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Hong-key Yoon

GEOMANCY AND SOCIAL UPHEAVALS IN KOREA

Abstract:

Geomancy has for some time played an important role in social change and upheavals in Korean history. It has always been a fermenting agent of social instigation. Social instigators and leaders of resistance to the established socio-political class often attempted to manipulate the people’s beliefs in geomancy. Some major socio-political events in contemporary history of Korea, including several presidential elections, were said to be associated with geomancy in one way or another, even in a small way such as moving a presidential candidate’s family graves in expectation of good luck to a more auspicious place. In this paper I attempt to document and explain the three major social upheavals in Korean history that had significant relationships with geomantic prophecies or adopted some aspect of the geomantic belief system. The three major social upheaval-rebellions that are associated with geomantic belief in Korea are (1) the Myochong rebellion (1135-1136) and attempt to move the Koryo Dynasty’s capital to present day Pyongyang; (2) Hong Kyongnae’s

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rebellion (1811-1812) in the Northwestern District of the Korean Peninsula during the later part of the Chosŏn dynasty; and (3) Chon Pongjun and Tonghak Peasant War (1894). After discussing briefly the general nature of geomancy and its impact on Korean landscape and life style, I will discuss in a chronological order these three social upheavals in association with geomancy.

**Key words: geomancy, Korea, Korean culture, Korean uprisings**
Nature of Geomancy in Korean Culture

Geomancy in East Asia is known as fengshui (風水) in China and p’ungsu in Korea. It is a traditional art of choosing auspicious sites for various purposes and has been a crucial factor in determining human-environment relationships and the development of cultural landscape including human settlements and graves. For instance, geomancy was a key factor to consider in the city site selection and the urban design of capital cities of East Asia such as Nanjing and Beijing in China, Kyoto and Nara in Japan, Kaesong and Seoul in Korea. The practice of geomancy in China is oldest in East Asia and has been sometimes labelled as an ‘enigma’ by Western Sinologist such as Jacques Lemoine who declared that ‘if there is a subject which should have captivated Western Sonologists, it is geomancy” (Lemoine 1974). Two prominent Western scholars who studied Chinese geomancy labelled it as the rudiments of natural science in china (Eitel 1873) or a quasi-scientific system (de Groot, 1897, p. 935). Geomancy has been a difficult subject to comprehend by Western scholars who did not have a similar tradition in Western civilisation. This art of auspicious site selection has been a mystic and sometimes inconsistent body of knowledge to comprehend even for an East Asian scholar.

Geomancy was behind some political decisions by rulers and people’s resistance to the ruling powers in Korea. This traditional art of site selection is based on the assumption that vital energy (shengqi
生气 in Chinese and sengki in Korean) which flowed underneath the soil while supporting all forms of life and blessing people who occupying the auspicious site with wealth, health and successful career life. Thus, geomancy is defined as “a unique and comprehensive system of conceptualising the physical environment that regulates human ecology by influencing human beings to select auspicious environments and to build harmonious structures such as graves, houses, temples and cites on them” (Yoon 2006, p. 311).

When Korean geomancers choose an auspicious site, they normally consider the following 3 key geomantic principles (Yoon 1980):

a. Surrounding landforms are the most important factors, because they are responsible for delivering and conserving the vital energy at an auspicious site. An auspicious place is normally a horse shaped basin that is sheltered by hills on three sides (back, left and right sides). A hill on the back of the propitious site is called the main mountain; the left, azure dragon; the right, white tiger. The most auspicious site lies at the foot of the main mountain.

b. Watercourses in front of a place is a key element required in geomancy, because such waters prevent vital energy from flowing away from an auspicious site for house as well as a grave. A favourable water is a slow flowing and meandering river or stream. However, the auspicious site itself should be dry.
c. Cosmological directions are determined by a geomancer with a geomantic compass and an auspicious direction is normally a sunny direction which is south facing direction. An auspicious direction is determined by considering the surrounding landforms, cosmological identity of people who will occupy the site and the types of structure (e.g., house, temple or grave) to be built.

If a place is qualified in terms of the above three geomantic criteria, then it is declared an auspicious site by a Korean geomancer. A careful analysis of geomantic principles applied in the examination of a place suggest that the art was originally formulated and developed in the Loess Plateau, North China as an instinctive response to local environments during early man’s search for comfortable places to live (Yoon 2016, pp. 21-29). The early development of geomancy is closely associated with cave dwellings (窯洞) in the loess land and thus the first form of geomancy was applied to the selection of house sites.

1) Myochong Rebellion

Myochong (妙淸, ?~1135) was a Buddhist monk-geomancer from Sokyong (present day Pyongyang, the Capital of North Korea) during the Koryo Dynasty (918~1392) in the Northwestern part of the Korean Peninsula. In January 1135, Myochong and his supporters in Sokyong rebelled against the central government and the rebellion...
lasted almost a year. The rebellion in many ways was an important socio-political movement of the Koryo Dynasty, for it advocated more nationalistic and independent Korean ideology than any social movement during the dynasty. It was also an armed rebellion as well as a socio-political movement against the established and corrupt ruling elite of the Capital City, Kaekyong by the marginalized northwestern district people who retained more Koguryo heritage than Kaekyong (P. Yi, 1980, p. 224). This socio-political movement heavily manipulated geomantic ideas and prophecies in attracting supporters by arguing that Myochong himself was a divine geomancer and Sokkyong has better geomantic conditions than Kaekyong, the capital. Thus Myochong and his supporters demanded that the central government should move capital city from Kaekyong in the central part of the Korean Peninsula to Sokyong (西京, the Western Capital) in the NorthWestern part of the peninsula. It was the most intensely nationalistic and the largest geomancy-involved socio-political movement in the history of Korea.

I will briefly summarise the historical process of Myochong’s rebellion in association with geomancy as practiced during that time. Myochong seemed to be an expert on geomantic prophecy and befriended the government officers of the Capital City. In 1127, he became the court officer with the title of King’s Advisor and won the confidence of King Injong. He influenced the king to visit and stay
briefly in Sokyong (present day Pyongyang), the Western Capital, away from the capital city of Kaekyong (present day Kaesong). He later strongly advised and nearly succeeded in persuading the King to move the capital to Sokyong, arguing that the geomantic energy of the existing capital had been dwindling and was weak, while the energy for Sokyong was strong and expanding further (P. Yi, 1980, p. 212-227). Although on the surface the reason for such advice was based on geomantic prophecy, in reality his real intention was to overcome the established ruling elites from Kaekyong and replace them with people from Sokyong, the Western Capital District (Pyongyang). This persuasive attempt was assisted by the literati court officers such as Chong Chisang who were from Monk Myochong’s home district, Sokyong, the Western Capital Area. In fact, Chong Chisang played a key role in Moychong’s ascendency to royal advisor (P. Yi, 1980, p. 200).

Monk Myochong persuaded the King to build a new palace at Sokyong, claiming that the place had a flowery power that would cause the neighbouring countries such the Jin (金)-Manchu empire to come, surrender and pay tribute to Korea. In 1129, the New Palace in Sokyong was completed and subsequently, on several occasions, the King visited and briefly stayed there (P. Yi, 1980, p. 203). Myochong and his followers who promoted shifting the capital to Sokyong instigated the self reliant and nationalistic policy. They argued that
the then Korean king should adopt the title of Emperor as in China and designate Korea’s own royal Yonho (年號) or the reign name instead of using that of the Chinese. The king could not implement this nationalistic policy because of the strong resistance from the c Kaekyong-based established class of literati-officers. Nevertheless, the King was interested in Myochong’s idea of moving the capital to the newly built palace in Sokyong (present day Pyongyang). Myochong’s efforts to persuade the King using geomantic arguments went very wrong when the king’s trip to the newly completed palace in Sokyong in 1134 coincided with a devastating storm that caused considerable loss of personnel and horses (P. Yi, 1980, p. 224). The opponents to moving the capital to Sokyong used the event of this disastrous storm as a clear sign that Sokyong was not a suitable capital site, countering that Myongchong’s geomantic argument and geomantic prophecy was false and treacherous. The opponent officers appealed to the King to stop the trip to Sokyong’s new palace and to abolish the policy of moving the capital to Sokyong. The King eventually stopped the trip to Sokyong and expressed his intention not to move the capital to Sokyong. After the failure of this plan, Myochong rebelled against the central government and declared the establishment of a new Korean kingdom called “Taewi (大為)” and his military power controlled the northwestern part of the Korean Peninsula with Sokyong (present day Pyongyang) of course as the
capital city. His rebellion lasted over a year until his capital was recaptured by government forces and Myochong was killed. Myochong’s movement was one of the most nationalistic socio-political movements and an example of a Korean popular uprising and rebellion that included the direct involvement of geomantic ploys. His movement was popular among people of the northwestern part of the peninsula and had a significant impact on Korean history.

2) The Hong Kyongnae Rebellion

The later Chosŏn period was marked by social unrest caused by a weakening of the king’s authority and power, the rise of Royal-in-law government (Sedo chongchi), rampant factionalism and popular uprisings. The popular uprisings were often fuelled by widespread rumours and geomantic prophecies which, for example, detailed that a certain hero would come from such-and-such region to save the country. Various forms of political corruption and polarisation of society in terms of economic and social status naturally provided causes for various forms of resistances, including popular uprisings from the disadvantaged or discriminated sectors or region of the country. Sometimes these uprisings manipulated the geomantic conditions or prophecies to their advantage as a means of fuelling their movement against establishment (central or local government). Under such circumstances, geomantic ideas and prophecies sometimes played a catalytic role in the people’s resistance.

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movement to the ruling class, and geomancers were often the leading instigators of such movements. The role of geomancer included travelling widely to various places (including settlements) for finding and surveying auspicious places for the various clients. Once a traveller or a stranger was identified as a geomancer the locals would not be suspicious why the person was visiting strange places, for people knew about geomancers’ need to travel to faraway lands from where they resided, when they are in search of auspicious places. Thus, the identity of a professional geomancer was convenient for a travelling instigators of popular resistance in avoiding suspicion from the government officers and others, and rebellion leaders often identified themselves as professional geomancers (Yu 2003, p. 270). At the same time, to be an itinerant geomancer one did not require a licence as long as one had acquired some knowledge in geomancy to evaluate landforms and possess a geomantic compass for examining auspicious directions. Geomancers sometimes practiced fortune-telling and divination as well. Therefore the ringleaders or instigators of popular resistances and uprisings were often the practicing geomancers who frequently travelled various places and gathered necessary information and sympathisers from different districts.

The Hong Kyongnae Rebellion was a large scale popular uprising manipulating geomancy as a means of attracting people from various social class including peasants, disgruntled Yangban (scholar-upper) class, merchants, laborers and even local government officers who felt...
that their region was discriminated and unfairly treated by the central government and their ruling elite of Korea at that time (Yu 2003, p. 270). The two key leaders of the Rebellion were practicing geomancers: the Chief Leader, Hong Kyongnae was a professional geomancer from Yonggang County of Pyongan province who claimed that the gravesite of his father that he had chosen was a very auspicious site that would protect him. He travelled extensively to find auspicious sites for his clientele in various places, for his income was mainly dependent on his practice of geomancy. Being an itinerant geomancer was a convenient means of contacting different people, gathering information relating to local people’s discontent and spreading his revolutionary ideology associated with geomantic prophecies that claim to save the people.

U Kunchik was another ring leader of the rebellion and Hong Kyongnae’s key collaborator. He is also known as U Yongmun as well and was a professional and itinerant geomancer who travelled around the district. U was from Kasan, a different county from Hong Kyongnae’s, but they had studied geomancy textbooks together at the Blue Dragon Temple (Chongnyongsa) at Kasan in 1800 (Kim 2007, p. 109). U was a close comrade of Hong Kyongnae and was the mastermind of the rebellion who provided ideological support along with geomantic prophecies as well as an effective recruiter of key supporters of the rebellion (Kim 2007, p. 109). He was also fairly wealthy with a high income from practicing geomancy as a well-known
Geomancer, especially among merchants. He himself was involved in financial ventures as well (Kim 2007, p. 109).

The Hong Kyongnae Rebellion used geomancy as a key ideology and means to attract the people to support the popular uprising for overthrowing the central government. The rebellion started with a successful armed attack on the local government office of Kasan County on 31 January 1812. The rebels successfully took over seven cities and the surrounding rural areas northwest of the Chongchon River in Pyongan Province. However, the armed uprising failed when the government blew up Chongju city fortress with gunpowder on 29 May 1812. The Hong Kyongnae Rebellion became an important anti-dynastic movement during the latter part of the Chosŏn Dynasty and became an important event that exposed the contradictions of Korean society at that time. This armed rebellion intertwined with geomantic prophecies was one of the first popular uprisings against a corrupt and unjust central government. The ideology of geomancy was used as a means to correct social injustices and was a challenge to corrupt and weak central government. Even if the Hong Kyongnae Rebellion that was intertwined with geomantic ideology and ended unsuccessfully, it provided momentum for other popular armed uprisings in different parts of Korea seeking a more just society, many of which sprang up around the country during the later Chosŏn Period.

3) Chon Pongjun and the Tonghak Peasant Movement

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The most significant armed peasant uprising against the then corrupt government was the popular and massive uprising from the Southwestern part of the Korean Peninsula that is now known as the Kapo Peasant War. This uprising was associated with the then popular and newly developed indigenous religion called ‘Tonghak (東學 Eastern Learning)’ and the armed rebellion was led by Chon Pongjun, who knew much about and practiced geomancy as a part time geomancer at one stage (Yu 2003). This uprising provided an important momentum for the people’s challenge to the then corrupt local government systems and a call for a more just society. This peasant uprising proved to be the main cause of the Sino-Japanese War on Korean soil and accelerated the foreign influence on and intervention of the Korean government.

The ideological basis and support for this peasant movement was from Tonghak, the native religion that was created by Choe Che-u during the early 19th century. This religion preached the “In-ne-chon (人乃天) doctrine” that claims that humanity and God are the same and one. This native Korean religion was born in part as a response to the then newly introduced Catholicism from the West and preached that all human beings are equal and serving humanity is the same as serving God. The armed uprising by the peasants of the Tonghak faith was a natural outcome of the Tonghak social movement. This religion incorporates aspects of Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism and a
number of traditional Korean folk beliefs including geomancy. The founder of the religion, Choe Che-u freely expressed his knowledge of and faith in geomancy in his book “Yongdam yusa (Bestowed Hymns on the Dragon Lake).” His descriptions and praise of the mountain ranges or local landscapes around his home Kyongju District is a geomantic reading of the local landscape using geomantic terminologies (Choe 1996, p. 126-127). In a chapter called “Mongjung Noso Mundapga (Questions and answers between elders and youngsters in a dream)”, the founder of the Tonghak Movement quoted a key geomantic proverb, “A great person is born by drawing the energy from the land” and exalted people with the statement “So let us live in the auspicious place” (Choe 1996, p. 127). In another chapter, “Yongdamga (Dragon Lake Song)” of Bestowed Hymns on the Dragon Lake, he quoted the same geomantic proverb and threw in a rhetorical question, “Since a great person is born by drawing energy from the land, a great man of virtue and talent must be born in this place” (Choe 1996, p. 127). Clearly, the Tonghak religious and social movement accepted and incorporated at least some aspects of geomancy into their religious doctrines.

The Charismatic leader of the Tonghak Peasant War (previously known as the Tonghak Rebellion), Chon Pongjun, also read geomancy textbooks and treated them as more than simple books on divination and superstition. Since boyhood his family had been poor and as he grew into an adult he became responsible for supporting his family. As
a means of earning an income he likely worked as a private tutor for children, as a geomancer or herbal medicine seller, while sometimes divining auspicious dates for villagers or ghost-writing letters for illiterate people (Minjok Munhwa Taepaekkwa Sajon 2015).

The Tonghak religion, which promoted equality among all humanity, experienced an exponential growth during 1880s with a fantastic response especially from those commoners who resented the ruling yangban class. The Tonghak movement became a formidable social force and the government started suppressing the religious movement. In 1892, several thousand Tonghak followers gathered to demand official recognition of their religion, to operate in the open and to stop the suppression of the movement. The result was not satisfactory for the Tonghak church and subsequently more and bigger gatherings were organised in different parts of Korea. In 1894, the Tonghak movement, now a formidable force, moved into a revolutionary armed uprising under the charismatic leadership of Chon Pongjun, at Kobu County against a cruel and corrupt local magistrate. The armed uprising was successful in its early stages by removing ‘bad’ local administrators and carrying out social reform. Serious struggles existed between the Tonghak peasant army and government forces. In order to suppress the Tonghak peasant army the threatened central government invited in Chinese armed forces. The uninvited Japanese government also sent troops to Korea under the pretext of protecting their own citizens living in Korea. China and
Japan fought a war in Korea at time of the Tonghak uprising and Japan won the Sino-Japanese war. After that the Korean government forces, along with the victorious Japanese army, defeated the Tonghak peasant army.

Even if the Tonghak armed uprising failed, its consequences were significant. The Tonghak movement installed the idea of equality among all humanity in the Korean mind, heightened commoners resistance to the Yangban ruling class, enhanced nationalism and increased awareness of Japanese power’s interference with Korean affairs (Lee 1984, pp. 287-288). It was perhaps the best organised, largest scale social movement ever to exist in Korean history.

A final remark on the relationships between the Tonghak Movement and the practice of geomancy in Korea is that the Tonghak Movement’s doctrines incorporated some geomantic ideas, as discussed above, and leader of the armed uprising, Chon Pongjun, had used the profession of geomancy as a means of earning income as well as actually believing in geomancy to a degree.

Conclusion

The three large scale popular armed uprisings in Korean history as discussed above are the major socio-political movements and rebellions against the ruling class in the capital since the establishment of the Koryo Dynasty in AD 918. All of these three uprisings, which affected the course of Korean history significantly, were associated
with geomantic ideas. The travelling nature of professional geomancers’ work was sometimes adopted as a disguise for uprising organisers’ establishing and expanding networks and gathering sympathisers. Belief in an auspicious place with exceptional qualities and associated geomantic prophecies was used by uprising leaders for motivating underprivileged or disgruntled people to join uprisings with hope for a better world. It is interesting to note that these three major Korean social movements and uprisings were closely associated with the practice of geomancy in Korea.

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Stanley D. Brunn

LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND BOUNDARY DISPUTES IN THE EMERGING VIRTUAL STATE: CHALLENGES FROM THE INTERNET, GOOGLE AND SOCIAL MEDIA WORLDS

Abstract:

Traditional themes of our study of the state, including cores, peripheries, boundaries, national identities, treaties and laws are important in our understanding of the virtual or cyberstate. These fluid, three and four-dimensional worlds, associated with speed, networks and the compression of time and space, call for a renewed focus on contemporary topics facing a polycentric, internet-connected, visually-oriented and social media world. I address seven major themes that challenge virtual state leaders; the political and legal status of their residents, immigration and citizenship, minority group rights, transnational identities, language nationalism, the emergence of visual geopolitics, and the resolution of cyberstate conflicts. I close with suggesting some innovative maps that illustrate the distinctive features of his emerging virtual state world.

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Key words: virtuality, state, Internet, social media, cyberstate.

“The Internet is less ‘about’ a technology of communication than a way of looking at the world” (Everard, 2000, p. 160)

“The state is like an email discussion list – an identity to which we subscribe and thereby derives the benefits and responsibilities of a cooperative society.’ (Everard, 2000, p. 152)

“Like software, the state ...is a very complex piece of software written in a number of programming languages, such as economic, military, security, environmental discourse and so on.” (Everard, 2000, p. 7)

“The state is already always becoming. It is always in a state of flow and its identity emerges from the focus of narrative upon this or that confluence of flows, be it an economic, military or cultural or some combination or mixture of the three.” (Everard, 2000, s. 54)

“All virtual worlds are computer-based simulated environments, as opposed to just programs. They look like a “place” sometimes a real place, sometimes a fanciful one, but always a visual environment.” (Duranske, 2008, p. 2).
“The question of governance in virtual worlds, is surprisingly controversial.” (Duranske, 2008, p. 57).

“The very nature of virtual worlds in a sense encourages behavior that civilized society would consider outrageous.” (Durankse, 2008, p. 188).

“Virtual worlds represent a completely new set of privacy challenges. They combine four elements in a brand new, and potentially dangerous, form:

1. indefinite data storage,
2. widespread availability of invasive technology,
3. widespread pseudonymity, and

“The traditional print media have been slow to understand how the Internet, with its traditional transmission and global circulation of images, has force-multiplied this effect and transformed the political as well as media game.” (Der Derien, 2010, p. 37).
‘Hollywood, as one of the most influential producers, “has always loved colonialism” and has had a special fondness for the British Empire in particular.” “Africa remains almost as much of a “Dark continent” for movie-goers today as in the past.” (Campbell and Power, 2010, p. 183).

“The scopic regime of ‘Africa’ has thus created a place in the world marked by either war and disaster or exotic natives and animal tourism.” (Campbell and Power, 2010, p. 188).

“All of this affirms that there is much to be done on the relationship between geopolitics and visual culture, which can go beyond an analysis of texts or images, to address more search questions about what it means to see.” (MacDonald, 2010, p. 288).

“…contesting the authenticity of images is now part and parcel of contemporary statecraft.” (MacDonald, Hughes and Dodds, 2010, p. 2).

“In its pure form – an ideal model toward which many states are leading – the virtual state carries with it the possibility of an entirely new system of world politics. (...) this does not mean that states will be abolished as territorial entities, that conflict over land
will never occur, or that politics can take place without geographic space.” “They inaugurate a world based on mastery of flows of production and purchasing power rather than stocks of goods.” “A new kind of corporation has emerged. The virtual corporation, economic analogue of the virtual state, has become increasingly pervasive.” “The world may become further divided into head and body nations, or nations representing some combination of the two.” “Mastery of flows is more important than possession of large fixed territorial stocks of resources.” “The technological revolution of today and tomorrow is a revolution of intangibles: ideas, knowledge, technique, software, new creative products and capital.” “A virtual world will not be without conflict, but it will represent a step toward a world free of war.” “Despite economic globalization, religious fervor, and ethnic claims, the state has not succumbed to transnational or localist influences. It provides an arena in which individuals can decide or at least influence their collective fates. Nor other institution performs this paramount function.” (Rosecrance, 1999, pp. 4-25, 211)

“In the twenty-first century, nation-states will remain the major organizing factor in international politics. Nations will continue to compete.” (Rosecrance, p. 211).

I. Introduction: Our World Political Map
When we think about the “world political map,” what does it look like? Is it a Mercator projection with distorted shapes of countries such as Russia and Greenland in the high latitudes? Is it a Eurocentric map with Europe at the ‘center’ and East Asia at the right margin? Or is it a map the world’s nearly 200 countries all bunched together like ancient Gondwanaland, that is, no oceans separating the land masses? Or is a map with major world capitals such as Beijing, Moscow, London, Tokyo, Paris and Washington DC in the center and little know capitals such as Mogadishu, Maputo, Bishkek, Suva and Port Moresby in a “deep periphery”? These are all familiar maps that one might think of ways to depict the present “countries” in a flat surface.

II. Mapping Power

A second major question for us to contemplate today has to do with power? How do we define power? Is power control, and if so, over what and whom? Is it in the size of a country’s armed forces or its perceived or actual “military muscle?” Its financial standing on a world scene? Its technological abilities to dominate others by legal and illegal practices? Its ability to influence regional and global decisions through persuasive negotiations and legal institutions for international not individual state ends? Is invisible power supplanting visible power on the world’s political stage? Or is it one’s ability to
manipulate events in cyberspace to serve its own ends? Or might be that power is no longer the most important objective of a state, that it, power has been replaced by issues regarding representation, regional cooperation and pluralistic diversity and the rights of one’s own citizens and also others within its borders? Great Powers in the past are probably “less-great” today. Perhaps the “lessening” of power has something to do with the “rise” of non-state actors on national and global scenes. One could make a legitimate case today that many humanitarian groups are probably equally or perhaps even more important than many of the world’s states and United Nations members. These international, interfaith, transborder and non-state groups, which are often labeled as “soft power,” are able to address issues about refugees, transborder conflicts, disease outbreaks and disaster relief easier, faster, fairer and with less bureaucratic than many traditional states and their own political agencies. I suggest the above because I think the definitions of power and the role of power are shifting in some new directions and challenging some of our traditional ways of measuring power and geopolitical influences. We need to remember that most of the world’s population live in states with little or limited power in a traditional sense. What does this portend for the future?

III. What Is News?
The third set of questions I want us to think about are the following: what do we know about the “world political map” today? How we “know” about that map comes from our knowledge of “what makes news?” Perhaps more importantly: what do we want to know? All news items have a geographical coordinate, that is, the story or event or development comes from somewhere – in some place or places. It may come from a global capital, a regional or provincial capital, a little known place or even a completely unknown place. That place may be close to a major center of commerce or political activity or it may be distant from a major center of political and economic power. The point I am making here is that if one constructed a “map” that included the places of news events during a week or month, it would reveal something about what we know about the political worlds. The map would also reveal to us something about what “we don’t know” about political worlds. That is, there would likely be gaps and voids, some wide, in our knowledge. But we know that “there is always something happening of a political nature” everywhere and all the time. We need to remember that all news, words or visuals, is socially and politically constructed. It may not be reported or shared with others, but it does occur. “The geographies of political, social and environmental “silences” are with us all the time. A comparison of national and global news coverage by a major newspaper or a major television organization would certainly reveal to us “stories about
favored or favorite locations” and also “absences or silences elsewhere.” As you think about these previous sentences, I am sure you are thinking of items, events, and places in the news. All these are associated within some geographical framework or context. We can think recently these items: massive numbers of Central American children along the US/Mexican border, religious groups facing persecution in Syria and Iraq, the Scottish national referendum on independence, the outbreak of Ebola in west Africa (not all of Africa), natural disasters in China, conflict in eastern Ukraine, and gang and drug wars in the Honduras capital. But I would also ask you to think about places that are seldom in the news, for example, former Soviet republics in southern Central Asia, religious/judicial conflicts in East Africa, elections in Indonesia and educational reforms underway in the Arabian peninsula or even good news about green energy developments, women in government offices and healing efforts at local levels.

What I want to do in this presentation is to think about not only the location of countries on a world map, but also on places within countries on a world map. I also want us to think of “what countries or states” mean when we think about boundaries, cores, peripheries and people within and along these political spaces. The world political map is certainly one that I would describe as messy, complex and confusing and overlapping with all kinds of boundaries, borders,
border landscapes, border zones, some which are invisible and important, others which are visible and but also important. I suggest that this messiness, complexity and confusion about states does not only exist for citizens, but also non-citizens, non-state holders and organizations. Below I will raise some important questions about seven major topics that I think are important and worth raising in our continued ongoing discussion with others in scholarly communities who are also concerned about place, culture, boundaries, human rights, environmental well-being and the state.

IV. Seven Emerging Features of the Changing World Political Map

1. Political and Legal Status of Residents. This a perplexing issue to many states, especially those experiencing an influx of new residents. Countries in the “Global North” with associated with human rights and freedoms are most affected by those fleeing religious or political persecution or those seeking permanent residence after studying or working (legally or illegally) outside their countries of citizenship. For the “global cosmopolites” that is, those with multiple countries of family, friends, and work experiences, the “single country/single citizenship” country is often a barrier to
personal satisfaction. For those who have worked for lengthy periods in another country, have family members born there and an extensive network of friends, not being granted citizenship or facing lengthy penalties or delays for potential citizenship are considered as being highly discriminating, prejudicial and unfair. Traditional-bound state policies defining citizenship by birth in the country of origin (the same regulations that existed a century ago) are facing challenges from those who wish to grant newcomers citizenship or amnesty to those who are active and committed members of the work force and culture.

2. Immigration and Citizenship. This feature is an extension of the previous one and specifically looks at the rights and privileges of new immigrants and their paths to citizenship. European countries as well as the U.S., Canada and Australia among others face challenges to those entering the country legally, but also seeking asylum. It is not only their legal status that is brought into question, but also their own and their children’s access to education opportunities, work permits, health care and engaging in the political arena of their new home country. It is again the dilemma facing traditional states with long-held definitions and policies regarding the above citizen rights that are facing the stiffest challenges from new groups who are welcomed into the country and who wish to become fully engaged in the political processes. Individual countries usually often face these issues
individually and independently, leaving an uneven pattern of legal rights. However, some concerted international cooperative agreements are needed to prevent the uneven legal landscapes that exist.

3. Minority Group Rights. With larger numbers of non-native born residents in states, questions about their legal rights present challenges to existing states where for long periods of state history, there was agreement on what was considered legal, acceptable and proper. Now questions are being raised about a number of issues by a small, but also increasingly, growing number of minorities whose ethnic status, language background and religious beliefs may be at odds with the traditional and longstanding native-born population. These are not only ethnic and racial minorities, but also linguistic minorities and even stateless minorities whose distributions cross multiple national borders. For example, what are the languages to be taught in public schools? What languages are acceptable in the workplace? What rights do the newly arrived mothers and fathers and their children have when it comes to health care? What rights do those born in a new country have when applying for jobs or entering a university? What about the religious rights of the new minorities? As places to worship or assembly or even constructing places of worship? Again, it is the traditional views of rights and policies that are brought into question. These are issues, it should be pointed out, that do not
affect all countries, but those which are the destinations of those seeking freedoms and rights, both which were denied in their country of exit.

4. Transnational Identities. The questions raised here have to do with those who have multiple identities. It would include those who flee oppression and seek a new life in a new country as well as those who seek to work, study and live in different countries. The “personal identity” worlds includes those who have single country citizenship and those who have multiple citizenships. And it includes those who are able to cross international borders easily, such as those in the European Union, and those who cannot. In the latter group would be those who have to apply for temporary or permanent visas for each country they visit or reside. In a highly mobile and fluid world, traditional land borders and boundaries are often viewed as a hindrance not only to transit, but to employment and the enjoyment of life. Challenges face states where the “local” world is the norm or was the norm and those whose employment, lifestyles and worldviews are global. Creative and imaginative solutions to these problems are probably best solved by international agreements rather than individual country policies, which leave the person having to navigate complex, unfair and difficult legal systems. Identities in today’s world also have to include the role of technological
innovations, which also help to “identify” who one is and where one is at any given moment. This topic is addressed further below.

5. Language Nationalism. Two issues are salient when discussing language issues. First is what is or are the dominant languages within a state. State identity in the past was strongly tied with a national language. That language was taught in the schools, used in commerce and diplomacy and help the state gain its unique territorial identity. However, favored language nationalism is being tested and contested, at least in Europe and North America, by new residents whose first language is not the official language of the state. Questions about language usage, curriculum materials, and even teaching modes are part of these ongoing discussions as states seek creative ways to become inclusive rather than exclusive in a globalized world. The second salient issue involves the increasing dominance of English even in countries where it was not an official language. English as a second or third language is certainly the case in much of non-English Europe, but also Russia and especially in China. Young generations are being taught early in elementary schools the importance of being able to write, read and speak English (and often American not British English). The popularity of the Internet and various social media serve as catalysts for what may become “planetary English globalism, not nationalism.”
6. Visual Geopolitics. One of the major features of the contemporary world is the rise of visualization and resulting visual geopolitics. News producers, especially states, are conscious of the importance of producing “the visual” for internal and external consumption. Images of leaders, leaders at events and prominent “photo opportunities” are strategically choreographed and even manipulated to inform viewers about what is going on at home or some distant place on the planet. “Manipulated geopolitics” is not something that started with Google or the Internet; the practice has been around prior to the written word and electronic messaging. Photos, Google images, and even hastily constructed maps inform the “viewer” about “what is happening where.” We know that powerful and seductive images can trigger emotions in ways that “the written word” cannot. Images replace the speech, the news story, and a lengthy document as ways to inform. These images can come from anywhere instantly and inform both local audiences, neighboring states and but also viewers around the world who probably would be unable to locate the location of that event or state on a world map. One can think of news items that display vivid images of refugees, disaster victims, genocide, civil wars, disease outbreaks and civil unrest. Think how many of those images of despair come from the Global South. (Think how Hollywood has constructed images of Muslims, non-whites, Africa and colonialism that are difficult to erase.)
The Global North’s images, I would maintain, are heavily ‘sanitized, political correct and less disturbing.’ It is indeed a fascinating world of “images” that is emerging, one where “what people know about a subject comes from what they see” depicted on a computer screen or news channel. Because of the ease in producing and disseminating (and also manipulating) visual information, it also comes as no surprise that some countries place “filters” on global images, filters that are ostensibly designed to “prevent” certain images from being telecast to inform their own citizenry.

7. Resolution of Cyberspace Conflicts. We live in worlds where technological innovations associated with information and technology are played out against backdrops of a legal system whose foundation was landed “2-dimensional” territorial boundaries, not a porous, open and bottom-up world that depicts much of contemporary society around the world. Governing in a 3-D and 4-D world is different than a 2-D world as longstanding states are painfully discovering. Information or knowledge conflicts and wars are different than wars over natural resources, which are fixed and territorial, whereas knowledge wars are fluid, flexible, and often invisible. Cyberwars and also cyberlaws and cybertreaties are porous cross-border conflicts and states are always, it seems, ‘behind the curve” when it comes to resolving conflicts. Regulating invisible electronic information and technologies is a quagmire at best. The actors in this case are
multiple; they include legitimate owners and users, but also hackers (sometimes state hackers), the murky worlds of the underworlds, and a whole generation of thieves who can wreak havoc on almost anyone, anytime and anywhere. The internet, Google Earth and social media are informing as well as empowering technologies which are altering a whole set of political relations whose impacts are not currently known. They promote “multiple and diverse voices” about subjects rather than a single-dominant view of the state. It might also be said that social media is a prime example where “the local becomes the global,” that is an isolated newsworthy event reported (factually or fictionally) in some know or obscure location is captivated by the multiple visual media for dissemination, manipulation and action. I suggest the following are especially important: (a) the growing use of social media in the Global South, we simply do not know the “power” of the local in a globalized cyberworlds; (b) the short and long term consequences are of an internet culture on the knowledge politics of the global poor and powerless, (c) the definitions of or limits on human rights and freedoms in mobility, representation and security in open as well as closed states, (d) the role these technologies place on non-state actors (NGOs) and also stateless populations and (e) the “blurred” borderline between news, factual news and entertainment. As more and more people across the globe cross boundaries daily, not only political, or class or time zone, but also internet/social media
boundaries, their lives and identities and communities are impacted, both in enhancing and positive ways as well as for short and long-term potential conflict.

V. New Mapping and New Maps

In my view the current world political map is one of many different features than ones we are used to seeing or reading about. It is a map that has speed, fluidity, networking and new identities as its basic underpinnings. It is a world with longstanding cores, new cores and even intermittent cores; it is a world that is asymmetrical and fragmented in many ways with deep gaps in income, gender relations, representation and access to power; there are islands, archipelagoes, peninsulas but also peripheries, some that are permanent, some semipermanent and some deep permanent. There are longstanding centers of power, emergent powers, awakened peripheries and even sleepy peripheries. Many of these political worlds exist within the same territorial boundaries of existing state; some also exist within the major centers of political, financial, military and technological power.
We need to engage in thinking about real and virtual geopolitical worlds: thinking “outside the box,” doing more than “linear thinking,” and preparing maps that reflect current realities. In short, the political worlds are an interesting, complex and complicated mix of the
past and the present, the elites and the awakened, the bounded and boundless citizens on the planet and states where some residents have stronger identities to territorial and extraterritorial non-state institutions (religion, economic, human rights, etc.) than the political worlds where they reside. Globalization failed to produced homogeneity, nor will a knowledge economy or society; rather both have uncovered the gaps, new ad hoc and permanent “tribes,” and an unevenness, slipperyness and balkanized world that exists at home and distant places on the planet.

These observations geographers have known for a long time, but, as we know, it sometimes takes economists and political scientists a while to realize that “space, place, territory and identity” and “gaps” (temporary and permanent) within them are part of the daily lifeblood of most of the planet’s residents.

References


ETHNOLINGUISTIC POLITICS IN TAIWAN

Abstract:

Monolingual Mandarin Chinese policy was adopted during ROC’s occupation of Taiwan since 1945. Taiwanese people were forced to learn Mandarin Chinese and to identify themselves as Chinese through the national education system. In response to ROC’s Chinese language policy, the promoters of Taiwanese have protested against the monolingual policy and have demanded vernacular education in schools. This is the so-called ‘Tâi-bûn Ėn-tōng’ or ‘Taiwanese language movement’ that has substantially grown since the second half of the 1980s. The purpose of this paper examines the relationship among politics, nationalism and ethnolinguistic development in the case of Taiwan from the 1940s to current date.

Key words: Taiwanese, Tai-gi, nationalism, politics, ethnicity

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1. Introduction

Taiwan is a multilingual and multiethnic society. Traditionally, the people are divided into four primary ethnic groups: the indigenous (around 1.7% of Taiwan’s population), Tâi-oân-lâng or Taiwanese (73.3%), Thòi-vân-ngin or Hakka (12%) and post war immigrants\(^2\) (13%) (Huang 1993:21). In addition, as international marriages have become more and more common in the globalization era, and Taiwan being no exception, foreign spouses in Taiwan number 483,587 as of September 2013, according to the statistics of Taiwan’s National Immigration Agency, Ministry of Interior.\(^3\) These foreign nationals account for 2.07% of Taiwan’s total population.\(^4\)

The speakers of Tâi-gí (台灣語 Taiwanese language) are traditionally and commonly called Tâi-oân-lâng (台灣人), literally ‘the Taiwanese people.’ Occasionally, they are called Hō-ló-lâng (or Hô-ló, Hok-ló, in different spellings) or Bân-lâm-lâng (閩南人Southern Min people) by other ethnic groups. The language Tâi-gí is also occasionally called Hō-ló-ōe (福佬話) or Bân-lâm-ōe (閩南話Southern Min language) in different contexts. Although the term ‘Tâi-gí’ has been

\(^2\) Mainly the immigrants came to Taiwan with the Chiang Kai-shek’s KMT regime after 1945.
\(^3\) The data are available at <http://www.immigration.gov.tw/public/Attachment/31031955020.xls>
\(^4\) By the end of October 2013, the amount of Taiwan’s total population is 23,361,147 according to Taiwan’s recent updated statistical data of Ministry of Interior, available at <http://www.ris.gov.tw/zh_TW/346>
used for more than one hundred years in society in Taiwan, it has not always been politically and officially approved by the government of Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC, thereafter). On the contrary, ‘Southern Min’ is officially adopted by the ROC to refer to Taiwanese.

‘Min’ comes from the abbreviation of Hokkien (福建) province of China. In addition, it is a pejorative name with the meaning ‘barbarians with snake origin,’ according to the famous Chinese classical dictionaries Shuō Wén Jiě Zì (說文解字Interpretation of Chinese Characters) by Xù Shèn (許慎) and Shuō Wén Jiě Zì Zhù (說文解字注) by Duàn Yù Cái (段玉裁).

Because the Ma Ying-jeou regime of ROC still considers itself a Chinese regime rather than a native Taiwanese regime, Ma insists on using the term ‘Southern Min’ in order to make a connection to China. For example, the term ‘Southern Min’ was officially adopted in the “2008 Grade 1-9 Curriculum Guidelines” (97年九年一貫課程綱要) by the ROC’s Ministry of Education (thereafter MOE) in July 15, 2009. In response to MOE’s discriminatory labeling for Taiwanese speaking people, around 40 Taiwanese organizations formed an alliance called ‘Alliance against the Discrimination Term on Southern Min’ (「反對閩南語歧視稱呼」正名聯盟) and demonstrated against MOE in July 29, 2009.
The purpose of this paper examines the relationship among politics, nationalism and ethnolinguistic development in the case of Taiwan from the 1940s to current date.

2. The historical context of ethnic groups and relations

Generally speaking, Taiwan was an indigenous society before Dutch occupation (1624-1661) in the early seventeenth century. There was only tribal awareness and no awareness of being “Taiwanese” at that time.

The aboriginal tribes, which belong to the Austronesian-Formosan language family, have been living in Taiwan for over a thousand years (cf. Lewis 2009). The classification of different tribes varies from scholar to scholar. Up to July 2014, the existing indigenous people are officially recognized as sixteen ethnic groups by the government of ROC on Taiwan. Their ethnic names also vary from past to present. For example, ‘Sèk-hoan’ (熟番; ‘cooked savages’ or ‘sinicized barbarians’) or ‘Chhéⁿ-hoan’ (生番; ‘raw savages’ or ‘rude barbarians’) were frequently used during the Chinese feudal period. Those pejorative names were later replaced by ‘Takasago’ (タカサゴ高砂族5) during the Japanese rule. ‘Takasago’ was further replaced by ‘Shānbaō’ (山胞mountain compatriots) by the Chinese

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5 A cognate name derived from an indigenous tribe in Kaohsiung.

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ROCK regime. The current official name ‘Yuánzhùmín’ (原住民 indigenous peoples) was not approved by the ROC until 1994.

The first half of the seventeenth century saw the fall of the Ming Empire (1368-1644) in China. The Qing Empire was then eventually established in China by the Manchurians. There were several remnant forces after the last Ming emperor was killed. The remnant forces spread out to different areas, such as Taiwan, Vietnam and other Southeast Asian areas. They tried to resist the military attacks of the Qing with the slogan “opposing Qing to restore Ming.” This situation lasted for several decades after the fall of Ming.

Koxinga (國姓爺 or 鄭成功), leader of one of the remnants, brought 25,000 soldiers to Taiwan and drove away the Dutch, who were the colonizers of Taiwan at that time. The Koxinga Regime was then shortly established in Taiwan from 1662 to 1683 (Su 1980:102; Ong 1993b:56). The Koxinga regime was later defeated by the Qing armies. Consequently, Taiwan became the colony of Qing Empire from 1883 to 1895.

Among the soldiers of Koxinga, they mainly came from southern Hokkien and partly from eastern Canton (廣東). The language spoken by the people from southern Hokkien is the so-called ‘Southern Min.’ In fact, ‘Southern Min’ was not even a common term by its speakers at that time. A local prefecture or county name where
the speaker lived was usually used by its speaker to refer to her/his vernacular. For example, the terms, such as Chiang-chiu (漳州), Choan-chiu (泉州), Amoy (廈門), and Formosan, were widely employed in dictionaries compiled by missionaries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see appendix I). The term ‘Southern Min’ was not even common until ROC’s promotion of it in Taiwan after World War II.

The languages used by the people from northeastern and eastern Canton are Hakka (客家) and Tio-chiu (or spelled Teochew潮州). Hakka means ‘outsiders’ or ‘guests,’ which was the name given by other neighboring ethnic groups during their continual immigrations in the history of the formation of Hakka (Lo 1933). In addition to Hakka, there are some other terms used to refer to Hakka in different areas and social contexts. For example, Hakka is also called Ngái or Hĕ in Vietnam. Nowadays, ‘Hakka’ is the official name approved by governments both in ROC and People’s Republic of China (PRC). In addition to Hakka, the terms ‘Thòi-vân-ngìn’ or ‘Theù-kâ-nginx’ or ‘Ngìn’ or ‘Ngài’ were recently coined to refer to ‘Hakka people in Taiwan.’

Due to Qing’s restrictions on migration, Hakka and Tio-chiu people are less numerous than the Hokkien during the process of migration to Taiwan. For example, right after Qing defeated Koxinga
regime in 1683, the Qing announced such restrictions as “people who lived in Tio-chiu and Hui-chiu (Fuichiu惠州) were not allowed to move to Taiwan, because those places were suspected of being the bases for pirates.” Such restrictions on Hakka were continued until 1760 (Su 1980:129).

After the restrictions on migration were completely lifted by the Qing emperor, more and more Hokkien and Hakka people moved to Taiwan. Conflicts among the Hokkien, Hakka and aborigines frequently occurred in regard to disputes such as land and natural resources (Ong 1993b:84-87). As a result, some pejorative terms were coined by each ethnic group to refer to other groups. For example, ‘hoan-á’ (番仔 ‘barbarians’ or ‘savages’) was used to refer to indigenous people by the Hokkien and Hakka; ‘pailang’ (白浪or歹人), which means ‘bad guys’ was coined by indigenous people in return to refer to the Hokkien and Hakka. ‘Kheh-hiaⁿ-kong’ (客兄公), which literally means ‘Hakka adulterer’ was used by Hokkien to refer to male Hakka speakers. In return, ‘Hok-lo-ma’ (福佬嫲Hok-lo concubine) was created by Hakka to refer to the female Hokkien speakers.

The number of immigrants increased and soon became higher than the number of the indigenous people. The majority of the early immigrants who moved to Taiwan were male. Many of them
intermarried with local indigenous women. The indigenous tribes that mainly resided in the western plain areas were more likely to come into contact with immigrants than tribes living in the mountains. They either were conquered by immigrants or intermarried with them (Su 1980).

There is an old Taiwanese saying reflecting this history of intermarriage: “ū Tṅg-soaⁿ-kong, bō Tṅg-soaⁿ-má” (有唐山公, 無唐山媽). Tṅg-soaⁿ was the old-fashioned term widely used by these immigrants to refer to their homeland in China. The saying literally means, “we have got a Mainland Grandpa, but no Mainland Grandma” (Kan 1995, pp. 152-162). Moreover, recent DNA studies by Doctor Lin Marie (2010) have revealed that the gene of Taiwanese people are much closer to People in Vietnam and Southeast Asia than those in China. It shows that although only 1.7% of the Taiwanese population are currently “pure” aborigines, as a matter of fact, most of the current Taiwanese population are partly descended from aboriginal stock (Brown 2004, p. 149; Lin 2010). This phenomenon is similar to those cases such as Ming Huong people in Vietnam, and Baba Nyonya in Singapore and Malaysia.

In the early period of migration, most of those immigrants only intended to live in Taiwan provisionally, and they identified themselves with their original clans in southeast China (Tan 1994, pp. 140-141). However, during the course of indigenization, they moved
from an immigrant society to a native society in the nineteenth century (Tan 1994, p. 92). That means that the immigrants began to settle down and to distinguish themselves from the people who lived in China. For example, there was an old Taiwanese saying, “Tǹg-soaⁿ-kheh, tùi-pòaⁿ soeh” (唐山客, 對半說). Literally, it means that “you should discount the words of the guests from China.” It advised that you should not believe the Chinese too much while you are doing business with them. This old saying also reveals that the indigenized immigrants had considered themselves as ‘masters’ rather than ‘guests’ in Taiwan, where they have been living for several generations. In short, the late nineteenth century saw the origin of a proto-Taiwanese nation, according to historian Su Beng (Su 1992, pp. 196-200).

In 1895, Taiwan and the Pescadore islands were transferred by the Qing emperor to Japanese emperor as a consequence of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which ended the first Sino-Japanese War. The Japanese colonization (1895-1945) of Taiwan was the historical turning point in Taiwan in the transition from traditional Chinese feudal society to a modern capitalist society (Su 1992, pp. 205-215). Owing to modernization and capitalization during the Japanese rule, the earlier proto-Taiwanese identity advanced to Taiwanese nationhood (Su 1992, p. 220). Those immigrant identities, once connected to the homeland of their ancestors such as ‘Chiang-chiu
people’ and ‘Choan-chiu people,’ began to be replaced by a developing sense of being a ‘Taiwanese people’ in contrast to being a Japanese people. Thereafter, ‘Taiwanese language’ and ‘Taiwanese people’ were widely used by the people all over Taiwan.

The strong Taiwanese identity during the Japanese era could be well illustrated by the formation of political organizations, such as Sin Bîn Hoe (新民會 New People Association), established in 1920. Its organization guidelines mentioned: “To promote political reforms in Taiwan in order to improve the happiness of the Taiwanese people” (Ong 1988, pp. 44-49). Moreover, the declarations (1925) of the Tokyo Association of Taiwanese Academic Studies (東京台灣學術研究會), which was organized by some overseas Taiwanese students in Tokyo, included: (Ong 1988, pp. 91-92)

“To support the liberation of Taiwan!” (支持台灣的解放運動)

“To obtain the freedom to speak Taiwanese!” (獲得使用台灣話的自由)

“Taiwan independence forever and ever! “(台灣獨立萬歲)

In addition to the identity transition from seeing themselves as immigrants to seeing themselves as native Taiwanese, the linguistic genres of vernacular spoken by the immigrants also changed. For example, although Choan-chiu and Chiang-chiu were originally two

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major different varieties of Southern Min, they gradually merged and became a new “non-Chiang non-Choan” (不漳不泉) vernacular after they were brought to Taiwan (Iwasaki 1913; Ong 1957, pp. 3-5, 1987, pp. 18-23; Ang 1992a, 1992b, p. 71). Moreover, they were greatly influenced by the languages of indigenous plain tribes, and particularly the Japanese language during the Japanese ruling period (Ong 1957:44-45). For instance, ‘tá-káu’ (former name of Kaohsiung city), ‘Tâi-oân’ (current name of Taiwan), ‘má-se’ (drunken) and ‘Báng-kah’ (a place name in Taipei) are cognates from Formosan Austronesian languages. In addition, ‘chù-bûn’ (ちゅうもん to order), ‘sú-sih’ (すし Japanese sushi), ‘se-bí-loh’ (セビロ a suit), ‘ò-bah’ (オーバー an overcoat) are loanwords in Taiwanese coined from Japanese. In short, this new “non-Chiang non-Choan” language has been widely called ‘Tâi-gí’ or ‘Tâi-oân-ōe,’ which all mean the ‘Taiwanese language’ by the Taiwanese people since the early twentieth century.

3. Awareness of Writing in Taiwanese

The Taiwanese language could be written in different orthographies. Currently, there are three major writing systems: 1) Roman-only, or exclusive use of Roman scripts, 2) Han characters only, which means exclusive use of Hanji, and 3) Han-Lo ‘Hanji with Roman

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6 There are some differences between Choan-chiu and Chiang-chiu, such as /koe/ vs. /ke/ to represent the same meaning of word ‘chicken.’

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The Roman scheme for writing Taiwanese was mainly developed and contributed by Western missionaries in the nineteenth to early twentieth century (Klöter 2005, p. 89). Called Peh-œ-jī, which means the scripts of vernacular speech in contrast to the complicated classical Han writing, it was introduced in Taiwan in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is currently also called ‘Tâi-oân-jī’ or Taiwanese scripts. It made important impact in three significant aspects: 1) cultural enlightenment, 2) education for all people and 3) literary creation in colloquial Taiwanese (Chiung 2013b, p. 111, Chiung 2011, p. ix).

Those applications and publications of Peh-œ-jī since the nineteenth century can be summarized in the following six categories: 1) textbooks, 2) dictionaries, 3) religious literature, include in the translation of the Bible, catechisms, and religious tracts, 4) newspapers, 5) private note-taking or letters, and 6) other publications, such as physiology, math, and novels (Chiung 2005, p. 36, 2012).8

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7 It was reported that the earliest development of Peh-œ-jī was contributed by the Spanish missionaries of Mania in the early 17th century (Klöter 2002 & 2004).
8 Some publications may be available at the website of Memory of the Written Taiwanese, which was initiated by Iûn Un-giân. This site is located at <http://ip194097.ntcu.edu.tw/Memory/TGB>
Carstairs Douglas’s *Chinese-English Dictionary of the Vernacular or Spoken Language of Amoy* of 1873 is regarded as an influential dictionary on the orthography of Peh-ōe-jī.\(^9\) After Douglas’s dictionary, most Romanized dictionaries and publications followed his orthography with little or no changes (Ang 1993b, pp. 1-9, 1993a).

George L. Macky’s *Chinese Romanized Dictionary of the Formosan Vernacular*, which was considered the first dictionary to focus on vernacular spoken in Taiwan, was completed in 1874 and printed in 1891 in Shanghai. William Campbell’s dictionary *Ē-mńg Im Sin Jī-tián or A Dictionary of the Amoy Vernacular Spoken Throughout the Prefectures of Chin-chiu, Chiang-chiu and Formosa*, firstly published in 1913 was the first Peh-ōe-jī dictionary published in Taiwan.\(^10\) It is the most widely used Romanized dictionary in Taiwan (Lai 1990; Ang 1996). This dictionary has been reprinted and renamed as *Kam Uî-lîm Tâi-gú Jī-tián* or *William Campbell’s Taiwanese Dictionary* since 2009.

Generally speaking, missionaries’ dictionaries were using Amoy vernacular as the criteria by the early twentieth century. Thereafter, the vernacular spoken in Taiwan gradually became the criteria. For example, *The Amoy-English Dictionary* and *English-Amoy Dictionary*, published by The Maryknoll Language Service Center in Taichung in 1976 and 1979, are two such dictionaries. Their vocabularies and

\(^9\) This dictionary was scanned and available at <http://ip194097.ntcu.edu.tw/memory/TGB>

\(^10\) This dictionary was digitized and available at<http://taigi.fhl.net/dick>
pronunciation systems are mainly based on the local Taichung vernacular even thought ‘Amoy’ was named. The publisher had to use ‘Amoy’ rather than ‘Taiwanese’ was due to the factor that Taiwan under ROC’s martial law from 1949 to 1987. At a later time, they were republished as *Taiwanese-English Dictionary* in 2001 and *English-Taiwanese Dictionary* in 2013, respectively.¹¹

In addition to missionaries’ efforts, the Taiwan Governor-General’s Office also published several dictionaries during the period of Japanese rule (Ang 1993c). For example, we have the *Japanese-Taiwanese Encyclopedic Dictionary* in 1907 and *Taiwanese-Japanese Encyclopedic Dictionary* in 1931 and 1932. Vocabularies based on Taiwanese were collected in those dictionaries and they were written in Hanji with revised Japanese Kana.¹²

Dictionaries compiled by individuals were mainly published after 1945 (see Appendix I). These could be divided into two periods: 1) the martial law period before 1987, and 2) after the martial law. Many more dictionaries were published after the martial law was lifted. In addition, the term ‘Taiwanese’ was adopted by almost all dictionary publishers, except the one published by ROC’s National Translation and Compilation Center in 2001. In this case, ‘Southern Min’ was adopted to fit the political ideology of ROC. On the contrary,

¹¹ This dictionaries are available at <http://www.taiwanesedictionary.org>
¹² *Taiwanese-Japanese Encyclopedic Dictionary* was digitized and supplemented with modern Taiwanese translations in Han-Roman style, available at <http://taigi.fhl.net/dict>
dictionaries published during martial law period were much more limited in number. Moreover, more than half of them had to politically compromise with ROC and use the name ‘Southern Min.’

In addition to dictionaries, the Bible is regarded as an important medium for the standardization of written Taiwanese. There were two major contributors to the completion of the Taiwanese Romanized Bible: Dr. James L. Maxwell and Rev. Thomas Barclay. Dr. Maxwell was the first medical missionary to Taiwan in 1865. Under his supervision, Lán ê Kiù-chúla-so Kì-tok ê Sin-iok, the first Romanized Taiwanese New Testament was published in 1873, and Kū-iok ê SèngKeng, the Taiwanese Old Testament, was published in 1884. They were both printed in the UK (Lai 1990). Their revised editions were completed by Rev. Barclay. The revised New Testament was published in 1916. Later, the Revised Old Testament along with the revised New Testament were collected together and published in 1933. The 1933 Barclay edition of the Bible is the most widespread Romanized Bible in Taiwan (Niu 2013). In short, the Taiwanese Bible of Barclay and Maxwell plays the same role as Martin Luther’s translation of the Bible from Latin into the German vernacular.

Amoy vernacular was regarded as the criteria for compiling the Bible by both Maxwell and Barclay. Thereafter, all editions of the Bible were translated in Taiwanese vernacular. For example, the Ko-Tân
The edition of Colloquial Taiwanese New Testament,\(^{13}\) which was mainly translated based on the vernacular spoken in the central Taiwan areas, was completed by the Maryknoll Society in 1972 (Niu 2005; Lim 2005). This Bible is also called ‘Âng-phôe Sèng-keng’ or ‘Red Cover Bible’ because of the color of its front cover. It was expected to fulfill the needs of modern Taiwanese speakers. Unfortunately, it was seized by the ROC regime in 1975. It was later transcribed into Han-Lo version by Lîm Chùn-iôk and published by the Taiwan Church Press in 2005.\(^{14}\)

Several revised or newly translated editions of the Bible in Taiwanese were published again after the martial law was lifted in Taiwan. During this period, the Taiwanese Bibles were published in three ways: 1) Roman-only, 2) Han-only, and 3) Han-Lo hybrid. For example, Hiān-tāi Tâi-gú Sin-iôk Sèng-keng, or The Today’s Taiwanese New Testament, which was translated directly from Greek into Romanized Taiwanese mainly based on northern Taiwanese varieties, was published by the Bible Society in Taiwan in 2008 (Li 2010, pp. 74-75).\(^{15}\) It was later published again in the Han-Lo version in 2013 (Tiuⁿ 2014, pp. 16-17). Recently, Choân-bîn Tâi-gí Sèng-keng or The Common Taiwanese Bible, which was revised from 1933 Barclay’s edition and transcribed into southern Taiwanese accents, was

\(^{13}\) Ko-Tân Tâi-oân Peh-ôe Sèng-keng Ek-pún (고태안 페오 성경 익본).

\(^{14}\) Its original texts are available at <http://taigi.fhl.net/list.html>, and sound archives are available at <http://bible.fhl.net/new/audio_hb.php?version=6>

\(^{15}\) The Bible was copyrighted in 2007 and published in 2008. For the comparisons of different editions of Taiwanese Bible, readers may refer to Niu (2005) or Iuⁿ (2013).
completed in 2013. It contains three versions: 1) Roman-only, 2) Han-
Lo, and 3) Han-Lo plus Ruby functions. They are expected to be
published in recent years. In addition to Roman-only and Han-Lo
editions, Taiwanese Bible in Han characters “台語漢字本聖經” was
published in 1996 for the first time. This Hanji edition was merely
transcribed from Barclay’s edition into Han characters.

In addition to dictionaries and the Bible, newspapers and other
publications are also important in the promotion and standardization
of written Taiwanese. The first modern newspaper Tâi-oân-hú-siâⁿ
Kàu-hôe-pô (Taiwan Prefectural City Church News) was published
monthly by Rev. Barclay in July 1885 (Tiuⁿ 2005; Tan 2007). This
newspaper was published in Peh-ōe-jī until March 1969. Thereafter, it
was shifted to Mandarin Chinese under the political pressure from
ROC.

In order to print Taiwanese Roman scripts, which contain some
distinctive features and tone marks, a state-of-the-art printing
machine was imported from Scotland in 1881. This printer was in
operation from 1885 until 1960s. After the printer was imported, the
first publishing house in Taiwan, known as Chū-tin-tông or Sin-lâu
Bookstore, was established in Tainan by Rev. Barclay in 1884. It was
later called Taiwan Church Press.

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16 Three versions of Common Taiwanese Bible are available at <http://taigi.fhl.net/list.html>
Although Taiwan Prefectural City Church News was a religious oriented newspaper, it also contained a variety of articles, such as aspects of literature, history, culture and science (Ng 2000; Chiung 2011). For example, a short story entitled as “Jît-pún ê koài-sū” (an oddity in Japan) and a travel note “Pak-kâng Má ê sin-bûn” (news on the goddess Pak-kang Ma) were published in 1886.\(^1\)

In addition to newspapers, there were some other publications, such as Pit Soàn ê Chho’ Hak (Fundamental Mathematics) by Ûi-lîm Gê in 1897, Lâi Gôa Kho Khàn-hô-hâk (The Principles and Practice of Nursing) by G. Gushue-Taylor in 1917, the novel Chhut Sí-Sòaⁿ (Line between Life and Death) by Khe-phòàn Têⁿ in 1926, and the collection of commentaries Cha’-hâng Koán-kiàn (Opinions on Ten Issues) by Pôe-hôe Chhòa in 1925.\(^2\)

Due to the successful promotion of written Taiwanese in the second half of nineteenth century, it had contributed to the emergence of Taiwanese new literature, which was written in accordance with the Taiwanese colloquial vernacular rather than traditional classical Han writing (Chiung 2005, p. 35). Comparing to the May Fourth New Culture Movement of 1919 in China, Taiwanese people had experienced colloquial writing decades earlier than the

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\(^1\) Articles in this newspaper were digitized and researchable at <http://210.240.194.97/nmtdadwt/pbk.asp>

\(^2\) Some photos of these publications are available at <http://www.dehan.org/pehoeji/exhibits/index.htm>
Chinese people. This is one of the reasons why the development of modern literature in Taiwan is quite different from China.

4. People’s resistance to ROC’s Chinese policy

Usually, the religious believers apply Pe̍h-ōe-jī writing to their daily life after they acquire the skill of Romanization. For example, they may use Pe̍h-ōe-jī as a tool for note taking or writing letters to their daughters, sons, or friends in addition to reading the Bible. Pe̍h-ōe-jī was widely used among the church people in Taiwan prior to 1970s (Chiung 2012, 2013a). Among its users, women were the majority. Most of those women did not command any literacy except Pe̍h-ōe-jī. Today, there are still a few among the elder generations, especially women, who read only Pe̍h-ōe-jī.

Why did Pe̍h-ōe-jī declined severely in the 1970s? It is the consequence of the ROC colonialism. From the political perspective of ROC, Mandarin Chinese in traditional Chinese characters was considered the only orthodox language. The Bible in Romanized Taiwanese was definitely regarded as a challenge to the Chinese regime, which is considered a foreign regime by many Taiwanese.

At the end of World War II, Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of the Chinese Nationalist (KMT) took over China (excluding Manchuria), Taiwan, and French Indo-China north of 16° north latitude on behalf of the Allied Powers under General Order No. 1 of September 2, 1945
(Hodgkin 1981, p. 288; Peng & Ng 1995, pp. 60-61; Chiung 2007, p. 110-111, 2008). In accordance with this order, Chiang sent troops to Taiwan and Vietnam. After Japanese forces were disarmed, Chiang was requested by Ho Chi Minh and French power to withdraw his troops from Vietnam in 1946. However, Chiang’s troops remained in Taiwan even though the well-known February 28 Revolution occurred in 1947 (Kerr 1992; Su 1980, pp. 749-801; Ong 1993b, pp. 157-162). Simultaneously, Chiang Kai-shek was fighting against the Chinese Communist Party in Mainland China.

In 1949, Chiang’s troops were completely defeated and then pursued by the Chinese Communists. At that time, Taiwan’s national status was supposed to be dealt with by a peace treaty among the nations at war. That is Treaty of Peace with Japan signed by 48 nations at a later time in San Francisco in September 1951. However, because of Chiang’s defeat in China, Chiang decided to occupy Taiwan as a base and from there he would fight to recover the Mainland (Kerr 1992; Ong 1993b; Peng & Ng 1995; Su 1980). Consequently, Chiang’s political regime Republic of China (ROC) was renewed in Taiwan and has remained there since 1949.

Chiang claimed that Taiwan was a province of China, and ROC was the only legitimate government of China even though the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was established in Beijing by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in October 1949. Due to Chiang’s control of Taiwan, his mortal enemy, the communist leader Mao Zedong, also
claimed that Taiwan was a part of PRC. In fact, both KMT and CCP used to support Taiwan to become an independent state from the Japanese during the 1920s and 1930s (Siau 1981). Nevertheless, the current relation between Taiwan and China remains a political issue to solve. From the perspective of people in Taiwan, many public opinion polls done lately have shown that the majority of Taiwanese people are more likely to support Taiwanese independence. For example, the polls conducted by Taiwan Thinktank in July 2014 revealed that 82.9% of the subjects agreed that Taiwan and China are two countries independent from each other.¹⁹

Monolingual Mandarin Chinese policy was adopted during ROC’s occupation of Taiwan (Huang 1993; Heylen 2005). Taiwanese people were forced to learn Mandarin Chinese and to identify themselves as Chinese through the national education system (Cheng 1996; Tiu¹ 1996; Hsiau 1997, p. 307). Consequently, research has revealed that a language shift toward Mandarin is in progress (Lu 1988, p. 73; Young 1989, p. 55; Chan 1994, p. III). In response to ROC’s Chinese language policy, the promoters of Taiwanese have protested against the monolingual policy and have demanded vernacular education in schools. This is the so-called ‘Tâi-bûn Ūn-tông’ or ‘Taiwanese language movement’ that has substantially grown since

¹⁹ Press release available at Taiwan Thinktank<http://www.taiwanthinktank.org/chinese/page/5/62/2840/0>

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the second half of the 1980s (Hsiau 1997; Erbaugh 1995; Li 1999; Lim 1996; Chiung 1999, 2007; Klöter 2005).

Although Pe̍h-ōe-jī was originally devised for religious purposes, it is no longer limited to religious applications after the contemporary Tâi-bûn movement was raised in the late 1980s (Chiung 1999, p. 42, 2005, p. 40). Pe̍h-ōe-jī has been adopted by many Taiwanese promoters to write Taiwanese either in Roman-only or Han-Lo styles. For example, famous Taiwanese periodicals such as Tōi-oân-jī (Taiwanese Scripts), Tâi-bûn Thong-sìn (TBTS Newsletter), Tâi-bûn Bóng Pò (Bong Newspaper), and Hái-ang (Whale of Taiwanese Literature) all adopt Pe̍h-ōe-jī as the Romanization for writing Taiwanese. Moreover, academic Journal, such as Journal of Taiwanese Vernacular accepts Pe̍h-ōe-jī as official writing. In addition, professional organizations such as Tâi-oân Lô-má-jī Hia̍p-hőe (Taiwanese Romanization Association) was organized in August 2001 for the promotion of writing in fully Romanized Taiwanese.20 Tâi-bûn Pit-hőe (Taiwanese Pen), the literary society of Taiwanese writers for the promotion of literary creations in Taiwanese vernacular was established in 2009. The Center for Taiwanese Languages Testing at National Cheng Kung University was established in 2010.21 They all recognized Pe̍h-ōe-jī as the official orthography for Taiwanese.

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20 TLH’s official website at <http://www.tlh.org.tw/>
21 CTLT’s official website at < http://ctlt.twl.ncku.edu.tw/> For more information on the development of General Taiwanese Proficiency Test, please refer to Chiung (2010a).
Under the pressure of the Taiwanese language movement, the ruling KMT regime had no choice but to open up some possibilities for vernacular education. Eventually, the president Lee Teng-hui, who is a native of Taiwan, approved the compromised proposal that elementary schools be allowed to have vernacular education starting in fall semester 2001. Prior to implementation of the vernacular education proposal, KMT lost its regime during the 2000 presidential election for the first time in Taiwan. Chen Shui-bian was elected president. Consequently, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) became the ruling party until 2008 when the KMT retrieved regime again.

This vernacular education proposal was thus conducted by the ruling DPP. A class called ‘pûn-thó̍h-sî-gīân’ (native languages), with a period of 40 minutes per week, is required in all elementary schools from fall semester 2001. Schools may choose the vernacular languages to teach in accordance with the demands of their students. In the vernacular education, course titles were officially named ‘Taiwan Southern Min Language,’ ‘Taiwan Hakka Language’ and ‘Formosan Austronesian languages’ to refer to the languages taught in class. In addition to elementary schools, universities were encouraged to establish new departments of Taiwanese languages and literatures or relevant studies. About twenty some such departments or graduate institutes were therefore established by 2008. The National Museum of Taiwan Literature was also officially established in Tainan in 2003.
While people were feeling hopeful and confident about mother tongue education, Ma Ying-jeou, from the KMT, won the presidential election in 2008. Once KMT became the ruling party again, all native policies regarding Taiwanese languages and culture adopted by the DDP were gradually changed. For example, the budget for Taiwanese proficiency test was cut by KMT legislators in February 2009.\(^2^2\) Also, ‘Taiwan’ was withdrawn by MOE from ‘Taiwan Southern Min’ of the “Grade 1-9 Curriculum Guidelines” in 2009. Moreover, private publishers such as King-an were later forced to replace ‘Taiwanese’ with ‘Southern Min’ on the title of Taiwanese textbooks for elementary students.\(^2^3\) The major excuse of the MOE officials and KMT legislators was that the term ‘Taiwanese’ would mislead people into thinking that Hakka and indigenous Formosan languages were excluded from the list of native languages in Taiwan. It sounded like that they were calling for racial equality. In fact, they were oppressing the Taiwanese speaking people’s growing awareness of their own identity and sowing seeds of discord among ethnic groups in Taiwan.

Because Ma Ying-jeou was regarded as a pro-China president by the Taiwanese people, these actions hostile toward Taiwanese were


\(^{2^3}\) The press releases against the policy are available at <http://ungian.pixnet.net/blog/post/28744136> and <http://taigi.fhl.net/News/News41.html>
considered Ma’s step toward de-Taiwanization (去台灣化). In response to MOE’s racial discrimination against Taiwanese speaking people, around 40 Taiwanese organizations immediately formed an alliance called “Alliance against the Discrimination Term on Southern Min” (ADTSM) and protested against the MOE. The organizations include Taiwanese Romanization Association, Haiang Taiwanese Association, Taiwan South Society, Taiwan Hakka Society, etc (Chiung 2010b).

The major arguments by the ADTSM are summarized, as follows:

First of all, ‘Southern Min’ contains the Chinese character ‘Min’, which is an offensive and pejorative word. It means ‘savages’ or ‘barbarians’ according to Chinese classical dictionaries Shuō Wén Jiě Zì (說文解字) by Xǔ Shèn (許慎) and Shuō Wén Jiě Zì Zhù (說文解字注) by DuànYùCái (段玉裁). It was the term used by the officials in northern China, where was the political center of ancient China. Although the term ‘Min’ have been used for a thousand years to refer to Hokkien, it does not mean that it is still appropriate today. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of UN of 1948 it was stated that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

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How can we use such a pejorative and insulting term to refer to a modern people?

Secondly, ‘Taiwanese’ is the traditional term which has been used for more than one hundred years in society in Taiwan. It is used not only by the Taiwanese people, but also by the Chinese people in Taiwan. For example, Lian Heng (連橫), grandfather of KMT’s former chairperson Lian Chian (連戰), published a book entitled as *Etymology of Taiwanese Language* (台灣語典) in 1933. In addition, a book entitled as *Taiwanese Dialect Symbols* (台語方音符號) was published by the Provincial Council for National Language Promotion in 1955. Also, *Taiwanese Conversions in Phonetic Symbols* (注音台語會話) was published by the Ministry of National Defense in 1958. They all used the term *Taiwanese* in these books. The term was not replaced by ‘Southern Min’ until the 1960s when the KMT tried to strengthen their assimilation policy. That is, force the Taiwanese people to identify themselves as Chinese rather than as Taiwanese.

To give readers a better idea of how different names are preferred and used in Taiwan, search results using Google Taiwan, dated on March 19, 2015, of different names (in Han characters) are tested. It reveals that 台灣話/台語 or Taiwanese Language was the most popular one with 14.7 million items found on Google. On the contrary, 閩南語 or Southern Min was accounted only 0.8 million. This shows that Taiwanese language is the most favored name by the
Taiwanese people.

The right to use one’s own name in one’s own language is an important issue recognized by international organizations. For example, in the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights of 1996 is found the statement that “all language communities have the right to preserve and use their own system of proper names in all spheres and on all occasions,” in article 31; and “all language communities have the right to refer to themselves by the name used in their own language. Any translation into other languages must avoid ambiguous or pejorative denominations”, in article 33. The term ‘Taiwanese’ has been widely used for more than a hundred years in Taiwan. Therefore, ROC regime should respect it.

5. Conclusions

From the political perspective of ROC, Mandarin Chinese in traditional Chinese characters was considered the only orthodox language. Education in Taiwanese, either in Han characters or Roman scripts, was definitely regarded as a challenge to the Chinese regime. Although nationalism may or may not consist of a linguistic component, it is definitely the case in East Asia that language and scripts play a substantial role in nation-building. For more than a millennium, Han characters and classical Han writing have served as the hallmark and tie between China and the Sinitic countries in the Han sphere. From the nationalistic viewpoint, abolition of Chinese
characters was thus considered an important step to the construction of a newly independent nation-state by the Taiwanese language promoters. Although writing in Taiwanese is still far removed from the ROC controlled Taiwanese society, it is not surprising that as conflicts between Taiwan and China increase, people’s enthusiasm about written Taiwanese will be mobilized. For example, the Association of Taiwanese Romanization and Taiwanese Pen were established in 2001 and 2009, respectively. These organizations aiming to promote writing in Romanized Taiwanese. It can be considered Taiwan’s reflection of the increased military and politico-economic threats from China in recent years.

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GEOPOLITICAL NAMING AND METAGEOGRAPHY IN THE EAST OF EUROPE

Abstract:

Modern geography is considered to be a methodologically weak discipline. One of the aspects of this weakness is the inability to properly define many common geographical terms, often used in literature, the media at large, in colloquial language and in scientific discourse as well. Thus the weaker the position of geography as a science, the stronger the influences of metageography. There where there exists a deficit of geographical study, metageographic constructs begin to appear. Such concepts begin to blur the true picture of geographical reality, continuing its limited understanding as pertains to regions and countries, which in turn may lead to conflict and missteps within both economic and political realms. The aim of this study then, is to arrive at proper definitions of what constitutes "Poland" and "Europe", as well as their exact localizations, since the understanding of both concepts have been deformed by the false premises of metageographic concepts.

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Key words: Europe's eastern boundary, geopolitical naming, metageography, Poland, Russia
Introduction: geography and metageography

Geography is the science which examines how people interact with the Earth upon which they live and how they order their lives... creating for themselves places. The existence of places is a direct result of the shaping by man of the Earth’s surface and stands as the raison d’être for the study of geography. Places exist only as a consequence of human presence. They are the creations of man, who forms them, giving them certain traits, functions and meanings, treating them as his own or as foreign entities, distant or hospitable, unsafe, pleasant or repulsive. They may be valuable to him or relatively passive in meaning.

The character of place depends upon how people organize their common life in particular localizations. English literature speaking about place, refers to it as the manner of dwelling together, while the classical French tradition of geography advances the expression genre de vie. When speaking of place, much depends upon the existing conditions and upon the resources that certain local societies have at their disposal, and how they use them for the shaping of the surrounding terrain. This especially includes any economic or technical means available to them. It follows then, that the scope and manner of the usage of these resources, is in effect a result of culturally conditioned preferences and methods of interaction with the existent biophysical surroundings as well as with the other people.
Places then are examined in geography according to various categorizations. For example: they may be examined under the category of country landholdings or factory districts, townships or parishes, Upper Silesia or Volhynia. They may constitute particular countries and regions and most notably Earth itself as the dwelling place of all people. Places exist then, in as much as they possess their own names, identities, internal cohesiveness, and series of traits resulting from their individual character or defined *qualité maîtresse*. It is necessary to add that places are something relatively constant even when the surrounding landscape finds itself in a process of rapid change due to economic and societal development, especially in the area of technology. At times places exist on as entities which go against the grain of such processes, slightly adjusting their character. It is necessary to admit however, that such processes of change, deeply influence the character of particular places, and in turn radically change the face of the entire Earth. Because of this, some places are destined to be extinguished and for sure will disappear, as for example the hallowed forests and shrines of the pagan gods. But the most radical predictions of the apocalyptic standardization of the Earth’s surface which was to accompany globalization and the new cultural uniformity of the world, along with the vision of the “death of geography”, are not coming to pass.

Since the shaping of the surface of the Earth is going forward continually forming new places, it is imperative that these new places...
become the subject of new scientific study. Such study is the interest of the discipline of geography. In the beginning phases of research activity, geographers attempt to realize two main goals. The first goal is to localize a given place or expanse. The goal of the second is to define its specific traits, functions and meanings. Only in later phases of examination does one begin to analyze specific phenomena and processes, which actually decide these functions and traits. In reality both of the above mentioned goals are interconnected in that the functions and traits of places, to large extent result from their localization. The general goal of this paper is to realize the two goals mentioned above as they relate to the existing places of Poland and Europe. For it seems that just as in the case of many other names and concepts, modern geography has failed in this attempt and has not been able to properly define either of the two terms. It could be just one of the main reasons that this discipline ‘is so little learned’ in spite of the fact that it does matter (McDougall, 2003).

Questions as to the location and geographical traits of Poland and Europe may seem surprising since the answers to these questions are contained in text books universally used in schools. They are however not questions of a purely rhetorical nature. In the present time, when precision of the spoken and written word is disappearing, and when words are often used not to express truth, but instead to hide the truth, the terms “Poland” and “Europe” are very often used in an entirely improper way. In relation to the question concerning the
localization of Poland, it is universally accepted that she finds herself in Europe. But Europe is a much larger entity than Poland and is also very diversified and disjunct. For this reason it is necessary to answer the question as to Poland’s place in Europe, by pointing the part of Europe to which Poland belongs. It is exactly on this point that opinions diverge with some researchers concluding that Poland belongs to “Western Europe”, while others define her as belonging to “Eastern Europe”. Still others advance the view of Poland belonging to “Central Europe” or to “East Central Europe”.

Still complicating the matter is the fact that many authors, among them journalists, reporters and even geographers themselves, often seem to think that “Europe” is a synonym for the European Union, or the continent which goes under the same name. And yet, the European Union is a political creation, while the idea of a continent is a geological categorization. The term “Europe” however is above all a geographical name. This is why in order to find the answer to the question concerning the true meaning and scope of what “Europe” is, one must look specifically to geographical study. An inherent problem as we do so however, (unlike with other so called Earth Sciences as geography is universally categorized in Poland), is the fact that there exist within geographical terminology many terms possessing multiple meanings and unclear definitions and terms, all of which can be understood in differing ways. The inclusion of geographical studies within the realm of Earth Sciences should
obligate us, to take special care in preserving linguistic precision, (since the above mentioned sciences also belong to the Natural Sciences). And yet, paradoxically, the discarding of geography’s humanistic identity and its recognition as a natural science, has not resulted in increased precision in the area of geographical terminology. Therefore even the terms “Europe” and “Poland” are names of undefined meaning and scope. In spite of the fact that the literature on the concept of Europe is voluminous, to deliver an unequivocal answer to the question of ‘what is Europe?’ seems to be impossible for the authors of contemporary publications. E.g. such answer is unavailable for editors of the well known collections of studies concerning what people have thought about Europe: ‘Any discussion of what constitutes “Europe” however, is problematic, for “Europe” is an undefined actor, lacking autonomy over a homogeneous, clearly bordered space’ (Maxine 2008).

Because modern geography often fails in its task to define common terms and names (such as “Poland” and “Europe”), it is important to note that these terms and concepts are essential for the proper functioning of society, for the proper understanding of communal texts, ideas used in the media and in literature, and in colloquial language as well. And there, where there is a lack of the study of geography or where such study is stunted, metageographic concepts appear which are effectively absorbed into the communal awareness of a given society and which complicate and blur the true
picture of reality (Lewis & Wigen 1997). And so it was with the localization of Poland in Europe and the definition of their territorial reaches. Although, from the formal point of view, Polish society is characterized by a high level of competency in the area of geographical studies, Poles are not able to definitively establish the positioning of their country in Europe, just as they are unable to define what Europe is and what exactly defines her territory. Their imagined map of Europe is not in keeping with purely scientific conclusions, but results instead from understandings and ideas of a metageographic nature which are riveted in their consciousness by ideological concerns, politicians, writers, news reporters and authors of school text books. It goes without saying, that the metageographic concepts, which go against the classical understandings concerning these questions have been, and are still being advanced. But at the same time it is important to note that they are also present in the language of geographical and geopolitical study. Such situation leads to conflict and mis-steps in the economic and political realms. An exact positioning of Poland and Europe, in agreement with principles advanced by scientific research, is absolutely essential for the proper understanding of the meaning and functioning of these two areas. This is because place names are not only the means to determine the very location of a place. They are attempts to characterize and even control the society’s life and consciousness. The importance of naming in “shaping, contesting, and redrawing the imagined political geography of Europe” and the role

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the “geopolitics of naming” plays in discussing military strategies, national identity, political economy and diplomacy were convincingly demonstrated by Joshua Hagen (2003). It is important to remember the sentence by John H. Mackinder, ‘the influence of geographical conditions upon human activities has depended not merely on the realities as we know them to be and to have been, but in even greater degree on what men imagined in regard to them’ (after McDougall, op.cit., p. 225). This is why such subject matter should be the foundation for the elementary study of geography.

Where is Poland?

The analysis of the texts concerning the localization of Poland show a drastic variance of understanding. It appears that Poles, concerning the question at hand, can be divided into four groups. The first group believing that Poland is a country of Western Europe along with Germany, France and Great Britain, with whom Poland is most strongly tied, economically and politically as is expressed by Poland’s membership within international organizations. Secondly however, Poland was equally viewed to belong to Eastern Europe. This seems to be how populations of the countries to the west of Germany seem to view the question. For them Poles are distant, “eastern” partners. For example, it has often happened that overseas “celebrities”, poorly educated in the area of geography, have mistaken Poland for Russia,
equating Poles with Russians, thus solidifying the conviction of Poland belonging to the East.

Without determining which of these two varying options finds itself closest to the truth, we can accept the conclusion that those who see Poland as belonging to Western Europe, are basing their opinion upon Poland’s common relationship with western ideals, while those who are inclined to place Poland with Eastern Europe accentuate, (aside from Poland’s very localization), her ethnically Slavic and thus “eastern” identity. It is wise to abstain from advancing wide-sweeping theories concerning the geographical location of Poland, since one cannot be sure whether those creating the definitions, are in themselves geographical entities. No one has any doubt as to the existence of Europe and Poland, for their varying traits and even stereotypes are well known, despite the disagreement as to the question of their localization. As far as Eastern and Western Europe are concerned however, it would be very difficult to determine, which territories belong to which in order to form a unified whole. For example one may notice that the westernmost Portugal and Spain have very little in common with “western” Iceland, as Eastern Sweden and Finland have very little in common with Greece even though these countries find themselves on the same longitude. A stronger tie and similarity in landscape exists among the countries of the Mediterranean as also is the case in distant Scandinavia. Iceland is more similar in terrain and history with Sweden than the countries
which are located on the western periphery of Europe. It is much the same with Greece, which reminds one more of Italy or Spain, than other countries found on the same nearby geographical longitude. It seems evident then, that it would be much easier to divide the countries of Europe into a Southern (or Mediterranean Region), and into a Northern (Nordic Region or Scandinavia), rather than attempting to adhere to the Eastern and Western division regions.

Although geography itself does not identify such regions as Eastern or Western Europe, the terms are very often used. It is necessary then to underscore, that these terms are not geographic in nature, but instead metageographic, resulting from historical events and ideology. In literature for example, the Western European countries are shown as the domain of Christianity (Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant churches) while the East is presented as being dominated by Orthodoxy as a buffer against the threat of Islam. When, in the last century however, religion ceased playing the main role as a determinate in civilization, Western Europe was defined as a domain of liberal democracy, separated from the totalitarianism of the East by “Iron Curtain” and Berlin Wall. From these examples, one can clearly see that the concepts of Eastern and Western Europe does not have its basis in geography, but instead possess a purely political and ideological connotation.

As was shown in the above mentioned research, apart from the main two options concerning the geographical localization of Poland,
there does exist a compromise opinion according to which Poland does not belong either to Western Europe nor to Eastern Europe; but instead to the Central expanses of the region. But here the question is raised: does a geographical entity under the name of Central Europe really exist? It goes without saying that simply listing the countries found within the central parts of Europe is not an answer to the question at hand, since every country and region possesses its “central” parts. Instead the question at hand is whether Central Europe exists as a place or geographical entity, possessing its own definition as a whole and having its own specific traits and character (genius loci). In the past such a concept was advanced by German geopoliticians. Their Mitteleuropa firstly denoted German-speaking countries and later increased its range as a concept to other countries, Poland being among them.\(^2\) The viability of this concept was limited due to the very negative (for Germany), historical period of the two World Wars. The concept of Mitteleuropa then, did not gain wider acceptance since it was a concept which resulted from ideological project, and was not an expression of a geographical reality. Mitteleuropa in congruence with the idea of its creators, was to connotate those areas directly under German control, or which had come under German control due to German, culturally, economically

\(^2\) The evolution of the concept of Mitteleuropa, understood as a political doctrine was presented first by Eugeniusz Romer. He wrote, “the concept of Central Europe appeared in Germany and became the basis for German programs of expansion (…) I maintain that this concept (…) was a political doctrine” (Romer 1917 , pp. 30-31).
and politically motivated expansionism. It should be emphasized that the concept of *Mitteleuropa* was not a utopian one, but was supported by the high economic and cultural position of Germany. Witnessing the great influence of German culture was the fact that no Slavic language was used nor French nor English during the deliberations of the Congress of Slavic Geographers and Ethnographers which took place in Kraków in 1927...only German. However, Central Europe as a geographical region simply does not exist in spite of various attempts to define the basic characteristics of the Central European identity. *Mitteleuropa* is not a geographical name and thus cannot be mapped (not unlike Western and Eastern Europe). There simply are no places so named.

In light of the above mentioned controversy and difficulties with definitions inherent in establishing the geographical localization of Poland, it must be mentioned that in the past few decades of the 20th century the concept of East Central Europe has appeared both in popular references and in formal scientific presentations as well. Such a concept owes its popularity to Oskar Halecki, a Polish historian working in the USA from the time of the Second World War (Lewicki 2012).

In the Introduction to the first edition of his study, Halecki defined the scope of his research as the eastern parts of Europe, consisting of those countries which had been (since the Middle Ages), tied culturally with the West, but having in later years lost their
independence. This area of Europe Halecki names East Central Europe. It is important to note that he did so however, “since there is no better name”, as he so aptly put in his own words. It is clear that by this, Halecki was referring to countries which had developed in the context of Latin civilization and who had, after World War II, found themselves in the camp of Moscow’s influence. Halecki then does not use for them the term Eastern Europe, simply because this name was being used by the growing Russian Imperium as a reference to what they considered to be the “European” part of the Soviet Union. Writing about the “wide isthmus between two seas”, Halecki refers to the concept of the *Intermare* (pol. *Międzymorze* meaning ”Between the Seas“) of Eugeniusz Romer, which in a practical application stood as the foundation of the political policies of Józef Piłsudski (Halecki 1952, pp. 4-5, 13). Such policies intended to create a federation or political union between the countries of Poland, Lithuania, White Russia and the Ukraine, which would be able to counterbalance the power of Germany and Russia. But because of the existing conflicts between the nations of the *Intermare* territories, this project was doomed to failure. In the opinion of historians, the resistance of nations to the idea of a union was due, in large measure, to the politics of the Polish government, which denied autonomy to the administrative institutions of those regions inhabited by Ukrainians and Belorussians and Lithuanians, absorbing them instead into the Rada Ministrów (Cabinet of Ministers) in 1920. Halecki then ceased
using the term *Intermare* instead favoring the newly coined name East Central Europe. In the end with Piłsudski’s political project a fiasco and with the onset of the Second World War, the hope of Poland becoming a main power of the *Intermare* area failed. It was then that Halecki broadened the meaning of East Central Europe to include all those countries which found themselves within the realm of the influence of Moscow, without regard as to their cultural allegiances and formation. This term then, came to refer to those countries who find themselves between Finland, Germany and Italy from one side, and the USSR and Turkey on the other. Despite this, Halecki did not deem all ‘comrades in misfortune’ found within this ‘satanic beltway’ (*Teufel’s Gürtel*), and who would find themselves isolated from the rest of the world by the “Iron Curtain”, to be of the same category. Instead Halecki clearly differentiates those countries of Latin civilization from those of the Balkan states, who, in his opinion, bore the weight of the “Russian yoke” much more aptly than the former, ‘People who were subjected to the oppressive Ottoman rule for 500 years learned to accept corruption, intolerance and despotism, and appeared to be quite willing to live under Communism to its end without a trace of resistance. These countries needed no occupying Soviet armies to keep them in line’ (ibid. p.2). East Central Europe for Halecki then, was made up of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, that is to say countries formed by Latin civilization, and who had, in the last century experienced their own absorption into the confines of
the Eastern Imperium. The realities of belonging to the so called
“Eastern Block” very readily put the brakes on the onward, cultural
and economic development of these countries, leaving them culturally
incapacitated, a situation from which they are striving to this day to
free themselves. There did not however in the face of all this, develop
a feeling of common and similar goals between the countries affected.
Thus the concept of Intermare collapsed. Also there does not exist the
region of East Central Europe. Like Oskar Halecki, one would be able to
call a group of certain nations by a chosen term because of a certain
historical commonality they may have shared at one point, but just as
with the name East Central Europe, they only convey a historical-
political idea, which does not permit us to recognize them as
geographic regions. The strange vigor of such a concept flows from the
idea of federalism, which fed the intellects of the most outstanding
Poles not only in the interwar period (Józef Piłsudski), but also during
the German Occupation (Władysław Sikorski) and later when ‘the ideal
of federalism become the mandatory paradigm of thought of emigrees
for the following decades’. Presently, with ongoing integration within
the European Union, ones hears much about the “theory of the
Central Zone” clearly taken from the ideas of Kazimierz Smogorzewski,
and which represents a contemporary version of the Jagiellonian ideal
and the Intermare concept (Rojek 2014). The well known version of
the Jagiellonian ideal is the concept by Saul Cohen, who argued the
necessity of a Gateway Region in eastern and central parts of Europe.
Such region is to be composed of ‘that middle tier of states between Germany and Russia’ whose independence Mackinder felt to be crucial to Eurasian and world stability. Poland is understood as the core of this Gateway Region (Cohen 1991).

From the reflection given above, one may clearly conclude that Europe does not consist of such subregions as Eastern or Western, Central or East Central Europe. All of these terms are metageographic constructs, whose goals are ideological or political in nature. How then are we to define the geographical localization of Poland? The answer to this question is possible only after identifying Europe as an independent region. Towards this end it is imperative to first establish the criteria which serve the identification and delineation of regions themselves.

The classical and contemporary definition of Europe

As presented in the introduction of this paper, Europe is above all, a geographical name and because of this should not be mistaken with terms such as the European Union or with the “continent” often called by the same name. What then are the criteria which allows one to define Europe and her borders in a precise and yet understandable manner? One of the foundational criteria for the development of classical geography was the role and influence of civilization, although in contemporary geographical literature this view is rare and even controversial. Paul Vidal de la Blache, the founder of the French school...
of regional geography was instrumental in expounding such an approach with the role of civilization at its foundation and his views were championed by his many followers. As a system of norms regulating interpersonal relationships and methods for organizing societal life, (especially in the areas of governance, economic matters, laws, ethics and education), civilization was formerly hailed as the main criterium in geography for the division of the world into regions and as the main motivator for the transformation of geographical landscape (Wilczyński 2011, pp. 126-146). Presently civilization as such, is only considered to be a concept proper to the disciplines of the historical and political sciences. Geographers having resigned then from the use of civilization as a criterium for geographical studies, have lost a valuable tool which functions in describing and researching the world regional structure.

In keeping with this criterium however of the role which civilization played in the development of classical geography, the name “Europe” connoted the area inhabited and developed by peoples co-creating Latin culture also known as Western culture. In congruence with the oldest available classical sources, Europe and Asia were understood as entities completely juxtaposed to one another. In this vein, Europe was understood to be thickly populated, possessing well-developed agriculture with a network of towns and many routes of communication. Asia on the other hand was understood to be comprised of deserted steppes and wooded tracts.

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separating civilized lands from the East and the North. According to the maps of the Pole Bernard Wapowski (circa 1526), the border of Europe and Asia was found in Poland and ran from north to south, just to the east of Wilno and Nowogródek, and along the line of the Słucz River toward Berdyczów and the middle part of Dniestr River valley. Interestingly, the name Berdyczów remains synonymous in Polish with a place totally removed from all main centers of civilization and which is difficult to reach. Even presently the saying goes that to send something to Berdyczów (pol. ‘na Berdyczów’), is to come to terms with the fact that the item sent will most surely be lost. To a certain degree, the movement of Polish settlements and the cultural influences which resulted from this process expanded the borders of Europe, fostering civilization. Thus the understanding of Europe was similar to the Greek understanding of oikoumene.

Such an understanding of Europe is however completely foreign to the authors of modern textbooks. Contemporary geography, having rejected differences in civilization as a determinant in identifying regions, has failed to propose any other workable and dependable criterium. In contemporary texts, the term Europe comprises an area stretching from Siberia and the Caspian Sea to the Atlantic and its tributaries. One look at the map allows one to conclude that it (Europe) is the most physiographically varied and westward fragment of Eurasia, having the shape of a dismembered peninsula, winding its way to the West and ending at the windswept cliffs of Cornwall’s - 97 -

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Lands End and the Finisterre in Iberian Galicia. The observant reader of these texts will notice that the Eastern border of Europe does not run back to back with the Urals, but instead runs to the east of that line. In as much as the Ural Chain is presented as being “on the European side”, in the case of the Caucasus, it is expoused to be just the opposite. It is postulated that the border between Europe and Asia runs through the northern plains of these mountains and as such categorizes them as belonging to Asia. The Eastern, that is Siberian foot of the Urals and the Northern plains of the Caucasus are the only land borders of Europe postulated by contemporary authors. It is worth wondering as to how such conclusions were reached and on what basis they were advanced. Upon examining the distant Kubań steppes located between the Don River (the ancient Tanais) and the foothills of the Caucasus, it is impossible to notice any indicators which define them as a border area. The same people live on both sides of the border in question, maintaining the same way of life, cultural development, language and customs. On both sides there exists a unified nation. The same can be ascertained when traveling from the Ural chain to the east. Beyond the mountains we experience the ideal flatlands of the Siberian taiga, differing little from those existing on the western side of the mountains. Here one is met with postings which indicate ‘Europe’ to the West and ‘Asia’ to the East. Of course it is the Russians who post such signs. They are necessary for them, to uphold a consciousness of belonging to Europe. They simply
do not want to recognize the independence of European, (i.e. Latin) civilization and the factors which differentiate it from their own. At odds with some Polish publications, the Russians sources discussing the subject of the borders between Europe and Asia, differentiate between the concepts of continent (материк in Russian), which the term Eurasia denotes, and “parts of the world”, as the terms Europe and Asia denote. It is also important to note that in contradiction to Polish maps and atlases, in which the great plains stretching from the Arctic to the Caucasus and the Black Sea are named ‘Eastern European Lowlands’, some Russian sources maintain their traditional term for the same as the Ruthenian Plain (rus. Русская Равнина). The used word ‘Ruthenian’ is close to ‘Russkiy’ as explained by Schaffenburg (2007). As with the understanding of the term continent, it is important to underscore the most important and correct nature of the two elements making up the Russian name; for neither are these areas totally made up of lowlands, nor are they Eastern-European. With all surety these are plains which may most definitely be called Russian, even if within their confines other nationalities dwell.

Since contemporary geography has not formed clear criteria for the identification of regions, the location of the border between Europe and Asia is not noted as being the same in all textbooks on the subject. The Great Encyclopedia PWN, for example, states that the border separating Europe from Asia is a fluid line, and then the Encyclopedia proceeds to give several variants as to the possible
location of this border. Perhaps the strangest localization of the border between Europe and Asia, is that which places its line along the shore of the Caspian Sea. It is interesting then to note, that for a person standing on the shore of this sea, one would have to cross the ‘border’ of two geographical entities, which are named ‘continents’ in order to actually enter the water. With the analysis of contemporary geographical textbooks and other educational materials (not only in Poland), one is able to conclude, that the information contained within these materials often goes against the obvious and factual, for they treat Europe and Asia as ‘discrete and objective geographical entities’, divided by the ridge of the Urals, which are seen as their ‘objective physical limit’, or as the ‘natural boundary of the European continent’. Some authors emphasize it with a hint of irony (Malatesta & Squarcina 2011), while William Anthony Hay ignores the modern thinking and instead of Ural-Caucasus he introduces the ‘Dvina-Dnieper portage’ (Hay 2003). The understanding of Europe and Asia as distinct and equal entities separated by the border of the Urals is then only one among many concepts functioning within contemporary geography, which defy empirical thinking. But despite this, it reigns supreme in the general understanding of geographical matters, affecting the status of geography and its position within the wider system of knowledge.

In order not to enter deeper into the above mentioned ‘magnum delirium’, it is necessary to return to the importance of...
classical concepts on the subject matter at hand. The problem with this however is, that the understanding of Europe as a region belonging to Latin civilization, does not enjoy the respect of contemporary geographers and functions less and less within the wider consciousness. Remnants of the classical school of geographical research resound within the statements of individuals such as Josip Brodski, who concluded that Eastern Europe does not exist, since such territories belong to Western Asia. From this statement alone, it is evident that Brodski studied classical geography which held that Asia extends to the Polish outposts of the East (known as the ‘kresy’ or ‘ukraina’), since in this area Asiatic cultures or ‘asianism’ co-existed with Latin culture. In Poland it was called Sarmatism which was signified in the Saxon Dynasty period by the shaven heads of the nobility and by their wearing of an outer garment called a ‘kontusz’ (Koneczny 2011, p. 10). This is an aspect worth underscoring since Sarmatism in Poland is not at all linked with Asia. The conviction that civilization functions as determinant affecting the identification of regions, has become almost entirely removed from the geographical literature, and the very term civilization was excluded from geographical terminology. This situation has shown to be very useful for Russian attempts to identify with “Europeanness”. As Iver Neumann put it, ‘The Russian state formulated, disseminated, and insisted upon a geographical definition of Europe as stretching all the way to the Ural mountains in the East [...], repeated protestations
that Russia was an European power suggest that this was far from obvious’ (Neumann 2003, pp. 12-13).

Because of the expanse of the Russian territories, it was impossible to unite them all with Europe. Due to this, it was deemed necessary by the Russians to prove a division of the country into a western part (which included Moscow) and its Asiatic remains. According to this logic the western part was referred to as European. From the time of Peter the Great, Russia looked at Europe with a certain complex of inferiority and jealousy. Neumann understood the matter thus, ‘Russians saw the question of relations with the Poles less in terms of their Roman Christianity and more in terms of their economic and political organization. Not infrequently, written statements were made to the effect that the Poles were superior to Russians in this regard. These embryonic Westernizers surmised, therefore, that backward Russia had something to learn from the Poles and other Europeans’ (ibid. p. 10). As an indication of the existence of such a complex, geography was in Russia reconstituted as a natural science, since such sciences could support the argument which divided Russia into two parts, one of which was the ‘European Russia’. But because all economic and cultural statistics registered to that time, recognized unilaterally that Russia and Europe are two differing worlds, it became necessary for them to look for criteria which would transcend cultural indicators in order to support the idea of the Russian-European unity. In order then, to show the
‘Europeanness’ of western part of Russia, it was necessary to separate its ‘Asiatic’ part from its ‘European’ part with a border that would be acceptable to international opinion. Russian sources were successful in this endeavor as they continue to be in our present time. Russian children today along with the most of the youth across the world all learn that it is the Ural Mountain chain which divides Europe and Asia, and thus ‘European’ Russia from ‘Asiatic’ Siberia.

How was the division of Europe and Asia arrived at?

Before one can present which criteria were used by the Russians in order to establish their understanding of the localization of the border between Europe and Asia, it is necessary to present the socio-cultural backdrop which existed behind the scenes in the entire process. As it has been already stated, the establishment of the borders in question among the Russians, originated in the time of Peter the Great and were the result of decisions clearly supported by representatives of the Russian elite. Wearing a French wig and garb, it was Vassili Tatischeff who in 1730 was the first to express his support of the official transfer of the eastern border of Europe to the foot of the Urals and Caucasus (which had as its goal the further Russification of the Finno-Ugric and Turkic peoples of the Volga basin area). For the supporters of Peter the Great’s program of westernization, such terms as ‘Asia’ or ‘asianism’ (rus. Азиатчина) carried with them a pejorative connotation, denoting Siberia as a barbaric land, which could be
explored, exploited and eventually colonized. Aspirations toward Europeanization, which grew among Russians thanks to, in part, contacts with Poland, were not only supported by those of the aristocracy. They were also embraced by such people as Leyba Davidovich Bronstein (known more often by his assumed name Lev Trotsky), who favored the idea of a complete break with turanism (= asianism) and with ‘the icons, Holy Ruthenia and with the history of the 17th Century’. This meant in practice the wish to assimilate all Russia into a ‘new and pure, Western civilization’ (Rosemont 1988).

The aspirations of the Russians to Europeanize did not meet with universal acceptance. During the Enlightenment and during the Napoleonic Period, Russia was denied entry into the family of European nations precisely because of her differing customs. Hugo Kołłątaj underscored the continuance in Russia of (as he put it), ‘slavery and ignorance’, identifying a lack of personal freedom, justice and equality under a cogent rule of law. The convictions of Joachim Lelewel concerning this same subject are very concrete. Lelewel saw the Romanovs Russia as a degenerate child re-born of the Old Ruthenia, built upon an ethnically Slavic foundation, which was constructed from elements of the Byzantine and Turanic civilizations, which in turn had lost all ancient, democratic and social relationships including that of language. Russia’s accentuation of her Slavic identity, it was postulated by Lelewel, was to serve the goal of her own expansionism and ‘the swallowing up of peoples’ which would result
from such expansionism. These are the very traits of Russia, which still continue to function even after the collapse of the czarist monarchy and which are still evident as part of the Russian milieux following the demise of the U.S.S.R.

But the pro-European politics of Peter the Great also had influential opponents within Russia itself. Among them were the Russian Pan-Slavists (Slavophiles), who held that although Russia and all other Slavic lands did not belong to Asia, she also stood as an antithesis to Europe (Walicki 1989, 502). In order to express this concept, the Pan-Slavists used the term ‘Eurasia’, which they borrowed from the 19th century Austrian geologist Edward Suess. Ignoring the dominant, cultural identification by some Slavic nations with the West, they concluded that all Slavs possess a “non-western” soul and therefore, together they should resist the expansion of the civilization of the West. These views of the Russian Pan-Slavists were in keeping with the many, well known views existing in Europe itself, which held that the ‘West’ was the sole domain of the German and Romance or Latin nations. The first to express this postulation was the German historian Leopold von Ranke. Later, following the Second World War, Theodore von Laue limited the idea of ‘the West’ identifying it as being constituted only by France and Britain. This view was tied with his specific convictions emanating from German National Socialism. In point of fact, von Laue considered the development of Nazism to be a direct result of an ‘attack’ by Eastern

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ideology upon Germany, which in turn had as its goal the extermination of all traces of Latin civilization within Germany (von Laue 1987). Evident from these approaches was the fact that European thinkers considered borders between regions to be determined by the reaches of a given civilization itself, which in turn is influenced by the geographical realities of the terrain. This approach of the Europeans did not please Russian geographers who sought out “proofs” that would establish geographical unity between Europe and Russia, or at least a part of her.

Aside from the various controversies which arose in Russia and Europe, Russians have never recognized their distinct separation from Europe, a separation which they have always understood as relegating them to a lower cultural status.\(^3\) It is because of this complex of inferiority that they have always desired to link their vast country with Europe as a whole. This could not be accomplished of geography alone and its existing parameters. One must note that the vast Russian plains are something completely different from the many, rather small, countries of Europe which are separated from one another by mountain ranges, great forests or ocean inlets. A continental climate also separates the Russian lands from the oceanism of Europe. But most of all, Russia has always, in a decided fashion, differed from

\(^3\) The question whether Russia is a part of the West (or Europe) was more recently discussed by Vladislav Martin Zubok (2005), Father Karl C. Schaffenburg (2007), Nikolas K. Gvosdev (2007), and John O’Loughlin and Paul Talbot (2005).

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Europe economically and culturally, since her experience of history is much different from that of Europe. The Middle Ages were experienced in a different way in Russia, the country never knew the full effects of the Renaissance or Baroque Periods, her faith was different and a different alphabet was in use. The life style and mentality of Russia was simply different than that of Europe. Particularly different was the Russian style of government, the way she conducted societal relationships, her mentality as well as the hierarchy of values predominating within her, as many Russian authors themselves have noted.

What are the criteria then, by which at least a part of Russia could be called ‘European’? This question can be examined with the aid of physical geography, which in Russia is known as the premier geographical discipline. According to research in this area, it is evident that during Eocene, some 50 millions of years ago (not so long ago in geological terms), the vast expanses of the plains of western Siberia and the Turkistan served as the bed of a shallow sea. Smaller bodies of water linked this sea with the Black Sea. The Mediterranean Sea was linked in this fashion with the Arctic Ocean, which led to the separation of a large fragment of the Eurasian land mass, constituting today’s Europe, along with western Russia and the Urals. These seas were shallow and short lived, but Russian geographers used their existence as a pretext in order to separate western Russia from the rest of her territories, referring to it as ‘European’. This above
mentioned, short and substantially unimportant geological episode in the history of Eurasia became the pretext for the identification of the territory belonging to the “continent” now known as Europe. Despite the questionable criteria used and the importance of such a division, it is one that is respected by the redactors of public statistics, the authors of maps and atlases as well as textbooks. According to many authors, the definition of Europe as stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals is recognized as the “classical” concept. Nothing strange then, that Europe is mistakenly known in the media and within textbooks as a ‘continent’, and the term ‘Eastern Europe’, is not used to define Poland, but instead western part of Russia. Consequently Poland, a border country of Latin civilization lying on the eastern borders in close proximity to Russia, is placed in ‘Central’ or ‘East Central Europe’. In publications of the regional geography of Europe then, it is much easier to find mention of Kazan Khanate or the Volga Bulgars than references concerning the regional structure of England, Portugal or Belgium, not to mention those of the Kashub region or the Austrian Vorarlberg. Such ambiguity is the price for the possibility that the Russians may be named Europeans.

Although the West took the Russian hypothesis into consideration, it would be difficult to imagine that the Russians alone could succeed in dictating to the entire world how geography was to be taught. The concept of Europe in the Russian view, would not have had a chance for acceptance without the appearance of a great ‘ally in...
the cause’ upon the scene. As Eugeniusz Romer noted, the recognition of Poland as a Central European nation is primarily due to the influence of German geographers, who for geopolitical reasons, desired to expand to the East the territories which they termed Mitteleuropa. Alfred Kirchhoff taught in 1890 that Mitteleuropa is the main expanse which naturally belongs to the German Empire along with Switzerland, the western part of Austria but without Polish Galicia to which they also laid claim. In 1907 Alfred Hettner partitioned the Congress District of Warsaw into the confines of Mitteleuropa. Ewald Banse five years later added all of historical Poland, beyond the Dniepr and Dvina Rivers to the same definition (Romer 1926). The incorporation of Poland to Mitteleuropa is the same as recognizing western Russia as an Eastern European country.

Although the vast majority of geographical and cartographic publications confirm that the border between Europe and Asia runs through Russian territories, the thesis concerning the ‘europeanness’ of western Russia, supported solely on the basis of physical-geographical and especially palaeogeographical criteria, is not convincing. For what meaning can the fact that 50 million years ago the areas of western Russia comprised one land mass with Europe, (and that such areas were separated from China, Tibet, Mongolia and Turkistan by seas), really have for contemporary life? We do not live in the Eocene age, so we must acknowledge the fact that there exists one Russian land and one Russian nation. Her division into ‘Europeans’
and ‘Asians’ is as absurd as to divide Poles into groups because of whether they live on the north or south side of the Warsaw-Berlin post-glacial valley. The Russians, like the Poles, aside from local differences are one homogeneous nation. They have their own culture, their own societal organization and life style which are mirrored in the landscape. What sense is there then of dividing these territories into ‘European’ or ‘Asian’ sectors since they are all Russian? Such a division of Russia into European and Asian parts is purely palaeogeographical and not geographical in nature. It could be meaningful only for the ancestors of mastodons or dryopithecus (if such creatures really existed), but not for those living today and especially not for those who possess the competency of rational thinking.

**Eurasia: a concept of unity between Europe and Russia**

The Russians, inspired by the idea of differentiating western Russia from Siberia, did not cease in their efforts to propagate a certain unity between “europeanness” and Russia. In case it did not enjoy favor, they proposed other solutions, which were characterized by, not only parts of Russia belonging to Europe, but *all* of Russia belonging to Europe. The result of such a union was purported by them to be “Eurasia”, that is a “Europe which stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific”. It was to denote that Russia is regarded as European but non-Western (Trenin 2002; see also Gvosdev 2007).
purveyors of eurasianism (among them the most influential Russian thinker Alexander Dugin) admitted that there indeed exist ‘differences in the ways of governing the society, in the mentality and hierarchy of values’, between Russians and Europeans, which ‘have expressed themselves by taking different directions as far as economic and societal development, and with the evolution of administrative and political institutions as well.’ The source of these differences is according to them, simply a matter of Europe and Russia’s respective cultural inheritances: Europe being the inheritor of Roman civilization and Russia the inheritor of Byzantine culture and ‘short-lived, despotic states of Asiatic nomads.’ Vladimir Abramov, pointing out the barrier in mentality and culture between Europe and Russia, correctly notes the inconsistency of the European Union in accepting countries for membership who lay outside of the influences of Western civilization. While underscoring the European character of the works of Russian writers and artists, his whole approach is built upon a mistaken concept of a metageographical nature, according to which he accepts as a given the notion that the ethos of the Russian nation was always existent in the eastern regions of the ‘European Continent’ (Abramov 2013). Such a conclusion would only make sense if the borders of the Urals could be understood in a cultural and geographical sense and not only in the metageographical sense. A similar line of thinking is found with Valentin Mikhailov who mistakenly juxtaposes Europe as a geographical entity, with Europe as a cultural entity. Such a
comparison could only be proven if we considered geography to be a natural science, having nothing to do with civilization. It would demand that we discard the whole tradition of classical geography, relegating it to the understanding which dominated the scene during the communist period.

The arguments of the adherents of ‘euroasianism’ often seem on the surface to be cogent and logical. And indeed they would be completely convincing if they did not result from a false metageographical concept of Europe as a ‘continent’ ending at the Urals and if they did not ignore geography as a social science, which has as its central subject of study civilization. It seems that Russians lack the bravery to be a separate civilization, as many of the statements of their adherents having to do with the concept of ‘European’ Russia, are formed by metageographic influences and the ever pervasive complex of cultural inferiority. ‘Despite the fact that for a few centuries the eastern border of Europe has been understood to be at the Urals, on the mental map of Europe Russia remains an independent civilization, which is described with high-pitched and damning epitaphs’ (Mikhailov 2013). Unjust is also the conviction, that Russia received its spirituality from Byzantium and its ‘army-camp’ style system of governance from Scandinavia, which had as its goal the minimalization of Turanism upon Russian societal realities. Perhaps then Russia really does not denote a civilization. If so there would be nothing left for them to do but to identify with Western civilization.

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with the risk of losing the original traits of their own culture. Geographical realities which decide the independent nature of civilizations, along with the immensity of territory and its status as a great power, allow one however to recognize Russia as an independent civilization, which should base its relationship with Europe and Asiatic civilizations on standards of true partnership and equality. The already mentioned bitter epitaphs and negative tone concerning Russia would subside if Russia could see herself as being proud of her own civilization and not as an entity seeking to constantly imitate the civilization of the West. It is worth noting that such a strategy only points to Russia’s endless lack of development. In order to truly ‘catch up’ with the West it would be necessary for her to employ a different approach. In the case of Russian identity, perhaps she would do well (apart from her natural characteristics), to employ elements of Russian spirituality in such a process.

The eastern bulwark of Europe

The conclusion that the division of Russia into European and Asian sectors is as devoid of rational foundation as is the conclusion that the border between Europe and Asia exists at the Urals. These concepts are pure conjecture, false creations and metageographical in character. In this milieu, it seems only proper to return to the importance of the classical concepts according to which Europe is...
understood as a region inhabited by nationalities which co-create together a Western civilization, and of which Poland is its most eastern representative.

In Poland the classical understanding of Europe, according to which “europeanness” was always equated with close ties to Latin culture, still functioned before the Second World War. Jerzy Smoleński, a geographer from Kraków, postulated that the eastern border of Europe was located at the eastern outreaches of Poland (the Varangian Zone, i.e. the line of Dvina and Dniepr Rivers which linked the Black Sea with the Gulf of Finland); and according to Smoleński, that was as far as Western civilization reached (Smoleński 2012). But such influences of the Polish nation became more and more limited through time and Poland ultimately lost her position as the main power in the Intermare region. At the same time, the eastern border of Europe, shifted to the west. Following the Second World War, these borders extended beyond the Elbe, and after the corrections of 1989-91 were positioned at the Bug River. In present times, Poland and her neighbors, freed from the yoke of communism, are attempting to make up ground and to erase the stamp of cultural backwardness which they had inherited from this totalitarian period. The political and social situations of Belarus and the Ukraine seem to indicate that their return to Western civilization will be very difficult. So then it is Poland which continues to be the easternmost country of Europe (along with Lithuania and the remaining Baltic countries), and which
remains as a bulwark of Western civilization. We then should underscore the position of Poland, and her international role. Regardless by what name we call Poland’s Eastern neighbors (Russia, Eurasia, Western Asia, ‘Great Siberia’), they are her most immediate neighbors. It has been Poland through the centuries who has been the brunt of direct strikes by peoples representing foreign civilizations dwelling to the East (Alans, Mongols, Tatars and Turks), and it was Poland who was responsible for upholding control in the Eastern Territories (called in Polish Ukraina), where Cossacks often fermented revolts, after which they would decide to make agreement with Moscow. It was Poland who held back the 1920 Bolshevik invasion, which had as its goal the domination of all of Europe with the ‘new faith’. Poland then, as an European nation, possesses the greatest experience in dealing with the reality of the East, and should cultivate relations with the East, which are not characterized by military rivalry but instead by economic and cultural co-operation.

The role which Poland’s geographical location has given her, has been more or less accepted by her. The Treatise of Two Sarmatias by Matthias of Miechów is an expression of Poland’s greatest cultural aspirations as a country. This great man who exposed the ancient views of Ptolemy as they relate to the territories which lay to the east of Poland, identified them as expanses which the Kingdom of Poland should explore, study and win for herself...for the good of and for the increase of Christian civilization. The power of the then existing
Kingdom of Poland and especially the power of Polish culture, allowed Matthias to place Poland in the company of nations realizing great achievements within this epic of the great geographical discoveries. In the dedication to his great work he wrote the following ambitious and proud words:

‘As the countries of the south and peoples neighboring the Ocean all the way to India were discovered by the King of Portugal, may the countries of the North, in the Northern Ocean regions and those dwelling to the East be opened to the world, explored by the knights and wars of the King of Poland’ (Wilczyński 2012, pp. 19-20).

In the centuries to follow similar documents witnessing to such international ambitions and power of Polish culture are totally absent. Later came the period of the partitions of Poland. But even in the face of this, the one who would presuppose that the partitions would mean the total collapse of the Polish nation, would be in error. It was Feliks Koneczny who wrote on this topic most convincingly, demonstrating how Polish culture broadened the reach of Latin civilization, even in periods of great political upheaval: ‘within the nation, (Poland), so fettered by the poor and the persecuted, a great spirit of assimilation opened up. This came about despite all odds, proving that the spirit is more powerful than the material (Koneczny 1997).

Such facts should have for us, in our present day a powerful meaning. Europe has become a great cultural melting-pot, even one
greater than Koneczny was describing. Latin culture finds itself threatened, though not by turanism or communism. The Spenglerian expression *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* has today a different meaning. The West itself is discarding those values thanks to which, throughout the centuries it formed the greatest civilization in the history of the world. The conditions governing liberal-democratic nations are severely limiting the three pillars of our civilization, those being: Christianity, the Greek philosophy, and Roman law (the Enlightenment liberalism and progressivism being a modern addition). Governmental systems are eroding the sacred character of private ownership in the name of “freedom” and “emancipation” of the individual and groups, blocking the economic liberty of the majority. Political correctness is in a painful way crippling the exercise of Truth, while true justice is being substituted with wayward concepts of “social justice”. But without aforementioned building blocks, true ethics cannot exist, ethics which stand as the foundation of all Western Civilization.4

All these negative changes affect Poland to a large degree as they influence the thinking of an ever increasing percentage of her society, awakening however, those who remain steadfast to conservative convictions. Perhaps such representatives exist in greater

4 How Protestant Christianity was ‘distilled’ into a secular ethical system was presented by James Kurth (2001), and the dangers resulting from rejection of classical culture and Christian religion were explained by Alan Charles Kors (2001).
numbers in Poland than in other countries, since from the Polish perspective one can see clearly the decadence of the West and also the fact that countries outside the influence of Latin civilization are more immune to the disease which is causing such decadence. In this regard the book of Ryszard Legutko should serve as a signal to Poles, that the idolc relationship which they have often expressed in the past toward liberal democracy, is coming to an end. Legutko points to the de-culturalization of these countries of the West, along with the complete collapse of the ideals of their educational systems, which has had a direct result on the weakening of their political systems, especially in the area of democratic institutions (Legutko 2012). The true appreciation of these facts serves as a necessary condition for Poland to undertake once again those tasks which result from her geographical location. As Feliks Koneczny noticed, ‘the geographical location of Poland has to itself the great advantage, that it is central and thus can move to the political center, with the ability to thrust itself directly into the center of civilization’(Koneczny 1997, p. 421). Even if Latin civilization collapses entirely, there will remain remnants which can witness to the past excellence of this once great culture and as an inspiration for the rise of a new civilization for the next generations to come. From the point of view of Latin civilization, this chain of events might be acceptable, as one takes into consideration the amnesia of the West, which ever more frequently dismisses Christianity, liberalizes the rule of law, and less frequently reminds
itself of its Roman roots, corrupting knowledge, philosophy and art, and distancing these disciplines from their Greek ideals of beauty and truth.

The goal then of contemporary science and study, especially geography and geopolitics, is the development and dissemination of the type of scientific ideas thanks to which the national and societal consciousness of peoples may be strengthened. Such a consciousness would be able to lead to the reversal of some negative process of deculturalization and to survival of elements proceeding from the roots of Latin civilization. They then could be disseminated around all of Europe, confirming the prophetical character of St. Faustina Kowalska’s vision. Such a consciousness could lead to Poland, because of its location, fulfilling her role within civilization. Is it possible then, that from Poland the spark may be ignited which will once again light the flame of Western Civilization anew? Much would depend on geography, which would need to cleanse itself from the influences of widely accepted metageographical constructs, whose continued, uncritical use stands as in insult to that which is rational and a negation of empirical argumentation. As Alan Charles Kors put it, ‘in the current academic climate of indoctrination, tendentiousness, and fantasy, the independence of critical intellect and the willingness to learn open-mindedly from experience of a reality independent of the human will, are the greatest hopes of our civilization’ (Kors 2001, p. 357).
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