

practical usage of about 928 core characters recommended by Fukuzawa. The bulk of the work consists of pages filled with instructional materials. Fukuzawa gives lists of useful kanji and kanji compounds, then common phrases in which they are used. Later, he also includes sentences utilizing the kanji, which a student may read to practice comprehension.^{ix}

Moji no Oshie also includes a preface in the form of an essay, which explains the need for textbooks which teach a limited number of practical kanji (like *Moji no Oshie* itself) and discusses the theory by which he believes kanji should be taught. In this preface, Fukuzawa advocates limiting the number of kanji in use for the sake of education. He states that it is meaningless to recite old Chinese texts without comprehension as in the manner of traditional teaching, and that it would be better to focus on the most important kanji and be able to understand a reading than to recite just the pronunciation of several thousand kanji and still be unable to read.^x

Moji no Oshie is often cited as a more “moderate” approach to the kanji issue as compared to the works of Maejima and other kana advocates, and is often presented as a more successful proposal than Maejima's because its prescriptions are closest to the reforms that ultimately happened. However, this assessment seems to be based solely on the fact that Fukuzawa does directly not call for the immediate removal of all kanji from Japanese, and while convenient as a means of placing Fukuzawa's work in the traditional narrative of inevitable language change, is a rather inaccurate characterization of Fukuzawa's apparent stance.

In *Moji no Oshie*, Fukuzawa does indeed call for the limitation of kanji as he proposes a new, simpler method by which to teach children reading comprehension. He asserts that the more difficult kanji are a barrier to actual understanding and ought to be the first to go, so that the number of

kanji in use would be reduced to two or three thousand. Nevertheless, it remains somewhat of a stretch to say that Fukuzawa's attitude toward kanji was really more moderate than others. Fukuzawa, in his opening line, says:

In Japan, where there is a kana script, relying on kanji is a pointless inconvenience; however, if we acknowledge the traditional trend of using all kanji in daily writings across the country, we see that discarding all kanji so abruptly would also be fairly inconvenient (Fukuzawa 555).

It is fairly clear from this alone that Fukuzawa was not a fan of kanji by any means. He puts up no argument in favor of later retaining the few thousand kanji he is willing to recommend, and as he continues, indicates that the complete removal of kanji is to be sought after.

According to *Moji no Oshie*, the time to discard kanji entirely simply had not arrived by the time of that essay's publication. "We can merely wait with our open hands stretched out, but that would be in error: we should prepare ourselves earnestly for the future time in which we can discard kanji" (Fukuzawa 1873: 555), he recommends. Clearly, Fukuzawa viewed his proposal in *Moji no Oshie* as a mere stopgap measure, which would serve to ready the system for getting rid of kanji entirely. In terms of measures this may be considered moderate, but it was not ideologically very different from what Maejima desired. Within the context of the kanji debate, Fukuzawa's argument does not occupy a place "in between" arguments to maintain kanji and pro-kana arguments: Fukuzawa was decidedly on the kanji abolitionists' side, at least during the stretch of time in which he wrote *Moji no Oshie*. Understanding this is a crucial step toward reconstructing our language reform narrative, as it allows us to place *Moji no Oshie*'s stopgap proposal in the context of

the larger argument Fukuzawa was clearly making. Fukuzawa's proposed changes to written Japanese in *Moji no Oshie* were made purely with the practical concerns of education in mind, not because he wanted a more appealing version of the language itself.

Fukuzawa's purpose in proposing these measures for improved education is also fairly similar to Maejima's goals. Though he does not discuss the implications of education directly in *Moji no Oshie*, it is clear from the previous discussion of Fukuzawa's other works that Fukuzawa felt that Japan could be a successful nation through the virtues of successful individuals, and that education was the key to what would become of each individual. This is not so different from Maejima's wish for an educational system to better the people, who in turn would enrich the country.

It is difficult to say whether Fukuzawa, in *Moji no Oshie*, was prescribing a plan that would excel in a nationwide education system, as Maejima did. Though Fukuzawa does explicitly state that "this article is being made with the purpose of facilitating children's understanding of written works" (Fukuzawa 1873: 556); that is about the greatest extent to which he describes his target demographic.

In an article challenging traditional claims about Fukuzawa, Earl H. Kinmonth points out that despite Fukuzawa's famous assertion that no man is born higher or lower than another, in *Gakumon no Susume* he also states that shizoku (those of the samurai class, i.e. people that were brought up in educated families) are more capable of learning than others (Kinmonth 1978: 687-88). If *Moji no Oshie*, like *Gakumon no Susume*, was considering mainly shizoku when it mentions "children," Fukuzawa's plan to teach a few thousand kanji makes sense—children of educated households would likely be

accustomed to seeing some of the simpler kanji, and would be able to pick them up easily. As it stands there is no indication within the piece that it is directed at those of the shizoku class, so Fukuzawa's aim in *Moji no Oshie* can only be subject to conjecture; however, it is important to remember that whatever his target with *Moji no Oshie*, Fukuzawa certainly did wish for improved education nationwide, whether or not he was prescribing a method for implementing it.

Maejima and Fukuzawa, as demonstrated above, were not concerned merely with a more beautiful or even linguistically intelligible form of written Japanese. What they advocated was reform of education for the purpose of creating of a Japanese nation-state. Thus, though ultimately language reform did not take the form of total kanji abolition as they may have idealized, it is unrealistic to say that their goals were never achieved.

Though many still either opposed or ignored script reform, in the years following the early proposals of Maejima and Fukuzawa educated Japanese did create a lively debate over script reform. Reformers eventually divided into two camps: the pro-kana camp and the pro-romaji (Romanized characters) camp. These camps went on to form the Kana Kai ("Kana Club") and the Romaji Kai ("Romanized-Characters Club").

Kana advocates originally formed themselves into three groups. The Iroha Kai, formed in 1882 and named for the famous Heian-era poem which contains all letters of the kana syllabary, was comprised mainly of educators. Kana no Tomo, or "Friends of Kana" was founded in 1882 as well, and counted Mozume Takami and Ōtsumi Fumihiko among its members. They produced the group's newspaper: *Kana no Michibiki*. The Irohabun Kai, created in the same year, was comprised of a more diverse assortment: its members included

businessmen, journalists, and graduates of Fukuzawa Yukichi's school, Keiō Gijuku (Twine 1983: 121).

In July 1883, the three kana groups joined their members together to form the Kana no Kai; however, they were unsuccessful in joining their ideologies, and so there remained three factions within the club. The disagreement sprung from the question of which kana set to use: the "historical" kana—which was the common practice but included characters and spellings that no longer reflected the correct pronunciation—or a revised, purely phonetic kana "alphabet?" The former members of Kana no Tomo were members of the Kokugaku school, and so naturally supported historical usage. The former members of Iroha Kai, as educators, felt that a simple, strictly phonetic script would be the most useful. Irohabun Kai members were mainly concerned with the immediate benefits script reform would bring their businesses, and so were not philosophically predisposed to either system (Twine 1983: 121-22).

The Kana no Kai published six different magazines of theory during the period of 1883-1891. Unfortunately, each publication was only supported by either the historical usage faction or the phonetic alphabet faction. The Kana no Kai never had a unified voice nor a unified publication, except during the brief span in which it published the *Kana no Shirube* magazine (July 1884 - May 1885), which soon ceased circulation due to the fact that the club had divided itself into its old factions once again (Twine 1983: 122).

Another difficulty which decreased the club's effectiveness was its failure to incorporate style reform into its written works. Though the club's published pieces were written in kana script, they retained the classical Japanese grammar and vocabulary (Twine 1983: 122). As Maejima realized early, such half-measures made

comprehension difficult due to the plethora of ambiguous homophones present in Japanese. Also, as long as the written language still employed archaic vocabulary and grammar, it hardly required less education than classical Japanese to read.

Eventually, the Kana no Kai was defeated by its own lack of momentum and internal schisms. It was disbanded in 1891 (Twine 1983: 123).

The pro-romaji movement developed concurrently with, and had many similarities to its kana-based counterpart. In January 1885, romanji advocates formed the Romaji Club, which shortly began publishing the Romaji Zasshi. The club was composed mainly of those who had studied foreign languages. Four months after its creation, it also counted 174 foreigners among its members.

The Romaji Kai, like the Kana no Kai, experienced internal disagreements. A committee had decided to advocate the Hepburn system: a romanization system based on English and Italian phonology which is familiar to modern-day students of Japanese. Tanakadate Aikitsu challenged this decision. He and his followers wanted to use Roman letters to more faithfully reproduce the sounds of Japanese instead of using a foreign phonology. This group quickly split off to form the Romaji Sinsisha and publish their own magazine, written in their favored style of romanization (Twine 1983: 125-126).

Although the Romaji Kai published articles written in romaji, it nevertheless fell into the same trap as the Kana no Kai had. Its publications still used the classical written style in conjunction with romaji script. This created the same barriers to understanding as the combination of classical style and kana script had. Unlike the Kana no Kai, the Romaji Kai did eventually adopt the idea of style reform, and began publishing articles using a more colloquial style beginning in 1887.

In 1892, the Club was disbanded

because of the trend of nationalism, which had resurged as a reaction to the previous years' rapid Westernization. These new nationalists responded to what they saw as over-Westernization by rejecting Western elements in favor of returning to Japanese roots, but what they failed to see was the impact the script reform movement had already made. Without it, the turn-of-the-century nationalists may not have even thought to speak out in favor of a "more Japanese" kokugo. A new era for Japan was beginning.

Though neither the Kana no Kai nor the Romaji Kai succeeded in surviving to implement either of their respective script reform ideas across Japan, they did serve to draw attention to the interdependence of script and style reform, both among their members and their critics.

Advocates of combined script-style reform were found both among the members of the Kana no Kai, and those of the Romaji Kai. Several members of the Kana no Kai, including Miyake Yonekichi, club secretary and the editor of three of its publications, proposed that stylistic reform was an element necessary to script reform (Twine 1983: 123). Some Romaji Kai members advocated the same: notably Taguchi Ukichi, whose Nippon Kaika no Seishitsu was itself written in a colloquial style (Twine 1983: 126), and Basil Hall Chamberlain, whose "Genbun'itchi" lecture warned that failure to implement stylistic reform endangered all efforts at language reform, and promoted the colloquial style as the best means of spreading education.

Genbun'itchi, or "unified spoken and written style" was the style reform movement's colloquial replacement for classical Japanese grammar. Though the style reform movement was later given distinctive name of "The Genbun'itchi Movement," the stylistic term genbun'itchi referred to a myriad of styles, since it was not until the success of the reform movement that a standardized form of the

colloquial written style was truly developed.

Authors played a large role both by advocating style reform for the sake of the development of writing itself, and beginning to use a more colloquial style in their works. While his contemporary Tsubochi Shoyo published influential essays such as “The Essence of the Novel” (1885), Futabatei Shimei was the first to become famous with the publication of a *genbun’itchi* style novel: *Ukigumo*. The efforts of novelists, particularly their experimentation with colloquial styles in their writing, ultimately proved that *genbun’itchi* style could be effective.

The efforts of these novelists took place concurrently with those of the Kana and Romaji Clubs, and each movement did not go unnoticed by the other. Twine theorizes that those in the script reform clubs who advocated joining their movement with style reform were encouraged by the publication of the first *genbun’itchi* works, such as *Ukigumo* (Twine 1983: 123). Style reform advocates also took notice of the Kana and Romaji clubs, though often the result of this was criticism. Members of the style reform movement generally panned the script reform clubs for their failure to incorporate stylistic simplification into their plans, citing the added confusion caused by trying to distinguish Chinese compound words without the help of kanji. Sugiura Shigetake, in *Nihon no Gengo Bunshou*, went so far as to say that the clubs’ aim to rid Japanese of kanji was impractical and far less necessary than style reform (Twine 1983: 129).

Ultimately, the only major script reformation came in the form of limits on the number of kanji that were “necessary” for daily use. The Ministry of Education, in 1887, limited the number of kanji to be used to 2,000. This number was further reduced in 1900, to a mere 1,200 kanji (Twine 1983: 130). Still, the debate over script reform did not die out with the Kana and Romaji clubs. It resurfaced again in a surge of nationalism

following the Sino-Japanese war, with nationalists of different perspectives arguing both for the abolition of kanji, and for its preservation.

The Meiji script reform movement did not result in the total expulsion of kanji in favor of a phonetic script, as Maejima, Fukuzawa, and so many of its other proponents had desired. However, the efforts exerted by script reform advocates did draw attention to the need for a colloquial Japanese style, which in the end did serve in the creation of a Japanese nation-state. Thus, it would be misguided to dismiss the script reform movement as a failure out of hand. The reformers’ efforts took place in the context of a period of greater change, and their script reform proposals were only part of the larger efforts they exerted toward accomplishing *bunmei kaika*. Though more study of the script reform movement outside the traditional language reform narrative is needed to make conclusions about its later, post-Meiji significance, it is clear thus far that the script reformers were far more successful in meeting their Meiji-era goals than has been allowed by scholars up to this point.

Contemporary historians often interpret the Meiji-era language reforms as a linguistic necessity. Twine begins her piece “In 1868, the year of the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese language was by no means an effective instrument of communication [...] Its separation from everyday affairs was of such long standing that it could not function concisely and effectively convey information” (Twine 1983: 115). This perception is not false per say: written Japanese at the beginning of the Meiji period was quite complicated—some forms more than others—and could not be understood by the population at large. If the infrastructure remained the way it had been for several hundred years, the written system would have been a poor means of information distribution.

Nevertheless, when examining the movement, it is important to realize that it did not happen in a vacuum; rather, it developed along with attitudes toward bunmei kaika and Westernization. Though there were Japanese, such as Mori Arinori, who believed in the innate poverty of Japanese as it was at the beginning of the Meiji Period, reformers such as Maejima and Fukuzawa saw the reform of written Japanese as the most expedient way to accomplish the educational reforms they deemed necessary to creating a modern nation-state.

The problem is that modern historians place too much of the burden on the language itself, as if pre-modern Japanese was innately unintelligible. This is clearly not the case: scholars and government officials had communicated via pre-modern written Japanese for centuries. Even from the perspective of a modern reader with a basic understanding of how to read these forms, works such as Fukuzawa's *Moji no Oshie* are pleasantly clear and comprehensible. There was nothing "wrong" with written Japanese, it was just not perceived as practical by bunmei kaika reformers at the beginning of the Meiji Period.

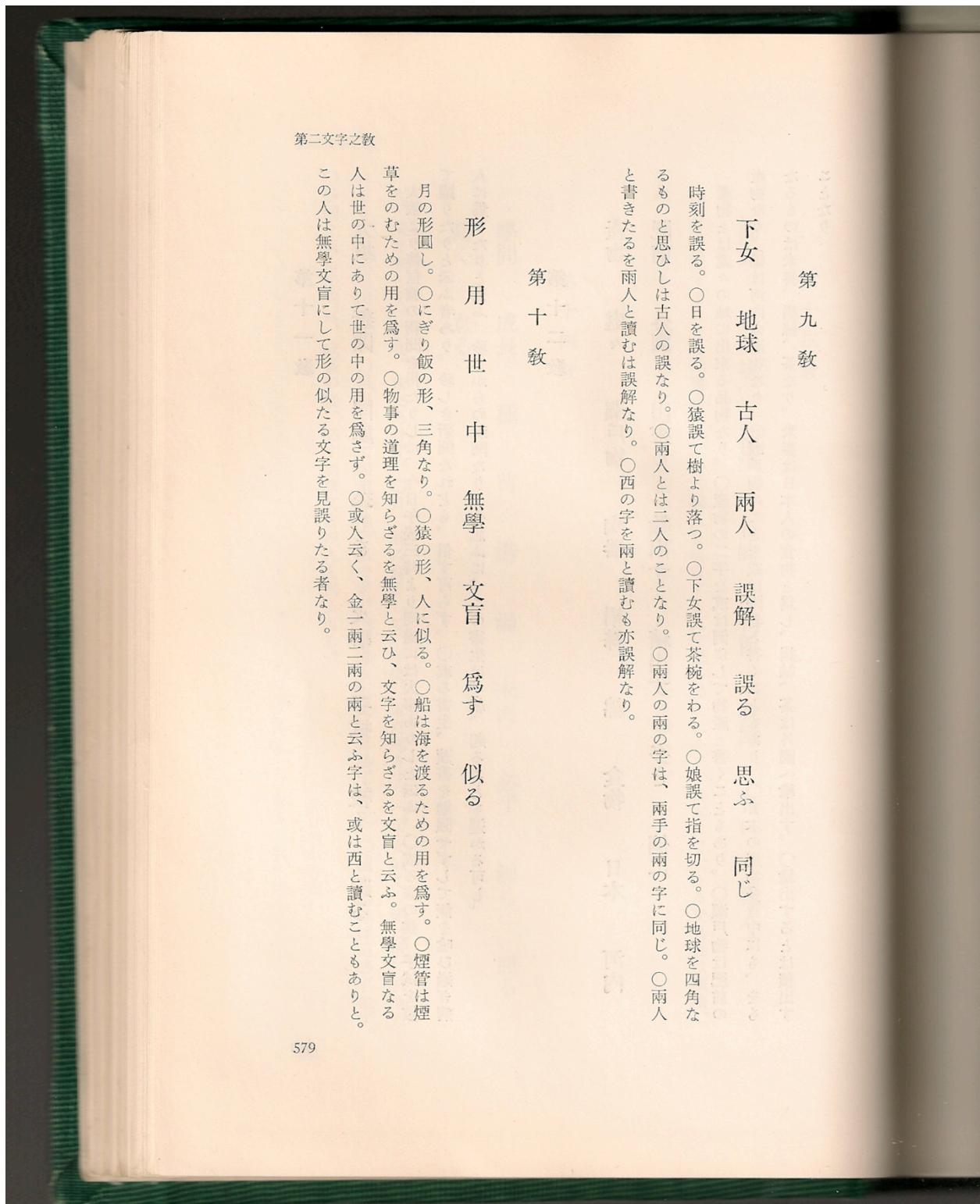
The issue was not the poverty of the language itself, but rather a combination of its impractical reliance on a vast knowledge of Chinese classics and kanji, and the lack of public school system required to teach both the language forms and the knowledge on which they relied. Furthermore, the lack of a unified language in the Tokugawa period meant that early-Meiji Japanese, lacking a consciousness of linguistic issues, had difficulty understanding the need for a Japanese language that would appeal to Japanese sense of nationality.

Without the script reform movement, Kokugo would not have developed in the way that it did. If the movement had not existed, perhaps the language of the Japanese identity would now rely more heavily on kanji, or perhaps not. Perhaps Kokugo, and the national awareness that it effected in later Meiji thinkers, would not have existed at all without the language awareness created first by the script reform movement.

Whatever the case, throughout the course of the preceding pages we have seen that the script reform movement raised questions which would later affect and be addressed by the genbun'itchi movement, and that the reform movement as a whole brought written Japanese under active consideration. In this way, the script reform movement was at least partially responsible for establishing an awareness of language which was crucial to the creation of the institution of Kokugo. Kokugo, in turn, succeeded as a linguistic source of nationalism and, ultimately, as a vehicle for education, fulfilling the ideals envisioned by early script reform advocates.

In light of this understanding of the script reform movement, we may begin to understand the language reforms of the early Meiji period as they were, not as we perceive they should have been. Rather than framing our discussion as the inevitable reformation of an ineffective language, we should take script reform for what it was: a politically motivated movement that did not fail, but rather re-adapted because nationalism in the Meiji Period and through World War II changed so rapidly.

Appendix 1: Sample page from Fukuzawa Yukichi's Moji no Oshie



Appendix 2: Translation of Selected Portions of Fukuzawa Yukichi's Moji No Oshie

On Kanji:

"In Japan, where there is a kana script, relying on kanji is a pointless inconvenience; however, if we take as tradition the trend of using all kanji in daily writings across the country, erasing all kanji so abruptly would also be pretty inconvenient. From the perspective of our current time, we see that while kanji is inconvenient it's also significant that we rely on its use, so while discarding all kanji is an ability devoutly to be wished, carrying it out immediately is difficult. In order to carry out this position there are no means outside of waiting for the right time. When we say to wait for the right time, we can merely wait with our open hands stretched out, but that would be in error: we should prepare ourselves earnestly for the best time in the future in which we can discard kanji. That preparation comes in our writing of pieces, bearing in mind every use of difficult kanji to accomplish something. If we just don't use difficult characters, the number of kanji should be reduced two or three thousand."

On the purpose of the work:

"Though I recognize that it is not difficult to recognize and read out (without necessarily understanding) simple kanji, more than just reading characters out, using one's mind to understand a piece's meaning is indispensable. That is to say that this article is being made with the purpose of facilitating children's understanding of written works."

ⁱ Unger 1996. Unger generally tends toward criticism of pre-modern written Japanese, condemning kanji as nonfunctional from a linguistic perspective. As he explains via this book, linguistically speaking, the script reformers and ultimately the Japanese language "lost" to the fanciful appeal of kanji during the Meiji period, and even modern Japanese would do well to dispose of kanji.

ⁱⁱ Hirakawa 1989: 433. According to Hirakawa, Ōkubo Toshimichi, a Satsuma leader and one of the key reformers in the early days of the restoration, was one such figure who equated bunmei kaika directly with Westernization.

ⁱⁱⁱ The primary text of interest to Kokugaku scholars was the Kojiki. Despite its having been written in Chinese characters, members of the school still believed that in its syntax could be found an "authentic" Japanese.

^{iv} Hirakawa 1989: 437-441. Hori Tatsunosuke, a scholar of Dutch, and (later) Western studies, used his experience reading Dutch to replace the Dutch words from the dictionary with Japanese ones.

^v For more detailed explanation and analysis of other pre-Meiji written forms, as well as the ones summarized above, refer to the first chapter of Gottlieb's *Kanji Politics*.

^{vi} Hunter cites a complaint made by Maejima in his unpublished 1873 work, *Kokubun no Benri o Ronzu*: "In everything we praise the old and despise the present[...]None of our time is devoted to things which are of any use and we will have no new inventions to pass on to our descendants" (101).

^{vii} Maejima 1867: 17. Translation by Cwynar.

^{viii} His proposals were not seriously recognized until 1899, when his contribution to script reform was already established and he was appointed as head of the Division for National Script Reform and the Imperial Board of Education (Yeounsk 2009: 27)

^{ix} See appendix 1 for a sample page from *Moji no Oshie*, which displays the structure of information presentation that is repeated throughout the work.

^x See appendix 2 for a translation of selected representative portions of the preface.

REFERENCES

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 2006.

Earl H. Kinmonth. "Fukuzawa Reconsidered: Gakumon no Susume and its Audience." *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Aug., 1978), pp. 677-696. Association for Asian Studies <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2054370>>.

Fukuzawa, Yukichi. *Gakumon no Susume*. David A. Dilworth and Umeyo Hirano, trans. Tokyo: Sophia University, 1969.

Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education: Selected Works. Eiichi Kiyooka, trans. Kazuyoshi Nakayama, introduction. Japan: University of Tokyo Press, 1985.

Fukuzawa Yukichi *Zenshū* v.3. To kyo ; Iwanami Shoten: 1958-1964, pp 555-557.

Gottlieb, Nanette. *Kanji Politics: Language Policy and Japanese Script*. New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1995.

Hirakawa, Sukehiro. *The Cambridge History of Japan, Volume 5: The Nineteenth Century*. Jansen, Marius, ed. Cambridge University Press: 1989

Hisoka, Maejima (1867). *Kanji Gohaishi no Gi*. In Minoru Nishio and Hisamatsu Senichi, ed, 國語國字教育史料總覽: Kokugo kokuji kyoiku shiryō sooran. Tokyo : Kokugo Kyoiku Kenkyūkai, 1969, pp 17-20.

Hunter, Janet (1986) Language reform in Meiji Japan—the views of Maejima Hisoka. In: Henny, Sue and Lehmann, Jean-Pierre, (eds.) *Themes and theories in modern Japanese history: essays in memory of Richard Storry*. Athlone, London: 1988, pp. 101-120.

Rubinger, Richard. *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007.

Twine, Nanette. *Language and the Modern State: the Reform of Written Japanese*. London; New York: Routledge, 1991.

Twine, Nanette. "The Genbunitchi Movement. Its Origin, Development, and Conclusion." *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (Autumn, 1978), Sophia University. pp. 333-356
<<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2383995>>.

Twine, Nanette. "Toward Simplicity: Script Reform Movements in the Meiji Period." *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Summer 1983), Sophia University. pp. 115-132.

Unger, J. Marshall. *Literacy and Script Reform in Occupation Japan*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Yeoun Suk, Lee. *The Ideology of Kokugo*. Honolulu; University of Hawaii Press: 2009.

ESCAPING OR INTERNALIZING COLONIALISM:

The Choson Pobingsa (1883) in Comparison with the Japanese Iwakura Mission (1871)

Seungyop Shin
Columbia University

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the roles, experiences, social influences, and historical significance of the first 1883 Korean Mission, known as the Choson Pobingsa, to the United States in comparison with the Japanese Iwakura Mission to the West in 1871. Through the exploration of why the Korean monarch decided to dispatch a reciprocatory mission after signing the Shufeldt Treaty with America in 1882, how it served as an eye-opening opportunity for the selected Korean leaders, and what subsequent effects it had on Korean society and political community, the thesis demonstrates that the Choson Pobingsa played the part of a historical channel through which the Choson Dynasty communicated with the outside world and by which it was incorporated into the modern international reality. My argument is that the Choson Pobingsa was a catalyst for the Koreans to solidify their favorable recognition of the United States, relying more on the U.S.'s support for Korea's nascent modernization and self-strengthening efforts. The Choson Pobingsa also marked the beginning of intellectual interchanges between the two countries and the introduction of American culture by non-governmental subjects, such as Korean students studying in the United States and American missionaries preaching in the peninsula.

In this regard, the achievements and objectives of the Japanese Iwakura

Mission to the United States and Europe in 1871 were considerably different from those of the Korean envoy. The Iwakura Mission was not only assigned to collect information on how Western industrialized societies worked, but also was the government's strategic way to impress foreign nations with the quality of Meiji Japan's modernization, eventually pursuing the revision of the unequal treaties that Japan had unwillingly signed before the 1868 Meiji Restoration. This thesis attempts to explain how the Japanese mission participants had opportunities to learn about the nation-building strategies of the West and internalize colonialism, which in turn oriented the path of modern Japan's national integration activities that were then manipulated for its imperialistic expansions in the later pages of history.

ESCAPING OR INTERNALIZING COLONIALISM

A nationalist sentiment, in both the North and South, to look for the "sprouts" of Korean capitalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries provoked a counterargument among Western scholars that "Koreans were able to have access to a market of sufficient size and dynamism to support a process of sustained capital accumulation only after Japanese colonization." Along with Western social scientists who tend to focus their studies of Korean capitalism on the period of rapid growth after 1961,

intrigued by South Korea's recent economic development, some historians in the United States claim that Japan enabled Korea's incorporation into the existing international capitalist economy by the West. It is often said that Saitō Makoto's (1858-1936) cultural rule, after the removal of the Company Law in 1920, afforded new opportunities to Korean industries with subsidies and protection, leading to a substantial increase in Korean business activity.ⁱ They underscore the ways in which "Koreans had clearly seen the emergence of a true "sprout" of capitalism, a nascent bourgeoisie, by the end of the colonial era as the Japanese army conquests in Manchuria, China proper, and finally Southeast Asia turned much of continental Asia into a single imperial market along with the high demand for military goods that facilitated the participation of Korean entrepreneurship in the colonial economy."ⁱⁱ

However, these views of the origins of Korean capitalism seem to downplay the Chosōn Dynasty's (1392-1910) nation attempt at modernization policies and socio-economic reform programs of the late nineteenth century, which served as the groundwork for colonial Korea's subsequent capitalization and industrial development. An overemphasis on the material modernization of infrastructure and the unique political-economic transformation after annexation in which Japan, the agent of Korea's "colonial modernity," accelerated Korea's integration into the global system of capitalism, can create the tradition-modern dichotomy in understanding early modern Korea. The institutions and events structured in the process of colonial domination are viewed as representations of colonial "modernity" whereas the historical facts and dynamics prior to colonization are subsumed to

"tradition." It is easy to overlook the late Chosōn Dynasty's active communication with the West through ambassadorial missions, the importation of foreign civilizations, the achievements of economic reform projects, and the gradual approach to the international capitalism by regarding the pre-colonial customs and culture of Korea as no more than traditional phenomena opposed to colonial modernization.

An investigation into the first Korean Mission to the United States would thus help us to reconsider Western historiography that pays little attention to the late Chosōn Dynasty's self-strengthening efforts to ward off colonialism through the construction of a modern nation-state, the modernization of public institutions, the industrial sector, schools, and the military, along with the dynamic changes that occurred in pre-colonial Korean society. There is a need to delve into the historical period that has been relatively less researched by Western scholars as compared with the early and mid Chosōn Dynasty and the Japanese colonial period. This study attempts to argue that the various social movements at the turn of the century - tensions over national polity within political community and civil society, the disintegration of social class system, and reform measures by the government - should not be brushed away as being irrelevant to social phenomena and collective experiences under colonial control. It rejects the idea that Korea's modernization was made possible only by the hands of the Japanese colonizers in the 1920s and 1930s. The Chosōn Dynasty in the late nineteenth century was not a state of vacuum, but an interwoven structure of tradition and as it actively strove to import Western modernity and civilization; this subsequently influenced many socio-political movements, such as the Kapsin

Coup of 1884, the Kabo Reforms and the Peasant War of 1894-1895, and the Independence Club movement of 1896.

In their study of colonial modernity in Korea, Gi-wook Shin and Michael E. Robinson argue that “colonial history needs to be viewed in terms of the interactive resonance of colonialism, modernity, and nationalism rather than binary constructions since each of the three variables carries its own unique cluster of concepts while holding onto its individual frame and the important constituents of the other two.”ⁱⁱⁱ Considering this approach to Korea’s colonial history, this study suggests a way to understand the colonial period not as an independent and isolated experience that demarcates it from pre-colonial Korean society of the late nineteenth century. But rather it was a state in which the multiple possibilities of dynamic discourses and structural transformation in the late Chosŏn Dynasty were closely interrelated to the particulars of the colonial situation in light of historical continuity and causality.

According to Myōn-hŭi Do, Korean nationalism did not emerge only after 1907 but was already part of the Enlightenment activists’ national reform plan in the 1880s and became manifest in the discourse of state (*kukka*), national language (*kugō*), compatriots (*dongpo*), and independence (*tongnip*) by publications during the reform period.^{iv} Likewise, the entire picture of Korean modernity cannot be fully drawn with the current academic reduction to historical researches on early modern Korea which have been disproportionately concerned with “colonial modernization” - new administrative procedures, market regulations, change in the façade of metropolitan spaces, and all the appurtenances of modern colonial administration brought by Japanese rule.

Korean modernity can be better understood by looking at the government’s initial steps towards being a modern nation-state such as: a series of measures to clarify landownership by launching the land survey (*yangjōn*) and the issuance of title deeds (*jigye*) in 1899; the promulgation of a new legal system such as a nine-article constitution called the *Taehan’guk kukche* in 1899 and a 680-article criminal code called the *Hyōngbōp taejōn* in 1905; the functional differentiation between the judicial and executive powers outlined in the Court Organization Law in 1895; and the build-up of the nation’s economic infrastructure and military institutions by means of establishing the Supreme Military Council (*wōnsubu*) in 1899. Amongst those various scenes of early modern Korea, a study of the late Chosŏn Dynasty’s official and non-official missions to the West, Japan, and China will provide us with opportunities to examine how pre-modern subjects’ perceptions of older political practices and social order were reshaped by their encounter with Western and Japanese imperialism. It also explores how their intellectual, ideological, and diplomatic interactions with the outside world influenced Korea’s historical trajectory in relation to the rise of its neighbor Japan during the same era.

This paper thus attempts to perform a study of the roles, experiences, social effects, and historical significance of the first 1883 Korean Mission, known as the Chosŏn Pobingsa, to the United States in comparison to the Japanese Iwakura Mission to America and Europe in 1871. The knowledge and experience that the Japanese leading bureaucrats had obtained in the West were powerful enough to reorient Japanese’ recognition the world, thereupon contributing to their construction of a modern nation-state and evolving into the ideological foundation

for their later business of imperialistic expansion. It is useful to see from a transnational perspective how various dynamics of pre-colonial societies were intertwined with the subsequent shaping of the colonial particulars and realities, and how the mission participants' experiences in different historical contexts were associated with the two countries' colonial relations afterwards.

THE CHOSON DYNASTY'S FIRST MISSION TO THE WEST AND POWER STRUGGLES IN EAST ASIA

For East Asian states in the late nineteenth century that were trailing behind the Western industrialization, envoys were useful channels through which they could collect information about the political, economic, and social conditions of the outside world and increase foreign exchanges. After Korea ended its period of isolation by signing the Treaty of Kangwha with Japan in 1876, five official missions were sent to both Japan and China until the early 1880s with primary objectives to survey their industrial facilities and institutional improvements. In the case of Japan, a couple of missions dispatched by the Tokugawa bakufu (1603-1867), specifically the Fukuzawa Mission to the United States in 1860 and the Takenouchi Mission to Europe in 1862 and 1865, "helped the Japanese to have an increased awareness of Western progress and a desire that Japan should share in it, thus building an intellectual basis for the 1868 Meiji Restoration."^v

In July 1883, following the American ratification of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, better known as the Shufeldt Treaty, between the kingdom of Korea and the United States on May 22, 1882, King Kojong (1852-1919) eagerly confirmed his commitment to the newly formed diplomatic relationship by

dispatching his so-called "Reciprocal Mission" to America. He appointed the all-powerful Min Yǒng-ik (1860-1914), Queen Min's adopted nephew, as the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to emphasize the value that Korea placed on its new relationship with the United States. The monarch looked forward to seeing that Min, one of the most influential figures among the Chosǒn's progressives, would make considerable contributions to Korea's reform movements and liberation policy from China's worsening suzerain power if he traveled America and inspected its developed social mechanisms.

The Chosǒn Dynasty was agonizing over its national independence in the late nineteenth century due to not only Western influences, but also the rising pressures from its neighbors: China was trying not to lose its political supremacy over Korean domestic affairs, Russia was looking upon the southern regions to obtain non-freezing ports, and Japan was soaring as an imperialistic state with intrusive economic policies towards the Korean market after signing the 1876 Treaty of Kangwha. The international struggle in East Asia as well as outside forces' increasing threats to national independence and survival required the Korean monarch to push forward reform policies and self-strengthening programs to preserve its sovereignty. Considering the political impasse in which the Chosǒn Dynasty was situated during the global era of growing colonialism, the primary objective of the Chosǒn Pobinga was to entice American involvement in Korea's modernization projects to ensure its sovereignty through the recruitment of American advisors who could work in key advisory positions for Korea's nascent diplomatic, economic, military, and educational institutions. King Kojong also intended to express his gratitude to the

United States government for ratifying the Shufeldt Treaty and to study the socio-economic conditions in that country.

THE CHOSON POBINGSA IN THE UNITED STATES: COMPOSITION, ITINERARIES, AND EXPERIENCES

The number of selected participants in the Korean Mission was ten. Its key members were composed of Min Yǒng-ik, the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Hong Yǒng-sik (1855-1884), the Vice Minister, and Sō Kwang-pōm (1859-1897), the Secretary. The average age of Min, Hong, and Sō was no more than 25 and all of them had common experience visiting Japan during the late 1870s to early 1880s. Their visits served as eye-opening opportunities for them to realize the urgent necessity of Korea's modernization since they could see how Japan started to shine with the light of civilization and abound in wealth by enthusiastically importing the West's modern advancements into Japanese society. In their audiences with the monarch, each of the travelers frankly reported the Japanese socio-economic transformation and prosperity, calling upon more radical reform policies in Korea. Those young bureaucrats were then able to win huge confidence from reform-minded King Kojong, and thus were selected as the chief officials of the first mission to the United States. The other attendants were Yu Kil-chun (1856-1914) and Pyōn Su (1861-1892), who had stayed on in Tokyo as house guests of Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901) to study at Keiō Gijuku until 1882, Ko Yǒng-ch'ōl, Ch'oe Kyǒng-sōk, and Hyǒn Hǔng-t'aeak, who had taken part in the Korean delegation to the Qing Dynasty in 1881 to learn English at the Chinese Bureau of Foreign Languages.^{vi} They were also accompanied by Percival Lowell (1855-

1916), who authored *Chosōn, The Land of the Morning Calm: A Sketch of Korea* (1886), as a foreign secretary and counselor, and Woo Li Tang, a Chinese student working at the Korean maritime customs, as a Chinese-English interpreter.^{vii}

The ambassadors and their assistants embarked on the U.S.S. *Monocacy* and left the port of Inch'ōn on July 16, 1883. They arrived in Yokohama and sojourned in Tokyo for a month to gather more information about the United States from Japanese government officials. Departing from the Yokohama port again on August 15, Min Yǒng-ik and his party traversed the Pacific Ocean on an American merchant vessel named Arabic.^{viii} For the young Korean bureaucrats, wearing big hats and flowing attire, September 2, 1883 was a historic moment - the first time in history that Koreans stepped on the land of America. Exotic landscapes, tall buildings, and various races that they had not seen before drew their attention first. The Korean visitors were amazed at street scenes, trolley, and the huge Palace Hotel in which they lodged, while Americans showed interest in the Korean ambassadors' traditional clothes. The San Francisco Evening Bulletin reported that the Korean visitors always wore hats, which looked similar to those of the Quakers, whenever they were doing official work or participating in dinner parties. The embassy was even followed by curious onlookers. After being welcomed by high-ranking officials and the Mayor of San Francisco, they visited the historical sites, chambers of commerce and industry, and the army base. They traveled through the American continent starting from Sacramento on September 7, dropping by Salt Lake City and Ogden in Utah, Omaha in Nebraska, and getting to Chicago by September 12.

The ambassadorial party finally arrived in Washington, D.C. on September 15 after spending one night in Chicago. It was a month-long trip since they began crossing the Pacific.^{ix} The Chosōn ambassadors were greeted by the U.S. Navy captain David A. Mason and second lieutenant George C. Foulk (1856-1893). They participated in a banquet with diplomatic representatives of many nations, hosted by the U.S. government for two days. On September 18, the Koreans, under the guidance of Mason and Foulk, met President Chester A. Arthur (1829-1886) at the Fifth-Avenue Hotel in New York where he was staying at the time. Min and his officials embarrassed President Arthur by performing the traditional kowtow before him. It was surprising enough for him to see that their foreheads touched the ground all together at the first ceremony of exchanging national credentials.^x President Arthur then made a welcoming speech on the Koreans' first visit to America as follows:

It gives me much pleasure to receive you as the representatives of the King and Government of the Chosōn Dynasty. We are not ignorant of your beautiful peninsular country, with its surrounding islands, or of their productions, or of the industries of your people, who live in an independent nation. We know you can be of benefit to us, and we think that when you become familiar with the improvement we have made in agricultural implements and processes, and in the mechanical arts generally, you will be satisfied that we can give you a fair return for the benefit you may confer on us. It may be that in our system of education and in our laws you will discover some things that you will be glad to adopt.^{xi}

The Chosōn Pobingsa's official mission began as they moved to Boston and inspected the American exposition,

the Walcott model farm, and the Merrimack and Lowell manufacturing company's mills from September 19 for three days. The Western Union Telegraph Company, hospital department, fire stations, post office building, newspaper offices, and West Point military academy at New York were also places they visited. When they came back to New York on September 23, the city's splendid sights and the degree of technical developments stunned them. In particular, the Koreans' initial visit to the Edison Electric Light Company aroused their keen interest in electricity, leading to the installation of electric lights at the Kyōngbok Palace later in 1887. Electricity, which did not exist in Korea at the time, "not only served as a powerful symbol of progress, forcing the darkness to recede and conquering nature, but also created the effect of a distant Utopian land among them" as it was mixed with the exotic city views of America.^{xii}

It was September 29 when the Korean officials finished all travels in New York and went back to Washington, D.C. for negotiations. For the last ten days of the entire itinerary in Washington, D.C., they performed full-fledged diplomatic activities to employ American advisors and collect useful information for the management of the modern government system and institutions. During their visit to the Ministry of Education, they listened to a presentation about the U.S. education system and then officially requested American teachers who could work at the modern schools in Korea. The Korean visitors also discussed with the Secretary of State the recruitment of American experts who would be in charge of the Korean military and diplomacy. The 40-day official schedule of the Chosōn Pobingsa came to an end with the final talk with President Arthur on October 12.^{xiii}

THE TRAVELS, NEGOTIATIONS, AND LEARNING OF THE JAPANESE IWAKURA MISSION IN THE WEST

Considering the itineraries and activities of the Chosōn Pobingsa in the United States, King Kojong's decision to send the first mission to the United States was an important attempt to overcome the precarious reality of the Chosōn Dynasty and escape from growing colonialism of foreign powers. He sought to capitalize on the Chosōn Pobingsa as a vital opportunity to request the United States government for American civil and military advisors who could come to Korea and support his enlightenment efforts, as well as to solidify the bond of friendship between the two countries. In this sense, the achievements and objectives of the Japanese Iwakura Mission to the West sent by the new Meiji government in 1871 were completely different from those of the Korean envoy. The Iwakura Mission was not only assigned to study the socio-economic conditions of the West, but also was the government's strategic way to impress foreign governments with the quality of Meiji Japan's modernization. The Japanese eventually pursued the revision of the unequal treaties that they had unwillingly signed before the 1868 Meiji Restoration.

The Iwakura Mission departed Yokohama port in December 1871. It was led by men of higher standing and more authority than any of its predecessors during the 1860s. Its senior member was Iwakura Tomomi (1825-1883) who, as Minister of the Left and former Foreign Minister, was the second-ranking official of the emperor's government. He was accorded the status of ambassador plenipotentiary by the government. With him were associated four vice-

ambassadors: Kido Takayoshi (1833-1877), Choshu county's chief representative on the Council of State; Ōkubo Toshimichi (1830-1878), Satsuma county's most powerful samurai politician, who had become Finance Minister earlier in 1871; Itō Hirobumi (1841-1909), vice-minister of Public Works; and Yamaguchi Naoyoshi (1839-1894), assistant vice-minister of Foreign Affairs.^{xiv} Contrary to their expectations for the mission, the Japanese leaders failed in convincing the Western nations to rescind the unequal treaties due to various factors: the participants' lack of experience, underprepared tactics for renegotiation, and the West's unwillingness to renounce their diplomatic prerogatives over Japan. They, however, succeeded in tracing the driving force behind the wealth, power, and cultural achievements of the West. "More importantly, en route, the mission's participants were exposed to colonialism from a number of dimensions and directly witnessed the national integration activities of the United States, which had just concluded a bloody civil war six years earlier and was busily engaged in the reconstruction of the union." As examined by Mark E. Caprio in his analysis of the role and activities of the Japanese Iwakura Mission in the West, one part of this process included assimilating recently emancipated blacks and Native Americans into mainstream American society through public education and mass media. Kume Kunitake (1839-1931), one of the official secretaries who accompanied the Iwakura Mission and compiled reports of the journey for the general public in a five-volume work, describes that all races represented the United States and that the government tried to incorporate the peoples of uncultivated lands by colonial practices.

Since “slaves” were imported from Africa and employed as laborers from the time of the country’s foundation, there are many black people. They make up one-seventh of the population. In the central part of the country, there are “Indians,” and in the western part they use Chinese as workers. The races are extremely complicated, but every one of them, it can be said, is presented in America . . . In the newest states land is abundant but people are scarce; the focus of their statecraft is colonization. So desperate are they to increase the population that they turn to every possible means at hand.^{xv}

When the Japanese bureaucrats crossed the Atlantic Ocean, they then encountered “European nations’ assimilation campaigns at different level of advancement, from the more developed efforts by the English to amalgamate the Welsh, Scots, and Irish, to the embryonic German ambition to unite the peoples of its newly annexed territories - Alsace and Lorraine. Upon arriving in France, the mission further saw the inauguration of the French government’s intense drive to integrate its southern provinces and the revision of its Algerian administrative policies to secure direct bureaucratic control over this colony.”^{xvi} Kume specifically recorded that the majority of the participants’ time abroad was spent examining the West’s components of nation-building. During their next visit to Germany, Chancellor Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898), who had masterminded the unification of Germany and spurred a catch-up industrialization, gave a lecture on the importance of self-reliance at dinner with the leaders of the Iwakura Mission on March 15, 1874. He argued that the reality of the world was a struggle, with the strong eclipsing the weak and the large scorning the small. Bismarck’s Social Darwinist view of international relations as a battle for survival awakened the Japanese visitors, teaching them that one could dominate the international

environment by successfully embracing modern technologies, civilized institutions, and liberal values while those who failed to do so would face colonization or even extinction. Chancellor Bismarck accordingly offered the Japanese commissioners a chance to realize that even Euro-America was not an undifferentiated whole as some had progressed farther than others.

The Japanese leaders’ discussions with government officials and tours of inspecting national institutions in charge of internal and foreign assimilation policies generally influenced their ways of thoughts and convinced them of a strategic setup of the state as the primary site of ideological articulation. The mission participants noticed that state-inspired nationalism had penetrated most strata of Western society, particularly having enabled Germany to succeed in unifying different subjects into one national entity. Their realization of the importance of nation-integrating techniques on the basis of an ideological logic subsequently materialized by the Meiji government that toiled at the task of spreading a nationalist ideology with a central motif of the “family state” for the Japanese people. They also recognized the necessity of giving prominence to the role of intellectuals and journalists as channels through which the nationalist ideology could be legitimatized. This intellectual invention provided the Japanese with an easily accessible explanation for their socio-political position both domestically and in terms of the broader international context. As Michael A. Weiner points out, “the concept of citizen and nation in accordance with myths of the Yamato people sharing a common ancestry, history, and culture thus became a canonical foundation for the Japanese vis-à-vis their European counterparts.”^{xvii}

THE IWAKURA MISSION'S EFFECTS: TEMPORAL HIERARCHY, NATION-BUILDING, AND COLONIALISM

The reform-minded Japanese leaders who had visited America and Europe realized that the West's present superiority within the hierarchy of nations and its power to overwhelm the traditional cultures of Asian nations was an inevitable consequence of the accumulation of technological improvement, social organization, and educational practices, which materialized in the form of "modernity."^{xxviii} As explained by Se-mi Oh in her doctoral dissertation, the Japanese officials' exposure to Western modernity taught them the concept of the developmental scheme of progress. This concept highlighted that "the West represented a universal time based upon a singular narration of history while the underdeveloped non-West pointed to the past of the West." The West became the bearer of the standard historical time whereas the multiple times of non-West localities were subsumed to each localized metropolitan time.

The difference between the two worlds was articulated in chronological terms as the non-West, which represented the past of the West, subsequently occupied the position of the inferior. Their realization of temporal difference also developed into the logic of temporal hierarchy between the metropole and the colonies by the time Japan initiated its colonial expansion. At the same time, "temporal hierarchy in a linear scheme of history gave Japan the possibility to catch up to the West; "catching up" in the overall developmental scheme was only a matter of time."^{xxix} This temporal view of modernization led Japanese political representatives to instigate a consciousness of crisis about the possible

colonial domination by the further developed West among the Japanese, thereby authorizing them to perform a full-scale Westernization of Japanese society for being a new nation-state in order not to lag behind in the global competition for imperialist hegemony. The Japanese success of internalizing the knowledge of the West's nation-building activities and colonialism through several missions to the United States and Europe, including the Iwakura Mission, helped Japan represent itself as the Asian vanguard of modernity and simultaneously reproduced colonial difference in the temporal hierarchy between Japan and its colonies.

The Japanese leaders who had gone abroad came back convinced that national education, large-scale factories and industrialization, the development of a modern military system, and political renovation should be Japan's highest priorities on the course of the post-Restoration in the 1870s. Their exposure to colonialism in the West confirmed their conviction that Japan would fall into other nations' hands unless they strove to transcend the Western scope of wealth and power, leading them to be more committed to a program of full-fledged reforms that sought for social changes. Specific information that the Iwakura Mission had collected from the West laid the ground for "the implementation of a new military structure based upon conscription, a new tax system to provide state revenues, the elimination of the last vestiges of feudal privileges, and education to prepare the Japanese citizens for an expanded role in government."^{xxx} Meanwhile, the Iwakura Mission's encounter with Western colonialism marked one of the very beginnings from which Japan was able to learn from the successes and mistakes of older colonial regimes like the English and French. Their experiences paved the way for the

Japanese imperialist government to import the most advanced technology of the times to fashion their colonial state. These were later applied to the incorporation of Ezo and the Ryukyu Kingdoms into part of the Japanese mainland and the acquisition of Taiwan and Korea as colonies.^{xxi}

THE CHOSŌN POBINGSA'S ACHIEVEMENTS AND INFLUENCES ON THE KAPSIN COUP IN 1884

In the meantime, the Chosōn Pobingsa's first achievement in returning to Korea was the opening of the modern postal service. Hong Yǒng-sik, who had accompanied Min Yǒng-ik as the Vice Minister and directly inspected the American postal system in New York, was appointed as a director of the Postal Administration and took the full responsibility for running the Korean post office. Although the postal service had to be aborted when the office building was burned down during the Kapsin Coup in December 1884, it was then created anew in 1895 and undertook, for the first time, mail exchange with foreign countries, marking the entry of Korea into the world's postal service in 1900. Furthermore, during their visits to farms in the United States, the Korean ambassadors were impressed by American agricultural techniques and saw the necessity of modern farms for the further development of Korea's agricultural industry. So, Ch'oe Kyǒng-sǒk, one of the Chosōn Pobingsa's attendants, brought with him the generous supply of seeds furnished by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. King Kojong promptly granted him a large tract of valuable land in the vicinity of Seoul, which he commendably converted into what is now known as the "American farm" in 1884.

The United States government provided the Korean model farm with more various seeds, agricultural tools, and California cattle in the following year. The Korean monarch also maintained much of his interest in the model farm and assisted Ch'oe with financial aid.^{xxii}

Perhaps, the Chosōn Pobingsa's most prominent result was the employment of eleven Americans who took key advisory positions within Korea's nascent diplomatic, economic, military, and educational institutions to support the Chosōn Dynasty's modernization projects. In early October 1883 in Washington, D.C., the Korean Mission had the opportunity to meet with the United States Secretary of State Fredrick T. Frelinghuysen (1817-1885) who confirmed that he would enlist competent men advising for Korean civil and military affairs. Although the United States government delayed in sending military instructors to Korea until 1888 for a variety of reasons, including fear of assassination in Chinese-dominated Korea for their anti-Chinese records, the interplay of the Chosōn Pobingsa and King Kojong was partially successful in hiring several American advisors on education and civil affairs. As Young-ick Lew analyzes, "the American advisors helped to engender the Korean people's vaguely popular consciousness about America, and were given great economic privileges and concessions by the Chosōn court in reward for their efforts to strengthen the bond between the two countries."^{xxiii}

The historical significance of the first Korean Mission to the United States was not only that it commemorated the conclusion of the Shufeldt Treaty and became an invaluable chance to learn about the foreign civilization, but also that it directly influenced the outbreak of the Kapsin Coup in December of 1884. The

Chosŏn Pobingsa sowed the seeds of the failed bloody attempt at top-down revolutionary change by the progressives, “which marked the beginning of a decade-long Chinese intrusion and dangerous military rivalry with Japan over the influence on the peninsula.”^{xxiv} The catalyst of the Kapsin Coup can be traced back to the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary Min Yōng-ik’s separate return to Korea from the Vice Minister Hong Yōng-sik after the completion of their mission in America.

The United States government, which had pursued to increase market accessibility to Korea, tried to generate a favorable image of itself among the Koreans. It thus spared no efforts and assistances for the convenience of the mission officials, not only paying the whole expense of the Chosŏn Pobingsa’s round-trip to America, but also financially supporting the six-month travel of Min Yōng-ik and a handful of his chosen attendants around Europe before their return to Korea. It was customary that an ambassador and a vice-ambassador returned to their country together after finishing their mission. But Min accepted the American President Arthur’s offer and set out on a trip to Europe for months as opposed to Hong who made his way home right after the mission. Although Min and Hong might have decided the divided return because of either the individual convenience or the urgency of reporting diplomatic achievements of the mission to the monarch, it is more likely that the ideological conflict of the two powerful figures led them to return separately if the political events that occurred afterwards are considered.

Min Yōng-ik, as a head of the conservative, pro-Qing Min family, had claimed before the Chosŏn Pobingsa, to be a moderate progressive and tried to be associated with the radicals such as Hong

Yōng-sik and Pak Yōng-hyo (1861-1939). However, when it came to issues of the urgency and degree of Korea’s modernization, Min advocated the “Eastern ways and Western Machines” idea of the Chinese moderate reform movement, emphasizing the need to maintain the superior cultural values of the Sino-centric world while recognizing the importance of acquiring Western technology such as the mass production system of weaponry.^{xxv} He sought a piecemeal adoption of institutions that would strengthen the state while preserving the basic social, political, and cultural order rather than a sweeping acceptance of new Western values like legal equality or political change from monarchy into parliament democracy. He was cautious of the progressive forces’ extremist ideas on the abolition of class distinctions and giving full responsibility to the State Council to formulate all laws and regulations on behalf of the royal court. The progressives concluded that the Chosŏn Dynasty’s old dependency on China was the critical factor in preventing Korea from modernizing into a new world order, and they watched for an opportunity to drive out Chinese influence from the Korean political community through the sponsorship of Japan. Min, who had a belief in the Qing Dynasty as the trustworthy supporter of Korea’s self-strengthening programs, thus cast a suspicious glance at the radical leaders’ associations with Japan.

At first, both Min and Hong left Korea without any noticeable conflicts, seemingly united under the common goal of learning about the West and building up a friendly relationship with the United States. However, the lack of consensus and fundamental ideological differences in domestic politics about what course to take for Korea’s national sovereignty rose to the surface steadily during their

travels.^{xxvi} It is noteworthy that Hong, without informing Min, secretly met Kim Ok-kyun (1851-1894), a member of the once-powerful Andong Kim clan who was anxious to set Korea on a similar path of Japan's rapid modernization, when the Korean Mission sojourned in Tokyo for a month on its way to the United States. The following account from the compendium of Yu Kil-chun's writings testifies to this scenery:

On our way to the United States with the other government officials, Hong and I met Kim in Tokyo, Japan and discussed the future of Korea's political reform. Kim promised that he would train military troops outside the country and Hong argued for the withdrawal of both the Chinese and Japanese troops from Seoul. They reached an agreement to start a revolution in about five years. I, as a mere scholar, did not participate in their plan, but just listened to their conversation.^{xxvii}

Kim alluded to Hong about his plan to mount a coup d'état in detail and they discussed it again on Hong's early return to Korea. Hong had been dissatisfied with the increasing pressure from China and its support of conservatives within the Korean government leading the sluggish social reform. Kim's confidence in the promise made by the Japanese minister to Korea, Takezoe Shinichiro (1842-1917), to provide Japanese legation guards to support the conspirators of the coup was thus powerful enough to persuade Hong into engaging in the removal of the Min family.^{xxviii} Moreover, the Chosōn Pobingsa's various experiences in America catalyzed the Korean leaders to reinforce their ideas that Korea could not survive in the international struggle for domination unless they succeed in a radical reformation like the Japanese Meiji Restoration.

In the meantime, the United States government looked forward to seeing that Min would ideologically develop into a pro-American, reform-minded official during his travels in Europe so that he could contribute to the support of commercial trade between the United States and Korea. However, he fell short of the U.S.'s expectations because of his sudden political changeover to a strong pro-Qing conservative after his return to Korea without clear explanations. According to George C. Foulk, an escort who accompanied the Chosōn Pobingsa during their return journey to Seoul, the other Korean bureaucrats Sō and Pyōn were indefatigable in compiling notes on useful subjects, and from encyclopedia sources, to learn about modern civilization and brought home a great mass of information on the political and progressive histories of the principle countries of the world. However, Min constantly read only Confucian books he carried throughout the whole journey, refusing to observe or get to know the broader world.^{xxix} Foulk also recorded that Min was faint-hearted in disposition and unwilling to accept different ideas and new cultures from the West. Yun Ch'i-ho even deplored, in his diary writing afterwards, that Min did not know the glory of reform and enlightenment because of his stubbornness and narrow-mindedness, even after his experience in Europe.^{xxx} Min turned to the conservative pro-Qing group after the Mission to the United States, while Hong, who expressed himself as having been in "a light so bright as to dazzle him," became even more involved in the progressive party and its radical attempt to overturn the old regime.^{xxxi}

It was not only Min's personal conservative shift after the Korean Mission, but also the role of the U.S. Navy second lieutenant George C. Foulk,

who came to Korea in May 1884 with the Chosŏn Pobingsa, that was crucial in the outbreak of the 1884 coup. Foulk learned the Korean language during his voyage to Korea and was appointed naval attaché to the American legation upon arrival in Seoul. He socialized frequently with Korean politicians of pro-Japanese and pro-American inclinations. As he developed a close friendship with these radical reformers and soon won their trust, they revealed their covert plans to overthrow the pro-Chinese conservative regime by aggressive means, requesting from the United States government both military and diplomatic backup. “Even though Foulk did not fully consent to their extreme plans due to the United States government’s abrupt turn to non-involvement foreign policy towards the Korean peninsula, he conveniently departed from Seoul after learning of these plans. Nonetheless, there is no denying that his tacit approval gave the coup leaders an added impetus.”^{xxxii}

KOREA’S NASCENT MODERNIZATION AND THE CHOSON POBINGSA AS A HISTORICAL WATERSHED

Regarding the intellectual influence of the Chosŏn Pobingsa on the Korean bureaucrats, it was the first catalyst for them to solidify their favorable views of the United States from a long-term perspective. The mission participants’ vivid experiences in the world’s “wealthiest and most bona-fide nation” were indelibly imprinted on their minds through repeated visits to industrial facilities, modernized cities, and well-organized military bases.^{xxxiii} The Koreans’ popular conception of space and universe that had long been predominated by the Neo-Confucian worldview was also restructured as they became conscious of

the fact that America, a vast expanse across the boundless Pacific Ocean, emerged as a central actor possessing power and wealth as opposed to “ailing” China, falling behind the rapid global changes in ideology and technology. The very abstract imagery of the United States as a strong country without greed for foreign lands that Korean intellectuals had obtained only through several Chinese “books” was fleshed out by their firsthand “travels.” The American government’s hospitable treatment of the Korean ambassadors led them to believe that the United States was willing to stand as Korea’s reliable benefactor and to prevent Western predators from intruding into the peninsula on behalf of China, the traditional “Elder Brother.” This recognition by the Korean leaders consequently led to their heightened level of dependency on the United States during the political upheavals in the late nineteenth and twentieth century.^{xxxiv}

The American experts’ contribution to strengthening Korea-U.S. relations was insignificant due to the United States government’s relative indifference towards Korea after U.S. officials realized that the Chosŏn Dynasty was a marginal agricultural country with low commercial prospects for American traders. But it is still noteworthy that the American advisors, who were employed by the Chosŏn court for its economic, educational, and military reforms, contributed to the modernization of Korean society. Some Korean historians criticize that King Kojong went as far as to jeopardize the economic independence of the Chosŏn Dynasty by awarding American financiers with a stream of the most lucrative concessions available in the country, including a franchise of the Unsan gold mine in the P’yōngan province and a contract to cut and export timber from Ullūng Island along with an

order for 4,000 breech-loading rifles. However, American businesses played an important role in introducing the West's cultural inventions to Koreans and helped them to have an increased awareness of modern developments. The American advisors, who were granted exceptional economic privileges and authority^y by the reform-minded Korean monarch, led the Chosōn court to open its door to American companies for the construction of new public facilities and social infrastructures such as electricity in the royal palace, the Seoul-Inch'ōn railroad, municipal trolley lines, public water supply, the telephone system, and modern office buildings. These social changes enabled Koreans to see how the traditional particulars and culture of their everyday lives were revolutionarily incorporated into modern transformations in the late nineteenth century although it was not until the mid 1920s that "all Koreans were enmeshed in a system of economic and social relations embedded in a new and highly uneven modernity."^{xxxxv}

In particular, George C. Foulk, who was appointed as a naval attaché to the American legation in Seoul after his travels with Min Yōng-ik and Sō Kwang-pōm, vigorously synthesized his energy with that of the Korean progressives and American Protestant missionaries to build modernized hospitals and schools in Korea. The first modern clinic, known as the *Kwanghyewōn*, opened in 1885 and later developed into the Severance Hospital and Severance Union Medical College. He also patronized the establishment of educational institutions by American missionaries, bridging them with the Chosōn court to issue a government license to found many schools, such as the *Paejae haktang* (School for Training Men of Talent) in 1885 and the *Ehwa haktang* (Pear Blossom School) in 1886, the first

school for women dubbed by Queen Min.^{xxxxvi} These schools were historically remarkable since the Koreans who were educated there by American missionaries and teachers went to the United States to continue their studies, and later became prominent political and intellectual figures in Korea. Just some of the notable figures include Yu Kil-chun, Sō Chae-p'il (1863-1951), Yun Ch'i-ho (1864-1946), An Ch'ang-ho (1878-1938), and Syngman Rhee (1875-1965).

Yu Kil-chun, who accompanied the Chosōn Pobingsa as Min Yōng-ik's attaché, remained in the United States to study at Dummer Academy in Massachusetts until June of 1885. Yu's studies and experiences in the U.S. were undoubtedly reflected in his book, *Observations of My Travels to the West* (*Sōyugyōnmun*), the first draft of which was dedicated to King Kojong and a number of his officials at the Korean government in 1890. Yu confessed in his book that it was not until he explored American educational, industrial, and military institutions that he could finally understand Min Yōng-ik's hidden motives for him to stay in the United States and pursue his studies for years.^{xxxxvii} The comprehensive accumulation of what he had been through in America later affected Korea's diverse reform measures, led by Yu during his term as the minister of home affairs in 1894, including the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, legislation for smallpox inoculation, and the decree for cutting off Korean men's traditional topknot, which all emulated American modern civilization.^{xxxxviii} Given the historical fact that the Chosōn Pobingsa was an opportunity for Yu to be the first Korean youth studying in the United States, he subsequently blazed a trail for future generations of Koreans to cross the Pacific for academic purposes. In this way, the Mission's influence on

Korean society extends from politics to the realm of intellectual interchanges and the introduction of Western culture by non-governmental subjects.

CONCLUSION

Unlike China which regulated the traditional hierarchy of East Asia so that Korea, China, and Japan were bound by a single set of cultural norms and ethnical affinity, a new world order led by the Western nations in the late nineteenth century compelled the East Asian nations to acclimate themselves to an international hierarchy of Social Darwinism that was based upon economic and military power. Korea and Japan in the 1870s and 1880s, late runners in Western-style industrialization without the organized notion of the modern nation-state, were required to catch up to the West's advancements in order not to fall in the ranks of the new hierarchy. Envoys were thus useful channels through which both Korea and Japan could learn about Western civilization and reinforce diplomatic relationships with foreign countries.

In this respect, the official and non-official envoys of the early 1880s are valid historical examples of how Koreans' recognition of the state, universe, and institutions that had been preoccupied with the Neo-Confucian ideologies changed as they were incorporated into Western-dominated global politics. The Chosōn Dynasty, exposed to unprecedented outside influences during the late nineteenth century, aimed at the American involvement in Korea's reform programs by dispatching the Mission in order to escape from growing colonialism in East Asia. The new knowledge about the conditions of the West imported by the Chosōn Pobingsa was absorbed into the reform-minded leaders of the Korean

political community, thereby encouraging the government's enlightenment efforts. The Japanese political leaders, through their two-year travels in the United States and Europe, on the other hand, internalized Western colonialism and the ways in which those foreign powers had integrated the peoples into their nation-state by heightening the collective sense of national unity. The Iwakura Mission was thus a meaningful opportunity for Japan's subsequent construction of empire undertaking its simultaneous projects of nation-building and overseas expansion.

Colonial history can be better understood in consideration of how various dynamics of pre-colonial society were intertwined with the shaping of the colonial particulars and realities. Even though the Chosōn Pobingsa's achievements were not highly significant due to the United States government's relative indifference towards Korea in comparison to China and Japan, it is noteworthy that the American advisors, who were recruited by the Chosōn court for its economic, diplomatic, educational, and military reforms, helped Korea implement full-scale self-strengthening policies and import modernized institutions. In spite of the criticism that King Kojong's favoritism towards the United States gave birth to the economic dependency on American businesses by awarding them with a stream of the most profitable concessions available in the country, it should be remembered that they played an important role in introducing the West's cultural inventions to Korean society. Given that the Chosōn Pobingsa was successful in hiring the American advisors who led Koreans to have an increased awareness of modern developments, Korean modernity needs to be reconsidered as having originated even before the Japanese colonial period. The interactive association of the Chosōn

Pobingsa with the U.S. government and its advisors created the “sprouts” of Korean nascent modernity as they contributed to Korea’s establishment of modern institutions, integration into the global system of global capitalism and politics, and construction of new social infrastructures.

-
- ⁱ Jun Uchida, “Brokers of Empire: Japanese Settler Colonialism in Korea, 1910-1937” (Ph.D. diss. Harvard University, 2005): 272-273.
- ⁱⁱ Carter Eckert, “The South Korean Bourgeoisie: A Class in Search of Hegemony,” Hagen Koo ed., *State and Society in Contemporary Korea*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 97-99.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Gi-Wook Shin and Michael E. Robinson, eds. *Colonial Modernity in Korea* (Harvard University Asia Center, 1999), p. 5-6.
- ^{iv} Myōn-Hūi Do, “The Implications of Colonial Modernity without Colonialism,” *Korea Journal* (Summer 2004): 204-206.
- ^v Ian Nish, *The Iwakura Mission to America and Europe: A New Assessment* (Routledge, 1998), p. 1-5.
- ^{vi} Peter H. Lee and William Theodore De Bary, eds. *Sources of Korean Tradition: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (Columbia University Press, 2000), vol. 2, p.249.
- ^{vii} Wōn-Mo Kim, *Hanmi sugyosa* (The History of Korea-US Diplomatic Relations) (Seoul: Chōrhakkwa hyōnsilsa, 2003), p. 44.
- ^{viii} Min-Sik Yi, *Kǔndae hanmi kwan'gyesa* (The Modern History of Korea-US Relations) (Seoul: Paeksan Charyowōn, 2001), p. 210.
- ^{ix} Kyu-Sik Chang, “Kaehang hu miguk sahaeng kwa sōgu suyong ūi ch'ai,” (Korean Diplomatic Mission to the United States and the Adoption of Western Civilization in the Late Nineteenth Century) *Han'gukchungangshak'oe* 24 (2006): 67-68.
- ^x Min-Sik Yi, Ibid. 213-214.
- ^{xi} Harold J. Noble, “The Korean Mission to the United States in 1883: The First Embassy Sent by Korea to an Occidental Nation,” *Transaction of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 18, 1929.
- ^{xii} Se-Mi Oh, “Consuming the Modern: The Everyday in Colonial Seoul, 1915-1937” (Ph.D. diss. Columbia University, 2008): 59.
- ^{xiii} Wōn-Mo Kim, *Kaehwagi hanmi kyośp kwan'gyesa* (The Modern Negotiation History of Korea-US Relations) (Seoul: Tan'guk taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 2003), p. 529.
- ^{xiv} William G. Beasley, *Japan Encounters the Barbarian: Japanese Travelers in America and Europe* (Yale University Press, 1995), p. 157.
- ^{xv} Kume Kunitake, “Tokumei zenken taishi Bei- Ō kairan jikkī” (Report of the Iwakura Mission) ed. and trans. Peter Duus in *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp. 168-169.
- ^{xvi} Mark E. Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in*

Colonial Korea, 1910-1945 (University of Washington Press, 2009), p. 20-21.

^{xvii} Michael A. Weiner, *Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity* (Rouledge, 2009), p. 7.

^{xviii} James L. McClain, *Japan, a Modern History* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2001), p. 173

^{xix} Se-Mi Oh, Ibid. 5-6.

^{xx} William Theodore De Bary, *Sources of East Asian Tradition: The Modern Period* (Columbia University Press, 2000), vol. 2, p.477-478.

^{xxi} Pyle Kenneth, “Advantages of Followership: German Economics and Japanese Bureaucrats, 1890-1925,” *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 1 (Autumn 1974): 127-164.

^{xxii} George McAfee McCune, *Korean-American Relations: Documents Pertaining to the Far Eastern Diplomacy of the United States* (Cambridge University Press, 1951), p. 106.

^{xxiii} Young-Ick Lew, *Early Korean Encounters with the United States and Japan* (Royal Asiatic Society, 2007), p. 30-32.

^{xxiv} Michael E. Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth Century Odyssey* (University of Hawaii Press, 2007), p. 17.

^{xxv} Michael J. Seth, *A History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010), p. 18.

^{xxvi} T'ae-Wōn Min, *Kim okkyun chōn'gi* (A Biography of Kim Ok-kyun) (Seoul: Ūryu munhwasa, 1969), pp. 72-73.

^{xxvii} Kil-Chun Yu, *Yu kil-chun chōnsō* (The Collection of Yu kil-chun's Writings) (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1971), vol. 5, pp. 263-265.

^{xxviii} Ch'i-Ho Yun, *Yun ch'i-ho ilgi* (Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary) ed. and trans. Pyōng-ki Song (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2001), p. 50.

^{xxix} George McAfee McCune, Ibid. 106-107.

^{xxx} Ch'i-Ho Yun, Ibid. 185-186.

^{xxxi} Wōn-Mo Kim, Ibid. 141-142.

^{xxxii} Young-Ick Lew, Ibid. 4.

^{xxxiii} “These works conveyed the topographical information of various countries and presented the concrete quality of arguments regarding naval defense tactics. Since the late 1870s when the works were introduced into Korea's political communities through those who had visited Japan, Korean leaders, though small in number, were able to get brief but more or less objective accounts of the history and geography of the United States. Furthermore, a pamphlet, entitled *A Strategy for Korea* (Chaoxian celue), written by the Chinese scholar-diplomat and noted poet Huang Zunxian (1848-1905), decisively dismantled Korean intellectuals' long-lasting influence of the seclusionist world-view. This text heavily influenced the formation of their positive perceptions of the United States, as America was described as the wealthiest nation that stood for liberty and was far from encroaching upon Asia, while Russia was portrayed as a country filled with an insatiable appetite for land, threatening the Chosōn government with its southward expansion.” See Young-Ick Lew, *Early Korean Encounters with the United States and Japan* (Royal Asiatic Society, 2007) See Young-Ick Lew, *Early Korean Encounters with the United States and Japan* (Royal Asiatic Society, 2007)

^{xxxiv} Yur-Bok Lee and Wayne Patterson, eds. *Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Korea 1866-1877* (New York: Humanities Press, 1970), p. 17-18.

- xxxv Michael E. Robinson, *Ibid.* 74.
- xxxvi Chōng-Suk Son, *Ibid.* 124-127.
- xxxvii Kil-Chun Yu, *Sōyugyo nmun* (Observations of My Travels to the West) ed. and trans. Kyōng-jin Hō (Seoul: Sōhaemunjip, 2004), p. 22-23.
- xxxviii Peter H. Lee, *Sourcebook of Korean Civilization: From the Seventeenth Century to the Modern Period* (Columbia University Press, 1996), vol. 2, p.341.

REFERENCES

- Carter Eckert, "The South Korean Bourgeoisie: A Class in Search of Hegemony," Hagen Koo ed., *State and Society in Contemporary Korea*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993.
- Chōng-Suk Son, *Han'guk kōndae chuban miguk kongsa jō n'gu* (A Study of the United States Ministers to Korea, 1883-1905) Seoul: Han'guk sahak, 2005.
- Ch'i-Ho Yun, *Yun ch'i-bo ilgi* (Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary) ed. and trans. Pyōng-ki Song. Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2001.
- George McCafee McCune, *Korean-American Relations: Documents Pertaining to the Far Eastern Diplomacy of the United States*. Cambridge University Press, 1951.
- Gi-Wook Shin and Michael E. Robinson, eds. *Colonial Modernity in Korea*. Harvard University Asia Center, 1999.
- Harold J. Noble, "The Korean Mission to the United States in 1883: The First Embassy Sent by Korea to an Occidental Nation," *Transaction of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 18. 1929.
- Ian Nish, *The Iwakura Mission to America and Europe: A New Assessment*. Routledge, 1998.
- James L. McClain, *Japan, a Modern History*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2001.
- Jun Uchida, "Brokers of Empire: Japanese Settler Colonialism in Korea, 1910-1937" Ph.D. diss. Harvard University, 2005.
- Kil-Chun Yu, *Sōyugyo nmun* (Observations of My Travels to the West) ed. and trans. Kyōng-jin Hō . Seoul: Sōhaemunjip, 2004.
- Kil-Chun Yu, *Yu kil-chun chō nsō* (The Collection of Yu kil-chun's Writings) Seoul: Ilchogak, vol. 5. 1971.
- Kume Kunitake, "Tokumei zenken taishi Bei-ō kairan jikki" (Report of the Iwakura Mission) ed. and trans. Peter Duus in *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.
- Kyu-Sik Chang, "Kaehang hu miguk sahaeng kwa sōgu suyong i ch'ai," (Korean Diplomatic Mission to the United States and the Adoption of Western Civilization in the Late Nineteenth Century) *Han'gukchungangsa hō* 24. 2006.
- Mark E. Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945*. University of Washington Press, 2009.
- Michael E. Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth Century Odyssey*. University of Hawaii Press, 2007.
- Michael J. Seth, *A History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010.
- Michael A. Weiner, *Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity*. Rouledge, 2009.
- Min-Sik Yi, *Kōndae hanmi kwan'gyesa* (The Modern History of Korea-US Relations) Seoul: Paeksan Charyowon, 2001.
- Myōn-Hōi Do, "The Implications of Colonial Modernity without Colonialism," *Korea Journal* (Summer 2004).
- Ok-Yul Kim, "Early Korean-American Relations," *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 43 (June 1976).
- Peter H. Lee, *Sourcebook of Korean Civilization: From the Seventeenth Century to the Modern Period*. Columbia University Press, vol. 2. 1996.
- Peter H. Lee and William Theodore De Bary, eds. *Sources of Korean Tradition: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century*. Columbia University Press, vol. 2. 2000.
- Pyle Kenneth, "Advantages of Followership: German Economics and Japanese Bureaucrats, 1890-1925," *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 1 (Autumn 1974).
- Se-Mi Oh, "Consuming the Modern: The Everyday in Colonial Seoul, 1915-1937" Ph.D. diss. Columbia University, 2008.
- T'ae-Won Min, *Kim okkyun chō n'gi* (A Biography of Kim Ok-kyun) Seoul: ryu munhwasa, 1969.
- William G. Beasley, *Japan Encounters the Barbarian: Japanese Travelers in America and Europe*. Yale University Press, 1995.
- William Theodore De Bary, *Sources of East Asian Tradition: The Modern Period*. Columbia University Press, vol. 2. 2000.
- Won-Mo Kim, *Hanmi sugyosa* (The History of Korea-US Diplomatic Relations) Seoul: Chōrhakkwa hyōnsilsa, 2003.
- Young-Ick Lew, *Early Korean Encounters with the United States and Japan*. Royal Asiatic Society, 2007.
- Yur-Bok Lee and Wayne Patterson, eds. *Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Korea 1866-1877*. New York: Humanities Press, 1970.

EXAMINING “EMPTINESS” IN BUDDHISM AND DAOISM

Andrea Dillon

Sub-traditions of both Buddhism and Daoism use the term “emptiness” to describe various aspects of their mystical beliefs, practices, and experiences. I will examine the use of the term “emptiness” in the Buddhist texts *Heart Sutra* and *Sunna Sutta* and the Daoist texts *Dao De Jing* and *Zhuangzi* in order to bring to light the similarities and differences in the ways each tradition generally employ this term. In Buddhism, emptiness occupies two positions: it describes the philosophical underpinning of the Buddhist mystical doctrine, as well as the mystical experience of liberation that comes with recognizing the truth of this philosophy. In Daoism, emptiness also occupies two positions: as a technique used in mystical practice, as well as a descriptor of the mystical experience that arises from such practice and that is characterized by a liberating shift in attitude. The use of the term “emptiness” to describe philosophical doctrine is more characteristic of Buddhism than of Daoism. In both traditions, however, attaining “emptiness” in the sense of a mystical experience is believed to offer liberation from suffering. The nuance here lies in the metaphysical foundation of the Daoist mystical experience, which is described as “emptying” in reference to an *attitude* that is adopted. This attitude is characterized by openness and surrender to the forces of the Dao. Believing in the metaphysical Dao does not bring about this emptiness in and of itself; rather, it must be cultivated through breathing meditation. In contrast, Buddhist experiential “emptiness” refers primarily to the

recognition of the truth of Buddhist philosophical emptiness.

BUDDHISM

Doctrine

Emptiness is employed in Buddhist texts primarily as a technical term describing the philosophical doctrine that all things lack independent being, but also in reference to a spiritual state of recognizing the truth of this doctrine and being liberated from falsehood. The former is important because it represents the foundation of the Buddhist religion; the latter is important because it leads to enlightenment and a cessation of suffering.ⁱ

Buddhist doctrine is centered on the notion that all elements of our world are “empty” of any permanent, independent essence or self. In *Heart Sutra*, Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion, sees clearly that the five *skandhas*, or aspects of human experience, are empty: “Here, O Sariputra, form is emptiness and the very emptiness is form; emptiness does not differ from form, form does not differ from emptiness...the same is true of feelings, perceptions, impulses, and consciousness.”ⁱⁱ What Avalokiteshvara means by “emptiness” is clarified in the *Sunna Sutta*: “It is said that the world is empty, the world is empty, lord. In what respect is it said that the world is empty?” The Buddha replied, ‘Insofar as it is empty of a self or of anything pertaining to a self: Thus it is said, Ānanda, that the world is empty.’”ⁱⁱⁱ If emptiness connotes the absence of a

permanent, independent self, it follows that our everyday experience in a dualistic, subject-object-based world is empty of ultimate reality,^{iv} and that “all dharmas are marked with emptiness.”^v Furthermore, everything is affected by and dependent upon everything else. “Emptiness” is thus used, particularly in early Mahayana traditions, to refer to the dependent origination of and fundamental interrelatedness of all things.^{vi} Nagajuna summarizes the philosophical concept of emptiness in *Stanzas on the Middle Way*: “Emptiness is dependent origination. Because nothing exists which does not arise dependently, no thing is not empty.”^{vii} This statement defines emptiness in a manner consistent with Buddhism’s rejection of dualisms.

Mystical Experience

Buddhists believe that attachment to false subject-object dualisms can cause only suffering; practitioners aim to shed this worldview through a mystical practice of “stopping” and “seeing” the true, empty nature of things. The resulting introverted mystical experience is what Sekida calls “absolute Samadhi:” a state of purity of body and mind in which the practitioner is empty of all thoughts, perceptions, and feelings.^{viii} Rather than inviting nihilism, insight into the emptiness of all things is considered a positive achievement that can lead to Nirvana when maintained as a mode of cognition back in the dualistic, conditioned world. The resulting extroverted mystical experience is the *experience* of emptiness. “Emptiness” is here employed in the second sense, as a descriptor of a spiritual state of intuitive wisdom called *prajna*, which forms the basis of the Mahayana mystical experience. This state involves living everyday life in the conditioned world with the knowledge of the emptiness of oneself and everything around one.^{ix} This

emptiness is important because of the effects it brings about, namely, a more dispassionate engagement with the dualistic world in everyday life, which is considered a liberating way to live. In *Heart Sutra*, this is described as “dwelling without thought-coverings,” a result of “having relied on the perfection of wisdom.”^x Recognizing the emptiness of all things frees the practitioner from attachment to her desires, motivations, and interests, which in a conditioned existence could invite disappointment and despair. Avalokiteshvara, after seeing the emptiness of the five *skandhas*, “overcomes what can upset, and in the end he attains to Nirvana.”^{xi} A second major effect of the state of emptiness is spontaneous compassion for all beings. The Mahayana tradition in particular assumes that mystical experience taps into an innate morality characterized by beneficial compassion toward others.^{xii} “Emptiness,” however, is not generally used to describe these *effects* of recognition, but rather the recognition itself.

As both a philosophical idea and a mystical experience, “emptiness” represents the foundation of Buddhism on two levels. It is used, for one, to describe the Buddhist doctrine that all forms exist without an independent, permanent self and thus constantly arise and pass away. It is also used to describe the mystical experience of seeing the truth of this doctrine both within oneself and in the surrounding world—the *experience* of emptiness. The result of this second type of emptiness is liberation from the suffering of a conditioned existence and brings about dispassionate engagement with the everyday and spontaneous compassion for others.^{xiii}

DAOISM

Doctrine

Emptiness in Daoism is employed primarily in reference to breathing techniques of mystical practice, as well as a spiritual “conversion” associated with mystical experience. As with Buddhism, mystical experience in Daoism revolves around Daoist doctrine. Daoist belief is more metaphysical than Buddhist, centering on the notion that all things are interconnected in a constantly changing organic web called the Dao. The Dao is occasionally described as “empty” in reference to the fact that it is not fixed—Lao Tzu mentions “merging with the empty Way,”^{xiv} and Hsin-shu Shang explains that “only the sage is able to find this empty Way.”^{xv} The aspects of Daoism in which the term “emptiness” is most often used, however, are mystical practice and experience. Often described as “emptying out,” Daoist mystical experience involves merging with the Dao by recognizing one’s place in the universe and accepting the impermanence of reality.^{xvi} “Emptiness” thus refers to an attitude of openness and surrender to the forces of nature, cultivatable through “emptying” practices of breathing meditation.

Mystical Practice

Daoist mystical practice involves meditation with the intent to “empty the consciousness.” It is in this context that “emptiness” is employed in its first sense. “I do my utmost to attain emptiness,” writes Lao Tzu, “I hold firmly to stillness.”^{xvii} In addition to sitting still, early Daoist mystical practice as outlined in the *Zhuangzi* calls for “empty breathing.” Focusing the attention on one thing, such as breath, is thought to aid in emptying the mind of distracting thoughts.^{xviii} Zhuangzi’s most famous passage on this process is “The Fasting of the Mind,” in which Confucius describes empty breathing:

“Unify your attention. Rather than listening with your ears, listen with your

mind. Rather than listening with your mind, listen with your breathing. Listening stops at the ears; the mind stops at what it can objectify. As for your breathing, it becomes empty and waits to respond to things. The Way gathers in emptiness. Emptiness is attained through the fasting of the mind.”^{xix}

Emptiness, then, describes both focused breathing as well as a mind cleared from the normal buzz of everyday consciousness. The breath becomes a point of attention, serving the normal functions of the mind by “responding” to outside stimuli and allowing consciousness to drain. Hsin-shu Shang explains how mental emptiness invites an introverted mystical experience: “If you empty out your desires, the spirit [-like mind] will enter its lodging. If you sweep out what is impure, the spirit [-like mind] will stay in its dwelling.”^{xx} Zhuangzi rephrases the same idea: “In the Empty Room, the brightness grows.”^{xxi} Once a mind is empty of consciousness, the Way will gather in the mind, at which point a practitioner will “merge with the Great Pervader,” also known as “discovering true nature.” Emptiness of mind and breath thus allows one to understand the true nature of things—interconnected in a constantly changing cosmic web. Like Buddhism, taking this introverted experience into everyday life is the true mystical experience that Daoists seek.

Mystical Experience

Daoist extroverted mystical experience is described as an “emptying out” whose emphasis lies on the psychological benefits of mystical practice. The word “emptiness” in this context is thus associated more with an attitude than a doctrine. If “emptiness and nothingness” are the foundation of Daoist mystical practice, “adaptation and compliance [with cosmic patterns]” is the application of this practice to life.^{xxii} Mystical experience involves surrendering oneself to the emptiness of the Dao rather

than simply believing in its existence. This is where Daoism differs from Buddhism. This surrender to the Dao, reminiscent of a religious conversion, brings about a state of flow characterized by openness to one's place in the harmonious universe. Lao Tzu calls this "attaining Emptiness" and describes it as "tranquil."^{xxiii} Zhuangzi uses words such as clear, impartial, spontaneous, and "attaining the empty Way" to describe this state.^{xxiv} A practitioner who is in a state of flow lets her innate nature respond to the world around her without self-consciousness. She treats herself as "other," no more attached to her own desires and selfish motivations than anyone else's. She is impartial, floating through existence without suffering through the meaningless emotions of conditioned existence.^{xxv} She has entered a different mode of consciousness and has adopted an attitude of openness to the constantly changing state of the universe.

"Emptiness" is an important concept in Daoism, just as it is in Buddhism. Though it is used sparsely to describe Daoist doctrine, it is employed most often to describe the Daoist mystical practice of breathing meditation and the mystical experience of merging with the Dao. Practicing empty breathing and emptying the mind of consciousness are techniques that are instrumental in attaining the Way, which in turn holds great psychological benefits for the practitioner. It is in adopting an attitude of openness to the Dao in everyday life that a liberating state of flow may be achieved.

CONCLUSION

Buddhism and Daoism employ the term "emptiness" in two different senses each. In Buddhism, emptiness occupies both philosophical and experiential positions as the descriptor of Buddhist doctrine as well as a spiritual state of liberation that comes

with recognizing this philosophy as truth. In Daoism, emptiness occupies a practical position as a technique used to bring about psychological change, as well as an experiential position as the descriptor of a liberating attitude of openness and surrender to the state of the universe. "Emptiness" is used in both Buddhism and Daoism to describe a mystical experience that offers liberation from meaningless suffering. Daoists, however, may not necessarily achieve an "empty" state of flow simply by believing in the metaphysical existence of the Dao. Rather, Daoist experiential emptiness refers to an adoptable *attitude* characterized by surrender to the forces of the Dao. Experiential emptiness in Buddhism, in contrast, describes recognition of a philosophical truth embodied in oneself and in the surrounding world. The dispassionate engagement and spontaneous compassion that *result* from this emptiness occupy a similar position in Buddhism as the state of flow does in Daoism, and yet the term "emptiness" most often refers to Buddhist *recognition* rather than the resulting "flow," a nuance that distinguishes the ways in which Buddhism and Daoism each use this term.

ⁱ Conze, Edward. *Buddhist Wisdom Books, Containing The Diamond Sutra and The Heart Sutra*. London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1958. Print. 85.

ⁱⁱ Ibid, 86.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Suñña Sutta: Empty." *Access to Insight*. Trans. Thanissaro Bhikkhu. 2011. Web. 09 Dec. 2011. <<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn35/sn35.085.than.html>>.

^{iv} Roth, Harold. "Foundations of Mahayana Buddhism," Brown University, 2011.

^v Conze, 91.

^{vi} Roth, "Foundations of Mahayana Buddhism."

^{vii} Ibid.

^{viii} Sekida, Kazuki. *Zen Training: Methods and Philosophy*. New York: Weatherhill, 1975. Print. 12.

^{ix} Ibid.

^x Conze, 101.

^{xi} Ibid, 102.

^{xii} Roth, “Foundations of Mahayana Buddhism.”

^{xiii} Ibid.

^{xiv} Lao Tzu and D. C. Lau. *Tao Te Ching*. [Baltimore]: Penguin, 1963. Print. XI

^{xv} Roth, Harold. “Nei-yeh (Inward Training): The Foundation of Taoist Meditation Practice,” Brown University, 2011.

^{xvi} Ibid.

^{xvii} Lao Tzu, XX.

^{xviii} Roth, “Nei-Yeh.”

^{xix} Zhuangzi and A. C. Graham. *Chuang-Tzū: the Inner Chapters*. 1981. Print. 68.

^{xx} Roth, Harold. “Laozi and the Foundations of Daoist Meditation,” Brown University, 2011.

^{xxi} Zhuangzi, 69.

^{xxii} Roth, Harold. “Playful Mysticism in the Zhuangzi,” Brown University, 2011.

^{xxiii} Roth, “Laozi.”

^{xxiv} Roth, Harold. “Significance of the Study of Daoism and Buddhism,” Brown University, 2011.

^{xxv} Zhuangzi, 52.

ALTAN URAG

Jonathan Heins
University of Pittsburgh

ABSTRACT

This project will examine the ways in which the self-proclaimed Mongolian “folk rock” band, Altan Urag, combines elements of both traditional Mongolian and Western music and culture in order to recast and recreate Mongolian tradition. These new representations of Mongolian tradition occur within the context of a young and rapidly developing democratic nation which looks both deeply into its own past to construct a strong national sense of identity and looks increasingly outward to the international community with aspirations of establishing itself as a recognized and respected member of that community.

Altan Urag’s new representations of Mongolian national heritage are both audial and visual in nature, and occur in live performance, album packaging, and digital mediums. Accordingly, this investigation will use data from all three mediums, as well as personal interviews with the band members and with persons related in various capacities to the band. In order to analyze these diverse data, the concept of “hybridity” will be employed in musical analysis as well as of analysis of the music’s socio-historical context. The result will be a comprehensive understanding of the interaction between Mongolian tradition and Western ideas in the music of Altan Urag on all levels of musical experience.

INTRODUCTION

Motivation

Over the past two decades since the democratic revolution of 1990, Mongolia has experienced rapid development, driven primarily by foreign investment in large mines like Oyu Tolgoi and Tavan Tolgoi. In particular, the capital city, Ulaanbaatar, has changed dramatically. New apartment blocks seem to sprout from the ground almost sporadically, outdated and inadequate roads are constantly jammed full of Land Cruisers, and new shops, stores and restaurants can be found everywhere. But it is not only the physical face of Mongolia that is changing: a Mongolian-socialist culture and worldview has given way to a Mongolian-global culture as “global culture” from America, Germany, Korea, Japan, Russia and China increasingly penetrates Mongolia’s political borders. Even in the more remote areas of Mongolia like the northernmost aimag, or province, of Huvsgul traditional pastoral lifestyles are changing due to increased exposure to global cultureⁱ. This rapid physical and social change combined with the democratic freedom for self-expression has prompted Mongolians to recreate their identities as individuals and as a nation.

One way they have done this is to create a strong sense of national identity that is deeply rooted in Mongolian history and culture, including the conquests of Chinggis Khan in the late 12th and early 13th centuries, the semi-nomadic and pastoral lifestyle still practiced by about a third of the Mongolian population, and musical traditions such as hoomii (throat singing or overtone singing), urtyn duu

(long song), and those of the morin khuur (horse-head fiddle). Indeed, the significance of Mongolian musical traditions in constructing a national Mongolian identity is evidenced by the presence of such state ensembles as the National Folk and Dance Ensemble and the National Morin Khuur Ensemble, by the substantial collection of Mongolian traditional music records for sale in stores like Hi-Fi Records in Ulaanbaatar, and in the use of hoomii, long song, and morin khuur in various television advertisements and programs.

More interesting however, and more prominent, is the integration of elements of traditional Mongolian music into Western musical styles and forms, like pop music. Mongolian pop music videos are broadcast on several television stations devoted to music in homes and restaurants throughout Ulaanbaatar and the countryside, and these Mongolian pop songs often feature melodies and lyrics taken directly from traditional Mongolian bogino duu, or short songs (in contrast to long songs, which have a very different style and structure). This integration of traditional Mongolian musical elements into Western musical forms and styles, which ethnomusicologist Carole Pegg describes as “hybrid Mongol-Western music”ⁱⁱⁱ is not limited to pop musical genres, but also occurs in rock music genres. Bands such as Hurd and Kharanga, which began in the 1990s, first introduced the Western heavy metal and hard rock styles to Mongolia and gained significant popularity.

There are varying degrees of Mongol-ness and Western-ness in “hybrid Mongol-Western” music, however. Bands like Hurd and Kharanga, as well as many contemporary rock outfits like The Lemons and Fire, adopt a straightforward rock instrumentation, sound, and style, but incorporate traditional Mongolian melodies and lyrical themes. Some groups,

however, like Khusugtun and Altain Orgil, use traditional Mongolian instruments like the morin khuur, the traditional singing styles of hoomii and long song, and even adorn traditional Mongolian dress during performances. Such instrumentation, sound, and appearance make their music seem more immediately Mongolian, and the Western-ness of the music is apparent in more subtle elements like harmony and musical structure. The result is a musical style that is in some respects traditionally Mongolian and yet distinctly modern, and which deliberately evokes images of a perceived Mongolian traditional heritage.

The Music of Altan Urag, the “Golden Lineage”

Perhaps no such hybrid Mongol-Western band is more well-known, more commercially successful, or more influential than the self-proclaimed “Mongolian folk rock” band Altan Urag. Altan Urag, which loosely translates to “Golden Lineage” in reference to the royal ancestral line of Chinggis Khan, is unique among the aforementioned bands for the innovative ways that they blend Western rock sounds and imagery with traditional Mongolian sounds and imagery with the intention of not merely being traditional, but of deliberately recasting tradition. Their masterful mixture of old and new has resulted in the production of seven studio albums, several music videos, participation in two full-length films, participation in several international music festivals, and appearances on national Mongolian television. They claim, justifiably, to be “one of the pioneers” of the Mongolian folk rock genre which bands like Khusugtun and Altain Orgil arguably fall into.ⁱⁱⁱ Their success and popularity means that they have a prominent role in shaping a modern, post-socialist national Mongolian identity within contemporary Mongolian-global culture, one which looks to Mongolia’s perceived ancient traditions and heritage.

Methodology

This paper will therefore investigate the ways in which Altan Urag combines elements of both traditional Mongolian and Western music and culture in order to recast and recreate Mongolian tradition. Because traditional practices and representations are both audial and visual in nature, this investigation will use both audial and visual data. Audial data consist of songs from Altan Urag's albums, music videos, and live performances. Visual data consist of Altan Urag's presentation and appearance in their album packaging, music videos, live performances, the movie "Khadak," in which they both performed music and played minor roles as characters, and on the Internet. These data are acquired through the purchasing of their albums in local record shops, watching the films "Khadak" and "Mongol," and observations at many local live performances. Finally, interviews with the band and other professionals, as well as interactions with random attendees at local shows and with other fans, provide first-hand insights into Altan Urag's creative process, artistic intent, and general reception in Mongolia, all of which provide a necessary context for detailed analysis.

Analysis of these data will be both anthropological – that is, concerned with the actions and interactions of cultural agents – and musical. While it is important to discuss representations of tradition in an anthropological sense, as other ethnomusicologists like Peter Marsh and Carole Pegg have done, it would be a mistake to leave out a detailed analysis of the music that Altan Urag plays – a mistake that ethnomusicologists like Peter Marsh and Carole Pegg have made. This is not to say that their work is incompetent or of no use. On the contrary, both have made great contributions to understanding the ways in which Mongolian society has

changed entering and exiting the socialist period, and particularly to the roles that music has had in those changes. I therefore rely on their work in my analysis of Altan Urag's music in its socio-historical context. However, any work which sets out to analyze music as a medium for expressing and recreating traditions is incomplete if it does not pay due attention to the music itself. Music by definition has structure, and its structure is the fine work of the musicians who make it – structure is part of their craft. Analyzing musical structure and elements is therefore an important part of investigating just how representations of tradition are created.

In the Theoretical Framework section, I will raise issues concerning the dichotomy between traditional and modern with regard to Mongolian music, drawing from the works of Carole Pegg and Peter Marsh, as well as a correspondence with an ethnomusicology student and associate of Altan Urag's, Andrew Colwell. The works of Pegg and Marsh are chosen because they are some of the most recent comprehensive studies undertaken of Mongolian music, an otherwise significantly understudied topic for which there are few resources available. I will also briefly touch upon the issues of nationalism in music, drawing upon Marsh's concept of "cosmopolitan nationalism" as it relates to Mongolian music in the late socialist and post-socialist eras. This discussion of tradition will provide a more sophisticated framework in which to understand all the data gathered in the next step, yielding a clearer picture of the way that traditional and Western elements interact in the music of Altan Urag.

In the Investigation and Analysis section, analysis of the data will occur as the data is presented. I will begin by providing a brief history of Altan Urag as a band to provide a context for discussing

their albums in music in depth. I will then describe in detail, utilizing both musical and anthropological analysis, how various aspects of Altan Urag's music, in the broad sense of the term, blend the traditional and the modern, the old and the new, and the local and foreign to create new representations of the past.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

"Traditional" Mongolian Music?

There are problems in discussing "traditional" Mongolian music that we must first address before beginning an analysis of Altan Urag's music. Generally, when we speak of traditional Mongolian music, we are referring to pre-socialist period musical practices. The socialist period, from 1921 – 1990, is generally regarded now as a period of foreign ideological rule and of suppression of Mongolian cultural expression in favor of Russian and Western cultural expression.^{iv} Therefore, "real" Mongolian traditions are those that were practiced before this period of ideological rule and socialization.

Unfortunately, the historical connection between the pre-socialist period and the post-socialist period is extremely tenuous, at least with regard to traditional musical practices. Current "traditional" morin khuur repertoire has almost no documented connection to the pre-socialist period, as melodies were not really written down until during the socialist period using Western musical notation.^v Morin khuur performance practice, training, and even the instrument itself have been thoroughly modernized and Westernized during the socialist period by state cultural institutions, leaving few traces of performance practice or sound from the pre-socialist period.^{vi} The morin khuur was not alone; other Mongolian instruments and singing styles faced similar reclassification, restructuring, and standardization of performance

practices.^{vii} Thus in many ways what is now called traditional folk music in Mongolia is really the heavily Westernized product of 70 years of socialization and standardization aimed at modernization.

This is significant, because it is this kind of traditional Mongolian music that is taught still in the Mongolian Music and Dance College, where Altan Urag was trained. Thus Altan Urag's traditional music is in no way pure or authentic, in the sense of being totally pre-socialist. Indeed, these facts about Mongolian traditional music call into question the distinction between traditional and modern/Western that we have used thus far in this paper. It would seem that the "traditional" elements of Mongolian music are themselves a mixture of all kinds of influences, from pre-socialist to socialist to post-socialist."^{viii}

Nevertheless, even if the line between traditional and Western is blurred or altogether nonexistent, the fact remains that Mongolians continue to practice these "traditional" musical forms with an eye to the past. This past is not necessarily authentic; but then again that is not the point. The real goal in performing "traditional" music is to evoke images of a *perceived* past with practices that are tied, however loosely, to that past. In this way one can say that the relevant sense of tradition here is as something imagined or created by a process that "utilizes selection and invention of materials."^{ix}

New Representations of the "Golden Lineage"

Altan Urag has been "selecting" elements of this socialized tradition, created initially to support a national socialist identity, and appropriating them for the creation of a national Mongolian identity. That Altan Urag connects Mongolian traditional music to ideas of nationality and Mongolian-ness is undeniable – see song titles like "Mother Mongolia," "Great Mongolia,"

“Temujin,” and “Blue Mark.” In their music, Altan Urag appropriates elements of socialized traditional Mongolian music in order to point to a romanticized history and identity that is distinctly non-socialist and distinctly Mongolian. However, they do not attempt to be “purely” traditional or to create a national identity that excludes other nations or influence. Altan Urag’s brilliance lies in the fact that they can take these Westernized traditional musical elements, acknowledging their Westernization as a distinct part of Mongolia’s own history, and blend them with contemporary Western and modern musical styles to create a national identity that looks to the nation’s proud past and places it in the context of a changing and globalizing Mongolia. This is much like Marsh’s idea of “cosmopolitan nationalism” in his discussion of late-socialist period musicians who, though concerned for the nation’s modernization and integration into the international arena, sought to retain a national identity that would distinguish it from other cosmopolitan nations.^x This then is how we should understand Altan Urag’s innovative fusion of traditional and western musical elements: as the creation of a national Mongolian identity that is rooted in its own past and yet also embraces exchange and interaction in an increasingly connected world – as new representations of the “Golden Lineage” for a new Mongolia.

INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSIS

Altan Urag’s History

Altan Urag was formed in 2002 by seven recent graduates of the Mongolian Music and Dance College. These founding members have been and continue to be the lineup of Altan Urag. They are B. Erdenebat, band leader and yochin player (Mongolian hammered dulcimer); B. Burentugs, morin khuur player and

hoomii singer; B. Bolortungalag, drummer and percussionist; M. Chimedtogtokh, throat singer and bishguur player (Mongolian horn, similar to an oboe in sound); H. Erdenetsetseg, long song and short song singer; Ts. Gangaa, ikh khuur player (great fiddle, like a bass morin khuur); and P. Oyunbileg, morin khuur player and throat singer. From the beginning, Altan Urag was the livelihood and sole career for all of its members. This is contrast to other bands like Khusugtun or Arga Bileg, where their members are all typically also members of either the National Song and Dance Ensemble or the State Morin Khuur Ensemble.

For two years, Altan Urag performed a more straightforwardly “traditional” repertoire. Then, in 2004, the band independently recorded and released its first album *Foal’s Been Born*. This album, deemed the “official beginning” of Altan Urag by band leader B. Erdenebat (a.k.a. “Erka”), marked the band’s first experiments with the new genre of “Mongolian folk rock.”^{xi} This album was actually more stylistically diverse than the term “folk rock” might indicate, as it also contained some tracks like “Aliens” and “Unsteady” which experimented with elements of 20th century postmodern Western music. Altan Urag would eventually revisit and rearrange nearly every song on this record in future albums.

Altan Urag promoted this album with a debut concert on 18 December, 2004 and continued to promote it in small performances at local pubs and restaurants and at a large local concert hosted in 2005. In 2006, Altan Urag was able to sign a contract with the local record label Sonor Records, the largest and most experienced label in Ulaanbaatar. Under this new contract they recorded and produced *Made in Altan Urag*, which has since become their most

popular and well-known album. Eschewing the more abstract experiments from *Foal's Been Born*, Altan Urag pushed its new genre of “folk rock” on *Made in Altan Urag* with bold and energetic tracks like “Mother Mongolia” and “Blue Mark,” which would eventually become crowd favorites and live performance staples. The time around *Made in Altan Urag* marks a significant point in the band’s development of its sound and image. Just before the recording of this album, Altan Urag acquired two new and original morin khuurs: instead of horse heads, these new black fiddles were adorned with the head of the Alien monster from the famous Western sci-fi horror movie “Alien.” Additionally, the band modified one of their morin khuurs and the yochin so as to become “electric” instruments, capable of producing a distorted sound similar to an electric guitar, the instrument so emblematic of the rock music style. These and other developments around this time will be discussed in greater detail later. Also around this time, Altan Urag was involved in the production of the movie “Khadak” by directors Peter Brosens and Jessica Woodworth, where they performed the song “Mother Mongolia” in one of the scenes and even played minor roles as outlaws in the end of the film.

The time spent and the experienced acquired working with Sonor Records, as well as the publicity gained from the distribution of the album, was enormously beneficial for Altan Urag.^{xii} However, for whatever reasons, the band did not sign another contract with Sonor Records. Instead, at the end of 2007, Altan Urag signed a one-year sponsorship contract with Khan Bank, Mongolia’s largest banking corporation, worth approximately 500 million MNT (very roughly 400 thousand USD). This sponsorship provided Altan Urag the means to afford a private rehearsal space,

funds for recording and producing new albums, and the equivalent of a year’s salary for each band member to allow them to continue to focus exclusively on writing and performing music. In return, Altan Urag would play at various Khan Bank-hosted events and acknowledge Khan Bank as a sponsor at live performances and on album packages.^{xiii} In 2008, Altan Urag received an extension to the contract for another year, providing them funding through 2009.

During this time, from 2008 up to and through 2010, Altan Urag independently recorded and produced no less than five albums: *Blood*, *Hypnotism*, *Once Upon a Time in Mongolia*, *Mongol*, and *Nation*. *Mongol* is actually a soundtrack album (though not the official soundtrack) from Altan Urag’s collaboration with Tuomas Kantelinen for the 2007 movie “Mongol;” the rest are each studio albums which experiment with different musical styles and are even given different genre-based subtitles such as “Contemporary Album” (*Hypnotism*) and “Ethnic Album” (*Once Upon a Time in Mongolia*). These albums will also be discussed in greater detail later. Also during this time, Altan Urag gained greater performance experience, performing both locally and at international music festivals in Japan, China, and even the United States.^{xiv}

Driving all of this production and live performance is Altan Urag’s goal, as stated on their official website, to “promote Mongolian culture to the world and to introduce traditional music to the young people of their country.” The band also has the desire to create “something new,” to make music that has not been heard before.^{xv} To accomplish both of these goals, Altan Urag sought to blend the traditional Mongolian music that they were all taught in college with the Western musical style of hard rock that they, and the younger generation of urban Mongolians, were familiar with. We will

now begin our analysis of Altan Urag's music and presentation in various media, examining in detail *how* traditional Mongolian and Western elements are mixed in the contemporary Mongolian socio-historical context.

Structural Analysis: "Blue Mark" and "Mother Mongolia"

We will begin with the music itself by examining excerpts from two songs from the album *Made in Altan Urag*: "Blue Mark" and "Mother Mongolia." These songs were chosen because they are highly representative of Altan Urag's "folk rock" style and because they are two of Altan Urag's most popular songs. Altan Urag always plays these two songs at every one of its local performances, and they are even featured in the movies "Mongol" and "Khadak" respectively. The following transcriptions were done by ear and are taken from the album versions of these songs (there are slight variations in live performance). These transcriptions are simplified abstractions and do not account

Yochin: chorus

The "x2" at the end of the bar indicates the entire figure is repeated twice in order

Chorus melody

This melody coincides with the yochin figure above in terms of length – each are repeated twice in order to form one 8-bar phrase grouping. This melodic line is introduced on the bishguur, but on subsequent performances of the chorus

for every sonic detail, but are sufficient for the present purposes of this paper.

Let us first consider the song "Blue Mark." Before delving into melodic details, we can note from the outset that this song is performed on traditional instruments (morin khuur, ikh khuur, yochin, bishguur) without the use of any electronic distortion. The sound may then be described as being very traditional, except for the use of the rock drum set. This is a big exception of course; for any listener familiar with western rock, pop, or jazz (which certainly includes younger urban Mongolians), the sound of the drum set will immediately evoke associations with these genres. Thus in terms of instrumentation and sound we can already see a combination of "folk" with "rock." We can further explore this by examining the melodic, rhythmic, and structural characteristics of "Blue Mark."

The following figure is the yochin part for the chorus, which also introduces the song:

to form one 8-bar phrase grouping. After one of these phrase groupings to introduce the song, the chorus melody is introduced on the bishguur:

the line is sung instead with the bishguur accompanying at the end of the song.

From these two figures we can see that the chorus is set in the key of F minor. However, notice that while the

yochin part has a steady presence of the note F, creating a strong grounding in the tonic (the “home” note or first note in the scale), the chorus melody strongly emphasizes C, the dominant (the fifth note of the scale). Thus there is a steady sense of the open fifth (F – C) in the chorus which is most noticeable in the final bar of the figures above, where the melody ends on C and the yochin plays the notes F and C. The open fifth is a prominent interval in rock music, and its presence here is part of this song’s rock sound.

As well, we can see that only six of the seven notes of the F minor scale are used in these figures, namely [F, Ab, Bb, C, Db, Eb]. This collection of pitches can be viewed as a possible F pentatonic scale, [F, Ab, Bb, C, Eb] with the addition of the pitch Db, the minor sixth in the F

minor scale. This possible F pentatonic scale, [F, Ab, Bb, C, Eb] is suggested in the chorus melody by the steady presence of C, the dominant, in combination with the strong motion towards and around C by notes in this pentatonic scale – motions which are strongly reminiscent of the melodic phrasing in many traditional Mongolian short songs (which always use pentatonic scales). The additional pitch, Db, can be seen as a passing note in the descent from Eb to C, but its close proximity to C (one half-step away) and placement in the melody are very reminiscent of its use in Western melodic phrasing. Thus we can see hints of the combination of traditional and Western in the melodic phrasing and pitch collection as well.

Let us now briefly examine the verse melody of “Blue Mark”:

x6 this
tonal
ambig
uity.

Notice here that this figure, as I have transcribed it, is repeated six times. This does not add up to one 8-bar phrase grouping, but instead 12 bars, or 1.5 8-bar phrase groupings. This shall be remarked upon shortly.

This verse melody is sung by P. Oyunbileg (a.k.a. “Oyunaa”) in a style of hoomii and is also played by the yochin and the morin khuur. There is a strong, almost overwhelming, presence of C in this melody, even more so than in the chorus melody. In fact, there is only one F in this entire two-bar figure. In the verse sections then the F minor tonality is seriously challenged, with C sounding more like an alternative tonic. The surrounding pitches of Bb and Db which embellish and emphasize the C augment

Additionally, the use of pitches a whole step below and a half

step above the perceived tonic is a common melodic structure in “harder” styles of rock, especially metal. This association is reinforced by Oyunaa’s hoomii vocal style that is like a declamatory growl, similar in sound to the growling vocal style found in death metal. This vocal style is still, of course, a type of traditional hoomii.

Though these melodic elements are all present in the song, the greatest elements of the rock style are found in its rhythm and structure. The following is a structural map of “Blue Mark,” with type

of section, primary instrumentation, duration in terms of number of 8-bar

phrase groups (abbreviated as pgs), and temporal location in the track:

Section Type	Instrumentation	PG Length	Time
Intro [Chorus]	yochin, bishguur	2 pgs	(0:00 – 0:30)
Verse 1)	hoomii verse x3	1.5 pgs	(0:30 – 0:52)
Chorus)	singing x1	1 pg	(0:52 – 1:06)
Verse 2)	hoomii verse x3	1.5 pgs	(1:06 – 1:28)
Chorus)	singing x1	1 pg	(1:28 – 1:42)
Break)	instr. Break	1 pg	(1:42 – 1:56)
Solo [Chorus])	bishguur	2 pgs	(1:56 – 2:25)
Verse 3)	hoomii verse x3	1.5 pgs	(2:25 – 2:46)
Chorus)	singing, bishguur	2 pgs	(2:46 – end)

As we can see, the track can be divided into two main musical sections of verse and chorus. The terms “verse” and “chorus” were chosen because these sections function as verses and choruses in typical rock-pop fashion: during the verses Oyunaa sings all of the lyrics of the song, while chorus sections follow verse sections with a catchy melody. There is even a break section, with rhythmic and melodic material not found elsewhere in the song, which leads directly into a solo section where the bishguur improvises a melodic line over the chorus melody in the yochin and morin khuur, much like a standard guitar solo section in rock music. Furthermore, these sections are divided into phrase groups 8 bars in length, a typical phrase grouping length in rock, pop, and blues. The exceptions are the verse sections, which are instead 12 bars in length (or 1.5 phrase groups). This is a common phrase group length in blues as well (“Twelve-bar blues”), and its mix with 8-bar phrase groupings is interesting. It is also interesting to note that during these verse sections, 8-bar structures are marked in the music with a crash cymbal hit in the drum set and the entrance of

some minor electronic, ambient sound effects.

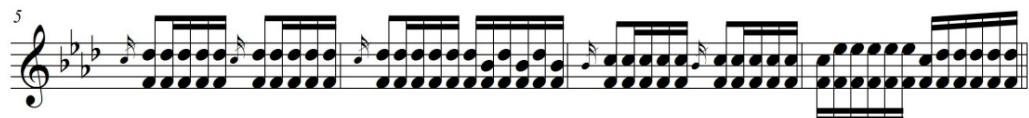
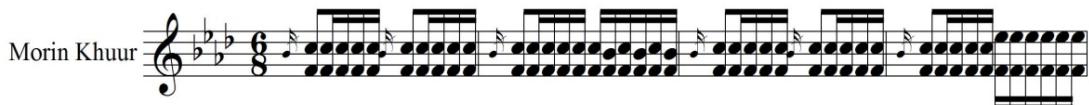
Finally, perhaps the most sonically obvious characteristic of rock music present in “Blue Mark” is the steady and driving rhythmic pulse. This can be seen in the yochin chorus figure, which consists entirely of steady eighth notes. It is most apparent in the drums, however (not transcribed). Throughout the song, except for the Break section, the drums provide a steady beat in 4/4 time, with a bass kick on beats 1 and 3 and snare hits on 2 and 4 of each measure. This pattern is often called a “backbeat,” and is a staple of rock music. As soon as the drums give four beats on the hi-hat to introduce the song and subsequently launch into the backbeat pattern, any listener at all familiar with western rock and pop musical styles is likely to identify this song as a kind of rock song.

Let us now just briefly examine excerpts from the song “Mother Mongolia,” which Erka claimed was one of the band’s favorite songs to play because it contains “many different rhythmic and melodic styles.”^{xvi} The following is the main yochin part throughout the song:



As in “Blue Mark,” we see a definite key of F minor and an 8-bar phrase grouping. The meter is different though – whereas “Blue Mark” was in 4/4 meter, “Mother Mongolia” is in 6/8 meter, meaning the pulse of the song has a triple (“1-2-3”) feel instead of a duple

feel (“1 – and – 2 – and”). The drums (not transcribed) play another backbeat pattern with the bass kick falling on beat 1 and the snare falling on beat 4 (“ONE-two-three-FOUR-five-six”). After one repetition of this figure, one morin khuur enters playing the following:



As in “Blue Mark,” there is a strong sense of beat and strong rhythmic pulse in this song as the morin khuur duplicates the yochin’s driving rhythmic pattern. Furthermore, the morin khuur here plays many open fifths, just as a guitar would play many open fifths in rock music. The morin khuur here also suggests a harmonic structure, creating a

movement from the minor tonic (F minor) in bars 1 – 4 to the minor subdominant (Bb minor) in bars 5 – 6 and then back to tonic in bars 7 – 8. This harmonic structure is depicted below, where ‘i’ indicates the minor tonic of F minor and ‘iv’ indicates the minor subdominant of Bb minor:



This harmonic structure is confirmed when the solo morin khuur enters after

another 8-bar phrase playing the following:

Morin Khuur Solo

The Bb at the beginning of the fifth bar confirms the harmonic movement to Bb minor, and the C at the beginning of the seventh bar the move back to F minor. This harmonic structure is something we did not see so clearly in “Blue Mark,” and is a distinctly western musical element. Also, notice that the morin khuur’s solo melody strongly emphasizes the pitch of C with frequent ascending motions from Bb below and with descending motions

from Db above – just as in the chorus melody of “Blue Mark.” This melody also contains the same characteristics of traditional pentatonic pitch collections and Western minor sixth emphasis that was discussed regarding “Blue Mark.”

While “Mother Mongolia” and “Blue Mark” have many melodic and rhythmic similarities, there are interesting differences in terms of overall structure. The following is a structural map of “Mother Mongolia”:

Section	Type	Instrumentation	PG Length	Time
Intro)	yochin, morin khuur	2 pgs	(0:00 – 0:46)	
Melody 1a)	solo morin khuur	2 pgs	(0:46 – 1:09)	
Melody 1b)	solo mk + bishguur	2 pgs	(1:09 – 1:31)	
Break)	yochin, long song	free time	(1:31 – 2:28)	
Bridge [2a])	hoomii	2 pgs	(2:28 – 2:51)	
Melody 2b)	bishguur	2 pgs	(2:51 – end)	

Unlike “Blue Mark,” “Mother Mongolia” cannot be said to have a verse-chorus structure, as there is no strophic text or lyrics. Instead, I have labeled the sections by what type of melody is present. Sections “Melody 1a” and “Melody 1b” have the same melody present, but I have distinguished them by the instruments performing that melody. Sections “Bridge [2a]” and “Melody 2b” contain the same melody, which is

different from that of the previous sections (and which is not transcribed). Nevertheless, the 8-bar phrase grouping is still the fundamental structural building block of the song, as can be seen above.

The exception to this is the Break section. While this section has the same driving pulse as the rest of the song (the yochin simply repeats the eighth-note, four-sixteenth-notes rhythmic figure over and over again), there is no sense of

overall phrase structure as the drums drop out. Instead, the structure becomes “free” as Erka enters singing long song. Though this free-time section conflicts with the phrase-group structure of the rest of the song, it accommodates the long song performance, as long song is traditionally performed in free time without any strong sense of rhythm, much less structure.^{xvii} Thus in the middle of a song which follows a fairly conventional rock song structure based on 8-bar phrase groupings is a temporal expression of traditional long song performance, and we can see a structural combination of traditional and western musical elements.

Other Musical Styles

The previous songs were chosen as examples of Altan Urag’s “folk rock” style. This style defines the band: they label themselves as a folk rock band on their albums and on their website, and for live performances they play their folk rock repertoire. However, since the release of *Made in Altan Urag*, Altan Urag has experimented with other musical genres on subsequent albums, combining traditional Mongolian music with various modern styles. We will now briefly discuss three of these albums.

In 2008, Altan Urag recorded two albums, one of which, entitled *Blood*, continues in the vein of “folk rock” established in *Made in Altan Urag*. The other album, *Hypnotism*, is very different: subtitled as “Contemporary Album,” it is a bold and venturesome exploration of contemporary classical music styles and elements. Some tracks like “Unsteady” and “The Foreign Khan” come directly from their first album *Foal’s Been Born*, while others like “Drumming” are new and original. The songs on *Hypnotism* can all be described as being very experimental and perhaps as more “abstract” in that their message and form are not simple. Instrumentation on these tracks often

goes beyond the band’s typical seven-piece setup, including full orchestration, as in “The Foreign Khan,” or extensive use of percussion not normally associated with rock or classical music, as in “Drumming.” Some songs make use of extended playing techniques and bizarre sounds, like “Unsteady.”

Perhaps the most interesting song with regards to our present purposes is “Kherulen River.” This song is performed by H. Erdenetsetseg (a.k.a. “Erka”) as an unaccompanied long song with additional reverb effect in the recording. In a sense, this could be called very traditional: Mongolians nomads would often sing long songs unaccompanied while simply going about their daily routine and carrying out mundane tasks.^{xviii} However, given the context of this song as an audio recording on a CD subtitled “Contemporary Album” and preceded by an intro track consisting of 64 seconds of silence, and the deliberate digital alteration of the sound, the listener hears “Kherulen River” not so much as a traditional song but as a contemporary work of high art. Or rather, the listener hears “Kherulen River,” as well as the rest of the album, as a traditional art form being abstracted and elevated to the arena of reflective high art. Thus *Hypnotism* both mixes elements of traditional music with modern music and encourages a new perspective on traditional music.

The second album we will discuss is *Once Upon a Time in Mongolia*, recorded in 2010. This album is subtitled “Ethnic Album.” “Ethnic music” is not a well-defined or insightful label for a musical genre or style, and it is not to be confused with “folk” music (Altan Urag also has a “folk” album, *Nation*, which will be discussed next). Its vagueness does, however, adequately capture the stylistic eclecticism of the album which contains a folk rock song, “Temuujin;” a sort of ethno-dance fusion (for lack of a better

term) song, “Four Kinds of Khoomei Singing;” two odd songs featuring accordion, guitar, and singing in French in addition to morin khuur called simply “Version I” and “Version II;” and a very poppy song called “Kadarchy Kys,” among others. Coinciding with this album’s experimentation with many different musical styles is its experimentation with instrumentation. The drum set is used in only three songs, while the others all make great use of various percussion and hand drums; acoustic guitar is prominent in “Version I” and “Whistling;” and even beat-boxing is used, courtesy of collaborating artists I Project, in “Four Kinds of Khoomei Singing.” However, there is also extensive use of traditional instruments beyond those used on the folk rock albums *Made in Altan Urag* and *Blood*, such as the mouth harp in several tracks and the limbe (flute) in “Whistling.” One song, “Tatar Tatлага,” utilizes and explores a specific type of playing technique for the morin khuur according to the album cover.

This whole album is focused primarily on exploring the sounds of different traditional instruments, including non-Mongolian instruments (e.g. acoustic guitar and accordion). As well, digital effects and other kinds of studio magic are audibly apparent, but there is no use of electric distortion on morin khuurs or yochin as in the folk rock albums. Finally, these “ethnic” sounds are blended together in very non-traditional, modern song styles and forms; one need look no further than “Four Kinds of Khoomei Singing.” The idea in *Once Upon a Time in Mongolia*, then, is to expand upon the kind of stylistic exploration found in the folk rock albums by not only blending traditional sounds and styles with modern sounds in a verse-chorus format, but also by blending different kinds of traditional sounds together that do not, traditionally, go together.

Finally, we will examine the album *Nation*, also recorded in 2010 and subtitled “Folk Album.” Whereas *Hypnotism* and *Once Upon a Time in Mongolia* both explicitly sought to combine the traditional with the modern, *Nation* is much more outwardly traditional, albeit in a very classicized sense of “traditional.” This is evident in tracks like “Kherulen River” and “Farewell” which feature long song and short song accompanied by morin khuur, respectively – a traditional performance arrangement.^{xix}

Interestingly, this album features two songs which appear on other albums and which we have already discussed: “Kherulen River” and “Four Kinds of Khoomei Singing.” Or rather, *Nation* features alternate versions of these songs, for they arranged and performed differently in order to fit the album’s stated “folk” aesthetic. Whereas *Hypnotism*’s version of “Kherulen River” featured unaccompanied and digitally augmented long song, *Nation*’s version features “raw” long song accompanied by solo morin khuur. Likewise, while “Four Kinds of Khoomei Singing” on *Once Upon a Time in Mongolia* is a bold and intriguing dance fusion song, on *Nation* it is simply four different styles of hoomii singing accompanied by morin khuur. By using the same songs with different arrangements on multiple albums, Altan Urag encourages the listener to pay attention not merely to the song, but also to focus explicitly on the difference in style, sound, and aesthetic that each album strives toward.

It would be uncharitable to Altan Urag’s artistic intentions to simply view *Nation* as a record of strictly traditional music. *Nation* contains several tracks, like “The Light” and “Mirage of Far Land,” which are distinctly modern in style and composition, even using some extended techniques on the yochin. More subtle elements of deliberate modernity can be

found in other songs as well, such as in the harmonies of the accompanying morin khuurs in “Farewell.” *Nation* as an album, then, is perhaps more outwardly traditional than other albums, but this is only because it seeks to combine elements of traditional music with elements of modern music in a traditional musical medium, a goal that is in line with the band’s stated goal of encouraging appreciation of traditional Mongolian music by younger urban Mongolians.

Album Packaging

Having discussed these albums with regard to auditory elements, let us now consider the visual elements of these albums’ packaging. We will begin with *Made in Altan Urag*, the album that marks a major point in Altan Urag’s history as a band, where it consolidated its image and sound as a folk rock band. As mentioned earlier, just before this album’s production Altan Urag acquired two new, custom morin khuurs that boasted the head of the monster Alien of Western sci-fi – horror lore in place of a horse’s head. A close-up image of the “monster-headed fiddle,” to use the term of Professor B. Tsetsentsolmon from the Mongolian National University, and its Alien head makes up the cover for *Made in Altan Urag*. It is a bold statement of the band’s artistic intent; the monster-headed fiddle is a symbol of the deliberate blending of Mongolian tradition with modern, global popular culture.^{xx} Furthermore, the frightening and grotesque nature of the Alien-head and the black color of the instrument evoke associations with a dark, aggressive style of rock or metal. Thus the morin khuur, thought of as a traditional Mongolian folk instrument, is transformed into a new folk rock instrument, and its image on the cover of *Made in Altan Urag* proclaims the album’s aggressive folk rock sound. More importantly, as Altan Urag’s

breakout, definitive album, it defines the band’s overall artistic goals.

Subsequent albums each have individual stylistic goals, and these are reflected in the albums’ respective covers. *Blood*, the “Folk Rock Album,” features two of the band members dressed in all black, wearing black T-shirts and some kind of black masks which completely cover all facial features, and holding morin khuurs. One of them is seated and playing while the other holds the fiddle in one hand and the bow like a spear while facing the other player. The image is obviously aggressive and evokes the aggressive and dark images associated with rock and metal music.

Hypnotism, the “Contemporary Album,” instead features black and white stripes with images of each band member’s eyes staggered in the white stripes. In contrast to *Blood*, this cover is not aggressive or dark but rather abstract, challenging, and even piercingly reflective as the eyes stare straight at the viewer. Here there are no images or depictions of tradition. The presence of only human eyes with no accompanying bodily or facial features creates a sense of impersonality and detachment from the physical, emphasizing instead the abstract. This denial of traditional images and emphasis on the abstract fits the ideas of modernity in music and thus represents the “contemporary” nature of the album.

Once Upon a Time features a picture of the band members, dressed casually, holding up and looking up through the circular wooden structure that forms the structural centerpiece of a Mongolian ger, or felt tent home. This is a particularly interesting image, as the band members are all dressed casually in modern fashion, clearly of the modern and urbanized age in Mongolia. Nonetheless, they look up through the central structure of a ger, symbolizing the constant looking to the past and to traditions. Thus this image

adequately captures the distinctly modern sound combination and arrangement of the songs which are composed at their base of traditional instruments and sounds.

Nation does not feature the band members or any human beings at all on its cover. Instead, it features only writing in the traditional Mongol Script in red ink on a brown, parchment-like surface. The use of Mongol Script very strongly conveys the sense of nationality that is so present in this album's "folk" music. Additionally, the lack of any human presence emphasizes a sense of collective, national identity over individual identity. This in turn emphasizes the role of tradition as providing a framework within which to build this national identity in modern times.

The album package for *Nation* is noteworthy for its inclusion of not a lyric booklet, but a booklet containing images from the Khan Bank (their primary sponsor at the time of this album's production) Contemporary Art Collection. This is interesting not only because it represents a combination of different artistic mediums in one package, but also because it presents the new (contemporary visual art) with the old (traditional "folk" music). Thus the packaging for the album reinforces the artistic goals of the album's music.

In general, Altan Urag's albums all contain song titles on the back cover in both Mongolian and English. Interestingly, only the "folk rock" albums contain lyric booklets, and only *Made in Altan Urag* contains English translations of the lyrics. Perhaps this is because the band places priority on its folk rock music and does not think it necessary for lyrics to be included in its other albums, wanting instead to emphasize its rock music and allow fans to become familiar with that music. Regardless, the listing of song titles in English as well as

Mongolian, a practice on albums of strictly "traditional" music by other musicians as well, is evidence of the band's concern for foreign audiences in addition to its Mongolian audience. Indeed, the album titles and subtitles on the covers are written only in English; a consequence perhaps of the prevalence of English in the global music industry and indicative of Altan Urag's presence in this industry as it targets the younger generations of Mongolians who are familiar with the music produced by it.

Overall, by producing albums with clearly stated stylistic mediums and goals, Altan Urag demonstrates both its high level of musicianship and its dedication to being innovative, exploring different combinations of traditional Mongolian musical elements with various modern musical elements. It also demonstrates the versatility of Mongolian traditional instruments and playing styles, another of the band's goals.^{xxi} Furthermore, the combination of traditional with modern that results from this versatility and innovation is captured visually in the album covers and overall packaging. Having considered Altan Urag's discography, let us now examine their live performances.

Live Performance

In the month of November, 2011, Altan Urag performed five nights every week. Each week I was able to attend four of these weekly performances. On Monday and Tuesday nights at 8:00pm they would perform at Mongolian's restaurant in the Sansar district of Ulaanbaatar, and on Sunday and Thursday nights at 9:30pm at Ikh Mongol pub and restaurant. The following observations are drawn from my notes taken at these concerts.

Regarding song choice, Altan Urag always played songs in the folk rock style, taken from the albums *Made in Altan Urag*

and *Blood*. Their sets were short, typically consisting of only five songs (one time they played six). Additionally, 2 of these 5 songs were always “Mother Mongolia,” which they always opened the show with, and “Blue Mark.” The other songs varied and were rotated, though at Ikh Mongol they always performed “RaAKH II.” They even occasionally performed a new song not yet recorded on any album.

Every member of the band was always in attendance with the exception of the long song singer, Erka, who only performed at a few of the shows I attended, always at Ikh Mongol. Her presence affected the choice of songs for the set: if she were there, they would play a new song which is a folk rock version of “Farewell” from the album *Nation*. Altan Urag likely sticks only to folk rock repertoire in live performance because it is easier to perform live (as it does not require any additional orchestral instruments or unconventional percussion), is more exciting for live performance, and most importantly because it is the identity that Altan Urag has built over the years since their formation. It is the most accessible, most exciting, and most well-received mixture of traditional and modern popular music.

The live performances of their songs were more often than not consistent with the album versions of the songs. In general they played faster than on the album versions, especially on “Blue Mark” and “RaAKH II.” These two songs also had other minor differences. In the chorus of “Blue Mark” there was often hoomii singing instead of just conventional singing as on the album, and “RaAKH II” featured much more lively and impressive drumming than the album version. These differences can be attributed to the band’s extensive experience in playing them live and the subsequent desire to add interest and

variety to their performance, for both the audience and their own sakes.

In all performances Altan Urag wore the same dress consisting of black tunics with silver embroidery in a common pattern in traditional Mongolian dress and blue jeans (occasionally the drummer would simply wear a black Altan Urag T-shirt). This dress is interesting, for as far as I can tell it is not actually authentic Mongolian traditional dress. Instead, its silver embroidery patterns evoke images of traditional dress while it is actually modern with a color scheme that evokes images of darkness associated with rock and metal. Thus Altan Urag’s costume, while modern through and through, yet evokes images of traditional dress, creating a new picture of tradition and encouraging the audience to hear the music the same way that they see the dress.

The instrumentation has already been addressed, but the physical arrangement of the musicians on stage is also noteworthy. Whereas bands like Khusugtun, who describe themselves as more a traditionally focused band on their website, tend to sit ordered in a straight line, Altan Urag arranges themselves much more like a conventional rock band with the drums at center and backstage, the ikh khuur (bass) and bishguur next to the drums, the two morin khuurs (guitars) front stage on each side, and the yochin (lead singer) front stage and center. The morin khuurs arrangement is much like that of rhythm guitar and lead guitar in a rock band, as one morin khuur sometimes uses electric distortion for leads and solos (lead guitar) while the other remains undistorted and often plays more accompaniment-style parts (rhythm guitar).

Both venues where I attended performances, Mongolian’s and Ikh Mongol, were relatively large and somewhat upscale. Ikh Mongol had a

much greater pub atmosphere about it, created by the large bar nearby and the large alehouse-style wooden tables which strangers often shared. Mongolian's in contrast was more of a restaurant with separated tables capable of seating groups of 4 and 2. Additionally, whereas the stage at Ikh Mongol was situated directly in front of rows of large wooden tables, the stage at Mongolian's, though larger, was oddly placed away from most of the seating, facing only a few small tables for two. Unlike many "concert venues" in the United States, which are designed solely for the purpose of musical or theatrical performance, these venues were both restaurants. Therefore the only seating available was seating at a table, and this put Altan Urag (and any other band that would play there) in more of a secondary role, as guest entertainment, rather than in a primary position where everyone present was present with the specific purpose of seeing Altan Urag.

Nevertheless, concerts at both venues were always well-attended and well-received by the audience. Endings of songs were always greeted with appreciative applause, with especially loud applause and cheering coming from tables containing greater numbers of empty liter-sized beer glasses. Audiences seemed to especially enjoy drum solos, electric morin khuur solos, and increases in tempo – all standard fan-favorites of rock music.

More importantly, though, the audience seemed to especially appreciate the more traditional qualities of Altan Urag's music. Whenever the long song singer, Erka, was present and they performed the new folk rock arrangement of "Farewell," there were especially loud and enthusiastic responses. One astute Mongolian audience member I spoke to observed that whenever Altan Urag played "more traditional" songs that were not "so rock," the audience generally appreciated it more. In some sense this

seemed plausible; however another Mongolian attending a show at Ikh Mongol said to me that he loved listening to Altan Urag perform "Blue Mark," one of their more aggressive-sounding rock songs, because it made him "feel proud to be Mongolian" – so much so that he would get pumped and "just want to yell 'Fuck you!'" This conversation, as well as others and observations of the crowds led me to the conclusion that Altan Urag's music is popular and well-received neither strictly because of its traditional elements nor because of its rock elements, but precisely because it blends the two so that the traditional and the modern, the old and the new, complement each other in a way that is meaningful and accessible to many contemporary Mongolians.

Other Media

In addition to their albums and live performances, Altan Urag utilizes other media including movies, music videos, and the internet. As previously mentioned, Altan Urag was involved in the production of the movies "Khadak," directed by Peter Brosens and Jessica Woodworth, and "Mongol," directed by Sergei Bodrov. In "Khadak," Altan Urag actually makes an appearance in the film as a band of outlaws. They perform the song "Mother Mongolia" and then play minor roles as bandits assisting in the reclamation of state-seized meat. The entire film is a magical-realist film that focuses on the rapid social change that Mongolia is currently experiencing. Altan Urag's musical and especially physical presence in this movie then places their music and their identity as a band in this context of social change, reinforcing and affirming their place as connectors of the traditional with the modern.

This is in contrast to the movie "Mongol," where Altan Urag was involved only in parts of the soundtrack. While they collaborated with Tuomas

Kantelin on parts of the score, an arrangement of their song “Blue Mark” appears during a major battle scene and during the end credits. Whereas “Khadak” was an artistic, thoughtful, social commentary, “Mongol” was a high-budget, special-effects driven thriller aimed more at providing entertainment through spectacular and over-the-top fight scenes. In this context, Altan Urag’s music can be seen as a kind of modernized glorification of a romanticized past.

Altan Urag has said that they greatly enjoyed working on the films, as they are major artistic creations (televised interview). This is evident in their many music videos produced to date. They have produced approximately ten music videos, mostly of songs from *Made in Altan Urag* and *Blood*, but also of “A Tale of Old Spirit” from the album *Once Upon a Time in Mongolia*. These music videos sometimes tell stories and sometimes simply feature the band playing a song on an elaborate set. The video for “Blue Mark” fittingly includes video clips from the movie “Mongol.”

One of the most interesting videos however is for the song “Abroad” from *Made in Altan Urag*. Musically this song features hoomii, hand drums, and guitar work by collaborating artist Andrew Colwell in 15/8 meter and in a very dark, modal chord progression. The resulting sound is very dark and intentionally exotic, coinciding with the title “Abroad.” The video features the band, plus Andrew Colwell (a non-Mongolian), playing music while circling an owoo, a traditional Mongolian religious structure, and paying respect to it. The band is dressed in their black performance robes, while Andrew is dressed in a typical Western fashion. Thus, there are multiple levels of interaction between the traditional and the modern – between the owoo and Altan Urag, modern Mongolians who pay tribute to the past in a modernized

musical medium, and between Altan Urag and Andrew, a Western foreigner playing a Western instrument who is nonetheless integrated into the music and the overall scene. It is worth noting also that Andrew does not circle the owoo or perform any sort of ritual regarding the owoo. Instead, his connection is to the band, again placing Altan Urag and their music in the role of a link or communicator between past and present. As Andrew himself puts it: “My interpretation is that they are all about synthesizing the new with the old, the past with the present, the local with the foreign. Collaborating with me, my presence in the video, engaging the owoo respectfully with a ‘hybrid’ song is all part of this message and aesthetic.”^{xxii}

Finally, Altan Urag makes use of the Internet in promoting themselves and their artistic goals. They have a relatively new website, designed by Baadai (who also developed Khusugtun’s website), that features nifty flash animation, contains biographical information of the band, showcases their sponsors, has links to music videos, and the latest Altan Urag news – all available in both Mongolian and English. The home page is designed like the inside of a ger with an old television set and one of Altan Urag’s signature monster-headed fiddles resting inside. All of Altan Urag’s music videos can be found through the television. Most notable of all is the online “Audio/E-Shop” where users can purchase and download Altan Urag music online. By offering their music online Altan Urag is specifically catering to a younger, urban generation of Mongolians and is attempting to make their music as accessible as possible.

Along the same lines, Altan Urag also makes use of social networking, like Facebook and MySpace. Altan Urag’s social networking is handled by O. Enhmandah (a.k.a. “Mandi”), a young, tech-savvy Mongolian who has had the

job for only about 9 months. Additionally, Mandi is responsible for managing Altan Urag's band channel on YouTube, where anyone online across the world can view Altan Urag's music videos and other relevant videos. He works essentially as a volunteer, driven by his intense appreciation for Altan Urag's music.^{xxiii} His recent enlisting by the band shows that Altan Urag has only recently made the move to social networking, but also that it is keenly aware of what methods are most effective for reaching their target audience of young Mongolians. Mandi is central to this, and the story of his getting the job – being offered it via email correspondence – is another example of Altan Urag's dedication to promoting their art and the traditional music of Mongolia to a new audience.

CONCLUSION

Altan Urag successfully blends traditional music with rock and other Western/modern musical styles in order to share Mongolian culture with the world and in order to inspire new urban generations of Mongolians to appreciate traditional Mongolian music. This blending occurs on audial and visual levels and in many different mediums: in album music and packaging, in live performance, movies, music videos, and online. The traditional elements are never strictly distinguishable from the non-traditional, because tradition is not a static object – it is constantly reimagined and recreated. By creating their unique style of Mongolian folk rock, Altan Urag has used traditional elements and rock elements to point to a national identity rooted in a perceived past which also openly embraces interaction with other nations and cultures in the context of a modern, globalized world. In blending old with new and local with foreign they create new representations of

the past that are meaningful and accessible in the present.

"The Mongolian nation of this time
Inherited this motherland.
Blessed with having
The sun, rising in the morning
Born the Mongolian fate, eternal
Inheriting the custom and tradition."

- from "Blue Mark"

ⁱ G. Serdamba, personal interview, September 18, 2011.

ⁱⁱ Carole Pegg, *Mongolian Music, Dance & Oral Narrative* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 293.

ⁱⁱⁱ B. Erdenebat, Burnee, and Tungaa, personal interview, Novemeber 15, 2011.

^{iv} D. Khirgis Munkh-Ochir, personal interview, October 31, 2011.

^v T. Mend-Ooyo, personal interview, September 5, 2011.

^{vi} Peter Marsh, *The Horse-head Fiddle and the Cosmopolitan Reimagination of Tradition in Mongolia* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 54-67.

^{vii} Pegg, *Mongolian music, Dance & Oral Narrative*, 256 – 261.

^{viii} Andrew Colwell, email correspondence, November 23, 2011.

^{ix} Sue Tuohy qtd. in Marsh, *The Horse-head Fiddle*, 13.

^x Ibid., 79.

^{xi} Erdenebat, Burnee, and Tungaa, personal interview.

^{xii} Ibid.

^{xiii} Ts. Oyunsetseg, personal interview, November 18, 2011.

^{xiv} Ts. Enkhchimeg, personal interview, October 18, 2011.

^{xv} Erdenebat, Burnee, and Tungaa, personal interview.

^{xvi} Erdenebat, Burnee, Tungaa, personal interview.

^{xvii} Pegg, *Mongolian Music*, 45.

^{xviii} Ibid., 47

^{xix} Pegg, *Mongolian Music*, 44.

^{xx} B. Tsetsentsolmon, “On How the Horse-headed Fiddle (*Morin Khuur*) Became Monster-headed and Electric in the Age of Globalization,” Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, National University of Mongolia, 2009.

^{xxi} Erdenebat, Burnee, and Tungaa, personal interview.

^{xxii} Colwell, personal correspondence, November 23, 2011.

^{xxiii} O. Enhmandah, personal interview, Novemeber 23, 2011.

REFERENCES

Print and Online Sources

- Altan Urag. Televised interview on NTV, Mongolian national television. Posted on YouTube November 15, 2011.
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZicjIYUj3g>>
Accessed November 23, 2011.
- B. Tsetsentsolmon. “On How the Horse-headed Fiddle (*Morin Khuur*) Became Monster-headed and Electric in the Age of Globalization.” Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, National University of Mongolia. 2009.
- Marsh, Peter. *The Horse-head Fiddle and the Cosmopolitan Reimagination of Tradition in Mongolia*. New York: Routledge, 2009.
- Pegg, Carole. *Mongolian Music, Dance, & Oral Narrative*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001.

Interviews and Personal Correspondences

- B. Erdenebat, Burnee, Tungaa. Altan Urag band members. Personal Interview. Trans. Baganaa.Ikh Mongol, Ulaanbaatar. November 15, 2011.
- Colwell, Andrew. Collaborating artist in song and music video “Abroad.” “RE: research project on Mongolian music and Altan Urag.” Email correspondence. November 23, 2011.
- G. Serdamba. Herder. Personal Interview. Trans. Ulzii Akh. Soyo bag, Ulaan-Uul soum, Huvsgul aimag. September 18, 2011.
- Munkh-Ochir D. Khirgis. Mongolian national security administrator. Personal Interview. School of International Training, Ulaanbaatar. October 31, 2011.
- O. Enhmandah. Social networking coordinator for Altan Urag. Personal Interview. Nayra Café, Ulaanbaatar. November 23, 2011.
- T. Mend-Ooyo. President of National Morin Khuur Society. Personal Interview. School of International Training, Ulaanbaatar. September 5, 2011.
- Ts. Enkhchimeg. Cultural Heritage Program Director of the Arts Council of Mongolia. Personal

Interview. Arts Council of Mongolia office, Ulaanbaatar. October 18, 2011.

Ts. Oyunsetseg. Head of Marketing Division at Khan Bank. Personal Interview. Khan Bank Central Office, Ulaanbaatar. November 18, 2011.

Recordings

- Altan Urag. *Blood*. Independent Release, 2008. CD.
- *Hypnotism*. Independent Release, 2008. CD.
- *Made in Altan Urag*. Sonor Records, 2006. CD.
- *Mongol*. Independent Release, 2010. CD.
- *Nation*. Independent Release, 2010. CD.
- *Once Upon a Time in Mongolia*. Independent Release, 2010. CD.

COLLEGE STUDENTS' USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND THEIR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN CHINA

Sun Huan

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

ABSTRACT

The debate of whether the use of Internet can enhance the offline political participation has mostly drawn empirical materials from democratic countries, but this study directs our attention to authoritarian regimes, like China. Instead of establishing a direct link between Internet use and offline participation, this paper focuses on mechanisms in the more nuanced process from informational use of social networking sites (SNS) by Chinese students to their political participation. Using data collected in spring 2010 from a random sample of students of a university in Beijing, this study builds up structural equation models to test the mechanisms in the process. Main findings include the positive relationship between time spent on SNS and their offline political participation through paths of political informational behavior and civic actions. Political attitude is proved as mediation between the amount of time spent on SNS and political informational actions. This article also provides evidence that the purposes of using SNS significantly influence the types of participation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The adoption of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) by citizens has drastically changed the way we live and our interaction patterns. The

impact of the Internet on every aspect of our life has been a very intriguing topic for scholars of many disciplines. In this work, under the broad topic of the relationship between the Internet and political participation, we specifically focus on the question whether the use of social networking sites by university students can enhance their political participation in China.

The significance of selecting this question is three-fold. First, in the literature, compared with comprehensive discussions of the general terms of Internet and political engagement, fewer works have emphasized the aspect of a particular form of Internet applications, such as social networking sites. Second, even though discussion on the social networking site use and voting behavior can be found in recent studies, very few take non-democratic regimes into the field of quantitative analysis. Third, many works focus on structural factors, such as social economic status, and education, as predictors of political participation; this study aims to provide a more complex model to examine the inner mechanisms of the process from online information gathering and networking to offline behavior.

Thus, we will first review some dominant views on whether the rise of the Internet could play an active role in widening and deepening citizen's political participation so as to provide a broad background. Analyzing different

approaches to answer the question, this article situates itself in the current gap of knowledge. Based on the literature of predictors of political participation in other countries, finally we will look at how scholars theorize Chinese characteristics of political participation, in order to shed light on our definitions of political behavior in authoritarian regimes.

INTERNET AND DEMOCRACY

In the literature there are various and even opposite hypotheses developed with regard to the political impact of the prevalence of the Internet. Optimists support the idea that a more engaged political community can be achieved by the Internet,ⁱ while pessimists believe the Internet shows little advantage in providing a participatory model.ⁱⁱ Many other researches do not provide a firm answer to the question,ⁱⁱⁱ which might be explained by the fact that no constant evaluation systems have been widely accepted. The full panel data from 1992 to 2002 was used in one more recent research showed Internet was not able to explain significant variation in democracy around the world.^{iv} At the same time, a perspective from media is adopted by the research claiming the plurality of media, especially the social media, is challenging the previous relationship between the monopolistic media and politics.^v

The discussion of whether SNS use fosters the growth of civil society falls largely to the area of social capital theory. Some studies use empirical evidence to establish the level of trust between users in social networking sites, which results in higher social capital in personal relationships.^{vi} Theory of how social capital enhances civic engagement to make officials more responsive traces back to Bourdieu,^{vii} but the view of time replacement theory by Putnam,^{viii} asserting that the decline of social capital is because

the time for participating associations has been consumed by media, has drawn attentions of many researchers. Some of them complicate the concept of social capital, believing it contains three parts: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and behavioral.^{ix} They measure life satisfaction as an indicator of intrapersonal social capital, and social trust as interpersonal social capital, while behavioral refers to actual civic engagement and participation. This approach sheds light on the possibility of putting psychological variables in our equation, even though social capital theory is over-used on some occasions. Contrary to the conclusion of declining social capital, some researchers established that the interpersonal relationships in the online world are actually positively linked to civic activities and increased political participation.^x

Research examining the social implications of the Internet questions whether the increased availability of information provided by the Internet has served to create a more informed public.^{xi} A common logic is that a more informed society is achieved by easier access to a high volume of information.^{xii} Not only the use of traditional sources of information online but also the emergence of usage of weblogs are equally important predictors of online political engagement.^{xiii} However, another empirical study rejects the mechanisms linked between information availability and levels of engagement.^{xiv} Meanwhile Polat summarizes why a high volume of information online does not guarantee a more informed public: that human processing information ability is limited, that most online information comes from traditional sources, that unequal distribution of information exists, and that the Internet feature of narrow casting leads to fragmentation.^{xv}

In addition, optimists suggest another reason to argue for the enhanced level of participation, namely, the potential to increase deliberative discussion. Interactive civic messaging reinforces interpersonal political discussion, which in turn fosters civic participation.^{xvi} A comparison between an online forum and traditional media confirms the effect of the Internet bringing new participants to political discussion.^{xvii} By expanding the communication capacity, the Internet may facilitate a qualitative change from mass communication into horizontal discussions, but it still needs further observation.^{xviii} An empirical study rejected the consideration of the Internet as a public sphere, where deliberative participation is improved, by laying out a model to compare Internet and print media.^{xix}

Except for opinions on increased horizontal participation diverse, whether the Internet can play a positive role in promoting a more interactive government is still doubtful. A simplistic view that increasing the access to broadband Internet can result in trust in government is denied by research studying four cases of municipalities.^{xx} Another research with a special interest in the vertical relationship between the authority and citizens in China claims that people can enhance participation by e-information, e-consultation, e-discussion and e-decision making, but it is all under government's close monitoring.^{xxi} A case study that examines the e-participation and local governance seems to come to a similar conclusion that though increased involvement exists, there is no fundamental change because of the civic culture and social capital.^{xxii} The evolving technology may indeed not be able to perform perfectly for e-democracy at the present time, but government should take incremental steps to adapt to the Internet.^{xxiii}

Contradictory views exist even though they largely rely on similar structural factors to test if the use of Internet leads to digital divide or widened participation. When measuring political participation, socioeconomic status (SES), gender and age are often used as control variables.^{xxiv} Physical locations as a strong factor of SES are identified as a predictor of access to the Internet, the usage of which has a clear effect on civic participation—contacting a public official.^{xxv} The conclusion of the inequities of access to the Internet is prevalent in literature;^{xxvi} however, a study also warns the gap of digital skill is emerging but the traditionally considered digital divide of access is closing.^{xxvii} One noteworthy result from the study of municipal e-participation in Norway shows that younger citizens who usually stand outside the political participation use the web actively, and there is no obvious difference in the online political participation between the political elites and citizens, even though the Internet widens the social and demographic divisions.^{xxviii}

PREDICTORS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

As mentioned many studies have adopted structural factors (income, gender, age, etc.) as the predictors of political participation, based on the ideal that unequal levels of participation should be given equal consideration. Building on the SES model, a resource model of political participation was developed with the advantage that it can not only perform as predictor of political participation, but also it in fact links SES to political activities, explaining why people from different social background participate in particular kinds of political activity. The authors claim that resources, time, money and civic skills, which distribute relating to

SES, are powerful predictors of political participation.^{xxix} However, this may not be the case, because the motivations in politics, such as interest and efficacy, are excluded by the model. Using this framework, another study analyzing the representativeness of Internet political participation develops its first two steps by modeling and assessing how non-monetary factors influencing online participation distribute across social categories.^{xxx}

The purpose of using media is another well-debated factor that shapes the behavior of the audience. Many empirical studies have suggested that people who seek information online are more likely to participate in civic activities than people whose purpose of using the Internet is entertainment.^{xxxi} The different outcomes of various purposes of media use are coined as “uses and gratifications”,^{xxxii} by which they focus on the explanation of how people use media to gratify their needs and what consequences there may be if users seek specific content. It leads us to ask if people seeking online political news would be more likely to conduct political activities since these people might be more concerned about some serious social problems.

The discussion of the purposes of using Internet may shed light on the complexity behind political participation. Many studies have suggested the informational use of new media have been positively related to associative activities and community commitment.^{xxxiii} Another mechanism mentioned by some researchers is the interactivity enabled by new media, which have significantly enhanced contacts in online networks. One study researched the weak ties through the online interaction, which ultimately contributes to offline political participation.^{xxxiv} In addition to interactivity, some studies focus on the

self-expression aspect of blog use and claim an effect of mobilization of blog use.^{xxxv}

YOUTH AND SOCIAL MEDIA

It is no doubt that the majority of Chinese netizens are the younger generation of China, so our locus should also be directed to the area of youth and social media. It is indicated in several studies that the Internet has brought the younger generation into political participation either online or offline.^{xxxvi} To examine the extant relationship between the youth's Internet use and civic engagement, a study shows a digital renaissance of youth and the two concepts are positively related.^{xxxvii} A more recent study confirms this finding, but the difference between civic participation and political participation is distinguished, and interpersonal communication is considered as the essential predictor.^{xxxviii} Although the emergence of social networking sites seems to promise a democratic discourse for its users, this hypothesis is rejected since young adults are not more inclined to participate in politics than other forms of media.^{xxxix} Avoiding a direct answer to the question, the authors broke the Internet use into purposes and time dimensions, and then reached the conclusion that the youth's activity is an important predictor of civic engagement rather than time spent online.^{xl} Then later research further focuses on the ordinary youth, neither apathetic nor activists, but the influence of the medium the Internet have on youngsters is not emphasized.^{xl} Although the Internet may not be the point in this research, but actually their individualized acts expressing their political and social concerns are shaped by the Internet.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN CHINA

In western literature, the definition of political participation largely relies on the fact that people influence policy making by voting for their leaders. It is believed that election is the only way for people to participate in politics.^{xlii} Later Verba defines political participation as “an activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action—either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies.”^{xliii} However, this definition has been challenged by much other research, which expands participation to community services.^{xliv} The broader definition directs our attention from voting behavior that is specifically applicable to democratic countries to more general civic engagement with the society, such as social services, volunteering and many other forms in authoritarian countries.

This definition shift is very useful when we think of political behaviors of ordinary people in China. In contrast to earlier theories believing that China is a totalitarian model where people are highly atomized,^{xlv} some political scientists found the power of groups who share similar interests in non-democratic China.^{xlvi} Then after the 1989 students’ Tiananmen movement, the discussion of political participation has shifted to the question: how are political activities of ordinary people linked to the policy-making process in communist societies?^{xlvii}

In 1990, a survey at the individual level was conducted by Nathan and Shi to summarize the characters of civic culture in China.^{xlviii} Later in Shi’s book on political participation in Beijing, Shi divides the political participation acts into seven modes: voting, campaign activities, appeals, adversarial appeals, cronyism, resistance, and election boycotts. He focuses on the institutional arrangements,

such as working units, which provide people with channels to influence politics in Chinese society.^{xlix} Instead of directly examining the ordinary people’s forms of political participation, other research proposes six policy agenda setting models to explain how participants at various levels have a say in the process of policy formulation,¹ which has not been emphasized by Shi’s work because of his pessimistic view on the possibility.

It is noteworthy to mention that Wang envisages the rise of the Internet as providing primary channels for Chinese citizens to comment on public affairs and challenge authority, but except for extreme controversial cases, most issues brought by the Internet still need a long time to transform accumulative online political participation into policy adjustments (Wang, 2008).^{li} Recent observations by Yang Guobin confirmed the power of contentious politics on Chinese Internet, in which he established the dynamics of Internet empowerment by portraying prominent controversial cases of social issues.^{lii} Although it is groundbreaking to systematically draw people’s attention to the complexity of online world, his methodology of case study still lacks the ability to be applied to ordinary everyday forms of political participation.

HYPOTHESES

This study has identified the current knowledge gap within the existing literature on Internet and political participation. Although the debate of the role of Internet in democracy and democratization is not new, limited literature is found that specifically discusses the use of social networking sites and the mechanisms of the process from SNS use to offline participation in a Chinese context. This study draws on concepts, theories, and models in previous

work to propose several hypotheses to test in later parts of the study.

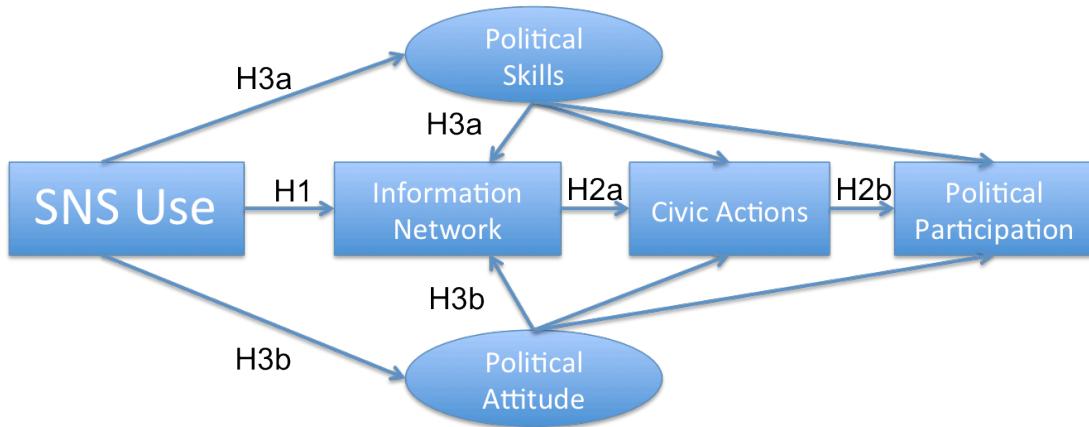


Figure 1 Hypothetical model of the SNS use and its relationships to political participation

Our conceptual model is summarized in Figure 1. Three mechanisms in the process from SNS use to political participation are developed in this conceptual model. The first one is the mechanism from SNS use to information network. The function of social networking sites is primarily to generate information from friends, and exchange information within one's online network. No matter if the information is in the forms of a longer post, a picture, or simply a shorter status, users of SNS consume and create information via this platform. In the process of exchange, some information of political importance may be circulated within the platform, and through the human agency, the political information, we expect, will also flow to other information networks. Here we do not limit the network to the online world, but any networks that are involved with behaviors of sharing and gathering

political information. Thus the first hypothesis is proposed:

H1: SNS use is positively linked with information network (the behavior of circulating political information).

The second mechanism in the process is the mobilization from informational behavior to civic actions in real life, and even political participation. In this model, the political participation refers to radical activities that explicitly challenge the authority. Meanwhile, we should also be aware that in an authoritarian country, like China, this kind of activity is not institutionalized and is rarely practiced in comparison with civic actions, which coined here mainly refer to community services, volunteering and other social work for charity. The mobilization process from informational use to real life civic participation has been established by some authors.ⁱⁱⁱ This article expects that the information sharing behaviors can be positively related to both civic engagement and political

participation. The following is the hypothesis:

H2a: Political information gathering and sharing behaviors will be positively linked to civic actions.

H2b: Civic actions will be further positively related to political participation.

Although the paths from SNS use to political participation are the main theoretical aspects we intend to explore, other strong predictors of political participation should not be neglected. As proposed by some alternative models, political skills and political attitude are taken as important factors that mediate between SNS use and three types of actions.^{lv} People using social networking sites might come from different reasons, and we expect that some of them who have better political skills and are more interested in politics may be more likely to engage with public issues:

H3a: Political skills are the important mediation that links SNS use with information network, civic actions and political participation.

H3b: Political attitude is the important mediation that links SNS use with information network, civic actions and political participation.

It is worth noting that the relationship between SNS use and political skills or attitude is not necessarily positive, because SNS could be a very time-consuming activity, which in the long term might diminish one's political skills or interest in politics. The complexity of the long-term influence of SNS use is beyond the scope of this article, and future analysis with large-scale data of longitudinal studies can be very useful to examine the permanent psychological influence of social media. Let me be clear here that the factors of political skills and

attitude are introduced mainly as control variables and so are demographics.^{lv} This conceptual model aims to establish the potentialities of SNS as channels of circulating political information, which further leads to civic actions and political participation.

The linkages in the conceptual model emphasize the most important paths this article intends to establish, and it does not mean that there is no relationship among these unlinked concepts. For example, the behavior of information sharing is very likely to be directly linked to political participation, as many cases in real life might lead us to think of renowned activists who are also very active in sharing political news. But our aim in this study is not to provide a comprehensive model that encompasses all possibilities. Leaving out unnecessary linkages, this study can focus on the paths that show the process of escalation and mobilization from daily practiced participation to politically sensitive participation in China.

METHODS

SAMPLING

To fulfill the goals of this study, a survey was conducted in spring 2010 at Tsinghua University covering both undergraduate and graduate students, excluding international students. We choose to independently conduct the survey because there is no extant national data available specifically for Internet use and users' political participation. According to a national survey report by CNNIC, in 2009, 59.1% SNS users had a degree higher than secondary school.^{vi} This information leads our approach to gathering data of college students. We handed out 721 questionnaires and had 521 respondents. The response rate was 73.1%.

Regarding sampling procedure, first, whole lists of student dorm in three

categories (bachelor, master and doctoral students) were made. Second, according to the proportion of numbers of students in three categories, the number of sample dorms for each category was calculated. Third, a sample size of 141 dorms were randomly selected, composing of 53 for the category of bachelor, 55 for master, and 33 for doctoral students. Once the dorms were selected, we handed questionnaires to all students in that dorm. Each sample dorm was visited four times unless we collected all answered questionnaires in that dorm before the fourth visit.

MEASURES

POLITICAL BEHAVIORS

Participation is measured with references to several western scholars' works but combined with Chinese students' characteristics of political participation behavior. This study emphasizes that the concept is behavior not attitude. Three levels of participation are considered, a) participation related with gathering and sharing controversial information or news, b) civic actions with a focus on caring about public life, c) in comparison with previous categories, more radical political participation behaviors. A specific list of three forms of political participation is described as follows:

Table 1 Factor Analysis of Behaviors of Political Participation

	Factor Loadings		
	a)Information Network	b)Civic Actions	c)Political participation
Talking about political news with others		.823	
Reading political news		.775	
Forwarding or sharing political news		.671	
Making suggestion on development of your organization		.625	
Listening to speech of political content		.560	.509
Donation		.468	
Commenting on news events			
Organizing activities for charity			.760
Community service			.686
Making a complaint for public interest			.577
Giving a speech on a topic of public interest			.564
Forwarding an email about public affair			.561
Taking part in online petition			.481
Wearing clothes with political meaning			.777
Protesting			.762
Taking part in an assembly			.564
Contacting media for public affair		.400	.553
Boycotting			.465
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis, explaining 48.1% variance.			
Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization A. Rotation converged in 5 iterations			

Respondents were asked how often they have done these behaviors in the past 12 months. The frequency of conducting behaviors is measured in five points. “5” stands for “most frequent” and “1” stands for “never have done.” The results of factor analysis show $KMO > 7$, $sig = 0$, and it explained 48.1% variance. Through factor analysis, we extract information of their behaviors and group these indicators in three dimensions: information network, civic participation and political participation. Later we will use these grouped indicators to build a structural equation model.

Table 2 Renren memberships

Are you a user of Renren.com		
	Frequency	Proportion
No	69	13.1
Yes	454	86.1
Missing	4	.8
Total	527	100.0

Table 3 descriptive statistics of SNS use

	Note	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Time spent on Renren every day	1=less than 10 minutes 6=over 4 hours	1	6	2.49	1.299
Frequency of logging to Renren	1=less than once a day 5=over 1 7 times a day	5		2.72	1.210

PURPOSE OF SNS USE

To measure the purpose of students' use of SNS, in the questionnaire we first listed several activities that can be done on these platforms, and let them choose the frequencies of doing these activities from

a scale of one to five. Then adopting factor analysis to extract common features of these activities, we summarize their purpose in three dimensions for each types of use.

SNS USE

SNS use is considered in two dimensions, time spent on SNS and frequency of SNS use. In the survey, Renren.com is the representative of SNS, not only because Renren has all typical functions of SNS but also it is the most popular SNS website among college

students in China. We can see from Table 2, 86.1% students are users of Renren. Then students were asked how often they log on to Renren and how much time they spend on it every day. The descriptive statistics for intensity of SNS use is Table 3.

Table 4 Factor Analysis of Purposes of SNS use

	Factor Loadings		
	Networking	Self expression	Entertainment
Reading friends' updates	.817		
Posting articles		.783	
Sharing	.497	.498	
Uploading pictures		.839	
Leaving messages	.592	.424	
Online chat		.400	.578
Playing games			.876
Refreshing updates	.740		
Changing status	.610	.435	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Explaining 62.4% variance

Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization A. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

It is indicated from Table 4 that students usually practice the main function of these platforms, seeking information and networking on SNS respectively. These platforms provide them with opportunities to express themselves by commenting, posting pictures and for entertainment.

SOCIODEMOGRAPHICS

The variables include gender (male = 66.3%), age ($M = 22.72$, $SD = 3.16$), family monthly income per person (ranging from 1=below 118 USD to 5=over 2212 USD, $M=2.89$, $SD=1.25$), GPA (ranging from 1=top 20% to 4=bottom 20%, $M=2.17$, $SD=0.89$) and others in Table 5.

Table 5 Descriptive statistics of other demographic information

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	172	33.5
	Male	341	66.5
Political Affiliation	China Communist Party Member	177	34.4
	China Communist Youth League	306	59.5
	No affiliation	29	5.6
	Member of other parties	2	.4
Grade	Freshman & Sophomore	152	29.6
	Junior & Senior	167	32.6
	Master Student	118	23.0
	PhD Student	76	14.8
Major	Science	57	11.1
	Engineering	343	67.0
	Humanities	32	6.3
	Social Science	42	8.3
	Art	38	7.4
Total		527	100.0

It is worth noting here that the demographic variables are not included in later analysis because the college students' life at campus is not largely shaped by their income. SES as the important predictor in other studies of political participation, however, in this group of respondents it is not the same. In addition, this descriptive numbers are provided here mainly in order to give more information about the respondents such as political affiliation and major. Not surprisingly, it is representative that most students are CCP affiliated, but the limitations of this data are the unbalanced gender and major distribution.

OTHER VARIABLES

Political attitude include measurements of political knowledge and political interest. Both are self-assessed by respondents in the questionnaire in a scale of one to five. Participation skills are measured by asking questions from no.18 through no.23 (use ftp, upload video, design webpage, coding, and climb over the Great Firewall). Every positive answer will be marked 1 point, so the scale is based on the sum of the positive answers from zero to six.

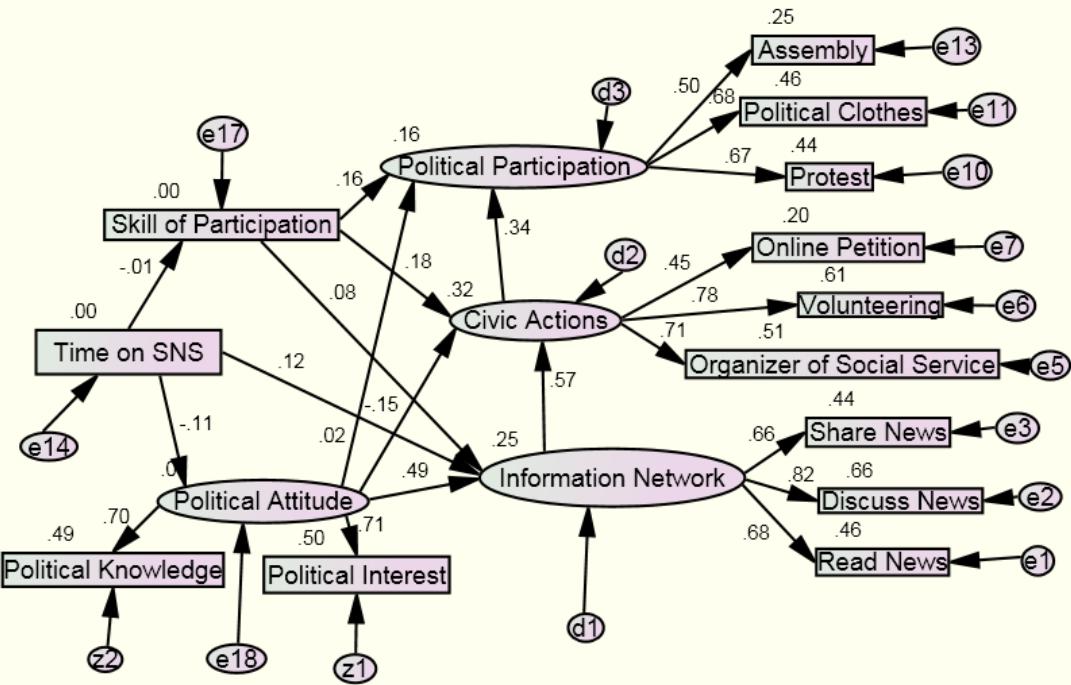
FINDINGS

To answer the questions raised in our conceptual model, we established a structural equation model to test how the data fit our theory in Figure 2. In the previous section of this article, we used factor analysis to better group political

behaviors into three categories, each of which consists of three types of behaviors. Specifically, the information network is measured by reading, sharing, and discussing news in both online and offline environment. The civic actions refer to organizing social services, online petition

and volunteering. The political participation consists of offline assembly for political reasons, wearing clothes of political symbols, and going for protest.

Figure 2 SEM of conceptual model

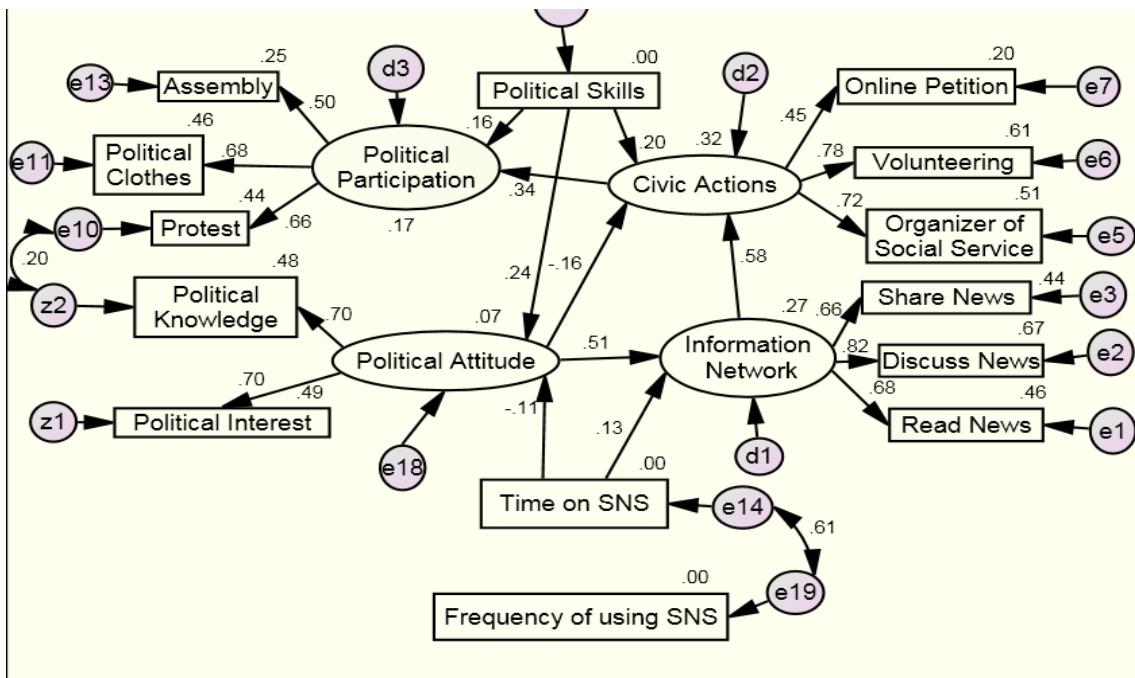


For the evaluation of the SEM of this conceptual model, CFI=0.925, TLI=0.896, IFI=0.926, Chi square=158.025, degree of freedom=56, RMSEA=0.059, CHI SQUARE/DF=2.82.

Unfortunately this result is not a perfectly fit model, as TLI is less than 0.09 and RMSEA is over 0.05. But we can certainly see that the data and the model are not arbitrarily put together and there is

certainly a similar pattern within this data set, which might be also acceptable for our conceptual model. As long as the paths from SNS use to information network, civic actions and then to political participation are not eliminated, we modified the model to seek for a better pattern within this data set in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Revised SEM of conceptual model



For the evaluation of this model, CFI, TLI, IFI>0.9 , Chi square=147.356, degree of freedom=69, RMSEA<0.5, CHI SQUARE/DF=2.14.

This time the revised model is well fit. We can see from the structural equation model, the direct effect of time spent on SNS on information network is 0.13 ($p<0.05$), so we can accept H1: SNS use is positively linked with information network (the behavior of circulating political information). Also, we can prove there is a positive link between frequency of SNS use and information network, while time spent on SNS is the mediation.

Regarding H2a we can see the strong linkage between information network and civic actions, as the direct effect is 0.58 ($p < 0.001$), so we accept hypothesis H2a. The direct effect of civic actions on political participation is 0.34 ($p < 0.001$), so we accept hypothesis H2b. So far we have successfully confirmed the most important part of our hypotheses: the linkage of SNS use to information circulating, to civic actions, and then to political participation.

The political attitude is identified as a strong predictor of political informational behavior, as the direct effect is 0.51 ($p < 0.001$). Time spent on SNS is negatively linked to political attitude, which means the more time you spend online, the more likely you become politically apathetic. These two paths are partially supported our hypothesis H3b: Political attitude is the important mediation that links SNS use with information network. The relationship between political attitude and other behaviors is not meaningfully shown in this model.

We cannot prove H3a (political skills are the important mediation that links SNS use with information network, civic actions and political participation) in this model, because there is no path going through political participation skills. But actually we can see from the model that political participation skills have positive influence on civic participation and political participation, which might shed light on future analysis about the different skill requirements of online and offline participation.

Since these results provide support for our main hypothesis that the SNS use can

correlation between different purposes of using SNS and the three incremental types

Table 6 Regressions predicting political participation from purposes of SNS use variables

Independent variables: Purpose of using SNS	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta
Constant	.004		.020		-.030	
Networking	.060	.058	.198***	.195	.277***	.277
Self-expression	.129 **	.125	.136 **	.134	.054	.054
Entertainment	.172***	.166	.089	.088	-.026	-.026
R square	0.046		0.064		0.081	

result in increased political information sharing, and then trigger sequent mechanisms to political participation in real time, we would like to know more about the nuances of SNS use. In Table 6 we ran regressions to examine the

Note: * p <0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p < 0.001, **** p < 0.0001

The prediction that the political participation will vary upon different purposes of use of technology is supported. Students reporting using the technology for self-expression tend to perform more active participation in real life, while the majority of the users are significantly linked with civil participation

of participation. The independent variables are the results of factor analysis of responses on student's behavior of SNS (see Table 4).

and info-participation. What was not my expectation is the fact that people seeking entertainment on SNS are more likely to participate in assembly, protest and wearing clothes with political symbols. Out of curiosity, I ran another regression but the independent variables changed into purposes of Internet use instead of SNS use to double test this pattern. The result is shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Regressions predicting political participation from the Internet use variables

Independent variables: purpose of using the Internet	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta
Constant	.001		-.002		.002	
Acquiring information	-.065	-.065	.182***	.181	.207***	.208
Self-expression	.219***	.219	.217***	.216	.067	.068
Entertainment	.022	.022	.042	.042	.121**	.122
R square	0.053		0.081		0.063	

Note: * p <0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p < 0.001, **** p < 0.0001

This result from Table 7 supports the main finding in Table 6, that is, people who use Internet as self-expression is more likely to take more radical participation than people who use Internet as source of information. The purpose of using Internet as entertainment contradicts the findings of Table 6. It is probably the case that the relatively small number of respondents whose main purpose is playing online games and listening to music makes their answers about political participation vary dramatically, either significantly linked with radical participation or a form of peaceable participation. The independent variables are generated by factor analysis of answers of question no.24 in our questionnaire. The factor loadings are not shown in this article, but will be available upon request.

CONCLUSION

We find SNS use is positively linked to Chinese college students' political participation. It is not a direct linkage, but

through a mechanism that transforms online informational behavior into civic actions as well as political participation in real life. Students who spend more time on SNS tend to be more likely to read, share, and discuss political news. Being more informed with political news, they are more likely to participate in services of social good. Being more active in social service, they are more likelt to take serious political actions (protest and boycotting).

Political attitude is proved as a strong mediation between SNS use and participation at the information level. People who possess a higher level of political knowledge and are interested in politics will be more likely to use time on SNS seeking and sharing political information. This finding contributes to the discussion of the predictors of political participation. Through our observations on factors of political skills, this study do not support the resource model brought by Brady, Verba, and Schlozman in 1995,^{lvii} but provides evidence for the model of Best and Krueger,^{lviii} which emphasizes the importance of motivation in political participation.

This result can answer the question of whether the increased availability of online information has served to create a more informed public. Our empirical data confirmed the mechanism linked between the availability of information and political engagement as a response to previous literature. SNS provides users more channels than traditional media to gather information and circulate them within their networks, which has the potential to transform the information consumption into civic engagement.

Findings of SNS's positive effect on political participation complicate our understanding of young people's online behaviors in authoritarian China. Most studies on political participation in China have been focusing on reflections of individual behavior for institutional settings or organizational factors, and very few conduct surveys to link online daily behavior to the framework of political participation. This study bridges the gap in this specific topic and has established the potential of networked individuals to transform an authoritarian regime.

This study provides empirical evidence to answer whether the prevalence of SNS use can contribute to the increased social capital. Although we do not measure social capital directly as theorized by sociologists—social capital is linked with social networking, life satisfaction, trust, and participation—the key of the concept is the social resources that can be used in social engagement. This present study directly links the social networking behaviors online to offline social actions, which means the pervasiveness of SNS use contributes to increased social capital.

For future studies on SNS use and participation, it is necessary to expand the discussion further. In literature, there are three main forms in student's social capital: bounding social capital, bridging social capital and maintained social capital.^{lix} Bridging social capital refers to a weak link between different people, while bounding social capital explains a tight bond between friends and relatives. Maintained social capital focuses on relationship between one person and the social network he left. The pessimistic view of time replacement theory takes the impact of electronic media on decreased social interaction as a symbol of declining social capital. Our findings in this study lead us to the hypothesis that the time replacement effect only diminishes bounding social capital. Theoretically the adoption of social networking sites can increase bridging social capital and maintained social capital. Framing SNS use with social capital theory is beyond the scope of our study, but our results provide empirical evidence to encourage future studies to examine the interpersonal relationships within the complex networks.

Although we cannot make direct causal relationship between SNS use and political participation, we at least omit some pessimistic views. We conclude that there is positive linkage between SNS use and college students' political participation. We also establish the nuanced mechanism of the process from information to participation. Political attitude is proved as mediation in the positive effect of SNS use on political participation.

APPENDIX: Questionnaire and Sample Demographics

1. Are you a member of Renren? (www.xiaonei.com or www.renren.com)

A yes B no

Time Spent on SNS

2. Average time spent on renren.com per day?
- A less than 10 min B 10--30 min C 30min--60min
 D 1--2 hours E 2--4 hours F over 4 hours

Frequency of SNS Use

3. How many times do you visit renren.com per day on average?
- A fewer than once B once C twice or three times
 D 4--7 times E over 7 times

Purpose of SNS Use

4. How do you assess the frequency of doing these activities on Renren?

		1 never	2	3	4	5 very often
4.1	Reading friends' updates	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4.2	Posting articles	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4.3	Sharing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4.4	Uploading pictures	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4.5	Leaving messages	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4.6	Online chat	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4.7	Playing games	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4.8	Refreshing updates	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4.9	Changing status	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Political Participation

5. How do you assess the frequency of doing these activities on the Internet?

		1 never	2	3	4	5 very often
5.1	Commenting on public affair	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.2	Protest	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.3	Donation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.4	Clothes having political meaning	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.5	Contacting media to express concern	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.6	Reading political news	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.7	Boycotting	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.8	Assembling	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.9	suggestions for development of your unit	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.10	Sharing political news	<input type="checkbox"/>				

5.11	Talking on topic of politics	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.12	Voluntary work	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.13	Organizing activity for charity	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.14	Online petition	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.15	Forwarding emails of public affairs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.16	Complaint for own interest	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.17	Attending lecture on topics of politics	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5.18	Speech on topics of public affair	<input type="checkbox"/>				

6. In recent year, did you donate your blood? A yes B no C not sure
 7. In recent year, did you go for a campaign for election? A yes B no C not sure
 8. In recent year, have you been a member of NGO? A yes B no C not sure
 9. In recent year, did you vote for any forms of election? A yes B no C not sure
 10. Will you become fond of a company because of its values ? A yes B no C not sure

Political Participation Skills

11. In recent year, did you search for political information ? A yes B no C not sure
 12. In recent year, have you been a leader in any forms of organizations? A yes B no C not sure

13. In recent year, did you give a public speech (class presentation is not included) ?
 A yes B no C not sure

Political Attitude

14. How do you assess your interest to politics?
 A very much B just interested C so so D relatively dislike E
 dislike

15. How do you agree this sentence, “politics is so complicated that you don't really understand what's going on”?
 A completely B partially C neither agree nor disagree D disagree E strong
 objection

16. How do you assess your knowledge on politics?
 A very knowledgeable B relatively knowledgeable C so so D relatively poor E very
 poor

Internet Skills

17. Your age of using the Internet?
 A no more than 1 year B 1—4 years C 4—7years D 7—10years E over 10 years

18. Have you ever used FTP ? A yes B no C not sure

19. Have you ever uploaded a video ? A yes B no C not sure

20. Are you capable of designing a webpage ? A yes B no C not sure

21. Are you capable of coding ? A yes B no C not sure

22. Have you ever heard of China Great Fire Wall ? A yes B no C not sure

23. Have you ever climbed over the China Great Fire Wall ? A yes B no C not sure
Purpose of Internet Use

24. How do you assess your frequencies doing these activities on the Internet?

		1 never	2	3	4	5 very often
24.1	Writing emails	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24.2	Reading news from portals	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24.3	Reading news using RSS	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24.4	Visiting forums and BBS	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24.5	Online music	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24.6	Online games	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24.7	Visiting social networking sites	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24.8	Working on a blog	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24.9	Online purchasing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24.10	Forwarding emails	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24.11	Micro-blogging	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Demographics

25. Gender: A female 33.5% B male 66.5%
26. Year of birth : _____ (M = 22.72, SD = 3.16)
27. Are you a member of :
- A communist party 34.4% B youth league 59.5%
- C other parties 5.6% D no membership 0.4%
28. Your grade :
- A year 1-2 undergraduate 29.6 % B year 3-4 undergraduate 32.6%
- C master 23.0% D PhD 14.8%
29. Monthly family income : 1 RMB yuan = 0.15 US Dollar
- A less than 800 yuan 9.7% B 800—2000 yuan 34.7% C 2000—4000 yuan 28.6%
- D 4000—7000 yuan 13.6% E 7000—15000 yuan 10.3% F 15000 yuan 3%
30. In recent year, your rank of your GPA? (1=top 20% to 4=bottom 20%, M=2.17, SD=0.89)
- A top 20% B top 20%-- top50% C top50%-- top 80% D none of the above
31. What areas are you majoring in?
- A natural science 11.1% B technology 67.0%
- C humanities 6.3% D social science 1.6%
- E economics and management 5.3 % F law 1.4 % G art 7.4%

ⁱ J. W. Stanley, “The Effects of Internet Use on Political Participation: Evidence From an Agency Online Discussion Forum,” *Administration & Society* 36, no. 5 (November 1, 2004): 503-527.

ⁱⁱ Jürgen Gerhards and Mike S. Schäfer, “Is the internet a better public sphere? Comparing old and new media in the USA and Germany,” *New Media & Society* 12, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 143 -160.

ⁱⁱⁱ S. Ward, R. Gibson, and W. Lusoli, “Online participation and mobilisation in Britain: hype, hope and reality,” *Parliamentary Affairs* 56, no. 4 (2003): 652; Corinna di Gennaro and William Dutton, “The Internet

and the Public: Online and Offline Political Participation in the United Kingdom,” *Parliamentary Affairs* 59, no. 2 (April 2006): 299 -313; Rabia Karakaya Polat, “The Internet and Political Participation,” *European Journal of Communication* 20, no. 4 (December 1, 2005): 435 -459.

^{iv} Michael L. Best and Keegan W. Wade, “The Internet and Democracy,” *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 29, no. 4 (2009): 255 -271.

^v Janette Kenner Muir, *Closing the gap: media, politics, and citizen participation.(ELECTIONS): An article from: Harvard International Review (Harvard International Relations Council, Inc., 2008).*

-
- ^{vi} Sebastián Valenzuela, Namsu Park, and Kerk F Kee, "Is There Social Capital in a Social Network Site?: Facebook Use and College Students' Life Satisfaction, Trust, and Participation1," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 14, no. 4 (July 1, 2009): 875-901; Nojin Kwak V. Shah, "'Connecting' and 'Disconnecting' With Civic Life: Patterns of Internet Use and the Production of Social Capital," *Political Communication* 18, no. 2 (2001): 141-162.
- ^{vii} Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. The forms of capital. In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J G Richardson, 241:241-258. Greenwood Press.
- ^{viii} R.D. Putnam, *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community* (Simon and Schuster, 2001).
- ^{ix} Dietram A. Scheufele and Dhavan V. Shah, "Personality Strength and Social Capital," *Communication Research* 27, no. 2 (April 1, 2000): 107 - 131.
- ^x Barry Wellman et al., "Does the Internet Increase, Decrease, or Supplement Social Capital?," *American Behavioral Scientist* 45, no. 3 (November 1, 2001): 436 -455.
- ^{xi} Paul DiMaggio et al., "Social Implications of the Internet," *Annual Review of Sociology* 27, no. 1 (August 2001): 307-336.
- ^{xii} Graeme Browning and Daniel J. Weitzner, *Electronic democracy: using the Internet to influence American politics* (Pemberton Press, 1996); H. Rheingold, "The great equalizer," *Whole Earth Review* 71, no. 6 (1991).
- ^{xiii} Homero Gil De Zúñiga, Eulàlia Puig-I-Abril, and Hernando Rojas, "Weblogs, traditional sources online and political participation: an assessment of how the internet is changing the political environment," *New Media & Society* 11, no. 4 (June 1, 2009): 553 -574.
- ^{xiv} Bruce Bimber, "Information and Political Engagement in America: The Search for Effects of Information Technology at the Individual Level," *Political Research Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (March 1, 2001): 53 -67.
- ^{xv} Rabia Karakaya Polat, "The Internet and Political Participation," *European Journal of Communication* 20, no. 4 (December 1, 2005): 435 -459.
- ^{xvi} D.V. Shah et al., "Information and expression in a digital age," *Communication Research* 32, no. 5 (2005): 531.
- ^{xvii} J. W. Stanley, "The Effects of Internet Use on Political Participation: Evidence From an Agency Online Discussion Forum," *Administration & Society* 36, no. 5 (November 1, 2004): 503-527.
- ^{xviii} S. Ward, R. Gibson, and W. Lusoli, "Online participation and mobilisation in Britain: hype, hope and reality," *Parliamentary Affairs* 56, no. 4 (2003): 652.
- ^{xix} Jürgen Gerhards and Mike S. Schäfer, "Is the internet a better public sphere? Comparing old and new media in the USA and Germany," *New Media & Society* 12, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 143 -160.
- ^{xx} Andrea H. Tapia and Julio Angel Ortiz, "Network Hopes," *Social Science Computer Review* 28, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 93 -117.
- ^{xxi} Min Jiang and Heng Xu, "Exploring Online Structures on Chinese Government Portals," *Social Science Computer Review* 27, no. 2 (May 1, 2009): 174 - 195.
- ^{xxii} Ángel Iglesias ALONSO, "E-PARTICIPATION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE: A CASE STUDY," *Theoretical and Empirical Researches in Urban Management* 4, no. 3(12) (2009): 49-62.
- ^{xxiii} Stephen Coleman and Donald F. Norris, "A New Agenda for E-Democracy," *SSRN eLibrary* (January 1, 2005), http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1325255; William H. Dutton and Malcolm Peltu, "Reconfiguring Government - Public Engagements: Enhancing the Communicative Power of Citizens," *SSRN eLibrary* (April 1, 2007), http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=295337.
- ^{xxiv} C.J. Tolbert and R.S. McNeal, "Unraveling the effects of the Internet on political participation?," *Political Research Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2003): 175–185; L.M. Weber, A. Loumakis, and J. Bergman, "Who participates and why?," *Social Science Computer Review* 21, no. 1 (2003): 26; Samuel J. Best and Brian S. Krueger, "Analyzing the Representativeness of Internet Political Participation," *Political Behavior* 27, no. 2 (June 1, 2005): 183-216.
- ^{xxv} D.E. Sylvester and A.J. McGlynn, "The digital divide, political participation, and place," *Social Science Computer Review* 28, no. 1 (2010): 64–74.
- ^{xxvi} N.H. Nie and L. Erbring, "Internet and society," Stanford Institute for the Quantitative Study of Society (2000); James Katz, Ronald E Rice, and Philip Aspden, "The Internet, 1995-2000: Access, Civic Involvement, and Social Interaction," *arXiv:cs/0109032* (September 18, 2001), <http://arxiv.org/abs/cs/0109032>.
- ^{xxvii} Paul DiMaggio et al., "Social Implications of the Internet," *Annual Review of Sociology* 27, no. 1 (August 2001): 307-336.
- ^{xxviii} J. Saglie and S.I. Vabo, "Size and e-Democracy: Online Participation in Norwegian Local Politics," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 32, no. 4 (2009): 382–401.
- ^{xxix} Henry E. Brady, Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman, "Beyond Ses: A Resource Model of Political Participation," *The American Political Science Review* 89, no. 2 (June 1, 1995): 271-294.
- ^{xxx} Samuel J. Best and Brian S. Krueger, "Analyzing the Representativeness of Internet Political Participation," *Political Behavior* 27, no. 2 (June 1, 2005): 183-216.
- ^{xxxi} Dhavan V. Shah, Jack M. McLEOD, and So-Hyang Yoon, "Communication, Context, and Community," *Communication Research* 28, no. 4 (2001): 464 -506.
- ^{xxxii} Elihu Katz, Jay G. Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch, "Uses and Gratifications Research," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (December 1, 1973): 509-523.
- ^{xxxiii} Nojin Kwak, Nathaniel Poor, and Marko M. Skoric, "Honey, I Shrunk the World! The Relation

Between Internet Use and International Engagement,” *Mass Communication and Society* 9, no. 2 (2006): 189-213.

^{xxxiv} Andrea L. Kavanaugh et al., “Weak Ties in Networked Communities,” *The Information Society* 21, no. 2 (2005): 119-131.

^{xxxv} Matthew R. Kerbel and Joel David Bloom, “Blog for America and Civic Involvement,” *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 10, no. 4 (October 1, 2005): 3 -27; Sharon Meraz, “Analyzing Political Conversation on the Howard Dean Candidate Blog,” In *Blogging, Citizenship and the Future of Media*, ed. Mark Tremayne (Routledge, 2007) 59-91.

^{xxxvi} S. Coleman, “Remixing Citizenship,” Democracy and young peoples use of the Internet. Carnegie UK Trust (2005); Corinna di Gennaro and William Dutton, “The Internet and the Public: Online and Offline Political Participation in the United Kingdom,” *Parliamentary Affairs* 59, no. 2 (April 2006): 299 -313.

^{xxxvii} C.H. De Vreese, “Digital renaissance: young consumer and citizen?,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 611, no. 1 (2007): 207-216.

^{xxxviii} W. Zhang et al., “The revolution will be networked,” *Social Science Computer Review* 28, no. 1 (2010): 75-92.

^{xxxix} Jody C. Baumgartner and Jonathan S. Morris, “MyFaceTube Politics,” *Social Science Computer Review* 28, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 24 -44.

^x E. Quintelier and S. Vissers, “The effect of Internet use on political participation,” *Social Science Computer Review* 26, no. 4 (2008): 411-427.

^{xli} Anita Harris, Johanna Wyn, and Salem Younes, “Beyond apathetic or activist youth,” *Young* 18, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 9 -32.

^{xlii} Sidney Verba, *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Comparison* (University Of Chicago Press, 1987).

^{xliii} Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (Harvard University Press, 1995), 38.

^{xliv} Jack M. McLEOD et al., “Understanding Deliberation,” *Communication Research* 26, no. 6 (December 1, 1999): 743 -774; R.D. Putnam, “Bowling alone: America’s declining social capital,” *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 1 (1995): 65-78.

^{xlv} Harry Eckstein and David E. (David Ernest) Apter, *Comparative politics : a reader / Edited by Harry Eckstein and David E. Apter* (London :: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 434.

^{xlii} David S. Goodman, *Groups and Politics in the People’s Republic of China* (Books on Demand, 1984); Victor Falkenheim, ed., *Citizens and Groups in Contemporary China* (Center for Chinese Studies, The Universi, 1987).

^{xlvii} T. Shi, *Political participation in Beijing* (Cambridge Univ Press, 1997), 7.

^{xlviii} Andrew J. Nathan and Tianjian Shi, “Cultural Requisites for Democracy in China: Findings from a Survey,” *Daedalus* 122, no. 2 (April 1, 1993): 95-123.

^{xlix} Tianjian Shi, *Political participation in Beijing* (Harvard University Press, 1997).

^l S. Wang, “Changing models of China’s policy agenda setting,” *Modern China* 34, no. 1 (2008): 56-87.

^{li} Ibid.

^{lii} Guobin Yang, *The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online* (Columbia University Press, 2009).

^{liii} Danah m. Boyd and Nicole B. Ellison, “Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship,” *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13, no. 1 (October 2007): 210-230; Hernando Rojas and Eulalia Puig-i-Abril, “Mobilizers Mobilized: Information, Expression, Mobilization and Participation in the Digital Age,” *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 14, no. 4 (July 1, 2009): 902-927.

^{liv} Henry E. Brady, Verba, and Schlozman, “Beyond Ses”; Samuel J. Best and Krueger, “Analyzing the Representativeness of Internet Political Participation.”

^{lv} The demographics are traditionally considered as structural factors that shape the level of political participation, but this study’s locus is not to discuss these inequities, so we consciously omitted these variables in our models. Also the inequities among students at Chinese universities in these variables might not be as important as the general public in society.

^{lvi} (CNNIC), C.I.N.I.C., Statistical Survey Report on the SNS Use in China (November 2009). 2009, China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC): Beijing.

^{lvi} Henry E. Brady, Verba, and Schlozman, “Beyond Ses.”

^{lvi} Samuel J. Best and Krueger, “Analyzing the Representativeness of Internet Political Participation.”

^{lvi} Nicole B Ellison, Charles Steinfield, and Cliff Lampe, “The Benefits of Facebook ‘Friends’: Social Capital and College Students’ Use of Online Social Network Sites,” *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 12, no. 4 (July 1, 2007): 1143-1168.

REFERENCES

Alonso, Ángel Iglesias. “E-Participation and Local Governance: A Case Study.” *Theoretical and Empirical Researches in Urban Management* 4, no. 3(12) (2009): 49-62.

Baumgartner, Jody C., and Jonathan S. Morris. “MyFaceTube Politics.” *Social Science Computer Review* 28, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 24 -44.

Best, Michael L., and Keegan W. Wade. “The Internet and Democracy.” *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 29, no. 4 (2009): 255 -271.

Best, Samuel J., and Brian S. Krueger. “Analyzing the Representativeness of Internet Political Participation.” *Political Behavior* 27, no. 2 (June 1, 2005): 183-216.

-
- Bimber, Bruce. "Information and Political Engagement in America: The Search for Effects of Information Technology at the Individual Level." *Political Research Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (March 1, 2001): 53 -67.
- Boyd, Danah m., and Nicole B. Ellison. "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13, no. 1 (October 2007): 210-230.
- Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. "Beyond Ses: A Resource Model of Political Participation." *The American Political Science Review* 89, no. 2 (June 1, 1995): 271-294.
- Browning, Graeme, and Daniel J. Weitzner. *Electronic democracy: using the Internet to influence American politics*. Pemberton Press, 1996.
- Coleman, S. "Remixing Citizenship." *Democracy and young peoples use of the Internet*. Carnegie UK Trust (2005).
- Coleman, Stephen, and Donald F. Norris. "A New Agenda for E-Democracy." *SSRN eLibrary* (January 1, 2005). http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abst_ract_id=1325255.
- Coleman, Stephen, Nicola Hall, and Milica Howell. *Hearing Voices: The Experience of Online Public Consultations and Discussions in UK Governance*. The Hansard Society for Parliamentary Government, 2002.
- Dahlberg, Lincoln. "The Internet and Democratic Discourse: Exploring The Prospects of Online Deliberative Forums Extending the Public Sphere." *Information Communication Society* 4, no. 4 (2001): 615-633.
- DiMaggio, Paul, Eszter Hargittai, W. Russell Neuman, and John P. Robinson. "Social Implications of the Internet." *Annual Review of Sociology* 27, no. 1 (August 2001): 307-336.
- Dutton, William H., and Malcolm Peltu. "Reconfiguring Government - Public Engagements: Enhancing the Communicative Power of Citizens." *SSRN eLibrary* (April 1, 2007). http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abst_ract_id=1295337.
- Eckstein, Harry, and David E. (David Ernest) Apter. *Comparative politics : a reader / Edited by Harry Eckstein and David E. Apter*. London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963.
- Ellison, Nicole B., Charles Steinfield, and Cliff Lampe. "The Benefits of Facebook 'Friends:' Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 12, no. 4 (July 1, 2007): 1143-1168.
- Falkenheim, Victor, ed. *Citizens and Groups in Contemporary China*. Center for Chinese Studies, The Universi, 1987.
- Di Gennaro, Corinna, and William Dutton. "The Internet and the Public: Online and Offline Political Participation in the United Kingdom." *Parliamentary Affairs* 59, no. 2 (April 2006): 299 -313.
- Gerhards, Jürgen, and Mike S. Schäfer. "Is the internet a better public sphere? Comparing old and new media in the USA and Germany." *New Media & Society* 12, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 143 -160.
- Gil De Zúñiga, Homero, Eulàlia Puig-I-Abril, and Hernando Rojas. "Weblogs, traditional sources online and political participation: an assessment of how the internet is changing the political environment." *New Media & Society* 11, no. 4 (June 1, 2009): 553 -574.
- Goodman, David S. *Groups and Politics in the People's Republic of China*. Books on Demand, 1984.
- Harris, Anita, Johanna Wyn, and Salem Younes. "Beyond apathetic or activist youth." *Young* 18, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 9 -32.
- Katz, Elihu, Jay G. Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch. "Uses and Gratifications Research." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (December 1, 1973): 509-523.
- Katz, James, Ronald E Rice, and Philip Aspden. "The Internet, 1995-2000: Access, Civic Involvement, and Social Interaction." *arXiv:cs/0109032* (September 18, 2001). <http://arxiv.org/abs/cs/0109032>.
- Kavanaugh, Andrea L., Debbie Denise Reese, John M. Carroll, and Mary Beth Rosson. "Weak Ties in Networked Communities." *The Information Society* 21, no. 2 (2005): 119-131.
- Kerbel, Matthew R., and Joel David Bloom. "Blog for America and Civic Involvement." *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 10, no. 4 (October 1, 2005): 3 -27.
- Kwak, Nojin, Nathaniel Poor, and Marko M. Skoric. "Honey, I Shrunk the World! The Relation Between Internet Use and International Engagement." *Mass Communication and Society* 9, no. 2 (2006): 189-213.

-
- McLeod, Jack M., Dietram A. Scheufele, Patricia Moy, Edward M. Horowitz, R. Lance Holbert, Weiwei Zhang, Stephen Zubric, and Jessica Zubric. "Understanding Deliberation." *Communication Research* 26, no. 6 (December 1, 1999): 743 -774.
- Meraz, S. "Analyzing political conversation on the Howard Dean candidate blog." *Blogging, citizenship, and the future of media* (2007): 59-82.
- Min Jiang, and Heng Xu. "Exploring Online Structures on Chinese Government Portals." *Social Science Computer Review* 27, no. 2 (May 1, 2009): 174 -195.
- Muir, Janette Kenner. *Closing the gap: media, politics, and citizen participation.(ELECTIONS): An article from: Harvard International Review*. Harvard International Relations Council, Inc., 2008.
- Nathan, Andrew J., and Tianjian Shi. "Cultural Requisites for Democracy in China: Findings from a Survey." *Daedalus* 122, no. 2 (April 1, 1993): 95-123.
- Nie, N.H., and L. Erbring. "Internet and society." *Stanford Institute for the Quantitative Study of Society* (2000).
- Polat, Rabia Karakaya. "The Internet and Political Participation." *European Journal of Communication* 20, no. 4 (December 1, 2005): 435 -459.
- Putnam, R.D. "Bowling alone: America's declining social capital." *Journal of democracy* 6, no. 1 (1995): 65-78.
- . *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon and Schuster, 2001.
- Quintelier, E., and S. Vissers. "The effect of Internet use on political participation." *Social Science Computer Review* 26, no. 4 (2008): 411-427.
- Rheingold, H. "The great equalizer." *Whole Earth Review* 71, no. 6 (1991).
- Rojas, Hernando, and Eulalia Puig-i-Abril. "Mobilizers Mobilized: Information, Expression, Mobilization and Participation in the Digital Age." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 14, no. 4 (July 1, 2009): 902-927.
- Saglie, J., and S.I. Vabo. "Size and e-Democracy: Online Participation in Norwegian Local Politics." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 32, no. 4 (2009): 382-401.
- Scheufele, Dietram A., and Dhavan V. Shah. "Personality Strength and Social Capital."
- Communication Research 27, no. 2 (April 1, 2000): 107 -131.
- Shah, D.V., J. Cho, W.P. Eveland, N. Kwak, and others. "Information and expression in a digital age." *Communication Research* 32, no. 5 (2005): 531.
- Shah, Dhavan V., Jack M. McLEOD, and So-Hyang Yoon. "Communication, Context, and Community." *Communication Research* 28, no. 4 (2001): 464 -506.
- Shi, Tianjian. *Political participation in Beijing*. Cambridge Univ Press, 1997.
- Stanley, J. W. "The Effects of Internet Use on Political Participation: Evidence From an Agency Online Discussion Forum." *Administration & Society* 36, no. 5 (November 1, 2004): 503-527.
- Sylvester, D.E., and A.J. McGlynn. "The digital divide, political participation, and place." *Social Science Computer Review* 28, no. 1 (2010): 64-74.
- Tapia, Andrea H., and Julio Angel Ortiz. "Network Hopes." *Social Science Computer Review* 28, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 93 -117.
- Tolbert, C.J., and R.S. McNeal. "Unraveling the effects of the Internet on political participation?" *Political Research Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2003): 175-185.
- Valenzuela, Sebastián, Namsu Park, and Kerk F Kee. "Is There Social Capital in a Social Network Site?: Facebook Use and College Students' Life Satisfaction, Trust, and Participation1." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 14, no. 4 (July 1, 2009): 875-901.
- Verba, Sidney. *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Comparison*. University Of Chicago Press, 1987.
- Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry Brady. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Harvard University Press, 1995.
- De Vreese, C.H. "Digital renaissance: young consumer and citizen?" *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 611, no. 1 (2007): 207-216.
- Wang, Shaoguang. "Changing models of China's policy agenda setting." *Modern China* 34, no. 1 (2008): 56-87.
- Ward, S., R. Gibson, and W. Lusoli. "Online participation and mobilisation in Britain: hype, hope and reality." *Parliamentary Affairs* 56, no. 4 (2003): 652.

-
- Weare, C. "The Effects of Internet Use on Political Participation: Evidence From an Agency Online Discussion Forum" (n.d.).
- Weber, L.M., A. Loumakis, and J. Bergman. "Who participates and why?" *Social Science Computer Review* 21, no. 1 (2003): 26.
- Wellman, Barry, Anabel Quan Haase, James Witte, and Keith Hampton. "Does the Internet Increase, Decrease, or Supplement Social Capital?" *American Behavioral Scientist* 45, no. 3 (November 1, 2001): 436 -455.
- Zhang, W., T.J. Johnson, T. Seltzer, and S.L. Bichard. "The revolution will be networked." *Social Science Computer Review* 28, no. 1 (2010): 75–92.

THE CURSED GENERATION AND THE ‘AHN CHUL-SOO SYNDROME’

Insung Chung

Washington University in St. Louis

INTRODUCTION

On December 2011, 56 professionals in various fields in Korea selected “youth” (“chungchoon” in Korean) as the keyword of the year in the Korean publication industry. Books providing comfort and encouragement to the young generation have become best sellers and the authors of these books are being admired by the younger generation as their ‘mentors.’ Live talk shows providing lectures and life guidance, so called ‘talk concerts,’ have also become a new social fad among the younger generations. Following the success of the ‘Youth Concert,’ various talk concerts emerged throughout the country in various scale. Such phenomena attributes to the discontented young generation of Korea, fed up with the exacerbating economic hardship and increasing uncertainties of society, seeking comfort from whatever they can.

An important change occurred in Korean society when such discontent of the young generation transformed into political action. In 2011, various protests were organized by these young generations such as the ‘demonstration for half-priced college tuition,’ the anti-wealth polarization demonstration known as ‘occupy Seoul,’ and the ‘anti-FTA demonstration.’ An internet broadcast series designed to reveal the malpractices of the Lee Myung-bak administration, ‘Naneun Ggomsuda,’ is maintaining its world ranking as the most downloaded audio file in Apple Podcast with the help wide use of Social Networking

Services (SNS) among the younger generation. Ahn Chul-soo, one of the main lecturers of the ‘Youth Concert’ has suddenly become the most prominent presidential candidate with the highest approval rate, although he is yet to announce his candidacy. Such movement formed the solid support base for Park Won-soon to become the first independent to become the mayor of Seoul.

Traditionally, Korean youth has been apathetic towards society and especially politics. The plummeting youth voting rates had always been an issue for Korean society. Uncertainty has always existed in Korea as the country constantly experienced dynamic social changes: from authoritarianism to democracy; from world economic basket to the world’s 13th largest economy; and from agrarian society to manufacturing and IT based society. Some may suspect why such phenomena took place after the successful industrialization and the period of time known to be the most prosperous period of time since the time of ‘Tangun,’ the legendary founding father of the Korean nation. Although it is natural for younger generation to feel rebellious, there seems to be no reason for the Korean youth to feel such discontent against society.

Such radical change in attitude implies that there must have been an intolerable situation and a stimulus that has led the mobilization. The media and the press acknowledged these changes brought by the younger generation to be driven by ‘anger’ towards the existing social structure.

If anger is the driving force of this movement, then what is the situation that created such sentiment to permeate through the younger population? This paper discovers the foundation of this radical change, analyzes the impact of the movement, and projects its future impact in Korean politics, especially for the 2012 elections. The 2011 special election to elect the mayor of Seoul will be highlighted as the turning point for the presence of the younger generation in Korean politics. The so-called ‘Ahn Chul-soo Syndrome’ will also be analyzed as the driving force behind such movement. The findings of the paper suggest that the ‘Ahn Chul-soo syndrome’ of 2011 is still in effect and shall not be considered as a mere fad of the young generations. The unprecedented power concentration of the young generation is to form an important axis for determining the outcome of the 2012 general and presidential election and may also permanently change the politics of Korea.

THE CURSED GENERATION

In order to understand the phenomena, it is first important to discover the socio-economic situation the younger generation of Korea face. Korea is known as the country of ‘academic inflation,’ in which 79% of high school students enter college after graduation. Decades ago, a college degree used to guarantee success. However, since so many people acquire it, college has become a minimal requirement to enter the workplace. This not only forces young Koreans to pay for tertiary education in order to secure employment but also creates a prejudice against people without college degree. People without college degree would have significant disadvantage in finding jobs and would be often despised by others. Therefore, a college degree has become a semi-mandatory requirement for survival in Korea.

The problem arises from the fact that this semi-mandatory requirement has become unaffordable or ineffective for many. College tuition in Korea is the second highest in the world, following the United States. From this high cost of tertiary education, civilians bear 79.3 percent of the cost, which is significantly higher than the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average of 30.9 percent. The rate of increase in tuition also exacerbates the problem. College tuition has increased over 10 percent annually, which is approximately 3 times the annual inflation rate, over the last decade. Student loans, which have an interest rate already higher than that of mortgage loans, are only open to students with higher grades. Such burden drives students to the workplace. Many students engage in part-time jobs. Some students leave school for a semester to work in order to pay tuition for the next semester. Some students engage in illegal activities such as prostitution or selling illegal products.

The problem with high cost of college education in Korea has worsened with exacerbating youth employment situations. According to the National Statistics Office, the youth unemployment rate of Korea has reached 8.0 percent in year 2011, while the average unemployment rate has remained 3.44 percent in the past 5 years. Although this seems to be not as high compared to other countries, it can be found that the numbers are flawed when a closer look is taken. First, youth employment rate is reported to be only 40 percent. This statistical flaw is shown due the exclusion of population that has given up on searching for employment opportunities which number has been significantly increasing. Second, the age range of youth employment in Korea is 15-29 while it is usually between 16 and 24 in other countries. People between 25 and 29 years of age are much more likely to be employed than the people under that range.

Third, temporary employment or part-time employment consist most of youth employment. Fourth, the employment rate of the younger generation is decreasing. Therefore, the actual situation the Korean young generation face is far worse than the statistics.

Even if a student finds him/herself a job, he or she is unlikely to receive adequate economic incentive from work. The jobs provided to the younger generation are generally temporary and low paying. The minimum wage of Korea is already as low as 4,580 won (four US dollars) in 2012, but many places refuse to obey that rate. This situation has created a term for the young generation nowadays: the ‘880,000 won generation,’ a generation that works full-time as temporary workers to earn around 880,000 won (800 US dollars) per month. These workers are usually forced to leave before six months as legislation forces companies to promote temporary workers to regular full-time workers after six months. Considering that college education cost ranges from around five million won to over 10 million won, the investment on tertiary education is failing to provide appropriate return. The young generation has become a victim of a modern version of indulgence.ⁱ

The increasing cost of tertiary education and exacerbating unemployment increases uncertainty for the future. The loss of certainty has resulted in loss of hope. Debt incurred from acquiring tertiary education creates approximately 10,000 Korean youth with bad credit ratings every year, which makes the economic activity of these people more difficult. This motivates some youth to take extreme measures such as crime or suicide. UNDESA reports that the death rate for Korean youth is highest in the world, with suicide being the most common cause. One of the most threatening consequences of the situation is that the younger generation is giving up one

of the most fundamental instincts of mankind: reproduction.

The current younger generation of Korea is labeled as the ‘sampo generation,’ meaning the generation that has given up dating, marriage, and having children. Some people label this generation as the ‘yookmu generation,’ which means the generation without jobs, income, house, love/marriage, reproduction, and hope. The youth, without adequate jobs, faced with high cost of living and burdened with debt, are forced to give up these three necessities of mankind required for a sustainable society. The cost of marriage includes the cost of finding a place to live and also incurs the cost of giving birth and raising a child. While apartment price in Seoul increased by 260.2 percent in the past ten years, the average income of Korean household increased by less, 169.4 percent. Considering the income of younger generation is significantly lower than that of the older generation, purchasing a house requires additional debt for a new household.

In order to avoid the burden of living with debt, Korean youth are postponing marriage until they accumulate enough wealth. The average age of first marriage for men has increased from 27.79 in 1990 to 31.61 in 2009, while that of women increased from 24.78 to 28.71. These statistics exclude the increasing number of singles in their 30s and 40s. The rising cost of raising a child further exacerbates the situation. Raising children not only increases the cost of living, but also limits the economic activity of the parents. For these reasons, young Koreans are deciding to not have children or give birth to only one child. The birth rate of Korea has reached 1.22, which is far less than the population subsistence level, 2.1.

The economic burden of young Koreans is expected to increase with decreased production, increased cost of welfare, and asset shock caused by decreasing population. According to Sun

Dae-in of the Kim Kwang Soo Economic Research Institute (KSERI), the rate of youth supporting the retired old population is expected to increase from 50.2 percent in 2010 to 80.6 percent in 2020, and 155.5 percent in 2030. This means that while approximately two young people were needed to support one old person in 2010, three young people will need to support two old people in 2030. This further increases the economic burden of the working population and discourages spending. Since the population decreases, the domestic market will also decrease, leading to the collapse of the production sector. Real estate market will also collapse with decreased demand. Therefore, the current young generation of Korea is cursed with a burden to inherit a society that has become unsustainable.

THE YOUTH STRIKES BACK

The young generation of Korea started to take action with the first wave of youth protests in 2011, known as the ‘half-priced tuition demonstration’ against the over-priced college tuition. The public discord exploded with the failure of President Lee Myung-bak to keep the public promise he made during his 2007 presidential race when he pledged to lower the student’s college tuition into half. The president has taken no measures and the situation continued to aggravate. The students began to gather, demanding transparency in school financial operation and tuition reduction. The protest became nationally famous and started to grow exponentially over the summer of 2011 as schools went on summer vacation. The protest was constantly in the press, and even celebrities like Kim Jae-dong and Kim Yeojin came to support the students. The protest seemed to have potential to become as powerful as the ‘anti US beef’ demonstration in 2008. Politicians from all parties became aware of the situation and

started to make promises to pass legislations to alleviate the financial difficulties of the students. They invited the leaders of the protest to the National Assembly and often participated in the demonstration themselves. Despite the active gestures, no effort was made and the students had to rely on very small compromises offered by their schools.ⁱⁱ

While the Korean news was dominated by the situation of the ‘half-priced tuition rally,’ another important movement triggered the revolutionary change in Korean politics: the emergence of the ‘Youth Concert.’ The ‘Youth Concert’ is a talk concert aimed at young generations. It consists of a host speaking with two main lecturers (or mentors), Ahn Chul-soo and Park Kyung-chul. The program includes participation of students as audiences who ask questions and play games with the mentors. With this new format that allows the participation of the audience, the Youth Concert went on a national tour and gained immense popularity. However, it was not just the format that has made Youth Concert so popular. Unlike other talk concerts that only provide comfort or life guidance, the Youth Concert also delivers an important message: change can and should be made through political participation. This message changed the attitudes of the young generation that used to be apathetic about politics.

While the popularity of the Youth Concert increased the general interest in politics among the young generation, another important phenomenon occurred that shifted the political sphere. Widespread use of Social Networking Services (SNS) has opened the doors for new ways of disseminating information and mobilizing the political forces online. A podcast program, ‘Naneun Ggomuda,’ (roughly meaning ‘I am a sneaky trickster’) was founded by Kim Ou-joon with purpose to uncover and make fun of the corruption of ‘gakha’ (‘his highness’), president Lee

Myung-bak. The program became the most heard podcast in the world through SNS with the mixture of humor and exposures of scandals such as how the Grand National Party parliamentarian ordered a hacking attack on the National Election Commission (NEC) website in the 2011 Seoul mayoral election. Kim claims that this ‘underground’ media is gaining great popularity due to the lack of freedom in mainstream media.

The fan base of ‘Naneun Ggomsuda’ mainly consists of the young generation. In an interview with the Taipei Times, Kim stated that “those in their 20s and 30s feel attached to us because we talk in terms they can relate to.” The easy and humorous approaches of ‘Naneun Ggomsuda’ in politics have attracted young audiences previously uninterested in political affairs. The accessibility of the broadcast through SNS has also contributed to the vast popularity among young Koreans. Therefore, with the help of SNS, ‘Naneun Ggomsuda’ has successfully attracted many young Koreans to politics. The changed attitudes of Korean youth and the power of SNS and ‘Naneun Ggomsuda’ have played a crucial role in shifting the Korean political sphere during the Seoul mayoral election in 2011.

SEOUL MAYORAL ELECTION 2011

The political status of the young generation has met a turning point. In 2011, a special election for the mayor of Seoul has taken place as a consequence of the previous mayor Oh Sae-hoon’s sudden resignation after the loss in the local referendum on providing free meals to elementary school children. Oh’s resignation shocked many Koreans due to the political significance of the position. As the head of Korean capital, mayor of Seoul holds one of the most powerful political positions in Korea. The mayor has the administrative power over the city in which over a quarter

of the Korean population reside and executes tax budgets of over 21 trillion won (approximately 20 billion US dollars). Such power of the position allows mayors to emerge as competent presidential candidates in the next election. For example, the current president Lee Myung-bak was a former mayor of Seoul and Oh Sae-hoon was also expected to follow Lee’s path. Therefore, only the top-tier politicians are nominated by their parties to compete for the position. Politicians from the Democratic Party (DP) on the opposition side, and the ruling Grand National Party (GNP) announced their ambition for the open position. While the GNP candidates showed higher approval rates compared to the DP candidates, neither of the parties gained significant support from the public, especially from the younger generation. The election entered a completely different phase when an independent candidate, Ahn Chul-soo, announced his candidacy.

Ahn Chul-soo is a medical doctor-turned-businessman who founded the Ahn Chul-soo Research Institute (AhnLab, Inc.), the largest software enterprise in Korea that produces computer vaccine programs. He has become famous for his innovative, honest and ethical business administration, has been an icon of hope among the young generation of Korea. The Korea Harold, a newspaper in Korea, has referred to him as the Korean version of “Bill Gates plus Michael Sandel” as Ahn emphasizes corporate social responsibility; Ahn remarked:

Korea’s social structure, dominated by conglomerates, angers the young people for its reluctance to provide jobs for them. Existing decision makers can correct the situation. If they ignore the problem, the second best option is correcting it by the power of the masses, but elections are the most economic way to do that. Young voters in their 20s and 30s can make it if more than 50 percent of them cast ballots in the next poll.

Although Ahn's support comes from all generations, he enjoys the nearly absolute support from the young generation, especially after his commitment in the Youth Concert.

As a 'mentor' of the Youth Concert, Ahn has inspired millions of young Koreans to change the environment through political participation in order to pursue their dreams. Ahn stated, "When we participate in an election, we citizens can become our own masters, principle can defeat irregularity and privilege, and common sense can drive out absurdity." Ahn's idea of common sense versus absurdity was an attack towards Korean politics dominated by the two major parties, the GNP and the DP, which fail to represent the interest of the people and only represent the interest of the existing powers, especially the conglomerates. According to Ahn, these characteristics of the two parties represent "irregularity," "privilege" and "absurdity." He suggests that a revolutionary change needs to be made through election to overcome the existing political system. Ahn's comments have stirred the discussion of an alternative solution, or the 'third way.' The Koreans, especially young generation, were actively supportive of this idea for change, and Ahn's candidacy stirred them to action.

However, the country was surprised once again when Ahn decided to give up his candidacy to another independent candidate, Park Won-soon. Park is a legendary figure in Korean civil rights movement. As a human rights lawyer, he has handled the defense of controversial civil rights cases including those regarding the National Security Law and also introduced the concept of minimal cost of living. In 1995-2002, he served as secretary general of the People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD), which engaged in numerous activities to promote the rights of ordinary people and the underprivileged. His commitment to civil

rights movement and promoting democracy has allowed him to win the Ramon Magsaysay Prize, which is equivalent to the Asian Nobel Peace Prize. After his resignation as the secretary general PSPD, he founded the Beautiful Foundation, which helped create thousands of thrift shops for the poor. This gave him the nickname, the Muhammad Yunus of Korea. Like Ahn, Park was a newcomer in Korean politics.

Nevertheless, Park did not share the popularity of Ahn. Park's approval rate was only 9.1 percent before the cessation was made. Therefore, it was a shock for most Koreans that Ahn has suddenly announced his "unconditional cessation" to the Park who "has long dedicated himself to promoting civil rights in Korea and is sufficiently qualified to serve as Seoul's mayor." The media immediately expressed skepticism towards Ahn's decision and questioned Park's ability to win the election as an independent candidate. Many believed that unlike Ahn, Park would not be able to overcome the power of traditional party politics with his popularity. Some predicted that since Park has long been considered as an advocate of liberalist views, he might decide to join the DP and enjoy the organizational strength of the party in order to win. In fact, the DP has constantly put pressure on Park in many ways to join the party.

Despite the skepticism, Park decided to remain as an independent candidate calling himself the "citizens' candidate." Most followers of Ahn, mostly younger generation, respected Ahn's decision and supported Park. According to Pressian, an online news media, 69.8 percent of Ahn's supporters have expressed their support towards Park after Ahn's concession while only 18.4 percent has expressed their support to Park's contender, Na Kyung-won. After the concession, Park's approval rate immediately rose to 33.8 percent. The number experienced another significant increase when the most prominent

candidate of the DP, Han Myung-suk, announced the abandonment of her campaign in order to support Park Won-soon. Although the DP has nominated another candidate, Park Young-sun, Han Myung-suk's stepping down has opened the doors for an open primary among the opposition block against the GNP. Once again, Park Won-soon has been provided with an opportunity to overcome party-dominated politics of Korea.

The mobilization of the younger generation through SNS and the support of 'Naneun Ggomsuda' allowed Park Won-soon's victory against the opposition primary against the DP candidate, Park Young-sun, and in the main election against the GNP candidate, Na Kyung-won. 'Naneun Ggomsuda,' as mentioned above, has gained immense popularity and influence in Korea. Politicians from both the GNP and the opposition block rushed to 'Naneun Ggomsuda' in order to reach the vast audience. The program was clearly in support of Park Won-soon. It urged people to mobilize in support of Park Won-soon and even held fan meetings in front of the ballots on the day of the election in order to lead their fans to the ballots. The broadcast constantly urged the public to vote through SNS, and the result was successful. The power of SNS and 'Naneun Ggomsuda' has facilitated the mobilization of young Koreans in support of Park and elect him as the first independent candidate to become the Mayor of Seoul. Park, the 'Naneun Ggomsuda' team, and nearly 3,000 fans of the broadcast celebrated together after his election.

The promotion of voting led by celebrities has also contributed to the mobilization of the young voters to the ballots. Top-class celebrities such as Lee Hyo-lee and Kim Jae-dong have urged young Koreans to vote and take pictures of themselves voting. Although these celebrities have not shown official support towards any candidate, the action was

considered as a move to support Park Won-soon as Park's foundation of support lies on young voters.ⁱⁱⁱ Young voters appeared at the ballots and posted pictures of themselves voting, or so called 'shot of proof,' on SNS pages such as Twitter and Facebook. The NEC has warned the people such movement may be considered as an illegal election campaign directed to support a certain candidate. The GNP, threatened by the mobilization of young people via SNS, has attempted to pass legislations banning the 'shot of proof' movement and celebrities from promoting voting. Despite the failure of the NEC and the GNP from stopping such movement, the attempts prove the impact of youth mobilization in the election.

Although Park announced his victory as the "victory of the citizens," it is important to acknowledge the impact that especially young Koreans have delivered to the political sphere. For the first time, the mobilization of young generation, armed with SNS, dominated the force of institutional mobilization by the major parties. Song Ho-chang, the spokesman of Park Young-sun stated that the voluntary participation of the young generation and the use of SNS have been crucial in Park Won-soon's victory. It is also told that during the primary election day, one personnel from the DP said "we lost," when he saw a wave of younger people entering the poll in the afternoon. The effect of youth mobilization was also crucial in the main election. Although the NEC has not yet revealed the voting rates classified by age, it is generally accepted that the voting rate of young Koreans have increased significantly compared to previous elections. Of these young voters, the exit poll shows that 69.3 percent of the people in their 20s, 75.8 percent of the 30s, and 66.85 percent of the 40s supported Park. Considering that it was a close election with Park receiving 53.4 percent and Na receiving 46.2 percent of the votes, the concentrated support from

the young voters have been crucial in determining the outcome.

Park's victory has also raised Ahn's status as a prominent presidential candidate. Although he is yet to announce his candidacy, Ahn's approval rate as a presidential candidate has risen to be top two along with the GNP candidate Park Keun-hye. Park Keun-hye, the most prominent presidential candidate within the GNP, has actively supported Na Kyung-won's campaign. Although Ahn has only provided minimal support to Park, people viewed the election as the proxy battle between Park Keun-hye and Ahn Chul-soo. The strategic importance of Seoul has also made the election a crucial for Park to secure her dominance and Ahn to prove that his support is not a mere fad. The victory of Park Won-soon has delivered the first damage to Park's seemly unbreakable dominance in the presidential race and has further solidified Ahn's foundation of support. Ahn was, therefore, referred to by the media as the "biggest winner" of the election.

THE 'AHN CHUL-SOO SYNDROME' AND THE RISE OF YOUNG VOTERS

In the 2011 election, Korean politics has experienced the rise of the young generation as an important axis of power. The young generation had (1) reasons to participate in politics (the socio-economic situation that threatens their survival), (2) stimuli (the messages from the Youth Concert), and (3) facilitators for mobilization (SNS and 'Naneun Ggomsuda'). The emergence of Ahn Chul-soo and Park Won-soon has enabled young Koreans to mobilize and elect an independent candidate to one of the most important position in Korean politics. Such experience in success is expected to trigger further mobilization of the young generation. All these factors have contributed to the phenomenon called the

'Ahn Chul-soo syndrome,' which was originally used as a term to describe young Koreans showing their absolute support towards Ahn and his evangelism. Recently, the term is also used to describe wave of youth participation in the political sphere.

The impact of 'Ahn Chul-soo syndrome' is shown not only in the increased voting rates but also in enhanced organized participation. Between 2010 and 2011 numerous political organizations were founded by young Koreans. These organizations form networks via both online and offline activities with the help of SNS. Due to the emergence of Ahn Chul-soo and the victory of Park Won-soon, the size and number of the organizations have been increasing with the increased interest in politics among young Koreans. The growth of these organizations is expected to continue as the approach of two major elections, the general election and the presidential election, in 2012 shall preserve the interest of the young Koreans. Also, the institutional powers embedded in the organizations shall further enhance the potentiality of youth mobilization which will create a larger impact in the following elections.

Political parties, acknowledging that the power of the younger generation is crucial for electoral victory, are trying to find ways to gather the support from the younger generation. One approach they are taking is the recruit of young leaders of the various fields. The GNP appointed a 25-year-old social business owner, Lee Jun-seok, as a member of its emergency committee. The DP has promised to nominate four people from the young generation on the ballot for proportional representation in the 2012 general election. Both parties are also increasing the use of SNS in public relations in order to get closer to the young generation. Such efforts suggest that the significant impact of the 'Ahn Chul-soo syndrome' which has raised the status of the young Koreans in politics.

THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ‘AHN CHUL-SOO SYNDROME’

It is important to learn the unique nature of young voters that has created the ‘Ahn Chul-soo syndrome.’ The ‘Ahn Chul-soo syndrome’ is founded upon an important characteristic of young voters: skepticism towards the existing dominating parties that have failed to represent the interest of the youth.

Korean political parties have traditionally revolved around three major political cleavages: (1) ideology; (2) regionalism; and (3) policies regarding North Korea. The DP was formed by the liberals who had led the democratization movement in the 70s and 80s, while the GNP was formed by the conservatives who had enjoyed traditional autocratic powers prior to the democratization. The DP has long enjoyed the support from Ho-nam, the southwest province of Korea, while the GNP has long enjoyed the absolute support from Young-nam, the southeast province of Korea. Based on the regional and ideological support, the DP takes a more favorable stance towards North Korea, while the GNP emphasizes national security. Korean politics have long been dominated by these two parties and the issues that have been revolving around such cleavages.

However, the interest of the young generation significantly differs from the traditional issues based on the three cleavages. Young Koreans consider wealth polarization and class conflict the most important issues to be resolved. According to the recent studies of MK news, 57 percent of the young Koreans (of age between 20s and 40s) believe that class conflict is the most important issue that needs to be resolved. Regionalism and ideological conflict has only gained 12

percent and 9 percent, respectively. Such shift of interest attributes to the socio-economic situation of the young Koreans discussed above. Such difference in interest and the failure of political parties to resolve issues of economic injustice and wealth polarization has created skepticism among the young generation. According to congresswoman Chun Hye-sook (DP), 84 percent of the 2030 generation believes that no party represents the interest of themselves. Such estrangement from the existing parties leaves the large pool of young voters to be vulnerable to the outsiders to enter politics.

An important characteristic of Ahn’s foundation of support is that, unlike the DP and the GNP, it is not based on the traditional political cleavages of Korea. Ahn Chul-soo successfully captures the interest of the young generation, feeling less affiliated with the propaganda of the existing parties, with a vision to overcome the outdated issues corrupting Korean politics and resolve the socio-economic issues. As shown in the 2011 election, these volatile voters have concentrated their support towards outsiders such as Ahn Chul-soo and Park Won-soon. Such phenomenon has never occurred for any DP candidate or an independent candidate. Such concentrated support of the young generation has served as the foundation for the ‘Ahn Chul-soo syndrome.’ It is very difficult for the existing parties to appeal to the public by presenting the same vision due to their established images and history. Therefore, the cleavages that have served as the foundation of the existing parties have now become their limitations. Unless the existing parties effectively win the support of the young Koreans back from Ahn Chul-soo, the syndrome is expected to be continued in the 2012 election.

CRITICISM

1. Exaggerated Power of Young Voters

Critics often point out that the significance of youth voting and the ‘Ahn Chul-soo syndrome’ is being overstated. The NEC report on voting rates suggests that the rise in youth voting rate should be

seen as a mere continuation of the trend shown in the 2010 local election.

<Table 1 – Voting rates of major elections, classified by age >

	19	Early 20s	Late 20s	Early 30s	Late 30s	40s	50s	60 and above
2010 regional election	47.4	45.8	37.1	41.9	50.0	55.0	64.1	69.3
2008 general election	33.2	32.9	24.2	31.0	39.4	47.9	60.3	65.5
Difference	14.2	12.9	12.9	10.9	10.6	7.1	3.8	3.8
2007 presidential election	54.2	51.1	42.9	51.3	58.5	66.3	76.6	76.3
2006 general election	37.9	38.3	29.6	37.0	45.6	55.4	68.2	70.9
2004 general election	-	46.0	43.3	53.2	59.8	66.0	74.8	71.5
2002 presidential election	-	57.9	55.2	64.3	70.8	76.3	83.7	78.7

(unit: %,%p / source: NEC)

The data in <Table 1> shows that the voting rate of the young generation is significantly lower than that of the old generation and has been decreasing until the 2010 regional election with exception of the presidential election, in which the voting rates of all generation are higher in general. However, the table also shows that the youth voting rate in the presidential election has also been decreasing. The decreasing voting rate suggests there has not been a compelling factor for the young generation to come to the ballots, which can be attributed to the strong apathy among the younger generation towards politics. Korean politics, dominated by the vested powers of the conglomerates and the elder generation with economic power, has failed to represent the interest of young Koreans. The exacerbating economic hardship, in fact, makes political participation or mobilization unaffordable for the young generation. The Confucian culture has also deprived the young Koreans of the opportunity to be formally represented in

political positions. Lacking the resources and the environment to be represented, young Koreans have become skeptical about the promises made by politicians and lost interest in politics in general and the vicious cycle of under-representation and skepticism further weakened the power of the youth.

However, the youth voting rates bounced back in the 2010 election as a result of exacerbating socio-economic status of the young generation. The young generation, having previously shown support towards Lee Myung-bak’s presidential campaign, which promised restoration of the economy, was driven to the ballots to express their dissent towards President Lee’s failure. Lee has become unpopular since the ‘anti-US beef demonstration’ in which he failed to show leadership in communicating with the public and mending the conflict between the sharply divided opinions regarding the issue. Lee’s approval rate from the young generation further plummeted due to the failure to resolve youth unemployment and rising college tuition. Meanwhile, socio-

economic injustice and wealth polarization has increased due to Lee's conglomerate-friendly policies which further angered the young generation. The anger has driven young Koreans to participate in anti-government demonstrations and to the ballots.

Despite the significant increase in youth voting rates, driven by anger, the 2010 election failed to deliver the changes the young generation expected. The youth support towards the DP was reactionary as there has not been an alternative candidate on the ballots against the ruling GNP. This reactionary support only allowed minimal success for the DP in few areas and the GNP managed to secure the most politically important regions, Seoul and Gyeonggi-do. For the Seoul mayoral election of 2010, the younger generation did not concentrate their support towards the DP candidate Han Myung-suk. According to the exit polls, Han has earned votes from 56.7 percent of Koreans in their 20s, 64.2 percent of those in their 30s, 54.2 percent of those in their 40s, 38.8 percent of those in their 50s, and 26.0 percent of those in their 60s and above. In comparison, the GNP candidate, Oh Sae-hoon, has earned votes from 34.0% of the votes from Koreans in their 20s, 27.8 percent of those in their 30s, 38.9 percent of those in their 40s, 57.6 percent of those in their 50s, and 71.8 percent of those in their 60s and above. Higher voting rates and concentration of the older generation has allowed the GNP to secure their presence. The minimal success of the DP suggests that the increased number of young voters did not translate to political change.

Furthermore, the increased youth voting rates of the 2010 election did not increase the proportion of young votes in the total amount of votes. According to the PNC Report's predictions for the 19th general election, the increase in youth voting rates only creates minimal impact. Of the total number of constituents for the 2012 election, people in their 20s and 30s stand

39.2 percent, people in their 40s stand 22.1 percent, and people in their 50s and over stand 38.8 percent. The PNC Report claims that even if the voting rates of the 2010 election, in which the youth voting rates were exceptionally high, is applied to predict the 2012 general election, the votes of the people in their 20s and 30s would only consist of 31.2 percent of the total votes casted. This only yields a 1.3 percent increase compared to that of 2008 general election. Considering that the voting rates of those in their 20s and 30s have increased more than 10 percent in the 2010 election compared to the 2008 election, as shown in <Table 1>, the effect of increased youth voting rates is relatively insignificant compared to the importance of the senior votes. The study attributes this effect to the increase in number of the senior population and the decrease in number of young population as Korea is approaching to become an aging society with low birth rates. Therefore, the critics suggest that the votes of the senior population are more crucial in determining the outcome of the election.

2. The Moon Kook-hyun Experiment

The significance of the 2011 special election comes from the emergence of 'outsiders' such as Ahn Chul-soo and Park Won-soon. These outsiders successfully captured the concentrated support of the young generation and proved that citizen's can overcome the power of the existing parties. Although there have been various factors for young Koreans' mobilization and the worsening economic situation, the defeatism would still have hindered them from casting their votes to DP candidates since their support towards the DP was only reactionary. However, the emergence of these outsiders has gained active support from the young voters unlike the mere reactionary support towards the DP in the 2010 election. Such active support was

translated not only into higher youth voting rates but also enough concentration of these votes for the newcomers to win the election.

However, it is not the first time the outsiders have gained such attention. Some scholars compare the so called ‘Ahn Chul-soo syndrome’ to the phenomenon of the 2007 election in which the so called ‘Moon Kook-hyun syndrome’ occurred. Like Ahn, Moon was a successful businessman who was known for his ethical administration practices and emphasis on corporate social responsibility. His “new paradigm” approach in economics and politics have inspired many young Koreans. As he entered the 2007 presidential election, his popularity was dominant in the internet using young generation, giving him the nickname of the ‘internet president of Korea.’ Although not many believed that he would win, many had expected that Moon would gain at least 10 percent of the vote to influence the outcome of the election. However, he managed to win only 5.8 percent of the votes. The following year, Moon and his Creative Korea Party (CKP), entered the 2008 general election expecting to win significant number of seats in the National Assembly. Moon was successful against President Lee’s front-man Lee Jae-oh in the regional representative election; however, the CKP only secured 3.8 percent of the votes for proportional representative, providing them a total of the seats in the National Assembly, which consists of 299 seats.

Critics often state the case of Moon as an example for the limitations the outsiders face when entering politics without a solid party base. They claim that Park Won-soon’s victory was only possible with the support of the DP and that Park will not be able to execute his policies without the support of the DP dominant city council. It is true that Park would have had a strong chance of losing the election if the DP had decided to not hold the open

primary and nominate a candidate to split the votes. Park’s policy execution is also highly dependent on the support of the DP city council members. In fact, Park is expected to join the DP by February 2012 for the unification of the opposition block. This puts Ahn in a difficult position to run for president as an independent candidate as he cannot expect the support from Park against the DP. With pressure coming from all parties, the ‘Ahn Chul-soo syndrome’ may follow the course of the ‘Moon Kook-hyun syndrome.’

However, Ahn is different from Moon in many ways. Despite the similarities, Moon has never shared the level of public support as Ahn has. Moon’s approval rate has never exceeded 10 percent while Ahn’s approval rate remains around 40 to 50 percent. Moon’s approval rate was constantly below the dominant GNP candidate Lee Myung-bak, the DP candidate Chung Dong-young and the independent candidate Lee Hoi-chang. However, Ahn’s approval rates dominate those of any other potential candidate. Some polls suggest that Ahn can win the election without the support of the DP. Furthermore, unlike Moon, who entered politics without any former experience, Ahn has solidified his foundation of support through the victory of Park Won-soon. Ahn’s political experience prior to declaring candidacy serves as a sustainable base for support, which is expected to be enhanced even further once he declares his candidacy.

CHANCE OF SUCCESS OF THE ‘THIRD WAY’ MOVEMENT

Despite the skepticism among critics, the ‘Ahn Chul-soo syndrome’ and the political movement of young Koreans have the potential to upset the existing two-party dominated Korean politics. According to the studies conducted by the MK news, 65 percent of the Koreans in their 40s, 69 percent of those in their 30s, and 72 percent

of those in their 20s will vote for Ahn Chul-soo over Park Keun-hye as the next president of Korea. In comparison, only 21 percent of those in their 40s, 17 percent of those in their 30s and 20s answered they would vote for Park. Of these young people, 29 percent have also answered that they would support Ahn's party if it is formed; only 12 percent of those expressed their support the DP or the GNP. The will of the young voters is also translated in the general poll as 51.7 percent of Koreans answered that they would vote for Ahn as the next president of Korea while 42.8 percent of them answered they would vote for Park. The approval rate of Ahn's party was 22.1 percent. Therefore, Ahn, based on the support of these young Koreans, has the potential to create a new axis of power in the upcoming elections.

However, there are many obstacles Ahn and the supporters of a third party need to overcome to be successful in 2012. One problem is the skepticism the general public started to feel due to Ahn's refrain from politics. After his cessation in the Seoul mayoral election, Ahn has been sending vague messages regarding his political debut. While these vague comments have kept the public expecting his political debut, they have also hindered the formation of organized support base. As mentioned above, young Korean voters are volatile. While Ahn has enjoyed the concentrated support of the youth voters, the volatility of the voters implies the possibility of withdrawal. This means that the rising skepticism towards Ahn due to his refrain from politics may lead to the withdrawal of support.

This withdrawal has already been occurring. With the absence of Ahn's presence in politics, the DP candidate, Moon Jae-in, is gaining support from the young generation and emerging as the most preferable presidential candidate in the opposition block. A recent poll shows that Moon's approval rate has become slightly

higher than that of Ahn Chul-soo as the young generation is leaning towards Moon. Such change attributes to the DP's efforts to unify the opposition block by recruiting leaders from NGOs in order to leave no space for independents or third parties to emerge. Therefore, as the time for general election approaches, it is becoming more difficult for Ahn to create a party that can secure seats in the National Assembly. The decreasing chance of Ahn's political debut will continue to wear out his foundation of support.

There are four possible scenarios for Ahn and the third party movement: (1) Ahn declares his political debut prior to the general election and form a party; (2) Ahn declares his political debut after refraining from the general election and run for president; (3) Ahn only takes a supporting role in both elections; and (4) Ahn refrains from all political activities.

1. Scenario One

The first scenario is that Ahn declares his political debut prior to the general election and forms a new party. With Ahn's financial status, the cost of forming a party does not seem to be an issue. Founding a political party prior to the general election would not only reestablish Ahn's support, but also create an institutional foundation that can effectively carry out operations for election. This can also serve as a 'convention effect' similar to that of Park Won-soon's victory and eliminate the skepticism caused by the uncertainties regarding Ahn's political debut. Considering that there are already significant number of voters that have shown support towards Ahn's new party, the third party is likely to secure significant number of seats in the general election.

However, finding the right people to join the party will not be an easy task. Ahn needs to make sure that the members of the party do not prove self-destructive to Ahn

and his ideals. He should learn from the failures of Moon Kook-hyun and the demise of his Creative Korea Party caused by internal conflicts. Although his party may succeed in securing a significant number of seats in the National Assembly, the failure to manage the party will not only damage Ahn's chance in the presidential race but also result in a collapse of the party. Ahn's leadership will be tested during the process of forming and sustaining the party. Therefore, this scenario requires careful execution.

2. Scenario Two

The second scenario is that Ahn declares his political debut after refraining from the general election and running for president. This option relieves the burden of forming and managing a party for Ahn Chul-soo. It can also preserve the 'outsider effect' that has been crucial for the 'Ahn Chul-soo syndrome.' Therefore, it may be the safest and the least costly choice for Ahn.

However, this leaves Ahn with no support from the National Assembly. Not having a solid party base in the National Assembly would limit the success of the new policies of Ahn and his new party. Park Won-soon's recent decision to join the DP also shows the difficulties an independent politician faces when entering politics. In order to overcome this situation, the supporters of Ahn could create or join a third party, such as the Creative Korea Party, and Ahn could state his support towards this party. Although this action will once again serve as a test to Ahn's influence, a successful third party will create another 'Ahn Chul-soo syndrome.' Therefore, this would serve as the most cost-effective scenario for Ahn and his supporters.

3. Scenario Three

The third scenario is that Ahn only takes a supporting role in both elections. Skeptics of Ahn Chul-soo consider this the most probable scenario. This scenario states that Ahn would only play the same role that he previously took during the 2011 election. Ahn continues to claim that he would not have to enter politics if there is a right candidate, or if Korean politics could correct itself. The assumption behind such action is that there would be a party and a candidate that is worthy of gaining the support from Ahn. Therefore, for candidates, winning Ahn's support will be very important. That is why many people say that the one who wins the heart of Ahn will win the world. Currently, there does not seem to be an appropriate choice for Ahn to support. However, as soon as a right alternative emerges, Ahn may simply take the supporting role and maintain his distance from politics.

This claim is also based on the assumption that Ahn is not willing to enter politics. Although Ahn's recent behaviors, such as donating all of his assets to create a charity foundation, are usually analyzed as a preparation effort to run for president, it may also simply be Ahn's act of taking social responsibility. Skeptics claim that Ahn would not risk his career while he can do so much without entering politics. In fact, a recent poll suggests that 44 percent of Koreans believe Ahn should not enter politics and only take a supporting role. Therefore, if Ahn is not desperate for power, he shall try to change the society through other measures such as managing the charity organization he is founding.

4. Scenario Four

The fourth scenario is that Ahn refrains from all political activities. This is the least probable scenario as this would severely damage Ahn's reputation. Although some Koreans believe that Ahn should not enter politics and remain as a social mentor,

Ahn's abandonment of all political activities would disappoint most of those who have shown support to his new ideas. Nevertheless, there will be people who try to participate in a third party movement regardless of Ahn's participation. These people will constantly ask for Ahn to take responsibility of his vision. Since Ahn has continuously claimed that people should create social change by participating in politics, it would be irresponsible for him to back down on political issues.

CONCLUSION

The 2011 election has significantly raised the political status of the young generation in Korean politics. The need for change in the socio-economic situation of this generation has motivated them to engage in political participation. The increased interest in politics was enhanced by factors such as the Youth Concert, Naneun Ggomsuda, voting promotion campaigns, and the wide use of SNS. Young voters, skeptical towards the existing parties, were able to concentrate their support towards outsiders such as Ahn Chul-soo and Park Won-soon. With the victory of Park Won-soon in the 2011 election, the power of the 'Ahn Chul-soo syndrome' further consolidated as young Koreans are becoming more engaged in politics. Political parties, alarmed by such movement, are putting effort to increase the youth support base. Therefore, young generation is expected to have more representation and power in politics due to the impact of the 'Ahn Chul-soo syndrome.'

The enhanced youth presence in Korean politics and the power of Ahn Chul-soo have the potential to create a new axis of power in Korean politics. Whether this potential could be realized depends on the course of action Ahn and his followers decide to take. While the level of Ahn's commitment shall yield different results, the 'third way movement' is expected to

continue with the support of the young generation. It is clear that the 'Ahn Chul-soo syndrome' has proven the paradigm shift in Korean politics. The traditional cleavages that have dominated Korean politics and have sustained the two major parties have become obsolete. Economic and social injustice has emerged as a new issue, and 'sustainability' is becoming a new keyword of the society. The failure of politics to keep up with the new social issues is creating the need for a new party to emerge. Whether this new movement will result in a meaningful change in the 2012 elections is unknown. However, if the existing parties continue to fail in keeping up with the social changes, as predicted by Alvin Toffler, the traditional axis of power will dissolve and the parties will fail to exist.

Therefore, Korean politics is at a crossroads of creating a foundation for change that is appropriate for the new rising issues in politics. With the emergence of the 'Ahn Chul-soo syndrome,' the chance for creating a new political axis has become higher than ever. The success of such movement depends on the efforts of the people, especially the young generation, to mobilize in support for change. Considering the high demand of the society for such change, Korean politics is likely to experience a ground shifting change during the 2012 election. This change, if it ever takes place, will destroy the two-party politics permanently and force the old party front to adjust to the agendas of the future generation.

ⁱ An organization called the 'youth union' was founded by the young generations in order to protect their own rights at workplace. Although the government is refusing to recognize it as an official organization, the 'youth union' is continuing to grow as an influential organization among the younger generation.

ⁱⁱ However, student demonstration regarding over-priced tuition is not only seen in Korea. In countries such as France, England, and the United

States, violent student demonstration occurred since the 2009 Global Financial Crisis. These countries not only had sharp increase in the cost of tertiary education but also exacerbating youth unemployment rate.

ⁱⁱⁱ The movement is very similar to the United States' 'vote or die' campaign

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Kim, Byung-soo, "Research on Political Perceptions of the 20s, 30s, and 40s," MK News, January 4th, 2012, accessed January 20th, 2012, <http://news.mk.co.kr/newsRead.php?year=2012&no=7002>

Choi, Jang Jip, "Political Cleavages in South Korea," in Hagen Koo (ed.), State and Society in Contemporary Korea, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993)

Toffler, Alvin and Heidi Toffler, "Revolutionary Wealth," (Random House Digital, Inc. April 25th, 2006)

Dae-in Sun, "Free Rider", (Korea: The Fact, 2010)

Sun, "Tax Revolution," (Korea: The Fact, 2011)

Kyung-soo Hwang, "The Ahn Chul-soo Phenomenon and the Third Party Discussion," (Korea: Yeon-in M&B, 2012)

National Election Commission, "Voting Rates of Special Elections since 2000," last modified August 10th, 2011, http://www.nec.go.kr/nec_new2009/BoardCotBySeq.do

P&C Report, "Report on the 19th General Election Predictions," last modified, January 25th, 2012.

http://www.pcreport.com/2010elect/2012general.html?code=h2b_2012general&mode=view&uid=1.00&page=1&pnt=1&f=&q=&g=&c=&lm=06

Park, Ju-min, "Satirical podcast ignites S Korean political activism," Taipei Times, Nov, 7th 2011, accessed January 15th, 2012, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2011/11/07/2003517664/1>

Kim, Dang, "Park Keun-hye 35.4%, Moon Jae-in 25.3%, Ahn Chul-soo 22.7%," Ohmynews, January 31st, 2012, accessed January 31st, 2012, http://www.ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/view/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0001691528

Choi, Jung-ho, "Ahn's approval rate jumps after seceding to Park Won-soon," Nanum News, October 10th, 2011, accessed January 16th, 2012, http://nanumnews.com/sub_read.html?uid=31972§ion=sc201

AN ANALYSIS OF THE VIDEO GAME WORKS OF FENG MENGBO

Valeriya Safronova

INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ART SCENE

Today, an American who is familiar solely with the work of someone such as Ai Weiwei might be surprised after visiting the 798 or Caochangdi districts in Beijing or the M50 area in Shanghai. She will find a huge variety of contemporary art tucked away in the many rows of galleries, and most of the artists will have never garnered even a side mention in an American newspaper. She might find images that make light of the Revolutionⁱ, paintings of nude men clutching chickensⁱⁱ, and abstract silkscreen prints of women in cheongsamsⁱⁱⁱ. Near M50, she might not expect to find a long stretch of walls covered with colorful graffiti, interlaced with black and white portraits of Chinese celebrities. This street art is not shunned; it is treated as a continuation of the gallery spaces nearby. In Caochangdi, she will find collaborations between Chinese and foreign artists, a large scale painting of Chinese entrepreneurs arranged Last Supper style^{iv}, and a Statue of Liberty enshrouded in a blood red fog^v.

The Chinese contemporary art scene is hardly homogenous, with influences coming in from all time periods and places. Nor are the messages and criticisms of contemporary Chinese works all centered on national politics or society. Some artists explore painting techniques, others reinvent calligraphy, while others shoot videos, or put together multi-

dimensional sculptural pieces. Far from all are interested in actively dissecting or commenting on politics. The international art market is slowly catching on to this hub of creative energy—a recent Sotheby's auction of contemporary Chinese art brought in \$54.8 million and according to Reuters, “saw rapid-fire bidding electrify a packed auction hall” (Pomfret, 2011).

As everywhere, video and new media art are on the rise in China. According to a written piece by Wu Meichun and Qiu Shijie, new media artists in China “have already become deeply involved in pondering the ideas of maintaining a continuous dialogue with technological advances...and advancing toward a globalized new media art” (Wu and Qiu, 2002). One artist who is persistently placed in the category of new media art (to his sometime displeasure) is Feng Mengbo, the focus of this analysis.

FENG MENGBO: BACKGROUND, WORKS, AND THEMES

Feng Mengbo was born during the first year of the Cultural Revolution, in 1966. Trained as a printmaker at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, he began working with digital media in the early 1990s, long before it was popular in China. As Christopher Mao writes in an introduction to Feng Mengbo’s 2009 exhibition *Yi Bite*, “he had very little to work with as...the situation in China was hardly conducive to international research. Yet he persisted in his obsessive exploration of this alternate world,

beginning with paintings before moving on to CD-ROMs and actual games” (Mao, 2009). Feng Mengbo’s first solo exhibition, *Game Over: Long March*, was held in 1994 in Hong Kong. There he presented a series of paintings that were a very early version of his 2011 MoMA PS1 piece *Long March: Restart*. He quickly gained international recognition, and was chosen to represent China at the 1997 and 2002 *documenta X and 11* exhibitions in Kassel, Germany.

Feng Mengbo has devoted a large amount of time to interactive digital pieces, such as *My Private Album* (2008), *Q4U* (2002, 2005), and *Long March: Restart* (2011). Because of this, Mao labels him the “king of nerds” (Mao, 2009). However, Feng Mengbo himself refuses to be placed into one category, and reminds interviewers of the importance of his two dimensional works, such as *Journey to the West* (2010) and *Wrong Code: Shanshui* (2007). In an email conversation with Li Zhenhua from 2010, Feng writes,

“Nothing limits me, whether it be media art, easel painting, society, or whatever. What I seek for is much greater than these trivial things” (Feng Mengbo, 2010).

The piece that this analysis will primarily focus on is *Long March: Restart*, which was shown during the winter and spring of 2011 at MoMA PS1 in New York City. The work was essentially a large-scale video game, comprised of two 80 by 20 foot screens, which were set up on parallel walls. The technology used was sidescroller, and the video games from which *Long March* drew its inspiration included “Street Fighter,” “Doom,” and “Teenage Mutant Ninjas.” The game consisted of twelve levels and required that the player move through the large room alongside the avatar in order to see what was happening on the screen. At the same time as one wall showed a zoomed in, enlarged version of the scene, the other showed a zoomed out image with more scope.



The twelve levels of the game were: a Great Wall scene, a traditional aristocrat's house, a swamp with mutant monsters, a winter scene, a suspension bridge, a Chinese city, a factory, the Red Square in Moscow, a Statue of Liberty scene, a moonscape, and two versions of Tiananmen Square. The winter scene, swamp, and suspension bridge appeared as complete alternate realities, with no references to iconic or political images. They were riddled with mutant machines, monsters, and characters from other video games. The other levels, however, were rife with symbols such as Communist

flags and the Red Star, Chinese calligraphy, PRC slogans^{vi}, the hammer and sickle, the Statue of Liberty, American rocket ships, the American flag, and yellow cabs. One particularly thought-provoking symbol of the piece was the Coca-Cola can, which appeared everywhere—as the weapon for the avatar, as the pattern on the ground in a few scenes, on top of the taxis (in Chinese writing), and in the Red Square. The preponderance of this symbol was striking and fecund with possibilities for interpretation.





Another of Feng Mengbo's new media projects that is of interest is the video game installation *Q4U* (2002, 2005). The interesting aspect of this work is that all of the avatars are Feng Mengbo himself, carrying a camcorder and a rifle. The essential rule of the game is to kill or be killed. Because all of the characters are the same, there is no way to make

alliances, and violence is the only form of interaction. Various sources have interpreted *Q4U* in different ways. Some suggest that it represents the competing ideologies of Communism and Capitalism, and the desire of both to gain hegemony over all of the nations in the world. These nations are, of course, comprised of people who are not as different as the

strict political dichotomy might have them believe (Krispme, 2011). Another view comes from the book *ShanghART*, in which the authors write, “what is presented as a virtual game might very

well be regarded as a mirror for ‘real’ people struggling against the rigid and omnipresent Chinese official organization of control” (O).



Whether he is working with paints, prints, or computers, Feng Mengbo takes an interest in a cadre of repeated themes. Many art critics and journalists have placed Feng Mengbo into a category known as Political Pop, because of his simultaneous use of political, historical, and contemporary symbols. For example, Li Xianting—the man who coined the term—lists Feng Mengbo as an artist within this category in the *Encyclopedia of Chinese Culture* (Davis, 2005). Eleanor Heartney, a critic writing for “Art in America” Magazine, asserts that Feng Mengbo “shares with compatriots like Wang Guangyi and the Luo Brothers an insouciant attitude

toward the icons of China's recent past” (Heartney, 2011). Both Wang and the Luo Brothers are generally identified as Political Pop artists. In the introduction to *Yi Bite*, Andrew Solomon writes, “while most of his art is not explicitly about politics, a political consciousness peeks through it” and that “he can suffuse a vision of the future with nostalgia of history” (Solomon, 2009).

While Feng may not be specific in his political messages, he does have a consistent concern with history, memory, iconic symbols, the Cultural Revolution, classical Chinese art, and the future. His works utilize certain methods and themes

that are found in the category of Political Pop, such as the portrayal of an emotionless state of being, a “non-standpoint” juxtaposition of iconic symbols, and a dislocation of history. However, the medium of the video game, which Feng uses in a number of works, particularly *Long March: Restart*, allows for a further and divergent exploration of power dynamics and history. Within the first of these two broad categories, Feng explores both the layers of control that are inherent in the video game medium and the additional types he proposes through his particular construction of *Long March: Restart* and *Q4U*. Within the latter category, Feng delves into the construction of history, alternate realities, nostalgic idealism, and the significance of digitization in the formation of living history. The artistic category into which Feng Mengbo might fit is not at stake here; more pressing is understanding and identifying both Feng Mengbo's multi-layered approach to pertinent categories and the questions he arouses in viewers. While previous analyses of Feng Mengbo's work have sought to contextualize him either within or outside of Political Pop, this thesis is more concerned with understanding how Feng Mengbo utilizes certain methods associated with Political Pop in the very unique structure of the video game, a medium that by its nature probes the issues of control and history. To begin, one must first try to understand what Political Pop means and which particular aspects of it that Feng Mengbo engages.

POLITICAL POP ART AND FENG MENGBO: THE CATEGORY, THE ARTIST, AND THEIR INTERACTIONS

According to the definition of Li Xianting, the man behind the term, Political Pop “characteristically combines political symbols of the Mao era...and symbols of Western consumer culture to create a feeling of irony or absurdity” (Li, 1999). Political Pop is part of a movement that is rooted in late 1980s Chinese attitudes about art. Li finds that there is a strong sense of cynicism and detachment in Political Pop, along with an ironic sort of humor. Gu Chengfeng, a Chinese art critic and literary editor, identifies a few aspects of Political Pop art as a whole category. These are:

- “1) The great use of visual signs so familiar to the public that they are tacitly understood...
- 2) The search for metaphors in reality. Satiric allegory extends beyond glorifying culture. It often uses to canvas to unleash a certain defiant mocking of authority.
- 3) Departures from traditional aesthetic categories. The degree of a work's success is determined by how well it expresses its underlying concepts.
- 4) Graphic simplicity and quick execution. By abandoning a sense of the eternal, [Pop] pursues efficacy for a given period of time.” (Gu, 1996)

Summarized, these four precepts state that Political Pop employs iconic symbols, mocks authority, departs from tradition, and aims for quick execution over immortality. A quick survey of *Long March: Restart* might find that Feng Mengbo definitely fulfills at least two of the categories—the first, with his use of global iconic symbols, and the third, with his choice of the video game as a medium. However, the sense of mocking authority is less clear in his work, although he definitely does question notions of control. Feng's concern is also less with

metaphors in reality and more with different types of realities, a theme he works through extensively through the use of the video game format. Considering the logistics, the planning, and design of a video game, Feng's *Long March: Restart* is far from simple or quickly executed. Putting together this video game is a complex, layered, technical and arduous process. Feng Mengbo's departure from the second category will be discussed later, as well as the effects of the video game medium on the first and third stipulations.

Gu notes that the use of the symbols was not intended "to provoke people to simply criticize the past," but to produce "an effect that simultaneously looks back on the past and exposes today's state of affairs" (Gu, 1996). The combining of symbols critical of the past and present allowed for a "dislocation of past eras" (Gu, 1996). An example of this might be *Chanel No.19* by Wang Guangyi, a man considered by many critics to be an artist emblematic of the Political Pop movement. The piece combines two well-known images, the Chanel logo and a trio of Revolutionary youths, one of them clutching the Little Red Book. Of course, during the time of the Cultural Revolution, youths in China did not know about Chanel. Chanel probably did not know much about them or their Little Red Book. However, Wang "dislocates" time and history by placing the two concepts into the same space, forcing the viewer to consider the consequences of their interaction. An instance of Feng Mengbo utilizing this method of juxtaposition is the placement of Coca-Cola cans as the only weapon in the hands of the avatar in *Long March: Restart*, a Red Guard soldier. In this combination of symbols, one sees the "dislocation" of history, as a Red Guard soldier most likely did not have any idea what a Coca-Cola can looked like, let alone what it was.

While it is tempting to attempt to draw out a unifying political message from Wang and Feng's juxtaposing of symbols, it is perhaps also futile. According to Huang Zhuan, Wang attempts to take a "neutral attitude" in his works. Huang writes, "This neutral attitude is not detachment; instead, it indicates that art can only make effective judgments about political events and history after it has removed specific political standpoints and humanist passions" (Huang, 1996). Essentially, an artwork that takes a neutral attitude cannot have an aggressive political agenda or message. It has to assess politics and history from a bird's eye view, removed from emotions and personal political biases. Huang also quotes Wang as saying that he is interested in achieving a "non-standpoint." The idea behind this is that all standpoints are valid, though perhaps in different places. This allows an artwork to open up and accept multiple points of view as its own.

Few would argue that the juxtaposition of contemporary and historic symbols in the works of Feng Mengbo and Wang Guangyi is pointed or obvious in its political message. They combine symbols of past and present, true, but not in a way that is meant to lead the audience down a strict and unwavering path that arrives at a singular criticism. Instead, Feng and Wang bring these images together through a means that causes the viewer to question their established meanings and their placement in society's consciousness. Coca-cola cans do not belong in the hands of a Red Army soldier. As mentioned earlier, the Chanel logo clearly stands out when placed right above a trio of Revolutionary youths with The Little Red Book in hand. Do these juxtapositions necessarily evoke a specific criticism? No. But they do push the audience to a new understanding of

society and to a questioning of accepted principles of what is. Huang suggests that if Wang is criticizing or deconstructing anything, it is the “mode of political conception that lays within the humanist passion” (Huang, 1996). This paper suggests that while Feng Mengbo is not aiming for a particular, or particularly political, criticism of Chinese, American, or global society, he is suggesting new modes of thinking about history, power dynamics, reality, memory, and idealism.

In his discussion of '85 New Wave artists, Li Xianting describes the apathy and meaninglessness which they sought to depict through their work. Lack of emotion is an element that Li pinpoints as integral to Cynical Realism, a movement which led into Political Pop over time (Li, 1999). One can see this emotionless state in both Wang Guangyi and Feng Mengbo's works. For example, in *Long March: Restart*, the Red Guard avatar is simply an empty vessel. He progresses through a world heavily overlaid with violence, yet the upbeat, inspirational background music nullifies the gruesome atmosphere. While the gamer might at first engage emotionally in the physical struggle of the Red Guard, she is drawn out quickly by the optimism of the tune which infiltrates her ears.

Similarly, Wang Guangyi's subjects appear to be empty, prototypical characters. Their eyes lack emotion and the stark, sharp lines that shape them share little with three dimensional, flesh-and-blood people who exist in reality. There is a permanent, disconnected smile etched on the faces of the Revolutionaries depicted by Wang, leaving little room for an interpretation that perceives them as experiencing genuine feelings or true engagement.

VIDEO GAMES AS ART: A BRIEF HISTORY AND POSSIBILITIES

In her essay “Games AS art,” Celia Pearce describes some of the ways in which game art is unique and useful in a different way from traditional categories of art. She explains that game art takes interaction and co-creation to a new level than before. She writes that game art “questions the relationship of art and artist to the viewer/spectator. It asks for the viewer’s engagement not only intellectually but literally” (Pearce, 2006). Pearce acknowledges that games are treated by society as a “low art” (Pearce, 2006), but she argues that they are complex, dynamic, and engaging tools and art pieces. Feng Mengbo echoes this sentiment in an interview with Li Zhenhua from 2010, writing, “One of my important artistic threads is playfulness. In these works, interaction is a must. Why do we call a ‘game’ as such? Because it has a straightforward interactivity” (Feng Mengbo, 2010). Both Feng Mengbo and Pearce touch on one of the major purposes of game art: to engage the viewer. This unique feature of video games brings art into a new dimension, bringing it down from an untouchable and inaccessible pedestal to an interactive experience which results in a novel relationship between the art, the artist, and the viewer.

In a description of contemporary game art, Daphne Dragna writes, “Using play as a practice to transcend rigid forms and to break constraints is a distinctive feature of today’s game-based art. Artists working in the field are playing with the rules, rather than playing by rules; they modify or negate instructions, structures, aesthetics and norms” (Dragona, 2010). This quotation captures a major aspect of game art: its flexibility and ability to create new situations and realities. Mary

Flanagan writes that because play is able to shift realities and world views, it "leads Csikszentmihalyi (1979) to the conclusion that, 'what play shows over and over again is the possibility of changing goals and therefore restructuring reality'" (Flanagan, 2010). Corrado Morgana enriches this assessment, writing that video games that appropriate *detournement* "overthrow conventions to create new meaning by appropriating and juxtaposing" (Morgana, 2010). Restructuring, recreating, and creating realities is something Feng Mengbo explores extensively in the worlds he forms within his video games. His versions of reality play into his questions of history and power dynamics. As Morgana points out, the methodology for suggesting alternate realities could be used to juxtapose. Feng Mengbo uses the Political Pop technique of combining symbols, but by doing it through the video game medium, he does exactly what Morgana and Flanagan describe: he questions concepts, ideas, and the status of society's reality.

Interaction and the creation of new realities combine in video games, allowing the viewer to project her own schemas onto the artwork, and then question them through the process of engaging in the video game. The rules an artist formulates for the video game force the player to act a certain way. When these rules combine with different realities and combinations of well-known symbols, the player has no choice but to reconsider her previous conceptions of reality. This can allow the artist-game designer to propose alternative methods of considering broader themes, such as—in Feng Mengbo's case—history and power dynamics.

POWER DYNAMICS

I. *Control Societies*

Many theorists have tracked the changes society experiences as it progresses further into the digital world. One theory, proposed by Gilles Deleuze, focuses on the idea of "control societies." In his book *Gaming*, Alexander Galloway describes Deleuze's theory, then discusses its extension in context of video games. A control society is made up of networks, both digital and traditional. However, as people become more and more reliant on computers, the Internet, and non-physical networks, the way in which control is expressed changes. Galloway writes, "Deleuze points out how the principle of organization in computer networks has shifted away from confinement and enclosure toward a seemingly infinite extension of controlled mobility" (Galloway, 2006). What this means is that the creation of digital networks creates more "space" for humans to function in. This seems to afford people more freedom of intellectual movement and more flexibility to wander away from boundaries established by the controller (be it the government, media, etc.). However, Deleuze points out that the additional space that digital networks create is still controlled, monitored, and delineated by *someone*, which gives users a sense of false freedom. People feel that they can go further by entering a digital network, but because there is still oversight, no matter how far inside of it they wander, they continue to be monitored.

Galloway applies this concept to video games, writing that, "the gamer is not simply playing this or that historical simulation. The gamer is instead learning, internalizing, and becoming intimate with a massive, multipart global algorithm" (Galloway, 2006). He implies that in a video game, there exists a network of rules that the gamer enters into without always being aware. The gamer may simply be

focused on the immediate environment within the game, her status, and her goals. However, if she approached the video game with a border perspective and surveys the particulars of the set up, she will uncover a greater “algorithm” at work. In this way, video games “solve the problem of political control...by making it coterminous with the entire game, and in this way video games achieve a unique type of political transparency” (Galloway, 2006).

In a video game, the player is given an avatar, which is an extension of herself in a separate, digital reality. The player may feel that she is making decisions, “gaming” the system formulated by the designer of the game, and existing in a new space that allows her more freedom. But, as Gonzalo Frasca explains, in a video game “all the possible combinations were already ‘authored’...Video games also allow, or give the illusion of allowing, players to become designers” (Frasca, 2001). The key phrase here is “give the illusion.” Video games voluntarily provide the gamer with the feeling that she is in some way in control, despite the falsity of this autonomy. Galloway proposes that this state of being controlled is clear in a video game; that no matter how free a gamer might feel by being in a potentially infinite set of worlds, she is always controlled, and that a video game is unique in that it makes this control obvious through its very nature. However, when it comes to Feng Mengbo’s *Long March: Restart*, one must take intended audience into account. The game was presented as an exhibition in MoMA PS1 in New York City. The likelihood that those who went to visit would be habitual gamers is low. More probable is the chance that most visitors were unfamiliar with video game play and structure. For them, then, the realization of control would have arrived slowly, through losing

repeatedly, through being forced to follow the levels, and through being made to watch videos from early Communist China intermittently. These gamers were not “gamers” in the way Galloway sees them. They are art lovers who have a desire to see an art object in its completeness. In order to do this, they must play the game. As they struggle through it, they start to see the various mechanisms of control in which they have inadvertently become engaged. They understand the submissiveness of their position as their appreciation of the artwork expands.

II. Gamer Submission

In *Gaming*, Galloway discusses the state of nonplay and its meaning with respect to control and submission. He writes, that in nonplay, “the operator is in fact moving his or her experience closer to the actual rhythms of the machine...the desires of the operator are put into a state of submission at the hands of the desires of the machine” (Galloway, 2006). What Galloway means here is the state of play during which the rules of a game force the gamer to stop playing. What is particularly interesting in his point, however, is the use of the term “submission.” At first glance, one might assume that in the relationship between the video game and the player, it is the player who is in control—she is the one who turns the machine on and off, who chooses the duration of time for which she will play, who decides the level she will play (or attempt to play) at. In *Long March: Restart*, these assumptions are broken. In order to play Feng Mengbo’s game, the gamer must physically move in tandem with the avatar on the screen. The large scale of the two parallel screens necessarily leads to this unexpected and forced movement pattern. The size and zoomed-in visuals force the player to move through the

room in which the installation is placed in order to see the obstacles she is coming up against. Because of this, Feng Mengbo's game not only dictates what kind of virtual space the gamer inhabits and how she must adapt to it, but it also alters the gamer's behavior in her physical, "real" world.

The imposition of the piece is also felt by the size of the visuals and the lack of other objects in the room. A typical video game is generally played inside of a home—perhaps a living room or a bedroom. The gamer has many remnants of the physical world to anchor her. A normal multimedia installation in a museum is also usually part of a series of works, which distract the viewer and bring heterogeneity to her physical world. However, the set up of *Long March: Restart* is such that the two 80 x 20-foot screens take up the entire room in which the installation is placed. No other pieces are inside. Additionally, because of the size of the screens, the images shown on them dwarf the visitors who come to view the exhibition. The music that plays endlessly in the background is loud and is all the gamer hears. These elements combine to create the effect that the gamer's entire physical reality is overtaken by the video game. While this type of submission is slightly different from what Galloway discusses, it is submission to the video game nonetheless.

An interesting note in terms of submission to the video game is Feng Mengbo's decision to place an image of himself on the avatars for *Q4U*. By being the creator, the victim, and the inevitable winner of the game (in the shape of any of the avatars), Feng Mengbo suggests that control can be a fluctuating rather than hegemonic entity. As Solomon points out, for Feng Mengbo a lot of works are "about achieving and relinquishing

power." The person, who is once the designer of the rules might later become the object of them, might later become the one who prevails by following them. Solomon emphasizes this point, saying that Feng Mengbo is "sometimes a captive in his own video game, holographically transplanted into the hostile terrain of virtual monsters and enemy combatants, and sometimes only the author of such dark, heroic worlds" (Solomon, 2009).

III. Rules of the Game

In his thesis "Videogames of the Oppressed: Videogames as a Means for Critical Thinking and Debate," Gonzalo Frasca writes that while "the novelist has to write specific actions, the simulation author has to write rules of behavior that will result on [sic] specific actions" (Frasca, 2001). He adds, "Authors in traditional media are just accountable for one or more instances of possible actions. Simulator authors are not only creators, but also legislators, because they decide which rules will apply to their systems" (Frasca, 2001). What Frasca means here is that in other modes of expression—such as the novel or a movie—the artists show examples of behavior on the part of the characters. However, the process of designing a video game requires that the creator develop rules by which the characters act. For example, the Red Guard soldier in *Long March: Restart* is not just shown to be persistent in his quest one time; as a rule, he perseveres, never reversing his path forward or giving up. Even if he is "killed," he is resurrected as soon as a new game begins, and continues to act the same way as he did before and will eternally. The rules a game designer creates apply for the entire lifespan of a video game.

Frasca adds, “Even subtle choices in deterministic or indeterminist models speak about *the author’s opinion and vision of both the real and simulated world*.” He goes on to list a series of questions that he thinks should be asked about the video game: “Are some scenes hard-coded into the system...? What is the role of chance in the simulated world? Has the player real means of cooperation with other characters or the game is designed to foster individualism?” (Frasca, 2001). What is particularly compelling in this argument is Frasca’s assertion that by creating a new reality which must function according to the rules set by the game designer, the designer must be projecting his perspective of the “real” world onto the game itself. The designer carries all of the agency when constructing the world of her video game, so the decisions she makes must be considered especially pertinent. If this is true—and this analysis will assume it is—questions must be asked of the legislative structure of Feng Mengbo’s games.

As discussed in earlier passages, Feng Mengbo’s *Long March: Restart* is filled with images that symbolize commercial globalization, such as the Coca-Cola can, the yellow taxi, and video game characters. The Coca-Cola can, in particular, is especially dominant, appearing throughout all of the levels as a weapon and in many places as part of the environment. In some shots, the Coca-Cola has an English label and in others, it is written in Chinese. If one combines the prolific nature of the Coca-Cola can with the concept of control societies, an interesting analysis emerges. The spread of material objects—items that consumers can purchase—to a global scale might suggest an expansion of freedom of choice. The more options people have for what to buy and where to buy it, the more liberty they may feel they are being equipped with. However, as

Feng shows, while the global consumer may have more choices, the “free” market forces a limit onto the scale of options. There may be many types of soda available in the world, but in Feng Mengbo’s point of view, the only one that people really know, care about, or buy is Coca-Cola.

Similarly, the images people are surrounded with are limited despite the spread of culture that has come with the opening of international borders and the accessibility of the Internet. Both the avatar in Feng Mengbo’s game and the player who controls him are subject to a visual bombardment of Coca-Cola cans, historical fragments, and political messages. The gamer is forced to look at the stream of yellow taxis, the house of a traditional Chinese aristocrat, the Communist slogans. If she chooses to play the game, she must participate in a simulated recreation of the historically real Long March. Perhaps Feng Mengbo’s comment is that while globalization has led to an expansion of cultural symbols and a sharing of cross-national and unique histories, the images that become symbolic, or “iconic,” are few. They are the ones that surge ahead in the global market and emerge at the forefront, creating a near monopoly on the images people across the world internalize. These symbols are circulated across the global landscape incessantly. It is impossible to say who chooses the images people are bombarded with in their everyday lives—the government, the free market, the media—and it is doubtful that Feng Mengbo is pointing his finger at anyone. As discussed in the section on Political Pop, Feng Mengbo does not propose or perpetuate a direct, politically charged message. Rather, by creating and legislating his own alternate reality, he calls into question the one both he and the gamer/art museum visitor inhabit.

In assessing the rules of Feng Mengbo's *Long March: Restart* and *Q4U*, it is useful to repeat one of the questions Frasca asks in his paper: Has the player real means of cooperation with other characters or the game is designed to foster individualism? For the set-up Feng Mengbo creates in both video games, "foster individualism" is far too mild of an expression. What Feng Mengbo *does* do is create a strong sense of isolation. In *Q4U*, all of the avatars are Feng Mengbo himself. This means that they are completely identical, half-nude human beings. Half-nude is an important descriptor here as it emphasizes their (or his) very human vulnerabilities. As noted earlier in this paper, there is no opportunity for the Feng Mengbo avatars to cooperate as they are all the same and as the goal of the entire game is to kill until only one is left standing. It is a violent structure—the characters pursue each other, camcorder and rifle in hand, perhaps immortalizing through technology the act of humans destroying other humans. There is no sense of community in this game, despite the completely indistinguishable physical identity that all of the characters share. There is no unity, communication, or alliances. The only aim is to kill, or die.

In the initial introduction of *Q4U*, this paper identified two analyses of its content. However, a third one might be useful when it comes to the question of isolation. The avatars are all human, yet they destroy each other. Is this a commentary on the human condition? On people's decisions to become spectators of suffering rather than citizens who are active in dislodging the system that sets them against each other? Is Feng commenting on the hypocritical relationship people maintain between active destruction and passive voyeurism? One is tempted at this point to place

Feng's commentary squarely onto the shoulders of China, yet Feng uses no symbols that suggest this as a possibility. Yet again, he does not make an overt political statement that criticizes a particular group, nation, or party. Instead, he questions human relationships by placing himself—an exposed human being—directly into the path of inevitable destruction.

The thread of isolation is also present in *Long March: Restart*. One of the major aspects of the actual march was the large number of people that first, walked it, and second, died while walking it. However, the player does not see any other Red Guard soldiers on the screen or in the game, nor are there ever opportunities for collaboration or support. The only items the player can rely on are the Coca-Cola cans and the points the Red Guard manages to pick up along the way. While there are other characters in the game, the only way through which they interact with the Red Guard avatar is to attempt to kill him. The others simply hover in the background.

Does this set-up signify the isolation of a march that has generally been depicted as a historic moment during which the Communist party brought together its supporters and the people? There are a lot of mentions—in Chinese—of "the people" and "the citizens" throughout the game. However, the lone Red Guard avatar stands starkly in contrast to these optimistic and idealistic messages. He must face the dangers alone. Is Feng perhaps implying that the Communist Party abandoned the very people that it built its foundations on? One might try to draw from this the assumption that Feng Mengbo is directly criticizing the Communist Party, yet it is not quite that simple. More so, it seems that he is questioning the relationship

between groups and individuals, slogans and reality, ideals and truths. In the end, however, the rules of his game dictate that the actor is left all alone.

Frasca proposes three levels of representation for which the author of a video game is responsible. The third of these is *ludus*. “It states what is the goal of the *ludus* is and defines a wining, and therefore a desirable, condition” (Frasca, 2001). The goal of *Long March: Restart* is simple: bring your avatar through all the levels until you complete the journey which is an implied reference to the historic Long March of the Communist Party. Therefore, the desirable condition of the video game is the completion of this journey, which is significant to the Communist Party of China in numerous ways. However, the avatar never sees the promised land, nor is he told why he is journeying and what kind of environment he will reach at the end. This does not matter to the Red Guard avatar, which remains blank and active for the entire duration, bouncing around happily when he shoots down yet another enemy. As discussed in the section on Political Pop, there is a strong sense of apathy in this portrayal of the Red Guard character—he lacks every emotion but enthusiasm, and is unaffected by the frightening impediments and mutant monsters that surround him. This enthusiasm is similar to what Wang Guangyi depicts in his *Great Criticism* series—Revolutionary youths oblivious to the materialistic temptations of capitalism that surround them because they are too busy envisioning the future described in Mao’s Little Red Book.

Once again, the *ludus* of *Long March: Restart* is not firing off a specific or overt criticism of Communism; it seems more concerned with the promises and disappointments of ideology. Feng echoes these sentiments in his own comments.

He summarizes the ideological contradictions that he experienced during his childhood, writing in an artist’s statement for *Wrong Code: Shanshui* (2007), “On the one hand we were taught to say that China had five thousand years of history; on the other we were called on to ‘destroy the four olds and build the four news.’ It was confusing... boys like me just looked forward to the next world war when we could be good soldiers and liberate all of humanity.” In this description of his relationship with Communist ideology, Feng Mengbo highlights the lack of substance being perpetuated and internalized. Feng Mengbo as a little boy cared little for the so-called *ludus*, or the goal of the Communist principles. What he cared about as he grew up was to become a soldier that would somehow save the world. This sentiment is clearly seen in *Long March: Restart*, with the happy, unencumbered Red Guard soldier and the unidentified ending that he strives to reach.

As noted above, in Feng Mengbo’s *Long March: Restart*, the gamer cannot change the rules of the video game. However, as the designer of the game, Feng Mengbo actively alters the rules of history—its linearity, its narrative, and its portrayal of events. Feng Mengbo uses the power afforded the game designer to create an alternate sequence and portrayal of historical events and to toy with memory. He creates a new reality, one that questions the very nature of history and the ways in which it is disseminated and moderated by authority figures.

HISTORY

One powerful aspect of video games is their ability to both depict a multi-faceted,

living reality and to create similarly vibrant alternate realities. As Frasca writes, “video games have the potential to represent reality not as a collection of images or texts, but as a dynamic system that can evolve or change” (Frasca, 2001). Although the choices a video game designer makes can reflect her ideology in the “real” world, the structure of a video game—with its time and space constraints, and rules—identifies its physical space as “different from reality” (Frasca, 2001). Similarly, Galloway writes that “gamic action is customarily described as occurring within a separate, semiautonomous space that is removed from normal life.” (Galloway, 2006). Many of Feng Mengbo’s works occupy unexpected zones of intersection between different realities. For example, Li Zhenhua describes “Journey to the West” as “representing ancient spiritual values on one side, and exploring the invasion of reality by a cyberspace constructed from 0s and 1s on the other” (Li, 2010). While the paintings Feng Mengbo presents in her gallery are influenced by landscapes of the Song dynasty painters, the “unearthly terrains of strangely-shaped masses, washed in an unnatural, eerie illumination, (which) belong squarely to digital fantasylands” (Li, 2010).

In *Long March: Restart*, Feng Mengbo creates an alternate reality rife with historic and commercial symbols. While the symbols themselves may be familiar to the viewer and gamer, the combinations into which they are placed are not. Feng explores notions of chaos and order in this piece. This dichotomy is a common topic in analyses of games. In discussing two major thinkers and their opinions on games, Galloway writes “With Huizinga is the notion that play must in some sense create order, but with Derrida is the notion that play is precisely deviation from order”

(Galloway, 2006). So which is it for Feng Mengbo? Does his video game create order out of the mess of history or does it take a linear narrative and deconstruct it, creating a disarray of events, places, and characters?

In *Long March: Restart*, there is a distinct linearity to the movement and progression of the levels and the game. The horizontality and order of the game are evident in the physical arrangement and in the win-move-on-to-the-next progression of the various levels. However, in the context of history, does the placement and order of the levels make sense? Did the people who were part of the Communist-led Long March during the 1930s wander into the Red Square in Moscow or fly off to the moon? Of course not. Nor were they equipped with Coca-Cola cans. The version of history that Feng Mengbo presents is far different from the one that can be found in textbooks or scholarly works. It is not objective, clear, or logical. To add another dimension of reality, consider the duality of the gamer and the avatar. The gamer exists in present time, with her own conceptions of historical narratives. Along with that, however, she views and exists in Feng Mengbo’s depiction of history. She must also be flexible in her preconceptions and both adjust to his alterations and survive within them. This can lead down a frustrating path of wondering what connects to what, who is who and how time functions. These questions led to a conclusion that Feng Mengbo himself hesitantly surmises, “Maybe our existence is just an absolute illusion.” (Feng, 2009).

This can see like the perturbed declaration of an artist chasing himself in circles, but it is not. Feng Mengbo’s questioning of human existence is part of his exploration of memory’s effects on

history and the disparate realities various people can simultaneously hold true. In understanding the decisions Feng Mengbo makes in his disordered version of history, it is useful to consider his own words, found in his interviews with Li Zhenhua:

“Childhood experience is vital to my artistic creation. For our generation, history is part of politics and education. History has been separate and fragmented, and in addition, it has been constantly modified....In my childhood, I received only very little information. However, it left a deep impression on me. It became something I turned over and over in my mind. I know very little about others' life experiences.” (Feng, 2010)

In this quote, Feng Mengbo touches on a number of interesting points. One of these is the importance of childhood experience to his works. There is a sense of nostalgia in *Long March: Restart*—Feng Mengbo reaches back into history for symbols and for narrative. The dissonant presentation of historical pieces and symbols in many ways mimics the jumble of impressions a child gathers as he grows up amongst contradictory political messages and adults' personal recollections.

Feng Mengbo says in the quote that history is separate and fragmented for his generation. They were taught at once to forget history and to rewrite it in their minds. There was no hegemonic or linear narrative of history and culture which Feng Mengbo was taught as a boy; instead there were inconsistent attempts at creating something like it. Combined with his comments on childhood, one can conclude that in *Long March: Restart*, Feng Mengbo pursues the question of the individuality and subjectivity of history. For some, the Long March was a time of pain and struggle. For Feng Mengbo learning about it as a boy, it was

juxtaposed in his mind with conflicting versions of Communist ideologies—one that asked for him to erase the past and one that demanded he honor it. It was placed next to dreams of video games and an outside world ridden with Coca-Cola cans. Probably, the depictions of history in *Long March: Restart* were not even how Feng Mengbo processed history when he was a little boy; in all likelihood, the symbols he combines are what he remembers remembering, what he thinks he must have thought, or what he thinks a child in an alternate reality exposed to global changes might have thought.

The questioning of personal memories and objective history is very present in Feng Mengbo's piece, “My Private Album,” which was also exhibited in NYC. As Solomon describes, it relied “on rudimentary computer animation, it was arranged so you could click and choose the events and alter their sequence to suit your own preferences” (Solomon, 2009). Feng Mengbo surrenders his personal timeline and the visuals that encompass his memories to the viewer. He allows the linear narrative to become jumbled in the hands of whoever is in control. In this way, he questions the legitimacy of a structured, non-fragmented history, and asks who controls which version of history is disseminated.

In looking at history, Feng Mengbo also wonders about the ideals of the past. Solomon writes that for Feng Mengbo, “the Cultural Revolution was a period of both idealism and horror; in the ecstatic mayhem, he and his friends dreamed only of being the soldiers who would next save the world” (Solomon, 2009). This same nostalgia for the belief in an ideology, or in any greater good for that matter, is seen in *Long March: Restart*. The Red Guard soldier battles monsters and overcomes surreal obstacles. There is

a mythological quality to the aesthetics—octopi hover on the moon, video game heroes run around a prototypical Chinese city. But with the lack of an identified goal besides reaching the end, the contrast of the upbeat music to the severity of violence on the screen, and the dynamics of control, Feng Mengbo “shows how the blind idealism and relentless hope of the Cultural Revolution had never been more (or less) than a game, played for the amusement of its toxic masters: violence, here, is both a ploy and an aesthetic” (Solomon, 2009).

In considering history, Feng Mengbo also expresses his anxiety for the future. His *Yi Bite* exhibit “encompasses classical works of brush painting and calligraphy reduced to one-byte form—the smallest amounts of information possible for a computer image, the most primitive possible code—and silkscreened onto silver-leaf panel” (Solomon, 2009). In this exhibit, Feng Mengbo takes ancient images and reduces them into their most basic form—what one might think of as regression to the past—by using modern technology. Why? Feng tells Solomon, “I’m worried about history” (Solomon, 2009). In his artist’s statement, he explains that he foresees the destruction of the world, and wonders about the significance of thought, emotion, history, culture, and art. As a salvaging act, Feng Mengbo reduces what he most values into the medium of the future: the *yi* bite. Though here Feng Mengbo speaks about the future, in his musings one can detect a sense of futility for recording the past. For him the past—whether it be memory, personal, or national history—has never been stable or whole. As seen in his long quote from interview with Li, for his generation, history is incomplete, mismanaged, and disseminated in “fragments,” or more aptly, in *yi* bites.

The frustration he feels in regards to history is clear from his approach to *Long March: Restart*. The event is practically myth in contemporary China, yet Feng Mengbo turns it into a game, filled with mismatched symbols and references to a past that was not...or maybe was. It is this confusion that exists at the core of Feng Mengbo’s assessment of history: what is reality? What is not? Does a true history exist? And does it matter?

Following through in this vein, it is important to consider the intended audience for Feng Mengbo’s *Long March: Restart*. Solomon writes that Feng Mengbo’s “art described the virtual reality in his head even when he had not seen what was marketed as virtual beyond China’s still-tight borders. As is so often the case with people imagining things that exist that they haven’t yet seen, the imagining and the reality do not line up precisely” (Solomon, 2009). Feng acknowledges the limits of what he knew as a child about the rest of the world and about history both verbally and through the dissonance of the images in his video game installation. In admitting the limits of his own understanding of the world in the past, Feng Mengbo opens the door for the possibility of his audience conceding the same. *Long March: Restart* appeared as an exhibit in New York City in 2011. At a time when China and the United States are struggling for power and supremacy, is Feng Mengbo asking his audience to recognize the limits of their knowledge and misconceptions about “the other” and “the outside?” By placing Coca-Cola cans on the moon and onto the hoods of Chinese cars shuttling back and forth in front of Tiananmen Square, does Feng Mengbo demand that his audience reconsider the significance of cultural symbols and to whom they could inherently belong?

While Feng Mengbo has repeatedly been categorized as a Political Pop artist, he does not fit comfortably into the category. Nor does this thesis seek to place him within or outside of this group of artists. What is compelling is the Feng Mengbo's appropriation of certain methods associated with Political Pop—the depiction of apathy, juxtaposition of symbols, and a dislocation of history—in the medium of the video game. This medium in and of itself is rife with possibilities for questions about control and history. Feng Mengbo actively combines its inherent structure with Political Pop strategies to probe the viewers' understandings of power dynamics and history. He questions who or what is in control, why this entity controls, how it maintains its hold, and what this means for global citizens. Feng Mengbo also utilizes juxtaposed and dissonant symbols to put forth questions about the fragmented and subjective nature of history. In the end, he leaves the gamer, the thinker, and the viewer wondering what reality is and whether one's perceptions of it are ever reliable.

ⁱ Yin Kun, "Main Stream Life," 2004

ⁱⁱ Song Yonghong, "Spring Sun shine," 2005

ⁱⁱⁱ Zhang Ermiao, "Drunk" and "Falling in a vacant mood," both 2007

^{iv} He Wenjue, "Dinner Party in a Flourishing Age," 2011

^v Wu Yiming, "Statue of Liberty," 2007

^{vi} 人民共和国万岁 and 世界人民大街团万岁

REFERENCES

- Carter, Curtis. "On the Future of the Present: Art, Technology, and Popular Culture." *e-Publications @ Marquette*. Ed. Marquette University, 1 Jan. 1998. Web. 2 Mar. 2011.
- Cohen, Andrew. "ArtAsiaPacific: Off The Page Li Xianting." *ArtAsiaPacific: Home*. Nov.-Dec. 2010. Web. 18 Apr. 2011.
- Complex Mag. "Exhibit See: Feng Mengbo's 'Long March: Restart' Giant Video Game at MoMA PS1." *Complex.com*. Complex Media, 4 Jan. 2011. Web. Nov. 2011.
- Dragona, Daphne. *Artists Re:thinking Games*. Ed. Ruth Catlow, Marc Garrett, and Corrado Morgana. Liverpool: FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology), 2010. 26-29.
- Feng, Mengbo. *Yi Bite: Recent Works by Feng Mengbo*. Beijing: Qian Bo Hua Lang, 2009. Print.
- "Feng Mengbo Q4U." *The Renaissance Society*. University of Chicago, 13 Jan. 2002. Web. Oct. 2011.
- Flanagan, Mary. "Creating Critical Play." *Artists Re:thinking Games*. Ed. Ruth Catlow, Marc Garrett, and Corrado Morgana. Liverpool: FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology), 2010. 33-49. Print.
- Frasca, Gonzalo. "Video Game of the Oppressed: Video Games as a Means for Critical Thinking and Debate." Diss. Georgia Institute of Technology, 2001. *Ludology.org*. Apr. 2001. Web. Oct. 2011.
- Galloway, Alexander R. *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2006. Print.
- Gu, Chengfeng. "Tendencies in Chinese Pop." *Contemporary Chinese Art: Primary Documents*. Ed. Hung Wu and Peggy Wang. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2010. Print.
- Heartney, Eleanor. "MoMA P.S.1." *Art in America* 99.2 (2011): 101-02. Print.
- Krispme. "Art History Presentation—Feng Mengbo." *Youtube.com*. 3 May 2011. Web. Oct. 2011. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=vx9lkmfgxo4>>.
- Li, Xianting. "Apathy and Deconstruction in Post-'89 Art: Analyzing the Trends of "Cynical Realism" and "Political Pop"" *Contemporary Chinese Art: Primary Documents*. Ed. Hung Wu and Peggy Wang. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2010. Print.
- Li, Xianting. "Li Xianting." *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Chinese Culture*. By Edward L. Davis. London: Routledge, 2005. 658-59. Print.
- Mirapaul, Matthew. "Shoot Away. You Can't Keep the Digital Avenger Down." *The New York Times* [New York City] 7 Jan. 2002: E2. Print.
- Morgana, Corrado. "Introduction." *Artists Re:thinking Games*. Ed. Ruth Catlow and Marc Garrett. Liverpool: FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology), 2010. Print.
- Obrist, Hans Ulrich. *ShaghART Salutations*. London, 2006. Print.
- Pearce, Celia. "Games as Art: The Aesthetics of Play." *Visible Languages* 40.1 (2006): 67-89. Web.
- Pomfret, James. "Sotheby's Sells Record \$447 Million of Asian Art." *Reuters* [New York City] 11 Apr. 2011. Print.
- Powers, Sophia. "The Slant on Feng Mengbo." *ArtSlant*. ArtSlant, Dec. 2010. Web. 2 Mar. 2011.
- Shanghai Gallery of Art, and Mengbo

-
- Feng. *Journey to the West*. Shanghai: Shanghai Gallery of Art, 2010. Print.
- Shanghai Gallery of Art, and Mengbo Feng. *Journey to the West*. Shanghai: Shanghai Gallery of Art, 2010. Print.
- Solomon, Andrew. "Their Irony, Humor (and Art) Can Save China." 19 Dec. 1993. Web. 05 Apr. 2011.
- VAMPYRVARGFESTEN. "Feng Mengbo "Long March: Restart" Video Game Exhibition - YouTube." *YouTube.com*. 1 Feb. 2011. Web. 15 Dec. 2011.
- "Wang Guangyi: Great Criticism Series | Asian Contemporary Art | Special Feature | Christie's." *Christie's: Fine Art Auctions and Private Sales for Contemporary, Modern, Old Master Paintings, Jewelry, Watches, Wine, Furniture & More*. Christie's, 10 May 2010. Web. 15 Dec. 2011.
<<http://www.christies.com/features/2010-may-wang-guangyi-great-criticism-series-631-1.aspx>>.
- Wu, Meichun, and Zhiqie Qiu. "The Rise and Development of Video Art and The Maturity of New Media Art." *Contemporary Chinese Art: Primary Documents*. Ed. Hung Wu and Peggy Wang. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2010. Print.
- Zhuan, Huang. "The Misread Great Criticism." *Contemporary Chinese Art: Primary Documents*. Ed. Hung Wu and Peggy Wang. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2010. Print.