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From the Faculty Advisor:

This journal is student directed and operated. In addition to their own studies and other activities that fill their day, the editors of the journal, all undergraduate students, solicit manuscripts, vet submissions, contact authors and offer recommended revisions, and assist in the final production that you see before you. My role is largely that of a managing editor, assisting the editors as needed, keeping records, and communicating with AIU Press.

In this issue, you will note several changes. The editors wanted to truly reflect the global focus of our university's mission by welcoming submissions from students at other institutions, especially our partner institutions. We are pleased to include works from students at some of these campuses. The editors also wanted to encourage not only academic essays, but to expand the focus to include creative pieces. You will find several artistic works in this issue, including images, poetry and short stories.

Additionally, I wish to thank AIU's president, Dr. Norihiko Suzuki, who has continued to financially support this endeavor with the funding through a President's Research Fund grant. I also wish to thank the staff of AIU Press, especially Yoriko Haseyama, for their help in this, my first issue, as faculty advisor of the journal.

After a long hiatus, I am delighted to see this issue come to fruition. The student editors have worked hard to make this issue happen. If you are a student at AIU, we encourage you to volunteer your time as an editor for the next issue. We are also always accepting new manuscripts and creative works; so if you have a work you are particularly proud of, please send it to us (see the call for submissions at the end of this issue)!

With warm wishes,

Paul Chamness Miller, Ph.D.

Faculty Advisor

February, 2015

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Otomen: Defining Hybrid Masculinity in Japan

Yasunobu Miyakawa

Introduction and Thesis

There are two possible ways to define the term otomen. *Otomen* is the title of a Japanese romantic comedy comic, or shojo manga, which has also been adapted as the drama series with the same title, *Otomen*. "Otomen (otome + men)" is also a term, "which refers to young men who enjoy handicrafts and pastry-baking like an otome (maiden)."¹ As Shu Min Yuen explains, the term otomen "became widely circulated in the mass media following the release of a manga series and subsequently a drama that carried the title, *Otomen*."² The amount of publicity 'Otomen' received in the Japanese media shows how impactful the comic and drama series are in defining feminine masculinity in Japan.

If you are unfamiliar with the phrase feminine masculinity, this paradoxical concept may be hard to fully grasp without a thorough explanation. The phrase feminine masculinity has been used continuously to describe the new masculinity in modern Japan. Reviewing Fabienne Darling-Wolf and her use of the term "hybridity" might in fact clarify this Japanese incorporation of capitalism in its 'traditional' culture and also help understand the femininity that is intertwined with masculinity in Japanese culture.³ Back in the post-war era, the "corporate warrior" type of masculinity had been the prominent representation of men; it was in the late 1990s when the "ideal salaryman masculinity" started to be "associated with 'femininity,' such as the ability to cook, or being seen to be taking an active interest in child-rearing".⁴ This new notion of feminine masculinity, or as Steven Chen might call it 'soushokukei danshi', has been directly tied with capitalist interest to create needs for men to seek the type of consumption that once was only targeted towards women.⁵

¹ Yuen, Shu Min (2013): *From men to 'boys' - the cooking danshi in Japanese mass media*. Women's Studies International Forum, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2013.08.002>

² Ibid.

³ Fabienne, Darling-Wolf (2006): *The Men and Women of non-no: Gender, Race, and Hybridity in Two Japanese Magazines*, *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 23:3, 181-199

⁴ Dasgupta, Romit (2010): *Globalisation and the bodily performance of 'cool' and 'uncool' masculinities in corporate Japan*. *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, 23 (<http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue23/dasgupta.htm>)

⁵ Chen, Steven (2012): *The rise of Soushokukei Danshi masculinity and consumption in contemporary Japan*. *Gender, culture, and consumer behavior*, 285-310

This transformation of the definition of masculinity has multiple societal implications. Analyzing the TV drama series *Otomen* will help us understand what this new identity means for the representation of gender in Japanese society. This essay will leave out the analysis of the comic book *Otomen* due to the limitations in space and access to the artifact. In this essay, I will argue that the representation of gender in the drama *Otomen* reinforces the public acceptance towards more feminine masculinity, but while it questions the traditional gender roles in Japan, the drama fails to negotiate equality for women and homosexuals.

Background: Hybrid Masculinity

In order to dismantle the phrase feminine masculinity, one must understand the implications of the term 'feminine'. As Yumiko Iida discusses in her article, the term 'feminine' is often associated with being subject to the 'gaze', a keener interest in appearances, and, most importantly, consumption.⁶ This subjectivity to the 'gaze' was not initiated in the 1990s, but began in the era of the bubble economy, the 1980s, when there was a "rise to the extravagant and sophisticated, if snobbish, material culture in which one's identity was typically displayed by means of images associated with luxurious brand items". As the women underwent this social transformation towards capitalism, they were increasingly exposed to the body industries, which consider appearance as a capital. This notion increasingly becomes "the capitalist imperative; to be 'attractive' is internalized among girls in their practice of self-surveillance and 'doing appearance'".⁷ According to Iida, young males at this point were not subjected to this new presentation of identity; at least not until the early 1990s in the "renewed stage of capitalist economy centering on image creations," which was made possible by new means of advertisement, such as the Internet.⁸ As Chen also argues, the feminization of men has emerged from the capitalist community, following the burst of the economic bubble, as the "corporate warrior" salaryman type of masculinity became not as prevalent or popularly accepted, which is incidentally associated with the rise of "soushokukei danshi," the more feminine 'boy'.⁹

This essay has so far discussed the background of the construction of this new identity, but what exactly is this 'new identity'? The phrase "soushokukei danshi" was

⁶ Iida, Yumiko (2005): *Beyond the 'feminization of masculinity': transforming patriarchy with the 'feminine' in contemporary Japanese youth culture*. Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, Volume 6, Number 1, 56-74

⁷ Kim, Yeran (2011): *Idol republic: the global emergence of girl industries and the commercialization of girl bodies*. Journal of Gender Studies, Volume 20, Number 4, 333-345

⁸ *Ibid.*, 59

⁹ Chen, Steven (2012): *The rise of Soushokukei Danshi masculinity and consumption in contemporary Japan*. Gender, culture, and consumer behavior, 294-297

mentioned above, but there are even more phrases that signify this 'new identity': "be it the...ojōman or otomen, [the new identity] is apparent from the ways these 'boys' are described by the various writers - "a new type of masculinity"; "a new generation of men"; "a new being".¹⁰ The new feminized men are more prone to leisure activities for self-cultivation, perhaps to meet the evaluating standards '3 Cs' mentioned in Miller's text: comfortable, communicative, and cooperative, which implies the increasing expectation for men to take roles in domestic duties.¹¹ The implication of this new identity is not limited to domestic duties but extends to grooming of self in a manner that is often associated with women. In the Darling-Wolf's case study on Japanese fashion magazine Men's non-no, she describes that the magazine "[offers] the usual mix of fashion spread, popular stars, skin and hair care advice, decorating tips, recipes, quizzes, horoscopes, and many ads".¹² To make a further note, most of the offerings in this magazine are conscious of the reader's interest or insecurity of their appearance. Yuen discusses the newly emerging identity of "cooking danshi (boy)," their hand-made lunch box, made for "his own enjoyment and consumption," are subjected to "judging eyes" (the author describes Japanese Mothers' lunchboxes being subjected to judging eyes when they are taken to school or work).¹³ Thus, being the 'new men' - embodying feminine masculinity - means to consume in order to achieve/maintain certain appearance standards, that were imposed by the imperatives of capitalism.

The judging 'gaze' once only belonged to women in Japan, however, the burst of the economic bubble that caused the Japanese economy to suffer consequently denied the old form of masculinity in order to promote consumption by men. The general consensus amongst the scholars this paper has referenced seems to be that this hybrid, feminine masculinity is a socially constructed phenomenon in response to the Japanese economy.

Otomen: Plot Summary

As I mentioned earlier, *Otomen* is a romantic comedy that humorously portrays the various forms of otomen, men with more feminine values. The main character of the drama is Asuka Masamune and the drama begins with a flashback of the memories of Asuka's father who had always told Asuka to be true to himself. One day

¹⁰Yuen, Shu Min (2013): *From men to 'boys' - the cooking danshi in Japanese mass media*. Women's Studies International Forum, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2013.08.002>

¹¹Ibid., 54

¹²Fabienne, Darling-Wolf (2006): *The Men and Women of non-no: Gender, Race, and Hybridity in Two Japanese Magazines*, Critical Studies in Media Communication, 23:3, 189

¹³Yuen, Shu Min (2013): *From men to 'boys' - the cooking danshi in Japanese mass media*. Women's Studies International Forum, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2013.08.002>

Asuka confess to his father how he accidentally broke a branch off from his father's cherry blossom tree. The father cheerfully accepts the confession by saying "I am glad that you told me the truth."¹⁴ Asuka's father then confesses to his wife and son in return, saying that he had always "wanted to become a girl" and leaves the house. This leaves the wife traumatized of men without traditional masculinity, which causes her to raise Asuka strictly to embody the manliest values or to "not be like [his] father." Despite her strict scrutiny, Asuka grows up with both manly values and comical obsessions with "cute and sweet" things. Throughout the drama series the main theme is the contrast between Asuka's outstanding ability in Kendo (a Japanese martial art) and his obsessions with cake and teddy bears, which portrays the feminine masculinity of new men in Japan. At first he tries to keep his feminine values a secret from not only his mother but also from his classmates. However, he later discovers friends who are also otomen just like himself.

The story line is mainly constructed around the romantic tension between Asuka and the heroine of the show, Ryo Miyakozuka. In comparison to Asuka who has feminine values, Ryo is a girl with masculine values, with knowledge and experience in multiple martial arts, including Kendo. While Ryo is known for her masculine values, she is portrayed as an attractive individual in the story, which potentially negotiates traditional gender roles just like the otomen. To further note the similarities, both Asuka and Ryo are gender ambiguous names, which reinforces the main theme that negotiates traditional gender roles.

Otomen: Negotiating the Gender Roles

The forms of otomen portrayed in the drama negotiate the stereotypical gender roles by using the 'gaze' of people within the drama. For example, Asuka is an excellent cook and a knitter, stereotypically more feminine activities. However, Asuka remains popular amongst his "fans" for his excellent skills in Kendo, portraying him as an attractive figure. This is similar to the relationship between the "surveyor" and the "surveyed" in Western representations of women in paintings. In this case, Asuka, becomes attractive in the presence of the "surveyor" or the fans.¹⁵ This is not limited to Asuka, but all the otomen in the show, including Juta Tachibana, Hajime Tounomine, Kitora Kurokawa, and Yamato Ariake, who are described as "ikemen," which means good looking in Japanese. By portraying otomen or hybrid masculinity as attractive, the drama is legitimizing the new type of masculinity, as masculinity is often associated as an ability to attract females. The legitimacy of this new identity that chal-

¹⁴Aya, Konno (2009): *Ottomen*, Fuji Television, 12 episodes, http://www.fujitv.co.jp/b_hp/otomen/

¹⁵Berger, John (1977): *Ways of Seeing*. Penguin Books in the United States of America Chapter 3, 45-64

lenges the stereotypical gender roles, consequently, negotiates the gender roles in the society.

The drama occasionally makes jokes out of the corporate warrior type of 'salaryman' masculinity, perhaps in another effort to legitimize the new hybrid masculinity. To name one example, episode two begins with a flashback of Asuka in an elementary school. One of his classmates reads his short essay about his father out loud, roughly saying, "My dad is a salaryman. He wakes up early in the morning everyday and works really hard, just like the hamster aimlessly running on its wheel." Laughter follows the story and the teacher comments by saying "thank you for the humorous story."¹⁶ Evidently, the drama is illegitimizing the old corporate warrior or salaryman type of masculinity by portraying it as "aimless" or pointless.

Homosexuality

The hybrid masculinity may sometimes be mistaken as a homosexuality, but the drama *Otomen* makes the distinction clear. Hybrid masculinity invites feminine values while it maintains the heterosexuality, and the line between hybrid masculinity and homosexuality stays clear. Asuka's father, Mondonosuke (his last name is unknown since he seems to have divorced Asuka's mother, Kiyomi Masamune) as I mentioned earlier, 'became a girl' or a "new half," which means gay or homosexual in Japan. His appearance in the show is very rare throughout the show. Episode seven is the only exposure of his identity apart from the flashbacks, and within all the flashback scenes, Mondonosuke only appears in male clothing. Throughout episode seven, Mondonosuke appears in feminine clothing and usually in an enclosed space with one other person in the room. During the comic award ceremony with many of his fans, he appears in a wig and with a large fan in order to cover his face and ultimately his identity. At the ceremony, he coincidentally sees Asuka but does not reveal himself. Juta Tachibana, another otomen with great skills in shojo manga writing, attends an award ceremony dressed in a western dress with make up on in order to conceal his identity, too. However, in contrast to Mondonosuke, Juta is one of the main characters throughout the show and, while he tries to keep his identity as a manga writer a secret until episode seven, Asuka and Ryo recognize him by the way he talks without: all of which does not have visible consequences to Juta. By limiting the exposure of homosexual character Mondonosuke, the drama series portrays homosexuals as oppressed and draws a clear distinction from hybrid masculinity - failing to negotiate the stereotypes of homosexuals.

¹⁶Aya, Konno (2009): *Otomen*, Fuji Television, episode 2, http://www.fujitv.co.jp/b_hp/otomen/

Representation of Women

Although the concept of otomen negotiates the gender roles for men, while Ryo negotiates gender roles for women, it reinforces the idea of male dominance by focusing solely on hybrid masculinity. As I mentioned earlier, Ryo is portrayed as a masculine female who can "beat up" men with ease - as it was proven in the first episode when Ryo defeated the 'furyou' or 'bad students' from another school that tried to "beat up" Asuka before his big competition. Ryo's assertiveness challenges the stereotypical gender roles for women to be "modest" or "reserved."¹⁷ However, Ryo is the only one that negotiates gender roles in the drama in contrast to all the otomen characters present in the show. This reinforces the male dominance by limiting the representation of masculine women when there are multiple women conforming to the cute, more submissive, identity.¹⁸

Conclusion

The drama *Otomen* defines hybrid masculinity and its relationship to society. Various forms of otomen challenge the traditional gender roles by representing feminine values as an advantage, and also by illegitimizing the corporate warrior masculinity. However, it fails to challenge the inequality amongst homosexuals and women. The drama fails to challenge the negative conception of homosexuals by underrepresenting them and portraying the identity as something to hide rather than, for example, as something to be proud of: like being an otomen. While the drama challenges gender roles of women, it also fails to promote equality amongst women by underrepresenting them and also by focusing solely on the hybrid masculinity. As Shu Min Yuen said, the term otomen has been widely circulated in the media. The implication of this drama defining the concept of hybrid masculinity is that it reinforces male dominance while it makes it appear as if feminizing masculinity is a revolutionary concept. While capitalist incentive drives Japan to promote hybrid masculinity, questions for equality amongst homosexuals and women remain unanswered and to be challenged in the contemporary media.

¹⁷Aya, Konno (2009): *Otomen*, Fuji Television, episode 2, http://www.fujitv.co.jp/b_hp/otomen/

¹⁸Miller, Laura (2011): *Cute Masquerade and the Pimping of Japan*. International Journal of Japanese Sociology, 20

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2013.08.002>

Should Hijab be Banned? Human Rights of Muslim Women

Yukari Hashimoto

Abstract

Anyone who ever studied Islam and Arabic culture, and those who spent time with Muslim women cannot underestimate the importance of the headscarf (*hijab*). The headscarf controversy is an issue between secularism and human rights. Governments under democracy guarantee human rights for its citizens and they should not violate it by banning the freedom of expression. Some examples of countries that ban religious dress by law are discussed in this paper as case studies. Much of the headscarf controversy is perhaps seen in Western countries (i.e., Europe and North America). As is commonly known, France has banned religious dress, and some countries in Europe are considering following France. Quebec in Canada is another multicultural region considering the ban, being inspired by France. Banning religious dress may be justified for various reasons, such as state secularism, separation of church and state, and the demand from society. Obvious, however, is the effect of Islamophobia on this globalized world. Stereotypes introduced by the media are primary factors of the issues regarding Muslims. An argument found through this paper is that there is the possibility of discrimination against religion when discussing the headscarf controversy because often times what comes to people's attention is not the Jewish dress or the Christian dress, but the Muslims dress.

Introduction

However different Muslim experiences in Europe might be, Muslims there, like many in America, have shared common concerns regarding the practice of their faith, the retention of Islamic identity (in particular for their children), and the preservation of family life and values. Specific concerns revolve around the ability to take time out from work to pray daily, to attend mosque on Friday, to celebrate the two great feasts of Islam (Id al-Adha and Id al-Fitra), to have halal foods available in schools and the military, and, for those women who wish, to wear a headscarf (hijab).¹⁹

One of the issues Muslims face in this globalized world is the ban on hijabs. Mandaville also points out that "Muslims in different settings will often develop quite

¹⁹Esposito John L. *Islam: The Straight Path, 4th ed.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 75

unique understandings (based on local histories and experience) of how and where their religion relates to everyday life and practical politics²⁰. The prohibition of the wearing of the hijab is controversial because it might be against the freedom of religion as well as basic human rights. Muslim women choose to wear the hijab for their own reasons and not because they are forced to in the countries discussed in this essay as case studies, because they are not Muslim majority countries²¹; instead, in these countries it has been historically up to individual choice to wear it or not. In present day however, the choices are becoming limited. France has banned the wearing of the hijab, and it has also been in discussion in the multicultural province of Quebec, indeed not for religious reasons, but for the sake of state secularism, as well as a means of political strategy.

It is often thought that Muslim women are forced by their husbands, fathers, or male counterparts to wear the hijab. In many cases, not only in Muslim minority countries, "[people] depict the headscarf as a symbol of patriarchal oppression and female inequality vis-à-vis men"²². Rather, Muslim women wear the hijab because God has told them to; in other words, it is written in the Qur'an in their interpretation. However, there are controversies in how to interpret the hijab even within the Muslim faith. It is not clearly stated in the holy book, so it is entirely up to individual interpretation. In the Qur'an, the word hijab is used seven times. Excluding the two verses²³ that use hijab in a symbolic meaning, and the three that use it in a metaphorical but materialistic way²⁴, two of the verses explain how women should veil²⁵. 33:53 is a sig-

²⁰Mandaville Peter. *Global Political Islam*. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 18

²¹Muslim majority countries include: Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Indonesia, etc.

Feener Michael R. *Islam in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives*. (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004)

²²Kuru Ahmet T. "Secularism, State Policies, and Muslims in Europe: Analyzing French Exceptionalism." *Comparative Politics*, vol.41, no. 1 (2008). Retrieved 12/ 18/ 2013 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20434102>

²³Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an* (Maryland: amana publications, 1989), verses 38:32 42:51: "And he said, "Truly/ Di I love the love/ Of God, with a view/ To the glory of my Lord"-/ Until (the sun) was hidden/ In the veil (of Night) (38:32); "It is not fitting/ For a man that Allah/ Should speak to him/ Except by inspiration,/ Or from behind a veil,/ Or by the sending/ Of a Messenger/ To reveal, with Allah's permission,/ What Allah wills: for He/ Is Most High, Most Wise." (42:51)

²⁴Abdullah Yusuf Ali, 1989.7:46, 17:45, and 41:5: "Between them shall be/ A veil, and on the Heights/ Will be men/ Who would know everyone/ By his marks: they will call/ Out to the Companions/ Of the Garden, "Peace on you":/ They will not have entered,/ But they will have/ An assurance (thereof)." (7:46); "When thou dost recite/ The Qur'an, We put,/ Between thee and those who/ Believe not in the Hereafter/ A veil invisible." (17:45); "They say: "Our hears are/ Under veils, (concealed)/ From that to which thou/ Dost invite us, and/ In our ears is a deafness,/ And between us and thee/ Is a screen: so do/ Thou (what thou wilt):/ For us, we shall do/ (What we will!)" (41:5)

²⁵Abdullah Yusuf Ali, 1989.19:17 and 33:53: "She placed a screen/ (To screen herself) from them;/ Then We went to her/ Our angel, and he appeared/ Before her as a man/ In all respects." (19:17)

nificant verse because it is thought to be the "Hijab verse"²⁶. From this verse, many Muslims tend to think that the notions of the veil for women in the Qur'an are relevant only to the wives of Muhammad²⁷; however, later in the same sura²⁸, is the "mantle verse"²⁹ which explains that if the women wear the garments, they will be recognized as a Muslim, and will be respected. This verse is indicating that wearing a garment must be a Muslim women's identity. What makes this verse unnoticeable is that it does not use the word *hijab* and says nothing about covering the head of the women. However, from this verse, it could be interpreted that God encourages women to veil. The point that makes the concept of veiling confusing is that these verses do not explicitly mention which parts of the body, and to what extent women should veil. In fact, there are different levels of veiling for women, starting from the most casual veil, *hijab*, to the most extreme *burqa*³⁰, but God does not mention any particular names of any garments; therefore, it is the individual's choice as to how, where and how much to veil. How Muslim women veil is a way of expressing themselves, leading to the question of whether prohibition of veiling is an abuse of these women's freedom of expression.

The reasons why some countries prohibit the wearing of the hijab is because when women cover, in most cases it serves as a symbol for one's religion. Under de-

²⁶Abdullah Yusuf Ali, 1989. 33:53 "O ye who Believe! Enter not the Prophet's houses- / Until leave is given you- / For a meal, (and then) / Not (so early as) to wait / For its preparation: but when / Ye are invited, enter; / And when ye have taken / Your meal, disperse, / Without seeking familiar talk. / Such (behavior) annoys / The Prophet: he is ashamed / To dismiss you, but / Allah is not ashamed / (To tell you) the truth. // And when ye / Ask (his ladies) / For anything ye want / Ask them from before / A screen: that makes / For greater purity for / Your hearts and for theirs. // Nor is it right for you / That ye should annoy / Allah's Messenger, or that / Ye should marry his widows / After him at any time. / Truly such a thing is / In Allah's sight an enormity." The English translation here for "hijab" is "screen". In this verse, the "screen" is not the women's garments, but rather a cloth like a curtain.

²⁷Campbell Robert A. *Women, War & Hypocrites: Studying the Qur'an* (Nova Scotia: Cape Breton University Press, 2010), 124-130

²⁸"*sura*" is the Arabic word for the chapters of the Qur'an

²⁹Abdullah Yusuf Ali, 1989. 33:59 "O Prophet! Tell / Thy wives and daughters, / And the believing women, / That they should cast / Their outer garments over / Their persons (when abroad): / That is most convenient, / That they should be known / (As such) and not molested. / And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, / Most Merciful."

³⁰"The burqa is the most concealing of all Islamic veils: it covers the entire face and body, leaving just a mesh screen to see through. It is worn over the usual daily clothing and removed when the woman returns to the household, out of the view of men that are not their husbands, fathers, brothers, uncles, sons, and grandsons." SBS News, "At-a-glance: Burqa, Niqab and Hijab" (April 30, 2010). Retrieved 12/ 20/ 2013 <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2010/04/30/glance-burqa-niqab-and-hijab>

mocracy, there needs to be a division of state and religion. Former US President Thomas Jefferson first introduced the term "separation of church and state" in the political field in 1802³¹. Essentially, though, this term has been in its existence for ages. Most known philosopher of this matter is John Locke. His first argument on the importance of this matter is that "given that a legitimate state must exercise authority, it can have no concern for religion"³². In his comprehension, people are "mere mortals" who "cannot comprehend God". Hence his support for a society with diversity in religion. The point here is that since people do not truly understand God, no matter what religion, these people, including governments, have no right to force anyone how to practice religion. Clark quotes Locke's criticism³³ noting that he has well-thought reasoning, that even when religion and politics are not separated, "the state, through the legitimate use of punishment, can merely control our behaviour rather than our inner thoughts and beliefs"³⁴. Locke further claims that religious integration by states relate to political instability "through the promotion of values that undermine the states supremacy"³⁵. He emphasizes the significance of political instability together with other concepts such as equality and human rights³⁶.

According to the separation of church and state in the political sense, states cannot promote or support any kind of religion. This also means that women who work for the country cannot show support of any religion. Civil servants are the representatives of the government, working for the country and its citizens. Therefore, if they support a specific religion, it also means that the government is doing so as well. It is logical and acceptable in a sense to ban religious dress, considering that religious

³¹"...Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," thus building a wall of separation between Church & State. Adhering to this expression of the supreme will of the nation in behalf of the rights of conscience, I shall see with sincere satisfaction the progress of those sentiments which tend to restore to man all his natural rights, convinced he has no natural right in opposition to his social duties..."

Jefferson Thomas, "Jefferson's Letter to the Danbury Baptists" Information Bulletin June 1998, Library of Congress, Retrieved 12/ 14/ 2013 from <http://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html>

³² Clark James, "John Locke: Separating the Church and the State." P.2 Academia.edu, Retrieved 12/ 14/ 2013 from http://www.academia.edu/3303307/John_Locke_Separating_The_Church_and_The_State

³³ "Confiscate a man' s goods, imprison or torture his body: such punishments will be in vain, if you think they will make him change his inward judgment of things" cited in Clark J. 2

³⁴Clark J. 3

³⁵Clark J. 4

³⁶Clark J. 3

dress is the symbol of that religion. Despite this logic, the prohibition of women covering daily is problematic because it contradicts the rights that the government guarantees to its citizens; basic human rights such as freedom of religion and freedom of expression. Although it seems like too much of a controversial provision to impose on people, there are some countries that ban the Islamic veils.

Case Study of France

France is a prominent example of the legal prohibition of religious dress in public spaces. The concept of separation of church and state came to the attention of the French citizens under the French Revolution. The concordat³⁷ lasted for a century and in the 1905 Law on the Separation of Church and State, separation of religion and politics in the Catholic majority France was pronounced³⁸. In addition, "the 1958 constitution of the Fifth Republic 1958 guarantees freedom of religion"³⁹. However, mass immigration from North African former French colonies brought secularism into the spotlight. Secularism at this point was not a serious issue however, because "[t]he first immigrants had no desire to find in France the mullahs they had left behind. Many of these older migrants are now shocked to see their children adopt conservative Islamic practices, and are at the forefront of moves to ban headscarves from schools"⁴⁰.

The controversy of religious dress, especially with a focus on Islamic veils, in France, is widely known as *l'affaire du voile* (the veil affair). This argument started to get attention when three Muslim girls were excluded from school in 1998.⁴¹ After the law was put into effect removing Islamic scarves in 2004, Muslim students who wear the Islamic veils have been suspended.⁴² However, since 2004 when the removal of the veils was enforced by law, Muslim students simply started taking the veils off before

³⁷"An agreement between a pope and a sovereign or government for the regulation of ecclesiastical matters" definition by Merriam-Webster, Retrieved 12/ 15/ 2013 from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/concordat>

³⁸Astier Henri., "The Deep Roots of French Secularism." *BBC News Online* (September 1, 2004) Retrieved 12/ 15/ 2013 from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3325285.stm>

³⁹Berkley Center for religion, Peace & World Affairs, "France" Georgetown University, Retrieved 12/15/ 2013 from <http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/resources/countries/france>

⁴⁰Astier H. (2004)

⁴¹Judge, Harry. "The Muslim Headscarf and French Schools." *American Journal of Education*, Vol.111, No.1, (November 2004) University of Oxford. Article DOI: 10.1086/424718 Retrieved 10/28/2013 from JSTOR

⁴²BBC News Europe. "French girls expelled over veils." *BBC News Europe*, October 20, 2004. Retrieved 10/ 29/ 2013 from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3761490.stm>

they entered the school grounds. At this point, the problem is at its minimum, if considering school as a closed institution where the girls will not encounter strangers everyday, but the issue has gained more attention when the first fine was issued in 2011⁴³. This fine was issued to a Muslim woman who refused to take off her veil at a shopping center. Even if it was easy to take the veil off at certain places like schools, it is not easy to remove it at every public space. In addition, which places are considered "public spaces" and which are not is not an obvious distinction for citizens, especially the Muslim women who need to veil in front of any non-relative males. A shopping center would be a necessary place to go to for every individual regardless of their religion, and considering the fact that shopping is one of the times that Muslim women encounter strangers, it would be extremely inconvenient for them to not be able to veil at places they frequent so often. Muslim women will be discouraged to go anywhere.

The law of 2004 is not total nonsense, considering the purpose of the enforcement; "anything that compromised the neutral character of the French state in matters of religion must be detected and condemned, and offending anomalies removed"⁴⁴. However the issue is that the prohibition of the Islamic veil may be a violation of human rights. Natasha Walter discusses how it is the freedom of individuals to chose whether to veil or not⁴⁵. She explains how that in the West women used to be forced to wear hats to cover their heads when in public for modesty, and that it is only natural that western women find it strange that women actually want to cover themselves even when they have the right to uncover. Walter also explains that even under those circumstances, Muslim women choose to veil and if so, it is a choice that they make for themselves.

For the supporters of the ban, public spaces such as schools "should be an emancipating and unifying republican institution..."⁴⁶. Kuru's claim here, is that schools should be a place where the students forget their community of origin, and learn equally; however, with the hijabs, students as well as teachers are distracted by their religious differences leading to difficulties in keeping equality. It is rather difficult to relate this discussion with separation of church and state, but this was a positive argu-

⁴³BBC News Europe. "France Issues First Fine for Women in Islamic Veil." *BBC News Europe*, April 12, 2011. Retrieved 11/ 01/ 2013 from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-13050445>

⁴⁴ Judge H. (2004)

⁴⁵Walter, Natasha. "Comment & Analysis: When the veil means freedom: Respect women's choices that are not our own, even if they include wearing the hijab." *The Guardian (London)*. (January 2004) Retrieved 09/ 23/ 2013 from LexisNexis

⁴⁶Kuru A.T. (2008)

ment for the French citizens because it was rather about equality for citizens than power of government.

On the other hand, the French government is putting much emphasis on state secularism because they are concerned with the continuing, yet growing number of Muslim immigrants⁴⁷. Kuru argues that the headscarf ban has not had a positive effect because first of all, "[t]he ban has affected fewer than 1,500 Muslim female students, an insignificant number"⁴⁸. He also questions the French government's aim in controlling immigration through this restriction saying that it is not a "reasonable factor". In fact, some data show that Muslims in France are not affecting the ethnic balance⁴⁹. According to Kuru, there are only a few Muslim members in the senate as well as the assembly, indicating that the political power of the Muslims in France is not intimidating that of the French population. Kuru, having analyzed how much time and money the French government has spent in enacting this law, he considers this issue as an "economically and politically irrelevant issue".

Case Study of Quebec

Quebec is also leaning towards banning religious dress in public spaces. The Quebecois notion of separation of church and state is rooted more in the establishment of Quebecois identity rather than revolution. French settlement took place in the 17th century in Quebec. The francophone population established a Roman Catholic culture⁵⁰. Since then, the Quebecois have been making much effort in keeping their identity, distinguishing themselves from the Anglicans and other Protestants brought into Canada by English settlement. Religious, cultural, and political clashes have been an historic issue in Canada. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees freedom of religion and prohibits religiously based discrimination⁵¹. However, unlike France, the province of Quebec funds Catholic education in public schools.

Nevertheless, there are some unique arguments here. Faranza Hassan and Tark Fatah clearly state that the real meaning of the hijabs are lost in the modern world and that Muslims are not obligated to wear them; hence it is unreasonable to oppose to the prohibition of Islamic veils. They question the relations of the hijab and Islam, taking into consideration the history in which the hijab came to be worn⁵². It should

⁴⁷Kuru A. T. (2008).

⁴⁸Kuru A. T. (2008)

⁴⁹Kuru A. T. (2008)

⁵⁰Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs, "Canada", *Georgetown University* Retrieved 12/ 14/ 2013 from <http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/resources/countries/canada>

⁵¹Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs

⁵²Hassan Faranza and Fatah Tarek. "Muslims are not required to cover up; the hijab has nothing to do with morality, say Faranza Hassan and Tarek Fatah." *The Globe and Mail (Canada)* (April 2007) Retrieved 09/ 23/ 2013 from LexisNexis

be noted that the khimar, a headscarf that predates the hijab, was worn by Arab women before Islam as a part of their culture. Verse 24:31 did not introduce the garment, but modified its use when it said that Muslim women should "wear the head-coverings over their bosoms;" previously, they were left bare, although decked with jewelry and ornaments. Accordingly, they conclude that "Muslim women who so vociferously defend its religious use should consider its history before determining whether they must wear it." Hassan and Fatah's point is that since wearing the hijab is not religious, but a cultural habit, it is nonsense to oppose to the hijab ban. In fact if the hijab is taken as cultural dress, there would be no violation of freedom of religion, but only the violation of freedom of expression. Then again, if states ban the hijab for the arguments Hassan and Fatah claim, the purpose would be state secularism rather than separation of church and state.

Another argument highlights that the forbiddance of hijab is only a political act. Dr. Richez of Concordia University explains in an interview that the *Parti Québécois* (PQ) was just trying to get votes from popular support by proposing a clause that would interest the majority of the citizens⁵³. If this clause is actually just a political agenda, it is truly erroneous to enforce it. The politicians or parties are not interested in making such a law because they are concerned about the Muslim population invading Québécois culture; rather, they are more interested in pandering to what the citizens would like to hear. Politicians or parties would make manifestos that attract the citizens only for the purpose of gaining power. The Toronto Star proves in its newspaper editorial that banning hijab is beyond controversy due to political propaganda. It introduces the ruling on hijabs that the World Tae Kwon Do Federation (WTF) imposes⁵⁴. The argument here is that the WTF bans the hijab for safety concerns; but in practice, other organizations such as the International Tae Kwon Do Federation (ITF) has never done so and in fact "hijab-wearing competitors are allowed in international contests held under WTF aegis." The claim here is that in one group, hijabs are prohibited for safety reasons, but if it is not in another, the reason of prohibition becomes doubtful. The WTF has a motive to ban the hijabs, but they are concealing it with a predictable reason. Now, if banning the hijab is, as it is here, for individual benefit, it is problematic because the original intent of the policy was to ensure the

⁵³Blatchford, Andy. "Turbans, hijabs, kippahs face restrictions in Quebec." *The Canadian Press*. (August 2013) Retrieved 11/ 01/ 2013 from <http://globalnews.ca/news/791186/turbans-hijabs-kippas-face-restrictions-in-quebec/>

⁵⁴The Toronto Star. "Kick politics out of rules on hijabs." *The Toronto Star Newspapers*. (May 15, 2007) Retrieved 10/ 30/ 2013 from LexisNexis

separation of church and state.

Islamophobia

In the post 9/11 world, Islamophobia is a principal aspect in any issues regarding Islam. Islamophobia is a term first used in 1991, and it was defined to be "unfounded hostility towards Muslims, and therefore fear or dislike of all or most Muslims"⁵⁵. It includes negative stereotypes and biases. These mostly are brought to people by the media. Sides and Gross notes "that news stories about Muslims often involved crises, war and conflict"^{56,57}. The media will often show violence and jihad⁵⁸ movements including terms such as "fundamentalist", "militant", "terrorist", "radical", or "extremist"⁵⁹. This allows the people to connect violence with Islam, forcing them to believe that Muslims are "threatening and violent" and that Islam is what brings conflicts and bloodshed⁶⁰. This notion engrained in people's minds makes us unconsciously misunderstand that the religion is the cause of the conflicts and violence. Many terrorist activities have followed the 9/11 incident, making people support state secularism and hope for peace by preferring less Muslims around them. This is an example of people who do not want to be a part of globalized society. People are turning their backs on the idea that we all live in this world together. Radical Islamists do exist, but forcing Muslims not to show their identity is not the way of calming down the anger or dissatisfaction of the terrorists. One of the reasons why France has made such an effort in practicing the law regardless of the waste of time and money must be much concerned with Islamophobia. Furthermore, the only reason why the political strategy of the Quebecois isn't questioned is because Islamophobia exists in people unconsciously. The existence of Islamophobia in citizens will encourage governments

⁵⁵Center For Race and Gender. "Defining "Islamophobia"." *University of California, Berkeley*. Retrieved 11/ 01/ 2013 from <http://crg.berkeley.edu/content/islamophobia/defining-islamophobia>

⁵⁶Sheikh Kashif Z, Vincent Price, and Hayg Oshagan. "Press Treatment of Islam: What Kind of Picture Do the Media Paint?" *Internatioanl Communication Gazette* 56: 139-154 (1995) cited in Sides and Kimberly

⁵⁷Sides John and Gross Kimberly, "Stereotypes of Muslims and Support for the War on Terror" *Journal of Politics*. Retrieved December 19, 2013 from <http://home.gwu.edu/~jsides/muslims.pdf>

⁵⁸There are two kinds of "jihad". The Greater Jihad (*jihad al-akbar*) refers to "one's spiritual or inner struggle to overcome the self in the course of submitting fully to the path of God". It is about the effort that one makes in order to live according to the shari'ah law and be a "good" Muslim. The Lesser Jihad (*jihad al-asghar*) is "the outward struggle to implement or defend Islam, which can be physical or violent in nature". When the media uses the term "jihad" they are often times referring to the latter, Lesser Jihad. Definitions from Mandaville P. 2007. 249

⁵⁹Sides J. and Gross K.

⁶⁰Sides J. and Gross K.

to take action, creating policies based on stereotypes or that are inconsiderate of minorities. It is true that there are non-Muslims that refuse to be served by women wearing hijabs, and this is becoming more and more of a serious issue⁶¹. Regardless, these citizens have Islamophobic minds and the solution to this would not be to use Islamophobia to oppress people, but for instance, to spread education, or to put limits on immigration.

Concluding Remarks

The prohibition of hijabs is possibly a violation of the human rights of Muslim women. These women living under democracy should be able to enjoy the rights they are guaranteed by the government. There are multiple factors underlining the ban of the hijab: state secularism, separation of church and state, and so forth; but clearly, there are corrupted motivations that benefit the limited powerful population. In any case, Islamophobia that is implanted in citizens by media plays a great role. The fear for the power of influence from the increasing number of Muslims within a nation misleads people to react to visual religious symbols. The issues between Muslim citizens and non-Muslim citizens mislead the government to presume that religious neutrality needs to be achieved through oppression. In addition, if political parties misunderstand the original intent of the enforcement and use the clause as a means for individual benefits, it is morally and politically incorrect. All of these issues stem largely from Islamophobia. Exclusion of the hijab is not only an ostensible form of separation of religion and state, but also an issue of non-compliance to the rights the nation guarantees its citizens.

In discussing the controversy of the Islamic veil, arose a question of equality in the treatment of religions. The acceptance of the Islamic veil has been much discussed in various fields such as politics, human rights, globalization, and so forth. However, in most cases the focus is mainly on Islamic dress, in other words Islam. Media coverage of incidents cause by radical Islamists is seen throughout the world every day, showing images of armed men and veiled women. Nevertheless, there are other religious dresses as well, for example the kippa of the Jewish religious garment, and the cross of Catholicism. Now, the French policy on religious symbols does include these items as well, but the question is whether they consider also the veils that these religions also encourage believers to wear. In fact, in some Jewish traditions, a veil is an obligation for women, and more widely known are the veils of Christian women.

⁶¹Seguin, Rheal. "Quebec body rules against right to wear niqab; Religious beliefs cannot trump gender equality, ruling says in health board case." *The Globe and Mail (Canada)* (March 2010) Retrieved 09/23/ 2013 from LexisNexis

Albeit that Islam is not the only religion that recommends its believers to cover, non-Muslims tend to think so when the hijab is discussed. This serious issue goes beyond anti-Islamic movements, resulting in discrimination against Islam. In the post-9/11 globalized world, people pay much more attention to Islam, but with stereotypes creating such concepts as Islamophobia. Nations worry about their society and culture becoming more Islamized. Hence visual symbols of Islam attract more attention than any other religions. It is only too obvious that the issue of discrimination against religion is also brought to the globalized world by negative stereotypes and biased eyes of people. The next challenge is whether it is possible to become indiscriminate against religion.

Are the Ghosts Real in Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*?

Eleanor Tsan

Ever since its publication, *The Turn of the Screw* has generated a lot of interest and speculation among critics and general readers alike over the uncertainty regarding the existence of the ghosts, the controversy over which has come to affect how the governess is to be perceived by the audience. Some believe the ghosts are real and the governess is the heroine who sets out to protect the innocent children from the force of evil, while others regard her as being "neurotic" and the ghosts are merely "the creatures of her own fancy" (Goddard 164). Edmund Wilson, author of "The Ambiguity of Henry James," argues that the governess is "a neurotic case of sex repression" and thus the ghosts are nothing but her hallucination (164). I agree with Wilson that the ghosts are not real. However, the illusions, I believe, are the revelations of the governess' hidden character traits which she may never have known existed. The illusions result not from sexual repression on the governess' part as Wilson suggests, but from her self-doubt and sense of insecurity.

Victorians took for granted the hierarchy within families where men were expected to be the head and women were supposed to be subordinate to their husbands. The word "home" had almost holy connotations during the Victorian era. Most Victorians perceived their home to be "the source of virtues and emotions;" a sharp contrast to the highly competitive workplace charged with conflict and friction. "It was a place of Peace;" writes John Ruskin in *Seasame and Lilies*, "the shelter, not only from injuries, but from all terror, doubt and division" (qtd in Houghton 343). While men toiled in the workplace as breadwinners, women were expected to be "angels in the house," obliged to serve their husbands, look after children and create that "peaceful shelter" from "terror, doubt and division." They were the "weaker sex," regarded as physically and intellectually inferior to men except for their "femininity": "Conventions," writes Richard Altick, "dictated a rigorously stereotyped personality. Ladies were to cultivate 'fragility,' leaning always on the arm of gentlemen who walked with them in a country lane or escorted them to dinner" (53). Hence, upper-class Victorian women led fairly restricted lives due to the reigning assumptions that they were no match for men when it comes to business management or professions that require practical skills: "the female brain was not equal to the demands of commerce or the professions. . . . Their education was limited to the polite accomplishments which was to help them first win husbands" in addition to "infusing their

households with an air of the softer graces so as to maintain their separation from the gritty world of affairs" (Altick 54). With women of good families but reduced circumstances, the only occupation open to them was teaching, as schoolmistresses or possibly a governess in a private family. Nonetheless, even if the governesses ranked with the superior servants in most homes, they still had the danger of settling for "governessing slavery," as Charlotte Bronte put it, if they were single and disappointed in their hopes of marriage (Altick 56).

The governess's role in Henry James' story is unconventional in the sense that she comes to be in charge of an aristocratic house in spite of her humble origins. Nonetheless, despite such elevation to the position of "supreme authority," the young lady still fails as the leader because, apparently, she is not ready to assume such responsibility. For one thing, she fails to demonstrate her independence. In the beginning of the story, Douglas has pointed out that the governess, "young and untried," is infatuated with her employer and it is her infatuation with the gentleman that moves her to take the job, regardless of his warning that it is an occupation of "serious duties and little company, of really great loneliness": "she hesitated, took a couple of days to consult and consider . . . and on a second interview she faced the music, she engaged. . . . The moral of which was of course the seduction exercised by the splendid young man" (5). That the governess is moved by her infatuation to take the job suggests that she is no different from other Victorian women who expected to "lean on the arm of a gentleman." She lacks the charisma and self-assurance that are often expected from authority figures.

In addition to her failure to assert her authority, the governess is emotional rather than rational. She acknowledges her own infatuation for the master to Mrs. Grose: "I'm easily carried away. I was carried away in London" (8). Such acknowledgement subtly gives away not only her true motive for accepting the job, which is her infatuation with the master, but also her own sense of insecurity. The governess is what Heller calls "the novice authority." The youngest child in her own family, she has been "near the bottom of the structure of authority" (55). Given her upbringing, it may have been likely that she was brought up to always respect and obey authority without ever questioning or challenging it. However, within a matter of days, she finds herself becoming the authority "strangely at the helm" (9). The reversal of the governess' domestic role is so dramatic that it takes her by surprise. Even if she claims to be excited about her current position, her excitement dies and is soon replaced by self-doubt: "as I walked around them, gazed up at them, took them in, of my new circumstances. They had, as it were, an extent and a mass for which I had not been prepared and in the presence of which I found myself, freshly, a little scared not less than a little proud" (9). The emotional shift on the governess' part is revealed in

the way she views the house. Upon arriving at Bly, she is astonished at its grandeur, describing the scene as "having a greatness that made a different affair from her own scant home" (7). Yet in just a few days, the splendid house, "the castle of romance inhabited by a rosy sprite," has turned into a "big ugly antique house" that looks "half-displaced and half-utilised" (9). According to Heller, the governess' sense of insecurity is understandable: "she vacillates between attraction to the power and freedom this job promises and fear at the responsibility it places upon her" (55), which is why she constantly wants to win her master's approval: "it would be charming . . . to meet some one. Some one would appear there at the turn of a path and would stand before me and smile and approve" (15). The lady longs to turn to her master for emotional support, believing that just the sight of him is enough of a reward for her: "I didn't ask more than that-I only asked that he *should* know; and the only way to be sure he knew would be to see it, and the light of it, in his handsome face" (15). Ironically, the governess is not rewarded with the master's handsome face but the grotesque faces of Peter Quint and Miss Jessel.

After Peter Quint's first appearance, the governess refers to the illusion as "someone of whom she is in ignorance" (16). Interestingly, when the governess first arrives at Bly, she expresses her excitement at finally having the opportunity to look at herself from head to toe in a mirror in her own room and her image "struck her like the wonderful appeal of her small charge" (7). The governess' excitement at finally seeing herself full length in the mirror suggests her lack of self-knowledge. Therefore, Peter Quint, the one "of whom she is in ignorance," is actually her repressed grotesque self which she never knew existed. In other words, she is "in ignorance of herself." Such a grotesque self, as Heller argues, is the result of "self-deception." As I pointed out previously, the governess is inwardly insecure about her current position and lacks the self-assurance to make wise decisions on her own. Hence, even if she knows it is the right thing to inform her master about Miles's expulsion from school, she would talk herself into believing that it is unnecessary. "There is an element of self-deception," writes Heller, "of which the governess has since become aware" (58): "it was a trap-not designed but deep-to my imagination, to my delicacy, perhaps to my vanity; to whatever in me was most excitable. The best way to picture it all is to say that I was off my guard" (14). The woman, out of her love for the master, refrains from doing the right thing, "deceiving herself about the consequence of her decision to do nothing about the matter" (Heller 59). "That she falls," writes the critic, "into the error of thinking that she is doing a good job and deserve praise despite her failure to deal satisfactorily with Miles's school problem shows her capability of being deceived and of participating willingly in her own deception" (59). The governess' capability of "participating willingly in her own deception" contributes to the appearance of Miss Jessel, whom

she describes as a figure of "unmistakable horror and evil" (30). When describing Miss Jessel as being evil, the governess is in fact describing herself. She is a "horror" and an "evil character" in the sense that she constantly feels the need to protect Miles and Flora, but that is the error of judgment on her part. She fails to realize that she is the threat herself. As far as the children are concerned, there are no ghosts and the governess' strange behavior is what scares them. The governess, regardless of the kids' fear of her, is only concerned with protecting the kids—protecting them, paradoxically and unwittingly, from herself. It is pathetic that her "well-intended" protection leads to Miles' death. The boy dies not from natural cause but possibly from his fear of the insane woman whom he should have kept away.

The governess is the victim of "governessing slavery" in Charlotte Bronte's term. Although she does not directly express it, it is likely that she is devastated in her master's absence and his command that she shall never bother him, leaving her a single woman disappointed in her hope of marriage. The absence of the master and his command intensify the governess' self-doubt and anxiety about managing the household on her own. The anxiety generates fear to the point that the governess can no longer distinguish between illusions and reality: "the more I go over it the more I see in it, and the more I see in it the more I fear. I don't know what I *don't* see, what I *don't* fear!" "Fear," writes Goddard, "is like faith: it ultimately creates what at first it only imagined" (166). The governess suspects in the beginning of the story that there is something strange and unnatural about the actions and words of the children. Eventually, they have indeed turned out to be strange and unnatural as she has assumed them to be. At the same time, the children are also aware of the governess' awkward and unnatural attitude towards them. "They cannot put it into words," writes Goddard, "but they sense it and grow afraid, and she accepts the abnormal condition into which their fear of her has thrown them as proof of their intercourse with the two specters" (166). In addition to her unrealistic illusions of the two sectors, the governess also lives under the illusion that she should become that "angel in the house," shielding the children from "terror, doubt and division." Ironically, far from being "the angel" who protects, she ends up destroying the entire family, with Miles dead and Flora leaving.

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Sisterhood: A Labor of Love, Dedication, and Sacrifice

Stephanie J. Stamps

The idea of sisterhood is not a new concept, for women of color have been at the forefront of this sorority for years, due to discrimination, poverty, and isolation by society. Christina G. Rossetti aligns herself with sisterhood, by stating, "For there is no friend like a sister, in calm or stormy weather, to cheer one on the tedious way, to fetch one if one goes astray, to lift one if one totters down, and to strengthen whilst one stands."

Consequently, Cece Winans, a popular gospel singer, heads up an organization which promotes sisterhood and friendships among African American women, duly named Always Sisters. Winans quotes Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 from the Bible, which mirrors Rossetti's quote, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. If they fall, one will lift up his companion, but woe to him who is alone when he falls; for he has no one to help him up". Likewise, it is the lifting up of one another in sisterhood, which makes all the difference in many African American women's lives. Thus, the purpose of sisterhood is to restore, revive, and renew the hearts of women of color, who otherwise would be cast aside if not for the safe haven of sisterhood.

To start, Bryant-Davis argues, "Sister friends can be crucial in assisting African American women and women of ethnically diverse backgrounds to face, address, and overcome, major transitions including stress and traumatic stress" (Bryant-Davis). Hence, one can see why sisterhood is not just a mere gossip club, but it is a viable network that allows women of color an outlet for the problems they face. Albeit, an outlet which is paramount in the outcome of many African American women's lives.

Thus, from the feminist point of view, it can be seen how the women in Alice Walker's *Color Purple*, and Gloria Naylor's novel, *Mama Day*, run up against sexism, and how their struggles bind them together. In comparison to this idea, Moore concurs that sisterhood is the awareness of being similar to other black women in terms of feelings, ideas, interests, ideology, and politics" (Moore 38). Nonetheless, these ties are what duly fortify the women in the two novels to stand together and give one another emotional support. This support renews their hearts to trust, advocates surrogacy to protect their children, and gives them courage to free their identities in a man driven society.

Historically, African American women have been subjected to abuse, and manipulation of their minds, bodies, and souls, by white men. This has been a harrowing

experience for generations of African American women. Moreover, Pearson argues along these lines that, "for women of color, the effect of their statuses of race, class, and gender simultaneously oppress the group" (Pearson 88). Therefore, to survive this oppression by men void of convictions and consciousness, it is no surprise that a sisterhood.

To begin, in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, the character Celie is an example of an African American woman caught up in a cycle of abuse. Despite this, she is still called upon directly, or indirectly to answer the call of sisterhood to the women in her family, and community. For example, Celie overhears her mother say, "Naw, I ain't gonna. Can't you see I'm already half dead, and all of these children" (Walker 1). This is her mother's response to her stepfather, still attempting to have sex with her, even though she is very ill. Even still, it is Celie who endures his unwarranted sexual advances, as a young teenager. However, Singh and Gupta argue it is her bond with Shug which liberates her to love and appreciate her body, "as Celie has been the object of repeated rapes and beatings, she has no desire of her body and is impossible for her to experience sexual pleasure, although she has had two children" (Singh, Gupta 2). However, it will be years after her adolescence before Celie will experience this liberation, as she continues to embrace sisterhood, while still enduring sexual misconduct by men, who should have been protecting her. Once again, it is Celie who must stand in the gap for Nettie; albeit, to protect her from the abuse that she experiences. To illustrate Celie says, "sometime he still be looking at Nettie, but I always git in his light" (Walker 5). By mere observation, one may not be able to fathom how a person like Celie is able to get in the light of evil, to protect someone, when she herself is suffering. It is this suffering, that is unique to black women that Pearson contends, "it would appear that women of Color should be somewhat unified and possess some degree of solidarity based on their similar positions and experiences in society as a self-conscious collection of people united, or closely related, by this experience" (Pearson). It is most evident that Celie's solidarity with her mother and sister, gives her the courage to do what she does. Yet, it is Celie's friendship with boisterous Sophia that gives her another taste of sisterhood, outside of her biological sister Nettie, as well as more lessons in feminism, when Sophia says, "I loves Harpo, God knows I do. But I'll kill him dead fo' I let him beat me" (Walker). Truly, Sophia's standing up for herself is like cold water in Celie's face, and this outspokenness washes over Celie, and begins to awaken her to a new way of thinking. According to Fiske, "their exchange validates the poignancy of each woman's private experience and, through that validation, binds them in a healing bond of friendship as Celie tentatively emerges from her habitual numbness" (Fiske).

In the same fashion that Celie and Sophia, and the other women in *The Color Purple* forge a sisterhood through their suffering; also in Naylor's *Mama Day*, the women also are bonded together by a suffering at the hand of grief. Miranda, respectfully called Mama Day along with the women of her family" suffers through the memory of what took place at Mama Day's childhood homestead" (Eckard). Also, according to Eckard, the homestead, "Originally built by Bascombe Wade, the house and the surrounding garden of Mama Day and her sister's childhood evolve as a place of legend, magic, and tragedy concerning Sapphira Wade. For recent family descendants, the house is a source of palpable anguish and pain—the drowning of Miranda's sister, Peace, and the suicide of her mother. Although Miranda recognizes that the house is nothing more than "wood and plaster and brick" and that people bring the sorrow (262), it still retains the memory of those who resided therein, and it assumes the sorrows and tragedies of their lives". Even still, it is Mama Day who garrisons up her powers to protect her family's very fragile emotional condition. Hence, once again it is the foreknowledge of sisterhood that enables Mama Day to understand that in a family, there must be a strong woman at the center, to protect the whole. Moreover, it is Mama Day's legendary mother, who was a rebellious slave, but was cunning enough to have her slave owner, and lover to give her a deed to his land. This is an empowering moment for the women in the Day family, as well as for the other women in their community. Albeit, they must accept the truth of how they got to own the land, and not allow the legend of their matriarch to die. Hence, by way of oral tradition feminism is touted down through generations, of what Sapphira Wade accomplished for her family.

Seemingly, it is their circumstances which necessitates sisterhood to act as a shelter for truth in relationships, in a society where men have taken it upon themselves to mishandle, and malign African American women; thereby, destroying their ability to trust in manhood for fear of its dark side, which is constantly dogging at their tracks, like a hound chasing the scent of a rabbit. In a like manner, Celie in *Color Purple* is not fortunate to establish a bond of trust with the most important man in a girl's life, namely her father. She is subjected to his lust, and his selfishness, as he rapes her and then gives away her children, to hide his sin. Celie sums it up like this, "He never had a kine word to say to me. Just say You gonna do what your mammy wouldn't. First he put his thing up against my hip and sort of wiggle it around. Then he grab hold my titties..." (Walker 1). Thus, this one act of her father washes away the foundation of trust for men in Celie's life. However, out of the pain a house of sisterhood emerges, in which Celie is able to find lodging, and shelter from the storms of life that seem to ravish her. Therefore, it is not surprising that feminism and sisterhood are first cousins in the big picture of liberation of African American women. According to

Proudfit, "it is the "female bonding," which occurs over a period of time, enables Celie—a depressed survivor-victim of parent loss, emotional and physical neglect, rape, incest, trauma, and spousal abuse to resume her arrested development and continue developmental processes that were thwarted in infancy and early adolescence". In all likelihood, had it not been for the grace of sisterhood, Celie would have found herself drifting in life, like a ship without a sail.

In comparing the issue of trust, in *Mama Day*, it is along the lines of trusting men with the organic nature of Willow Springs. Certainly, the opportunities for economic development presents itself in the untapped resources of the land, but it is not up for sale, and Mama Day wants no parts of outsiders changing their way of life. For example, Mama Day says, "...the way we saw it, American ain't entered into the question at all when it come to our land; Sapphira was African-born, Bascombe Wade was from Norway, and it was the 18 and 23'ing that went down between them two put deeds in our hands (Naylor 5). Similarly, "like the roots discourse, the narrative preoccupation with dating, marriage, and childbirth carries with it connotations of the existence of an organic, natural, and homogenous community" (Lamothe), so it is with Willow Springs that Mama Day is untrusting of anyone outside Willow Springs to alter its landscape, and not just the physical, but the spiritual aesthetics of their beliefs, and not even Cocoa's husband George is able to escape Mama's Day filtering of outsiders, whose only interests are in changing, and uprooting the foundation of their lives; thereby, infringing on the soundness of their sisterhood, of which they do not understand, and cannot infiltrate. Hence, according to Donlon, "George's role in the spiritual performance is the key to establishing this discourse of distrust as both intra-racial and inter-racial. George, with his engineering degree and his gold-leafed copy of *King Lear*, prizes his Western individualism, yet he fails to prove "beyond a shadow of a doubt that you got nothing from believing in crossed fingers, broken mirrors, spilled salt" (Naylor 33). He thereby serves as a means to guiding skeptical White Western audiences to confirm his stories from the grave". In other words, George is on the outside looking in, and his Western ideology creates a gulf between the ideologies of Mama Day, and the community of Willow Springs.

Furthermore, on the issue of trust for the women in *Color Purple*, and *Mama Day*, it is within the circle of sisterhood, where trust is tangible. In as much as these women are facing: abuse, rape, grief, and abandonment, as well as isolation, it is a great consolation in knowing that someone is able to take care of their children in their absence. Albeit, surrogacy is an age old practice among African American women, in which it is common for children to be raised by grandmothers, aunts, or godparents. For example, Celie's children were taken from her by her father, but fate has a hand in Nettie being able to watch them grow up, in Celie's absence. Also,

Sophia whose known for her reflex reactions to unwarranted confrontations, proves the latter again, when she knocks out the mayor, and then is hauled off to jail. However, in the midst of her fighting, she gives instructions regarding her children, "Take my children home" (Walker 86), is not a plea, but a command to take care of her children in her absence. Undoubtedly, in the back of African American women's minds is the disheartening thought that someone else may have to raise their children, due to internal or external conflicts. Likewise, Davis states, "Rarely ideal, the mother in African American literature may in fact be a biological mother or grandmother. Just as often, however, she is a sister, an auntie, an adoptive mother or a teacher who provides the maternal heart of the story. She may be raising her children, mourning their loss or trying, after many years, to find them".

In comparison to the surrogate mothers in *Mama Day*, Cocoa is raised by her Grandmother Abigail and her aunt Mama Day in a loving, and caring way, as surrogates in the absence of her mother, Grace. Most importantly, it is Cocoa who explains the co-parenting of her Grandmother, and her aunt, when she says, "Unlike Grandma, she'd take a peach switch to me. Mama Day just didn't believe in cuddling. But if Grandma had raised me alone, I would have been ruined for any fit company. I guess, in a funny way together they were the perfect mother. (Naylor58). Yet, it is when Cocoa is struck by an illness, directly related to black magic, that Mama Day attests to her place as a mother in Cocoa's life to Cocoa's husband George. "Baby Girl is the closest thing I have to calling a child my own. There ain't a mama who coulda felt more pain or pride for her when she was coming up-do you understand?" (Naylor 294). In this instance, Mama Day allows one to see that it is the premise of sisterhood, which allows a woman to accept, dote on, and love a child that she did not physically bear, as well, as feel the pain that any real mother feels, when her child is not faring well. It is also a clear picture of feminism, in that black women are capable, and willing to often raise children that are not their own.

Needless to say, with all the trauma, and disenfranchisement of their souls, it is no wonder that many women, hand in hand with sisterhood are able to recover their identities in a world ruled by men. For example, in *The Color Purple*, Celie is stripped by men of her identity to see them as a source of strength, someone to protect her, and she says, "I don't even look at mens. That's the truth. I look at women, tho, cause I'm not scared of them" (Walker 5). However, with a little coaxing, Shug helps Celie to see herself, as a valuable, and important. By observation of Singh, Sonal, and Sushma Gupta, "Shug also encourages Celie to touch herself and to learn that her body is for herself, not for men. By discovering and then accepting her own body, Celie is able to initiate desire of selfhood and opens the door for her breaking away from male domination". Furthermore, as Celie character progresses in the novel, so does her identity

as an independent woman.

Likewise, in *Mama Day*, Cocoa is adamant about keeping her identity intact, and is unwilling to give all of herself to her husband, George. To illustrate, one day George is unsatisfied with a meal of leftovers that Cocoa is serving him, and chastises. Cocoa asks him during the argument, "Well, what spoiled your day?", and George response is, "Coming in here and looking at this goulash, and Cocoa simply responds, "Nigger please" (Naylor 144-145). This is once again Cocoa's response to male domination by George, and a refusal of a stereotypical role that her husband wants her to assume in their relationship. Hence, by Lamonthe's research, "Her reluctance to be tradition-bound, are implicitly patriarchal, and therefore problematic" (Lamothe 156). In essence, Cocoa's idea of sisterhood is evolving, and is staring at feminism in the mirror, and she likes what she sees, and is unwilling to let traditions strip her of her independence, and chain her to a stove, barefoot and pregnant.

In summary, the women in *The Color Purple*, and in *Mama Day*, portray the sisterhood that African American women of today should reflect in their relationships to one another. Likewise, they should provide emotional support to one another, instead of tearing one another down. According to Moore, "the bonds among contemporary black women is weakening, in part, due to class differences that make it increasingly difficult for middle-class, working-class, and poor black women to relate to each other's life experiences". However, African American women must find a way to bridge this gap amongst one another, until their hearts beat as one.

Henceforth, the pulse of the community must be checked periodically and African American women, must throw down their rocks, and unite under the awning of sisterhood, to shelter them from the rain. However, in order to do so, women of color must remember that they share the same enemies of rape, abuse, and ill treatment, and therefore must not allow their sisterhood to be moved by distrust, and betrayal within their ranks.

For ultimately, their ability to get past their differences boils down to their children, and the generations who will come after them resting on the shoulders of sisterhood to ensure their safe passage into successful individuals, who understand that their jobs are to also make sure the tradition of surrogacy among African Americans is not a choice, but sits at the top of their to do lists. Even still, that age old proverb still reverberates today, "It takes a village to raise a child", and the African American women must unite to raise their children, and someone else's child if need be, in the spirit of sisterhood; however, this latter responsibility needs to be carried out by African American women, who know who they are and where they are going. Moreover, women who know that identity is not tied to or defined by men, who want them to believe that their place is not within equality, but within the ideologies of a

man's world.

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Communicative Language Teaching in Japan: The Failure of English Education in Japan and Some Ideas for Its Better Future

Eri Suzuki

Abstract

There is always a notion that "Japanese people are not good at English and they cannot communicate in English". Over two decades, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has tried to introduce Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Japan so that students can acquire communicate competence of English. However, their attempts seem to have failed so far, and CLT is not well rooted in Japan. Although there is a worldwide notion that "CLT is the best teaching method ever", some problems have been pointed out. In this paper, problems of CLT and challenges in introducing CLT in Japan will be analyzed. Following this, solutions for these problems will be presented. In this globalised society, it is time for Japanese people to understand the real problems of CLT and make actions so that students can foster communicative competence of English.

Introduction

"Tokyo!" On 7th September, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced the capital of Japan as the host city of the Olympic Games in 2020. Since this announcement, many people have insisted that Japanese people must improve their English ability. When 437 people, who had been asked for directions by foreigners, were asked if they have confidence in giving directions in English, more than 80 per cent answered that they do not (Diamond Online, 2013). There are concerns for the lack of Japanese people's English ability even from outside of the country. For example, Foreign Policy (2013, September 9), an American magazine, claims that, "Japanese people, on the whole, can't speak English".

There is always a notion that Japanese people are not good at English and that they cannot communicate with foreigners in spite of six years of English education. We must ask if this is really the case. According to the Test and Score Data Summary for TOEFL iBT Tests held in 2012, the average score for Japanese people was only 70 out of 120. Even when this score is compared with other Asian countries, where the average was 79, this was one of the lowest, with only Cambodia and Mongolia scoring

lower. Even though Japan is one of the most developed countries in Asia, this data clearly shows the lack of English competence amongst Japanese people. If this is the case, this raises the question as to what can be done to change the situation. Other than knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary, there is an idea that people need to be able to speak English in order to communicate with others from all over the world. This is because, today, English is used as a tool to communicate internationally in a globalised society. English should be learned as a tool for communication. However in Japan, English has been taught only as a school subject and students learn it simply in order to get better score on high school or university entrance exams. With regard to this current situation of English education in Japan and the needs of acquiring communicative English, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) appeared as a solution. This approach places emphasis on fostering students' communicative competence of the target language rather than on their knowledge of grammar or translation.

In this paper, the concept of CLT and its effect on language teaching in various countries will be discussed. Following this, current English education in Japan will be reviewed and the reasons for the failure of previous attempts to introduce CLT during the past twenty years will be established. The difficulties in introducing and implementing CLT will be examined from three different perspectives; education system, students, and teachers. Finally, possible solutions for education system and teachers will be shown so that pupils will be able to acquire not just "English" but "communicative English" with which they can communicate with foreigners.

What is CLT?

Before the discussion of the Japanese education system in this context can commence, the concept of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) must be defined. Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching (2010) describes CLT as "[a]n approach to foreign or second language teaching which emphasizes that the goal of language learning is communicative competence and which seeks to make meaningful communication and language use a focus of all classroom activities" (p. 99). The same dictionary also shows the major principles of CLT: "1) learners use a language through using it to communicate; 2) authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities; 3) fluency and accuracy are both important goals in language learning; 4) communication involves the integration of different language skills; 5) learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error" (p. 99).

Characteristics of CLT are further explored by Brumfit and Finocchiaro (1983) by comparing CLT with the audiolingual method, which is the archetype of structure-

based approach. They show the characteristics of CLT as being; "[f]luent and acceptable language is the primary goal: accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context" (p. 92); "[s]tudents are expected to interact with people, either in the flesh, through pair and group work, or their writings" (p. 93); "[i]ntrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in what is being communicated by the language" (p. 93); and "[t]he target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate" (p. 92).

In addition to the characteristics stated above, they also point out that "[c]ommunicative competence is the desired goal" (1983:92). "Communicative competence" is defined as "knowledge of not only if something is formally possible in a language, but also whether it is feasible, appropriate, or done in a particular speech community" (Longman Dictionary, 2010:99) and includes grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Therefore the principle of CLT is that, students gain not only knowledge of the language but also the skills needed in order to communicate with others using the language.

The History of CLT and Its Effect

The concept of CLT appeared in Europe in the 1960s when the number of immigrants and guest workers from poor countries increased. At the time, there were also many people who came and went within Europe due to the establishment of European Commission (EC) (Savignon, 1991; Oshita, 2009). Therefore, people needed to learn a second language, most often English. However, English language teaching at that time did not focus on the language structure, but on the functional aspect of the language. The Council of Europe, which attempted teaching communicative English to people, then introduced CLT as an alternative language teaching approach (McDonough & Shaw, 2003).

CLT has been implemented at many schools around the world ever since and various studies have taken place to examine its effect on students' ability to communicate in the target language effectively.

CLT in the World

In CLT, if it is recognised not as a method but an approach, there are mainly two categorizations; the task-based approach and the content-based approach. The former focuses on the tasks they do in the target language class. Through these tasks, pupils learn the function of the language and how to use it other than the meaning and pronunciation (Nunan, 1991; McDonough & Shaw, 2003). The latter focuses on the

content of students' learning. Thus with content-based approach, all subjects are taught only in the target language (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

Task-based approach. An example of the task-based approach is the Bangalore Madras Communicational Teaching Project, which took place in India from 1979 to 1984 (Baretta, 1989; Tsutui, 1995). Through this study conducted in their English class, students had been involved with problem-solving activities in English for three years. For example, in a class which dealt with distances on a map, the teacher asked almost only one question, "How far is [X] from [Y]?" and then changed the roles so that students could take turns asking distances (Baretta, 1989). Through this task-based approach, students could learn not English *for* communication, but rather English *through* communication, which is a much more effective approach (Baretta, 1989; Oshita, 2009; Tajima, 1995).

Another case is the study of an adults' French class in the U.S., which looked at "the effect of practice in the use of communication strategies as part of an instructional program" (Savignon, 1991:264). In this study, in one class, teachers were simply following language teaching rules such as pattern practice and error avoidance. On the other hand, teachers in the other classes encouraged students to ask for information and clarification in the target language, French in this case. By doing so, teachers encouraged learners "to take risks, to speak in other than memorized patterns" (Savignon, 1991:265) so that they could attain "communicative competence... the ability of language learners to interact with other speakers, to make meaning" (Savignon, 1991:264). After 18 weeks of classes at five hours per week, test results of the two classes were compared. The result of the test of structure shows that the learners who practiced communication performed with no less accuracy than those who did not. On the contrary, the result of the test of communication measured in terms of fluency and effort also showed that the learners who practiced communication did much better than those who did not. Even though this study took place in the U.S., i.e. not in Japan, and the target language in this case is not English, the contextual factor is quite similar to the case of English education in Japan in the sense that the learners learn the language not for surviving, but rather for fun or acquiring skills to get a better job.

Content-based approach. An example of a content-based approach is the immersion programme which took place in the mid-1960s in Quebec, Canada. Although French is the first language in the region, there were also residents who knew only English. Even though there were French classes for English speakers at school, they did not acquire "sufficient skills to work in French, or to socialize with French speakers" (Johnson & Swain, 1997: 2). However, because parents wanted their children to acquire a sufficient level of proficiency in French and to understand the culture of

Quebec in order to live in harmony with French speakers, their needs and wants changed the situation. In this immersion programme, young children in kindergarten were instructed entirely in French until they reached grade 2, when the first language literacy skills were taught for the first time. In grade 6 about the half of classes were taught in English and half in French (Edwards, 1998; Johnson & Swain, 1997). This programme was seen as a success as Crawford (1991: as cited by Laborda:1048) states, "as most students became fluent in French. However, the success went further beyond than learning the language, students achieved considerable learning in the other subjects, and did not interfere with their English competence".

CLT prevailed among Asian nations too. These countries have similar EFL situations in terms of students' motivation towards learning English, teachers' proficiency to conduct CLT, national policy, and educational system including system of entrance exams (D. Li, 1998; X. Li, 2011; Wang & Hill, 2011). It is relatively difficult to introduce CLT in Asia compared to Western countries; however, teachers have valued the efficacy of CLT and have been trying to introduce it in such places as South Korea (D. Li, 1998), Vietnam (Ngoc & Iwashita, 2012), China (X. Li, 2011; Liao, 2004), Yemen (Bataineh & Thabet, 2011), and Japan. Although these efforts have generally not been met with success, attempts have been made to change the situation and introduce CLT more successfully.

CLT in Japan

In Japan, the Course of Study in the national educational policy is revised approximately every ten years. Until the revision to the Course of Study in 1989, almost all English classes focused on grammar-translation, structure, and readings. As the Japanese economy developed, English became an academic subject which pupils need to acquire in order to enter better high schools and universities. With this purpose in mind, "the grammar and translation method came to dominate English language education" (Butler, 2007:132). However, the Japanese government and its citizens became aware of the necessity to acquire communicative competence in English as Japan now plays an important international role as one of the most highly developed countries, and international business has become important.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology (MEXT) was aware of people's concern and started taking action. In 1989, MEXT revised the Course of Study and put emphasis on students' acquiring communicative competence in English and introduced a new subject, 'Oral Communication'. Moreover MEXT issued "The Establishment of an Action Plan to Cultivate 'Japanese with English Abilities'", which tried to improve practical communication skills in English and foster a positive attitude amongst learners towards communication in English (MEXT, 2001).

One of the main actions was the setting of Super English Language High Schools

(SELHi's). This case shows to some extent the efficacy of introducing CLT in actual schools and classes (Tsutsui, 1995; Shimamura, 2009). In this instance, MEXT designated 169 high schools as SELHi's from 2002 to 2009 (MEXT, 2011c). Each school tried to improve their English teaching programs with financial support from the government over three years. They put emphasis on the balance of four skills; reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills. They also encouraged teachers to conduct activities such as pair work, group work, discussions, presentations, and debates in which students can communicate with each other in English. Moreover, pupils were encouraged to challenge extensive reading and writing texts or participate in events such as speech contests (Nishiono & Watanabe, 2006).

As a result of these improvements and efforts, many teachers at SELHi's say that pupils are acquiring higher English proficiency (Benesse, 2008). They are also generally motivated to study English. Yonezaki (2007), an English teacher at a SELHi, says that although at first pupils had no confidence in speaking in English in front of others, as they gained confidence through pair- and group-works and presentations, their attitude towards English class changed and they came to speak more actively in English. Toyoshima (2007) also states that thanks to the change of the class style from teacher-centred to student-centred, pupils seemed to enjoy English classes more and understood that they were acquiring practical English skills which they might be able to use in the future. Moreover, according to a survey conducted by MEXT (2008), more than 80% of teachers at SELHi's answer that things which they did through the three year period were effective for passing university entrance exams. Almost 80% answered that pupils now speak more in English in class and more than 90% said that pupils came to be more interested in foreign cultures and languages than before.

Problems of CLT

Since CLT appeared, many countries have made efforts to introduce it because they believe that "CLT will work anywhere... the methodology is king, and the magic solution for all our pupils" (Bax, 2003:281). However problems in CLT began to occur and people started to study its efficacy and point out its problems.

This is also the case in Japan. Even after MEXT's attempts for over twenty years, criticisms of English education in Japan remain. For instance, Shimamura (2009) shows that "it has not been functioning effectively to produce communicatively competent users of English in spite of the time and energy spent on English learning" (p. 2); Tahira (2012) complains that "[t]here remains a big gap between the stated policies and what is actually done in the classroom" (p. 3); Tsukamoto and Tsujioka (2013) also claim that "it didn't have a great impact on English language teaching in Japan"

(p. 310). Moreover a survey conducted by Nishino (2011) shows that after the action plan, although 60% of teachers answered that CLT is favourable, only about 30% of them actually introduced CLT in their class.

With regard to these complaints, MEXT revised the Course of Study again in 2008 and 2009, which took effect in 2011, which aims to "provide Japanese youth with a more heightened sense of internationalization" (Mondejar, Valdivia, Laurier & Mboutsiadis, 2012:180). Due to this change in the Course of Study, pupils from fifth grade at primary school to third grade at high school have had opportunities to learn English (MEXT, 2010; 2011a; 2011b). This revision aims to foster motivation to learn the language and "instructors are encouraged to utilize more learner-centered instruction - based on student needs and interests - instead of traditional teacher-fronted instruction" (Mondejar et al., 2012:182). Because the revised Course of Study has only recently been implemented, the effect of this revision is as yet unknown. However, if the government and school teachers just follow this revision and try to introduce CLT in Japan without thinking about the reasons why MEXT's attempts have failed for twenty years, current efforts could once again prove futile. Thus it is necessary for them to understand the problems of CLT in an EFL context in Japan and try to find solutions in order to introduce CLT successfully.

Therefore, in this section, problems of CLT from a theoretical perspective will firstly be analysed; following this, the challenges of introducing in Japan based on the EFL context will be examined.

Problems of CLT from the Theoretical Perspective

Many people paid attention to Bax's (2003) criticisms of CLT which argue that CLT neglects the EFL context of the country when it is introduced. In language teaching, it is important to consider the context of EFL in the country when the teaching materials and approaches are chosen; as Bax (2003) insists, "[t]he first priority is the learning context...This will include an understanding of individual students and their learning needs, wants, styles, and strategies...as well as the coursebook, local conditions, the classroom culture, school culture, national culture, and so on" (p. 285). Wang and Hill (2011) also claim that "[i]t would thus be unwise to neglect these contextual factors in the planning and implementation of ELT programs" (p. 211). Among problems in CLT, the neglect of EFL context is the most problematic and something needs to be done in order to implement CLT successfully.

That was when Bax's (2003) 'Context Approach' appeared which claims that CLT must be implemented in a way which suits that country concerning the context of the nation and its people. This idea is supported by Harmer (2003) who claims that "the problem is not with the methodology itself, nor with the ideas that it generates, but rather with how they are amended and adapted to fit the needs of the students

who come into contact with them" (p. 292), and by many other experts (Savignon, 2003; Nishino, 2011; X. Li, 2011; Tsukamoto & Tsujioka, 2013).

Therefore, if the government, and especially the teachers, can recognise the EFL contexts in Japan, then they will be able to adjust and amend CLT in a way that is more suitable for the learners. This is what Japan should do rather than just introducing CLT in a way that is only suitable for Europe or North America.

Difficulties in Introducing CLT in Japan

In order to understand the EFL context, some challenges which class conductors might face in implementing CLT successfully in Japan will be presented. When problems and challenges of CLT are concerned, these factors are categorized in different ways depending on authors such as McGrath (2002), who categorises these factors into two contexts, the macro and micro contexts. In this essay, D. Li's (1998) categorization, which contains difficulties caused by the education system, students, and teachers, will be applied. This is because the EFL contexts in Asian countries are quite similar (D. Li, 1998; Wang & Hill, 2011); therefore, it is easy to follow even when those of Japan are analysed and categorised.

Difficulties caused by the education system.

Large classes. A number of teachers are concerned that each class has so many pupils that it is very difficult to conduct CLT. Research conducted by Nishino (2011) shows that many teachers think it is the classroom size that needs to be changed most in order to introduce CLT successfully. There are about 30 to 40 students in each class in Japan. If there are too many in one class, it would be much harder for the teacher to control students and the class, and CLT is more likely to fail (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008).

Grammar-based examinations. Because the Japanese education system puts emphasis on the high school or university entrance examinations, CLT is difficult to implement. It is said that this entrance exam system and CLT are incompatible because entrance exams focus on reading comprehension and grammar (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008:135; D. Li, 1998), but the skills at the heart of CLT are not easily measured (Davies, 1983; Savignon, 1991). Nishino and Watanabe (2008) also state that teachers in Japan believe that "detailed grammatical knowledge and intensive reading skills are crucial for Japanese secondary school learners" (p. 134). Therefore if teachers put more emphasis on the preparation for the entrance exams, they cannot conduct CLT effectively; on the other hand, if they try to foster students' communicative English skills, then they cannot spend much time on teaching grammars and vocabulary. The points in this case are that in Japan or in other Asian countries, people do not feel the need to learn English, rather they simply study English for the entrance exams in order to enter higher education. In other words, for Japanese people, English only

plays a role "as a school subject and passing examinations is the only goal of learning" (Wang & Hill, 2009:209).

The use of ALTs. Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) play an important role in EFL in Japan. They team-teach with Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) in introducing foreign languages such as pronunciation, expressions and gestures, and foreign cultures. It is a great opportunity for students to actually meet these ALTs and learn their real languages and cultures; however, because ALTs get minimal teaching training before they start their job in Japan, they do not know how and what to do to teach English effectively (Mondejar et al., 2011). Moreover because of the lack of proficiency in English and Japanese, ALTs and JTEs do not communicate with each other; therefore, they cannot improve the class together (Mondejar et al., 2011). Campbell, Kikuchi and Palmer (2006) also state that if JTEs believe that English is best taught with native speakers' assistance, they tend to rely too much on ALTs. Consequently, even when JTEs work with ALTs, they just make ALTs pronounce words and phrases or talk about their culture.

Teachers' training. Another reason why English teachers in Japan are incapable of conducting EFL classes is because "they lack training in communicative approaches...; they have beliefs about themselves and teaching that undermine their confidence" (Nishino and Watanabe, 2008:136). Tahira (2012) also points out that "teachers do not fully understand [CLT] and are not confident about using [it]" (p. 7). In reality, most teachers claim that because MEXT does not offer any practical materials or give any lectures about how to conduct communicative activities, they do not clearly know what to do (Nishino, 2011).

Little time for and expertise in material development. Teachers' jobs are not only teaching but also giving guidance to students, coaching in club activities, and so forth. According to the study conducted by Benesse (2010a; 2010b) shows that 91.3% of primary school teachers, 81.3% of secondary school teachers, and 65.1% of high school teachers say that they are too busy to have enough time for preparation of the next class. Moreover Nishino (2011) claims that teachers' working hours are the longest among OECD countries. This lack of teachers' time for preparation could lead to the failure of introduction of CLT. D. Li (1998) insists that the situation is the same in South Korea and that "the teachers either had given up CLT after a brief try or simply had not ventured to try it" (p. 689) as if they want to introduce CLT, they need to make materials for themselves due to the lack of existing examples.

Difficulties caused by students.

Low English proficiency. A study conducted by D. Li (1998) shows that it is not teachers' deficiency of English but pupils' deficiency that prevents teachers from introducing CLT. He also claims that, because "[t]hey usually have a small English

vocabulary and a limited command of English structures... the teachers found it hard to do any oral communicative activities with them" (D.Li, 1998:690). This is also the case in Japan. The research conducted by Nishino (2011) shows that only half of teachers believe that pupils would be able to understand what the teacher says if CLT is introduced.

Little motivation for communicative competence. The EFL context in Japan is clearly different from that in Europe at the time when CLT was first introduced in terms of needs of learning that language. In Europe at that time, there was a great need to acquire English because if people could not speak it, they could not survive or be able to communicate with others. However, this is not the case in Japan today, where most people speak Japanese and if they do not really need to learn English to live. Nishino and Watanabe (2008) state that "because Japanese students... have very few opportunities to engage in face-to-face communication in English outside the classroom, they may feel little real need for communicative English skills" (p. 134). This is not only the case in Japan but also in other Asian countries, as Wang and Hill (2011) claim, "in the Asian context, for most learners, especially those of the expanding-circle countries, integration with the target culture is far from being a realistic target of learning" (p. 212). This kind of socio-cultural demands of learning the target language influences pupils' motivation towards learning it (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

Students' reluctance in active participation and learner-centred learning. There are also concerns that CLT might not be suitable for English learners in Japan from socio-cultural perspective. Because most classes had been taught in teacher-centred way until recently, Japanese people are not used to student-centred classes and being actively involved in class (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008). Moreover Campbell et al. (2006) describes the general culture of a Japanese school as; "strong belief that instructions and explanations should be given in Japanese", "general resistance by students (and teacher) to accept the use of English between Japanese" and "longer class hours allocated to grammar-centered teaching conducted mainly in Japanese", for example. Therefore it can be said that CLT, which requires students' active participation and much interaction between the teacher and student and among the students themselves, might be incompatible with Japanese people.

Difficulties caused by teachers.

Low proficiency in English. Some people claim that the lack of teachers who can put CLT into effect in Japan results in the failure of introducing it. It is often said that English teachers in Japan do not have much knowledge of English and their teaching ability is insufficient. In April 2013, *Kyouiku Saisei Jikkou Hombu* (Education Rebuilding Council) made a suggestion that all English teachers should pass at least STEP pre-1st grade which is equivalent to TOEFL iBT 80 and TOEIC 730. However

in reality, only 27.7% of junior high school teachers and 52.3% of high school teachers have passed it (Saito, 2013).

Even though English teachers do not have much English proficiency, CLT requires high levels of English both in accuracy and in fluency. The reason for this is because evaluation of the answers in CLT is very difficult (Savignon, 1991). It is easy to judge if pupils' answers are correct or not in the grammar-translation method and other methodologies that focus on the language structure. However, it is difficult in CLT because there are various possible answers. Even if the sentence is grammatically incorrect, it might be able to make sense and they can communicate with that sentence. In that case, that answer can be both correct and incorrect. In other words, in CLT, teachers need to be able to respond flexibly to pupils' various answers and to make them talk frequently without overly worrying about the mistakes (Thompson, 1996). Therefore, teachers who have much knowledge of English are necessary in CLT; however, Japan does not have enough teachers who can put CLT into effect. Thus Japan has been unable to introduce CLT at a school level.

Misconceptions about CLT. Although MEXT has been trying to introduce CLT and most teachers have a favourable feeling towards CLT itself, they do not understand what CLT really is and so are mistaken in their approach to it. Thompson (1996) pointed out four common misunderstandings about CLT, that: 1) CLT ignores grammar; 2) CLT means teaching speaking only; 3) CLT equals doing pair work and group work, such as role plays; and 4) CLT demands too much from teachers in terms of time, skills, and energy.

If teachers misunderstand CLT, some may feel that CLT is "contradicted to their beliefs about language learning" (D. Li, 1998, p. 689), so they will not try to make an effort to introduce it. Moreover, it could lead the teachers to introduce CLT in an erroneous way. Tsukamoto and Tsujioka (2013) argue that "[t]eachers' misunderstanding of CLT and their low competence of implementing it could negatively impact students' competence" (p. 312).

Ideas for Better English Education: Suggestions for the Future

When examining the EFL contexts in Japan, it seems that CLT is not suitable after all. However, if the government and, more importantly, teachers recognise these contexts and difficulties in introducing CLT and amend CLT to fit into the EFL contexts more, it would work properly even in Japan as Bax's (2003) 'Context Approach' shows.

In this section, fundamental and practical suggestions and possible amendments that could be taken into consideration in order to introduce CLT successfully in Japan

will be shown for the education system and teachers.

Suggestions for Education System

As examined in the previous chapter, there are many situational constraints which have negatively affected the implementation of CLT. For example, situational constraints include the entrance examination system, classroom size, teachers' training, and teachers' little time for preparation for class.

Entrance examination systems. The government really needs to take an action to change the entrance examination system; otherwise, English classes are more likely to remain the same as the current ones that focus on grammar and translation. Since 2006, a new component, "Listening Comprehension", has been included in the nationwide Unified University Entrance Exams taken by about half a million applicants every year (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008). However this is still not enough. Because communicative competence is difficult to measure, it might be difficult to add a new part which tests students' communicative competence in this exam. However, it could be possible that second-stage exams that each university sets will have tests such as individual interviews in English which judges students' communicative competence.

Classroom size. As previously mentioned, classroom size matters a lot in language teaching. The fewer the students, the better language learning would be because students would have more opportunities to speak in the target language (Nishino, 2011). However, reducing the number of students in one class would be costly. According to Nishino (2011) it would cost about 780 billion yen to reduce the number of students in one class at primary and secondary schools from 40 to 30. Even though it costs much to reduce the number of students in one class, Nishino (2011) argues that the Japanese government should spend money on education because the proportion of money which Japan uses for education is the lowest among 28 OECD countries, and then, it could reduce the number of students in one class, and consequently, the teachers' workload as well.

Teachers' training (also that of ALTs). The lack of opportunities for JTEs and ALTs is also problematic. Tahira (2012) continues by claiming that "it is essential that more support be given in order for teachers to become confident and capable of teaching in communicative ways" (p. 6). MEXT has begun to make significant changes. The number of English teachers who are encouraged to take English course in English-speaking countries have been increasing (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008). However, the number of those who have received this kind of training system is still limited. MEXT should offer class materials and show examples or demo classes for all English teachers in Japan as Tahira (2012) insists, "it is necessary that MEXT more clearly defines the type of classroom activities and ways of teaching which it expects teachers to adopt" (p. 6).

Distribution of teachers' workload. The fact that a number of teachers claim that they have little time for preparation of their class because of other work was presented. In order to solve this problem, the government should hire more people who can do some teachers' jobs. For example, today many teachers coach club teams after school or even at the weekend. If the government hire people who can coach these teams instead of teachers, the teachers' workload would be reduced and they will have more time to spend on preparing for the next class or developing the class materials in a way which is more suitable for the students.

Suggestions for Teachers

Although there are many problems in the education system with respect to introducing CLT in Japan, changes in education system would take time and cost significantly more. However, even if education system remains the same, if teachers clearly understand CLT and EFL contexts of the class including students' level and needs of the target language, then they can amend and apply CLT in a way which is more suitable for their students; as Liao (2004) states, "if teachers are aware of situational constraints, any difficulties can be overcome" (p. 271). Therefore in this section, what teachers should do in class or keep in mind when they teach will be presented.

Do not neglect grammar. Some teachers have a misconception that in CLT, grammar should not be taught. However, the truth is that grammatical instruction is essential in language teaching; therefore, it should not be neglected (Sato&Kleinsasser, 1999; X. Li, 2011). For instance, Savignon (1991) states that "[c]ommunication cannot take place in the absence of structure, or grammar" (p. 268) and "for the development of communicative ability, research findings overwhelmingly support the integration of form-focused exercises with meaning-focused experience. Grammar is important; and learners seem to focus best on grammar when it relates to their communicative needs and experiences" (p. 269). Related to this argument, Thompson (1996) shows how to teach grammars in CLT class. According to him, students should be exposed to the new language in a comprehensible context so that they can understand the function and meaning, and then grammatical forms should be examined. This is just the matter of the order that grammars or functions be taught; however, even this slight change could alter the situation.

Tell students the purpose of activities and CLT. One of the reasons why CLT does not function in Japan is because students do not feel the necessity of communicative competence; therefore, they are not motivated towards communicative lessons. It shows that if students know the needs of acquiring the skills and purposes of each activity and CLT itself, they can be more positively motivated. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to clarify the meanings and purposes of activities and explain the reasons and the efficacy of each activity so that students can be positively motivated towards

in a class (Tsutsui, 1995; D. Li, 2011; Nishino, 2011; Ngoc & Iwashita, 2012; Barnes & Lock, 2013).

Put more emphasis on interactions. Among characteristics of CLT, the importance of interaction between students is insisted by many people such as Devies (1982), Harmer (2003), Bataineh et al. (2011) and Tsukamoto and Tsujioka (2013). Lightbown and Spada (2013) especially insist that, "When students work in pairs or groups, they have opportunities to produce and respond to a greater amount and variety of language" (p. 128). Moreover Thompson (1996) states that through pair- and group-work, students can gain chances to communicate in the target language, help from others, and confidence. Therefore, more and more pair- and group- works should be encouraged.

Try to understand CLT and the EFL context of your class. Most importantly, it is truly important for teachers to well understand the concept of CLT and the EFL contexts of the class (Savignon & Wang, 2003). CLT should be implemented in a way that is most suitable for students. In order to do this, teachers are required to understand the EFL contexts of the class as well as those of CLT, as X. Li (2011) states, "teachers' proper perception of CLT plays a key part in the implementation of CLT" (p. 12). Liao (2004) also shows that the successful case of CLT implemented by a female English teacher in China. Even though there were more than 50 students in her class, she successfully fostered students' communicative competence using normal textbooks by changing components and activities according to students' needs, wants and levels. Therefore, what is important for teachers is the motivation towards learning CLT and enthusiasm to improve your students' communicative competence by knowing them well; as Ur (1996, as cited in Wang and Hill, 2011:214) insists, "to serve as a language teacher...one has to have a good understanding of basic processes of teaching, techniques of teaching different language skills, and making and implementing lesson plans as well as detailed knowledge of the language that is being taught and the students who are doing the learning" (p. 214).

Conclusion

Although Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) had once received great attention as a solution for all foreign language teaching situations, some countries have failed to introduce it such as some Asian countries, including Japan. Thus some started pointing out the problems of it. The strongest criticism was that CLT neglects the context of the country where it was introduced. In this paper, the difficulties in introducing CLT in Japan regarding its EFL context were examined based on three different categories; difficulties caused by education system, students, and teachers.

With regard to education system, large classroom size, grammar-based entrance examination system and lack of teachers' (including ALTs) training prevent CLT from functioning properly. Difficulties caused by students such as lack of motivation and proficiency in English, and classroom culture in which students do not actively speak up in class also have great influence on the failure of CLT in Japan. Teachers also prevent CLT from working properly because of the lack of proficiency in English and CLT.

After considering the problems of CLT and the challenges of introducing it, some practical suggestions were shown for changes to the education system and for teachers. For the education system, suggestions were given such as; the government should think about adding a test which examines students' communicative competence; the government should spend more time on education so that the number of students in one class and teachers' workload can be reduced; and they should put more effort on training both JTEs and ALTs. For teachers, more practical suggestions are presented such as; they should not neglect grammar because it is needed to foster one's communicative competence; they should explain the purpose of each activity and of CLT so that students can be more motivated; they should understand the effectiveness of interactive activities such as pair and group-work and put more emphasis on them; and they should try to understand what CLT is and the EFL context of the class such as their needs and levels.

"Rome was not built in a day" - as with this proverb, CLT in Japan is and will not be established in a day. Even though Japan has been trying to introduce it for over two decades, it has not been well rooted yet because of situational constraints. It is true that there are many problems with the education system when conducting CLT. However in order to change the education system, a lot of money and time will be spent. Therefore what is important for implementing CLT in the actual class is that teachers understand both CLT and the EFL context of the class, and amend CLT so that it could be more suitable for students according to their needs, levels and interests. In addition, they should try to utilise more communicative activities using materials which are given or develop other materials by cooperating with co-workers. Teachers' effort, enthusiasm, motivation, and love for students are essential in order to successfully implement CLT in Japan.

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It

Tabitha Cole

"I can do this, I can do this," I whispered as I tip-toed into the downstairs bathroom. Oh gosh, I can't! My heart is palpitating. I'm trembling all over again. "What if it's in here, watching me. I don't think I can be in here alone" I felt sweat trickle down my neck to my back, my feet moving about the speed of a slug on the cold concrete floor. I flicked on the light switch, and I looked around, checked all the windows, and peeped under the white iron tub, but I didn't see anything. I tried to relax and be sensible, but my brain couldn't seem to let go of the last encounter.

"Ah." Sinking into the boiling water, relieving my aching muscles, I threw away the stress of the day. Steam filled the bathroom as I leaned back with my brown hair pinned up, feeling the iciness of the white tub on my skin. All the worries that bombarded my mind, money, school, this English paper, drifted away with the steam as I indulged in my own little world of bliss.

"I wonder what I could write my paper on. Why is it so hard to think of a dang subject?" I pondered this ridiculous thought as I settled into the warm water, and I wondered what happened to my ethereal world of bliss I was in a minute ago. Sure it's due next week, but this bath is more important right now! I scrubbed like a maniac, hoping the searing pain of lemon foam on my skin could magically write my paper. Turning off the water, I was in three hundred places right then in my mind, and I could hear the echoes of my thoughts scream out. I never liked the silence. My skin was now pink and raw.

"I wish I knew a topic to write about, but my life's boring! Nothing interesting ever happ...",

Every muscle in my body froze, even the bubbles of my foam beard. I gazed at the most unnatural, grotesque, gruesome sight I have ever seen. I was paralyzed. I felt the water freeze, or was that perhaps my blood freezing in place, I couldn't tell. My soul flooded with terror, my heart began to pound so viciously I was afraid it would pump a hole in my chest. How do I even begin to describe that hellish thing? It was like Satan peering through the window. I'm pretty sure he isn't this horrid.

"Mom, Mom!" I screamed bloody murder a thousand times before she finally responded. "Hurry before it gets me!"

My screams were an understatement of what I was feeling inside. I was in a nightmare, and I was going to die. I was too young to die! There was so much I hadn't

achieved in life yet, like fixing the shark bite on the back of my car, or getting married, or visiting the mall of America, all the important stuff. It never gazed away from it, fearing the worse. How were my family and friends going to live without me? They needed me! I hadn't even written my will yet, and I imagined all my friends brawling over my clothes, resulting in a blood bath.

This thing was coming closer every millionth of a second, creeping closer and closer. My mom was going to be too late. I heard her steps, but they were a million miles away (ok, their only twenty feet away). I feared for the gruesome sight she would see, or worse. I could see her die right on the spot when she found my body with my head butchered away, and my body that's left slowly being ripped apart and digested by that monstrosity. What if it went after my mom next? My dad and sister would come home to find our bodies twisted together in a freakish cocoon, our blood splattered all over the wooden walls and white tub. No, I had to conquer the beast myself.

I slowly stood up. I felt God powered me through my foam beard that has yet to leave, but I feared the beard's magical powers aren't enough. The sight of this thing was ghastly. Those long, spiny brown legs flicker, striped with black. That muscular body patterned intricately of brown and black. The fangs, the worst in my opinion, screaming with murder, sharp as a Great White Shark, marked with the hint of crimson at the edge, and those eyes, the eyes of death. They were small but with the intensity of a thousand suns, all glaring straight into my soul.

I faced this demon eye to eye, but it was so hideous. I backed down. I felt it laughing at me in the midst of my cowardice. It won this battle. How could I defeat the spawn of Satan? Everything about it was horrid, and its size! It was gargantuan, large enough to cast off many ships. It would have shamed the Titanic.

Ok, so it was about the size of a flash card, little dramatic I know, but for a Wolf Spider it was ginormous.

The door opened. I heard the angels singing. I was going to live! Those five minutes were the longest and most torturous minutes of my life.

"Where's it at?" My mom casually asked with a shoe in her hand, as if my impending doom wasn't a big deal. I pointed to her the wretched spot where it perched.

"So what do you need me to do?"

"Burn it! Slaughter it! Desecrate it! Burn its family, children, and community! Burn it to the ground!" I screamed at the top of my lungs, sounding like a homicidal maniac.

She sighed, rather loudly, and walked on over to the monster. I leaped from the tub, with my towel on of course, and slunk to the outermost corner. I waited. With closed eyes, I strained to hear any sound I could. I only hoped my mom would live.

What I heard next would forever haunt me. That sound. I never knew the sound of a crushed body could bring joy to my soul. It was a crunching sound, but more than just that. I heard the impenetrable screams of agony coming from that being. I smiled.

"Well its dead now." My mom stepped out of the bathroom. She didn't gloat or brag, which she has every right to, considering she battled with the devil. I tiptoed over to the spot, and I saw the twisted, mangled corpse of what was a spider. I don't think I can bathe in that crime scene ever again, but all of sudden something clicked in me. It was as if a light bolt went off in my head. With my towel still on, I leaped to the nearest pencil and paper and started furiously to write.

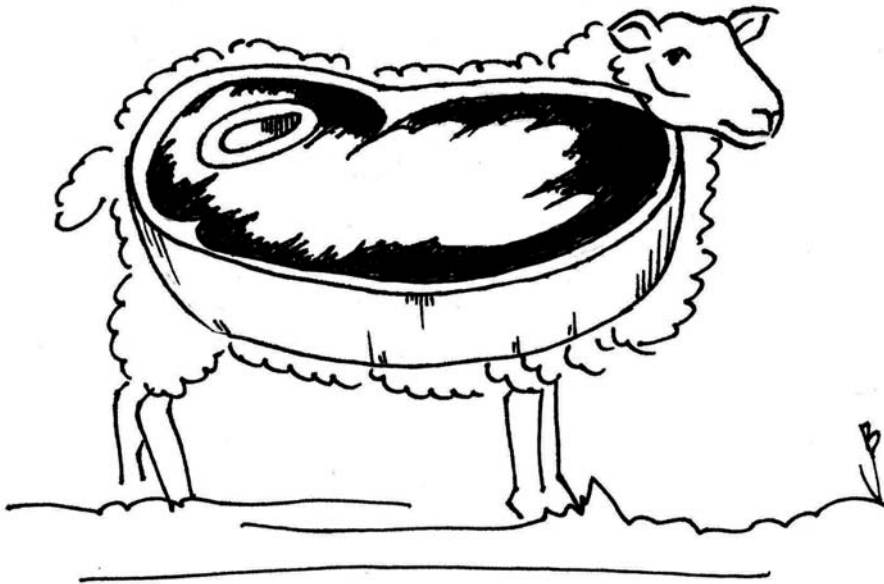
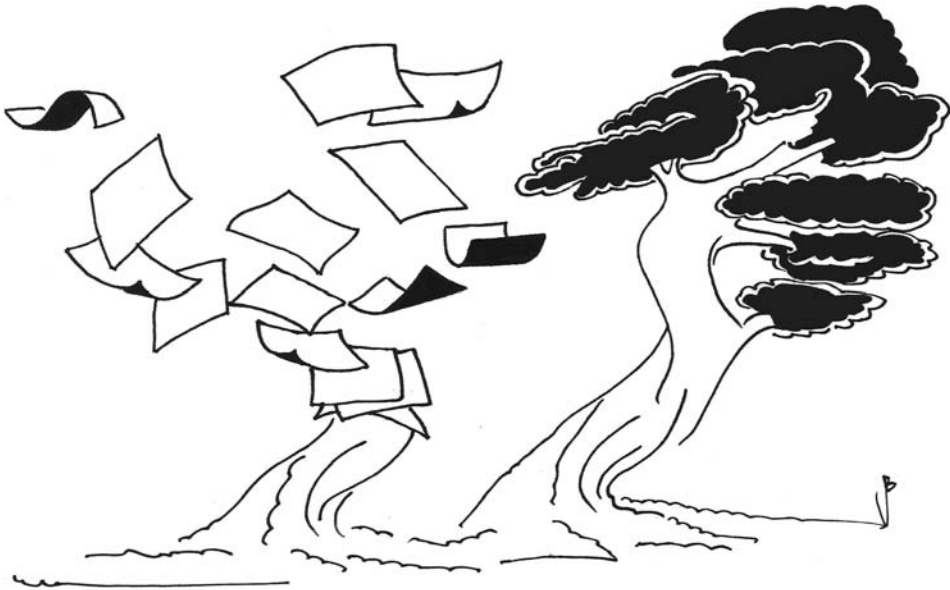
Well, I can never complain again about my life being boring. Is a boring life, however, really that bad?

Steam fogs the window, the sound of running water calms my trembles. I can still recount that day, even the crunching of its corpse. Ok, it was just a spider, right? A wolf spider isn't even venomous. Gosh, I can be so dramatic at times it's unreal. Hey, at least I don't have to worry about my paper. I let the steamed water soothe my muscles. I slowly enter my ethereal world of bliss, away from the stress and fear I built up. "This isn't so bad. At least I know have a topic to write about. I just hope a make a go... Mom!"

Digital Artwork

Valeriia Boldosova

These works are inspired by excessive consumption of the Earth's resources aiming to encourage people think about the future of the planet.



The Autumn Poem

Roman Kushnir

Look at the gift of summer toil,
The fields of barley, wheat and rye,
Oh thank you, thank you, Mother Soil!
This autumn soon will say "Good bye!"

Calls to a feast the Abbey bell,
Great Hall awaits, the lanterns light.
This vermeil autumn, farewell,
Friends, let bale-fires blaze at night!

Alas! Good bye! Fall of the leaf
Brought shining gold to silent day.
Sleep villages, towns, joy and grief
Within the walls of boring grey.

"New winter comes! Alas! Alas!",
Told me the star of a Higher Plain.
And snow will hide the home of us,
But my deep sorrow will remain.

Good bye! Alas! No cry today,
Let my little soul in amber sleep.
The fire cannot burn away
With leaves, my sorrow, hard and deep.

The pain of heart - it has no sense,
Oh, how to stand the grey weeks turn?
I have to wait, I will, and hence
One day this autumn will return.

The Beast of the Barony

Jared Malone

In days past of the old code,
Lived warriors brave, strong, and bold.
On the earth roamed many beasts,
Some fierce and cold, others meek.
A small town atop a hill,
Suffered vast and bloody kills.
A vile serpent, quick and mean,
Fed daily- quite a fiend.
At first light, the people fled
And at night, wept for the dead.
Short, stubby legs carried the beast,
Over the hills to claim its feast.
For months, the serpent kept on,
Eating all it came upon.
All suffered- farmers and cooks the same,
Livestock swallowed whole, not at all in vain.
When at last fed up, came down the iron hand,
He was sick of death- The Baron of that land.
Hiding in fear at first, but not anymore,
The Baron took up arms to settle the score.
He put on his mail, heavy and tight,
Then his plated armor, pure and bright.
He put on the sword of his fathers past,
And took up his steel shield, heavy and vast.
And taking up his lance at eight feet long,
He mounted up his white horse, young and strong.
Early at dawn, he set out at such a speed,
His horse, pure bred, with no limits to exceed.
Arrival was met with such a ghastly sight,
Gore covered the Earth and people wept in fright.
Without a word, The Baron followed the blood,
The beast making a trail in the grain and mud.
The Baron soon arrived at its dwelling place,

A looming cave carved in a rocky cliff base.
There, was the serpent at the mouth of the cave,
Feeding upon a corpse, not granted a grave.
At sight of the horse, the beast let forth a harrowing scream,
It leapt at The Baron its bloody, gnashing teeth a gleam.
The Baron's horse rearing, he extended his lance,
And pierced the serpent's side upon its advance.
As the reptile let out a groan and its blood poured,
The Baron leapt off of his horse and drew his sword.
His boots sank into earth and blood as he raised the blade,
And brought it down with both hands, taking the beast's life as pay.
The body was rolled over, doused in oil, and burned,
While the head was displayed in town and The Baron's thanks was earned.
In town that eve, was held a great victor's feast,
Thus is the story of The Baron and beast.

Call for Papers

Aims and Scope

The *Student Journal of International Liberal Arts* is the first academic journal to be published by the undergraduate students of Akita International University. The editors are all AIU undergraduate students and the journal showcases undergraduate and graduate student work -- from AIU and from the rest of the world. The goal of this journal is to give students the opportunity to publish their academic and creative writing and to exchange intellectual ideas with peers. As such, the *Student Journal* hereby invites you to submit your finest writing, written for a course or simply for your own intellectual purposes. Academic writing from both Japanese and international students is welcomed. Students are invited to submit a paper they would like to have considered for publication.

Submissions

Academic essay liberal arts topics include, for example, politics, history, education, environment, economics, anthropology, sociology, literature, etc. Creative writing includes poetry, short stories, etc. We also welcome other creative works such as photography, painting, and sculpture, but must be submitted in digital format.

Academic submissions should be:

1. written in English,
2. formatted following APA6th edition conventions
3. referenced with endnotes, not footnotes, and kept to a minimum.
4. double spaced, with 12-point font size, 1-inch (25mm) margins,
5. a minimum of 1,000 words (3 pages in length, excluding references, tables, etc.) in length, to a maximum of 20 pages, and,
6. submitted in MS Word

Creative writing should be:

1. written in English
2. double spaced, with 12-point font size, 1" margins, and,
3. submitted in MS Word

Submissions are reviewed year-round. Notification of acceptance is typically sent within 3 months of submission. Journal Editors will consult with authors regarding any revisions deemed necessary prior to final publication. All revisions will require the original author's approval. The *Student Journal* reserves the right to do minor editing for clarity. Please submit your paper with a title page containing full contact information (full name, mailing address and e-mail address) to: **studentjournal@aiu.ac.jp** and indicate "journal submission" as your subject.

Questions may be directed to the faculty advisor, Dr. Paul Chamness Miller, at the same e-mail address.

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