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Cultural Contact, Innovation and Tradition

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EDITORIAL:

Cultural Contact, Innovation and Tradition

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The current issue of Interface focuses on the fields of tension between tradition and innovation. Thus, it reflects the topic of the INTERFACEing Conference in Trier, which was held at the beginning of October 2022: "Telling Innovations and Tradition. East and West." Even the formal organization of the conference showed where we stand today. After the pandemic –natural focus of the previous issue 19– scholars from East and West met again, for the first time in situ, at Trier University in Germany. They listened to the lectures in the seminar rooms, discussed their positions in the autumn sun, explored, quite incidentally, the ancient (Roman) city. At the same time, a number of colleagues who otherwise would not have been able to participate were connected via zoom. Ten years ago, this was considered barely feasible. The term hybrid conference was virtually unknown. Nevertheless, we are wondering: How do we fathom the advantages and disadvantages of digital academia properly? Is this merely a temporary phenomenon? If not, in which direction will we develop communicatively, thus scientifically, hence (and ultimately) socially? And which factors are driving or impeding this development? The current issue of INTERFACE, although considerably augmented by papers that were not presented in the conference, is not yet able to provide conclusive answers to these questions, but it does offer some pertinent suggestions. The topics are structured from practice to theory, from the material-historical to the intellectual-historical.

The contribution by Matthias Fechner (University of Trier) opens the discussion by not taking a purely descriptive and historical view of re-

form phases in education, but by pointing out possible causes of failure in contemporary education. Here, the increasingly scarce time for negotiating implementation processes plays an important role. Digital innovation pushes into society, demands reforms, but - in the (sometimes) chaotic acceleration of processes - simultaneously has a destructive effect, blocking itself, devouring resources. Using historical examples, the author demonstrates in **"Success and Failure. Four phases of education reform in long-term historical contexts in Central Europe (and a short detour to contemporary China)"** quite tangibly that the positive results of comprehensive reforms do not automatically become visible after years or even months, but rather require decades of difficult negotiation to finally bear fruit in society. Moreover, his conclusion is that the current developments of a digitalized education are primarily and, above all, perceptible in China, whereby we are all called upon to counter the tendencies of control and encroachment that occur as a (sometimes intended) side effect, entirely in the sense of the negotiation processes he evokes.

The second contribution, by Karl Akbari (National Taiwan University of Science and Technology), is also devoted to a very relevant topic: **"Innovation in Pricing Mechanisms: An Analysis of the Emergence of Dynamic and Fixed Pricing in Five Countries."** Akbari takes the volatility of current pricing processes as an opportunity to differentiate and analyze them according to cultural areas. He looks at fixed and dynamic pricing in Japan, China, France, the UK, and the US. The dynamics behind these forms of price formation can have an immediate impact – even more direct than educational reforms – on the societies they affect. The recent rise in energy prices in Germany – as a result of the war-related boycott measures against Russia – has provided a poignant illustration of the impact that dynamic pricing can have in this sector. By comparing historical examples, the author explains how prices develop in the aforementioned countries: Mitsui Takatoshi's (三井高利, 1622-1694) influence on static prices in Japan, for example; James Lackington's bookshop in London's Finsbury Square, where books were first sold (cash only) at a competitive fixed price; Macy's and Wanamaker's general stores, later department stores in the U.S. as

well as Ma Yingbiao's (馬應彪, 1860-1944) department store in Hong Kong. Akbari contrasts this with the concept of dynamic pricing, i.e. prices determined by the factors of variable costs, time, supply and demand, first introduced by Anglo-American airlines in the 1950s (revenue management), later expanded by hotel chains, now widely represented on the market (Amazon, Uber, etc.). A similar development took place in East Asia, however only after a long delay. Finally, cultural and ethical differences, but also advantages and disadvantages of fixed and dynamic prices are clarified. What is clear is that the topic of pricing will become even more important as a result of artificial intelligence and globalization.

It may be surprising, but in fact there is an intersection between the topic of pricing and Sheng-mei Ma's (University of Michigan) **"Bespoke Immigrants in Nisei Murayama, Accented Kim, and Mama Tan."** For success in literature is, among other reasons, determined by supply and demand. Ma reveals (by way of example) how East Asian immigrants are not necessarily portrayed in an accurate or even fair way, in the novels of Milton Murayama ("All I Asking for is my Body," 1988), Richard Kim ("Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood," 1998), and Amy Tan (e.g., "The Joy Luck Club," 1989), but conforming to the book market and to politics. Ma uses the positively connoted term "bespoke" to label this constellation. His argumentation, however, is furious, differentiated, and strikes a deep nerve: as with the other contributions, the author is ultimately not only concerned with the topic he deals with on the surface, the deliberately distorted literary portrayal of Asian Americans (by Asian Americans). What is more, he tackles literature (inspired by migration), which sells itself and thus fails, in the very midst of the tension between innovation and tradition.

A slight contrast to this can be found in Duncan McColl Chesney's article **"A Love Letter to Europa: Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer's Grand Hotel Europa."** Here, the focus is no longer on identity in the New World, but also and especially on the identity crisis of Old Europe and its cultural heritage, prior to the Covid pandemic and the associated, now intensifying social tensions, which are also –but certainly not only– caused

by displacement effects of global tourism and continued migration. Pfeijffer's novel is devoted to the latter issues: In an old grand hotel, the colorful narrator, who also mirrors the author, fathoms them from an ironic distance, humanely, eloquently, imaginatively, and in rich detail. McColl Chesney now forms a further, theoretically underpinned layer on top of this narrative, which skillfully breaks Pfeijffer's fictional reflection of Old Europe, from the position of a North American scholar working in Taiwan. In terms of our thematic issue, this unusual perspective has a surprisingly connective effect, for example when the role of the "Chinese" in the Grand Hotel Europa is analyzed.

Connecting is certainly a term that applies to the contribution that concludes this issue. In their jointly authored article **"Innovation with and against the Tradition. Examples from Chinese, Japanese and Korean Confucianism,"** Marion Eggert (Ruhr University Bochum), Gregor Paul (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology) and Heiner Roetz (Ruhr University Bochum) have not only managed to combine the perspectives of three Confucian cultures, initially presented as papers in the Trier conference panel. In doing so, the authors also used historical examples to demonstrate that Confucianism should by no means be regarded as an impediment to progress. Heiner Roetz, for example, in his part (**"A Rupture in the Origin that Opens again: A Note on Confucianism and Tradition"**) refers to Mengzi and the intellectual-historical impact of Confucianism, while including a critical reflection of Western philosophy on Confucianism in his argumentation. Following this, Marion Eggert in **"Traditional resources for integrating new knowledge"** examines Yi Ik (1681-1763) and Yi Chinsang (1818-1886) – an endeavor that seems particularly relevant because Korea has had the reputation of being especially orthodox in its cultivation of Confucianism. Finally, Gregor Paul rounds out the joint contributions with a look at Japan, in **"Catalysts of Innovation and Modernization in Japanese 'Confucianism,'"** focusing on the period between the Meiji Restoration and the end of World War II, when the trends he describes were indeed of heightened geopolitical significance. However, the importance of understanding Confucianism has not changed.

In that sense, the current issue hopefully joins the series of pertinent contributions from INTERFACE to better understand the intellectual and spiritual currents in and behind cultures –East and West.

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Success and Failure: Education reform in long-term historical contexts in Central Europe (and a short detour to contemporary China)

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Abstract

From a historical perspective, this article tries to demonstrate that reforms in education follow certain patterns. Hence, four phases could be distinguished in the long-term implementation of educational change: the idea phase, the negotiation phase, the implementation phase, and the consolidation phase.

As opposed to very similar concepts in sociology, I argue that –in practice– education reforms do not always unfold completely but are also prone to fail. Each phase might take decades to fully evolve and ensure the reform's continuity. And yet, no phase must be skipped. If one or even several phases are ignored, the reform could be severely at risk and might collapse, either in parts or completely.

At the same time, there is a reciprocal influence of ideas that are transferred from one educational system to another by multipliers.

This thesis is substantiated with exemplary sketches on the development of educational reforms from the 19th to the early 21st century, with a focus on Germany and China.

Keywords: education reform, Johann Friedrich Herbart, digitalization, social credit system, China, Germany

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Success and Failure: Education reform in long-term historical contexts in Central Europe (and a short detour to contemporary China)

The agencies of history do not issue return tickets. And historians usually don't waste their breath discussing the tracks not taken. But it seems worthwhile to analyze the wiring diagrams and station buildings and, above all, the route maps and locomotives to learn from the past; and in the case of this article's topic –to improve the future of education.

Hence, this article follows an apparently beaten track, taking a ride through the history of education to explore several leading questions: How do education reforms evolve? And in doing so, can we discern regular patterns? Moreover, what could we possibly learn from the processes of implementation to avoid costly failures and, in turn, improve the positive impact on our schools and universities? However, this is a hypothesis: the beginning of an exploration not its conclusion. Neither do I offer a detailed schedule that could be applied to any reform, nor do I claim concrete and bulletproof validity for my hypothesis. My aim is more modest: to simply draw attention to the (scarcely researched) question whether the successful implementation of education reforms might depend on the adherence to processes, patterns, and phases. In other words: could reforms, as a rule, fail if their protagonists ignore or interfere with hidden, almost organic laws of evolvement in the planned change of educational structures (without necessarily following systems theory)? And when I write about reforms here, I mean large-scale, profound changes to an education system, almost always accompanied by historical caesuras: wars, the collapse of empires, or, as recently, a pandemic.

While there exists a small body of works on this topic, especially in Chi-

nese and American contexts, exploring patterns of change on a micro level (Li, 2017; Coburn et al., 2012; Hallinger & Heck, 2011), few take a historical, long-term perspective while relating to education systems in Central Europe, especially Germany. Hence, questioning the long-term implementation of reforms and, above all, the acknowledgement of failure appear here –despite their relevance– to constitute smaller fields of research.[1] At the same time, I loosely try to synchronize my hypotheses and questions with research on school theory (Fend 2006; Gerstner & Wetz, 2008) and, especially, the lively dialogue between Chinese and western scholars on contemporary education and school reform (Meyer, 2022; Green et al., 2021; Cai, 2019; Lee & Kennedy, 2017).

As mentioned above, the transfer of ideas between different cultural areas and their education systems has been well documented; consequently, my depiction of reciprocal influences in China and Germany bears no claim to originality. When analyzing education reforms, it yet seems vital to realize that – fortunately – no major reform is implemented in a sterile chamber. And no education system is an island: We can discern historical influences and must consider that ideas are contagious. When reforms are eventually on track, however, they are not only driven by ideas and people but, if successful, will follow regular patterns, phases that evolve almost organically.

What is more, it could be said that there are two important factors in this very process: time and communication. Reforms require time to mature. And they must be negotiated. The current failure of the hastily implemented digital reforms in the German school system – keyword: *DigitalPakt Schule* – would be just one example. Even the Federal Court

1 Cf. the comparative studies of Jürgen Schriewer (2003; 2007) dealing with education reform from a historical angle; while Gita Steiner-Khamsi (2016), David Philipps and Kimberly Ochs (2003) have, among other topics, dedicated their research to policy borrowing. These fields of research are instructive yet have not focused on models of failure, exploring conditions under which reforms will peter out, collapse, or even harm and endanger a working education system. Although this article follows the historical scope of the aforementioned scholars, it seems appropriate at this point to refer to another, related and extremely neglected field of research: Micro-studies on the failure of individual educational institutions –also due to incorrectly implemented reforms– are almost non-existent. Drawing on internal sources, the author has written brief reports on the failure of two educational institutions in Germany. Both institutions turned dysfunctional –in addition to other reasons– due to improperly implemented reforms. Cf. Fechner (2017; 2019). However, these weak attempts rather tend to reinforce the impression that a vital field of knowledge has been ignored by research.

of Auditors recently stated that the *DigitalPakt Schule*, which had been endowed with no less than 6.5 billion euros to boost the use of digital learning in schools, remained ineffective and had to be stopped (Wiarda, 2022). Warning signs, of course, had been visible some time before the ignominious end of the ambitious reform. In a poll commissioned by the German teachers' and scientists' union GEW (*Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft*) many of the surveyed teachers had already expressed their discontent in February 2020, especially criticizing tenuous information policies (Mauss, 2020, p. 6). Considering this situation, we might also assume in general that digital communication exerts more pressure on the parties concerned. Today, the instructions of the supervisory authorities are sent out at a more rapid pace than in the past and often require immediate responses. On the one hand, this increases the ability to react to potential hazards. On the other hand, at this pace, consultation on the implementation of measures, objection and negotiation are hardly possible.

But *DigitalPakt Schule* also finished on a dead-end track because measures against the spread of the Coronavirus were –simultaneously– implemented in Germany, in an even more hasty and indiscriminate manner, especially in the school sector. A second assumption may be made here: The implementation of a reform requires regulated processes and must not be overlaid and thus disrupted by other large-scale measures. In Germany, the ensuing perturbations did not allow for a structured negotiation process that might have crucially improved the –hitherto indiscriminate– introduction of digital tools and distance learning (Fechner, 2020). In addition to the financial loss, there were also pedagogical side effects, such as a steep increase of psychological illnesses among schoolchildren and youths (Naumann et al., 2021) as well as among students (Ravens-Sieberer et al., 2022), a continuing decline in reading ability exacerbated by the application of digital tools (Sälzer, 2018, p. 6), an increase in violence during the home-schooling periods (Fickermann and Edelstein, 2020) or a rising number of psychological illnesses among students (Ravens-Sieberer et al., 2022). The same dynamics, though, is true for an entirely different reform: When China severely restricted after-school tutoring at short notice in July 2021, its suppos-

edly constructive measures immediately created havoc in the education sector (McSpadden, 2021).

But what could be done to implement education reforms properly? As mentioned, we can learn from history –heeding the aforementioned factors of time and communication, while raising our awareness of crucial patterns in reform processes.

For the history of education knows numerous, decisive and eventually successful reforms. In modern times, historical upheavals, i.e., wars and revolutions, acted as catalysts in almost all cases. They made the old education systems, with their transmission of traditional values and hierarchies, appear unsuitable to cope with the new and unusual challenges. At the same time, utopias, germinating reform approaches, and concepts from other countries were taken up to question, challenge or even replace central elements of the old system. In this article, I will therefore also look at the country that could currently exert the greatest influence on educational reforms in Germany: China.

In Central European history, one can first draw a wide arc from Comenius (Thirty Years' War) to Wilhelm von Humboldt (Napoleonic Wars) to the reforms after World War I and the reorganization of education in Germany after 1945. However, on their way into practice, reform concepts changed due to lengthy negotiation processes, histories of conflict, in which sometimes the original intentions dissolved, even turned into their opposite –as with the epoch-making proposals of the Zook Commission of 1946 and the progressive reforms in the Soviet Occupation Zone.

More precisely, four phases can be distinguished in the implementation of educational reforms. Firstly, the *idea phase*, during which a reform is designed in theory, not infrequently with utopian connotations. Secondly, the *negotiation phase*, which accompanies the (conflict-ridden) transition through the politico-administrative level into exemplary practice, as yet limited to a small number of schools and universities. Thirdly, the actual *implementation phase*, an adaptation of the reform concepts into

practice on a broad, nationwide scale –which in some cases might take decades. Eventually, this often leads to a *consolidation phase*, during which reform concepts are routinised and implemented on a long-term basis, often without being questioned –until the next historical upheaval. Each phase might take decades to fully evolve and ensure the reform's continuity. And yet –this is the gist of my article– no phase must be skipped. If one or even several phases are ignored, the reform could be severely at risk and might collapse, either in parts or completely. But before we embark on a trek through the history of education, I would like to reiterate the factors of space, technology, and time. In earlier eras, it took longer traversing the land to implement reforms and laws. Likewise, rudimentary communication technology slowed down the pace. Today, digital information rockets around the globe within seconds. Back then, despatches were transported by stagecoaches, and later by railroads and automobiles. Reforms grew more slowly and more stably, and at the same time their phases could be defined less precisely. Today, it seems to be the other way around: reforms are carried out within a very short period of time, and their implementation can be tracked precisely. At the same time, implementation seems more arbitrary, less stable, more prone to failure.

These gradual, almost sedate processes can be observed in the first major –successful– educational reforms in Central Europe. After Austria had failed to successfully challenge Prussia's supremacy in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), its Emperors Maria Theresia and Joseph II would initiate reforms on a large scale. Ignaz von Felbiger (1724-88) was charged with the monumental task to reposition the Austrian school system in 1774 (Conrads, 2005). Surprisingly, the industrious abbot had acquired his experience by reforming Prussia's primary schools in Silesia; being inspired, among other sources, by Johann Friedrich Hähn and *Heckersche Realschule*, a Protestant institution famous for its innovative teaching practice (Lambrecht, 2021, p. 42). Henceforth, teaching in the elementary schools of the multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire would be clearly regulated with a central school code. Felbiger not only defined the curriculum and even the methodology, but also monitored the schools with a centralized reporting system. From Lake

Constance to Bukovina, the performance, behavior, and attendance of all students could now be recorded in detail. Unfortunately, not only the term "Schema F," i.e., running procedures exactly according to the book, has survived from this period, but also the administrative and statistical control of the school system (Weiss, 1896). However, it took decades until the system was implemented in a reasonably stable manner throughout the Empire –then, however, ensuring Austria-Hungary's inner coherence until the end of World War I, when Woodrow Wilson's *Fourteen Points* "accorded" the peoples of Austria-Hungary "the freest opportunity to autonomous development." (United States President, 1918). A proposition, of course, that led to the implosion of the multinational Empire –and the subsequent, alas short-lived flowering of Central Europe's probably most audacious school reform, instructed by Otto Glöckel in Vienna (Urbanek, 2006).

In turn, another more suitable example can be found in the introduction and course of reforms in Prussia from 1806 onwards. At that time, the French under Napoleon I defeated Prussia, partly because they had very consistently implemented their own educational reforms in the years following the French Revolution.

At first, a two-track system can be discerned in Prussia. On the left track was Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, who pursued a grassroots pedagogy shaped to reach as many young men as possible for his *Wehrsport*, i.e., military sports or "The German Art of Gymnastics" (Jahn & Eiselen, 1816). His exercises were structured according to athletic ability. Although Jahn unfortunately was not free of antisemitic tendencies, they largely dispensed with class or intellectual hierarchy. In other words, Jahn's gymnastics train stopped at every station and invited *most* able-bodied men to board. Even today, many elements of Jahn's gymnastics have survived in the physical education curricula of German and Eastern European schools, albeit without the ideological components that dominated in the 19th century.

On the right track, the train moved faster and access was much more exclusive. There, the Stein-Hardenberg reforms (1807) were intended

to accelerate the upper tiers of Prussia's education system. This also involved hierarchical centralization, which, however, provided extensive freedom in the higher education sector. The main author, Wilhelm von Humboldt, was able to design a progressive, streamlined system in theory, which, among other aspects, postulated the extensive separation of state and university as well as the freedom of both teaching and research. Thus, Humboldt intended to provide a liberal framework that would enable students to develop their individual talents and aspirations. However, the reactionary developments at that time, following the Carlsbad Resolutions (1819), frustrated Humboldt's progressive efforts. They paralyzed the higher education system of the German states for decades to come but clearly should be understood as part of the negotiation process.

This system's engine was developed by the philosopher and Kant successor Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841). During his reforms in the school sector, he even created pedagogy, here: teaching methodology, as an independent subject.

For this purpose, he developed the formal steps theory. According to this system, the acquisition of knowledge could be brought about in four steps: clarity, association, system, and method. Thus, the teacher first had to determine the prior knowledge of his pupils. Secondly, he supported them in absorbing new knowledge through association. He would, thirdly, organize this knowledge into a system with them. And finally, he would practice it methodically with his pupils. Herbart's theory seemed to be applicable to every –intellectually gifted– student without exception. It would be further differentiated by him over many years and lectures. When he eventually published the second (and amended) version of his "Outlines of Educational Doctrine" in 1841, he was –shortly before his death– able to include even the smallest details and possibilities. It seems vital to note that Herbart's "Outlines" were not necessarily meant for the classroom yet their tailor-made pedagogical approach could easily be applied to school-teaching where they experienced an overwhelming success.

After Herbart's death, Tuiskon Ziller (1817-1882) expanded his academic teacher's pedagogical approach into the *Herbart-Ziller Formal Steps Theory*. During the 19th century, Ziller thus successfully consolidated the assumption that human beings could be –without any doubt or fail– educated in the classroom. The repressive and authoritarian atmosphere in the German states and eventually the *Reich* favored the hierarchical spread of an approach that was certainly perceived as something unrivalled and new. Humans could be educated in a controlled manner, in small steps.

By the time of the Weimar Republic (1919-1933), Herbart's conception of human nature had gained almost universal acceptance at secondary schools and universities. The teaching methods were no longer associated with Herbart's philosophy (Oelkers, 1989), which had accumulated enough independence, appeal, and adaptability to survive even during the Third Reich and the GDR. However, Herbartianism experienced an overwhelming boom in the Federal Republic of Germany, in the cognitive hothouses of the three-tiered school system. This time in a new form, more strongly influenced by methods of quantifiable measurability, especially after the introduction of PISA, the Program for International Student Assessment. A similar development took place –almost independently– in China.

I do not have the space here to go into detail about the course of the left track of the school system. In the middle of the 19th century, fierce negotiations took place there: Numerous reform schools –the respectable Cauersche Anstalt (1818-1834) may be mentioned as an example– had to withstand financial and political pressure that still drove many of them to ruin. Even Friedrich Froebel's kindergarten in Blankenburg was banned on August 7, 1851 –three years after the failed revolution of 1848. In fact, the authorities considered it subversive to let children play freely in a garden (Sauerbrey & Winkler, 2017). Ferdinand Stiehl's restricitve *Regulative* (1854-72) finally complemented Herbart's approach. In their purely practical definition of elementary school and teacher training in Prussia (i.e., religious and patriotic curricula), they created the foundation of a conditioning authoritarian state that had lit-

tle in common with Herbart's filigree instructions. Until well into the second half of the 19th century, educational innovations were either discussed among primary school teachers (Schnell, 1856) or tended to take place abroad, for example with Ignaz Paul Vital Troxler (Troxler, 1834) in Switzerland or Leo Tolstoy in Russia (Толстой, 1862).

Around 1890, the left track emerged from the tunnel again. Now, on the one hand, large conferences were held on the weaknesses and the need for reform of the theory-heavy and reactionary German school system, which apparently struggled to prepare students to overcome the challenges of an increasingly industrialized, unified Germany striving to find "A Place in the Sun" among the global powers (von Goßler, 1891). On the other hand, a small group of reformers started their own schools to overcome the shortcomings of the educational system in practice. The first and perhaps most important was Hermann Lietz. Although Lietz was a nationalist, he oriented himself –admiringly– towards British public schools. The concrete model for him was Cecil Reddie's school of Abbotsholme, which he visited several times, and which even inspired him to write a utopian school novel: "Emlohstobba" (Lietz, 1897). With this blueprint, he thus founded the first German reform school proper, Pulvermühle near Ilsenburg in 1899. Other schools based on the same model were to follow in the years to come. Before World War I alone, these were: Stolpe am Wannsee (1900), Haubinda (1901), Schloss Bieberstein (1904) and Grovesmühle (1914). What they all had in common was a holistic pedagogy that was to be effective far from the temptations of the big cities. Teachers who had taught with Lietz in turn founded their own schools or moved to schools whose pedagogical concepts they would decisively shape with the experience they had gained at Lietz' flagship school in Haubinda. Paul Geheeb, for example, founded the Odenwald School (1910), running it together with his wife Edith until both emigrated to Switzerland with a group of Jewish students in 1934. There, they later founded a new school, the École d'Humanité (Näf, 2006). Robert Killian moved from Haubinda to the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart in 1919. Thence, its founder Rudolf Steiner gave him a relatively free hand to turn his pedagogical experience into a fruitful contribution to Waldorf education. Essential elements of Waldorf

education were thus not "invented" by Steiner but adapted by Killian (Fechner, 2016). These are the main lesson periods and their exercise books, the handicraft lessons, horticulture, the extensive renunciation of textbooks, grades, and corporal punishment; then the realization of co-educational lessons and the *Jahresarbeiten*, a year's practical or theoretical research on one major topic, presented at a school assembly. Of course, not all pedagogical elements were adopted from Haubinda. Expressive dance was very much in vogue at the time and was spiritualized into eurythmy by Steiner himself (Amrine, 2017). Lesson periods –one or more hours of one subject taught daily for a period of up to six weeks– had originally been conceived by Bertholt Otto (Schwitalski, 2004, p. 39). And the field measuring was already familiar to Steiner and the Austrian teachers at the Stuttgart Waldorf school. Since Felbiger's reforms, it had become a school subject in Austria-Hungary because the expanding empire needed surveyors (Rothe, 2011, p. 19).

However, school reforms on a broad scale did not begin in Germany until after the First World War. In a similar way, as in the case of Johann von Felbiger's and Wilhelm von Humboldt's reforms, the lost war served as a catalyst. From a purely external point of view, the *Reich* had failed to assert itself against other global powers. Obviously, the education system had to be reformed, especially since improvements there –unlike in the economy and the military– seemed conceivable without great difficulty. As mentioned, the first Steiner school was founded in 1919. In the same year two other famous institutions were established: the best-known German boarding school, Schloss Salem, and the Bauhaus University in Weimar. Both impressed with a wealth of innovative educational approaches. In the early years of the Weimar Republic, dozens of other similarly oriented schools also opened their doors for the first time.

Their general aims were similar: humans should not be educated conforming to the requirements of society. Instead, society had to develop and integrate human talents and abilities. After the existential crisis of the First World War, this approach was not limited to niches. Now there were negotiations on how fast, how comfortable, and how far one could

travel in education. The positions of these negotiation processes were manifold: there was the pedagogical tradition, the disrupted society, the new supervisors, the visionary school founders, the teachers, but also the parents and pupils. Against this challenging background, educators often inspired and helped each other. Fritz Karsen –head of the Karl-Marx-Schule in the Berlin *Bezirk* of Neukölln and a civil servant at the local school supervisory authority– for example, visited many of his most innovative colleagues and published a volume about their work (Karsen, 1923). In doing so, he was supported by Prussia's progressive minister for education, Konrad Haenisch (Dudek, 2000, p. 939). These processes also took place outside Germany, beginning well before the First World War. One need only recall the schools of Francisco Ferrer, František Bakulé, Ervin Batthyány, Maria Montessori, Rabindranath Tagore or –perhaps still most influential today– Alice and John Dewey's Laboratory School in Chicago (1896). What is more, educators and academics exchanged ideas in organizations such as the League of Decisive School Reformers or the New Education Fellowship, whose international conferences between 1923 and 1932 also fostered a lively discourse. There, Maria Montessori, Peter Petersen, Adolphe Ferrière, A.S. Neill, Paul Geheeb and even Martin Buber formed a network whose discourses appeared to be constructive, inspired by the daily practice of progressive schools.

In this development, we are eventually able to clearly identify the different reform phases. The idea phase, which began around 1890, transitioned into the negotiation phase with the founding of the first reform schools at the turn of the century. Then, until World War I, it was a matter of testing innovative pedagogical designs in practice and, at the same time, of negotiating with the authorities and the parents. The First World War brought those processes to a temporary halt. But after the Armistice, educational work continued with increased vigor and speed. In the implementation phase during the 1920s, the reforms –via legislative processes– even made the transition to state schools and were also received academically. However, the National Socialists' seizure of power prevented the reforms from entering the consolidation phase.

For the Nazis had no interest in complex reform processes in education. They dismissed teachers who did not fit into their ideology but did not change the education system, which, by and large, remained repressive. What is more, they took over the alternative, left-wing track of after-school activities via the Hitler Youth. There, rival reform-oriented organizations –boy scouts, *Jugendbünde*, and *Jungenschaften*– were systematically eliminated after 1933 (Reulecke, pp. 126).

Thanks to international networking, development processes could nevertheless be continued in exile. An excellent example is provided by the State Bauhaus, whose holistic pedagogy was taken up in the late 1930s –along with some of its faculty– by the progressive Black Mountain College in North Carolina (Blume, 2015). After the end of the Second World War, the modified Bauhaus impulse moved back to Germany; manifesting itself at the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) in Ulm, which exerted considerable influence on the intellectual life of the Federal Republic of Germany and acted as an engine for the '68 movement. Among the founders, staff and students of Bauhaus, Black Mountain College, and Hochschule für Gestaltung we can notice a remarkable continuity. The founding rector of HfG, renowned product designer Max Bill, had been a Bauhaus student; together with him, former Bauhaus masters Walter Peterhans, Helene Nonné-Schmidt, Johannes Itten and –as director of the Black Mountain College– Josef Albers belonged to the small former faculty that established HfG Ulm (Wachsmann, 2018). Unfortunately, the Hochschule für Gestaltung itself only lasted until 1968 because conservative politicians in the state of Baden-Württemberg closed it down, for financial reasons. It had probably been the single-most important educational project resulting from the Zook Commission's suggestions for the reform of education in Germany. And, ironically, Hochschule für Gestaltung's closure almost coincided with the end of the negotiation phase. Then, the Brandt administration was beginning to apply the ideas, which HfG had crucially helped to develop, to the West German education system (Brandt, 1969, p. 29).

Similar interactions, processes that involve individual reformers, span decades, cultural areas, and continents can also be observed between

Germany and China. But let us go back to the long 19th century. In 1995, Jörg Möller demonstrated that modern Japanese education was decisively influenced by the work of the Herbartian Emil Hausknecht, who was responsible for reforming Japanese secondary schools, teacher training colleges and German Studies departments between 1887 and 1890 (Möller, 1995). Only a few years later, Herbart's pedagogy also reached China via Japan, introduced by Wang Guowei (Ye, 2020, 204). This would hardly be remarkable if Herbart's concept of step-by-step learning did not also enjoy a certain resonance in contemporary China. Li Qilong would translate many of Herbart's works into Chinese, among others "Outlines", published in 2002 by Zhejiang Education Press in Hangzhou. If we focus closer, the picture becomes more complex: Li Qilong also invited Wolfgang Klafki –an eminent German education scientist, loosely located in the tradition of the reform movement– to East China Normal University in 1986. Both would cooperate to facilitate the transfer of historically grounded ideas and concepts in education research from Germany to China (Meyer, 2022, p. 18). Hilbert Meyer even claims that Chinese interest in Herbart –and his filigree didactics– has been fed by the urge to find alternatives to the quantifying approach predominantly practiced in the United States:

> Offensichtlich ist die deutsche Bildungstheoretische Didaktik insbesondere deshalb für kritisch orientierte chinesische Erziehungswissenschaftler interessant, weil sie helfen kann, sich von der Hegemonie der stark an Managementmodellen orientierten und regelmäßige Leistungskontrollen fordernden US-amerikanischen Curriculumtheorie zu emanzipieren.
>
> [Obviously, German educational didactics is particularly interesting for critically oriented Chinese education scholars because it can help to emancipate from the hegemony of US curriculum theory, which is strongly oriented towards management models demanding regular achievement assessments.]
>
> (Meyer, 2022, p. 19)

However, it would be no contradiction to argue that Herbartianism and

its meticulous instructions bear a certain affinity with US curriculum theory. In Germany, the propositions of the Zook Commission (1946), strongly influenced by North American teaching concepts (Zook, 1946), were implicitly rejected by German educators and administrators in the American Occupation Zone immediately after the Second World War. Egalitarian high schools with discussions, work in groups, citizenship lessons, exchange projects with American students were apparently not considered appropriate for children that had just shed the brownshirts of the Hitler Youth. And there were few teachers who could have transferred those propositions into practice, thus guaranteeing the smooth restart of the school system in western Germany. Moreover, the Zook Commission stated that

> Fragen der Schulverwaltung, der Schulunterhaltung, Messungen und Tests der Schulgebäude und Schulausstattung, der Lehrerbildung, der Lehrplangestaltung, selbst der pädagogischen und Kinderpsychologie werden [in den Ländern der amerikanischen Besatzungszone, M.F.] arg vernachlässigt. Pädagogische Bestandsaufnahmen sind praktisch unbekannt.
>
> [Questions of school administration, school maintenance, measurements and tests of school buildings and equipment, teacher training, curriculum development, even educational and child psychology are sorely neglected (in the *Länder* of the American Occupation Zone, M.F.). Pedagogical assessments are practically unknown.]
>
> (Zook, 1946, p. 55)

As already mentioned, some twenty-five years on, in the wake of the 1968 protest movements, the West German Brandt administration would eventually introduce some of the suggestions propounded by the Zook Commission. The advent of the standardized PISA tests in 2000 and the gradual introduction of digital school administration would further contribute to the fusion of assessment-based North American pedagogy and West German didactics –that still bore a resemblance to Herbartian teaching methods. Again, it should be noted that the reforms evolved in

phases: commencing with the idea phase immediately after the end of World War II. Followed by continued negotiation until the early 1970s, when reform concepts eventually were put into practice on a federal scale, materializing into restructured curricula, newly founded schools and universities, built to mirror the aspirations of a social-democratic society. Then, slowly consolidating until the *Wende* years of 1989-90, when the renewed (and increasingly left-leaning) West German school system was considered as tried and tested, deemed suitable even by conservatives as Helmut Kohl and Franz-Josef Strauss to be applied to the new *Länder* of eastern Germany.

By contrast, the same development could not be witnessed in the Soviet Occupation Zone. Even before the founding of the German Democratic Republic in 1949, the negotiation phase was skipped, and utopian concepts were directly put into practice. The ratification of the *Gesetz zur Demokratisierung der deutschen Schule* in June 1946 would, on the one hand, ensure that schools and universities (and their personnel) could instantly conform to ideological stipulations: denazification, empathy for the Soviet peoples, an egalitarian school system, the abolition of religious education, the banning of private schools, the elimination of tuition fees, an orientation towards the needs of work and production (Anweiler et al., 2013). On the other hand, the majority of (experienced) teachers had been entangled with Nazi politics and were forced to leave their positions (Uhlig, 1970, p. 384). Their youthful replacements were not only inexperienced but also had to cope with an initial lack of suitable teaching materials, damaged buildings, material hardship and jam-packed classrooms (Geißler, 2000, p. 100) –a constellation that, among other factors, would contribute to the reform's initial failure and East Germany's dramatic backlog in the following decade(s).

As we know, ideas are transferable. More often than not, successful competitors in the geopolitical arena serve as a source of motivation, even inspiration. Austria-Hungary's education reforms were inspired by Prussian schools. Prussia, in turn, felt challenged by Napoleonic France and its promotion of an administrative élite. Towards the end of the 19th century British public schools would become role models

for the German reform movement. In the same vein, it could even be argued that the failed Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901) might have facilitated the success of Herbartianism in China. The defeat of 1918 would drive an unprecedented wave of new and reform-oriented institutions in Germany and Austria. After the Second World War, Soviet and US pedagogics would not least gain a foothold in Germany, because the theories of Makarenko and Dewey were propagated by victorious enemies. And there was no end to inspiration by competition: the Sputnik Shock (1957) would induce Georg Picht to publish his seminal treatise of the *Bildungskatastrophe* (1964) which served as a blueprint for the Brandt Administration's *sozialliberal* education reforms of the 1970s. Eventually, even the PISA-Test and the Bologna Process could be linked to the fall of the Iron Curtain. For the apparently successful states of Western Europe and their former Eastern European competitors had to re-organize their education systems in a multipolar world, streamlining European education as whole, in the belief that Anglo-American tertiary education holds the key to success.

Admittedly, these are hypotheses: they need to be substantiated by further research. But against this setting, it is no longer surprising that Herbartianism could be strongly embraced in the Far East, especially in China, as education reformer Lan Ye (East China Normal University) explains:

> For a hundred years, classroom teaching had been shaped by the Herbartian approach in two different forms. In the first half of the twentieth century, teaching was strongly influenced by Herbartian didactical theories borrowed from Japan for training teachers to teach in the modern school system (also adopted from Japan). From the 1950s until the start of the Cultural Revolution, classroom teaching was then under the powerful impact of Kairov's didactical theory –a Soviet form of Herbartian theory [...]. As a result, Herbartian teaching ideas had found deep roots in the daily teaching habits and behaviors of millions of Chinese teachers, even in the 1980s when China re-opened itself

to the world.

(Bu, Xu & Deng, p. 202)

Lan Ye (with her concept of New Basic Education) is, of course, counted among the reformers in China, concerned with strengthening students' personalities in the classroom (Ye, 2009). At the same time, Lin Junyue, mastermind behind China's Social Credit System (SoCS), developed a kind of strict and digital Herbartianism for society, combining human intelligence and surveillance with quantifying methods to measure, control and improve the social behavior of citizens (Drinhausen & Brussee, 2021). Superficially, his conception of social control was inspired by the American Credit Score System, calculating the credit rating of (potential) borrowers. But it should take twelve years to bring this system, which originated in the banking industry, to a comprehensive implementation that would also affect schools across society (Raphaël, 2019). Moreover, as we have seen in the history of education, these transfers should never be considered as single journeys. Chinese models of social control have already been tested in practice –in cooperation with DFKI (German Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence). From the current level of technology, it is easy to develop and implement digital control systems in schools. Taking China as an example, it has been technically possible to electronically measure and process physical signs of pupils' attention in class. Tracking devices in school uniforms, the use of drones and facial recognition can also be used to determine the whereabouts of so-called "system crashers" in real time (Kutscher, 2019). With a social credit account, digitalized assessment would be also conceivable that directed offenders on a structured route to the middle of society, and which would go far beyond simple reporting or a mere grade report (Gaillard and Louvet, 2019) or the digital control of reading assignments, as already practiced with members of the Chinese Communist Party (Erling, 2019). Comprehensive digitalization would not only generate school data, but also differentiated movement and contact scenarios, which could be supplemented medically by fitness trackers. Negative social influences, alcohol, and drug abuse, but also inertia deviating from the norm could thus be treated more professionally. With digital communication already in place, caregivers would

of course be able to intervene curatively in case of deviant patterns. If necessary, almost the entire socio-educational control process could be carried out digitally, accompanied by algorithms, up to and including judicial and executive elements (Catá Backer, 2019).

In retrospect, the connections between Herbartian education, the economization of the education system and the Social Credit System –which was designed to work as securely and predictably as possible– become more apparent and even close into a circle. Contrasting the mostly performance- and success-oriented Western form of the economization of education, the Chinese approach also includes physically measurable interest, eagerness to learn, behavior, and hence social behavior in a more intimate sense in its calculations and system of sanctions. On the one hand, one can endorse this development. On the surface, technology helps people to control, improve and measure their behavior. Thus, a safer and more just world seems possible. On the other hand, this kind of control strangles freedom, the source of creativity, of human progress in general. A society would achieve the opposite of its intentions: it would slip into stasis, into coma. And the situation is serious: in China, social credit appears to enjoy a high level of acceptance, especially among materially and socially privileged groups of the population (Kostka, 2018).

Herbart's thesis of human *Bildsamkeit* has certainly contributed to the success of economization and the implementation of the social credit system, directing the conditioning of humans. But the boundaries to private life that Herbart was capable of drawing in the 19th century have been dissolved 200 years later in the People's Republic of China, by digitalization devoid of morals and by a growing neglect of basic human rights. Moreover, the Chinese model, which has been tested in practice with German support, could also be used in Germany. Even if considerations of mentality, politics, technology, law, pedagogical traditions, and expenditure might contradict this assumption, we should acknowledge that global competition has been slighting the west's invisible walls erected to defend social achievements that have been won in decades, even centuries of emancipatory and democratic struggles. The costly (and foreseeable) failure of current education reforms in

Germany, such as *DigitalPakt Schule*, further underlines the hypothesis that research on the remodeling of schools and universities also needs to critically focus on the very processes of change. In the same vein, it needs to strengthen discourses that rigidly analyze the cost-benefit ratio of digital innovation and critically take stock of the educational surplus value of technical progress. Consequently, political concern for the turnover and economic success of IT companies must never influence decision-making processes in the education sector (Füller, 2020). And, of course, digital technology should never be used as an end in itself. Instead, the human factor should be prioritized, especially at a time of teacher shortage and a steep increase of noticeable psychological problems among young people. Taking all this into account, the negotiation phase has probably just begun in Germany. In comparison to other countries like Denmark (Laursen, 2022), the necessary changes have not been discussed properly. As late as 2020, the Federal Republic's biannual report on the state of education would portray digital reform as a project that could be applied wholesale, entailing very few side effects at no extra financial and pedagogical cost (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2020). And yet, even basic questions indicate the amount of work the digitalization of schools might hold: how would Germany's 16 federal states integrate the benefits of digitalization into their curricula, differentiated by school forms, grades and subjects? How would they adapt their *Didaktik* and their teacher training? In doing so, how would they augment and reshape their (constrained) education budgets? Besides, how would they efficiently contain the eminent dangers of digitalization, as outlined by a rising number of scholars (Lankau, R. 2023; Patzlaff, R., 2021; Alter, A., 2017; Bergmann, W. & Hüther, G., 2013; Guggenberger, B. 1997)?

Creating an educated awareness for the challenges of digital school reform seems even more crucial, as some governments that would be willing to fulfil the social credit model's promise of digital justice could possibly enjoy majority support from present and future generations, regardless of its dictatorial implications (Zuboff, 2019).

In this sense, reform discourses are not limited to schools, but extend

deep into society, where we are all called upon to engage in the ongoing process of negotiating the implementation of digital technology.

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Innovation in Pricing Mechanisms: An Analysis of the Emergence of Fixed and Dynamic Pricing in Five Countries

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Abstract

This study examines how two pricing innovations, fixed and dynamic pricing, became the modi operandi in pricing. We first introduce the historical context and adoption of fixed and dynamic pricing mechanisms and identify common themes and differences. In addition, the innovation patterns of the fixed and dynamic prices in five countries, Japan, Britain, France, the United States, and China, are analyzed and contextualized from a historical, biographic, and a buyer/seller perspective. The results show that fixed and dynamic pricing have continuously evolved and gained widespread acceptance as a leading pricing strategy once the appropriate platform was available (e.g., department stores for fixed pricing or a deregulated airline industry/e-commerce for dynamic pricing). The key factors contributing to the diffusion of pricing innovations: mutual benefits for buyers and sellers, competitive pressure for smaller sellers to adopt the innovative pricing mechanism, and market expansion by including less affluent customer groups, are guidelines for the success of future pricing innovations.

Keywords: fixed pricing, dynamic pricing, innovation, business history

Innovation in Pricing Mechanisms: An Analysis of the Emergence of Fixed and Dynamic Pricing in Five Countries

Innovation is a multi-faceted concept that plays a vital role in driving economic growth and progress.[1] According to the economist Joseph Schumpeter, innovation disrupts existing market structures and creates new ones, thereby driving economic development (Schumpeter, 1942). The concept of innovation emerged in the early and mid-20th century, and its study provides valuable insights into the workings of our world today (Popplow, 2021).

Thompson (1965) defines innovation as the "generation, acceptance, and implementation of new ideas, processes, products, or services." Innovation can take many forms, and its impact can range from progress and growth to friction and social imbalances. This study focuses on an inconspicuous type of innovation, but one with major consequences, on pricing mechanisms innovations, specifically fixed pricing and dynamic pricing in business-to-customer markets.

For businesses, pricing is a critical factor that determines financial success. The right pricing strategy can increase profits, improve market positioning, and enhance customer loyalty. Conversely, incorrect pricing can result in reduced sales and decreased profits. For consumers, prices carry a deep meaning, influencing their perceptions of fairness, trust in

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the seller, and the perceived value of the transaction.

Innovation does not occur naturally and should not be considered a law of nature. Therefore, this study aims to understand the historical context and adoption of fixed and dynamic pricing mechanisms and identify common themes and differences. Thus, we aim to explain how fixed and dynamic prices have become the modi operandi in pricing today. The study also aims to evaluate the relevance of these innovations for emerging pricing mechanisms. Despite the significance of pricing innovation, it has received relatively limited research attention, particularly its historical context, adoption process, and cross-cultural significance. This study seeks to fill this gap in the literature.

The paper is structured into three parts. Firstly, the historical background of fixed and dynamic pricing mechanisms will be introduced. Secondly, the innovation adoption will be analyzed and contextualized from historical, biographic, and buyer/seller perspectives. Finally, we conclude.

1 Pricing innovations

In most parts of the world, consumers are accustomed to two prevalent pricing mechanisms. When purchasing goods or services from brick-and-mortar stores, consumers typically encounter a single, fixed price established by the seller, which is relatively stable over time and consistent for all buyers. When purchasing goods or services online, consumers will be presented with a price on the website. This price may fluctuate based on the time of purchase. This pricing model, dynamic pricing, is typically implemented through computer algorithms to set prices.

These pricing models are relatively recent developments in the history of pricing. Historically, prices were not solely determined by the seller but were negotiated through bargaining for most products in most regions of the world. Until the mid-19th century, bargaining was the primary pricing model, after which fixed prices became dominant. Only

in the late 20th century did the dynamic pricing model emerge and become widely recognized. We will examine these two pricing mechanisms' innovation histories in the following.

1.1 Fixed pricing

Fixed pricing, also referred to as a one-price policy (Grinder & Cooper, 2022; Norris, 1962; Shiozawa et al., 2019; Vaccaro & Coward, 1993), uniform price (Tirole, 1988), or fixed offer prices (Gudehus, 2007), is a pricing mechanism in which the seller sets a price that the buyer cannot influence. The price is communicated to the buyer, who can then decide whether to purchase or not (take-it-or-leave-it offer).

It is crucial to note that a fundamental aspect of the definition of fixed price is that the seller has complete control over determining the price. This eliminates another type of fixed price, where the price is the same for all buyers and sellers but is instead set by a third party, such as the government or guilds (Ogilvie, 2014). For example, King Edward III established fixed prices for wool in 1337, which allowed him to purchase the commodity at a lower cost within England and then sell it at fluctuating prices to weavers in other parts of Europe (Casson & Casson, 2014). Although this price is also "fixed," it is not the innovation discussed here. Furthermore, fixed prices are usually stable for a certain period but not indefinitely. Promotional discounts, such as end-of-season sales or off-peak pricing and general price adjustments made in response to cost or profit margin changes, do not conflict with a fixed pricing strategy.

The development of the fixed price innovation is a subject of interest, and this study aims to examine the innovation patterns of the fixed price in five countries: Japan, Britain, France, the United States, and China. Fixed prices have existed in some form, such as in taverns during ancient Egyptian and Roman times (Casson, 1974) or in pubs in the 18th century (McKendrick et al., 1982), but they were peripheral phenomena. This study will examine how they became the dominant pricing strat-

egy.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that specific individuals may be credited as innovators of fixed pricing in the five countries studied. These potential candidates include (in chronological order) Mitsui Takatoshi in Japan, James Lackington in Great Britain, Astride Boucicaut in France, Alexander Turney Stewart, Rowland Hussey Macy, and John Wanamaker in the United States, and Ma Yingbiao in China. Figure 1 shows a timeline for the adoption of fixed pricing. The following paragraphs will examine the historical evidence of the emergence of the fixed price and provide insight into the stories of these potential innovators.

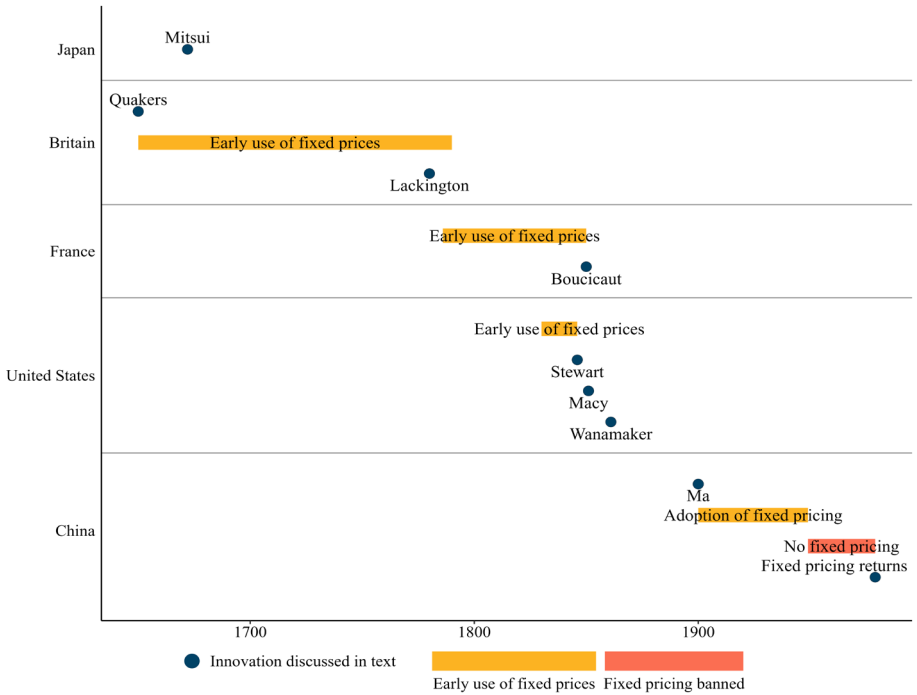

Figure 1: A timeline of the fixed pricing innovation

1.1.1 Japan

In ancient Japan, the samurai culture viewed setting high prices and focusing on profit as immoral (Tsunoda et al., 1958). However, as the economy transformed in the 16th and early 17th centuries, the previously low-status merchant class began to rise and establish new norms. In traditional markets and shops, haggling with customers over prices became common. Merchants could trade and sell goods nationwide, open new stores, and sell various product classes. Their business practices were characterized by a proliferation of selfish, illegal, and shady business practices, which were tacitly condoned by government officials who accepted bribes in exchange for their complicity (Yamamura, 1973).

The practice of fixed pricing in Japan has a historical origin that can be traced back to the 17th century. Japan's earliest known mention of fixed pricing dates back to 1672 (Yonekura & Shimizu, 2010), 1673 (Horide, 2000; Russell, 1939), or 1683 (Shiozawa et al., 2019). The individual credited with the introduction of this innovation is Mitsui Takatoshi (三井高利, 1622-1694). Mitsui came from a middle-class merchant family. His mother, Shuho (殊法), was the family head and a devout Buddhist and educated her children in this spirit. Their philosophy is based on the principle of Ji-Hi (慈悲), which embodies the virtue of compassion of the Buddha. This Buddhist philosophy has two elements: Ji (慈), which entails giving happiness to all living things through friendliness, benevolence, and goodwill, and Hi (悲), which involves freeing all living things from torment and distress. Following Buddhist faith, one should excel in one's profession. For merchants, these teachings dictate that they should strive to excel by making as much profit as possible, while being honest, respected, and beneficial to the country. Poverty is not desirable, but selfishness and pursuing one's own gain at the expense of others are considered wrong (Basu & Miroshnik, 2021b; Horide, 2011; Nakamura, 1967).

Mitsui followed these beliefs and was well known for his rigorous work ethic, diligence, honesty, and frugality (Horide, 2011, 2019). As the

fourth son, Mitsui spent most of his life working under his older brother in the family's retail business. After his brother passed away, Mitsui, at the age of 50, established the Echigoya Drapery (越後屋), a kimono shop in Surugashu. Upon opening, he announced non-negotiable and fixed prices (Horide, 2000; Russell, 1939; Shiozawa et al., 2019).

This change in pricing strategy came with other innovations. On the one hand, Mitsui did not provide credit, nor did he conduct home visits, a common practice among his competitors. On the other hand, his prices were lower than those of his competitors. Additionally, while other sellers focused on offering highly customized services to the elite, negotiated prices, and extended credit limits, Mitsui's fixed pricing strategy allowed him to successfully target the middle class, allowing his business to grow and expand to other product sectors and become very wealthy (Yamamura, 1973). On top of that, Mitsui's descendants build one of Japan's most significant business empires. As a result, the Echigoya Drapery eventually evolved into what is now known as department stores and the Mitsukoshi retail shopping chain (Shiozawa et al., 2019; Yonekura & Shimizu, 2010).

Fixed prices did not immediately become the primary pricing method. In the early and middle Edo period (1603-1800), merchants continued to pay suppliers as little as possible and charge buyers as much as possible (Jansen, 2000; Ramseyer, 1979). Moreover, Mitsui's innovations in discount selling angered competitors, leading to exclusion from the guild and acts of sabotage, such as building a toilet to overflow onto the store or threats to attack and set the store on fire (Horide, 2000). Eventually, however, other merchants followed Mitsui and adopted fixed pricing. By the early 19th century, this practice had become a standard among merchants in Japan. Furthermore, merchants prided themselves on "*charg[ing] the standard market price for an article, and not add[ing] an unfair profit to the price*" (Ramseyer, 1979, p. 213).

From the 1630s to 1853, Japan was mostly isolated from the rest of the world. Japanese citizens were prohibited from leaving the country, and foreigners could not enter without the authorities' approval. Therefore,

the development and adoption of fixed pricing in Japan were largely separated from the rest of the world. After Japan's reopening in the 19th century, foreign visitors noted the widespread use of fixed pricing in Japan, remarking that while haggling was still common in most other parts of the world, in Japan, "*once you set foot in Japan, you pay the same 'single price' that Hachirobei Mitsui introduced to an amazed commercial world 250 years ago*" (Russell, 1939, p. 74). (Hachirobei Mitsui was the business name of Mitsui Takatoshi.)

1.1.2 Britain

In the pre-industrial era, retail pricing in Europe was primarily determined through negotiation between the consumer and the seller.

James Lackington (1746-1815), a British bookseller, is considered one of the earliest known individuals to have implemented the use of fixed prices in retail in the Western world. Lackington began his career as a bookseller in 1744. In his memoirs, Lackington recalls the implementation of fixed prices in 1780. Lackington's primary motive for fixed prices was to facilitate business organization and gain a competitive edge. He recognized that giving credit was costly as customers often did not pay their debt or only paid after a long time, which forced the seller to take costly loans. He discontinued extending credit to customers, which was considered a bold move. To compensate for this change and maintain his competitiveness, Lackington established a low but fixed, non-negotiable price for each book and adhered to these prices (Lackington, 1792).

Despite coming from a poor background and receiving little formal education, Lackington taught himself to read by searching for secondhand books in flea markets and living frugally. After starting his own business as a shoemaker, he began selling books on the side before eventually transforming it into a bookstore (Timperley, 1839).

In the 18th century, more and more people were learning to read, but

books were still expensive luxuries, and other bookstores could be intimidating places. Lackington drove down prices and made books affordable and accessible to poorer people. However, the guiding idea of his business and pricing decisions was pecuniary. He aimed to accumulate wealth through many sales with a small profit margin.

Fixed prices did not stop Lackington from giving high discounts. During that time, it was common business practice for other booksellers to buy out the lion's share of a book and destroy most of it to make the remaining copies more valuable. In contrast, Lackington sold all copies at highly discounted prices (Lackington, 1792; Timperley, 1839).

The implementation of fixed prices encountered significant challenges. Due to the lower prices compared to competing businesses, the store's reputation was negatively affected, and customers were led to believe that the quality of the books would also be lower. In response to this, Lackington introduced a money-back guarantee policy. Despite the initial difficulties, fixed prices ultimately proved beneficial, resulting in the steady growth of Lackington's business (Mee, 1938/1951).

As a bookseller, Lackington became wealthy and influential, even minting his own coins that could be redeemed in his store, "The Temple of the Muses" at Charing Cross in London. He voluntarily published his costs and profits to be perceived as honest and fair. Although born a Methodist, he rejected Methodist beliefs during his time as a merchant and even made fun of them. He rediscovered his faith only after retirement and became a part-time Methodist preacher (Mee, 1938/1951; Timperley, 1839).

Beyond the adoption of fixed prices, Lackington's innovations in the bookselling industry had a meaningful impact on the evolution of the modern bookstore. They contributed to the democratization of literature, making books more affordable and accessible to a broader range of individuals (Lackington, 1792).

By the end of the 18th century, haggling remained prevalent in England,

but fixed-price systems were gaining popularity. This trend rapidly expanded beyond major cities, and by 1806, even smaller country stores had adopted fixed prices, price tags, and warranty services (Fowler, 1998). The adoption of fixed prices continued to spread (Adburgham, 1981), and by the mid-1850s, a French visitor noted with surprise that haggling was uncommon and viewed as impolite in England (Davis, 2013).

It should be noted that Lackington is often credited as the pioneer of fixed prices in Britain. However, he did not invent it. There are earlier records of fixed pricing, specifically among the Quakers,[2] who believed that charging different prices to different individuals was immoral. As such, in the 1650s, one of their founders and leaders, George Fox, requested that his merchant followers establish a single price (Fox, 1694/2010).

The Quakers' adoption of fixed prices was primarily motivated by their religious beliefs. According to Weber (1904/2016, 1946), the Quakers were driven by individual salvation, which they believed could be achieved through hard work and honesty in all aspects of life. They believed that God was present in all people and that everyone, regardless of social class, should be treated equally (Fox, 1674). However, the resulting wealth was a double-edged sword. Too much wealth was seen as a distraction from their faith, while too little was seen as a sign of idleness and a lack of effort in worshipping God.

While Weber (1904/2016) argues that individual salvation was the central motive for adopting the fair price and that social and economic consequences were only of secondary importance, Kent (1983) suggests that additional motives were at play. The Quakers were frustrated by the seemingly selfish business practices of the time. They believed that one could please God only by being honest and charging everybody the same. In their view, charging everyone the same was a way to decrease social inequality and promote fairness in society (Fox, 1658; Kent, 1983).

2 Quakers, also known as the Religious Society of Friends, are a religious group that emerged in England in the 17th century.

However, the pricing mechanism did not gain widespread acceptance outside of the Quaker community, as customers at the time largely rejected this change (Edmundson, 1774; Fox, 1694/2010; Hower, 1943) and got furious when deprived of their right to haggle (Toldervy, 1655). The Quakers also faced opposition from other Protestant faith groups who believed that fixed prices were unfair as they benefitted the rich, who should pay more to achieve fair prices (Kent, 1983; Weber, 1946). Nonetheless, the Quakers continued to use fixed pricing as a pricing mechanism, as another French traveler remarked with surprise in 1792 (de Saussure, 1902).

1.1.3 France

Like other countries, France has a claimed inventor of the fixed pricing system Aristide Boucicaut (1810-1877) (Gosmann, 2013; Thivierge, 1989). Before the 19th century, haggling was the standard method of conducting transactions. Boucicaut came from humble origins and initially worked as a salesperson. He joined Le Bon Marché as a co-owner in 1853. The small retail store identified a demand for a new type of retailer that offered a wider range of products. He was instrumental in establishing the concept of the department store in France through the expansion of product offerings, enabling customers to purchase a variety of items under one roof. This was when he abolished credit and introduced the use of fixed prices for products (d'Avenel, 1896; Moreuil, 1970).

Boucicaut was Catholic, and his faith profoundly impacted his business practices. His store was renowned for its virtuous reputation, which with fixed pricing, became a defining trait of the Bon Marché brand. Boucicaut's religious convictions were so strong that some people even speculated he had direct ties to the Church. He held high moral standards for his employees and ensured they received religious instruction, and followed the fixed price paradigm (Miller, 1981).

The emergence of fixed pricing can be attributed to a larger societal

shift. To target the growing bourgeoisie, Boucicaut offered products at lower prices, implemented refund and warranty policies, and provided unrestricted access to his store (Beauvais, 2004; Hower, 1943). This contrasted with the competition of high-end boutiques. Boucicaut utilized shop windows and vitrines to display goods and ensured wide aisles and ample space for customers to browse leisurely. Later, he extended his offerings to include home delivery and mail orders through catalogs (Pasdermadjian, 1954). Le Bon Marché made Boucicaut one of the wealthiest individuals in France during his time. When Boucicaut died in 1877, his wife, Marguerite Boucicaut, took over the store's management and continued to expand and innovate.

The rise of consumerism led to the growth of department stores that adopted fixed pricing, allowing them to compete with traditional retailers who still used negotiated prices (Gosmann, 2013). The result was a price war between Le Bon Marché, other emerging department stores, and traditional retailers. The intense price competition favored department stores that operated on a low-margin, high-volume model. Department stores grew at the expense of specialty shops and neighborhood stores. In Paris, by the early 1900s, even smaller businesses such as butchers, dairy shops, clothing stores, and restaurants adopted fixed pricing (Saint-Léon, 1911; Wemp, 2010). However, in the countryside, fixed pricing and bargaining coexisted until after World War II (Braudel & Labrousse, 1970).

Although Boucicaut is widely credited as the pioneer of fixed pricing, there is evidence of its existence in France before his time. In 1786, other merchants raised concerns about stores that had adopted fixed prices (Saint-Léon, 1911). Other sources indicate that fixed pricing was in use as early as 1800 (Ambrière, 1932) and that the Parisian bazaar and jewelry seller Petit Dunkerque was among the first stores to adopt the practice (Jarry, 1948; Sombart, 1922). Additionally, dry goods and clothing stores (magasins de nouveautés) in Paris used fixed prices in the 1820s (Jarry, 1948), 1830s (Jarry, 1948; Miller, 1981), and 1840s (Brandt et al., 2014; Hower, 1943).

1.1.4 U.S.

The United States also claim to be the origin of fixed prices, with three names frequently mentioned: Alexander Turney Stewart, Rowland Hussey Macy, and John Wanamaker (Grinder & Cooper, 2022; Tamilia, 2011; Tamilia & Reid, 2007).

Stewart (1803-1876), an Irish immigrant, is credited with pioneering the department store model and being the first to use uniform fixed pricing in the U.S. Although he never advertised it, he had adopted fixed pricing by at least 1846 (Appel, 1930; Miller, 1981; Resseguie, 1962, 1965; Tamilia & Reid, 2007). Stewart began with a small store that eventually grew into a department store and later into a business empire, making him one of the wealthiest Americans. At the time, selfish business practices, customer deception, and haggling were the norm. In Stewart's store, customers had to pay in cash, as little to no credit was given. Prices and profit margins were kept low, and customer satisfaction was prioritized. Steward came from a religious family, and after his father died at a young age and his mother left him behind, his grandfather and later a Quaker friend raised him (Brockett, 1868). Consequently, Stewart valued honesty and discouraged salespeople from exaggerating the quality of their goods. He believed in setting affordable prices to limit competition, increase sales, and ensure long-term success by accumulating capital (Surdam, 2020).

Macy (1822-1877), a Quaker who began his career as a sailor, opened a dry-goods store in Massachusetts in 1851 that sold exclusively for cash and with fixed prices (Hower, 1943). After struggling in a rural environment, he relocated to New York City and opened R. H. Macy & Co. as a department store, again adhering to fixed prices. The store's success helped establish the department store format as a major retail presence in the U.S., and it continues to operate today under the name Macy's. He combined fixed pricing with other novel retail strategies, such as low-price positioning, a low-price guarantee, and odd pricing (e.g., prices ending in .89, .93). He also heavily advertised this positioning, emphasizing the fixed price aspect. This marked a significant departure from

prior retail practices, making fixed pricing a cornerstone of Macy's successful department store business model (Hower, 1943).

Wanamaker (1838-1922) came up with a similar idea. In 1861, Wanamaker opened his first store, "Oak Hall" in Philadelphia, and later established a larger store, "Wanamaker's," in 1876. As a competitor of Macy's and other emerging department stores, he adopted fixed pricing and introduced a novel concept of labeling all goods with their respective prices, referred to as "price tags." It is said that before Wanamaker, U.S. retailers would not display product prices, requiring customers to seek out a salesperson for each item's price, which could be time-consuming and deter some customers from purchasing. The introduction of price tags revolutionized retail and was quickly adopted by the industry. Wanamaker was a devout Presbyterian. He valued hard work, honesty, and equality (Appel, 1930; Grinder & Cooper, 2022). He was also a philanthropist who donated generously to various causes. The fixed (and low) prices were advertised as a particularly fair policy. Wanamaker's contributions to the retail industry extended beyond fixed pricing. He was influenced by Le Bon Marché in Paris and expanded the product range at his store, offering money-back guarantees and employing innovative advertising methods. This helped further to popularize the department store format in the United States.

The introduction of fixed prices and price tags enabled customers to compare prices across stores, leading to intense competition and price wars among department stores. This competition also spurred the adoption of innovations outside business strategies, such as elevators and electrical lighting (Hower, 1943; Pasdermadjian, 1954).

The origin of fixed pricing in the U.S. is disputed; some merchants have already experimented with this practice. In 1817, Arthur Tappan, a carpet and dry goods seller best known as an abolitionist, implemented fixed pricing in his business, motivated by his Christian beliefs. However, this did not gain widespread adoption, and competitors continued to use haggling (Tappan, 1870). Further use of fixed prices in New York in the 1840s (Appel, 1930) and small country stores in the 1830s (Norris,

1962) have been documented. However, there was some suspicion that fixed price policies were a disguise for higher prices and a sophisticated and unfair haggling strategy (Resseguie, 1965). Wanamaker acknowledged Stewart for originating the policy and credited himself with establishing it (Appel, 1930), but it is more likely that fixed prices resulted from continuous development. The practice of haggling gradually declined in the 19th century (Barth, 1982) but continued to be used well into the 20th century (Appel, 1930).

There is a disagreement about the origin of the fixed-price innovation in the U.S. Some sources suggest that fixed pricing was first implemented in Britain and France and was later adopted by American merchants (Nystrom, 1915; Pasdermadjian, 1954). Meanwhile, other sources indicate that the development of fixed pricing was concurrent in both the U.S. and Europe (Appel, 1930; Hower, 1943; Norris, 1962; Tamilia, 2011). Evidence supports both arguments, as early U.S. and European cases of fixed prices were parallel, but the final success of the policy was achieved by adopting department stores with extensive product offerings and fixed prices.

1.1.5 China

The use of fixed prices in China during the 19th century is largely unknown. However, the idea of government price controls was well-established (Weber, 2021). During the Ming and Qing dynasties, state orders and imperial edicts determined prices, including grain and rice prices. However, merchants' and traders' adherence to these prices remains unclear (Allen et al., 2011).

Ma Yingbiao (馬應彪, 1860-1944), born in Guangdong Province, moved to Australia at the age of 19 to work at a gold mine and later as a salesclerk. Influenced by Western values, he was impressed by Sydney's flagship department store, Anthony Hordern & Sons, which used fixed prices. During his time in Australia, Ma converted to Presbyterian Christianity (Austin, 2011). Upon returning to Hong Kong, he opened

the first Chinese-owned department store, the Sincere Company (先施百貨), in 1900 and strongly advocated for clearly marked prices so that customers could choose goods based on price. The name "Sincere" alludes to fixed prices being seen as honest and fair (Chan, 2010). Sincere mandated its employees to attend Christian services on Sunday mornings but also integrated the Confucian principle of developing character with the Christian values of overseas Chinese (Chan, 1996; Hong, 2016). The success of the Sincere Company led to its expansion to Shanghai and Guangzhou in the 1910s. The company continues to exist to the present day. Shortly after the establishment of Sincere, other department stores, such as Wing On (永安百貨), Sun Sun (新新公司), and Dah Sun (大新公司), entered the market. They were also influenced by Protestantism and adopted the fixed pricing mechanism, leading to tough competition.

The introduction of fixed prices by Ma Yingbiao at the Sincere Company was accompanied by several other innovations, including the employment of women as salesclerks and the display of goods in an elaborate manner, despite the high financial costs. However, due to backlash, hiring female clerks had to be discontinued for over thirty years (Chan, 1996). The fixed price was a significant advertising proposition for department stores and continues to be viewed as a signal of honesty (Peng, 2011).

The use of fixed pricing before Ma Yingbiao's implementation in 1900 is debated. While haggling was widespread in small-scale markets in China, some department stores in the International Settlement in Shanghai, operated by English merchants, may have used fixed pricing. However, their clientele was primarily foreign residents, thus having limited impact on the Chinese retail sector (Chan, 1996; Clifford, 1991; Rawski, 1989).

The concept of fixed pricing is present in Chinese history, as evidenced by the idiom 真不二價 or 不二價 (pinyin: zhēn bù èrjià or bù èrjià), which translates to "no second price" or "no bargaining." This idiom is believed to have originated from ancient businessman Han Kang who

sold medicinal products and refused to sell for any price other than what was initially announced, as it represented his goods' true value and quality. However, this pricing method was only used sparingly in Chinese medicine shops and was not widely adopted in the retail sector until the modern era.

Fixed prices set by companies in China were a fleeting concept. After the Communist Revolution in 1949, companies were dissolved, and price setting became the sole responsibility of the government. For 30 years, the government centrally set prices for most goods and services, such as food, housing, and fuel, at artificially low levels (Chao & Hsiang, 1969). However, such control resulted in economic imbalances, giving rise to a thriving black market and the return of haggling based on the principles of supply and demand. In 1979, the Chinese government introduced the pricing reform to return to market pricing and company-set fixed prices. This allowed state companies and the market to independently set prices for certain parts of production (Li, 1989).

1.2 Dynamic prices

The use of non-negotiable pricing for products and services was widespread after World War II in both Western and Communist nations. In theory, companies set prices in the Western world, while the government sets a single price in Communist countries. However, both systems were often combined in practice. State-owned firms dominated heavily regulated industries in the Western world, while some entrepreneurship was permitted in Communist countries.

Managers' and academics' efforts centered mainly on determining the optimal fixed price until the late 1970s. This shifted when companies started adopting variable pricing strategies, charging different prices for the same item based on the time of sale. This evolution will be referred to as dynamic pricing and will be the focus of this chapter. Dynamic pricing refers to adjusting prices of goods or services in real-time based on market demand, supply, and other relevant factors, determined solely

by the seller. Like with fixed prices, the price is communicated to the buyer, who can accept or reject the offer (take-it-or-leave-it offer). Yet, buyers typically pay different prices depending on when they buy. This pricing method often employs complex mathematical algorithms and data analytics to inform its decisions. A discussion of the different definitions of dynamic pricing can be found in Gönsch et al. (2009).

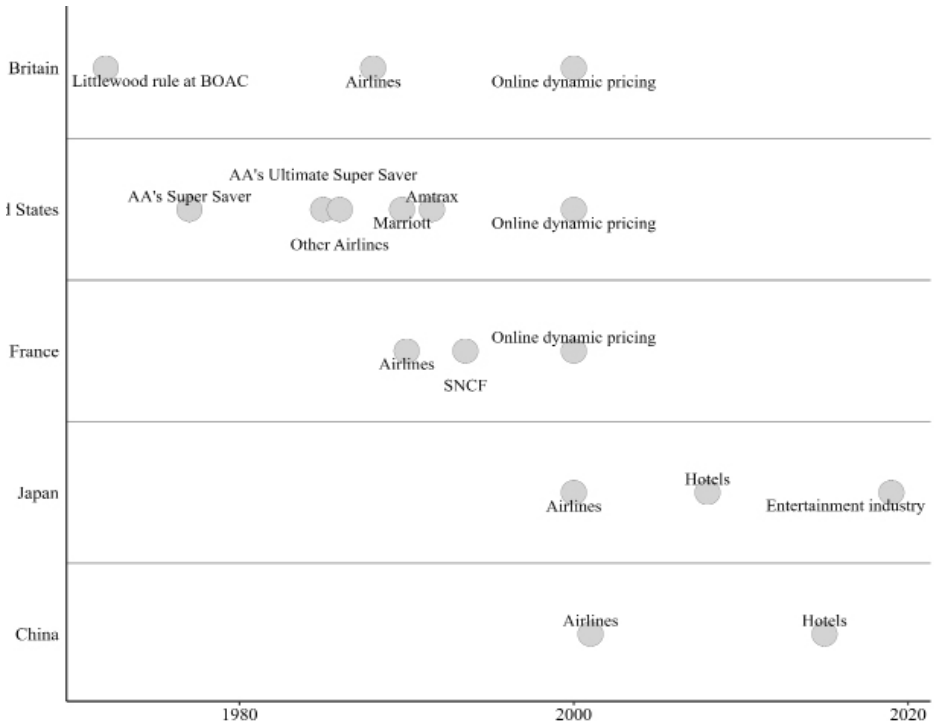

Figure 2: A timeline of selected cases of the dynamic pricing adoption

The evolution of dynamic pricing started in the airline industry in Western countries, originating from revenue management. Commencing in the late 1950s, studies on forecasting models aimed to address operational challenges such as managing cancellations, overbooking, and no-shows, as well as determining the appropriate number of tickets to sell to prevent empty or overbooked seats (Beckmann & Bobkoski, 1958).

The concept was called yield management and, later, revenue management. The goal was to analyze the optimal allocation of capacity to different airline classes and the establishment of prices for each class.[3] Ultimately, revenue management aims to maximize profits (McGill & van Ryzin, 1999). Figure 2 gives an overview of the adoption of dynamic prices in different countries and industries.

1.2.1 The first use of revenue management in Britain

These models led to revenue management-driven dynamic pricing in the early 1970s in Great Britain. The BOAC (British Overseas Airways Corporation, now British Airways) developed a mathematical model to predict customer demand, enabling dynamic pricing implementation for revenue optimization (Littlewood, 1972/2005; Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2017). Although applied to all economy class flights, customers who booked at least 21 days before departure received a discount compared to those who booked closer to the departure date. The algorithms aimed to find the optimal balance between discounted seats that could be sold and non-discounted seats that needed to be reserved for last-minute bookings, an optimization task known as yield management at the time and revenue management today (Cross et al., 2009; McGill & van Ryzin, 1999). Thus, the revenue was optimized instead of optimizing seat sales (Vinod, 2009). This is commonly referred to as the Littlewood Rule (Littlewood, 1972/2005).

3 There is no widely agreed-upon definition of revenue management (Kimms & Klein, 2005; Pfeffer, 2016; Stuhlmann, 2000). A popular early definition that remains prevalent today is "maximizing passenger revenues by selling the right seats to the right customers at the right prices" (AMR Corporation, 1987, p. 22). In addition to dynamic pricing, revenue management also involves controlling capacity to allocate a limited capacity to demand from different market segments in a way that optimizes revenue (Tscheulin & Lindenmeier, 2003). For a long period, dynamic pricing was considered a subfield of revenue management only. Dynamic pricing, in this sense, is considered a component of revenue management (Elmaghraby & Keskinocak, 2003; McAfee & te Velde, 2006). However, some scholars contend that dynamic pricing and revenue management overlap to some degree, and that there is no hierarchical relationship between them (Gönsch et al., 2009).

1.2.2 Development of revenue management in the U.S. airline industry

Before 1978, the airline industry in the United States was heavily regulated, with prices and routes controlled by the Civil Aeronautics Board. Airlines were guaranteed a 12% return on half-full flights by the government's set prices (Vinod, 2016; Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2017). Thus, pricing was not a focus for airlines for a few years. Instead, the evolving industry faced operational challenges, including implementing a functional booking system and reducing costs.

Robert L. Crandall (born 1935) is recognized as a pioneer of dynamic pricing innovation. Crandall earned a reputation as a 'tough guy' while at American Airlines. Coming from a humble background, he aimed to adhere to high ethical standards, including maintaining integrity, fulfilling commitments, following a moral path, and striving for excellence (Crandall, 2022). Crandall's primary motive was determined to win against competitors. He prioritized achieving the best possible results for his company and shareholders, even if it meant making tough decisions (e.g., hiring and firing friends) (Cross, 1997; Graham et al., 1992).

In the mid-1970s, as Senior Vice President of Marketing for American Airlines, he and his colleagues were brainstorming ways to cut costs when they realized that planes were only flying at half capacity. This led them to realize that the airline industry had a revenue problem rather than a cost problem (Cross, 1997). In addition to efficiency-related reasons, Crandall also recognized pecuniary motives for introducing revenue management: "*If we could figure out a way to sell those empty seats [...], we would make a lot of dough*" (Cross, 1997, p. 111). American Airlines' Super Saver discount fares for advanced booking in 1977 resulted from this brainstorming session (Smith et al., 1992; Vinod, 2016). They were highly successful and copied by other airlines (Cross, 1997).

However, it was just the beginning of dynamic pricing. The Airline Deregulation Act of 1978 eliminated restrictions on domestic routes and fare regulations, leading to the entry of low-cost carriers and intense competition. Low-cost carriers, most notably PeopleExpress, offered

reduced services at a low fixed price. PeopleExpress implemented an unbundling strategy that separated all non-flight services, including baggage handling, booking service, and meals, from the basic ticket price and charged supplementary fees for these services. Customers had to book their reservations directly instead of utilizing agents, and tickets could be purchased onboard the aircraft. This approach resulted in a significantly lower cost structure for these airlines, reducing expenses by 50% compared to major carriers. This allowed low-cost carriers to target less affluent customers and make flying available for everybody but also put pressure on established airlines whose revenues and passenger numbers declined and were struggling to survive (Cross, 1997; Cross et al., 2011; Koten, 1984).

Crandall, who was subsequently promoted to CEO of American Airlines, devised a countermeasure. To retain high prices from business travelers and attract price-sensitive customers, American Airlines was the first to introduce an updated version of revenue management with more aggressive dynamic pricing with its Ultimate Super Saver fare in 1985. In contrast to the previous iteration, American Airlines was leveraging cutting-edge computational capabilities; the revised dynamic pricing mechanism enabled the airline to target discounted fares more precisely. The Ultimate Super Saver offered competitive, constantly changing prices for customers who booked up to 30 days before travel and stayed over the weekend.

At first, competitors reacted with skepticism and strong opposition to the low-cost strategy, viewing it as a potential threat to their future profitability. They believed that dynamic pricing strategies would not be well-received by customers. The norm was that everybody should pay the same, and it was thought that customers would not tolerate different prices for the same product and that the government would view such practices as bait pricing and intervene accordingly. Notably, the decision to implement dynamic pricing strategies rested with American Airlines' marketing department and the CEO but lacked significant consideration of the consumers' fairness perceptions and ethical issues. In fact, customers were viewed simply as rational economic agents

rather than consumers with complex personalities. However, consumers generally reacted positively to dynamic pricing contrary to initial expectations. Many felt they could benefit from lower prices and receive the same level of service as they would from a traditional airline (Cross, 1997). One year later, other airlines quickly adopted this model, making it an integral part of revenue management (Cross, 1997; Huefner, 2011; Vinod, 2009).

In addition to his pioneering work on dynamic pricing, Crandall is recognized for his contributions to the airline industry. One of his most notable achievements was creating the first frequent-flier program at American Airlines, which revolutionized how airlines interacted with their customers (Graham et al., 1992).

1.2.3 Evolution of dynamic pricing in other industries in the West

The development of revenue management and dynamic pricing in Western countries during the 1980s and 1990s was marked by distinct differences from the development of fixed pricing. Unlike the determination of fixed prices, made by the owner, employees advanced revenue management. These specialists regularly interacted with peers and academia through professional conferences and communication networks. Overcoming language barriers facilitated the exchange of expertise and the hiring of specialists from rival organizations. As a result, the adoption of dynamic pricing within the airline industry in the Western world was rapid and widespread, with most airlines adopting some form of dynamic pricing within a decade.

Dynamic pricing evolved in industries with capacity limitations similar to airlines. Marriott was the first company in the hotel industry to implement revenue management and dynamic pricing in the late 1980s (Kimes, 2016). Other hotels followed in the 1990s (Hanks, 2002). However, compared to the airline industry, the more fragmented industry structure limited the widespread application (Kimes, 2016). The national passenger rail systems of the United States, Amtrak, and France,

SNCF, adopted revenue management and dynamic pricing in 1991 and 1993, respectively (Ben-Khedher et al., 1998; Vinod, 2016). Currently, most European railway companies use revenue management (Hohberger, 2020).

Before the late 1990s, dynamic pricing beyond these industries was considered too complex and infeasible. Kimes (1989) identified six critical factors necessary for implementing dynamic pricing: fixed or limited capacities, high fixed costs, low marginal costs, capacity perishability, significant fluctuations in demand, the possibility for advance booking, and the possibility of market segmentation and price differentiation.

However, with the advent of the internet and e-commerce in the late 1990s and early 2000s, dynamic pricing also gained popularity in retail and beyond capacity-driven industries in travel and hospitality. The increased availability of data, advanced technology for quick pricing adjustments, and improved analytical capabilities presented a significant challenge to traditional pricing strategies and an opportunity to implement dynamic pricing (Elmaghraby & Keskinocak, 2003). Online retailers, such as Amazon and eBay, widely adopt dynamic pricing algorithms in North America and Europe to adjust prices multiple times a day based on demand, inventory, and competition. Ride-sharing companies like Uber and Lyft also employ dynamic pricing by considering factors such as time of day, location, and ride demand to adjust fares. In the ticketing industry, companies such as Ticketmaster and StubHub adjust ticket prices based on event popularity and the availability of tickets. There are a few instances of brick-and-mortar stores that use electronic shelf-labels to implement dynamic pricing as well.

Ethical dimensions of dynamic pricing were little considered. During the Reagan era in corporate America, fairness considerations were perceived as weak and insignificant (Mueller, 2004). The dominating logic of Chicago economics, emphasizing free markets and rationality, added to this trend. From a customer perspective, dynamic prices were acceptable with a significant discount and reasonable restrictions (Kimes 1994). More recently, the ethics of dynamic pricing have been debated

more (Elegido, 2011; Gerlick & Liozu, 2020; Haws & Bearden, 2006; Nunan & Di Domenico, 2022; Seele et al., 2021; Selove, 2019).

In Japan and China, the implementation of dynamic pricing deviated from the pattern observed in North America and Europe.

1.2.4 Dynamic pricing in Japan

In Japan, the adoption of dynamic pricing has been slow despite the exchange of ideas with Western countries and Japanese researchers studying in the West. Japanese companies did not implement dynamic pricing mechanisms in the 1980s and 1990s. This was primarily due to government regulations limiting Japanese airlines' ability to implement revenue management practices. However, after market deregulation in 2000, companies gradually began adopting revenue management and dynamic pricing in the 2000s (Eguchi & Belobaba, 2004). Influenced by their international counterparts, Japanese hotels have since adopted dynamic pricing. In the Japanese railway industry, dynamic pricing has yet to be implemented due to regulation and government approval required for rail prices. Despite discussions on the topic for a long time (Abe, 2007; Bugalia et al., 2021; Yasutomi, 2016), the government only began considering its implementation in 2021. Similarly, dynamic pricing mechanisms were only recently adopted in industries such as theme parks, parking lots, and sporting venues.[4]

1.2.5 Dynamic pricing in China

Dynamic prices were also slow to be adopted in China. Several factors contributed to this, including the new prosperity brought about by opening the Chinese market and the subsequent economic growth, which made dynamic pricing unnecessary. Additionally, there was a lack of knowledge regarding dynamic pricing techniques, which were primar-

4 Ironically, since 2017, the successor company of Mitsui Takatoshi's kimono shop have established Dynamic Plus Co, a company that offers revenue management and dynamic pricing consulting and services.

ily developed in the West. Furthermore, government regulations and price controls posed obstacles to implementing dynamic pricing (Yang, 2009; Yuan & Nie, 2020; Zheng & Liu, 2016). After the market was deregulated in 2000, airlines were the first industry in China to adopt revenue management systems and dynamic pricing. China Southern was the first to adopt revenue management in 2001, followed by China Eastern and Air China in 2003. Implementing dynamic pricing was not straightforward due to various challenges, including airlines' lack of pricing power as resellers primarily sold tickets, government price controls, and knowledge limitations (Yang et al., 2009). The adoption of dynamic pricing and revenue management in the hotel industry in China was similarly delayed. Although some international hotel chains have implemented these practices, widespread adoption did not occur until recently (Li & Ma. 2017; Yang et al., 2009). In contrast, the railway industry still operates under government price regulations and has yet to implement dynamic pricing or revenue management.

2 Learning from pricing innovation

In this section, we will analyze and compare two pricing innovations regarding their historical background, the sellers' biographic, religious, and moral background, and the roles of the sellers and consumers in the diffusion process.

2.1 Historical innovation patterns: Two waves

The following section will examine the recurring themes observed in implementing the two pricing innovations, fixed and dynamic pricing. The development and adoption of both pricing innovations were gradual. These pricing mechanisms represent significant modifications in how prices are established and market transactions are carried out. However, no sudden realization or "eureka" moment marked the introduction of either fixed or dynamic prices. The shift toward their implementation occurred gradually over time (Davis, 2013).

The evolution of fixed pricing occurred in two waves. During the first wave, between 1600 and 1850, early advocates of fixed pricing were driven by religious or moral motivations, viewing uniform pricing for all customers as fair and honest. Despite this, adopting fixed pricing was limited as competitors ignored it, and customers were resistant. Fixed pricing was only seen as a peripheral practice. The first introducers of fixed pricing went unnamed. China had some prior experience with fixed prices but was the only country studied that did not see the first wave of gradual introduction before the emergence of the department store. The second wave saw fixed pricing establish itself as the primary pricing strategy, driven by practical considerations such as the growth of industrialization and the rise of the European consumerist movement. The Meiji Restoration ended Japan's isolation and brought department stores to Japan, transforming the retail sector again. Fixed pricing, however, was already established before this (Hong, 2016).

The adoption of fixed pricing as the dominant pricing strategy across countries shows two main threads of development - an independent evolution in Japan and a Western-Chinese evolution. The department store model facilitated the successful implementation of fixed prices, which offered a wide range of products and a price-sensitive clientele, necessitating low prices. Other innovations from the department store, such as advertising, warranties, low-price guarantees, and home delivery, also contributed to the success of fixed prices.

Paralleling the development of fixed pricing, the implementation of dynamic pricing evolved gradually in two phases. The first wave of dynamic pricing adoption started in the late 1970s and occurred primarily in the airline industry under the guise of revenue management and filling capacity. Dynamic pricing allowed revenue advantages through implicit temporal price differentiation and revenue advantages through response to random demand fluctuations (Gönsch et al., 2009). This method was gradually adopted in other industries with capacity constraints, such as hotels and train industries, driven by technological advancements and primarily utilized by larger enterprises.

The second wave in the adoption of dynamic prices paralleled the rise of e-commerce. As e-commerce developed and advanced, the accompanying software technology also advanced. This resulted in a renewed emphasis on pricing in e-commerce, albeit in a different manner. The growth of e-commerce has led to increased price competitiveness, with market prices for products frequently changing multiple times a day in response to consumer demand.

In conclusion, fixed and dynamic pricing have continuously evolved and gained widespread acceptance as a leading pricing strategy once the appropriate platform was available (e.g., department stores for fixed pricing and airline industry/e-commerce for dynamic pricing). This is a trend that we can observe similarly in other fields of innovation. Pricing innovation should not be confused with the invention of a new pricing method. The origins of pricing inventions, such as the first person who implemented fixed pricing in ancient civilizations like Greece, Rome, Egypt, and China, are unknown. Similarly, ideas of dynamic pricing have existed for a long time but were previously deemed unfeasible (den Boer, 2015).

Going (1911) once cleverly formulated the idea that our world very often had as much creative genius and inventiveness as it could handle, meaning that it only made use of an invention at the right moment. For example, the economist cited the steam engine, which was often invented, set aside, and rediscovered. Only at the end of the 18th century was it able to establish itself because this time's economic and social conditions were particularly favorable for its application (Pasdermadjian, 1954). According to Schumpeter (1934/2021) the social environment often responds unfavorably to new ideas, attempting to suppress even minor innovations by imposing bans or subjecting innovators to social condemnation. This backlash is evident in all five countries regarding fixed-price innovation. More recently, Ridley (2020) claims that innovation is usually gradual and not sudden. Sudden leaps are rare and often the result of long stretches of preparation, multiple wrong turns, and hindsight. Successful innovation follows a consistent path and can be seen in small incremental steps rather than sudden breakthroughs. He

concludes that it is often not the first inventor who has a lasting impact on society, but rather the innovator who effectively implements the innovation in the appropriate context and at the appropriate time.

2.2 Biographic, religious, and moral drivers of pricing innovations

The innovators discussed above share striking similarities. Most came from poor (Lackington, Boucicaut, Macy, Wanamaker, Ma, Crandall) or modest (Mitsui, Fox, Tappan, Stewart) backgrounds, and most rose to incredible wealth, power, and fame. Mitsui, Lackington, Boucicaut, Stewart, and Wanamaker were among the wealthiest people in their societies before they passed away.

All the innovators had strong values that followed them throughout their lives. All believed in hard work, and most shied away from a luxurious lifestyle despite their wealth. Their puritan religious values often guided this. Except for Lackington and Crandall, religious beliefs were the guiding principle for introducing price innovations.

Remarkably, most innovators followed Protestantism, reflecting sociological hypotheses from the first part of the 20th century by Weber (1904/1920/2016) or Sombart (1911). This is manifested in their decision to introduce the fixed price. Followers of Fox, Macy, and Stewart followed the Quaker ideology that everybody should be treated the same. Arguments by the other Protestant innovators were similarly driven by honesty and fairness (Wanamaker, Tappan, Ma). The core values Weber attributed to Protestantism - hard work, asceticism, profit orientation, and private entrepreneurship - can also be found in Japanese Buddhism (Basu & Miroshnik, 2021a), and Mitsui's ethic stresses honesty and high moral standards. The Catholic Boucicaut stands out. While he was very devout, little is known about how this influenced his motives for introducing the fixed price.

Lackington and Crandall, who were not religious during their time as innovators (Crandall, 2022; Mee, 1951; Timperley, 1839), were driven

by a different set of values: increasing the efficiency of their operations, becoming more profitable, or simply winning against the competition.

2.3 The consumers' and sellers' perspectives on pricing innovations

2.3.1 Supporting factors

Fixed pricing has several advantages for the seller that were cited as major drivers for its success. First, there was increased efficiency. Rather than negotiate a price with each customer, the seller only needs to set the price once. Bargaining requires a significant amount of skill, as the seller must assess the buyer's willingness to pay, determine a suitable starting price, and clearly understand product costs and overhead expenses to sustain their business in the long run. This process can be more manageable in owner-run shops, but training new salesclerks to be skilled negotiators is a resource and time-consuming task. For larger businesses, the benefits of fixed pricing are even more pronounced. With the hiring of salesclerks, ownership and pricing decision-making were separated. Therefore, the owner's ability to control the price is diminished. Fixed pricing was introduced as a way for the owner to regain control over the pricing decision by centralizing the pricing decision-making process (Phillips, 2012).

Second, the implementation of fixed pricing was successful in department stores, utilizing complementary marketing strategies such as money-back guarantees, lowest-price guarantees, low-price strategies, and extensive advertising campaigns. The implementation of these strategies was made possible by the adoption of fixed pricing.

Third, there was a psychological argument. Fixed pricing proponents claimed it was a fairer approach, treating all customers equally (Fox, 1694/2010; Lackington, 1792; Scull & Fuller, 1967; Wanamaker, 1911). Additionally, it improved the relationship between buyers and sellers by removing the tension and animosity that arose during the haggling

process (Geertz, 1978; Wanamaker, 1911). Fixed pricing also served to justify the unequal power dynamics between buyers and sellers. Department store owners, who became wealthy through successful businesses, could claim that they did so through fair and honest practices (Crow, 1943). Evidence suggests that fixed-price sellers pressured others to adopt the same pricing method through negative publicity and exclusion if they resumed bargaining (Phillips, 2012).

Fourth, a theoretical economic argument proposes the optimality of fixed pricing over haggling (Riley & Zeckhauser, 1983).

From a consumer's viewpoint, implementing fixed pricing had numerous benefits. Customers who struggled with bargaining no longer had to participate in the negotiation process. Particularly for individuals who were traditionally charged more, such as the upper class, fixed pricing resulted in lower prices. Second, price comparisons across various stores were more straightforward as prices were clearly displayed. Therefore, competition between buyers and sellers shifted towards competition between sellers (Geertz, 1978), resulting in increased perceptions of interpersonal fairness and lower prices (Gelber, 2005). The introduction of price tags also enhanced trust between the store and its customers, as they felt they were being treated fairly and receiving good value. This fostered customer loyalty, a crucial factor for the stores' long-term success. The adoption of fixed pricing was also aligned with the progressive values of the time, as department stores were perceived as modern and forward-thinking, making various local and foreign goods accessible to a larger portion of society, including the lower classes. On the other hand, haggling was seen as an outdated process for smaller stores (Phillips, 2012).

The widespread acceptance of dynamic pricing can also be explained by the benefit it brings to sellers and consumers. First, from a seller's standpoint, it effectively addresses the need for capacity utilization, inventory management, and customer outreach through early revenue management techniques. Second, dynamic pricing increases sales and resource efficiency by determining the optimal price at each price point.

Third, it enables price differentiation among buyers, which reverses prior limitations imposed by the mostly time-stable fixed pricing. By setting a lower price, usually associated with less convenient purchase and consumption times, and a higher price with more convenient scheduling, the seller allows buyers to self-select according to their willingness to pay. For instance, in the case of a flight, more affluent business travelers may choose to book during the higher-priced period shortly before take-off, while students on a tight budget may accept the inconvenience of booking in advance to pay a lower price. Ultimately, this leads to a rise in seller profitability (Zhao & Zheng, 2000).

From a consumer perspective, discounted fares were welcomed during the initial adoption of dynamic pricing in the airline industry. They were primarily seen as a cost-saving option for consumers. For price-sensitive consumers who can plan ahead, dynamic pricing results in a potential increase in consumer surplus. The price discrimination involved in dynamic pricing does not necessarily have to be unfair or unethical (Elegido, 2011). Like in the case of haggling, price discrimination can redistribute income from less price-sensitive and often wealthier groups to more price-sensitive and often less wealthy groups (Tirole, 1988).

The influence of the buyer on the pricing decision is increased again in dynamic pricing. While haggling allows for a high level of face-to-face influence, fixed pricing minimizes buyer influence. On the other hand, dynamic pricing offers a new level of virtualized influence. When consumers believe they benefit from it, they often support price discrimination in the market (Kimes, 1994). Additionally, from a psychological perspective, dynamic pricing allows consumers to experience the thrill of finding a good deal (bargain hunting) (Choe & Wu, 2015)and to feel good about paying less than others (Lee et al., 2011).

2.3.2 Inhibiting factors

The societal discourse around the new pricing mechanisms was not uncritical, and some arguments were raised against the innovations. The

introduction of fixed pricing faced opposition from some sellers, as it impacted their previous business practices. While it provided a standardized pricing method, it also limited the ability of smaller sellers to engage in price discrimination, as they could no longer set different prices for different customers. Previously, bargaining allowed them to set higher prices for wealthy customers and lower prices for those with limited means. The introduction of fixed pricing increased competition, lowered profits for smaller sellers, and led to price wars (Saint-Léon, 1911).

In Europe, before introducing fixed prices, guilds set prices, which limited competition by agreeing on minimum prices (Ogilvie, 2014). Additionally, during the initial implementation of fixed pricing, high-quality sellers negatively perceived it as a threat to their business and a method for selling lower-quality products (Saint-Léon, 1911). The introduction of fixed prices in France during the 18th century was initially met with criticism as they were perceived as unfavorable to the poor. The police even banned fixed prices and encouraged bargaining for staple goods like bread, allowing low-wage workers to obtain a fair price for their baguettes (Forster & Kaplan, 1998). As previously mentioned, fixed pricing eliminates personal interaction in the pricing process and offers the same prices to all consumers, resulting in a standardized relationship between buyers and sellers. Sombart (1922) considered introducing fixed prices as contributing to objectifying the buyer-seller relationship in capitalism. Many consumers were accustomed to bargaining and found it pleasurable. Thus, removing bargaining stripped them of the sense of achievement and dominance in securing a good deal (Jones et al., 1997). Similarly, during the period when fixed pricing was first introduced, it was perceived as a haggling strategy or a signal of bad quality in Britain and the U.S. This trend can still be observed in countries where bargaining remains a common practice (Dawra et al., 2015; Kassaye, 1990).

The resistance to fixed pricing is also evident in the cross-cultural diffusion of innovations. Except for Japan, fixed pricing was established and developed in regions characterized by frequent trade and commerce,

such as colonial empires like Britain, France, and the U.S. During that time, fixed prices were implemented in parallel and faced similar opposition from other sellers. There was a cross-cultural exchange between these countries, and the accounts of foreigners visiting regions that already utilized fixed pricing, show that they were taken aback by the concept. This was a reciprocal experience, whether the French in Britain, the British in the U.S., or the Americans in Japan. Across cultures, introducing fixed pricing sparked surprise and initially faced rejection.

Similarly, in China, fixed prices were introduced in Hong Kong and Shanghai, considered among the most open cities in the early 20th century. Fixed prices came along with the rise of department stores, viewed as representing Western values and early capitalism. However, there were reports of fixed pricing being perceived as a colonial, Western concept and nationalist consumers rejecting it as a way to resist imperialism (Hong, 2016).

During implementation, dynamic pricing faced resistance from sellers who had not yet implemented it. The adoption of dynamic pricing technologies creates pressure for competitors also to adopt it, leading to a more competitive market where prices can be easily adjusted in response to market conditions. This can ultimately result in lower prices and reduced profits over time. In contrast to the simplification brought by fixed pricing, dynamic pricing complicates price setting. The implementation of dynamic pricing requires advanced technology, software, hardware, and human resources to accurately set prices for each product. As demonstrated by the bankruptcy of PeopleExpress after American Airlines introduced dynamic pricing, a lack of related technology can have negative consequences. Dynamic pricing also reduces the power of managers over pricing decisions and requires using algorithms that must be accurate, transparent, and fair to avoid legal and ethical issues. Despite this, managers often retain control over pricing decisions in dynamic pricing rather than delegating it to employees (Wamsler et al., 2022). Regardless of success stories, many companies have failed to implement dynamic pricing correctly and abandoned the approach.

In some cases, companies experimenting with dynamic pricing faced criticism for charging higher prices from media and customers (Yang, 2020). There are also concerns about the consumer's reactions when facing dynamic prices, with some industries, such as movie theaters opting not to use dynamic pricing despite meeting its criteria. This can be attributed to a conservative approach (Orbach, 2004). Additionally, sellers are often concerned about losing their pricing image and customer loyalty if dynamic pricing is implemented (Seele et al., 2021).

The initial innovators of dynamic pricing in the digital sphere faced significant resistance from the media and consumers. Perceptions of fairness and trust in dynamic pricing were viewed negatively (Garbarino & Lee, 2003; Haws & Bearden, 2006). This can be attributed to the power imbalance created by dynamic pricing, which allows sellers to target weaker customers using vast amounts of consumer behavioral data. Dynamic pricing also decreases price certainty for customers, making it harder for them to plan and increasing their uncertainty. Additionally, the decreased price transparency in dynamic pricing creates ethical issues for the seller and erodes its credibility (Seele et al., 2021). There is also a cross-cultural variation in the adoption of dynamic pricing, with consumers in collectivist cultures being more sensitive to price comparisons within their in-group (Bolton et al., 2010). This partly explains why dynamic pricing is more regulated or rejected in collectivist cultures such as Japan and China.

In conclusion, there are several common themes in fixed and dynamic pricing diffusion patterns. In both cases, the acceptance of the new pricing system was driven by mutual benefits for sellers and buyers. Sellers who adopted the innovation could better utilize their resources and increase sales and profits, while buyers benefited from lower prices and a better product offering. As a result, both pricing innovations, by and large, led to a democratization of consumption, making products that were previously only accessible to the wealthy more affordable to a larger consumer group. There were some exceptions. The poorest of the poor benefited from haggling for their daily necessities, and similarly, airline passengers who needed a last-minute flight on an almost booked

plane were better off with fixed prices than dynamic prices. A second feature of the diffusion pattern of both pricing innovations is that their successful and lasting introduction started in larger organizations and was later adopted by smaller ones. It is worth noting that except for fixed pricing in Japan, both innovations were seen as a Western, modern way of doing business and challenged traditional cultural practices in Eastern countries. These similarities suggest that economic and cultural factors influence the diffusion of pricing innovations.

In addition to these similarities, however, there are also contradictory features in the two price mechanisms. On the one hand, fixed pricing streamlined the pricing process and reduced labor costs. On the other hand, dynamic pricing resulted in a more complex pricing structure. However, computer technology enabled automated pricing processes, removing the personal touch from pricing decisions. Additionally, while fixed pricing was perceived as promoting price fairness, dynamic pricing was seen as a decline in price fairness, suggesting that price fairness does not appear to be a determining factor in the diffusion of pricing innovations.

3 Conclusion

The present research examined how two pricing innovations, fixed pricing and dynamic pricing, became the modi operandi in pricing. We could map the acceptance of fixed and dynamic pricing by introducing innovation and implementation patterns in five countries, three from the West and two from the East. While there are colorful stories of some innovators who came up with the idea of fixed pricing, we find evidence that the implementation of fixed and dynamic pricing as leading pricing strategies developed gradually over time. Fixed pricing evolved in two waves, with early adopters driven by religious or moral motivations and the shift towards it occurring gradually over time. The growth of the department store model further facilitated the successful implementation of fixed pricing. Dynamic pricing also evolved in two phases, with the first wave starting in the late 1970s in the airline industry and the sec-

ond wave paralleling the rise of e-commerce. Innovations in software technology allowed for increased competitiveness in e-commerce and frequent price changes in response to consumer demand.

Furthermore, we discussed why the innovating firm was motivated to innovate and how competitors and customers reacted to the innovation. According to economic theory, fixed pricing has advantages for the seller, such as increased efficiency and control, improved buyer-seller relationship, and optimization. From a consumer's viewpoint, fixed pricing makes negotiation easier, allows for easier price comparisons, increases trust in the seller, and aligns with progressive values. Dynamic pricing benefits the seller by addressing capacity utilization, improving resource efficiency, and enabling price differentiation. Consumers benefit from discounts and the excitement of finding a good deal. However, introducing fixed pricing faced opposition from some sellers, led to price wars, and negatively impacted smaller sellers' profits. Dynamic pricing raises concerns about fairness and has been criticized for price discrimination.

On a personal level, the innovators were a diverse group of individuals who shared a commitment to hard work, honesty, and fairness. Their religious beliefs, mostly Protestant, played a significant role in their decision to introduce fixed pricing, reflecting the values of their respective cultures and religions. However, there are also examples of fixed prices and dynamic prices being introduced for pecuniary reasons.

The outcomes of this study have implications for future pricing innovations. The evolution of pricing is an ongoing process, and the examination of fixed and dynamic pricing in this research constitutes just a fraction of the many pricing innovations that exist. Nevertheless, the key factors that contributed to the adoption of fixed and dynamic pricing: mutual benefits for buyers and sellers, competitive pressure for smaller sellers to adopt the innovative pricing mechanism, and market expansion by including less affluent customer groups, are interesting guidelines for the success of future pricing innovations.

The diffusion of dynamic pricing may be the precursor to further advancements in algorithmic pricing. In this context, using big data, including personal and competitive data, may lead to the developing of new pricing systems, such as personalized and collusive pricing mechanisms (Ezrachi & Stucke, 2016; Seele et al., 2021). The current societal reaction to the proliferation of algorithmic pricing mechanisms, including personalized pricing, is a topic of ongoing discourse. The integration of AI into pricing has the potential to bring about both technical and societal challenges. As the availability of big data increases, algorithmic pricing and personalized pricing will likely expand, raising concerns about privacy and fairness in pricing. While regulatory bodies such as the European Union are monitoring the developments, there are currently no established regulations (European Union & Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs, 2018; Rott et al., 2022). The debate surrounding the benefits and drawbacks of these pricing systems revolves around similar topics as in the case of fixed and dynamic pricing. What are the advantages for larger vs. smaller sellers, and what is the potential benefit and harm for consumers? This discourse highlights the need for greater scrutiny to ensure that algorithmic pricing does not exploit the vulnerable (Chen et al., 2022; Gerlick & Liozu, 2020; Richards et al., 2016)

The present research was limited in scope to examining fixed and dynamic pricing innovations and did not explore other pricing mechanisms and pricing innovations that failed to gain widespread adoption. The advent of the internet has facilitated the emergence and popularity of various pricing strategies such as auctions, pay-what-you-want, or name-your-own-price, among others, with varying levels of success. The underutilization of the name-your-own-price pricing strategy, once popularized by Priceline.com, may provide valuable insight into why some pricing innovations are not widely adopted. Additionally, the study was limited to five countries. While those countries are (at least partially) success stories of fixed and dynamic pricing, others have largely rejected both innovations (Bin Ahmad Alserhan, 2009; Kassaye, 1990; Kramer & Herbig, 1993). A more comprehensive examination of fixed and dynamic pricing in other regions, such as the former Soviet

countries, South America, Africa, or the Middle East, could provide valuable insights into their innovation and diffusion patterns.

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Bespoke Immigrants in *Nisei* Murayama, Accented Kim, and Mama Tan

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Abstract

Bespoke immigrants are immigrant characters made-to-order for the master narrative of Asian American literature, particularly in the genre of bildungsroman featuring ethnic protagonists coming of age vis-à-vis their immigrant parents and the parent nation of America. These bespoke immigrants are emplotted to bring about the denouement as the protagonists come into their own. By virtue of such blood ties, a great number of Asian American writers have taken poetic license in representing immigrant characters as types, even stereotypes, long familiar to their Anglophone readers. Such portrayal reveals how white or whitewashed these American writers of Asian descent are, casting the white gaze onto immigrants who look like themselves. These immigrant prototypes harbor a schizophrenic split between the ancestral land and tongue versus the Promised Land and English. Morphing from alien clowns with baby English and farcical mannerisms to spiritual morphine supercharging ethnic quests of identity, immigrant characters serve as the foil in bildungsroman on maturing, mainstreaming, and Americanizing. Such poetic license, such self-serving discursive liberty, borders on "immigrant license," or license to replicate creatures-characters. This is tantamount to the license to kill them, who would have otherwise been round, organic, and unto themselves, evidenced in Milton Murayama, Richard Kim, and Amy Tan.

Keywords: Bespoke Immigrants, Immigrant License, Milton Murayama, Richard Kim, Amy Tan

Bespoke Immigrants in *Nisei* Murayama, Accented Kim, and Mama Tan

By "immigrants," I mean the majority of foreigners in the US on student visa, work permit, and permanent residence, some of whom would eventually be naturalized and acquire American citizenship. Tourists and illegal migrants are not, by definition, immigrants. Refugees and asylum seekers, on the other hand, are forced to flee their home country and settle in the US less by choice than by necessity. An immigrant is thus an adult who enters the United States lawfully for a variety of reasons: college education or advanced studies, business, and visiting family and friends. Upon completion of educational or professional training, an immigrant-to-be may choose to apply for an extended stay, culminating in a green card or citizenship. In Asian American studies, immigrants would constitute the first generation, or *issei* in Japanese American parlance, whereas children of immigrants form the second generation or *nisei*, followed by the third generation or *sansei*, and so forth. The 1.5-generation denotes children and adolescents arriving in the company of their immigrant parents.[1] In the worst-case scenario, some youngsters are "parachuted" alone to American boarding schools for the coveted English proficiency and Western cultural cachet. The title of Kevin Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians* turns literal when well-heeled yet derelict parents seem to believe that teenagers are independent adults, requiring no parental care other than a gold Visa card. The term "0.5-generation" is coined to lament the gradual fading away of the elderly who have retired in Asia and relocated to the US, frequently to be close to their grown children, who are the first-generation immigrants.[2]

By "bespoke," I mean immigrant characters made-to-order, tailor-made

1 The term 1.5-generation is widely used in ethnic scholarship, applicable to a host of scenarios involving Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, and South Asian subjects in North America and the West.

2 See Ma (2006).

for the master narrative of Asian American literature, particularly in the genre of bildungsroman featuring ethnic protagonists coming of age vis-à-vis their immigrant parents and the parent nation of America. These bespoke immigrants are emplotted to bring about the denouement as the protagonists come into their own. By virtue of such blood ties, a great number of Asian American writers have taken poetic license, without much critical pushback, in representing immigrant characters as types, even stereotypes, long familiar to their Anglophone readers. Bespoke immigrants are custom-made for Anglophone customers with a sensibility still reeking of Orientalist misconceptions. This style of portrayal reveals how white, off-white, or whitewashed these American writers of Asian descent are, casting the white gaze onto immigrants who look like themselves. On the shoulders of such stock immigrant characters, Asian American individuals stand tall on the page. These immigrant prototypes harbor a schizophrenic split between the ancestral land and tongue versus the Promised Land and English. Morphing from alien clowns with baby English and farcical mannerisms to spiritual morphine supercharging ethnic quests of identity, immigrant characters, oftentimes parents, serve as the foil in bildungsroman on maturing, mainstreaming, and Americanizing. It would be more appropriate to term such poetic license, such self-serving discursive liberty, "immigrant license," or license to replicate creatures-characters if need be. This is tantamount to the license to kill them, who would have otherwise been round, organic, and unto themselves.

This "J'accuse" may sound harsh, grating to some Asian American ears, no different from what the stereotypical immigrant parents, allegedly, have done to Asian Americans on paper and onscreen. Nevertheless, this immigrant reaction stems from what has been done discursively to immigrant characters in the first place throughout the Asian American literary canon from the 1974 *Aiiieeeee!* anthology coedited by Frank Chin et al. to the present. The marginalizing and stereotyping necessitate a revolt of the immigrant parents against the sin of their American children. As Asian American writers de facto sire their immigrant characters, such "poor parenting" instigates an uprising that would upend Japanese American author Milton Murayama's advice in *All I Asking*

for Is My Body: "The parents should owe the children, not the children the parents" (Murayama, 1988, p. 45). The silenced first generation now raises its tentative hand in dissent over the second generation's "immigrant license" to beget bespoke immigrants, who suffer, to a person, a shared bipolar syndrome. Taking a page from Murayama's playbook, the immigrant vows to "disown you [mama] and papa," the Anglophone Maker (Murayama, 1988, p. 92). As rare as they come, immigrant writers such as Richard E. Kim writes exquisitely, accentlessly, which accents self-Anglicization. Self-Orientalization via immigrant Mamas reaches a fever pitch in Amy Tan, much to the delight of Anglophone fans.

Three classics specializing, respectively, on pidgin, immigrant, and ethnic voices converge to illustrate bespoke immigrants in Asian American fiction. The critical lacuna on the stereotypical misrepresentation of immigrant characters energizes this immigrant talking back. A tautological, chicken-or-egg blame game is bound to transpire: A number of Asian Americans threatened by the notion of bespoke immigrants would lash back, accusing the author of stereotyping which he had accused Asian Americans of committing. Beware of the power differentials, though! This argument consists of a majority of one, a foreign body trying to dodge the long arm and the "organic whole" of Asian American hegemony in terms of immigrant duality. The pursuit of discursive justice and equity, however convoluted and stymied, proceeds apace.

1 Eat Pies, Eat Shit in Milton Murayama

The vulgar slang of "eat shit" befits the unsavory theme of Milton Murayama's *All I Asking for Is My Body*, written partially in Japanese Hawaiian pidgin English to reflect the patois of the plantation laborer family, the Oyamas. The autobiographical fiction's title, in and of itself, already unsettles self-agency when the body is not one's own, long noted by Sau-ling Cynthia Wong (1993, pp. 160-162). Denied that most basic of subjectivity, one is dehumanized, reified into an object

in someone's or something's possession. Incrementally throughout the three-part narrative, self-disgust mounts over a body so "used up", so wasted as to feel like trash or body waste (Murayama, 1988, p. 77). In Part I, "I'll Crack Your Head *Kotsun*," originally published in *Arizona Quarterly* in 1959 and revised for the 1968 collection *The Spell of Hawaii*, the perfectly normal human activity of partaking food, particularly the all-American "corned beef," "pie," and "ice cream," symbolizes Americanization that the child narrator Kiyo (short for Kiyoshi) Oyama desires, as fraught as it might be (Murayama, 1988, p. 5). Sau-ling Wong (1993, pp. 44) calls them "treats" in the category of "Extravagance". Instead of sharing Don McLean's "American Pie", Kiyo feeds on, unwittingly, the crumbs dropped from the white master's table. The delusionary joy of food leaves a bad taste, so to speak, in Part II, "The Substitute," when the life of *Obaban* (Granny or the "grandfather's older sister" [Murayama, 1988, p. 17]) is taken in place of the mother character, as though one is chewed up and spit out to make room for a choicier morsel. Indeed, chew and spit conjure up Murayama's curse words, "eat spit," bandied about in a subsequent squabble, possibly to trade "shit," a repulsive scatological figure of speech, for "spit," a more acceptable body secretion (Murayama, 1988, pp. 60, 77). If Part II stresses how life or fate swallows indiscriminately one human over another, then Part III, the eponymous "All I Asking for Is My Body," zooms in on the human realm of traditional Japanese indebtedness and the ensuing material and psychological exploitation, so much so that one generation consumes the next, akin to Cronus devouring his sons, except Zeus, who matures to "eat back." In the second-generation or nisei Murayama's memoir-fiction, the young American protagonist dreaming of eating pies matures into the "perennial alien" made to eat shit.

Part III's endocannibalistic metaphors within the Oyama family may sound "Greek" to modern readers born, luckily, far away from the sugar plantation's "Pig Pen Avenue," but such tropes are universal, ranging from mythology to realpolitik. Symbolic cannibalistic consumption, all-in-the-family, may come indirectly, unintentionally: Baby Boomers' "good life" gobbles up the earth's energy, clean air and water, handing to their Gen X and Millennial children leftovers of a fouled and soiled

earth; Our Founding Fathers' Second Amendment ensures their American descendants cowering under the highest rate of gun violence and deaths among the developed nations. In Murayama, endocannibalism falls well within the lived experiences of the "piglets" of Kiyo and his elder brother Tosh (short for Toshio), the "number one son," slowly being bled dry by family debts, dictates of filial piety, and capitalist exploitation of labor.

Describing the Oyama home, "the last house on 'Pig Pen Avenue' and next to the pigpen and [camp latrine] ditch," Kiyo notes. "When the warm Kona wind blew from the south, our house smelled like both an outhouse and a pigpen." In the same breath, literally, Kiyo follows up with: "Worse yet, the family debt was now $6,000" (Murayama, 1988, p. 29). The Oyamas are caught between the fetid Kona wind from the south and the filial "Japan wind" from the north. The rhetorical "jump cut" from feces to filthy lucre is no accident. The stink in the nose pales in comparison to the stink in the family name. Kiyo and Tosh manage to escape, albeit temporarily, from the odorous pigsty through boxing, sex, and romance. But the latter stench haunts them for generations: the Oyamas carry the black hole of debts wherever they go. A furious Tosh accuses his parents, pregnant with the seventh child, of raising "Oyama's pigs," who would have been sold in Japan: those "good-for-nothing girl pigs . . . into prostitution . . . You'd call it filial piety! It's filial bullshit!" (Murayama, 1988, p. 92). It is but a small step from Tosh's fury to the subheading's slang of "eat shit," for pigs, like dogs, are rumored to eat their own and others' droppings.

From its genesis of a 1959 short story to the publication of the tripartite narrative three decades later, the perspective has progressed from a child's point of view and visceral memories to an adult's mind. The child's vivid sensations in Part I are driven by basic wants, so fragmentary and prohibited that they lead to no firm grasp of the happenings. By contrast, the teenager in Part II and the young man in Part III assume the role of agents of change. The teenage narrator of Part II not only discerns hidden forces plaguing the immigrant community in general and the Oyamas in particular, but he also sets in motion the "swap" to save

his mother. The young man in Part III opens by mapping the pyramidal plantation structure where the bosses on top "shit" on everyone else, a built-in socioeconomic injustice at the heart of capitalism and colonialism. Part III elaborates in conclusion when it dawns on the narrator that the camp

> was planned and built around its sewage system. The half dozen rows of underground concrete ditches, two feet wide and three feet deep, ran from the higher slope of the camp into the concrete irrigation ditch on the lower perimeter of camp . . . Mr. Nelson was top shit on the highest slope, then there were the Portuguese, Spanish, and *nisei lunas* [straw bosses] with their indoor toilets which flushed into the same ditches, then Japanese Camp, and Filipino Camp.
>
> (Murayama, 1988, p. 96)

To chart the subterranean sanitation system in such precision of width and depth signifies the capitalist appropriation of labor equally camouflaged by company policies, Japanese traditions, and communal togetherness.

This island paradise's pyramid parallels another island's—Japan's—time-honored patriarchal hierarchy whereby the virtue of filial piety justifies lifelong indebtedness to the elders. Generations of the Oyamas lapse into indentured servitude to pay ever mounting family and plantation debts, a vicious cycle seized only in the wish-fulfilling happy ending. Joining up in the wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Kiyo makes a killing in a crap game among the boot camp recruits, whose ethnicity remains unidentified except Bob Kaita, "a real talkative kid . . . five feet tall and looked fifteen" (Murayama, 1988, p. 103). Given the "all-nisei regiment with volunteers from the mainland and be allowed to fight in Europe," Kiyo's rolls of the dice, apparently, take from fellow nisei of what would have culminated into the storied 442nd Infantry Regiment to fill the hole of $6,000 (Murayama, 1988, p. 97). Whereas the plantation boss Mr. Nelson shits on non-whites, and the Promised Land Boss Roosevelt, with a stroke of his pen on Executive Order 9066,

interns Japanese Americans rather than German and Italian—read: white—Americans along the West Coast, Kiyo leeches his own kind in order to replenish his family with the blood money. Contrary to the white mastery over non-whites, Murayama fictionalizes endocannibalism of minorities feeding on the weak amongst themselves, albeit the eater and the eaten alternate their roles ceaselessly. The life savings of Kiyo's father was taken by his grandfather, only to lose it all in the Japanese Earthquake of 1923. In turn, Kiyo's father expects decades-long sacrifice from his sons to repay the debts the grandfather and he have incurred. In retaliation, Murayama launders dirty family secrets of unseemly immigrants claiming "parental rights" to Kiyo's and Tosh's bodies. In so doing, poetic license, or "immigrant license," to be exact, seems to countenance Murayama's representation of immigrant bodies.

"Eat pies, eat shit" not only captures the cyclical digestive and bowel movement inside each of the Oyama family members, but it also projects out on to the body politic of America and Japan, and to the context of reading Murayama today. The name of the game, "craps," suggests a zero-sum game. If one eats what one kills, the winner craps—defecates—on the losers, who feel like crap, having been devoured, sucked dry, and dumped like body waste of the winner. In visualizing the two nauseous figures of speech, it is impossible to distinguish, affectively, between the losers being pooped on versus being pooped out, or the losers being abused versus being used "internally." In contrast to dreams rose-tinting reality, excrement has a way of despoiling anything it touches. In contrast to work at a boot camp, the crap game is a play that threatens to wipe out all thoughts of the deadly serious mission of acquiring combat skills. Gamers play to kill time, to numb themselves to the work at hand: preparing to kill or to be killed on the European theater of war.

Psychologically, nisei recruits play to put out of their minds their own folks back in internment camps designated for "enemy aliens." Repressed as well is the looming suspicion of the American people over the loyalty of the all-nisei 442nd Infantry Regiment. From the unit's inception, such unwarranted distrust had steered it away from the Pacific

theater where they would have engaged the Imperial Japanese soldiers. America feared that nisei would not have been able to pull the trigger against their "look-alikes," which somehow did not apply to German and Italian Americans sent to fight the Nazis and Mussolini's fascists. The most decorated of any unit of its size, the 442nd's motto, "Go for Broke," bespeaks nisei's gamble of risking their lives to prove patriotism to a nation that had incarcerated Japanese Americans en masse for the crime of skin color. While the majority of the mainstream society believe that Asian faces and names betray un-Americanness, the Americanism of the informal "go for broke" is beyond the command of most foreign speakers suckled on textbook English, if that. Only native speakers like nisei would have come up with the term. True to the motto, Kiyo indeed goes for broke in his last bet: "Here's 200 more. All or nothing" (Murayama, 1988, p. 102). An even number "2" is perverted into a single choice out of either-or, win-lose, me-you. Murayama imagines a triumphant happy ending—Kiyo the winner takes all—to a game rigged against "perennial aliens" from the Chinese Exclusion Act to Trumpian "CHINESE" virus and to anti-Asian hate crimes. The sole exit lies in exploiting one's own—nisei—and excluding one's own kind by taking the liberty of immigrant license. Murayama rigs his narrative endgame to perpetuate an American bildungsroman of liberation from the immigrant family. His psychological emancipation is initiated, for instance, by a series of fiascos in the boxing ring, which displace familial struggles: "I've been fighting myself all along. . . It wasn't only me, I was fighting mother and all her overworry which had rubbed off on me" (Murayama, 1988, p. 72).

The dice of the crap game used to symbolize Japanese immigrant bodies cast out over the Pacific Ocean by themselves and by forces far greater than they could have imagined. The dice is now rolled by Murayama on the authority of immigrant license for Anglophone readers. Per immigrant license, Murayama feels entitled to represent immigrants by not representing them, by speaking for or over them. The tension within his title, *All I Asking for Is My Body*, accrues from the unnamed addressee who controls Tosh's and Kiyo's lives. Such unidentified "body snatchers," inferred from the brothers' unceasing struggle to break free, are

the immigrant parents, not to mention the grandfather whom Tosh calls a "thief" outright (Murayama, 1988, p. 30). Kiyo's immigrant parents lapse from the tyrannical fisherman father and the protective mother to the "blood-sucking" patriarch scared of Tosh and a controlling, nagging mother. This immigrant polarization between Part I and Part III fits the paradigm of Asian America's bespoke immigrants. This paradigm goes back a long way, such as Maxine Hong Kingston's bifurcating of her mother character Brave Orchid into the brazen "barefoot doctor" in China of the opening chapters in *The Woman Warrior* as opposed to the befuddled, farcical laundress in the United States of the concluding chapters. The mother's fall is as predictable as the crossing of the ocean where the younger, braver self has drowned, in a manner of speaking, or in the manner of Asian America speaking.

Accordingly, the stern father of few words gives the command that Kiyo stay away from Makot, whose generosity of treating others to movies and to "corned beef and onions and Campbell soup . . . pie, ice cream, and chow fun" comes from Makot's mother, a Japanese prostitute servicing the Filipino Camp (Murayama, 1988, p. 5). The fear of contamination by a woman of loose morals in their midst duplicates America's paranoia over Americans of Japanese descent, allegedly with divided loyalty post-Pearl Harbor and destined for mass incarceration. An incorrigible Kiyo is threatened with the father's "I'll Crack Your Head *Kotsun*." Aiming to menace, to force compliance, this rare utterance is the tip of the immigrant iceberg of obligation and obedience weighing down on the American-born children. Although the father ages and avoids the explosive Tosh after having been felled by "a left hook" to his "solar plexus," the mother carries on with her tongue-lashing (Murayama, 1988, p. 44).

As the parents rely on the children translating for them, Murayama smuggles in, arguably, a sleight of hand in staging this minimal immigrant voice. The father's threat in Part I's title was undoubtedly issued in the Japanese language, only the last onomatopoeic sound Romanized and preserved in the original. Regrettably without adequate Japanese, I could have imagined a Chinese father swearing in Chinese: *Rangni na-*

odai kaihua, Kaca! (讓你腦袋開花，卡嚓! Make/pop your head bloom/open, *Kaca/Katsa*!). As unwieldly as the three slashes may seem, the dual renditions balance faithfulness to the original and idiomatic expression, including the onomatopoeic sound for breakage in pinyin first and then in the more intuitive "ts." In comparison to pinyin's "c," which would, in all likelihood, come out as another "k," leading to the nonsensical "*kaka*," "ts" is more inferable from apostrophic contractions of "that's" and "it's," or from plurals of "cats" and "shirts." An accomplished stylist, Murayama could have made the immigrant parents into, linguistically, performatively, "somebody, instead of a bum," instead of dummies parroting Standard English or pidgin, to paraphrase another failed boxer played by Marlon Brando in *On the Waterfront* (Elia Kazan, 1954). Murayama may have written from his heart, from his perch as an American-born Japanese, by way of his mother tongue of English without, alas, an in-depth grasp of the mother's and father's tongue of Japanese. The off-kilter, one-sided portrayal of immigrant characters unfolds as a pantomime in a silent movie, to be dubbed, minimally, in English by Murayama for the bemusement of American readers equally indifferent to the mother's tongue or to the mother.

The romanization of "*Kotsun*" signals the narrative alchemizing of a lived experience in Japanese into a reading experience in English, where even the rare sightings of Japanese words, italics notwithstanding, are Anglicized in pronounceable, intelligible alphabet. What would have been Japanese ideograms, equivalent to my parenthetical Chinese scripts earlier, are "substituted," to borrow Murayama's favorite trope in Part II, by English letters. A consummate polyglot, the author could have endowed us with far more Japanese inflections with regard to immigrant voices. Rather, Murayama chooses to write about immigrants in shorthand, as it were. When Kiyo details four languages the Oyama household deploys, "good English in school, pidgin English among ourselves, good or pidgin Japanese to our parents and the other old folks," the latter two are rarely, if ever, transcribed in good faith. Despite the claim of Tosh speaking "in pidgin Japanese," he in fact speaks in pidgin English or slang: "Mama, you better tell Kyo not to go outside the breakers. By-'n'-by he drown. By-'n'-by the shark eat um up" (Muraya-

ma, 1988, p. 5). If Tosh's pidgin Japanese comes dressed in pidgin English, then the Oyamas' "good Japanese" has never quite made it on to the stage. The Japanese language used by the Oyama parents and the immigrant community at large is excluded from Murayama's stylistic heteroglossia, except occasional code-switching from the children's perspective.

One translingual case in point occurs early in Part I when Tosh warns Kiyo against Makot's company: "Go tell that *kodomo taisho* to go play with guys his own age, not small shrimps like you. You know why he doan play with us? Because he scared, thass why. He too *wahine*. We bust um up" (Murayama, 1988, p. 4). Switching among Japanese, idiomatic and dialectal English, and Hawaiian, Murayama feels so at ease, so in his own skin, that he does not bother to gloss the satirical *kodomo taisho* until the next page: "General of the kids" (Murayama, 1988, p. 5). Tosh integrates Americanism of "small shrimps" as well as eye dialect spelling of "doan" for "don't" and "thass" for "that's." Tosh's pidgin routinely skips verbs as in "he scared" and "He too *wahine*," the latter with the local color of the Hawaiian word "*wahine*" for a "sissy" boy. The violent metaphor of "bust um up" not only echoes the title's skull-cracking, but it nativizes the Japanese onomatopoeia "*Kotsun*" into American slang. The masculinist microaggression seems to run in the family, from the father to the number one son.

Another translingual confusion derives from grammatical consistency of the English language vis-à-vis Japanese synthesis of positives and negatives. As the left-leaning, "Communist" teacher Snook disapproves of the generational bondage immanent within filial piety, Murayama succinctly dramatizes the difference in the two languages and ways of thinking (Murayama, 1988, p. 36). Snook inquires of his pupils in class concerning parental and plantation authorities:

> "So you have no beliefs beyond obeying your immediate superiors?"
> "Yes."
> "Yes, you do?"

"Yes, I don't."

(Murayama, 1988, p. 35)

Snook expects an answer in English to be in agreement in and of itself, namely, the interjection of "Yes" to be followed by an explanation in the positive. On the contrary, his young Japanese pupils hold two opposite thoughts together in their sentence and in their minds. Their "Yes" agrees with Snook's rhetorical question, which in English should have been a "No." Barely a few years into their schooling in English and still fettered to the home and community language of Japanese, Snook's pupils are yet to think in the straight line of English, which would happen in years to come, as they shed the winding, circuitous ways of their elders. The Anglophone consistency of either two positives or two negatives in one sentence would one day supplant the Japanophone symmetry of one positive and one negative. The conjoining of positive and negative surfaces again when the mother, in disbelief over the broadcast on the attack on Pearl Harbor, asks: "Are you sure it's not a mistake?" Tosh replies in duality: "Yes, it's not a mistake" (Murayama, 1988, p. 78). Tosh's answer would have confused English speakers, but it is the only way to communicate the fact to the mother.

Before the scene of the bewildered mother, Kiyo is informed of the attack by his five-year-old sister Tsuneko hurrying to him with "flushed" cheeks, who breathlessly blurts out: "Kiyo-chan Wall! Wall!" Caught off-guard, Kiyo "thought somebody in the family had died." Indeed, the large collective family of Japaneseness has been summarily severed by the stealth attack. A brief dialogue follows:

"Wall!"

"*Nani*?" (What?) I said in Japanese.

"*Senso*" (War) she said.

(Murayama, 1988, p. 78)

The proverbial transposition from "r" in "war" to "l" in "wall" is surely something Tsuneko would outgrow once the Great Leveler of English-only schooling works on her a year hence. But Tsuneko's slip of the tongue in fact speaks the truth of "Build the Wall," which but veils

the drive to "Wage the War." The physical wall in which the Oyamas inhabit, be it the plantation, internment, or military boot camp, segregates them as potential or imagined adversaries. The invisible wall of filial piety domesticates the Oyama children, until they Americanize themselves. The linguistic wall of Japanese is scaled and left behind by Murayama in the mainstreaming of language and mindset from Part I to Part III. In closing, the immigrant parents have aged, faded away, the Japaneseness they once embodied retired from the narrative after having served its function in the genre of ethnic bildungsroman.

As brilliant as these translingual moments are, they appear too little too late. Ironically, they are made possible by the ghettoization of Hawaii's Japanese labor camps and the all-nisei 442nd Infantry Regiment. Such linguistic bubbles are popped in the lone immigrant character of Richard E. Kim's memoir fiction keen on demonstrating his mastery of the master tongue and in Amy Tan's Joy Luck Club of Chinese "Mamas" playing mahjong to enlighten not only their American-born daughters but their American readers and moviegoers.

2 Lost Korean Names Found in English by Richard E. Kim

Seldom do readers witness immigrant writers speaking up in English; Richard E. Kim's *Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood* is a rare find. Kim is surprisingly ignored by Elaine H. Kim (1982) in her seminal survey *Asian American Literature*, possibly on account of the fictional universe of Korea rather than America. Sandwiched between the second-generation Milton Murayama and Amy Tan, between wartime paranoia in Hawaii and the late twentieth-century multicultural chic are immigrant voices of Kim and, earlier still, H. T. Tsing in *The Hanging on Union Square* and Younghill Kang in *East Goes West: The Making of an Oriental Yankee*. Beyond these few writers, many a text purportedly on immigrants throughout the twentieth century until this day has been authored by the second generation "licensed" to create and to cremate aging generations and fading memories. That Kang would resort to "Oriental," an archaic term decidedly retired by Edward Said's sem-

inal text of postcolonialism, *Orientalism*, suggests immigrant selfhood severely inflected and compromised by mainstream ideology. To riff on the loaded title, Kang is a self-Orientalizing Yankee wannabe, going West to become the West. Tsing's style of fragmentation, on the other hand, veils the new arrival's linguistic infelicities, an immigrant survival strategy of leveraging liabilities into assets. These stylistic characteristics resemble accents marbling immigrant voices, explored in the genre of films by Hamid Naficy in *An Accented Cinema*. One major difference exists: whereas Naficy's "accent" is principally metaphorical since "postcolonial, Third World filmmakers" would cast actors with no discernible accent in their respective tongues, my exegesis on Murayama, Kim, and Tan deploys "accent" literally, as immigrant characters are wont to do with English, their second language (Naficy, 2001, p. 3). Specifically in the hands of native-born, English-only Amy Tan and the Anglophone Kevin Kwan of *Crazy Rich Asians* fame, the novelists tap into a lost land —China— never countenanced as lived experiences. Only occasionally do they dabble in the lost ancestral tongue in faulty romanization, muddling along in ways that few of their Anglophone readers would detect. Genuinely from elsewhere is Kim, arriving in the United States at the age of twenty-three as an international student first and then as a naturalized American citizen.

To read into Kim's authorial intention of flashback to the sin of and trauma under Japanese colonialism entails reading backwards, starting from "Author's Note" at the end of the autobiographical fiction. In "Author's Note" penned in 1997, Kim raises two issues that evidently so vexed the author for nearly three decades that they require an addendum: the translated titles in Korean and in Japanese; the genre of fiction or memoir. The multilingual author reflects on the translations:

> [T]he title word *lost* was translated in both [Korean and Japanese] as "violently, forcibly taken away." The Korean version implied that "someone took my name away violently," whereas the Japanese one suggested—passively it seemed to me—that "I had my name violently taken way." Neither rendition pleased me. If anything, I had wanted *lost* to mean, simply, *lost*. To be sure,

> an adjective derived from a past tense verb in English is often difficult to translate into Korean and Japanese.
>
> (Kim, 1998, p. 197)

One would assume that the trilingual titles on the book cover of the University of California Press edition published one year after "Author's Note" are the revised titles in translation "without the haunting shadows of victims and victimizers" (Kim, 1998, p. 197). Kim's recollection of boyhood unfolds not only in Wordsworthian tranquility but also in a foreign language, which leads to the natural corollary that English ensures tranquility by way of estrangement. The title's "lost" is found to be most apt, hailing from a foreign language with verb conjugations non-existent in the language either of the colonized or of the colonizer. As few readers are as trilingual as Kim is, one feels obliged to take Kim's word for it, namely, the English language proves to best capture a sentiment and a state of being once experienced in Korean and Japanese. Nonetheless, the colonized condition is one of being victimized; the colonizer condition is one of perpetrating victimization. To pretend writing in English exorcizes the haunting victimhood from either side points to Kim's ambiguous motive of writing in the first place.

The subtitle of *Scenes from a Korean Boyhood* evinces the same kind of distancing as does the titular adjective "lost," oblivious to who lost what to whom. Kim's objective conjures up William Wordsworth's "Spots of Time" and Marcel Proust's madeleine moment, both childhood memories visiting upon the adult artist. Whereas the static scenes from the past decry abominable sins of colonization, they arrive cleaved from historical victimhood, as though they were art for art's sake, sedimented in the image that is the author's personal favorite: "the boy-narrator . . . gazing up at the dark heavens whirling with millions of stars" (Kim, 1998, p. 197). Resonating with Van Gogh's *The Starry Night*, the aspiration projected upward is practically the "last word," cited in "Author's Note" at the end of the novel. Perplexingly, the adult author gazes back at the boy gazing upward, a strategy of deflection of personal longing to be among the stars. The artifice forced upon memories suggests Kim's desire to acquire through words the celestial status of a fiction writer, an

artist alchemizing life's trauma into golden art. The abstracting and distilling stem from an instinctive recoil from the lower rung of chroniclers and memoirists in the hierarchy of literature. This betrays the drive for revenge against the Japanese by means of writing: "Vengeance is Yours [God's]," while "Memories are Mine" (Kim, 1998, p. 135). The parallel structure echoes the deflected gaze, eventually boomeranging back to authorial intentions. As such, Kim appears to buy into not only Christianity but also another Western white privilege of romanticism that valorizes poets as Shelley's (1821, p. 1087) "unacknowledged legislators of the world". Confucius, for example, describes his mission as *shu'er buzuo* (述而不作explicate, not create). Confucius may be an extreme, but so is Western white privilege of dissociating "white" texts from the conditions under which they are produced, the author's non-whiteness looming large in this case.

"Author's Note" proceeds to the second issue of the genre. Kim sees *Lost Names* as a work of fiction proven by "its literary techniques," while "most readers seem to view it as an autobiography, a memoir" (Kim, 1998, p. 197). An extension of the dissatisfaction over translated titles, Kim dismisses the generic dispute through a flourish of one-upmanship: "all the characters and events described in this book are real, but everything else is fiction . . ." (Kim, 1998, p. 198). This marks the second coming of the ellipses in the short "Author's Note," for the dots of omission have occurred soon after the boy looking at "millions of stars." The obfuscation over "everything else" refuses to spell out what exactly the sweeping gesture includes. This sleight of hand merely reprises the romantic effusion of ellipses, signs of the inexpressible beyond the power of speech. Does Kim mean that the bones, the hardware—"characters and events"—are real, while the software, the connecting tissues, or the flesh over the bones are made-up? Cast in cinematographic terms, *Lost Names* dangles between a real boyhood from a documentary as opposed to a boyhood in reels, scene after scene from, say, an art house movie.

Insofar as Kim's "literary techniques" are concerned, they do not so much define his work of fiction as its flaws that lend themselves to an

autobiographical reading. All the main characters come without specific names: the protagonist from one year of age to thirteen; the righteous father unyielding despite Japanese persecution; the loving mother whose bravery and perspicuity do not pale in comparison to her husband; the doting grandparents. Namelessness denotes all or nothing— either universal characteristics or no characteristics. The nameless cast, inevitably, encourages a synchronization of the author's life and the narrator's. Major events of the two do match: the child Richard E. Kim crossed into Manchuria with his parents; the schoolboy returned to Korea under Japanese colonization. Throughout the novel, however, readers have no knowledge of the Korean names of the characters. To say that they have lost their Korean names begs the question of what they are in the first place. Even in the autobiographical scenario whereby the protagonist bears the author's name, which Kim has flippantly disavowed, what precisely is the protagonist's name in Korean, the firstborn that is "bumped off" by the Christian name—pun intended—Richard? Is this a Freudian slip that the original name in Korean, nominally treasured, is categorically substituted by the moniker of Richard? What does the middle initial "E" stand for—the Korean first name under erasure? Subconsciously, the adult artist named Richard looks down at a nameless boy looking up at "millions of stars," each star a hole in the dark sky of Japanese colonization in childhood and of immigrant self-Anglicization in adulthood.

Ironically, the absence of names is violated but once when the father is forced by colonial policy to take on the Japanese surname, Iwamoto. The young protagonist queries the meaning of the new surname. "Foundation of Rock," answers the father. "Shielding my face from the bitter-cold snow with his hand. '. . . on this rock I will build my church. . .'" (Kim, 1998, p. 106). What the father shields from the boy, what the adult novelist blinds the reader to, is not only white snow but self-whitewashing in the crypto-Christian subversion of the Japanese Empire. To usurp one form of political and military imperial subjugation, Kim borrows from another form, namely, the foreign influence of the Bible from missionaries and their soft power—a Christian "placebo" for Japanese ills. To contest one colonizer-patriarch, the colonized gravitates to another

colonizer-patriarch, as the Taiwanese leapfrog over their immediate fathers, the Chinese mainlanders of the Nationalist Party (KMT) since 1945, to their distant fathers, the Japanese colonization of Taiwan, 1895-1945. Flanked by ellipses, the apocalyptic resolve for church-building by splitting rock masks an immigrant's art-making. The ellipses repress the Korean experiences intertwined with the Japanese language and culture as well as the Manchurian or Chinese context, all flipped into English for the sake of church congregants, so to speak, all Anglophone and Christian by default.

This maneuver is readily apparent in code-switching that is in name only, since the novel transpires entirely in English, without even the "usual suspects" of loved ones and beloved things fondly recalled in the heritage language by which they have been known since childhood, such as "mother" rendered as "Mah" in Chinese, "Okasan" in Japanese, or "Omma" in Korean. Despite repeated markers of switches between the Korean language close to the heart of the colonized and the Japanese language symbolizing violence, the novel is monolingual, English-only. Hence, in English, Kim details how the Japanese oppression befalls the family in their haste to cross the Tumen River from Korea to Manchuria, stopped by the Japanese Thought Police, leaving the father's "nostrils . . . stuffed with tissue paper or cotton that is darkened . . . welts on his left cheek" (Kim, 1998, p. 13). The father-son legacy of abuse is compounded by the Japanese tongue when the son, returning to Korea without any knowledge of Japanese, meets his first brutal corporal punishment in school for the transgression of bellowing out the foreign song "Danny Boy." The Japanese teacher slaps and pounces on the boy in part for failing to comply with his commands, because the boy simply has no idea what is asked of him. The disjunction of the two languages continues even among Koreans themselves. Frequenting a bookstore run by his father's confidant, the father and the owner exchange in Korean, joined by the protagonist's teacher. Out of habit from school, the protagonist answers the teacher in Japanese, only to be urged to speak in Korean, seconded by his father (Kim, 1998, p. 76).

Notwithstanding the appearance of multilingualism, Kim is in league

with Anglophone readers, rarely taxing their patience with a foreign word or two, taking care to render a story of brutality in a faraway land in idiomatic English. English serves to abstract, to insulate the boyhood trauma in the same way the titular "lost" is favored due to the detachment, the cover, an adjective in English provides, preferable to the raw affects of victimhood in Korean or of victimizing in Japanese. In the opening chapters, that sense of detachment is further magnified by the protagonist's youth. The author and the reader come to share confidences over the young boy unable to comprehend his surroundings, so much so that the father seems an enigmatic "riddle" to the son (Kim, 1998, p. 114). The boy matures in the book after a long baptism of fire of beating and abuse. Flogged in public, the boy enters a "self-induced, masochistic euphoria" in the voice of Christ on the crucifix: "They know not what they do" (Kim, 1998, p. 134). This hearkens back to the pattern of counterbalancing Japanese atrocities, such as being "rechristened" Iwamoto, with Christian apotheosis.

A class leader owing in part to his elite, land-owning family background, the teenage protagonist takes the initiative of sabotaging the Japanese rule amidst a propaganda school play and the war effort of rubber ball collection. On the advice of his grandmother, the protagonist punctures all the rubber balls before handing them over, symbolically deflating the Empire desperate for rubber, metal, and other matériel. The thirteen-year-old's confidence is reflected in his ease of language when he defies the Japanese teacher in charge of student-laborers toiling over a runway for kamikaze pilots who would never arrive: "I'll just tell him off if he makes a fuss about it" (Kim, 1998, p. 153). Unbeknownst to Kim, the boy's sure-footedness is tripped by his speaking in the master tongue, in the idiomatic English of "tell him off," "make a fuss." Such conversational English falls into the same paradigm of pitting Christianity against Japanese policy of purging Korean names and identities. The protagonist in the concluding chapters grows in stature as he strategizes the takeover of the Japanese police station and infrastructure after the Japanese Emperor's radio broadcast of the unconditional surrender.

As admirable as this non-native speaker's tour de force is, *Lost Names*

suffers from certain flaws from beginning to end. The opening chapter details the parents crossing the Tumen River into Manchuria on a snowy night. The one-year-old baby in the mother's arms, apparently, stands as a witness to the saga. An immigrant's urge to testify to the family travails jars against the incredulous perspective of an infant. This fraught inception is matched by the fraught conclusion. After the peaceful transition of power from Japanese authorities to the Korean townspeople led by the father, on the counsel of the thirteen-year-old, Kim gives vent to traditional Asian mansplaining. The Western "habit" of "literary techniques" that prove the credential of his fiction coexists with the Asian "habit" of patriarchal pontificating on the moral high ground. Lecturing his son on generational responsibility, the father lays the blame squarely on the grandfather's generation for having failed to implement reforms that would have prevented the Japanese onslaught. The father's peers have also become paralyzed in the subsequent shift of power (Kim, 1998, pp. 185-186). Asian sermonizing, along with Western literary craftmanship, materializes in English and in English only. Nevertheless, Kim and other immigrant writers may have secreted Asianness in an invisible ink, as it were. How to "heat" the alphabet on paper and the frames on film stocks to reveal the palimpsest of non-English messages, or the non-Western, non-Orientalist soul? Or does this soul-searching run the risk of burning, disfiguring immigrants, who resemble figures of speech anyway in many Asian American novels, Amy Tan's, for one?

3 Mahjong Mamas Played by Amy Tan

Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* arrived at an opportune time, elevating the novelist as the heir apparent to Maxine Hong Kingston with her classic on ethnic consciousness, *The Woman Warrior*. Better suited for the era of "managed" multiculturalism than Kingston's civil rights contestation, Tan softens the burgeoning genre of Asian American novel with melodrama, ethnic root-searching, and a touch of, pardon the expression, "chick flick." So winsome, which means both crowd-pleasing and tear-jerking, is Tan's vision of mother-daughter relationships that the filmmaker Wayne Wang adapts it into a 1993 feature film with an

almost all-Asian cast, only the second time in Hollywood's history in the wake of *The Flower Drum Song*. The all-Asian cast of actors of Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Vietnamese-French mixed-race origin eerily validates the stereotype of "they [Asians] all look alike." Tan's novel and Wang's film are threaded together herein, as they are closely related, with the latter more widely viewed than the former. While this section focuses mainly on Tan, the half a dozen or so references to Wang's film are explicitly identified throughout. A prolific writer, Tan follows her hors d'oeuvre with *The Kitchen God's Wife*, *The Hundred Secret Senses*, *The Bonesetter's Daughter*, and more equally Orientalist fare specializing in exotic foods and/as bodies, evident from the book titles alone. Across her monolingual corpus, Tan sprinkles touches of exoticism in Romanized words, spelled in an obsolete system of transliteration based on a mix of dialectal or imaginary pronunciations, oftentimes taken out of context, mystifying native speakers of Mandarin.

Tan casts her debut in the trope of a mahjong club from wartime China to *fin de siècle* San Francisco, a trite trope also favored by Jon M. Chu's 2018 rom com adapting Kevin Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians*. The mother character Suyuan Woo first conceived of the club among women enduring hardships in Chungking, China, during the anti-Japanese war, mainly to repress the painful condition. This club is revived by immigrant mothers on the West Coast to alleviate the haunting trauma that is China and the ongoing trial of diaspora, particularly the uneasy ties with their American-born daughters. While Suyuan organized the mahjong club, her daughter Jing-mei "June" Woo initiates the book by substituting her mother who died. While Jing-mei sits, as the voiceover of Wayne Wang's film has it, in the east that heads the game, Amy Tan is the mastermind playing the four mother-daughter pairs and the huge supporting cast to serve the white clientele, otherwise known as "Sugar Sisterhood," in Sau-ling Wong's sarcastic pun of an article title.[3] Intricate tensions exist not only in the mahjong table on the page but, off the page, a triangular love-hate relationship binds together immigrant mothers' alien stories, Asian American daughters symbolized by

3 See Sau-ling Cynthia Wong (1995).

the raconteur, and the American readers.[4] Simply put, an alien, Asian American, and American triangle maps out the Amy Tan fad.

In keeping with the mahjong game of four players, the novel comprises four parts, each part devoted to one single mother or daughter. The mothers occupy the first and fourth part, while the daughters speak in the middle two parts. Spread out quite thin among eight main speakers in sixteen segments, the 4 x 4 form is designed to accommodate the short stories previously published in six journals. Each part opens with a fable-like epigraph, setting the tone of fairy tales, which characterizes the mothers' Chinese stories of a faraway land once upon a time rather than the daughters' American reality through girlhood tribulations, identity crises, career and marital problems. Yawning across generations is the contrast of Chinese mothers' parables and American daughters' realism, a contrast as stark as night and day. Of "chick flick" fame, the novel also straddles the Chinese Other and the American Self, with whom Anglophone mainstream readers identify. That the American daughters are all ethnic whets white consumers' appetite in "Going Chinese" for their choice multicultural escapades. The metaphor of white escapism via roleplaying ethnic applies to both eating Chinese and touring Chinatown. Amy Tan acts as a Chinatown tour guide, casting the white gaze, slumming through Little China.

The first epigraph to Part I, "Feathers from a Thousand *Li* Away," bares Tan's immigrant license unabashedly; the epigraph is the microcosm of the entire story. These epigraphs are italicized to signal the mothers speaking in a foreign tongue, understood to have been translated into English for Anglophone readers:

> *The old woman remembered a swan she had bought many years ago in Shanghai for a foolish sum. This bird, boasted the market vendor, was once a duck that stretched its neck in hopes of becoming a goose, and now look!—it is too beautiful to eat.*
>
> (Tan, 1989, p. 17)

4 See Chapter 1, "Native Informants and Ethnographic Feminism in Asian American Texts," in Ma (1998).

Along with the italics, both the subheading's "thousand *li* away" in place of the idiomatic "miles" and the spatial marker of Shanghai highlight the otherworldliness of the parable, not to mention the notorious "wet market" post-Covid. Narrated in simple sentences of a children's story, the allegory opens with the transformation from the duck to the goose to the swan, embellishing a fantastical register. Yet the three chosen animals debunk any alleged Chineseness, since they are darlings of Western, not Chinese, imaginary. While Peking Duck is a heavenly dish, "Duck, Duck, Goose" is a traditional children's game in American preschool and elementary school, morphing into the internet search engine DuckDuckGo. "Swans," by far, reign in Euro-American rather than Chinese mythology. No equivalent exists in China to Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*, Yeats's "Leda and the Swan," and the genesis of Zeus and Leda in Greek mythology passed down through Homer, Virgil, Ovid, among others. Swans appear to grace Chinese popular culture but once in the proverb "A toad lusting for a piece of a swan's flesh," suggesting an ugly man chasing after a beauty. Nor are swans ever sold as foodstuffs in China or elsewhere. The incredulity elevates the fable into a higher plane of discourse less factual than poetic. Therein lies the poetic or immigrant license to corral Tan fans into a dream called the Orient.

Apotheosized discursively, the swan takes on the role of a magical familiar to the woman emigrating, who

> *cooed to the swan: "In America I will have a daughter just like me. But over there nobody will say her worth is measured by the loudness of her husband's belch. Over there nobody will look down on her, because I will make her speak only perfect American English. And over there she will always be too full to swallow any sorrow!"*
>
> (Tan, 1989, p. 17)

The refrain of the future tense in "*will have*," "*will say*," and the like approximates the future perfect tense, signaling less expectation of what would transpire than prognostication for events destined to transpire "over there." Hence, the signature style of immigrant license manifests

itself: the fusion of simple, even stilted and mangled, English with a prophetic vision so confusing that it evokes "the Uncanny" in Sigmund Freud and "the Fantastic" in Tzvetan Todorov. Immigrant pidgin turns out to telegraph clipped, telepathic acumen; faulty English, by Orientalist default, foreshadows foresight.

Immigrant license, however, unwittingly deconstructs itself. The daughter who speaks "*only perfect American English*" and "*too full to swallow any sorrow*," with the exclusivity implied in "*only*" and "*full*," becomes in part the source of heartache for the mother who speaks imperfect English, which fails to exorcize sorrow. Both of the mother's resolves are in fact self-projections onto her daughter. Subconsciously, the mother's wishes involve major functions of the mouth swallowing and speaking, in and out of the body, absorbing external stimulations and articulating inner thoughts. To speak out means not to have to take in grievances and injustice. By contrast, *chiku*, or "eating bitterness," the Chinese equivalent to Tan's maudlin "swallowing sorrow," presupposes repression, the opposite to expressing oneself. This wishful display of her Chinese clairvoyance belies its own demise since it awaits to be delivered "*year after year . . . in perfect American English*" (Tan, 1989, p. 17). In the same vein as the Western metaphor of swans, or what is practically the future perfect tense in Proto-Indo-European verb conjugations, the epigraph reflects, incontrovertibly, an immersion in the Anglophone tradition, shoved down an immigrant mother's throat. Just as the first epigraph evinces in English the illusion of Chineseness, so too the whole book resorts to the genre of Orientalist romances. Whereas Jing-mei confesses that "I never thought my mother's Kweilin story was anything but a Chinese fairy tale," the reader would have never thought that Tan's Chinese story was anything but an American fairy tale (Tan, 1989, p. 25).

The epigraph proceeds to the formulaic diasporic fall when "*the immigration officials pulled her swan away from her, leaving the old woman fluttering her arms and with only one swan feather for a memory*" (Tan, 1989, p. 17). As though flapping her wings in a desperate attempt to take to the air, the mother is the remains, the vestiges, of her swan dream—a

single feather as an object of beauty and of pity. The image of a swan feather inspires Wayne Wang's opening credits as the voiceover on the swan is visualized by Chinese ink wash painting. A brushstroke diagonally across leaves ink water spreading on the rice paper of a frame to formulate the veins extending from the central shaft of the feather. Jing-mei's voiceover also reprises that the feather "*may look worthless, but it comes from afar and carries with it all my good intentions*" (p. 17). Tan's "feel-good" intentions aim to please mainstream readers anear at the expense of immigrants afar, erstwhile swans now quacking and walking like ducks, except when they revert back to the future perfect tense of a psych(ot)ic.

A case in point, Ying-ying St. Clair's "yin eyes," to borrow Tan's coinage from *The Hundred Secret Senses*, "know a thing before it happens. She [Ying-ying's daughter Lena] will hear the vase and table crashing to the floor. She will come up the stairs and into my room. Her eyes will see nothing in the darkness, where I am waiting between the trees" (Tan, 1989, p. 252). Delivered with the same crescendo of heart-wrenching soundtrack accompanying the swan voiceover, as though chanting in a trance to summon the spirit, Ying-ying well-nigh commands her weakling daughter Lena to ascend to the guest room, away from a house as "lopsided," in the words of Wayne Wang's film, as the table and the marriage the husband handcrafted. Ying-ying casts a spell on Lena, from one broken woman to another, bound by Tan's New Age primitivism of blood and intuition. While the West evolves to be rational, enlightened, and evidence-based, the East devolves back to instinct and affect, replete with irrational and inscrutable urges. Tan recycles Orientalist stereotypes that project the West's longing and loathing onto its doppelganger, the East. Thus, in an archaic tribal kinship, the mother and the daughter click extrasensorily, climaxing in "waiting between the trees," a turn of nonsensical purple prose. Ying-ying the traumatized woman turned token Goddess waiting "in the darkness" evokes medieval alchemy's "black sun," illuminating by way of a conundrum: the shadow of a mother in a room with no trees.[5] The answer to that Zen-alchemical riddle is the fetish of immigrants, who are here and

5 See Chapter 8, "The Black Sun," in Marlan (2021).

not here, who are there and not there, simultaneously all-powerful and powerless, prophetic and pathetic.

All four mothers embody that paradox, the first half of which hails from trauma that is China, the second half turned American triumphalism in liberating their daughters. Pain morphs into the eponymous joy and luck. As *The Joy Luck Club* anchors squarely in the American-born daughters' visceral lives, the first half narrated in the mothers' pidgin English, long gone in China and repressed in America, functions to buoy the second half in the daughters' fluent, colloquial English, ongoing here and now. The mothers' China fables lay the foundation for the rise of the American daughters' bildungsroman, coming of age, and maturing into motherhood themselves. By definition, parables, like children's stories, are universal and symbolic, absent characterization and modern psychology. The four mothers' suffering, so remote and archaic, thus blends into one Chineseness. On the contrary, each of the American daughters undergoes individual experiences totally relatable to non-Asian Americans. Schematically, the mothers suffer China to emancipate America. In terms of reception, readers suffer China to embrace ethnic America.

The far-near, other-self, mother-daughter dynamics play out four times. Suyuan lost her twin babies, who are to be found by Jing-mei the substitute mother in her homecoming. Rubbing her neck scar inflicted the night of her mother's expulsion in the wake of a rape, An-mei emboldens her daughter Rose to reclaim her beloved house in Amy Tan and her entire marriage in Wayne Wang. Having been sold in an arranged marriage, Lindo passes on her aggressiveness to Waverly, the one-time chess child prodigy of San Francisco Chinatown. Conceivably, both Lindo and Waverly stand as role models for Amy Chua's infamous child-rearing "handbook" *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother.* Ying-ying St. Clair was "*Kai gwa*," literally, cut "open the watermelon," or deflowered by an evil Chinese husband (Tan, 1989, p. 244). Ying-ying's shattering of the vase has been shown to release Lena from her dependency on the egotistic, domineering husband Harold Livotny. Wang casts Michael Paul Chan in the role of Livotny, apparently white not only from the surname

but also from the label of "Rice Husband," invoking rice fever or yellow fever for white fetishization of docile, passive, and hyperfeminine Asian women, of which category Lena surely counts as one. Through Chan and through Lena's current Asian boyfriend in the film's closing moments, Wang deliberately reduces the daughters' white partners rife in Tan's fiction, including Ying-ying's Clifford St. Clair, to present an ostensibly all-Asian cast. Marrying out has long been a subconscious calculus in whitewashing the gene pool of "perennial aliens." Preceded by fair-skinned Blacks in Nella Larsen, only mixed-race Asian Americans enjoy the luxury—and perhaps guilt—of passing for white.

Out of the four pairs, Suyuan and Jing-mei are privileged. Not only do they open and end the novel, but Jing-mei is the only character with both Chinese and English names. Named after the month in the middle of a year, "June" balances Chinese mothers and American daughters. Her return to China on behalf of her deceased mother is made possible by the other three survivors of the mahjong club locating and writing to Jing-mei's twin sisters. Auntie Lindo wrote to the sisters in Chinese, of course, since none of the daughters professes a proficiency in the heritage language better than Waverly, who makes light of her own "unintentional mistake" of mixing Lindo's and her own ancestral city "Taiyuan" in China with the country "Taiwan" (Tan, 1989, pp. 182-183). Symbolically, Jing-mei transports all the mothers' well wishes for the daughters' homecoming to the mother/land.

Indeed, Tan's China dream culminates in the melodramatic refrains of, as advertised on the back-cover blurb to the Ivy Book edition of *The Joy Luck Club*, "As soon as my [Amy Tan's] feet touched China, I became Chinese," a hyperbole on Tan's 1987 visit to China. Given Tan's self-awareness in fashioning the Freudian or Waverly-ian slip, one is surprised by the blurb's affectation of affect, a low of bathos to promote sales. Such sentiments, nevertheless, proliferate throughout the Tan oeuvre, evidenced by the bang, not the whimper, intended to conclude her debut: "And now [in China] I also see what part of me is Chinese. It is so obvious. It is my family. It is in our blood. After all these years, it can finally be let go" (Tan, 1989, p. 288). To "be let go" means "it"

resides within all along. Repeating four times the undefined "it"—the said Chinese core of Jing-mei—makes a lie almost credible. The preference for descent or bloodline in abstraction over consent to specific identity politics, for family and race over individual agency, is downright anti-democratic and un-American.[6] If such a denouement born out of repetition borders on willful superstition, at least a suspension of disbelief, Tan has already groomed her readers by cleansing Jing-mei, who "wear[s] no makeup . . . my face is plain" (Tan, 1989, p. 272), a ritual any middle-class female and male, professional office worker or not, would understand. The fallacy of conversion strikes a chord with modern readers also because it dabbles in "scientific" terminology; being among Chinese is said to "activat[e] my genes" (Tan, 1989, p. 278).[7] These genes are as amorphous as "it" for the Chinese interior of Jing-mei, entirely beyond the reach of English and human comprehension. Therein lies the lie of miracle over immigrant license pivoting on "it," the immigrant, at once a mummy and a Mommy, an inanimate object and an animating anima.

This finale circles back to Wayne Wang's opening credits of a brushstroke across the frame. Akin to mahjong players played by Tan, Wang's computer-generated image of Chineseness morphs from a swan feather to the young mother Suyuan's wartime *taonan* (flight from disaster) with her twin daughters amongst refugees through "Kweilin" or southwestern China's landscape of jagged limestone peaks, a favorite in traditional ink painting and modern tourism. The splicing of refugee abjection and chinoiserie aesthetic resonates with the immigrant license that authorizes the ambiguity of René Girard's sacré, denoting both the

6 See Sollors (1986).

7 Such notion of an essentialized ethnic core is so widely shared that the Chinese Canadian writer Paul Yee commits the same fallacy as Amy Tan's in his collection of Chinese North American ghost stories, *Dead Man's Gold and Other Stories*. As Yee's North American-born character Blossom journeys back to China, she is bemused that although she "had never set foot in China before, yet somehow the bend of the river, the leafy spread of the chestnut tree, the curve of the stone bridge all seemed familiar" (Yee, 2002, p. 48), probably on account of internalized sights and sounds from Anglophone films and books. The romantic implication, however, is that the bonding derives from innate kinship, ancestral memory, or, simply, blood. To debunk that fallacy, one only needs to note that Yee's haunting ghost stories of Chinese laborers persecuted by racists and racist laws are entitled with the Americanism of "Dead Man's Gold" from the Gold Rush and the Western genre! Ironically, what seems to be most Chinese is not only "invented," as Yee confesses in "Note to the Reader," but Yee does so in a most idiomatic of American expressions (Yee, 2002, 112).

accursed and the blessed, both the nauseating and the entrancing.[8] An exhausted Suyuan in total despair was forced to abandon the twin babies by the trail across a breath-taking landscape. While brutality marks traces of any refugee memory, beauty is an afterthought, "the spoonful of sugar" to make it "go down" for children of refugees and non-refugees.

The matrilineage of a swan feather plucking at the heartstrings comes bundled with scenes of horror, sins of China, from which modern spectators recoil. A two-in-one package of aesthetics and abomination, the latter buttonholes the reader in the cringe-worthy episode of An-mei Hsu's mother cutting a piece of her flesh to cook in the medicinal brew in hope of resuscitating the bedridden Popo, or the maternal grandmother. This sacrifice in accordance with filial piety is made to restore Popo, who kicked out her raped daughter in the first place. "She put this knife on the softest part of her arm . . . And then my mother cut a piece of meat from her arm." This bizarre self-mutilation is justified by the logic of "This is how a daughter honors her mother. It is *shou* so deep that it is in your bones" (Tan, 1989, p. 48). Once again, note the tripling of the vague "this" or "it." Should this Oriental logic sound illogical, stereotypes of "honors," "*shou,*" and the body memory in Chinese "bones" depict, after all, a parallel universe of primitivism and spiritualism, one so disorienting that even a foreign word "*shou*" is taken at face value—an inexplicable mystery—with no need for gloss. Insofar as the exotic value is concerned, *shou* decidedly shoos away its mundane translation of "codes of conduct." Should generations of females confuse, from Popo to An-mei Hsu's mother to An-mei to Rose, the Chinese mother and grandmother and Popo roll into one collectively for the sole purpose of juxtaposing with the American daughter Rose Hsu Jordan and with, not surprisingly, the American reader. A playground see-saw, if you will, with the total dead weight of Chinese mothers on one end sending American daughters, Tan included, to the sky! It beggars the imagination as to why anyone would be moved by such gratuitous sadomasochism as well as by antiquated, retrograde clichés of Oriental "human sacrifice" in the name of filial piety. In Wang's visualization, the potential

8 See Girard (1977).

transgressiveness is edited not so much as a scene of meat-slicing as one of bloodletting, shot, mercifully, from behind the forearm, with a quick tilt downward to the bowl, from which the bedridden Popo drinks—to no avail. The Chinese Other's trauma and death open up the American Self's tearful Joy Luck Club.

Bespoke immigrants populate Murayama, Kim, and Tan from the 1950s to the 1990s. The psychological need for a genesis of Asian American identity leads writers to reach across time and space. The span over ethnic backgrounds of Japanese, Korean, and Chinese coexists with the span over socioeconomic backgrounds of working- and professional class. Their novels zoom in on the coming of age of ethnic protagonists, maturing, finding their own voices. The relative linguistic and cultural heteroglossia in Murayama flattens into Tan's monolingual Americanization and upward mobility. Ironically, whereas the Oyamas on the bottom of the society retain somewhat the language and culture of Japan, deemed a burden by the young, the ethnic rise to tax attorneys, interior designers, and socialites in Tan entails, to a large extent, shedding Chineseness other than Orientalist stereotypes, including the sleeper cell of ancestral genes triggered by Chinese soil. As Lisa Lowe observes in *Immigrant Acts* (1996), Tan's novel maps the generational "antagonisms" onto the struggle between "nativism and assimilation," ethnic versus white essentialism (Tan, 1989, pp. 79-80). Seemingly an immigrant outlier, Kim's Korean boyhood comes dubbed in impeccable English to demonstrate acculturation. Via immigrant license in representation, Asian America bears fruit once the immigrant other, about to bloom in good time, is tailor-made to wither prematurely. Asian America comes to fruition before the "designated" buds even open, whereby immigrant parent characters are pitched—both discarded and promoted—like discursive stillbirths, buds of aged morbidity infantilized by baby English and childish *shou*, each pregnant with a world of not possibilities, but actualities. Representational justice to redress Asian Americans' immigrant license awaits the chorus of immigrant voices, few and far between so far, in the twenty-first century.

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A Love Letter to Europa: Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer's *Grand Hotel Europa*

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Abstract

In this article I review Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer's 2018 novel Grand Hotel Europa in order to explore the themes of hospitality, tourism, and European cultural identity. I argue that Pfeijffer masterfully intermixes multiple plots to make palpable the current (though pre-COVID) crisis in Europe, that is, the refugee crisis since 2015 and the on-going transformation of (Western) Europe's capitals because of mass tourism. Following Pfeijffer's lead, I review some work on hospitality and the legacy of the European Enlightenment by such writers as Jacques Derrida, Jürgen Habermas, and Aleida Assmann to draw some conclusions about European cultural identity. The tradition of European hospitality links the contemporary migrant and tourist in a general problematic that challengingly tests European identity. While a "thick," positive Judeo-Christian tradition can no longer be assumed as constituting the identity of Europe, the learning processes of the 20th century bring forward the unfinished European project of Modernity and contribute to an identity around which solidarity can be forged today. I argue that Pfeijffer's novel is a valuable contribution to thinking through these issues of pressing contemporary interest, and a successful example of what a new, European artwork can be.

Keywords: hospitality, Europe, tourism

A Love Letter to Europa: Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer's *Grand Hotel Europa*

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"Welkom op Lampedusa, arme vriend,
een vreemd hotel met prikkeldraad om gras,
waar elke gast veel beter had verdiend
en heel veel beter nooit gekommen was.

Nu word je hier als een problem benoemd.
We lieten je creperen als we konden.
Je wordt door uns gelukszoeker genoemd,
maar het geluk heb jij niet gevonden."

Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer, "Lampedusa," (2015, p. 70)

"Welcome to Lampedusa, poor friend,
a strange hotel with barbed wire around grass,
where every guest deserved much better
and would much better had never come.

Now you are listed as a problem here.
We'd let you die if we could.
You are called 'fortune seeker' by us,
but you have not found fortune."[1]

Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer (2015, p. 9) begins his 2015 book *Gelukszoekers* with a "Letter to Europa," reimagining her history from the arrival of the bull on the shores of North Africa to the present day in Brussels and asking her "bent u te oud om uzelf nog te verjongen en om iets anders to doen dan uw herinneringen te exploiteren" ("are you too old to rejuvenate yourself and to do anything but exploit your memories").

1 The translation here, and throughout the article, is by me in the absence of an English-language edition of the cited work.

Reviewing the flood of refugees from Africa and from the Middle East ("Ze zijn op de vlucht voor oorlogen, onderdrukking en armoede die u zelf hebt veroorzaakt." "They are fleeing from wars, oppression and poverty that you yourself have created."), Pfeijffer (2015, p. 17) advises: "U moet niet bang voor hen zijn. U hebt hen nodig. Zij zijn precies wat u nodig hebt. U hebt niets anders méér nodig dan hen. Zet uw ramen open, haal uw deur van het nachtslot en verwelkom hen. Haal hen binnen en omhels hen. Leg bloemenkransen om hun nek. Zij zijn uw toekomst" ("You shouldn't be afraid of them. You need them. They are exactly what you need. You don't need anything else but them. Open your windows, unlock your door and welcome them. Bring them in and hug them. Put garlands of flowers around their necks. They are your future."). Out of a concession to youth and the future, as much as out of a tradition of hospitality, Europa must accept these migrants as her own responsibility and indeed her own chance at regeneration.

This becomes a major theme of Pfeijffer's subsequent novel, the 2018 international bestseller (translated into 20 languages), *Grand Hotel Europa*. The novel seeks to explore the role of Europe in the contemporary phenomena of mass tourism and the global refugee crisis, but does so intertwined with an appealing story of love and loss, an art-historical mystery and detective search, and a sort of re-vising of Thomas Mann's *Der Zauberberg* in a sustained reflection on the meaning of Europe, European cultural history and European identity, all narrated by a certain Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer, successful poet and author of a novel about Genoa, *La Superba*: in short, an auto-fictional exploration of the contemporary state of Europe by the well-known Dutch novelist long resident in Italy.

The celebrated, earlier novel about Genoa was admittedly a novel about "het thema van migratie en de fantasie van een beter leven elders" (Pfeijffer, 2016a, p. 123; "the theme of migration and the fantasy of a better life elsewhere."), and so his trans-European journey (see *De Filosofie van de Heuvel* – "De reis op de fiets naar Rome is achteraf een reis gebleken naar een nieuw leven" [Pfeijffer, 2009, p. 172; "The journey by bicycle to Rome turned out to be a journey to a new life."]) and relocation leads to the larger theme of Europe and migration. *La Superba*

had already established the parallel between his "migration" and that of contemporary refugees in the harrowing story of Djiby from Senegal in the Second Intermezzo, *Fatou Yo* (also collected in Pfeijffer, 2015, pp. 21-68). Pfeijffer, while transitioning from being a tourist himself, after his epic bike ride, to a resident in Genoa, is forced to think more seriously about this issue of migration and the challenges it poses to European identity, and it is to these themes that he devotes the subsequent large novel.

In this essay I want to follow the novel in exploring the main themes of hospitality, migration, tourism, and European identity. As an international bestseller, obviously the book has had considerable success in reaching a wide audience, and it has been widely reviewed in the press,[2] but it seems time to give it a little closer scrutiny, to see what questions it raises and what tentative answers it proposes. At a certain point in the novel, Ilja[3] is trying to coax the migration story out of Abdul, the bellboy and factotum of the hotel who is reluctant to re-live the trauma of his journey in narration. Why must he tell his story, asks Abdul?

> Because stories give meaning to the events and without meaning everything becomes senseless. Because if you don't find your story in the random chaos, you can give up hope of ever understanding anything. Because we're people and that's what people have been doing since the beginning of time: telling each other stories. Culture is mostly the collective memory of all the stories that define who we are and what it means to be human. The day we stop telling each other stories, empathy for our fellow human beings will crumble, the joint venture that we call society will topple, and like characters in a post-apocalyptic dystopia, we will be dependent on each other's survival instinct and on whether the producer nevertheless wants to impose an unbelievable happy ending on things for commercial reasons.
>
> (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 218; 2018, p. 220)

2 Conveniently available at https://iljapfeijffer.com/en/work/prose/grand-hotel-europa/

3 In the discussion I will refer to the novelist as Pfeijffer and the protagonist as Ilja.

How does Pfeijffer's story help us make sense of contemporary Europe? How can the Abdul narrative balance with the Ilja-Clio plot and the story of the Grand Hotel Europa and add up to a coherent contribution to a critical understanding of contemporary European culture? By following the novel closely and exploring its main themes, I seek to assess its significance as a guide for understanding Europe today.

The book starts out with the novelist escaping from Venice and arriving at the hotel in some unspecified Western European country – apparently not Italy, but also not explicitly Switzerland. The hotel itself is clearly meant as a figuration of a glorious and faded European past, embodied in its "sensational chandelier, which hung with breathless antiquity" (2022, p. 7; 2018, p. 15), a painting of Paganini commemorating a famous visit and performance, and other objects and symbols, including statues of a sphinx and a chimaera by the grand marble staircase. All of this is established under the sign of Virgil: "sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt" (the Latin phrase is merely hinted at in the Dutch but provided in the English translation by Michele Hutchison, 2022, p. 7). The tears of the old things in the hotel indeed touch the mind of Ilja and establish a melancholic mood for the hotel episodes in the novel.[4] Ilja is pleased with this nostalgic if somewhat dilapidated furnishing, as consonant with his own retrospective mood as he works through his recent past and the end of a love-affair during his stay at the hotel. "There was no destination without clarity about the origins and no future without a readable version of the past" (2022, p. 11; 2018, p. 19). This will be counter-posed later in the novel, as a particularly *European* idea, against the future-oriented civilizations of America and China, with Ilja and the majordomo, Montebello, as well as the several other permanent guests, on "the losing side of history" (2022, p. 478; 2018, p. 475).

4 While the novel lacks the gravitas of those discussed by Ellison, Pfeijffer still belongs in the movement Ellison (2022, p. 4) seeks to establish in Modiano, Sebald, and Muñoz Molina according to "their backward-facing, tradition-oriented articulations of lateness and their resultant melancholy aesthetics [which] may yet be imagined as a collective expression in European fiction of a more optimistic sense of futurity." Pfeijffer focuses less on the disasters of the 20th century, but still emphasizes lateness and melancholy, and also, as I suggest below with respect to Damien Hirst, an aesthetic exhilaration that looks forward to a more hopeful future.

The opening chapters thus set up the overlapping narratives of the love story and the thematic story: "The love of my life lives in my past…I don't want to come to the conclusion, just as the hotel I am staying in and the continent it is named after, that the best times are behind me and that I have little more to expect of the future than living off my past" (2022, p. 48; 2018, p. 56). We are given the sense that a future for him (and indeed for his relationship with Clio) will also correspond to a sort of future of Europe. And, indeed, in the tradition of Mann's *Magic Mountain*, the retreat to the secluded Grand Hotel Europa is marked by speculation about the current cultural crisis in Europe, primarily through the figure of Patelski, who acts as the novel's Settembrini figure (also including a toned-down Naphta pessimism).

1 Old Europe

> "Wir können es nicht ändern, daß wir als Menschen des beginnenden Winters der vollen Zivilization und nicht auf der Sonnenhöhe einer reifen Kultur zur Zeit des Phidias oder Mozart geboren sind. Es hängt alles davon ab, daß man sich diese Lage, dies *Schicksal* klar macht und begreift, daß man sich darüber belügen, aber nicht hinwegsetzen kann. Wer sich dies nicht eingesteht, zählt unter den Menschen seiner Generation nicht mit."
> ["We cannot change the fact that we were born as people of the beginning winter of full Civilization and not at the height of a mature culture at the time of Phidias or Mozart. It all depends on understanding this situation, this fate, and realizing that you can lie to yourself about it, but you can't ignore it. If you don't admit it, you don't count among the people of your generation."][5]
>
> (Spengler, 2006, p. 62)

Resisting the cultural pessimism of Spengler, philosopher (and former mayor of Venice) Massimo Cacciari (1997, p. 11) in his book on the *Arcipelago* posits a new Europe conceived as a unity in difference, a "nuovo Ordine" according to its *logos*:

> "fatica di raccogliere e custodire i distinti, di intendere come lo

5 At one point, in a conversation with his editor, Ilja himself refers to these famous forebears – Mann's *Magic Mountain* and Spengler's *The Decline of the West* – and moots the idea of a title: "Love in times of mass tourism." Clearly Pfeijffer understands his book as in dialogue with this tradition (2022, p. 302; 2018, p. 300).

> stesso movimento intrinseco di ciascuno possa volere una tale raccolta e una tale comune custodia."
>
> ["a struggle to collect and keep the distinctiveness, to understand how the intrinsic movement of each distinct part can want such a collection and such a common custody."]

Cacciari was writing before the current refugee crisis and concerned rather with shoring up the ruins of Europe in the face of the imminent *naufragio* of the European Union – a *catastrofe* he characterizes according to the

> "universale forma a priori, annullante in sé ogni tópos, dello Spazio uniforme e indifferente, dove il dominio del Mezzo sovrasta ogni 'invenzione' di senso, dove la fedeltà diviene calcolo, la verità correttezza procedurale, la bellezza buon gusto, l'amor intellectualis' dello híst̀or semplice tolleranza;"
>
> ["universal a priori form, nullifying in itself every tópos, of uniform and indifferent Space where the dominion of the Mediocre dominates every 'invention' of meaning, where fidelity becomes calculation, truth procedural correctness, beauty good taste, amor intellectualis of the historian simple tolerance."]
>
> (Cacciari, 1997, p. 11)

This leads him to wonder:

> "È questa l'unica possibile destinazione d'Europa? È questo l'unico senso del suo necessario tramontare: perdere se stessa, fare naufragio senza avere 'ben navigato'?"
>
> ["Is this the only possible destination for Europe? Is this the only meaning of its necessary decline: to lose itself, to be shipwrecked without having 'sailed well'?"]
>
> (Cacciari, 1997, p. 32)

Pfeijffer too wonders whether Europe has any other future than such a uniformization, standardization in Americanization-globalization for the sake of mass tourism. But in the meantime, the refugee crisis and mass tourism are posing a far greater challenge to European identity than Cacciari could imagine in 1997.

In one of the extended discussions between Ilja and the philosophical permanent guest Patelski (Pfeijffer, 2022, pp. 122ff; 2018, pp. 126ff) reference is made to George Steiner and European identity. In an article on "The Idea of Europe" Steiner identifies the key elements of European identity: cafés, or intellectual debate and the exchange of ideas; domesticated nature – navigability; permeation with its own history; the dialectic of Athens and Jerusalem, or reason and revelation; and awareness of its own decay. (Steiner [2016] actually writes: "Five axioms to define Europe: the coffee house; the landscape on a traversable and human scale; these streets and squares named after the statesmen, scientists, artists, writers of the past; our twofold descent from Athens and Jerusalem; and, lastly, that apprehension of a closing chapter, of that famous Hegelian sunset, which shadowed the idea and substance of Europe even in the noon hours.") Rather than pinpointing a specific Christian tradition and history, Steiner focusses on space (the café, domesticated nature, historical memory) and tone (memory as nostalgia) and then, in a general sense, the dialectic between the Enlightenment and the Judeo-Christian religious tradition as essentially characteristic of Europe.

Patelski notes that Europe is not so much losing its global significance today (which is certainly the case) as resorting back to its own provinciality and geopolitical (in)significance with respect to Asia and America that was abnormally exaggerated for several hundred years since the Renaissance ("the world's future won't be devised by Europe" [Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 456; 2018, p. 454]). The current crisis of Europe is thus not to be bemoaned but to be accepted as a reasonable, indeed inevitable, return to a historical norm. But, as Steiner notes, Europe is obsessed with its glorious past. It thrives on memory. As Ilja muses, "Existence in the Occident is an act of memory. Living is reliving. Nothing can

ever be new on an old continent" (2022, p. 149; 2018, p. 153). The aptly named Clio, Ilja's beloved and an Italian art-historian specializing in Caravaggio, embodies this backwards focus, in her aristocratic lineage (as the future marchioness Chiavari Cattaneo) and in her sense of being trapped in the old way of doing things in Italy that prevents innovation and change. This theme comes to a climax in Clio's rant about dead Italy (2022, pp. 35 ff; 2018, pp. 43ff), institutionally and culturally averse to innovation (indeed modernization) and reeking of "rot, decay, stagnation and death" (2022, p. 37; 2018, p. 45). (This is documented comically and exasperatingly in *La Superba* when the Ilja character is trying to deal with apartment acquisition and renovation in Genoa.) Yet even as she laments the inertia and nostalgia of Italy, Clio herself is precisely interested in Renaissance and not Modern or contemporary art, and must be understood as a custodian of tradition rather than an enabler of a living, thriving art. So even for Clio the question is not so much how to be new, as how to keep the old alive in the present. This leads inevitably to issues of decline.

Ilja is quite obsessed with decline. "Europe has become irrelevant on the world stage and has lost its influence on the future…We have nothing left to sell but our own past" (2022, p. 128; 2018, pp. 131-2). This of course raises the theme of tourism and Europe's place in the global tourist industry in the past 25 years. "Europe has become a theme park…an open air museum, a fantastic historical park for tourists…" (2022, p. 129; 2018, p. 133). A glorious history from classical Greece through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment to the global expansion of bourgeois capitalism in the 19th century culminates, after globalist de-industrialization, in the mass tourism phenomenon of the affluent 1990s-2000s (prior to the Covid-19 crisis[6]). Present day Europe can only survive by presenting itself to others –notably Americans and Chinese– as entombed, once-glorious antiquity. The current European crisis –the provincializing of Europe– thus gives a new spin to the question raised by Naphta to Settembrini,

6 Pfeijffer's entertaining and insightful comments on the COVID crisis in Italy can be found in his journal *Quarantaine* (2020).

> "ob die mediterran-klassisch-humanistische Überlieferung eine Menschheitssache und darum menschlich-ewig – oder ob sie allenfalls nur Geistesform und Zubehör einer Epoche, der bürgerlich-liberalen, gewesen sei und mit ihr sterben könne"
>
> (Mann, 1969, p. 713)

> ["whether the Mediterranean, classic, humanistic tradition was bound up with humanity and so coexistent with it, or whether it was but the intellectual garb and appurtenance of a bourgeois liberal age, with which it would perish"]
>
> (Mann, 2020, p. 521)

Pfeijffer grapples with this question and in the end cannot provide anything more satisfying than a very ambiguous answer. To address this we need to assess the twin themes of migration and tourism, both of which fall within the tradition of European hospitality.

2 Hospitality

> "Quelle définition pourrait convenir à l'hospitalité? – demanda, à son maître, le plus jeune de ses disciples. Une définition est, en soi, une restriction et l'hospitalité ne souffre aucune limitation – répondit le maître."
>
> (Edmond Jabès, 1991, p. 57)

> "(Whatever the enigma of this name and the "thing' to which it refers, "Europe" perhaps designates the time and space propitious to this unique event: it was in Europe that the law of universal hospitality received its most radical and probably most formalized definition…in Kant's text Perpetual Peace…)"
>
> (Dufourmantelle and Derrida, 2000, p. 141).

Derrida here claims as central not just to the Enlightenment but to the very identity of Europe this law of universal hospitality: "*hospitality* means the right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility when he arrives on someone else's territory" (Kant, 1991, p. 105: "Hospitalität (Wirtbarkeit) [bedeutet] das Recht eines Fremdlings, seiner Ankunft

auf den Boden eines andern wegen, von diesem nicht feindselig behandelt zu warden" [Kant, 2020, p. 213]), although, as Kant explains, "this natural right of hospitality, i.e. the right of strangers, does not extend beyond those conditions which make it possible for them to *attempt* to enter into relations with the native inhabitants" (1991, p. 106: "…Hospitalitätsrecht aber, d.i. die Befugnis der fremden Ankömmlinge, sich nicht weiter erstreckt, als auf die Bedingungen der Möglichkeit, einen Verkehr mit den alten Einwohnern zu versuchen." [2020, p. 214]) – further rights of treatment depending on specific national laws (and subject to the larger eventual system of cosmopolitanism).

Derrida, via Levinas, seeks to extend this universal right impossibly to an *un*conditional or absolute hospitality. "Absolute hospitality requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner (provided with a family name, with the social status of being a foreigner, etc.), but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I *give place* to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names" (Dufourmantelle and Derrida, 2000, p. 25).[7] Here hospitality is obviously an ethical and not a political matter whose imperative, according to philosopher Peter Venmans (2022, p. 111), is something like: "ontvang de vreemde zoals je zelf ontvangen zou willen worden als je je in de vreemde bevindt"; ("receive the stranger as you would be received were you the stranger"), or simply: "Gij zult gastvrij zijn!" (p. 119; Thou shalt be hospitable!).[8] This "hyperbolische," "roekelozen" (p. 134; hyperbolic, reckless) conception of hospitality can clearly serve at best as an ideal in the practical politics of migrancy management, but by juxtaposing the Abdul narrative with the criticism of the tourist industry, Pfeijffer aims to pose the question of hospitality at the highest level. The question of hospitality, but also that of the good life – and what this can mean in a super-personal sense on a finite globe

7 Even more radically: "Let us say yes to who or what turns up, before any determination, before any anticipation, before any identification, whether or not it has to do with a foreigner, an immigrant, an invited guest, or an unexpected visitor, whether or not the new arrival is the citizen of another country, a human, animal, or divine creature, a living or dead thing, male or female" (Dufourmantelle and Derrida, 2000, p. 77].

8 Indeed, in another essay on Cosmopolitanism, Derrida (2001, p. 17) even writes: "ethics is hospitality."

with limited resources. (Kant [1991, pp. 107-8] could already write in 1795, "The people of the earth have thus entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point where a violation of rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*" ["Da es nun mit der unter den Völkern der Erde einmal durchgängig überhand genommenen (engeren oder weiteren) Gemeinschaft so weit gekommen ist, daß die Rechtsverletzung an einem Platz der Erde an allen gefühlt wird…" (2020, p. 216)], thus leading to "die Idee eines Weltbürgerrechts" – the idea of a cosmopolitan right.)

Derrida goes to some length teasing out the implications of the right of hospitality not just as articulated by Kant but as fundamental to European culture dating back to "Jerusalem and Athens." Again, showing that this is not simply a matter of politics (or economics), Derrida (2021, p.83) states that "la question de l'éthique ne faisait qu'une, dans son extension, avec la question de l'habitat comme hospitalité" ("the question of ethics, in its extension, is the same as that of habitat as hospitality."). This ethical ideal is, as usual with Derrida (2022, p. 152), pushed to an extreme, an openness to the other leads to the sense that "l'hospitalité est le déconstruction du chez-soi" ("hospitality is the deconstruction of home/self").[9] The stranger, the one who arrives, though, again following Levinas, is not a burden but an opportunity, a sort of a blessing:

> "…comme si l'étranger pouvait sauver le maître, libérer le maître, come si le maître était prisonnier de son lieu et de son pouvoir, de son ipséité, de sa subjectivité (sa subjectivité est otage): c'est donc bien le maître, l'invitant, l'hôte invitant, qui est l'otage et l'hôte otage invité qui devient l'invitant de l'invitant et le maître de l'hôte (host)"
>
> ["as if the stranger could save the master, free the master, as if the master were prisoner of his place and his power, of his ipseity, of his subjectivity (his subjectivity is hostage): it is thus the master, the one who invites, the inviting host, who is hostage,

9 As Jabès (1991, p. 35) writes, "Exclure c'est, en quelque sorte, s'exclure soi-même. Le refus de la différence conduit à la negation d'autrui, Oublie-t-on que dire 'Je' c'est, déjà, dire la différence?"

> and the hostage invited guest who becomes the one who invites, the inviter and master of the host."]
>
> (Derrida, 2021, p. 161)

Like Pfeijffer, Venmans (2022, p. 176) links two types of "Gelukszoekers" [fortune seekers]: *hedonist* (tourists) and *vital* (refugees). In both cases it is a matter of hospitality and an essential openness to the other, with – via Derrida – the ideal that

> "vluchtelingen verwelkomd moeten worden op dezelfde hartelijke manier als toeristen, hoe verschillend hun situatie verder ook is. Een gast is een gast, of hij nu geld meebrengt of dat hij moest vluchten uit zijn land: een gast krijgt een goed onthaal, punt uit"
>
> ["refugees should be welcomed in the same warm way as tourists, however different their situation may be. A guest is a guest, whether he brings money or has had to flee his country: a guest receives a good welcome, period."]
>
> (Venmans, 2022, p. 192;)

Pfeijffer entertains the idea of Europe as the origin and center of the law of hospitality in both senses, as the site of migrancy and of tourism. What sort of hosts can (Western) Europe manage to be, in fidelity to its own ideals and traditions? Venmans (2022, p. 179) notes that the West-European is typically the "welkome gasten" (welcomed guests) when they travel the world but "onwillige gastheren" (unwilling hosts) when it comes to refugees – but also, recently, in respect of mass tourism. What hospitality is this?

The refugee plot of *Grand Hotel Europa* centers around Abdul, the bellboy. Over the course of the novel Ilja coaxes the story of his flight from Abdul: escape from unspecified upper (sub-)Saharan African village under violent attack (Sudan?) via Libya and a corrupt network of Mediterranean people smugglers and so forth, the dangerous crossing and through Lampedusa and then by luck arrival at the Grand Hotel Europa. It turns out that when learning the language (Italian?) Abdul is lent a

translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* by Montebello. He then models his epic tale of escape on the illustrious European model, not out of artistry or flattery (or plagiarism) but out of the real resonance of the story and his experience. Pfeijffer, the former classicist, could hardly be more explicit about the epic nature of these refugees and their traumatic experiences of flight and survival. Nor does he mince words about the obligation of Europe to receive these "gelukszoekers" and indeed to let their tales be known. "All Europe's writers should write the stories of all the Abduls so that there are no readers left who don't realize that they have lived in the past up to now" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 72; 2018, p. 78). Narration here is understood as the communication of a harsh reality to awaken consciousness and lead to real social change. A *power* of art –and a contemporary *duty*.

Pfeijffer is quite clear about his stance on the refugee crisis. At one point in *Gelukszoekers*, referring to the apparent hospitality of the Islamic State towards global jihadi, he writes

> "Tegenover die zoegenaamde gastvrijheid van de jihad stellen wij ons waarlijk humane vreemdelingenbeleid, dat aan iedere buitenlander die zich bij ons komt voegen een volwaardig bestaan belooft me dezelfde rechten als alle andere EU-burgers en dezelfde kansen om te delen in onze onmetelijke rijkdommen"
>
> ["We counter the so-called hospitality of jihad with our truly humane immigration policy, which promises me the same rights as all other EU citizens and the same opportunities to share in our immeasurable wealth for every foreigner who comes to join us."]
>
> (Pfeijffer, 2015, p. 92).

These rights, the heritage of European history and political culture, should be shared as our greatest achievement, over and above the economic and technological achievements fostered by that political culture since the Enlightenment. How to conceive the basis of European *solidarity* [Habermas] beyond the Judeo-Christian inheritance of history in order to welcome the stranger? This raises the question of cosmopolitanism.

According to Kwame Anthony Appiah (2006, Kindle loc. 138), there are "two strands that intertwine in the notion of cosmopolitanism[:] one is the idea that we have obligations to others, obligations that stretch beyond those to whom we are related by ties of kith and kind, or even the more formal ties of a shared citizenship[;] the other is that we take seriously the value not just of human life but of particular human lives, which means taking an interest in the practices and beliefs that lend them significance [which means respecting difference]". These "two ideals – universal concern and respect for legitimate difference – clash. There's a sense in which cosmopolitanism is the name not of the solution but of the challenge" (Kindle loc. 143). As such, cosmopolitanism thus remains an ideal, an aim. In the spirit of Kant, Habermas (2012, p. xi.) writes, "the *international* community of states must develop into a *cosmopolitan* community of states and world citizens." Figuring out how it can do so is hardly the task of *Grand Hotel Europa*, but Ilja, that is Pfeijffer, seems committed to the ideal. "All concepts of justice assume the equality of all people. Since ethics are universal and egalitarian, the principle of open borders is actually implied by ethics" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 228; 2018, p. 230). (Derrida: "toute éthique est sans doute éthique de l'hospitalité" [2021, p. 60] or "l'hospitalité [est] l'éthique même" [2022, p. 22].) However "Christian" in origin this ideal is,[10] it must be aimed at in secular practice if Europe is to stay true to its identity. But if that ideal seems clear in the case of refugees (however difficult its practical application!), it is somewhat less clear in the case of mass tourism. As Pfeijffer (2022, p. 110; 2018, p. 115) writes,

> Tourism forms an uneasy contract with other forms of migration which is a consequence of globalization and which we unreservedly consider as problematic. While we open our borders as hospitably as possible to foreigners who have come to spend their money, we want to close them to foreigners who come to earn money. Both forms of migration interfere with each other in an unsavoury manner. Tourists visiting the Mediterranean Sea swim in a mass grave. From a Greek perspective, the main rea-

10 Saint Paul: "there is neither Jew not Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

son the 2015 refugee crisis was so urgent and had to be solved as quickly as possible was because the presence of refugees on the beaches was driving away tourists.

3 The Age of Tourism

> "So globalization is a dilemma as well as an opportunity: and the plague, the pandemic, is also an allegory of expansion - that other triumphantly expansionist and imperialist species—the rat—having now been replaced by the tourist."
>
> Fredric Jameson (2022, p. 564)

A major theme of the novel is tourism. The move from Genoa to Venice allows Ilja (and Clio) to view the Serenissima with critical eyes and they do not like what they see. The city is famously "deluged with 18 million tourists per year" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 78; 2018, p. 84) (in a city with only 53,986 inhabitants), many of them arriving in those massive cruise ships which dock right at Piazza San Marco. Venice, while it still stays above the water, is a city completely transformed by tourism, every corner shop catering to souvenir-minded tourists (carnival masks and Murano glass). The irony, though, as Pfeijffer notes, is that places like Venice can only survive because of the very tourism that seems to be destroying them. In a chapter on urbicide, Marco d'Eramo notes the fatal designation with the UNESCO "World Heritage" label (which has been applied to Venice since 1987). This designation, intended to protect sites of world historical cultural significance, in fact consigns them to entombment, preventing any of the sort of innovation and creation that made them what they were in the first place. D'Eramo (2021, p. 105) writes of the phenomenon in general,

> "The UNESCO label opened the [tourist] industry up to a vast and marvelous new hunting ground: why build a new Disneyland when we have plenty of real, living cities waiting (or indeed begging) to become theme parks through the simple process of mummification, that is, through their emptying out."

Through zoning and restrictions on development, cities are frozen in time, and then businesses naturally cater to the transient tourist populations, so practical shops for residents get replaced by souvenir shops or ice cream parlors. Then of course Airbnb moves in to facilitate the gutting of the most desirable residential neighborhoods again to cater to the transient tourists.[11] The result is that "Tourism destroys the very thing it is attracted to" (Pfeijffer 2022, p. 108; 2018, p. 113). The local shops and citizens that give a place its character become replaced by transients and a "touristic monoculture" (d'Eramo 2021, p. 94) that make one place very much like any other similarly geared to tourists (just as the high streets or the airports all resemble each other in their domination by the same handful of global brands: globalization as uniformity).

Naturally then it is in everyone's economic interest to exploit the only resource they have got: their own past, but in a preservation or mummification that kills that which it seeks to prop up. Venice is also infamous for the bad behavior of its visitors, a fact spoofed late in the novel when a Dutch tourist, trying to get a knock-out selfie, breaks the head off of a 17th century statue which leads Clio to complain: "The capture of Rome by the barbarians did less damage than the hordes in shorts flooding our streets these days. We are witnessing the last, definitive barbarian invasion of Italy. What you see here is Europe's funeral, and all those tourists are standing there, watching and taking pictures without realizing that they've wrung the neck of three thousand years of European culture" (Pfeijffer 2022, p. 437; 2018, p. 437).

An unspoken sort of classism perhaps lurks in the criticism of tourism voiced by Clio as by Ilja. Ilja, with his fancy name-brand suits and courtly behavior, likes to think of himself not at all as a tourist but at worst as a traveler and rather as a resident, and in any case as a gentleman.[12] Late

11 D'Eramo notes that "the company was founded in 2008, and after only 10 years it offered 4 million units to 150 million users in 65,000 cities in 190 countries" (2021, p. 80). In just three years between 2015 and 2017 the number of apartments offered in Venice went from 5.8 to 11.8 percent – with similar numbers in Rome and Florence.

12 Pfeijffer's distance from Ilja within the auto-fictional conceit renders possible an irony that is not always entirely clear; here, where to the reader Ilja seems somewhat vain, we can assume this is an intentional effect by Pfeijffer, but in other episodes, as in the silly sketches of Dutch tourists which Pfeijffer had earlier published on-line in his own name, it is not at all clear that Pfeijffer distances himself from his fictional avatar. In general, the ironic distance allows Pfeijffer to moot important issues without

in the novel he is discussing tourism with Patelski, who pinpoints two big factors in global tourism: "the low-cost airline" – "In 2016, Ryanair alone transported 117 million passengers" (Pfeijffer 2022, p. 449; 2018, p. 447) – and the rise of "a well-off middle class" (2022, p. 450; 2018, p. 448) – first the Americans and Western Europeans in the 70s and 80s, then the Japanese, and now of course the Chinese. Or as d'Eramo (2021, p. 227) puts it more neutrally, "a technological revolution in transport and communications that made travel shorter, safer, more comfortable, and cheaper; and the social revolution that allowed increasing numbers of the world's population to enjoy paid leisure time." The unspoken criticism is that the mass tourism phenomenon is deplorable not only because of the sheer numbers of people flooding small towns and overwhelming ancient infrastructure, but also because the masses of budget tourists are so tacky and uncultured! Pfeijffer is more comfortable aiming this criticism at Americans with their short pants, baseball caps, and sneakers so out of place in old Europe, but the criticism lurks there also about "the Chinese invasion of Europe" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 446; 2018, p. 444). At one point Clio, who has organized a conference on the future of museums in Europe, moots "raising museum prices drastically, since it was both absurd and scandalous … that we were putting up for grabs mankind's greatest art treasures for the price of a Big Mac and a Diet Coke…What about paying 400 euros for a ticket?" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 442; 2018, p. 442). Reading about the destruction of the Vatican Museum or the Uffizi by an incredible number of tourists (Pfeijffer, 2022, pp. 439-41; 2018, pp. 438-440) can make this seem reasonable, but it would in fact be just a turning back against the democratic shift in tourism since the 1980s. Earlier in Malta Clio had suggested exams to test the knowledge of potential museum goers to determine their worthiness for ticket of entry:

> I can't think of a single good reason that we [Europeans] should make our valuable art collections accessible to American and Chinese people wearing shorts. They've got sweaty feet and not even the faintest idea of the meaning or value of the paintings

officially ascribing to Ilja's positions, which can be comically hyperbolic. This is certainly one of the novel's strengths, but it also raises the question of exactly which positions in the fiction the author really endorses, an issue endemic to the form of auto-fiction that I cannot address here.

> they're queuing up to see. Do you think a Chinese person knows who authored the vulgate translation [they are looking at a Caravaggio St Jerome]? With his selfie-stick and his silly hat. And what's an American, whose entire cultural baggage consists of being able to tell two different kinds of cola apart, to make of the existential fears of a complex, ambiguous artist like Caravaggio?... How much do these tickets cost? Four euros. See? That's ridiculous. Much too cheap. They should cost at least a hundred times that. Or you should only be able to view Caravaggio upon appointment, to be made at least a year in advance, with a written motivation, after an entrance exam. But instead we're selling off our past at bargain prices.
>
> (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 156; 2018, p. 159)

Pfeijffer clearly thinks this is unreasonable, but he also suggests that the museums and cities of Old Europe, among other places, simply cannot bear the through-put of masses that it has endured in the last 25 years. This is simply unsustainable. Something has to change: the price of tourism must better reflect its real costs.

Pfeijffer is interested in *Grand Hotel Europa* in this tourism specifically to Europe, and his novel deals with trips to Venice, Porto Venere and le Cinque Stelle, Malta, Amsterdam, Giethoorn, and Skopje. Scholarship on the mass tourism phenomenon however shows an even larger trend. As Elizabeth Becker (2013, p. 17) writes: "the tourism industry contributed $7 trillion to the world economy in 2007 and was the biggest employer, with nearly 250 million associated jobs…" There were by 2012 one billion international trips and "at least one out of every ten people around the world is employed by the industry." This has led Marco d'Eramo (2019, p. 15) to write that tourism is "in realtà l'industria *più pesante*, più importante, più generatrice di *cash flow* del XXI secolo" (the first chapter of the English version of the book, responding to COVID, is modified and not at all the same as the Italian original; so, "tourism is the heaviest and most important industry and the one most generative of cash flow in the 21st century"), leading him to dub ours the "Age of Tourism" (2021, p. 2). It is certainly not a "problem" that can

easily be solved, as Pfeijffer recognizes in his novel, although he highlights the absurdities and calamities of the industry. As d'Eramo (2021, p. 20) notes, "In every normal year [not counting the COVID years], one out of every seven people on the planet takes an international trip" and in 2019 there were "69 million flights (an average of 188,901 flights per day)" (2021, p. 21). This makes it the "single most polluting industry" (d'Eramo, 2021, p. 5), yet another reason why it is unsustainable. Everyone is traveling and seeing the world: flights and budget airlines, cruises, hotels and Airbnb, selfie sticks and Instagram –these are the main culprits in the story of contemporary mass tourism. In his way Pfeijffer tries to answer the question: why? What is everyone looking for?

One answer is that tourism is a search for authenticity ("the desperate search for authenticity" [Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 466; 2018, p. 463]). This is spoofed several times in the novel, in a Dutch couple's visit to Pakistan (in chapter 10, "The Panchayat of Muzaffargarh") and in the existence of the Xtreme Xperience company (Pfeijffer, 2022, pp. 462-65; 2018, pp. 460-63). A minority of Western tourists thus seek out pre-modern, real places and experiences in order to escape from the very affluence and development of their own societies, which can seem alienating and fake. These staged and privileged experiences, like luxury safaris in East Africa, are very far from the authentic (colonial!) experiences they claim to be. But on the flip side is majority tourism where people want to see new and different places, but want those places to have all of the logistical and culinary advances of home (ATM machines, reliable police, healthy and sanitary restaurants and restrooms, and so forth). What results is, again, far from authentic, especially in cases where it presents itself as more real, like Airbnb. As D'Eramo (2021, p. 39) puts it: "the crux of the matter, then, is that escape from an alienated society can only be itself alienated."

We travel for various reasons: authenticity, adventure, and of course cultural tourism – to see things that one's own home lacks. If, unlike the sheikhs in Abu Dhabi, you cannot afford to bring the Louvre to you, then you have to go to Paris to see it. Such tourism is of course often characterized by a superficial knowledge – at best – of what one is at-

tempting to see, and perhaps more important for the subsequent selfies and social media posts than any sort of thoughtful contemplation of artworks and cultural artifacts. But again, the suggestion is classist and elitist that taking a selfie in front of the Venus de Milo is by definition illegitimate and superficial (is it more meaningful if I simply take a picture of Venus without myself in the frame? Or is photography itself the problem, mediated seeing for recollection?) What is inauthentic about taking a selfie in front of the Mona Lisa? The protective glass cover? The 35 tourists in the room elbowing me while taking their own photos? What would it mean these days to have an authentic and even "auratic" interaction with *that* painting?

Many of those 35 tourists in the room at the Louvre would be Chinese (at least before COVID), and the Chinese enter the picture in Pfeijffer's novel since a certain Mr. Wang has taken over the Grand Hotel Europa and is remodeling it to appeal to his compatriots. But before they begin to arrive, the Americans do, in the family of Richard, Jessica, and their adoptive daughter, Memphis, from Crystal, Michigan. Memphis is an updated Lolita: America figured as not-so-innocent (female) youth and immaturity. Her visit to Ilja's hotel room in a miniskirt and "pink pussy fur porn shoes" and armed with a sexual consent affidavit leads to a porn experience that marks the whole episode as fantastical and comic. But Memphis, too, is a writer, committed to honing her skills through horror stories so that eventually she can tell her own traumatic story of parental abuse and rape, abortion, foster homes, and so forth (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 281; 2018, pp. 280-81). The parallel with Ilja (and with Abdul) is clear. For Memphis writing may be thought of as a form of revenge, but in any case, it is a commitment to story-telling as a way of getting a grip on experience and indeed surviving it. In any case, what Memphis' family wants from a trip to Europe – fashion and a bit of culture – is gently mocked by Pfeijffer. When Jessica complains about the confusing change of languages from one country to the next (at least the Euro is uniform!), Ilja explains, "Linguistic diversity is a symptom of cultural diversity, which I and many others like me consider one of Europe's greatest riches, even though that cultural diversity is under pressure from Americanization and tourism" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 280; 2018, pp.

279-80). Europe, caught between the American stage of globalization and the nascent Chinese phase, will find it difficult to retain its own identity, especially as it increasingly has to cater its own image for those specific groups and their interests and tastes.

Today (COVID notwithstanding), the main group in question is the Chinese. In a conversation on tourism late in the novel, Patelski speaks of "the Chinese invasion of Europe" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 446; 2018, p. 444). The prodigious growth of the Chinese economy in the last 20 years has produced a sort of a middle (and elite!) class with resources for travel, and Europe is a key destination. This leads to palpable changes – not just the availability of Chinese translators at the Louvre and Chinese-language menus at tourist restaurants, but a total modification of the self-image presented to an audience presumed not to know too much about the past but to value a clichéd image of tradition. This is reflected in the novel in the changes Mr. Wang makes to the hotel. He has the old "Chinese Room" – very typical of 19th century European Orientalism but not of obvious interest to actual Chinese people – replaced by a "typical" British pub which couldn't be more touristically designed (and has absolutely nothing to do with the vaguely Italian or Swiss location of the hotel). "The antique chandelier has been replaced by a modern monstrosity made of Swarovski crystal [tradition replaced by name brands], and the portrait of Paganini by a photograph of Paris" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 446; 2018, p. 444). In each case, something actually reflecting the real history of the hotel and that specific part of Europe is replaced by something more "typically" European and clichéd – for outsiders who have a very simplified conception of a sort of undifferentiated "Europe." Thus "tourism destroys the things it is drawn to" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 446; 2018, p. 444). This is not the fault of the *Chinese* tourists per se – they are just taken – rightly or wrongly – to know even less about what they are visiting in Europe than the Japanese and the Americans who preceded them. But as Pfeijffer notes, via Patelski, in 2017 there were 145 million visits by Chinese to Europe and "if you bear in mind that only 7 percent of the 1.5 billion Chinese people own a passport, it will become clear to you that there is still potential for considerable growth. Forecasts predict 400 million Chinese tourists by

2030" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 450; 2018, p. 448).

The reason people are visiting Europe in such numbers, besides the chance to have "typical" European gastronomic and other experiences, is of course to see the wonderful art and architecture bequeathed to the present by a definitively *past* glorious history. This is a main theme through the character of Clio and her devotion to Caravaggio. The search for the missing last Caravaggio painting is both a plot device and an emblem of the love between Ilja and Clio,[13] but her profession as an art historian and association with the Italian Renaissance tradition of aristocracy-patronage-artistic flourishing is clearly backwards focused in a way that will seem ironic in the juxtaposition with the new initiative of the Abu Dhabi Louvre. Before this final move of contrast between the old, glorious, Italian/European cultural tradition and the new money and space of Arabia, Pfeijffer sets up a different art-internal contrast as the couple in Venice visit the Biennale (bemoaning the meager present art offerings) and then an exhibition of the *Treasures from the Wreck of the Unbelievable* by Damien Hirst. Fully aware of the radical changes in the notion of art and artist between the time of Caravaggio and that of the notorious YBA Hirst, Ilja (and Pfeijffer?) is nonetheless in awe of the monumental, post-modern show. Looking at the gigantic sculptures, carved in classical marble or cast in bronze in a foundry in Florence just like the great works of the Renaissance, but pseudo-aged and caked with rust and coral accretions, Ilja has a sort of experience through Hirst of a post-modern sublime.

> That's how I must write, I thought, in the spirit of this show of strength, of munificence, this pleasure in the adventure. I shouldn't avoid classical forms and a desire for monumental perfection in fear of not seeming modern, but have the courage to encompass the times I was living in in marble sentences, bronze words and sculpture made of gold, silver and jade, and erect a memorial to the present using the best means and materials from the past…I must have the courage to write about major topics

13 See also Ilja's comment on their narrative – the Caravaggio search as a point around which they can construct a shared story, and thus a relationship (Pfeijffer, 2022, p.370; 2018, p. 370).

> like the world and the passing of centuries, and to be as clear and comprehensible as a classical marble sculpture in the shimmering light of the midday sun. I shouldn't seek the dark, fearing that light might be old-fashioned and outdated…
>
> (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 496; 2018, p. 493)

This poetic credo then reflects Ilja's project of connection back to traditional form and material (like a 500-page well-crafted novel) as a resource for confronting the present in all of its complexity, and – through Hirst – a sense of joy and exhilaration in the very monumentality and tradition-connectedness of the endeavor.[14] This is his way of belonging to the past yet keeping it alive in the present – and thus his sense of how European art can continue to thrive in the present without either being overly caught up in the past or simply ignoring it and foreswearing one's greatest resource.

4 Der europäische Traum

> "War die europäische Idee einer transnationalen Allianz ein neues, geschichtswirksames Modell eines demokratischen Staatenbunds oder war sie nur ein ephemeres historisches Ereignis, das schon bald wieder folgenlos verschwindet?"
>
> ["Was the European idea of a transnational alliance a new, historic model of a democratic federation of states, or was it just an ephemeral historical event that would soon disappear without consequences?"]
>
> (Assmann, 2018, p. 15)

Thanks to Habermas, among others, it has long been clear that the legacy of the Enlightenment in Europe and thence to rest of the world is complex and ambivalent.

14 This is of course not as easy as it sounds. At one point in the book Marco, the director of the "European" film project on tourism that Ilja has been associated with, decides to quit being a filmmaker, not feeling up to the demands of tradition: "I've come to understand just how much naivety is required to believe in the illusion that you could add anything of value to all the artworks already in existence" (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 469; 2018, p. 466). The weight of the European past on present artists is clear. Pfeijffer for one seems to feel capable of contributing. Whether Pfeijffer really thinks Damien Hirst occupies a position similar to Caravaggio in the contemporary art scene is uncertain. However controversial the British artist may be though, one thing is totally uncontested: his success – the mega-millionaire Hirst is one of the wealthiest artists of all time!

> "The project of modernity as it was formulated by the philosophers of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century consists in the relentless development of the objectifying sciences, of the universalistic foundation of morality and of law, and of autonomous art, all in accord with their own immanent logic."
>
> (D'Entrèves and Benhabib, 1996, p.45).

However, "with cultural rationalization, the lifeworld, once its traditional substance has been devalued, threatens to become *impoverished*" (ibid). Indeed, impoverishment and alienation accompany the rationalized life of the subject in capitalist modernity, a process which has only accelerated since Habermas' main contributions to understanding modernity in the 1980s. Thus, the ambivalence of the yet unfinished project of Modernity is clear even at the forefront of modernization in the rationalized Western metropoles, to say nothing of the peripheries linked to them in the combined and uneven development of capitalism in the 19th and 20th centuries (as well as the global ecological consequences of eco-cidal development and consumption). In 1980 Habermas (D'Entrèves and Benhabib, 1996, pp. 52-53) wrote that "a differentiated reconnection of modern culture with an everyday sphere of praxis that is dependent on a living heritage and yet is impoverished by mere traditionalism will admittedly only prove successful if the process of social modernization can *also* be turned to *other* non-capitalist directions, if the lifeworld can develop institutions of its own in a way currently inhibited by the autonomous systemic dynamics of the economic and administrative system." He did not see how this goal could be served by the three forms of conservativism he identified at that point, but a turn away from a utopian modernist attempt at reunification was not the answer. There is no merely cultural solution to deep, structural socio-economic problems, but the utopian ambition of the avant-garde to break down barriers of autonomy and over-rationalization remains an important urge. In this light we may want to be cautious in a wholesale celebration of the Enlightenment project of Modernity. We see the consequences of this revolution in modernization, globalization, alienation, standardization, exploitation, commodification, the famous colonization of the lifeworld by the rationalizing and commodifying values of

the market, and so forth, but also of course in the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen, in liberal democracy, human rights, and the Enlightenment ideals that culminate, after the disasters of the 20th century, in the project of the European Union (and the United Nations).

Aleida Assmann, in *Der europäische Traum*, argues that Europa must be understood not just with respect to the Enlightenment, much less to classical Greece and Rome, but to the 20th century, to coordinates 1945, 1989, and 2015, and the hard-fought result of a continuing learning process.

> "Ohne eine europäische Verständigung über diese Geschichte und ihre bis heute anhaltenden Folgen ist es unmöglich, einen gemeinsamen Richtungssinn…in der aktuellen Krise zu entwickeln und eine gemeinsame Zukunft zu gewinnen"
>
> ["Without a European understanding of this history and its consequences, which continue to this day, it is impossible to develop a common sense of direction...in the current crisis and to win a common future."]
>
> (Assmann, 2018, p. 87).

Assmann (2018, p. 31) identifies four facets of the European ideal: das Friedensprojekt, das Demokratisierungsprojekt, die Erinnerungskultur, and die Menschenrechte (the project of peace, the project of democracy, cultural memory, and human rights) – so this Idea of Europe corresponds largely to the European Union, born out of the postwar desire for peace, for democracy, and for the protection of inalienable human rights, but with a special kind of historical sense characterized by self-critique: "…die Auseinandersetzung mit den negative Episoden der eigenen Geschichte, die nicht einfach gelöscht und vergessen, sondern noch einmal zum Gegenstand der Auseinandersetzung gemacht warden" (Assmann, 2018, p. 51: "the confrontation with the negative episodes of one's own history, which are not simply erased and forgotten, but are once again made the subject of confrontation."). It is not exactly a positive shared history that constitutes Europe, but a collec-

tive willingness to learn from the mistakes and disasters of that history and move forward towards a better future. In contrast to the famous "American Dream," Assmann (2018, p. 83) speaks of "der europäische Traum" as "der Selbsvergewisserung und Selbskritik der EU-Staaten," and the commitment that "Menschen bereit sind, aus der Geschichte zu lernen und diese Lehren al seine Orientierung fär die Zukunft zu verinnerlichen" ("the self-assurance and self-criticism of the EU states," and the commitment that "people are willing to learn from history and to internalize these lessons as their orientation for the future.").

There is currently a crisis of the European public sphere, reflected in divisive nationalist and populist movements that risks undermining the hard-won benefits and promises of this tradition (and it is not obviously to be fixed by the social network and digital technology, as Byung-chul Han argues – *au contraire!*). Habermas (2020, p. 28) himself expresses uncertainty about this:

> "Die klassischen Massenmedien konnten die Aufmerksamkeit eines großen nationalen Publikums bündeln und auf wenige relevante Themen lenken; das digitale Netz fördert die Vielfalt kleiner Nischen für beschleunigte, aber narzisstisch in sich kreisenden Diskurse über verschiedene Themen…Die digitalen Öffentlichkeiten würden sich dann auf Kosten einer gemeinsamen und diskursiv gefliterten politischen Meinungs- und Willensbildung entwickeln"
>
> ["The classic mass media were able to focus the attention of a large national audience and direct it to a few relevant topics; the digital network promotes the variety of small niches for accelerated but narcissistic discourses on various topics… The digital publics would then develop at the expense of a common and discursively filtered political opinion and decision-making process."]

In short, as Han (2022, p. 17) explains, "the public sphere disintegrates into private spaces, and our attention is dispersed rather than directed

towards issues relevant to all of society." The digital media are in fact very far from the original utopian ideal of connectivity that might have revolutionized the public sphere and marked a positive third revolution in communication, after written language and the printed book (Habermas, 2020, pp. 26-7).[15] Ninety-year-old Habermas seems quite confused and pessimistic about this.

Among other things, the development of the idea of communicative reason was a way to imagine the ground for collective deliberation, if not consensus, and a viable political community *not* based in shared linguistic, religious, or cultural traditions. But what happens when this conception of the public sphere is no longer tenable? Not any kind of tribalist appeal to a positive identity. So, what are the possibilities for the collective future of Europe? Elsewhere Habermas celebrates the idea(l) of "solidarity" (Habermas, 2015, pp. 23-4) over and above mere law and technical procedures of isolated individuals. "Whereas 'morality' and 'law' refer to the equal freedoms of autonomous individuals, ethical expectations and appeals to solidarity refer to an interest in the integrity of a shared form of life that includes one's own well-being" (Habermas, 2015, p. 23). Solidarity is formed through face-to-face interaction, "it is the *trust-founding Sittlichkeit* of informal social relations that, subject to the condition of *predictable reciprocity*, requires that one individual 'vouches' for the others" (Habermas, 2015, p. 22). But how can this interactive reciprocity be expanded to a larger community, for example Europe as a whole? Historically this has been a matter of *Öffentlichkeit*, of those famous cafés, newspapers, and so forth so important to Habermas, as well as George Steiner, as the sites of deliberation and consensus-building. As highly individualized and isolated persons connected merely to specific niche-groups and bespoke news-feeds, it is difficult to see how contemporary Europeans can form a "we," and can even want to, except through the private (for-profit) initiative of individuals engaged in the heritage custodian-ship for the tourist industry.

And yet, as Pfeijffer intimates, there is such a rich history and tradi-

15 Pfeijffer has elsewhere spoken critically of the digital media, e.g. "Internet is het paradoxale domein van massa-individualisme en gedeelde intimiteit" (Pfeijffer, 2016, p. 281), etc.

tion that links Europeans in a common story, from Caravaggio through Rousseau to Kafka and beyond. Habermas, like Assmann, stresses the international spread of European ideals, not just the capitalist economy and its gradual encompassment of the whole world to benefit (Western) Europe: "The first human rights declaration set a standard which inspires refugees, people who have been thrust into misery, and those who have been ostracized and insulted, a standard which can give them the assurance that their suffering is not a natural destiny. The translation of the first human right into positive law gave rise to a *legal duty* to realize exacting moral requirements which has become engraved into the collective memory of humanity" (Pfeijffer, 2012, p. 95). The development, through learning processes –that is, through mistakes and failures, absolute disasters, and their historical critique– of a "bestimmten europäischen Form des civilizierten Gesammenlebens" (Habermas, 2020, p. 11: "a particular European form of living together in a civilized manner."). But we should keep in mind the argument of Cacciari's *Geofilosofia dell'Europa*:

> "fin dalle guerre persiana, anzi fin dall' "Asia" ionica, l'Europa è instabile intorno ai suoi confine, inquieta nel suo cuore, incerta sul suo destino. Fin dal suo apparire, nella coscienza ellenica, procede per decisioni – e, dunque, problemi, enigma, bivi si aprono continuamente di fronte al suo sguardo...guerra/pace, mare/terra, Oriente/Occidente, legge/sradicamento…proprio il tentative di ridurre questa tensione di opposti, la volontà di forzarli a un accordo è alll'origine di quella violenza che vediamo sprigionarsi dall'interno dell'Europa."
>
> ["since the Persian wars, indeed since Ionian "Asia", Europe has been unstable around its borders, restless in its heart, uncertain about its destiny. Since its appearance, in the Hellenic conscience, it proceeds by decisions - and, therefore, problems, enigma, crossroads continually open up before its gaze... war/peace, sea/land, East/West, law/eradication... precisely the attempt to reduce this tension of opposites, the will to force them into an accord is at the origin of that violence that we see ema-

nating from within Europe…"].[16]

A unity within plurality and a hard-earned commitment to Assmann's four ideals: peace, democracy, critical memory,[17] and human rights: these are the foundation of European identity and must be re-affirmed in weathering the current crisis.

At one point late in the novel, Ilja criticizes "Classical" music, as it is treated on the concert circuit throughout Europe (and the rest of the world) as precisely the *wrong* relationship to one's past.

> In no other art form is the adoration of the past and the refusal to accept contemporary developments so total. Classical music is not a living culture but a pitiful relic, a mummy hooked up, against better judgment, to a life-support machine because no one dares to say it's been dead for over a century. An ever-ageing audience revels in a subsidy-swallowing nostalgic celebration of a brief but glorious past, when Europe conquered the world and the lacily dressed bourgeoisie with the Sachertortes crawled out from under the shadow of the aristocracy. A better metaphor for the current state of Europe is barely imaginable.
>
> (Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 514; 2018, p. 512)

I am not sure how seriously Pfeijffer intends this remark (here we see his ironic distance from Ilja which allows him to make an audacious critical point and thereby raise a serious issue), but it is clear that Ilja thinks it would be more appropriate to invest resources in contemporary

16 This is actually a useful summary found on the cover inset of Cacciari, 1994.

17 Assmann notes, in respect of critical memory, the development of a new historiography attempting to rethink European identity and cites as a positive example Étienne François and Thomas Serrier, eds. *Europa – notre histoire. L'héritage Européen depuis Homère* (Paris, 2017). So much has been made by historians of the epoch of empire and the combined and uneven development of the world during the period of European global domination, and we must keep in mind how much not only this era transformed Europe, but how much Europe has continued to change in its aftermath. See for example Buettner (2016, p. 9) whose book begins to really promote an "understanding of how Europe was *re-created* once its territorial expanse receded." Re-creation – yet another chapter in the story of a complex and changing region which will survive the current crisis by transformation, mutation, even metamorphosis.

creativity to match that of musicians circa 1790. Europe must invest more in its present than its past to sustain a future. Instead, we have the moribund, artificially-respiring mummified tradition of Bach to Mahler: funeral music!

Towards the end of the novel, we indeed have a funeral where Europa, the former owner of the Grand Hotel *Europa,* is buried and seen off by the last surviving luminaries of a distant and glorious past. The book ends with three main scenes: the Paganini concert in the Grand Hotel Europa given by a twelve-year-old Chinese virtuouso (suggesting a future for the supposedly dead European past in a hybrid mixture); the disastrous trip to Abu Dhabi (amidst "the despair, the vacuity, the emptiness" [Pfeijffer, 2022, p. 533; 2018, p. 531] of that commodity paradise cum cultural wasteland) where Clio accepts a job at the Louvre branch museum and the couple break up; and the final funeral for old Europa which motivates Ilja on the last page to set forth for Abu Dhabi to seek a future with Clio away from Old Europe. This somewhat unbelievable, romantic conclusion does nothing to undermine the affirmation of Ilja: "I want to be a patriot of the European Union [like Habermas!], which struggles day in and day out with outmoded national interests and continues to struggle on bravely" (2022, p. 538; 2018, p. 536). It sounds at the end as if Ilja is leaving Europe to its own demise and escaping to the future in Abu Dhabi, but of course Ilja and Clio will remain Europeans committed in the fight for its continued identity, and they will continue to visit, if not as tourists, then as a kind of migrant making use of the tourism infrastructure. Clio, curating the presentation of the European past to visitors of the Louvre Abu Dhabi, and Ilja, writing grand novels à la Thomas Mann (or Damien Hirsch!) uniting past tradition with present day critical themes, will themselves contribute to a 21st century European cultural identity. With *Grand Hotel Europa*, Pfeijffer – who has certainly *not* moved to Abu Dhabi – gives us a sense of what this on-going European cultural identity could look like. It will be anchored in the past, concerned with the present, and exhilarating in its complex interweaving of the two.

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Panel Paper:

Innovation with and against the Tradition. Examples from Chinese, Japanese and Korean Confucianism

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Abstract

Up until the present day, Confucianism has been a major factor in the normative discourses of East Asia. At first glance, it has sided with the preservation of the old and against innovation, according to Confucius's self-declaration that he "only transmits and creates nothing new." This also describes the historical role that Confucianism in distinction to other philosophies has actually played over long stretches of time. Nevertheless, Confucian ethics contains structural features, figures of thought and ideas which point beyond mere traditionalism. They reflect the deep crisis of tradition against the background of which Confucianism came into existence and which has left its mark on it. They could set free a dynamic that made it possible to distance oneself from the Confucian tradition within this tradition itself and open it up to something new, if not in terms of its creation then at least in terms of its acceptance and support. This potential also intrinsically relates to the possibility of a "modern" Confucianism.

The following three short essays do not claim to give a comprehensive account of the outlined problematique. It is only intended to throw a light upon some of the corresponding thought formations that developed in ancient China and explore by a few examples the extent to which the said potential has actually been realized in later Confucian discourse in Korea and Japan, assuming that border crossing might be among the factors to unleash it.

Keywords: Tradition and Innovation; Confucianism; China; Korea; Japan

Innovation with and against the Tradition. Examples from Chinese, Japanese and Korean Confucianism

1 A Rupture in the Origin that Opens again: A Note on Confucianism and Tradition

Panelist: *Heiner Roetz*

1.1 Confucian China – a stronghold of traditionalism?

When it comes to exploring the relationship between tradition and innovation, China and East Asia, inasmuch as it has been under Chinese influence, seem to be a topic of considerable importance. We have societies that on the one hand have long been considered traditionalist and on the other hand stand out through rapid scientific and technical progress. This has even led to questioning older sociological theories that saw cultural traditions as obstacles to be overcome for modern development.

Modernity, which as we know it today originated in Europe, has organized its self-understanding as a monologue with itself. China has played the role of a silent counter-image, as exemplified already in the early self-reflection of modernity in Hegel's philosophy. Hegel identifies "free subjectivity" as the "principle" of the "modern world" and excludes China from it, and thus from modernity, as the realm of unmoved "substance." Substance stands for the unbrokenness of the given inherited forms of life and for the traditional and anti-innovative as such. This gave rise to the image of a "stataric" (Hegel), stagnant East, into which movement can only be brought from the outside, as by colonialism, if at all. Karl Marx adopted this view, and Max Weber elaborated it in his sociology of religion. In China, Weber says, filial piety obliges as the "final ethical standard" again and again to one and the same social order as the "best of the possible worlds." The result is the "reckless canonization of the traditional" (Weber, 1989, pp. 451, 360).

Weber relates this, as Hegel had already done, to an alleged absence of transcendence in China and the prevalence of a compact world immanence without space for imagination to move.

This conception is still influential, even though it has meanwhile been thoroughly shattered by the economic boom of the East Asian region which is not easily explainable by merely external influences, together with the claim emphatically put forward by China in particular to represent a type of modernity of its own distinct from the "Western" one. This "Chinese" or "Confucian" modernity is supposed to have emerged not from a break with the past, as standard modernization theories in the wake of Weber have assumed, but from the alleged continuity of "5000 years of Chinese history." The theory of "multiple modernities" first brought forward by Shmuel N. Eisenstadt argues in a very similar way. However, this does not do justice to the actual complexity of the historical Confucian attitude to tradition.

In what follows, I will take a look at this attitude in order to highlight its inner tension between keeping faith with the old and recognizing the voice of the present. I will argue that if traditionalism is not an apt term to describe this attitude, this is not only, as Eske Møllgaard has it, because the Confucians are obsessed with "closing the gap between the present and an imagined origin" and in this sense are "militant proponents of radical socio-ethical change" (Møllgard, 2018, pp. 34, 12). It is because there is a "gap" already *in* the imagined origin itself (*ein Sprung im Ursprung*) so that one can stand in the tradition and beyond it at the same time. The departure from tradition is already latent in it.

1.2 The crisis of tradition in Warring States China

One of the earliest debates about the validity of the old and the legitimacy of the new took place amidst a profound upheaval of the existing political, social and mental order in ancient China during the late Chunqiu and the Warring States periods (6th century to 221 BCE), the time that Karl Jaspers called the "axial age," since he regarded it, due to its philo-

sophical breakthroughs, as a possible turning point of world history. Different positions emerged, covering a broad spectrum of conflicting attitudes towards preservation and change. The breakdown of the old order was widely perceived as a crisis of tradition, whose reliability was questioned in a broad spectrum of differentiated arguments (Roetz, 2009). This led to a fundamental reorientation of human existence in an uprooted world that had lost its foundations and become problematic. The attempts to deal with the challenge constitute the diverging main directions of Chinese philosophy which emerges from this background.

With regard to our topic, we have on the one side of the spectrum the so called "Legalists" who combine their call for a radical innovation of the political institutions and the social structures with an uncompromising sharp anti-traditionalism and partisanship for the New—for the Legalists, the outdated knowledge transmitted from the past does not offer any solution to the unprecedented problems of the present time (Roetz 2018, pp. 44-56). On the other side, we have the Confucians with their endeavor to rescue the endangered tradition—"this culture" *si wen* 斯文 (*Analects* 9.5)—from its total loss, combined with the claim attributed to Confucius, "to transmit and not to innovate" (*shu er bu zuo* 述而不作) (*Analects* 7.1), that obviously was soon understood as a conservative maxim and attacked as such by the Mohists (see below). In spite of its traditionalistic appearance, however, Confucianism, like all ancient Chinese philosophies, is deeply marked by the crisis of tradition to which it owes its emergence. This is most evident in two central ideas of its ethics that break the frame of traditionalistic thinking: Mengzi's ethics of compassion and Confucius's Golden Rule.

1.3 Mengzi's moral anthropology: spontaneity vs. historical learning

Mengzi 孟子 (ca. 370-290 BCE), like Confucius, sees himself in the tradition created by the early sages Yao 堯 and Shun 舜 and continued by their successors. Nevertheless, in order to provide an unshakeable foundation for the Confucians ethics, Mengzi claims that its core norms are rooted not just in history and past achievements but in human na-

ture. Every human being, he says, has the innate knowledge of the good (*liang zhi* 良知) in itself prior to any consideration and learning,[1] thus prior to being introduced into a cultural tradition. Humans have moral impulses that *here and now* tell them the right thing to do, and education is only their stabilization and refinement. The good is given in the immediacy of the impulse, not only in what is mediated through tradition—an idea which certainly does not belong into a time-paradigm oriented to the past.[2]

In possessing this moral knowledge, an ordinary human being is no different from the "sages" (*shengren* 聖人), the early cultural heroes. The sages are little more than exemplary personifications of general human abilities who manage to act consistently in accord with them and keep them intact. But doesn't this mean that the tradition started by them tells us something that we already know by ourselves? Mengzi doesn't put it that way, but this is exactly how he is understood by his ancient critics Xunzi 荀子 (ca. 310-230 BCE) and Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179-104 BCE), who conclude from his moral anthropology that political rule, education and the tradition of the sages, and that is, the imparting of truth through the institutions, become superfluous in the face of the moral impulse of nature.[3] Mengzi, with his delight for childlike spontaneity, is suspected of being a Daoist rebel in the Confucian camp.

Nevertheless, the passages from the *Book of Mengzi* became part of the Confucian canon and thus of the Confucian tradition where they have worked as an internal challenge. This enabled e.g. the Confucian philosopher Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472-1529) to replace the authority of Confucius himself by the authority of the voice of the innate "good knowledge" postulated by Mengzi—if his heart tells him that Confucius is wrong, Wang says, then he will follow the heart and not the Master. Similarly, he will follow even the words of an ordinary person, if the heart tells him that they are right (Wang, 1976, I 72, Roetz, 1993, p. 172).

1 Mengzi 7A15: "What humans are capable of without having to learn is their good capacity. What they know without having to deliberate is their good knowledge."人之所不學而能者 其良能也. 所不慮而知者 其良知也.

2 Cf. for this topic Roetz, 2009.

3 Cf. Roetz, 1993, p. 221 f.

1.4 The Golden Rule: moral guidance without historical mediation

While Mengzi's idea of spontaneous moral impulses provides a primarily affective basis for morality, the Golden Rule as formulated in Confucius's *Collected Sayings* (*Analects*) represents a primarily cognitive approach. The Golden Rule (*shu* 恕) is identified with the "one that goes through all" (*Analects* 4.15) and introduced as something that "consisting of one single word can be practiced through all one's life." (*Analects* 15.24) It obviously occupies an important position in Confucius's ethics. "One single word" —namely *shu* 恕—, this is something different than the many words of the Confucian texts and the detailed behavioral prescriptions handed down from the past. And indeed, the Golden Rule contains no more than a thought experiment that can be made again in the here and now—to reflect on one's own likes and dislikes and imagine oneself in the role of the person affected by one's actions or non-actions. It operates in the present moment in principle free from any transmitted knowledge. For likes and dislikes most probably refer to basic human needs beyond cultural specification (like food, clothing, living in peace etc.), as in the plausible interpretation of *Analects* 4.15 in the 2nd century BCE text *Han shi wai zhuan* 韓詩外傳 (3.38, Roetz, 1993, p. 141 f.). The *Han shi wai zhuan,* which illustrates passages from earlier literature, above all the *Book of Songs*, by short narratives, describes the corresponding attitude as that of the idealized early sage kings, the founders of the tradition. Once again, as in the case of Mengzi's ethical nativism, we have the implicit contradiction between the role model function of the sages on the one hand and their redundancy on the other—the simple thought operation can not only be done by everyone, but it also delivers a direct normative guidance prior to all historical mediation.

That the contradiction which is implicit here could evolve into an explicit conflict is demonstrated by a passage of the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋*,* a mid 3rd century BCE text which uses the thought operation of the Golden Rule to unhinge the entire tradition in a categorical shift from a law-maintaining to a law-making perspective. Rather than still following the outdated norms of the early kings, the text says, we should take

into consideration, *how* these norms were made and on this methodical basis create new norms: namely, by "knowing the other (*zhi ren* 知人) through examining oneself (*cha ji* 察己)." Since "me and the other are the same" (*ren yu wo tong* 人與我同) one discovers a shared *humanum* by self-reflection which delivers the orientation mark for creating the new order (*Lüshi chunqiu* 15.8). The *Lüshi chunqiu* is a text of mixed composition that did not belong to the Confucian canon. Still, it shows the again explosive potential of elements of this canon that threaten to dissolve it in favor of something novel, in this case the thought figure of the Golden Rule prominently advocated by Confucius.

1.5 The Mohist paradox: no tradition without innovation

In the described theorems, there is a connection of loneliness and autarky, here in the discovery of the inner moral impulse and there in the reflection on oneself, that is a source of possible deviance. But at the same time, the Confucians, unlike all other famous philosophers of Chinese antiquity, understand themselves as loyal keepers of the cultural tradition. How does that go together? It is hardly conceivable unless the tradition itself already contains its opposite, a moment of innovation. That this is the case is the argument of the Mohists, one of the most influential "schools" of the time. They submit against the aforementioned maxim "to transmit and not to innovate" that what is now old must "once have been new" (*chang xin* 嘗新), and what one follows must have been "invented by someone" (*huo zuo zhi* 或作之) (*Mozi* 39, 181). The sages of antiquity, celebrated for their creative spirit, must necessarily themselves have been innovators rather than traditionalists. From this perspective, tradition would on the one hand represent its origin, the endeavor of the sages, but on the other hand, as a tradition, fall behind and betray it. For the Mohists, in this conflict there is a logical and historical primacy of the non-traditional—innovation—over the traditional, and a normative primacy of the "good" (*shan* 善) over the merely old.[4] Another criterion discussed in this context is "practicabili-

4 *Mozi* 46, 261 f: "One should transmit the good of antiquity and create the good of today, in order to increase the good all the more." 吾以為古之善者則誅(述)之 今之善者則作之 欲善之益多也.

ty" (*ke* 可), brought forward by the Legalists (*Hanfeizi* 18, 87), with the readiness for the total dismissal of the hitherto known, even by means or terror, should the old no longer be appropriate. Inspired by Legalist ideas, at the end of the Warring States period a novel form of a meritocratic centralized state has emerged that puts an end to political feudalism. It punishes "to deny the present in the name of the old" with the death penalty for the entire clan and burns books to erase any memory of the past (*Shiji,* 6, p. 255, Roetz, 2018, pp. 55-56).

The criterion of descent correlated with traditionalism is under attack everywhere in "axial age" China. At closer inspection, this is also true for the Confucians, although they are the most faithful to tradition. One can even speak of a Confucian solidarity with rather than addiction to tradition that is itself part of a non-traditional principled ethics of justice (Roetz, 2023). In any case, the lingering question of tradition has later largely determined the architecture of Confucian intellectual history—just as probably the history of all traditions has sooner or later been touched by the Mohist paradox, in particular if they have operated with narratives of founding figures that serve as models.

1.6 The creators of tradition as innovators and lonesome outsiders – a reflection of the mood of the "axial age" Confucian scholar

This paradox, according to which tradition implicitly contains innovation and thus its opposite, seems indeed to be inherent to the Confucian understanding of tradition as initiated by early creators of civilization. None of them is embedded in a functioning context that could be described as a living tradition itself, and they all stand against their time and their surrounding. Nearly all of the figures that appear in the famous foundation narrative in *Mengzi* 3a4[5] are in one way or the oth-

5 "At the time of Yao, the world was not yet settled. Great floods crisscrossed and inundated the whole world. Grasses and trees grew thickly, and the animals gathered en masse. The grain could not grow, and the animals harassed the people. The paths left by the tracks of the animals crossed [even] on the territory of the [later] central states. Yao alone was worried about this. He raised up Shun and had him establish an [administrative] order. Shun let Yi handle the fire, and Yi burned the forests and swamps so that the animals fled and hid. Yu made the nine rivers flow again, cleared the beds of the Ji and the Ta and led them to the sea. He created a drain also for the waters of the Ru and the Han and opened the Huai and

er outsiders. In Mengzi's narration, Yao 堯 (trad. dated into the 3rd Millennium BCE), the first of the early sages in the Confucian canon, "alone was worried" (*Yao du you zhi* 堯獨憂之) about the chaotic situation on earth, which was under water because of great floods, and started the establishment of the first administrative order in order to make the world habitable. Shun 舜, Yao's helper and successor, was the son of a criminal, and his family tried to murder him. Yu 禹 (trad. dated around 2000 BCE), the founder of the first dynasty Xia, whose father was executed, left his home for rescuing the world from the floods, and though he "three times passed the door he did not enter." Houji 后稷, who tought the people methods of agriculture in the first government, was repeatedly abandoned as a child by his mother who regarded his birth as inauspicious, and he grew up amongst animals (*Shiji* 4, 111).

When we come to later times, we find the rebel Wen Wang 文王 (11th Century BCE), together with his son the founder of the Zhou Dynasty and again one of the main links in the Confucian tradition before Confucius, imprisoned by his overlord (*Shji* 4, 116). His main helper Jiang Ziya 姜子牙 had lived as a hermit by the sea (*Shiji* 32, 1478). And Confucius himself sighs that no one knows him except Heaven (*Analects* 14.37). He leaves his home country Lu for a thirteen-years journey through crises-torn China,[6] several times on the brink of death, his restlessness being a signature of the time. "Homeless dog" (*sang jia zhi gou* 喪家之狗) is shouted after him, which he self-ironically accepts (*Shiji* 47, 1921). He erects a mound over his parents' grave, contrary to the customs of antiquity. His justification is this: "I am a man of the East, the West, the North, and the South. It won't do that I don't find the

the Si and led them into the Jiang. Only then became it possible to live in the central states. At that time, Yu was eight years away from his home. Three times he passed the door of his house, but he did not enter. If he had wished to cultivate his fields, could he have done so? Houji learned the people sow and harvest and plant the five kinds of grain. The grain ripened, and the populace grew. But the way of humans is such that they become almost like animals if they are well fed, warmly clothed and comfortably housed and receive no education (a contradiction to Mengzi 2a6). So the sage (Shun) was worried again, and he let Xie as Minster of Education instruct the people about the human relations. […]" 當堯之時天下猶未平。洪水橫流，氾濫於天下。草木暢茂，禽獸繁殖，五穀不登，禽獸偪人。獸蹄鳥跡之道交於中國。堯獨憂之，舉舜而敷治焉。舜使益掌火，益烈山澤而焚之，禽獸逃匿。禹疏九河，瀹濟漯而注諸海，決汝漢，排淮泗而注之江。然後中國可得而食也。當是時也禹八年於外，三過其門而不入。雖欲耕，得乎? 后稷教民稼穡， 樹藝五穀。五穀熟而民人育。人之有道也，飽食煖衣逸居而無教則近於禽獸。聖人有憂之，使契為司徒教以人倫。

6 Cf. Toynbee 1951, vol. III, pp. 248-263, on the "Withdrawal-and-Return motif."

grave again." (東西南北之人也. 不可以弗識也, *Liji* 4, 65) And sympathizing with two dropouts whom he comes across in the wilderness, he sighs, "I cannot live together with birds and beasts. But if do not become a follower of these people, whose follower, then, shall I be? If the world were in possession of the Dao, I would not have to take part in changing it."[7]

Mengzi, again, who sees himself as the re-founder of the Confucian tradition which, as he deplores, was practically lost in his time, declares to "walk his way alone" (*du xing qi dao* 獨行其道), if necessary (*Mengzi* 3b2), ready to "end in a ditch" and "lose his head" (*Mengzi* 3b1, 5b7). And it comes as no surprise that Mengzi also slips into the role of a "creator" who hands down a work with an uncertain fate (*Mengzi* 2b14). Standing not only at the end of a line of tradition, but at its precarious beginning, the solitude of the zero moment repeats itself. No one else but him, Mengzi is convinced (*Mengzi* 2b13), is able to save the drowning world which, now metaphorically, is under water again—like in the time of the lonesome concerned sage Yao. In the ancient texts, there is a conspicuous emphasis on the *subjectivity* of the Confucian "gentleman" (*junzi* 君子) against the world, as in the his constant, sometimes coquettish reference to his "self" with the expectation and experience to be routinely misjudged and remain unacknowledged by others. He feels like an iris or orchid in the depth of the forest that is fragrant though nobody smells it (*Xunzi* 28, 345). Not to be acknowledged is even seen as a sign of being on the right path.[8] If necessary, the *junzi* will "confront thousands and tens of thousands" (*Mengzi* 2a2). All of these resistive motifs, totally at odds with what one would associate with an "embedded" way of life, become part of the Confucian tradition.

There is an obvious congruence with regard to loneliness, disembeddedness and tension with the world outside, then, between the world-situation in which the Confucians see themselves, that of their early heroes, and central ideas of their ethics, which mirror one another. A readiness for leaving the establish consensus is hidden in a presentation of tra-

7 Analects 18.6 鳥獸不可與同群。吾非斯人之徒與而誰與? 天下有道，丘不與易也。

8 Cf. for this topic Roetz 1993, pp. 162, 166-167 and 170-173.

dition as the result of creative achievements by lonesome heroes who oppose their time. In this solitude in the midst of a hostile, ignorant environment the "axial age" Confucian scholar recognizes himself. And it seems that rather than really walking in the footsteps of Yao and Shun, he is reversely projecting his self-image on them. The personal mood of the scholar is turned into a narrative construction of the tradition of the sages.

1.7 Triggering the dynamics: borderline experiences

This would mean, however, that the disembedded Confucian puts himself above the tradition in which he stands and which he at the same time defends. The latent tension could erupt and lead to a conflict with the Confucian establishment which tried to keep the dialectics of the tradition under control by all means and defend the state of things, as in the case of the free thinker Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602): Influenced by Wang Yangming who is again influenced by Mengzi, he invokes Confucius himself against those who declare him untouchable, arguing that to follow the Master would betray the spirit of the Master himself (Li Zhi, 1965, p. 16f.; de Bary, 1970, p. 199). And like Mengzi, Li Zhi idealizes the infant who does not depend on the words of others but on what comes from its own mind (Li Zhi, 1965, p. 98f.; de Bary, 1970, p. 195).

This is also the point where Confucianism in principle is able to open up from within itself for deviance and, as the case may be, for the New. However, the structural potential of tradition to go beyond itself has still to be released—the elements of a tradition of second order lie behind the surface of the first order tradition into which Confucianism has in the course of time been turned. Typical triggers that create the distance are challenges by crises and external influences and changes of environment, but also the change of generations, in which a tradition must again and again be newly understood and adopted—generally speaking, the crossings of borders, generational, historical as well as geographical ones. It is for this reason that in the following contributions the focus will be on examples from Korea and Japan.

2 Traditional resources for integrating new knowledge in Korean Confucianism. The cases of Yi Ik (1681-1763) and Yi Chinsang (1818-1886)

Panelist: *Marion Eggert*

2.1 The limits of traditionalism among Korean Neo-Confucian literati

Korea used to be known as the country in East Asia which held most steadfastly to the Confucian tradition. This image of Korea has itself a long tradition: since at least Koryŏ times, Korea was both exonymically and endonymically known as the "land of decorum and propriety," which first and foremost referred to its adherence to Confucian ritual and ethical norms; and it has been reinforced by the 500 years long Chosŏn dynasty's adoption of Neo-Confucianism as state ideology. After the Chinese Ming dynasty fell to the Manchu onslaught in 1644, the Chosŏn political and cultural elite regarded itself as the last standard-bearer of Confucian civilization, and although this idea was critically reflected by some literati of the 18th century, it remained a strong ideological current until the mid-19th century, prodding the Korean educated elite to prove their adherence to Confucian doctrine. All this has contributed to the image of Korea as the place with the most conservative Confucian tradition. And yet, Korean Confucianism has never been as uninventively orthodox as this image purports. Rather, the fact that for Koreans this was a consciously and studiously appropriated tradition produced a desire to go to its roots, to understand it thoroughly as worthy successors to the great creators and innovators of this tradition, and thus prompted the unique, sophisticated debates through which Korean scholars from the 16th century onwards unfolded the finer implications of Neo-Confucian ethics and cosmology. In other words, for Korean Neo-Confucians, innovation of tradition was a hallmark of honoring tradition.

That teaching is to be received not blindly but with critical reflection is already taught in the Confucian *Analects*: "Learning without thinking is labor lost." (學而不思則罔, *Analects* 2.15). We find the same thought

expressed in the works of Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn (崔致遠, 857-after 908)—the earliest Korean Confucian scholar whose Collected Works have been transmitted until today –, although voiced in a Buddhist context: "The master's teachings and one's own insights enhance each other." (故師所教, 己所悟, 互有所長, "Muyŏm hwasang pimyŏng," *Kounjip* 孤雲集 kw. 2) Creating new interpretations was not frowned upon, as the cliché would have it, but recognized as achievement. The great 16th century Confucian philosopher and politician Yulgok Yi I (栗谷李珥, 1536-1584) prided himself on having "discovered what the holy men of old had not discovered" 發前聖之未發 and declared that he "knew about the folly of keeping watch of the tree-stump" (知守株之自困). (*Yulgok sŏnsaeng chŏnjip* 栗谷先生全集 1, "Hoek ijŏn yu yŏk pu.") This was not just a phenomenon of the 16th century when T'oegye Yi Hwang (退溪 李滉 1501-1570) and Yi I established themselves as philosophical masters with, arguably, their own respective orthodoxy; nor is it typical only for Yi I who is regarded as the less conservative, less tradition-oriented of the two masters. Two centuries later, to give a rather fortuitous example, Yi Sangjŏng (李象靖 1711-1781) who belonged to Yi Hwang's intellectual lineage, in a letter to Yi Suhang (李守恒, n.d.), praises the latter for his "Illustration of the Great Ultimate" ("T'aegŭksŏl" 太極說) with the following words:

> Your final explanation, it washes away old opinions and makes something new out of the diagram, yet without a self-centered perspective that complicates or simplifies meaning. This is something that the men of old found difficult, but you have achieved it.
>
> 而至其後說，則濯去舊見而新是圖，少無纏繞惹絆之私，此古人之所難者而執事有焉。
> (*Taesanjip* 大山集7, "Tap Yi Chunggu" 答李仲久 [i.e. Yi Suhang])

The phrase "keeping watch of the tree-stump" (*suju* 守株) which appeared in the quote from Yi I above is telling in this context. It derives from the famous story by Han Fei 韓非 (ca. 280-233 BCE), a sharp critic of Confucianism, about a farmer who witnesses a hare bumping himself to death on the stump of a tree and, overjoyed about the easy

meal, discards farming and instead spends his time observing the tree (*Hanfeizi* 49, 339). In the original text, this story is tied to the question of tradition and innovation to such a degree that the phrase *suju* could be translated as "stupidly observing tradition," i.e. without reflecting the special conditions of the past that prompted the creation of that tradition. *Suju* became a word used for self-deprecation in the sense of "stupid," but it never lost the original implication of "being too stupid to change one's mind and adapt to new circumstances." The intimate connection of *suju* to a lack of readiness for innovation is easily proven by a text from the mid-19th century, an encyclopedia entry which is concerned not so much with *tradition* but with economic and political *custom*; it discusses the advantages of gold and silver mining. Given, however, that reform of custom and innovation of tradition can hardly be clearly demarcated, the text may still illustrate how *suju* is part of the vocabulary of innovation versus conservatism:

> To shy away from "changing and overcoming the dead end" just because of concerns about (people) giving up farming or causing troubles would be equivalent to "observing the tree-stump as if paralyzed." To "restring the bow/ make reforms and start over again" as the times demand […] will sufficiently enrich households and country.
>
> 但以廢農召亂爲慮。不爲變通。則是亦守株坐困。有時更張。[…] 則寶藏興焉。家國富足矣。
>
> (Yi Kyugyŏng 李圭景 (1788-?), *Oju yŏnmun changjŏn sango* 五洲衍文長箋散稿 152, "Kŭm ŭn tong kwang pyŏnjŭngsŏl" 金銀銅鑛辨證說)

The term *suju* thus bears witness to the existence of a mind-set among Neo-Confucian literati that prized flexibility of thought and clearly recognized innovation not as enemy of tradition but as means for its renewal and enrichment. The fact that literati freely quoted from a text known for its decided anti-traditionalism[9] reinforces this point.

9 For a concise account of anti-traditionalism in the *Hanfeizi* see Schleichert & Roetz (2021, pp. 222-225).

How did this play out, however, in the context of contact with an alien tradition, given that an emphatic concept of tradition is the result of *challenges* to tradition, be they endogenous or exogenous? For Korean Neo-Confucianism, the first decisive exogenous challenge was the advent of Western Learning—the cover term for both Christianity and Western knowledge transmitted by Jesuit missionaries to Beijing and then further transmitted by members of Korean China embassies from the turn of the 17th century onwards. (Prior to that, dealing with the Buddhist alternative had been part of the process of *appropriating* Neo-Confucianism as new guiding worldview, not a challenge to the latter as *tradition*). In 17th century Korea, news about another sophisticated civilization beyond India had the potential to de-center Chinese civilization, an intellectual situation not well compatible with Confucian convictions. This was acerbated by the Manchu victory over China. At the same time, Christianity as religion began to enter Korea, most likely as a bottom-up movement, reaching the literati class by the end of the 18th century. Although routinely persecuted, the religion slowly continued to spread throughout the 19th century; that it was perceived as a threat to Confucian predominance can be seen by the rising number of anti-Christian pamphlets authored during the first half of the 19th century.

It would be an exaggeration to say that Korean scholars *had* to react to this challenge; ignoring it was an option for many. However, all intellectually leading literati of 18th-19th ct. Chosŏn felt compelled to integrate this challenge into their vision of the Confucian tradition. In this brief paper, I will juxtapose two figures who represent the near-ends of the spectrum of possible reactions, Yi Ik (李瀷 1681-1763) who embraced parts of the new Western knowledge, and Yi Chinsang (李震相1818-1886) who is known as a staunch defender of tradition. And yet, I will argue, it is not so easy to mark them as "innovator" and "traditionalist" respectively.

2.2 The case of Yi Ik

Yi Ik is a very well-known figure in Korean intellectual history; he counts among the handful of persons who would be named first when talking about the so-called "empiricists" of the Late Chosŏn era—an epithet given to those whose horizon of learning went beyond Neo-Confucian moral philosophy, especially to those who openly engaged with Western Learning. Yi Ik was indeed instrumental in making Western knowledge better known to his contemporaries; his father had brought immense numbers of books from his multiple journeys as an envoy to Beijing, among them the important anthology of Jesuit works, *Tianxue chuhan* 天學初函. Yi Ik had read it with great interest, and since due to the breadth of his learning (and probably his charisma) he had a large number of students, he helped to propel the content of these writings into the scholarly discourse of the times. From his school emanated a generation later the first self-professed Korean Christians. Some of Jesuit natural history knowledge was incorporated into the large encyclopedic work Yi Ik authored, and his miscellaneous writings contain numerous essays on political and social reform.

Yet, Yi Ik was by no way an anti-traditionalist. Part of his rich written output were collections of the sayings of Zhu Xi and Yi Hwang to whose intellectual lineage he belonged; his disciple Chŏng Yagyong 丁若鏞 (1762-1836) spoke of him as a firm believer in Zhu Xi.[10] The topic he dealt with most frequently was Confucian ritual, usually regarded as the playground of the orthodox. He expressed much pride in Korea as the place where the ways of the ancient Chinese Zhou dynasty had been preserved, and he had the habit of calling fellow literati *samun* (chin. *siwen* 斯文), an appellation for scholars without official rank[11] which can also be used for "Confucian tradition" ("This Culture of Ours" in the phrasing of Peter Bol). After his death, he was praised and lamented by his disciples as the keeper of the Way:

10 Chŏng Yagyong, Letter to Yi Mundal, *Yŏyudang chŏnjip* 與猶堂全集 *munjip* kw. 19, 281_408d.

11 The term (in the meaning of "our culture") is derived from *Analects* 9.5. In the present function, the word may best be understood as meaning "cultivated person." Of course, Yi Ik was not alone in using *samun* in this sense, but it seems to appear more frequently in his *Collected Works* than in any other such collection contained in the fully searchable *Han'guk munjip ch'onggan* database (itkc.or.kr).

> While the worldly situation has deteriorated, the Way been concealed, and fake virtues create all kinds of disorder,[12] thanks to the Master the true lineage of Our Culture has not been broken. That heaven has brought the disaster of death upon him means great trouble for Our Way.
>
> 雖世衰道微。紫莠交亂。而斯文正脈。賴先生而不墜。則先生之有功於世教。亦甚大矣。上天降禍。吾道不幸
>
> (Yi Pyŏnghyu, "Chemun 祭文", *Sŏngho chŏnjip,* purok kw. 2)

My argument is that these two sides of Yi Ik are not at all contradictory; rather, they belong together because of the way he conceived of his, the Confucian, tradition. As evidence, I provide here the preface to a collection of critical notes on Zhu Xi's commentary on the *Analects*, a work he produced probably in the 1720s. The beginning of the preface provides a narrative of the core of Confucian tradition:

> Humans are the most ingenious among all beings; the greatest among human beings are the sages; sagehood was most developed in Our Master (Confucius); and his teaching is best provided in the Analects. Ah! How could the world do without this book? The people of Zhou discarded it, yet it was transmitted by Confucius' disciples; the people of Qin burnt it, but it reappeared from its place of concealment in a wall. It was overgrown by widely diverging interpretations, but Zhu Xi has found their middle ground, fixed our tradition, and gone forward against all opposition with his commentary. Ah! How could the world do without this interpretation? It is most fortunate to have it. Whoever wants to read the Analects should first read this commentary; whoever wants to read the commentary should first grasp Zhu Xi's mind. From Zhu Xi's mind one can more or less infer the mind of Confucius. What do I mean by "mind" [or: "core"]? When Zhu Xi made this commentary, he chose among the earlier interpretations whatever was plausible; he did not needlessly

12 Literally, "the darnel and the bluish red create confusion [with corn, and with vermilion]." Allusion to *Mengzi* 7b37. The preceding 世衰道微 alludes to *Mengzi* 3b9.

innovate. When anything was contradictory, he changed it; he did not needlessly preserve. Even his disciples, however young, could point out any difficulties they saw. Whatever little thing of value they had to say, he would take it up and not needlessly discard anything. From this we can see the heart of Zhu Xi, who […] followed only what was right [and not any social considerations]. […] His followers enjoyed his openness and voiced all their doubts, not restricting themselves out of embarrassment. This is how a gentleman should teach. Yet today, people venerate his book but do not grasp his heart, recite his text but neglect its meaning.

物莫靈於人。人莫大於聖。聖莫盛於吾夫子。而教莫備於論語。噫。天地間何可以無此書。周人擯之。而諸子傳之。秦人火之。而壁簡復出。異說紛糾。而折衷於朱子。斯文定于一而集註於是乎孤行。噫。世教何可以無此解。此幸之幸也。欲看此書。須先究此註。欲究此註。須先得其心。得朱子之心。夫子之心。又庶幾可推也。何謂心。朱子之爲此註。其於舊說。苟可以因則因之。不苟新也。或前後異見則易之。不苟留也。雖門人小子。隨意發難。一曲之長。咸在採收。不苟棄也。用此知朱子之心。與天地同恢。與古今同公。無一毫繫吝。而惟義之從也。然則當時取舍氣像可見。雖愚下之言。必將導以諦聽。祈或有中。使有乖妄。亦且詔而不怒。所以集長就中而爲朱子也集註也。其門人小子又樂其開納。盡情質疑。不以淺劣而自沮。是則大君子門法有然者也。其在于今。尊其書而失其心。誦其文而後其義。

(“Nonŏ chilsŏ sŏ,” *Sŏngho chŏnjip* kw. 49)

This account both fixes Confucian tradition and lets it loose. Tradition as narrated here is not arbitrary, it has a core of value which has been transmitted against all odds, obliterated and rediscovered. This tradition is not convention but the teaching of a truth that has to be defended against convention; and at its core, at the heart of this truthful teaching is the striving for truth in a joint endeavor. In Yi Ik’s eyes, the Confucian tradition so worthy of veneration but all too often forgotten is the weighing of arguments and critical thought itself.

This very attitude informed the way in which Yi Ik related to Western Learning. The religious part of it did not interest him much, since it asked for belief without evidence. However, he was deeply impressed by some of the more scientific ideas and arguments he found in Jesuit books. His take on Western Learning is best illustrated through a narration by one who was not at all satisfied with it, his disciple Sin Hudam 愼後聃 (1702-1761). Sin Hudam visited Yi Ik four times in the years 1724 and 1725 to discuss Western Learning with him and recorded it in a kind of diary which he titled *Kimun p'yŏn* 記問編, "Compilation of records of what I heard." According to this record, this is how the extended conversation between the two scholars began:

> Master Yi was just discussing with others the matter of Li Xitai 李西泰[13] I asked: "What kind of man is Li Xitai?" He answered: "The learning of this man should not be disregarded. Seeing from his writings like The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven (*Tianzhu shiyi* 天主實義), the correct doctrine of the Heavenly Lord (*tianxue zhengzong* 天學正宗), even if his way does not necessarily fall in line with our Confucianism—when you look at where his way leads him, he can also be called a holy man." I asked what the main doctrine of his learning was. Master Yi answered: "He says that the head is the root of receiving life, that the brain in the head is the master of the contents of memory. He also says that plants have nutritive souls (*saenghon* 生魂), animals have perceptive souls (*kakhon* 覺魂) and humans have intelligent souls (*yŏnghon* 靈魂).[14] These are the essential points of his learning. Although this is not identical with our Confucian teachings about the mind and human nature, how do we know he is not right?"
>
> 李丈方與人論李西太事。余問曰西太果何如人。星湖曰此人之

13 This is, of course, the Chinese name of Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), author of the *Tianzhu shiyi*. Note that Xitai seems to be used generically for the authors of Jesuit writings—Jesuit texts like *Zhifang waiji* 職方外紀, a collaborative work, and *Tianwenlüe* 天問略, authored by Manuel Dias Jr. (1574-1659), are also subsumed under "Xitai's" works.

14 For translation of the terms for the soul, which are Aristotelian in origin, I have used the terms generally in use in English for Aristotle's psychology. It should be noted that *yŏnghon* has quite different connotations from "rational soul" and would be far better translated as "spiritual soul."

> 學不可歇者。今以其所著文字如天主實義天學正宗等諸書觀之。雖未知其道之必合於吾儒。而就其道而論其所至則亦可謂聖人矣。余問曰其學以何爲宗。李丈曰其言云頭者受生之本也。頭有腦囊爲記含之主。又云草木有生魂禽獸有覺魂人有靈魂。此其論學之大要也。此雖與吾儒心性之說不同而亦安知其必不然也
>
> ("Kimun p'yŏn," first entry. In: Sin Hudam 2006, vol. 7)

To the great dismay of Sin Hudam who had only recently abjured his previous fascination with heterodox readings and wished to be guided on the Confucian Way, Yi Ik showed himself ready to discard tradition as truth criterion. Although this attitude paved the way for some of his disciples to reject all claims of the tradition to their allegiance, for Yi Ik himself, this openness stood in no opposition to the Confucian Way but carried on the best part of it.

2.3 The case of Yi Chinsang

Just like Yi Ik, Yi Chinsang was hailed as a guardian for the Confucian Way in lifetime and after his death; different from Yi Ik, this is the way he is remembered until today (and the reason why he is far less remembered in spite of his intellectual stature as one of the leading scholars of the mid-nineteenth century).[15] An obituary poem by (today forgotten) Ch'oe Kyŏngmok 崔慶穆 (n.d.) puts the general image his contemporaries held of Yi Chinsang in a nutshell:

> He shouldered the burden of safeguarding our tradition (*samun*) and devoted all his energies to upholding the general good and overcoming himself. Now that his star has sunk behind the horizon, our Way will be in obliteration. 擔護斯文責。惟公克有功。

15 In Western language studies of Korean intellectual history, Yi Chinsang is mostly just mentioned in passing (e.g. Noh 2016, p. 183), In both English language works treating him more extensively which I could discover, his innovations in some finer points of Neo-Confucian argumentation have been pointed out (Seoh 1977, p. 55; Shababo 2011, pp. 47f.), even while claiming that he "was not an innovator" (Shababo 2011, p. 48), Yi has of course been well studied in Korean language; however, the undercurrents of responses to Christianity in his thinking seem to have remained largely undetected so far.

德星沈左海。吾道竟夢夢.

(*Hanju chip*, purok kw. 4)

For Yi and his contemporaries, living in a time when the missionaries brought their books on cannon boats, the Western challenge was not a purely ideological one anymore. Yet what bothered Yi Chinsang most was the fear that the "foreign teaching" (*igyo* 異敎) could take over and push Confucianism aside; in his writings, he time and again lamented this prospect. His answer to the threat was an emphatic concept of tradition (*samun*, *odo* 吾道) as well as an intellectual bolstering up of this tradition. In order to safeguard the Confucian tradition, Yi Chinsang felt he had to re-interpret it for his day; he did so creatively and by adapting some structural elements of the tradition that he wanted to refute.

Space allows me to provide here only one example, a treatise with diagrams on *chujae* 主宰 ("Chujae tosŏl" 主宰圖說, Yi Chinsang, *Hanju chip* 寒州集, kw. 34), the "controlling power" which is traditionally (i.e., already in *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類) identified with both the "principle" (*li* 理) and the human mind (*xin* 心). As can be seen in Figure 1, in illustrating these identifications in the diagrams to which his treatise is attached, Yi Chinsang takes recourse to something that looks like the Holy Trinity: *Sangje* 上帝, the Supreme Ruler, in his words: "the controlling power of Heaven and a reverent name for the Heavenly principle;" *Sin* 神, the Spirit, "the spread of the Mandate of Heaven and the miraculous working of the principle", which is the source of the expression of *li* in the material world; and finally *ch'ŏn'gun* 天君 or "the heavenly Lord," a comparatively rarely used word for the human mind derived from the *Xunzi* 荀子 (*Xunzi* 17, 206 f.) which is, in Yi's explanation, "the reverent name for the human principle".

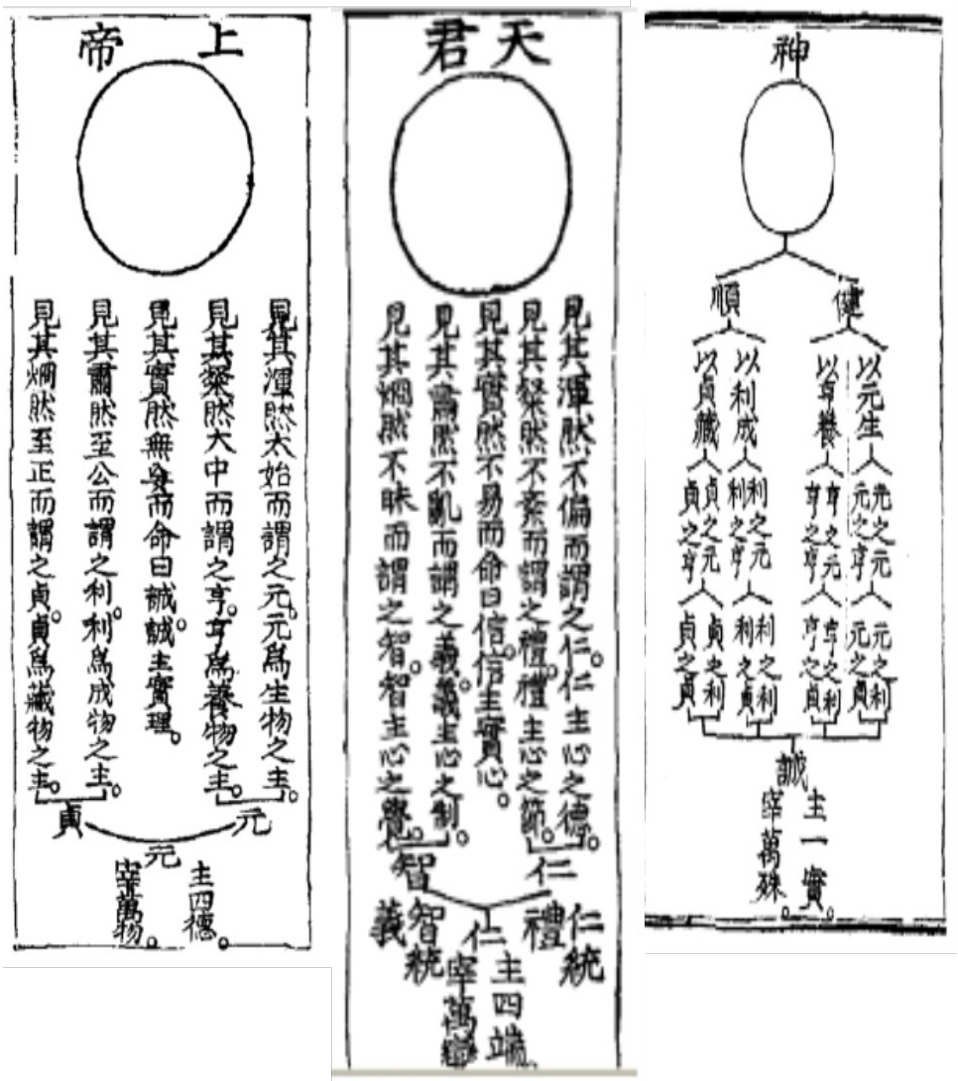

Figure 1: Diagrams in Yi Chinsang, 李震相 "Chujae tosŏl" 主宰圖說

All three words, *sangje* 上帝, *sin* 神, and *ch'ŏn'gun* 天君, are reminiscent of the Christian God: the first two terms had both been adopted by Protestant missionaries as appellation for God, while the latter might be translated into Korean as *hananim* ("Lord of Heaven"), just like the

Catholic word for God, *ch'ŏnju* 天主. All three are also emanations, or different aspects, of Heaven: *Sangje* refers to the unity, *sin* to the all-pervasiveness, *ch'ŏn'gun* to the human embodiment of Heaven. Again, this sounds not unlike a monotheistic theology of an almighty, omnipresent god who resides in everbody's heart. And finally, this "Heaven" seems identical with, or at least unseparable from, *li* 理. While stopping short of a personification of the "principle," Yi Chinsang's metaphysics are quite obviously meant to recapture Heaven, *tian*, for Confucianism. With the rendering absolute of a transcendent power on the one hand, and the strengthening of human agency through the identification of the human mind with *li* on the other hand, his teaching already contains all the elements necessary for the ultimate "religiosification" of Confucianism for which his son Yi Sŭnghŭi became an important proponent.

Thus, with thinkers like Yi Chinsang a religious fervor entered Neo-Confucianism that had not been extant in the 17th and 18th centuries. Scholars of this era now emphasized the metaphysical aspects of their tradition over the ethical ones to a degree which is in some ways—as I could hopefully illustrate—curiously reminiscent of the Christianity they fought against. The struggle to hold up the tide of Catholicism had resulted in structural accommodations of the "foreign" into the "own" in a way that helped to prepare the ground for Confucianism to recognize itself as one of the "religions" when this neologism was brought to Korea. The Neo-Confucian refutation of Christianity, be it polemical, discursive or implicit, ended up locking both into an antonymic relationship within the emerging religious field from which Neo-Confucianism never managed to disentangle itself. In other words, by struggling to refute Catholicism, Neo-Confucian scholars construed an "other" that became more constitutive for their "self" than they may have imagined, but this move helped to secure a place for their "teaching" in the world of "religion." Doubtlessly, then, Yi Chinsang's attempt to safeguard *tradition* did work and could work only through *innovation*.

2.4 Concluding remark

Innovation was concealed behind *both* scholars' rhetoric of tradition, in a way analogous to how in the period of transition to modernity around 1900, traditional thought was concealed behind the modernizers' rhetoric of innovation.[16] Admittedly, there is nevertheless a marked distinction between the two scholars treated here concerning their attitudes towards tradition, in that they are of different opinion about the reach of tradition's authority. And yet, taken together the two vividly illustrate the innovative power of the Korean Confucian tradition.

16 As one example of numerous studies showing this, see Schmid 2002, 80-86.

3 Catalysts of Innovation and Modernization in Japanese 'Confucianism'

Panelist: *Gregor Paul*

3.1 Introduction

In the 19th century many Japanese intellectuals who criticized the Tokugawa Shōgunate (1600-1868) as a reactionary and outdated system regarded the Shōgunate's reliance on Shushigaku 朱子学, the Japanese 'Neo-Confucian' "School of Zhu Xi [1130-1200]," as one of the main reasons for these evils. In their demands for a thorough reform, if not radical change, they utilized philosophies developed within other branches of Japanese 'Confucianism,' especially the Kogaku(ha) 古学(派), i.e., the "School of Ancient [Confucian] Learning," and the Shingaku(ha) 心学(派), i.e. Wang Yangming's 王陽明 (1472-1529) "School of Heart-and-Mind." Main representatives of these schools were Itō Jinsai 伊藤 仁斎 (1627-1705), and Kumazawa Banzan 熊沢蕃山 (1619-1691), respectively. The two schools emphasized Mengzi's 孟子 (ca. 370-290 BCE) justification (if not obligation) of forcibly doing away with an inhumane government, and the right to individual decision based on an individual's unfailing innate knowledge. When, in 1837, Ōshio Heihachirō 大塩 平八郎 (1793-1837) started a rebellion against the inhumanity of the Shōgunate, he was inspired by the teachings of Mengzi and Wang Yangming. During the early years after the Meiji Restauration (1868), the Mengzi was referred to as a means of the 'Confucian' tradition itself (i.e. original 'Confucianism' itself) that could overcome Neo-Confucian based Tokugawa reactionism and thus pave the way for a humane and modern sociopolitical system.

3.2 Classic Confucianism versus Neo-Confucianism

In my contribution, I offer examples of traditions or ways of thought that determined Japanese politics between 1868 and 1945. While some of these traditions opposed egalitarian, democratic, and universal rights

ideas, others favored such ideas, and used them to argue for respective political innovations. Both ways of thought were conceived of as 'Confucian' traditions, though the label 'Confucian' is not unproblematic.[17]

Independent of this problem, one should be aware that the term "tradition(s)" can refer to more or less broader orientations, schools, or lines of history. The wider a notion of a tradition, the more probably it includes both, conservative and innovative strains or tendencies. For instance, Chinese history as a whole includes such different traditions as 'Confucianism' and radically anti-traditional Legalism. But even within 'Confucianism,' we find both, traditionalism and innovationalism. Actually, the name 'Confucianism' refers to a considerable number of different teachings and practices which can aptly be distinguished by such labels as 'fundamentalist', 'reactionary,' 'closed,' 'conservative,' 'critical,' 'tolerant,' 'open,' 'progressive,' and 'revolutionary.' Moreover, even if it comes to 'Confucian' individuals—as for example the Korean studies scholar Marion Eggert deals with in her contribution to this volume—we are often forced to admit that their teachings cannot be reduced to mere conservatism or anti-conservatism. The Japanese scholar and writer Ueda Akinari 上田秋成 (1734-1809) who is regarded as an adherent to the nationalist (or nativist) school of Kokugaku 国学, the "School of our homeland [Japan]," also criticized the school's normative notion of cultural identity, emphatically put forward by the Kokugaku scholar Motoori Norinaga 本居 宣長 (1730-1801). Usually both, conservative and innovational orientations, become especially apparent and are strengthened if they get acquainted, or confronted, with 'external' or 'foreign' traditions—as it was the case with the opposition between 'Confucianism' and Legalism and the confrontation of Japanese culture with 'the West.' Such contacts lead to defending (what is regarded as) one's own (especially one's indigenous) 'beliefs' and customs, or to advocating changes, respectively.

17 Like the other two authors and for the sake of convenience, I follow the convention of using the label 'Confucianism' instead of using the respective Chinese designations. As to the problems of this label, see Paul (2022, pp. 22-33). To avoid any misunderstanding, in my approach I deal with what may be called traditional 'Japanese Confucianism' (which includes reception of classic Chinese Confucianism) and different kinds of Chinese Neo-Confucianism. This enables offering a differentiated account of the 'innovating' and 'conservative' forces inherent in Confucianism, and of their influence in Japanese intellectual history.

In what follows, I focus on what I regard as the main branches of Chinese and Japanese conservative and progressive 'Confucianism'. The most important conservative 'Confucian' branch, the so-called 'Neo-Confucian' Shushigaku, the "School of Zhu Xi (1130-1200)," had originated in 12th century China. The most important progressive line was dubbed Kogaku-ha, "School of Ancient Learning." This name referred to classic 'Confucianism,' as put forward in the *Lunyu* (*Analects*, Jap. *Rongo*, mainly attributed to Confucius, 551-479 BCE), the (*Book of*) *Mencius* (Jap. *Mōshi*, attributed to Mengzi), and the (*Book of*) *Xunzi* (Jap. *Junshi*, mainly attributed to Xunzi 荀子, ca. 310-230 BCE). Roughly speaking, the first line of thought was supportive of the Tokugawa Shogunate, a rather oppressive system ruled by the Tokugawa clan *samurai*, established in 1600. Its idea of a strong and untouchable rule was supported by nationalist and chauvinist traditions, namely the teachings of the Kokugaku, and Tennōism, a doctrine according to which the tennō was a 'living god' who (because of his divinity) must under no circumstances be dethroned, and who, like a father, ought to be 'loved' and obeyed by the Japanese people.[18] (Of course, during the Tokugawa period (1600-1868), the tennō did not hold real political power.) Shushigaku, Kokugaku, and Tennōism were anti-egalitarian and decidedly anti-democratic movements.

Classic 'Confucianism' had been introduced to Japan latest during the 6th century, and had played an almost revolutionary—and in this sense innovational—role already in the establishment of a new political system during the early 7th century. One may very well regard this as a significant indication of the innovational humane potential of classic 'Confucianism'.[19] In 17th century, the Kogaku-ha scholar Itō Jinsai, in an astounding appraisal of the humane and anti-despotic teachings of Mengzi, strongly criticized Shushigaku and Kokugaku. In particular, Jinsai emphasized the Mencian notions of human dignity, the importance of ordinary people, and the Mencian justification of what may be called tyrannicide. Jinsai completely agreed with the Mencian notion of individual human dignity, namely the concept of tianjue (Jap. tenshaku

18 See my explanation of Tennōism in Ommerborn, Paul & Roetz (2011, pp. 824-829).

19 For a detailed treatment of the Japanese reception of the *Mengzi* in early Japan, see Paul (1993) and Paul (2018, pp. 27-29).

天爵), according to which every single human being is endowed by nature with a value that consists in, what for the sake of brevity may be characterized as, moral autonomy.[20] He even went further than Mencius when emphasizing that not only "high" (*kami* 上), but also "low" (*shimo* 下) people, i.e. ordinary people had the right to forcibly do away with despots. Jinsai also stressed the Mencian notion that the people—and not the rulers—are the foundation of a nation (Tucker, 1998, especially pp. 192, and 35-36). Similarly, Banzan argued in favor for a non-oppressive politics (McMullen, 1999). In so doing, he was also inspired by Wang Yangming whose emphasis on the Mencian teaching that every human possesses unfailing innate intuitive knowledge (Chin. *liangzhi*, Jap. *ryōshin* 良知) became justifications of an ever stronger 'individualism' than in the *Book of Mencius*. The uprising by Heihachirō I mentioned in my introduction was inspired by ideas of Wang Yangming. I need not emphasize that the ideas of individual moral autonomy and individual innate knowledge became catalysts for later anti-traditional, i.e. anti-authoritarian movements.

3.3 Developments since the Meiji Restauration 1868

After 1868, inspired by such 'Western' philosophers as Rousseau (1712-1778), John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), and especially Kant (1724-1804), and impressed and at the same time repelled by 'Western' military power and general sociopolitical developments that they attributed, among other things, to 'Western' democracy, eminent Japanese scholars expressed similar and even stronger admiration for these Mencian teachings than Jinsai had voiced. Explicitly referring to Mengzi, they went as far as demanding instituting "peoples' rights" and even "human rights." That is to say that they indeed tried to utilize what they regarded as original Sino-Japanese traditions, that is *one of their own traditions,* as means for achieving radical sociopolitical changes. Their ideas can indeed be adequately called innovational since though including traditional notions, they also implied the radically new 'Western' ideas of

20 For a comprehensive discussion of the Mencian notion of individual autonomy and human dignity, see Paul (2022, pp. 119-129).

democracy and human rights. This should, however, not lead to underestimating the traditional influence. This influence became a significant catalyst of their demands and was used as a counter-argument against the argument that democracy and human rights were something utterly 'foreign' *and therefore* no acceptable means to determine Japanese culture and politics. *Generally speaking, reliance on—and reference to—one's own traditions can be an efficient means to counter the argument that an idea is of (mere) foreign origin and must therefore be rejected.*

However, in spite of these scholars' sharp criticism of Shushigaku and chauvinism, and their reference to classic 'Confucianism' as an old-standing Japanese tradition, the chauvinist, anti-egalitarian, and anti-democratic powers dominated Japanese philosophy, ideology, and politics till the end of the Second World War. This ideology culminated in the publication of the *Kokutai no hongi* 国体の本義, "The original truth of our national essence," a pamphlet that, among other things, explicitly rejected the teachings of Mengzi (*Kokutai no hongi* 1949, p. 150; see also p. 177). They also exploited a traditional narrative, used in a story by Ueda Akinari, according to which ships from China that carried the *Book of Mencius* did not reach the Japanese shore (Ueda Akinari, 1977, p. 102; 1971, pp. 61-62). However, and as mentioned above, this scholar, though regarded as an adherent of the Kokugaku, criticized its chauvinist propagators, thus also actually indicating that one should be open for 'foreign' ideas. This becomes especially clear from his succinct statement that "Wherever a country, the spirit of the country is its stench" (*Doku no kuni demo sono kuni no tamashii ga kuni no shūki nari* どこの国でも其国のたましいが国の臭気也). (Ueda Akinari, Tandai shōshinroku 胆大小心録1808, NKBT, vol. 56, 312). Again generalizing: normative notions of a unique cultural identity are strongly supportive of traditionalism and even ethically and politically questionable.[21]

In what follows, I briefly present three examples of the way Japanese

21 I have tried to show this in detail in Paul (1998); and Paul (2010). More recently, François Jullien (2021), expressed similar views, warning against the "dangers" of the notion of cultural identity (though, in my opinion, he confuses facts and norms and history and logic, in this way perhaps even contradicting himself).

scholars used the *Mencius* to demand a politics that honored ideas of democracy and human rights. The first one is related to the Meirokusha, the "Society of Meiji 6" and its journal *Meiroku zasshi*. The second and third ones are simply clear evidence that Japanese scholars who asked for democracy and human rights were indeed convinced that their demands could by supported and even justified by reference to the *Book of Mencius*.

The Society of Meiji 6 was founded in 1874. Because of increasing restriction of freedom of speech, it dissolved itself already one year later. The members of the society included some of the most progressive and brilliant intellectuals of the time, among them scholars who argued for human dignity, democracy, and human rights, often supporting their arguments by at least implicit reference to the *Book of Mencius*. Two of the most famous members, namely Nishi Amane 西周 (1829-1897) and Tsuda Mamichi 津田真道 (1829-1903), however, also explicitly argued against traditionalism by pointing out that one cannot get an ought from an is, i.e. that one cannot defend one's culture and customs by merely arguing that they are traditions. Also, Nishi stressed —thus arguing against conservative Neo-Confucianism— that one should clearly distinguish between the way of heaven and the way of man, i.e. natural laws and social norms. Nishi Amane was influenced by the Kogaku-ha scholar Ogyū Sorai 荻生　徂徠 (1666-1728) who in turn was strongly influenced by Xunzi (Paul in Ommerborn, Paul & Roetz, pp. 762-767). Tsuda attacked every kind of superstition.

My second example is the scholar Nakae Chōmin 中江　兆民 (1847-1901). Since he had translated parts of Rousseau's *Contract Social* (in 1882), he was nicknamed "Rousseau of the East." He maintained that the principles of freedom, equality, and justice also existed in China as especially put forward in the Book of Mencius, and were thus no exclusively Western "possessions." Though he conceded that an emperor ought to be venerated, he also pointed out that veneration should depend on whether the emperor himself honored the named "principles" (Paul in Ommerborn, Paul & Roetz, 2011, pp. 802-804). Note that Chōmin, by basing his views on both, 'Western' and 'Eastern' traditions, argued for

a universally valid ethics, thus providing an exemplary instance of the influence 'foreign' ideas can have on realizing that there traditionally exist similar ideas in one's own culture that, moreover, could and ought to be used as incentives for similar innovations as were already carried through in other cultures.

The third example is Kōtoku Shūsui 幸徳 秋水 (1871-1911). Because of what the government regarded as intolerably revolutionary ideas, Kōtoku was executed in 1911. In 1903, he said that he, like Chōmin, based his fundamental convictions on the Book of Mencius. In 1906, he further stated that he had always been a fond reader of radical, anti-nationalist, anti-militarist, and anarchist books, and that his [respective] readings included the *Book of Mencius* and the *Daodejing* (Paul in Ommerborn, Paul & Roetz, 2011, p. 804).

3.4 Illustrations of Japanese Nationalism and 'Universalism'

I conclude my paper by showing pictures exemplarily illustrating the tradition of Kokugaku and Kogaku-ha. The first one (Figure 2) is a self-portrait of the most influential representative of the Kokugaku, Motoori Norinaga.[22] He shows himself together with cherry blossoms, about which he wrote the famous poem:

Shikishima no 敷島の
Yamato gokoro wo 大和心を
Hito towaba 人問わば
asahi ni niou 朝日に匂ふ
yama-sakura-bana 山桜花

If you ask for the heart of Yamato [Japan] –
The blossom of the mountain cherry
In the fragrance of the morning sun.

22 For details, see Paul 2006, and Paul in Ommerborn, Paul & Roetz 2011, pp. 719-727.

Figure 2: Motoori Norinaga, self-portrait

The critical *kokugakusha* Ueda Akinari whom I referred to above, countered Norinaga's poem by the following poem of his own:

Shikishima no しき島の
yamato gokoro no やまと心の
nan no ka no なんのかんの
uronna koto wo うろんな事を
mata sakura bana 又さくら花

Again this mumbo jumbo
About the heart of Yamato
And its cherry blossoms.
(Tandai shōshinroku 胆大小心録1808, NKBT, vol. 56, 312)

About Mengzi Norinaga remarked, in the vein of the Legalist critique that Confucianism supported rebellion (*Hanfeizi* 51):

> Mencius, whom the Confucianists revere as a sage in the same class with Confucius, was quite different [from Confucius]. […] He encouraged revolt (doing away with one's souvereign which under no circumstances is admissible) wherever he went. He was no less evil a person than Tang 湯 and Wu 武 (the founders of the Dynasties Shang and Zhou, idealized as legitimate rebels by the Confucians).
>
> (Motoori Norinaga, *Kuzubana*, MNZ V, 466, trans. Tsunoda et al., 1958, p. 529)

The second picture (Figure 3) shows a sculpture of Mengzi that in 2005 China presented to the Japanese university Ritsumeikan. *Ritsumei* (Chin. *liming* 立命) is a term from the *Menzius* (7a1) which, roughly put, implies that one ought to follow the rules of humaneness (Chin. *ren* 仁, Jap. *jin*).[23] The present did of course not express an agreement with Mengzi's philosophy of government, but simply the Chinese government's intention to improve Chinese-Japanese relations.

23 For details, see Paul 2006, and Paul in Ommerborn, Paul & Roetz, 2011, pp. 736-741.

Figure 3: A statue of Mengzi

3.5 Final remark

Though brief, my discussion of tradition and innovation in the history of 'Confucianism' in Japan from 17th to 20th century may suffice to refute the prejudice that traditional Sino-Asian cultures *as such* did not develop ideas of human dignity and, being averse to innovation, did not use them as a means to argue for sociopolitical modernity and human rights as the epitome of the new—though this happened rather late, as it was the case in Western cultures, too.

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