ASIA IN FOCUS

Contents

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Letter from the Editor

The idea to create a journal dedicated to supporting early-career researchers along their academic path came from a student assistant working at NIAS Library and on the InFocus Blog. There were many well-written and innovative blogs submitted by early career researchers, so together with the head of the library and a small group of PhD students at NIAS, the University of Copenhagen and other Nordic academic institutions, we developed the idea of a journal that published shorter articles written by Master and PhD students from the humanities and social sciences whose studies were focused on Asia.

The project was to be volunteer based, but the idea was so well received by lecturers and students at the Nordic NIAS Council member institutions that a year later, NIAS decided to dedicate some financial resources to the project. Over the course of the last four years, we have been able to establish an official remunerated role for a Managing Editor, create a modern user-friendly website, register an ISSN number, and join the Danish Royal Library's national portal for the digital publication of scholarly scientific and cultural journals, Tidsskrift.dk. We have published eight regular issues and one special issue of the journal, given feedback and support to over 150 Master and PhD students in the Nordic Region and Europe, and we have achieved level 1 ranking in Norway, which is a major achievement in light of the fact that the articles we publish are half the length of those in regular scientific journals.

Unlike mainstream scientific journals, Asia in Focus has regarded itself as a learning platform as well as a source of innovative high-quality evidence based knowledge on Asia. We have thus measured our success not only on the number of students (and issues) that we have published, but also on the amount of students we have been able to give in-depth feedback and guidance to regarding their academic writing – a role that increasingly time-pressured lecturers understandably have little time to dedicate to. In an era where researchers are judged and measured by the number of publications produced in high-ranking journals, the founding and successive editorial teams have taken great pride in being able to deliver this academic service to such a great number of early career researchers across Europe.

Our goal is to reach Master and PhD students worldwide, but for now we have a different challenge ahead. As a result of an ongoing restructuring process at NIAS – Nordic Institution of Asian Studies, Asia in Focus is in search of a new institutional home in Denmark or the wider Nordic region. The journal has thus far been such a great success, the Director of NIAS, Duncan McCargo and the Editorial Committee are in agreement that it should live on and continue to provide guidance, support and this opportunity

to become a published researcher for PhD and Master students studying at European institutes of higher education.

Our Facebook page and website will remain live while we establish ourselves elsewhere. Please do not hesitate to get in touch via Facebook, or contact Inga-Lill Blomkvist (ilb@nias.ku.dk) if you know of an institution or department that would like to hear more about us and potentially be our new home.

In this issue, we take you to Kyrgyzstan to learn about how traditional institutions affect political voting and mobilisation patterns, to Korea to learn about the importance of cultural memory when looking at the outcome of the Inter-Korean Summit in 2018, to China to look at what managerial strategies are used to control and manage agency workers mobility and finally to Thailand and an exploration of the social consequences of an ethnic migrant community radio station and its role for the Shan migrant community in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Enjoy the read, and do share the journal with your peers and networks both inside and outside of academia!

Nicol Foulkes Savinetti

Managing Editor of Asia in Focus

Inter-Korean Dialogue and Cultural Memory Practices

KATRINE EMILIE BRANDT

The Inter-Korean Summit of 27 April 2018 reinstated dialogue between North and South Korea after a decade of little diplomacy between the two states. In doing so, it drew significant international media attention. Heavy debates on how to interpret both the meeting itself and the prospects of further peace negotiations were raised. Among the spectators, several critics argued that the summit was merely an exercise in symbolism. This article aims to challenge this perception because it disregards the important dynamics of the negotiation process that took place. Using a Cultural Memory Studies approach, this study sets out to demonstrate the significance and complexity of the memory negotiations that took place during the summit. The study looks at some of the internal remembrance processes and employed modes of addressing the past. Furthermore, it investigates how the two actors of diplomacy temporarily altered the dominant "mode of remembering" their past and, through this, recontextualised inter-Korean relations within the time and space of the meeting. More specifically, this study examines how cultural artefacts and different forms of cultural memory in performative acts can be said to have created a "civil space" within which diplomatic talks were enabled.

Keywords: Cultural memory, inter-Korean relations, peace negotiations, modes of remembering, politics of memory

On 27 April 2018, an Inter-Korean Summit was held between delegations from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) with the North Korean Chairman Kim Jong Un and the South Korean President Moon Jae In as the central actors of diplomacy. The summit took place at the Joint Security Area (JSA) of Panmunjom and signified the revival of peace negotiations between DPRK and ROK after a decade of little diplomacy between the two parties. Although the armed hostilities of the Korean War ended on 27 July 1953 with the signing of the Armistice Agreement, no official peace treaty was ever signed. Consequently, this newly instated dialogue sparked significant international media attention. The summit ignited heavy debates on how to interpret this meeting, along with the prospect of further peace negotiations. Many of the media spectators have shown themselves to be critical of the effects of this summit. Additionally, several critics have claimed that "the summit was a mere exercise in symbolism" (Botto & Jo, 2018) because so many, both internal and external, political interests are at play in the Korean conflict. Nevertheless, by calling the meeting "mere symbolism," these critics seem to regard definitive peace along with unification as the only criteria that determine the value of the meeting. However, the success of the negotiation process in itself should not be relegated.

It is important to acknowledge that external factors played a significant role in facilitating this summit and in driving these leaders to meet. The most prominent were the US' call for additional trade sanctions on North Korea in 2017 (Borger, 2017; Harrell & Zarate, 2018; McCurry, 2018) and the passing of several new resolutions by the UN Security Council, which boosted sanctions in a number of areas including a ban on coal and iron exports and restrictions on oil imports (Albert, 2019).

However, this study does not focus on the internal-external dynamics that motivated the meeting. Instead, it seeks to challenge the interpretation that the Inter-Korean summit itself was an ineffectual

"exercise in symbolism." While steps toward peace and eventual unification may arguably have been the primary objectives of the talks, they were far from the only interesting dynamics at work during the actual summit. This study aims to present an alternative way of looking at the diplomatic negotiations along with their potential significance. Following a cross-cultural approach to the understanding of culture and memory, the study looks at the internal remembrance processes at work during the summit in order to investigate how memory can be utilised as a practice that alters relations. More precisely, the study investigates the use of cultural artefacts and different forms of "cultural memory" in performative acts. The essential question here is whether the selected mode of addressing cultural memories created the space for a familiar dialogue between the two actors.

A Cultural memory approach

In order to investigate the importance of the cultural memory practices observed during the summit, it is necessary to outline the theoretical framework of this study in terms of its position within the memory studies field. The basis of memory studies as a field is the understanding of memories not as something fully individual, but something that is also inherently cultural, social and collective in nature. This study draws its understanding of cultural memory from Astrid Erll (2008, 2009) and Ann Rigney's (2005, 2009) studies on the concept. In the book *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies,* Astrid Erll presented "the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts" (Erll, 2008, p. 2) as a simplistic way of defining the dynamics of cultural memory. Elaborating on this, Erll suggested that memory should be seen at two levels: cognitive and social. In practice, these two levels continuously interact. Memory neither works on a purely pre-cultural, individual level nor on a fully collective level. Erll argues that we remember in socio-cultural contexts as "our memories are often triggered as well as shaped by external factors" (2008, p. 5). Based on previous

work done by Jan and Aleida Assmann, Rigney (2005) lays out the developments of the memory studies field from Maurice Halbwachs's original concept of "mémoire collective" to the current culture-focused version. She argues that "the term 'cultural memory' highlights the extent to which shared memories of the past are the product of mediation, textualization and acts of communication" (Rigney, 2005, p. 14). Cultural memory is performative, and the things we remember about the past are products of current memory practices within different contexts. Cultural memory should not be considered something that spontaneously appears (Nora, 1996, p. 12). It is not something we *have,* but something we *do* (Olick, 2008, p. 159) and both *what* is remembered and *how* it is remembered are important for the meaning the past assumes (Erll, 2008, p. 7). Essentially, it is the constant process of remediation and recontextualisation of cultural memory that works to renegotiate current relations (Erll & Rigney, 2009).

To conceptualise these memory practices, Erll presents the idea of different "modes of remembering" the past and provides the example of how a war, depeding on context and group dynamics, can actively be remembered in numerous ways: as a political or historical conflict, a family tragedy or as trauma (2008, p. 7). Jan Assmann presents the idea that what we remember creates our understanding of selfhood (Assmann, 2008, p. 109). How and what we choose to remember at a given time, more or less consciously, can be said to guide how we act and how we understand our relation to others. This is also applicable on a national level (J. Assmann, 2008; Erll, 2008). Assmann suggests that we create the national us and them based on our understanding of the past. The politics of memory is a convoluted affair and using a cultural memory approach enables a look at the dynamics between memory practices and negotiations of group identity within a given context.

Looking at the construction of the first 2018 Inter-Korean Summit, this study seeks to examine the artefacts and selected memory practices

utilised to open up the dialogue between the two political actors about the future relations of their states. Some critics may contradictorily argue that the summit evaded addressing memory altogether so as to avoid dealing directly with the conflictual memories between North and South. However, completely avoiding the aspect of memory in the context of a complex socio-political conflict is impossible. This study thus suggests that their selected mode of addressing memory during the summit lay in the dynamics between "purposeful forgetting" and "selective remembering." These two aspects are considered crucial components within the politics of memory (Mageo, 2001) and both worked to shape the summit. It is important to note that this study does not claim that a homogeneous memory culture exists between nor within the two Koreas. Rather, the study works within the understanding that "a number of normative and formative texts, places, persons, artefacts, and myths" (Assmann, 2008, p. 108) constitute a form of "memory canon" which, to some extent, is familiar to both sides. During the summit, a number of these canonical elements seem to have been employed with the purpose of initiating a certain mode of remembering Inter-Korean relations within the temporality of the meeting. Successful negotiation was arguably found through the chosen address.

The summit: Cultural memory practices

The Inter-Korean Summit on 27 April 2018 was held under the official slogan 'Peace, a new start' (평화, 새로운 시작) (Sohn, 2018). In creating this narrative, the organisers set up the framework for a meeting which could potentially mark the beginning of something new. The framework is, in itself, not unique from the two previous Inter-Korean summits as it strongly resembles the sentiment seen during the South Korean "Sunshine Policy" of the late-1990s and early-2000s. The first two Inter-Korean summits were held in 2000 and 2007, and both were enabled by the Sunshine Policy which worked under the premise that "[p]ersuasion was better

than force, and that engagement through dialogue and economic and cultural exchanges would bring about a change in the North and foster peace between the two Koreas" (Shin, 2018). Instead of paying attention to the narrative itself, it is rather the particular remembrance practices in use that are worth investigating.

In the next section of this study, five different parts of the summit schedule are analysed to illustrate different practices and negotiations. These five examples are far from the only ones, but they illustrate some of the most prominent themes. The primary source material used in the analysis is the full live stream of the summit provided by the South Korean broadcasting station, KBS News.

I. *Panmunjom and the emotional setting during the border crossing*

The venue of the summit was the Joint Security Area (JSA) between North and South Korea, which is often referred to as Panmunjom in popular media due to both its physical and symbolic proximity to the original "truce village" where the Armistice Agreement was signed ("The DMZ," 2010). Panmunjom is often perceived as the embodiment of the division ("Venue for Koreas Summit," 2018) and thus acts as a strong symbolic and visual memory trigger in connection to the Korean War. The predetermined memories and usual practices connected to this place mark the importance of the space within which the summit was carried out.

On 27 April at 09:30, Kim Jong Un came out of the main building on the northern side of the Military Demarcation Line in Panmunjom. Surrounded by his delegation, Kim walked up to the line where Moon Jae In stood waiting for him. With his hand stretched out, Moon greeted Kim and invited him to cross ("2018 Inter-Korean Summit", 2018, 1:09). This moment was a clear break with usual border practices and the first time since the division that a North Korean leader was allowed to set foot on South Korean soil (Fifield, 2018). As something that can be regarded as a tone-setting gesture, Kim af-

terwards reciprocally and unscripted let Moon cross the border into North Korea for a brief moment. They were afterwards seen stepping over the line and returning to the southern side, holding hands while smiling broadly at each other. What was seen during this first section of the summit, was a series of physical acts and bodily practices to establish an emotionally open space. These practices created an image of two people from the same community meeting and greeting after a long time apart. While this could be considered a purely symbolic act, it created a temporary break from the memories connected to the place and set the emotional tone for the rest of the summit. Essentially, it laid the foundation upon which the following negotiations could take place. Furthermore, it served to signify how near in proximity the two sides actually are, which Kim also expressed during the afternoon session at the Peace House:

> ...The demarcation line wasn't even that high to cross. It was crossed so easily, but it still took 11 years for it to happen. While I was walking over here today, I thought to myself: why did it take such a long time? I had initially thought it would be harder to do. ([...]분계선이 사람들이 넘기 힘든 높이도 아니고 너무 쉽게 넘어오는데 11년이 걸렸다. 오늘 걸어오면서 보니까 왜 그 시간이 오랬나, 오기 힘들었나 하는 생각이 들었습니다) (2018 Inter-Korean Summit, 2018, 6:41:02)

II. *Military Guard of honour as a cultural artefact from Joseon Dynasty*

After crossing the border, the two leaders were escorted by a traditional guard of honour along the Military Demarcation Line ("2018 Inter-Korean Summit", 2018, 1:12). On both sides of the leaders, regular palace guards were lined up, and together with a military marching band in front, they formed a rectangular shape. While this was meant to serve as a gesture of respect towards Kim Jong Un, it was also a visual representation of a traditional guard of honour formation as it was used during the

Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910) ("Our country's guard of honour," Dailian, 2012). In a sense, the guard of honour can be considered a purposefully selected relic from their past which provides Koreans with a visual framework that triggers memories of a Korean Peninsula under a united dynasty. This idea that artefacts can be "fished" out of the archive and brought into play during social interactions is something often discussed in relation to acts of remembering the past (Rigney, 2005). Rigney (2005) argues that "public remembrance changes in line with the shifting social frameworks within which historical identity is conceived" (p. 23). By choosing to commemorate the Joseon Dynasty, a momentary shift was created in the current mode of remembering their common past. Under normal circumstances, Inter-Korean relations are dominated by memories of the Korean War; however, with the selected remembering inscribed in this performance, memories of the period before the division of Korea took centre stage and implemented a purposeful forgetfulness of the memories of conflict. This kind of performance is essentially what anthropologist Paul Connerton refers to when he argues that recollected knowledge of the past is conveyed and sustained by bodily practices and ritual performances (Connerton, 1989, pp. 3–4). By enacting this performance, the two states renegotiated the chosen mode of addressing their past and thereby altered their relations within the given time and space of the summit.

The use of Joseon Dynasty costumes and instruments can also be seen as part of a recovery project, an attempt to resurrect a sense of "imagined community" (Anderson, 2006) between the two present-day Koreas, based on past proximity of the two. Overall, the way their past is presented throughout the summit can be seen as a specific mode of remembering that foregrounds the notion of a homeland tragically separated by a political partition, with the meeting attempting to regain common ground. This negotiation tactic aligns with the studies of cultural historian John R. Gillis who highlights that "civil spaces" are "essential to the democratic processes by which individuals and groups come together to discuss, debate, and negotiate the past and, through this process, define the future" (1994, p. 20). The encounter during the meeting was constructed in a way that should create a sense of civility and familiarity.

III. Arirang creating a sense of unity

While the military guard of honour escorted the two leaders towards the Peace House, a significant anthem was played ("2018 Inter-Korean Summit", 2018, 1:12). *Arirang* is a traditional Korean folk song dating back long before the division and used in both North and South Korea. This song has often been used in other contexts to bring the two sides together. During the opening of the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, for example, *Arirang* functioned as a shared national anthem for the unified Korean women's team (Strother, 2018). Furthermore, *Arirang* is inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list as heritage belonging to both DPRK and ROK (referred to as *Arirang folk song* and *Arirang lyrical folk song)* giving the song a symbolic status of a shared cultural artefact of value. Like the Joseon costumes, this song was a cultural artefact used to evoke a sense of shared community during the summit.

To underpin this, it is relevant to mention *Arirang*'s reappearance at the proceeding Inter-Korean Summit held in North Korea on 20 September 2018. In a broadcasted clip from this summit provided by SBS News, Chairman Kim, President Moon, their wives and the remaining delegations are seen listening to a performance of *Arirang*. Moon Jae In's wife, Kim Jung Sook, and Kim Jong Un's wife, Ri Sol Ju, were seen smiling and laughing familiarly at each other while singing along ("The sound that united," 2018). This clip reaffirms the familiarity of the song and the strong emotional impact it evokes in audiences from both sides.

IV. The narrative of new beginnings at the 'Peace House'

Upon arriving at the Peace House, Kim Jong Un wrote a message in the visitor's book:

> A new history begins now. An age of peace, at the starting point of history (새로운 력사는 이제부터. 평화의 시대, 력사의 출발점에서) ("The sound that united," 2018, 2:54).

Kim's words suggest that the meeting was a venue for the two parties to "cut-off" history. However, the sequence of temporality itself cannot be abolished even if that is what "the starting point of history" insinuates. Cultural memory will always be part of the negotiations. This sentiment is supported by Paul Connerton (1989) who states that all beginnings contain an element of recollection. He argues this is especially true when a group makes a concerted effort to start over since "there is a measure of complete arbitrariness in the very nature of any such attempted beginning" (Connerton, 1989, p. 6). Current modes of remembering the past would first have to be addressed and altered. The Korean War has primarily been remembered on both sides as a bitter invasion by the other. North Korea, in a post-war perspective, has been seen to mainly blame what they refer to as the "U.S imperialist invaders," but they also fault the South for being a "puppet clique" as can be seen in an official North Korean history source on the Korean war ("Outstanding leadership," 1993).

Concurrently, there is also a continuous sense of betrayal to be found within various South Korean "media of cultural remembering" (Erll, 2009, p. 118). In South Korean historical texts and museums about the war, the notion of an unlawful and unfair invasion of the South by the North is still strong. This offence is often directly referred to as the "unjust/illegal invasion of the South" (불법 남침). Since this narrative about the war still stands strong, the act of purposeful forgetting is a necessary part of the peace negotiation process. During the summit, they selectively illuminated memories of national trauma, including the tragic separation of families and the homeland. The shift towards focussing on familiarity and homeland separation was also apparent in the final Panmunjom Declaration, where "South and North Korea agreed to proceed with reunion programs for the separated families on the occasion of the National Liberation Day of August 15" (Ministry of Unification, 2018). This promise was later actualised, further proving the effectiveness of the given negotiation. It can thus be argued that their repositioning in terms of the past carried the dialogue.

V. Tree-planting ceremony and the rise of a small memorial

In the afternoon, the two leaders met for a tree-planting ceremony. This kind of ritual performance has often been used as a way for leaders to mark new beginnings or commemorate past events (Sanders, 2018). In this study, the term "ritual" is understood as something performed, "an aesthetically marked and tightened mode of communication, framed in a special way and put on display for an audience" (Bauman, as cited in Rothenbuhler, 1998, p. 9). It can be seen as a rule-governed activity of symbolic value that draws the attention of its participants to objects of thought and feeling (Lukes, 1975, p. 291). During the tree-planting, President Moon shovelled soil from the North's Baekdusan, while the soil used by Chairman Kim was from Hallasan on the southern side ("2018 Inter-Korean summit," 2018, 8:07). Likewise, water from Han River of the South and the Daedong River in the North was used to water the pine tree.

With rituals, it is essential to pay attention to the details that show a political attempt at inscribing new meaning into the venue site. For example, a pine tree is a traditional symbol of peace and prosperity ("2018 Inter-Korean summit highlights review," 2018), and the particular tree used for this summit was purposefully chosen for its age of 65 years, the same number of years since Korea has been in a state of ceasefire after the signing of the Armistice. The tree hereby symbolises entering a new era of peace and prosperity; a time of sharing the earth and

water of the entire Korean Peninsula. Furthermore, rituals function as means of transmitting cultural memory (Connerton, 1989, p. 52). In his study, *How Societies Remember*, Connerton (1989) argues that deliberate changes in cultural memory often happen through a form of performative practice. When trying to create a break and figuratively establish a "new beginning," something material and physical is often used to stand as the embodiment of this change (Connerton, 1989, p. 4). The ritual performed during the summit was arguably meant to establish an embodied symbol of the beginning of a healing process. To commemorate this, a stone was placed with the words "Peace and prosperity are planted" (평화와 번영을 심다).

Even though peace was not obtained during the meeting, this stone stands as a reminder of the dialogue; a form of spatial memory trigger. Moreover, should these peace negotiations fall flat as the Inter-Korean summits of the 2000s did, this monument will stand as a message. It will act as a reminder of the specific approach under which dialogue was made possible.

Concluding thoughts

This study set out to demonstrate the significance and complexity of the memory negotiations that took place during the summit and, thereby, oppose the interpretation of the summit as mere ineffectual symbolism. When working with the concept of cultural memory as an analytical tool, it is important to remember that it is essentially an operative metaphor (Erll, 2008, p. 4). In other words, there will always be a personal aspect to the intake of the cultural memories mediated. A critique of this approach could, therefore, be that with the primary material used in this study, one cannot know how individual actors received the given memory practices and perceived the overall peace negotiations.

Nonetheless, cultural memory as an analytical framework provided the opportunity to look at the way the Inter-Korean summit successfully evaded activating contesting memories during the peace negotiations through purposeful utilisation of cultural artefacts and performative memory practices. The analysis illustrated how "purposeful forgetting" and "selective remembering" were used politically to create a temporary shared frame of reference that enabled diplomatic talks between these two actors. While this process of recontextualising cultural memory, in actuality, did not change the current status of North and South Korea, it was an attempt to renegotiate their future diplomatic relations by altering their specific mode of remembering the past.

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Labour Power Control and Resistance

Precarious Migrant Factory Workers under the Agency Labour Regime in Chongqing and Shenzhen, China

CHUNSEN YU

Under the process of global capitalism, neoliberalism, and globalisation, many studies have discussed the dormitory labour regime and the student labour regime in the Chinese manufacturing industry. There are also many studies on the working conditions of Chinese agency workers. However, very little of the literature has been concerned with why Chinese agency workers still lose their freedom of mobility and freedom to choose where and to which employers they sell their labour services under the agency labour regime. Chris Smith (2006) argues theoretically that the indeterminacy of labour structures and worker relations exists between workers and employers as a result of mobility power, which is one of two important components within labour power (the other is effort power). Mobility power focuses on dynamics that arise from workers' abilities to change employment (Smith, 2006). In this article, I apply this theory to the case of China, and I argue that labour agencies use three managerial strategies to control agency workers' mobility power: checking workers' employment experiences; checking workers' ID cards on recruitment systems if re-entering the same labour agencies; penalising workers with delays and salary deductions if they quit the job without any notice or in violation of agency procedures.

Keywords: agency labour regime, China, high-tech manufacturing, mobility power control, precarious agency workers

Under the process of global capitalism, neo-liberalism, and globalisation, many scholars have discussed the dormitory labour regime (Smith, 2003; Pun & Smith, 2007) and the student intern regime (Pun & Chan, 2012; Pun & Koo, 2015; Smith & Chan, 2015; Chan, Pun, & Selden, 2015), particularly in the Chinese manufacturing industry. Additionally, there are many studies on the working conditions of Chinese agency workers, such as Zhang (2008), Xu (2009), and Zhang, Bartram, McNeil, & Dowling (2015). Existing studies focus particularly on the manufacturing industry (Wang et al., 2014) in the Pearl River Delta (Chan, 2014) and other places in China, including Changchun, Yantai, Qingdao, Wuhu, Shanghai, and Guangzhou (Zhang, 2014). Very little of the literature has been concerned with why Chinese agency workers still lose their freedom of mobility and freedom to choose where and to whom they sell labour services.

Chris Smith (2006) argues theoretically that the indeterminacy of labour structures and relations exists between workers and employers as an effect of mobility power, which is one of two important components within labour-power (the other one is effort power). Mobility power focuses on dynamics that arise from workers' abilities to change employment (Smith, 2006). There are two types of uncertainties within workers' mobility power. First, the decision of where workers sell their labour-power is given to the individuals and thus remains an uncertainty for the employing firms in calculating whether or not workers will remain with them. Second, there is uncertainty for the workers as to whether or not the employing firms will continue to buy their labour services (Smith, 2015). Accordingly, the struggle surrounding mobility power has been examined both as form of workers' resistance and as an employer's strategy to retain employees (Smith, 2006).

Empirically, Alberti (2014) applies the concept of mobility power to London's hospitality jobs which migrants take advantage of to improve their precarious lives in the United Kingdom. However, according to the literature, there is little research about the application of this concept to China. Although Zhang (2014) researches agency workers in the Chinese automobile industry, her study only discusses the precarious situations of agency workers. Furthermore, many scholars, such as Xu (2009), Gallagher, Giles, Park, & Wang (2013), and Lan, Pickles, & Zhu (2015), have discussed the Labour Contract Law implemented in 2008, which has had a great impact on agency workers, namely in improving their employment and social security in China. Correspondingly, labour costs are increasing for firms and labour flexibility is restricted for agency workers (Gallagher et al., 2013). However, labour dispatch is increasingly seen as the best way to get around the 2008 Labour Contract Law, and a common strategy used to avoid the law is to increase the number of agency workers along with the expansion of labour agencies nationwide in China (Gallagher et al., 2013). In other words, it is still unclear whether agency workers get protection from the Labour Contract Law of 2008 or not. Importantly, there are no empirical studies about its influence on rural migrant agency factory workers' mobility power in the labour market.

This article fills the gap by arguing that although the agency labour regime in China provides freedom for agency workers to change to different jobs frequently and get employed immediately, labour agencies use three managerial strategies to control agency workers' mobility power. To be specific, labour agencies first compulsorily request that workers indicate their work experience to determine whether they have a (poor) history of frequently changing jobs. Second, labour agencies check workers' ID cards through their recruitment systems to know whether the workers have poor employment records when the workers want to return to the same labour agencies. If they have one of the above conditions, the labour agencies would not consider recruiting or re-recruiting them. Third, labour agencies give financial penalties, such as delays and deductions in salary for workers who leave without any notice and violate agency procedures.

It appears that unrecognised conditions can limit the power that workers could normally gain by having an exit option. Chinese migrant agency workers gain power through mobility options between different workplaces when labour shortage is high in high-tech manufacturing. The agency workers thus gain bargaining power in the labour market. However, mobility power is restricted by labour agencies that severely reduce costs in terms of administration, training, continuity, and management. In other words, agency workers' freedom and mobility power regarding where and to which employers they sell their labour services are weakened.

Theoretically, this movement of workers is a sign of a strong labour market (Smith, 2006) rather than a sign of worker precariousness. Workers quit because they have the freedom to choose or quit a job in the labour market. Only constrained labourers are trapped in jobs they do not favour. However, my findings from both Chongqing and Shenzhen indicate that workers are not simply at the mercy of the market. Labour agencies as employers implement extra-economic constraints to reduce workers' bargaining power, which deviate from labour market rules. The negative impact of these constraints is significant since workers' freedom and strength through mobility is the main mechanism for improving their wages and labour-power, "mobility power", as Smith (2006) has suggested.

Even though labour mobility gives some freedom to choose or quit a job as a result of labour agencies' constricted regulations of employment and reemployment, this article offers a negative picture in which power and gains still ultimately rest with the enterprises, while costs and powerlessness rest with the workers. Workers, through economic constraints, social obligations and other non-economic forces, seek to stabilise relations with employers. However, firms, through various practices, seek to institutionalise and normalise the continuous supply of useable labour, increase the substitutability of labour and manage rather than

respond to labour-power by mobility from workers (Smith, 2006).

In the next section, I introduce the methodology of the study. I then illustrate the agency labour regime in China and discuss how and why the agency labour regime is related to the indeterminacy of labour-power through mobility for Chinese agency workers. In doing so I analyse three strategic approaches labour agencies use to control agency workers' mobility power. The final section concludes the article.

Methodology

This article is based on qualitative research methods. Fieldwork was conducted between 2014 and 2016 using semi-structured interviews to collect primary data within six high-tech processing and assembly manufacturing factories, including Pegatron, Wistron, and Compal in the Liangjiang New Area in Chongqing. Additionally, data was collected from Foxconn, Huawei, and Lenovo in the Longhua and Futian districts in Shenzhen. Both cities have intensively developed the high-tech processing and assembly manufacturing industry in local areas. I selected three Chongqing factories by visiting the fieldwork site. The three Taiwanese factories in Chongqing are famous high-tech manufacturing companies in Liangjiang. By contrast, in Shenzhen, I chose Foxconn as the company frequently mentioned in labour studies in China, and I then selected two Chinese high-tech factories, i.e. Huawei and Lenovo, because many of the workers I interviewed from Foxconn mentioned they previously worked in the factories at those two companies. I also used purposive sampling (Bryman, 2016, p.408) to approach target interviewees, rural migrant factory workers, and then employed snowball sampling to approach more interviewees and enrich interview data.

164 rural migrant factory workers (including 63 agency workers) were interviewed to understand the workers' side of labour-power control and resistance. In Chongqing, I interviewed rural migrants inside or outside of their living areas near the factories, either

in coffee shops or public places, such as parks. In Shenzhen, I interviewed rural migrants either in coffee shops or public areas near the factories, which included outside a public library and in public parks. I chose these places to interview rural migrants for two reasons: First, it was difficult to gain access to the high-tech manufacturing factories. Second, my research about rural migrant workers' labour rights and protection is politically sensitive in China. Additionally, in both cities, governmental officials, Human Resources (HR) staff from factories, staff from labour agencies, factory managers and staff from non-governmental organisations (20 persons in total) were accessed through my contacts. I interviewed them to understand the managerial side of labour-power control within the agency labour regime. These managerial-level people were interviewed in either their offices or in coffee shops in both cities to get accurate data in a relaxed atmosphere with familiar surroundings.

The Agency Labour Regime in China

In order to accurately understand the struggle surrounding the indeterminacy of labour-power through mobility argued by Smith (2006), we need to place labour-power issues against the background of global capitalism, neoliberalism, and globalisation characterised by the increasing mobility of labour and capital, as an important catalyst that contributes to the forming of the agency labour regime in China. The "agency labour regime" has spread nationwide, contributing to the growing "precariatisation" of employment for workers across China.

Labour dispatch, through the use of these agencies, has now become one of the most significant forms of labour supply in China. The core feature of this labour regime is that of a triangular labour employment mode: agency workers, labour agencies, and firms are all kept separate from formal labour recruitment in firms. Labour dispatch offers an attractive choice for firms to distance themselves from the requirement of establishing an employment relationship with their workers. Instead, economic and commercial relationships between firms and workers are formed, discouraging two parties from officially confronting one other as contracting parties (Xu, 2009). Correspondingly, an agency-mediated employment relationship is thus established between firms and agency workers through labour agencies.

The use of labour dispatch in China has developed rapidly since the 1990s, allowing employees to find new approaches to increase employment flexibility and avoid legal obligations (Gallagher et al., 2013). Geographically, the increase in the number of agency workers is mainly in eastern and southern China, which includes Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, and other regions which have prosperous financial districts (Watts, 2011). However, in both Chongqing and Shenzhen, agency workers within the high-tech industry are used as provisional, auxiliary, and substitute labourers, and the majority of them are rural migrant workers. In different industries, however, including in high-tech manufacturing, many workers have dual and overlapping identities of rural migrant workers and agency workers. The agency labour regime serves not only the function of supplying alternative labourers for enterprises but also challenges formal working conditions, such as stable salary payments and social insurance associated with the formal labour contract system.

Central and local governments in China play a very important role in terms of supplying agency workers from labour agencies. This phenomenon responds to the serious unemployment caused by restructuring and layoffs at many state-owned enterprises (SOEs) since the late 1990s. In 2002, the central government used agency workers as an effective way of assisting laid-off workers in finding new positions. In 2003, at a national forum on re-employment, the Party Secretary and soon-to-be President Hu Jintao emphasised the need for "actively developing agency labour regime and other types of employment forms to organise and guide those laid-off workers to find re-employment" (Li, Zheng, & Yin, 2009). Local governments also responded to those issues, transforming former

employment and re-employment centres into labour agencies affiliated with local labour and enabling social security bureaus to create job opportunities for laid-off workers (Zhang, 2014). This is a typical example of the process of precariatisation in China in terms of dismissing securely employed workers and then re-employing them on insecure and precarious terms.

Pun and Deng (2011) estimate that by the end of 2005, there were over 25,000 registered labour agencies in China, nearly 70% of which were approved by local government Human Resources and Social Security Departments. Local authorities are thus both organisers and promoters in the agency labour regime. Large SOEs and public institutions are especially prone to choose government-affiliated labour agencies because they are considered to provide a "trouble-free" official guarantee in the case of labour disputes with agency workers (Zhang, 2014, p.57). According to my fieldwork, all three Chongqing factories used local government-organised labour agencies to supply workers. Moreover, all six high-tech factories also had major cooperation with private labour agencies to recruit workers because the labour agencies have a long history of dispatching labourers to different factories. While the government-organised labour agencies assist urban *hukou* laid-off workers in finding jobs again (Xu, 2009), the cooperation between government-organised and private labour agencies has managed rural migrant labourers and has led them to high-tech manufacturing jobs in urban areas. The combination is a new trend in recruiting rural migrant workers for the resolution of labour shortage within high-tech manufacturing in both Chongqing and Shenzhen.

The agency labour regime has spread rapidly to other sectors and all types of enterprises, and increasingly, many urban people including college graduates join agency labourers (Zhang, 2014). Nevertheless, rural migrants still make up the main group of agency workers (Huang, 2009; Park & Cai, 2011). In Tianjin from 2011–2012, 70% of agency workers were new-generation rural migrants, and in Chengdu, 64% were rural migrants (All-China Federation of Trade Unions, 2012). It appears that the *hukou* system of household registration still plays a significant role in creating segmentation in China's labour market. Labour agencies treat urban *hukou* laid-off workers differently to rural *hukou* migrant workers even though they are both engaged in precarious jobs that are typically low paid and with little protection (Xu, 2009). While urban *hukou* laid-off workers are usually dispatched to better workplaces, such as SOEs and other formal institutions (Xu, 2009), rural low-skilled migrants are dispatched to workplaces within service, manufacturing, and construction industries, such as non-SOEs and private companies (Lan et al., 2015). As a result of the discrimination legacy of the *hukou* system for rural *hukou* holders, urban *hukou* laid-off workers do not want employment in workplaces where only rural *hukou* migrants usually get jobs (Xu, 2009).

The Indeterminacy of Labour Power through Mobility for Agency Workers in China

The characteristics of the agency labour regime in China fit the theory of the indeterminacy of labour-power through mobility for agency workers, which helps explain how and why Chinese agency workers still lose their freedom and mobility power when deciding where and to which employers they sell their labour services. Smith (2006) argues for the "double indeterminacy" of labour structures and relations between workers and employers through two components of labour-power: effort power and mobility power. This kind of indeterminacy relates to "production indeterminacy," the labour process side of the uncertainties within the capitalist employment relationship (Smith, 2006). Production indeterminacy allows the labour process theory to explore employers' managerial strategies and workers' resistance through the power of work effort from workers themselves and the power of mobility between enterprises (Smith, 2006).

My findings suggest some degree of indeterminacy of labour-power through mobility, from agency workers in particular. There is a process involved in leaving an unsatisfactory workplace, and workers who express discontent and choose to quit exchange labour power for bargaining power. Thus, they should not be seen as entirely passive agents in the employment relationship. Nevertheless, employers also benefit from labour mobility. As Smith suggests, quitting can also favour the employer by removing "the discontented and more vociferous workers from the workplace, eliminating potential leadership from trade unionism or collective workplace organisation" (2006, p.393). Additionally, firms have developed a large number of strategies to manage and control labour-power shifts caused by worker mobility (Smith, 2006).

Furthermore, although agency workers appear to have more freedom to move around the labour market and choose or reject their jobs, compared with those who are formally and directly employed, labour agencies still implement many regulations to punish those agency workers who move too frequently. Smith (2006) suggests that workers can tend to be engaged in insecure jobs more easily when they have less investment in them. Capitalism progressively creates new capitals, expands the division of labour and expands labour markets, which also gives workers many opportunities to move and finally to enhance labour-power as a result of mobility (Smith, 2006).

In support of this perspective, my interviews with agency workers in both Chongqing and Shenzhen highlighted that there was a high level of competition between agencies for labour, which gave workers some bargaining power. However, labour agencies had several methods for maintaining the balance of power in the labour relationship. The first strategy labour agencies used was to require workers to indicate their work experience in order to determine whether they had a (poor) history of frequently changing jobs. Every time a labourer was recruited as an agency worker, the labourer indicat-

ed his/her working experience in his/her application form. In both Chongqing and Shenzhen, rural migrant agency workers confirmed this procedure. For example, a 23-year-old male agency worker interviewed at Foxconn, Shenzhen who previously worked at Compal, Chongqing complained that he did not like this procedure and felt it was redundant. He said that every agency worker including him had at least five dispatching experiences. He felt this procedure was ridiculous and could not accurately judge his or his colleagues' working experiences in both Chongqing and Shenzhen. However, from the side of labour agencies, it was a useful approach to know agency workers' experiences and avoid unnecessary financial loss from the turnover of agency workers. Factories also asked labour agencies to select obedient agency workers to work in their factories. This was confirmed by all factory managers and HR staff interviewed.

The second strategy labour agencies used was to check workers' experiences from their recruitment systems since the workers' ID card would have been recorded with each recruitment. If agencies found that workers had changed their jobs very frequently, they would not be recruited again. Labour agencies in both Chongqing and Shenzhen implemented this policy. A 20-year-old female agency worker working in Wistron Chongqing complained that she could not be recruited again if her labour agency found she left and entered many times in the same labour agency. Since she had only one ID card, which would be checked when she applied for her jobs every time through the same labour agency, she felt her mobility power was weakened. A 25-year-old male agency worker from Foxconn, Shenzhen also had his ID card checked to re-enter the same labour agency to work in Foxconn. He was lucky to pass the examination; however, his friend failed and could not re-enter the labour agency. Both agency workers did not like the approach since they felt that they could not move freely in and out of different labour agencies. In other words, their mobility to change jobs was extremely

restricted. Nevertheless, labour agencies preferred to check workers' ID cards to minimise labourers' mobility power because this method decreased the agencies' overall labour costs. All labour agency staff interviewed confirmed this.

The third strategy labour agencies used was delay in and deduction of salary payments. These financial penalties were imposed on agency workers if they left without any notice and against agency procedures. These situations were replicated across different labour agencies. In this way, labour agencies took the role of employers of those workers, thus reducing costs in terms of administration, training, continuity, and management. A labour agency staff in Shenzhen believed that delays and deductions in salary payments were a helpful method to control the turnover of labourers they dispatched because agency workers were concerned about their remuneration and would not quit their dispatch jobs freely. This was confirmed by a 19-year-old male agency worker at Pegatron, Chongqing. He complained that he was punished with delays in and deductions from his salary payment after he gave notice that he wanted to leave the Pegatron factory. His labour agency told him he could not get his salary on time because he violated agency procedures by quitting a dispatch job he did not like. A Foxconn factory manager added that as a result of the delays in and deductions from salary payments as a penalty for agency workers, the Foxconn factory had enough workers to finish its assembly assignments for mobile phones and other electronic devices. It appears that agency workers' freedom to change jobs and mobility power is thus strictly controlled.

Furthermore, Smith (2006) suggests that workers can easily walk away from employment contracts. My findings concur that for agency workers, labour contracts act more like papers that place no restrictions on them leaving their existing jobs, which results in a high employee turnover. I argue that this itself contributes to a sense of precarity. Based on my fieldwork and interviews with agency workers in both Chongqing and Shenzhen, being part of the agency labour supply is itself precarious for rural migrants because labour agencies dispatch workers to various factories and different positions even though workers have signed labour contracts with those labour agencies. Although rural migrants may gain some benefits from the jobs to which they are dispatched, such as higher salaries as a result of frequent work in different factories with higher pay, their risks still increase because they are forced by the labour agencies to change their jobs irregularly without any notice. This contributes to their precariousness in terms of the stability in the workplace and of salary.

From this perspective, the labour contracts for agency workers do not play a role in providing long-term employment security and stable jobs with social security. In other words, while mobility opportunities grow for agency workers, precarity increases as well since labour agencies develop many managerial strategies to control agency workers' labour-power by mobility. Agencies prioritise stability and continuity of labour rather than offering high wages or stable jobs. Frequently engaging in different types of jobs also weakens the power of freedom to choose and mobility for workers. They may not have much choice of where and to which employers to sell their labour services because employers' managerial strategies limit the bargaining power of the workers during the labour process.

Conclusion

This article has empirically suggested that the agency labour regime is one of the important labour regimes in China that makes rural migrant factory agency workers' employment and social security remain precarious. Although these agency workers have signed labour contracts with labour agencies, agencies distribute workers to a diverse range of factories that require labourers on demand. The agency labour regime in China also fits the theory that Chris Smith (2006) argues on the existence of the indeterminacy of labour structures and worker relations between workers and capitalist employers through worker mobility power.

Although the frequent employee turnover suggests those agency workers have the freedom to change their jobs frequently and gain employment immediately, labour agencies, as capitalist employers, use three strategic methods to control the labour process, which include checking workers' employment experiences, checking workers' ID cards through the recruitment systems if workers want to re-enter the same labour agencies, and penalising workers financially with delays and deductions in salary payments when agency workers leave without any notice and act against agency procedures. Finally, productivity and profits increase rampantly and labour costs decrease significantly within high-tech manufacturing in both Chongqing and Shenzhen, China.

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Articulating the Shan Migrant Community in Thai Society Through Community Radio

A Case Study of the Map Radio Fm 99 in the City of Chiang Mai, Thailand

HYEONSOO JEON

Community media as an alternative public sphere for minorities has emerged separately from mainstream media and formal public spheres. In particular, its ethos of understanding community participation as a key component of operating a station highlights its potential to empower community members as active social agents. This study examines the social consequences of an ethnic migrant community radio station, Map Radio FM 99, to explore its role for the Shan migrant community in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Fieldwork was conducted for seven weeks between December 2015 and January 2016 to collect data using semi-structured interviews, participant observation and relevant documents. Employing a qualitative approach, this study found that participation in community radio helps participants be socially active in Thai society by maximising their participation in the social sphere using media. This study concludes that participation in Map Radio enables the Shan migrant community to better adapt to Thai society by providing and obtaining information necessary for their lives in Thailand and by contributing to the formation of a collective identity as ethnic migrant workers, thereby creating community cohesion. Nonetheless, lack of political efficacy as a result of the challenging political environment in Thailand might partly prevent Map Radio from functioning completely as an alternative public sphere.

Keywords: community radio, alternative public sphere, ethnic migrant, social participation, Thailand, community cohesion

Media in the public sphere plays an important role in ensuring citizens' participation in modern society. The public sphere indicates a communicative space where citizens raise their opinions, interests and discourses with freedom of expression, free from external powers (Habermas, Lennox, & Lennox, 1974). In particular, the importance of the public sphere arises from its contributing role of achieving social integration through facilitation of public discussion. However, a general disregard in mainstream media for minorities often limits their opportunities to participate in the public sphere and leads to their exclusion from society (Atton, 2001). In response to this crisis, community media emerge as an alternative public sphere to mainstream and commercial media. Emphasising community participation at the grassroots level, community media highlights its potential to empower community members and promote democratic communication across many spheres of society.

The growth of community media is closely linked with increasing migration patterns worldwide (Georgiou, 2005). Such presence of community media appears in Thailand, a multicultural society where approximately 70 ethnic groups co-exist (Jory, 2000; Hayami, 2006). Geographic proximity and the cultural similarities of northern Thailand and Myanmar as well as the recent economic growth in Thailand have attracted Shan migrants for decades (Jirattikorn, 2016; IOM, 2013). However, their disadvantaged legal and economic status leads to their occupation of the most marginalised sections of Thai society and their exclusion from the public sphere (Murakami, 2012). Furthermore, Thai media has often described Burmese migrant workers as illegal or a threat to national security (Sunpuwan and Niyomsilpa, 2012). Nonetheless, their participation in community radio indicates the creation of an alternative public sphere for the migrant community in a new society. This study understands community radio as a social practice as well as an empowering tool for development intervention. Through a case study of Map Radio FM 99 in Chiang Mai, Thailand,

the study explores how community radio functions as an alternative public sphere and facilitates social participation for the Shan migrant community.

Theorising community radio as an alternative public sphere

Understanding community radio as an alternative public sphere
Community radio is often considered the most effective and democratic method of community communication (Vatikiotis, 2005). Compared to mainstream media, community radio has several advantages, including its "more widespread geographic coverage, access to rural and illiterate populations, and its ability to broadcast in minority languages" as well as its low operation cost (Bosch, 2014, p. 430). Above all, easy accessibility leads to a favourable environment for minorities to create an alternative public sphere.

The alternative public spheres indicate a communicative space where minorities create their own discourses (Fraser, 1990; Bosch, 2014; Meadows, 2015). In particular, Fraser's recognition of an alternative public sphere is valuable in understanding community radio. She indicates that alternative public spheres are created as a result of social inequality and the exclusion of minorities from the main public sphere (Fraser, 1990). Fraser (2007) pinpoints the importance of "efficacy" in forming an alternative public sphere. Rooted in political theory, the notion suggests the public sphere should be equipped with both "normative legitimacy" and "political efficacy" to have critical mass (Fraser, 2007). While normative legitimacy concerns the inclusiveness of the public in a sphere, political efficacy concerns delivering the will of the public as a form of civil society, which can be further realised in a certain society (Fraser, 2007, p. 8). In this regard, Fraser claims that the (alternative) public sphere can have an influence on social change when it involves the formation of public opinion and decision-making (1990, pp. 89–92). Furthermore, the recognition of an alternative public sphere implies

the presence of multiple public spheres in society. According to Fraser, multiple public spheres are preferred and better ensure participatory parity for all, especially in a multicultural society (1990, pp. 65–70). Although this claim is based on the assumption that "multiple public spheres are situated in a single 'structured setting' that advantages some and disadvantages others" (Fraser 1990, p. 68), it is clear that a single unitary public sphere cannot guarantee participation for all.

Participation with different action rationales
In community radio, different forms of participation are made through the different action rationales of participants. For Leal (2009), different action rationales refer to "the differing orientations that motivate the actions of the actors who perform in the space of the radio station, namely the host/presenters and directors who are connected to

the station by means of voluntary and contractual regimes" (p.159).

As shown in Figure 1, Carpentier (2011, p. 67) argues that audience participation in media can take two forms: participation *through* media and participation *in* media. According to Carpentier (2011), participation through media takes the form of expressing individual voices and experiences to interact with other people. In addition, participation in media production consists of content-related participation and structural participation (Carpentier, 2011). While the former refers to direct engagement in the production of media content, the latter refers to involvement in decision-making processes. Both forms of participation encourage participants to be active in the public spheres related to their daily lives (Carpentier, 2011). Arguably, both participation in media production and interaction with media content ultimately lead to participation in society.
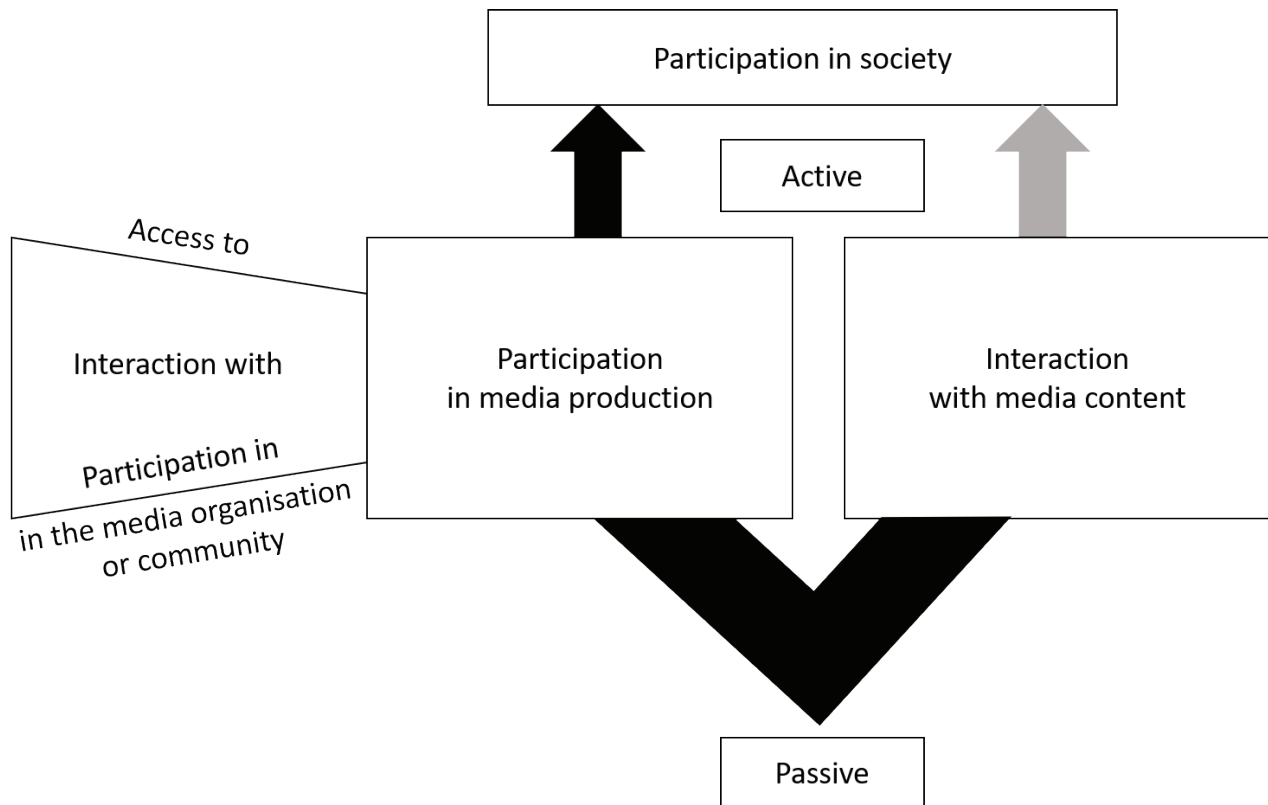

Figure 1. Participation dimensions in the media sphere (Carpentier 2011, p. 70)

The socio-cultural functions of community radio
Entering public discourse through participation in community radio promotes a greater level of individual and collective agency (Berrigan, 1981). Agency is a central concept to understand empowerment and describe the process of change; an agent is someone who acts and brings about social change (Kabeer, 2012; Sen, 2001). Describing community radio as empowerment radio, Jallov (2012) explains that empowerment grows when people realise their knowledge and the power obtained by sharing this knowledge with others. Similarly, Khawaja (2005) argues that information plays a key role in empowerment. Information can be divided into two aspects: provision of information and access to information (Khawaja, 2005). While the provision of information intends to benefit listeners by meeting their needs, access to information does so by allowing them to make informed decisions (Khawaja, 2005). In this sense, participation in community radio can be understood as a means of providing and gaining information (Bosch, 2014). Community radio also enables community members to share a language that reflects their common social and ethnic formation. For Howley (2010), this facilitates the creation of a sense of shared identity and collective solidarity. Especially for minority groups, this can be an act of demonstrating indigenous forms of expression and defending cultural identities (Rodríguez, 2008).

The social consequences of community radio
The practices of community radio result in social consequences for the given society as well as the community. By recognising community media as a form of social capital, Fleras (2009, 2015) argues that community media creates bonding (within a community) and bridges roles (between communities) for migrant communities in a new society. According to Fleras (2009, pp. 726–727), community media can operate inwardly by announcing relevant information about a homeland and outwardly by reporting information of "relevance and immediacy" necessary for life in a new society.

Community media can operate reactively and proactively (Fleras, 2009). As alternative media, community media responds to the needs, identities and furthermore, the realities of communities which are not discussed in mainstream media by offering a community's perspectives. Moreover, community media can proactively celebrate community culture and identities to create social cohesion within the community. However, thinking from an outward perspective, such strengthened cohesion may insulate a community from a new society (Fleras, 2009). Nonetheless, Fleras (Fleras, 2009, p. 726) emphasises that the outward role of community media should not be underestimated because it allows community members to challenge inequitable social structures to create a more inclusive society as well as to proactively facilitate intercultural dialogues. A multidimensional understanding of community media that considers outward and inward perspectives, as well as proactive and reactive actions, is depicted in Table 1.

Analytical framework
To analyse the social consequences of community radio practices and in keeping with the multidimensionality of community media (Fleras, 2009, 2015), I adopt "articulation" as an analytical framework based on the theoretical grounds discussed. According to Howley (2010), "the feeling of affinity, belonging, 'we-ness' that we share for our local neighbourhoods, ethnic communities, or nationality is articulated within and through communication" (p. 4). As an analytical lens, articulation posits three dimensions concerning the practices of community radio: process, relationship and agency.

Process indicates the way in which two different elements are articulated together. Specifically, process explores how community members create connections within community radio to create their own public sphere, understood as an "alternative public sphere" in the current study (Fraser, 1990). Furthermore, community radio has a strong focus on "doing communication" (Atton, 2001; Howley, 2010).

	Reactive	Proactive
Inward focus (bonding/insular)	**Constructing buffers** Reaction to invisibility in mainstream media by offering the perspectives of minorities	**Creating bonds** Foster community pride/cohesion by celebrating community achievements and provide news from homeland
Outward focus (bridging/integrative)	**Removing barriers** Address injustice by advocating for positive change and levelling uneven discourse	**Building bridges** Civic participation while fostering intercultural dialogue for social integration

Table 1. Multidimensionality of community media as social capital (Source: Fleras 2009, 2015).

This is largely linked with community participation. With this in mind, the current study explores the content produced by participants as well as community participation by different action rationales.

Relationship refers to the articulated linkages within community radio across any social levels including the nation-state, a media system, a neighbourhood, civic groups and even individuals (Howley, 2010). In the current study, I pay attention to the relationship between community radio and contemporary Thai society with the purpose of exploring the outward functions of community radio.

Agency refers to "the pivotal role human actions play in articulating and rearticulating social formation" (Howley, 2010, p. 15). In other words, a form of articulation emerges when community members are empowered through their participation in community radio (Mhlanga, 2015). In the context of community radio, agency can bring about social changes by mobilising individual and collective abilities.

Methodology

In Chiang Mai, there are more than 150,000 Shan migrants, almost one-sixth of the city's population (Jirattikorn, 2012; Eberle & Holiday, 2011). According to Jirattikorn (2012), Chiang Mai became a main destination for Shan migrants because of "its provincial border with the Shan State in Myanmar, the language similarity between the northern Thai dialect and Shan language, and Chiang Mai's status as a metropolitan

centre in the North where there is a great deal of demand for cheap labour" (p. 215–216) (See Figure 2).

The methods for collecting data were semi-structured interviews, participant observation and document analysis. I interviewed 23 people, and the field

Figure 2. The location of the Shan State and Chiang Mai city (© 2018 GADM. Reproduced under terms of their licence. No redistribution nor commercial use without prior permission from GADM.)

work continued for seven weeks. During the field-work, I conducted participant observation to observe the interactions between listeners and broadcasters that were taking place at the radio station, including during the broadcasting. I also attended an international conference "Culture and Communication for Sustainable Development Goals" on 18 December 2015 where two staff broadcasters from Map Radio presented their communication strategies for migrant workers. Furthermore, I reviewed some relevant documents, including the timetable, a historical background of the establishment of Map Radio and policy guidelines for volunteer broadcasters. In addition, I recorded a total of two minutes from different listener panels, which contained 15 listeners' opinions on the radio programmes.

Analysing Map Radio 99 FM

Articulating the process of Map Radio 99FM
The presence of community media in Thailand has increased because of continuous political instability, mainly caused by military intervention and a reaction from civil society called the "Campaign for Popular Media Reform" (CPMR) in the late 1990s (Klangnarong, 2009; Siriyuvasak, 2009). According to Brooten and Klangnarong (2009), in addition to the CPMR, ethnic minorities and labour organisations also worked together to defend their communication rights and freedom of expression (p 105). Along with increased funding from international donors directed towards Thailand at the time, this social movement resulted in a nationwide surge of community radio.

The Migrant Assistant Programme (Map) Radio FM 99.75 is the first community radio station in the Shan language in Chiang Mai. With the financial support of the Map foundation, Map Radio has been broadcasting for the migrant community in Chiang Mai since 2004. Radio programmes are broadcast in three languages: (northern) Thai, Shan and Burmese. Today, Map Radio aims to be a "space where migrant workers voices and opinions can be heard by encouraging public participation and civic engagement" (Map Foundation, 2009). This highlights the desire of Map Radio to be the alternative public sphere for migrant workers.

Participation with different action rationales
Broadcasting at Map Radio is performed by both volunteer and staff broadcasters who have an average of almost six years of experience in broadcasting. All parties engage in broadcasting and their skills used for broadcasting have been largely self-managed after a small amount of training.

Most volunteer broadcasters mentioned that their largest motivation was concern about migrant workers and an awareness that new Shan migrant workers need specific information to properly navigate life in Thailand. One staff broadcaster mentioned during the interview that "broadcasting is my interest and I feel happy when I can help migrant workers," a sentiment shared by other volunteer broadcaster interviewees. With this in mind, it is perhaps clear that volunteer broadcasters' participation in Map Radio is largely motivated by shared experiences with and empathy for Shan migrant workers.

Map Radio allocates almost half of each broadcasting slot for phone calls from listeners. All listeners interviewed responded that they listen to Map Radio because the radio programmes provide them with useful information, including the period for visa extension, Thai migration policy changes, and updated news on the Shan State in Myanmar. Furthermore, one listener mentioned, "Map Radio speaks in Shan and talks about the Shan issues which are not dealt with on Thai radio." This highlights the alternative nature of Map Radio in comparison with mainstream media which do not use minority languages.

Interestingly, most volunteer and staff broadcasters were previous listeners of Map Radio. One staff broadcaster said, "I was a listener before and listened to songs and migrant issues from the Map Radio. I also talked with broadcasters through the phone-in programme." Considering such sentiments, it is possible that participants' experiences

as listeners through access to and interaction with media content encouraged them to become broadcasters, as emphasised by Carpentier (2011). Namely, their participation *through* radio programmes and supported participation *in* Map Radio served as motivators. Furthermore, staff broadcasters attend regular meetings as well as participate in a monthly listener panel to discuss overall issues related to the management of Map Radio and content of its radio programmes. These participants' action rationales, which include different motivations and activities, are summarised in Table 2 below.

Content

At Map Radio, most programmes are broadcast in the Shan language, which accounts for 53 out of 77 hours of broadcasting per week. Programmes in Thai (20 hours) and programmes in Burmese (4 hours) are also broadcast. The programmes can be categorised into nine themes: religion, culture, health, migrant workers, youth, women, media, news and others.

As Figure 3 shows, programmes on culture take up the largest share of broadcasting hours (27) followed by migrant workers (9), other (8), health (7), religion (7), news (7), women (6), youth (3) and media (3). Interestingly, cultural programmes broadcast in Thai have more broadcasting hours than those in Shan.

During my observation of the *Shan Tea Table Programme*, the Shan singer Nang Hseng Lu from the Shan State was invited to the programme to celebrate the Shan New Year. Such flexibility was often observed during Shan festivals and other Shan community activities. Arguably, the content produced by Map Radio is to a large extent culturally motivated with a strong focus on the Shan community. Nonetheless, some of the content produced in Thai and Burmese also enables community members to experience a sense of multicultural belongingness in Thai society. This demonstrates the "normative legitimacy" of Map Radio as an alternative public sphere characterised by an inclusive nature regarding varying ethnicities, as explained by Fraser (1990). However, it is notable that at Map Radio, political opinions cannot be expressed during broadcasting because of the strict censorship from the Thai military. Instead, only political news with exact sources can be broadcast. One staff broadcaster notes, "…we should follow Thai rules and policies since we are in Thailand. If not, we will be closed down. We just mention Thai policies related to migrant workers, not really opinions, just facts, exactly what happened."

In considering this sentiment, political discourses arising from Map Radio is arguably not accompanied by the formation of a public opinion. This indicates a diminished functionality of Map Radio as an alternative public sphere particularly for political efficacy

Participants with different action rationales	Motivation	Activities
Listeners	- Information on Thai migration policies, visa extension - News on the Shan State	- Phone-calls - Listener panel
Volunteer broadcasters	- Interest in broadcasting and volunteering - Concern and awareness about Shan migrant workers and their situation in Thailand - Former listeners - Recommendations from the Shan	- Broadcasting - Monthly broadcasters meeting

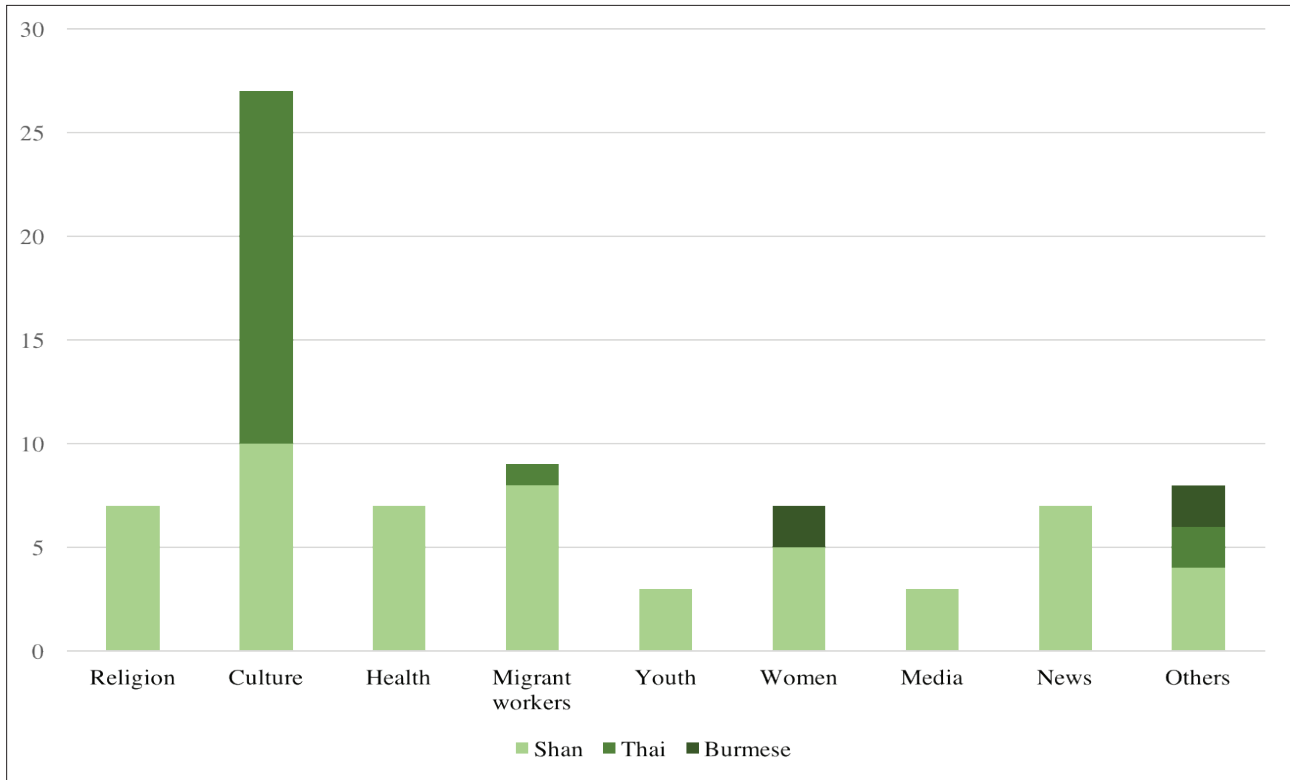**Table 2.** Participants' action rationales at Map Radio

Figure 3. Broadcast hours per week according to theme and language

which, according to Fraser (1990), delivers the will of the community as a form of civil society. It also suggests a diminished potential for Map Radio to be an influential and strong public sphere in Thai society.

Articulating relationships in Map Radio FM 99
There are five programmes broadcast in Thai on Map Radio. One Shan staff broadcaster mentioned "We try to build our relationship between Thai and Shan and it is actually going well." Thai broadcaster from *Thai Community Programme* has assisted in designing the broadcasting timetable with Shan community members since Map Radio first started. Her programme is currently broadcast 10 hours a week and is the biggest slot among cultural programmes shown in Figure 3. When it comes to the participation of Thai broadcaster at Map Radio, one staff broadcaster responded, "Our Thai DJ can talk well, and she can link migrant issues with the Thai community for listeners. Even though she speaks

Thai, her information can be about the Shan, which is very good." Thai listeners as well as Shan migrants listen to *Thai Community Programme*. Because of language similarities, Shan migrants are willing to listen to Thai programmes.

One government official from the Thai immigration office broadcasts information regarding recent policy changes during *Immigration Programme* for one hour per week. This programme is particularly helpful regarding participants' living conditions because relevant legal information is delivered. One listener mentioned the programme, "this programme is so important for us, so Map Radio should increase broadcasting time." Thai citizens' involvement with the radio station shows the intention of Map Radio to promote intercultural dialogue with Thai society. In addition, the presence of Thai broadcasters and Thai programmes at the radio station suggests that the meaning of community at Map Radio can be understood more than as simply the Shan migrant community.

Articulating the agency of Map Radio 99FM

At Map Radio, all participants of this study except for one responded that they have experienced personal changes after becoming involved in broadcasting. Some broadcasters have become more confident, for instance, when speaking in public, when meeting people outside and when writing transcripts for broadcasting. Two broadcasters are employed or received offers for employment from broadcasting organizations. As such, participation in Map Radio may bring about socio-economic opportunities which enable participants to actively participate in Thai society. Moreover, interactions with listeners can make broadcasters feel empowered through sharing information with listeners. For instance, one staff broadcaster responded, "I found that information I talked during the broadcasting was so useful and important for migrant workers. I think I love that. I like the interactions with listeners. I feel like I can help them."

Frequent interactions with listeners may provide opportunities for empowering broadcasters. Additionally, as discussed, most listeners listen to Map Radio to gain information about the Shan State in Myanmar as well as about their life in Thailand.

Since establishing Map Radio, participants have wanted to expand their working area and the influence of the radio station beyond the Shan community in Chiang Mai. Several broadcasters noted a willingness to have an AM frequency and establish a community radio station in the Shan State. Furthermore, broadcasters mentioned that they wanted to train Shan youth to make them become broadcasters of Map Radio. Regarding participants' collective changes, one volunteer broadcaster responded,

> I think Thailand is more advanced. In the Shan State, we just started accepting the typical norms. Last time, in my programme, I talked about gender equality and discrimination. I knew that people have rights […] human, child, women's rights […] I've learned this from the community, which made us change.

As this sentiment demonstrates, such changes are made because participants become aware of their fundamental rights through providing and acquiring information during their engagement in the community radio station. Arguably, this awareness of rights and a common social status as ethnic migrant workers strengthened participants' collective identities and can potentially facilitate collective movements in the future.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to explore a range of social consequences that result from the practices of a community radio station in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in order to understand the role of this radio station as an alternative public sphere for the Shan migrant community in Thai society. I have argued that Map Radio has emerged as an alternative public sphere because of an early marginalisation and exclusion of the Shan migrant community from Thai society. The content produced by Map Radio is to a large extent culturally motivated with a strong focus on the Shan community among others and mostly spoken in the Shan language, which strengthens a shared identity of the Shan migrant and maximises their participation in society through this media channel. Based on shared experiences and empathy among Shan migrant workers, it becomes clear that the radio station plays an important role in providing necessary information for new Shan migrants. However, when looking at the Shan community itself from a perspective that is *not* the comprehensive structural viewpoint of the media landscape in Thailand, it is arguable that Map Radio could be considered an alternative public sphere as framed in this study. It is certain however that Map Radio has been working as a formal public sphere for the Shan migrant community. Indeed, Map Radio has a central role for the Shan migrant community in building up their buffers and it plays a significant role in their socio-cultural survival in the country.

I have also claimed that this radio community is attempting to strengthen relationships with Thai and Burmese communities in addition to strengthening relations between Shan community members. The radio station achieves this by using different languages, a variety of multicultural programmes

and engages with different community members. In this regard, it is clear that Map Radio operates both inwardly and outwardly to varying degrees according to Fleras's (2009) argument that community media creates bonding (within a community) and bridges roles (between communities) for migrant communities in a new society. Furthermore, I have argued that as a tool for emancipation, Map Radio empowers participants on individual and collective levels. Individually, participants have become more active, confident and knowledgeable, in some cases increasing their socio-economic participation in Thai society. On a collective level, participants have been expected to exert collective agency by establishing radio stations in the Shan State to achieve communication rights. This clearly shows community radio has social capital as Fleras (2009) describes.

While Map Radio seems to actively engage in creating community solidarity and cohesion, thereby constructing buffers for new Shan migrants, it is unclear whether it proactively operates outwards beyond the community in Thailand. This may be partially explained through the insufficient political efficacy of Map Radio attributable to migrants' challenging socio-economic status along with the political environment in the country, which can be characterised as threatening. Although this restrictive political situation is also applied for other community radio stations in the country, regardless of which community they serve, I would argue that a political environment in the country which guarantees freedom of expression and communication rights may favourably increase the presence of the Map Radio as an influential and strong public sphere in Thai society. This may bring about positive effects on intercultural dialogues between this ethnic migrant community and Thai society by supporting their social participation and strengthening the linkage between the communities.

Since the country has not recognised multiculturalism as a critical national agenda and an independent community broadcasting landscape has not been promised, discussing the social consequences of community radio might be premature. Nonetheless, the case of Map Radio provides an example of how a radio station has managed to serve an ethnic migrant community by operating their own radio station which is premised on community participation.

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Institutional Analysis of Uruu/Village-Based Voting and Mobilisation Patterns in Post-Independence Kyrgyzstan

ARZUU SHERANOVA

Traditional pre-tsarist institutions in Central Asia (CA) are viewed as being crucial in domestic politics, democratisation, transition and nation-building. Political scientists have focused on clan identities and clan politics, whereas anthropologists have proposed kinship and patronage as alternative analytical frameworks. Each side of the debate, however, has not adequately explained or portrayed traditional institutions that affect political voting and mobilisation simply because it is a combination of both proposed frameworks at the same time. This article suggests using Elinor Ostrom's Institutional Analysis framework (IAD) to gain a more comprehensive analysis of the issue. Ostrom's IAD is particularly useful to frame and explain this phenomenon because it was designed as an instrument to understand complex situations for which individuals set rules. Due to difficulty in terming the phenomenon found in the literature, this article favours using the local terms "uruu/uruk" that denote patrilinear genealogy and "uruuchuluk" that broadly stands for patrilinear bonds identity to describe traditional pre-modern institutions that affect political voting and mobilisation. In addition, this article stresses that the uruu/uruk genealogy system is closely linked with its inhabited geographic area and generates a parallel regional identity which tends to be crucial in the political life of Kyrgyzstan. Therefore, the paper treats uruu/uruk and region together as one phenomenon. The uruu/uruk genealogy system is explained via Ostrom's IAD framework and is informed by the existing literature on contemporary elections in Kyrgyzstan along with the author's observations of elections in Kyrgyzstan since 2009. Based on the IAD, I conclude that uruu/uruk-based voting and the development of regional identity in Kyrgyzstan are attractive practices for both individual voters and political candidates because they both benefit from the situation and are committed to maintaining the "structure" of the situation.

Keywords: Institutional analysis, voting, uruu/uruk, uruuchuluk, genealogy, Kyrgyzstan

The post-communist transition to democracy in Kyrgyzstan is still an on-going process. Despite formally well-established democratic institutions and values, in practice, traditional institutions and values frequently succeed. On the central level, democracy training in Kyrgyzstan, like in most of Central Asia, mainly legitimated post-communist regimes, while the regimes simulated democracy performance (Murzakulova, 2014). However, on the local level, traditional family network and village network institutions remained strong and challenged modernisation and democratic institutions such as transparent elections and political parties. Since 2013, Kyrgyzstan has shifted to the e-voting system because the government believed that e-voting would help to build a more transparent and democratic election process. However, recent observations report bribery and a strengthening of regional networks and loyalties (OSCE/ODIHR, 2016).

The terms used to denote traditional institutions such as family networks and village networks are disputed in recent scholarship. On the one side of the debate, political scientists suggest terms such as "clan" (Collins, 2004, 2006) and "tribalism" (Junusaliev & Ploskih, 2000). In response, anthropologists argue that the term "clan" is distorted from the local reality and propose instead referring to "kinship and lineage" networks and "patronage" (Hardenberg, 2009; Jacquesson, 2010; Ismailbekova, 2017). Because each side of the debate has not adequately explained or clarified the best use of terminology, and because traditional institutions that affect political voting and mobilisation is a combination of both at the same time, this paper suggests that instead, homegrown terms such as "uruu/uruk" that denote patrilinear genealogy and "uruuchuluk" that broadly stands for patrilinear bonds identity should be used (Ismailbekova, 2018). Uruu is a bigger lineage group composed of several smaller sub-groups or uruks in Kyrgyz genealogy, even though in common everyday usage they are essentially synonyms. It is common to hear both: "*Uruun emne?*" and "*Urugun emne?*" (in Kyrgyz: What is your lineage?). Considering this, the article treats uruu and uruk as one. Recent studies also take this approach and prefer using the local terms uruu and uruuchuluk (see Ismailbekova, 2018 and Light, 2018).

In addition to kinship as an important feature of uruu/uruk, the paper notes that the uruu/uruk genealogy system is closely linked with its inhabited geographic area, and as a consequence, generates a parallel regional identity along with uruu/uruk. Under the nomadic reality of the past, Kyrgyz uruus moved from one pasture to another in a pre-agreed arrangement with neighboring uruus. This practice consolidated a bond between uruu and land which was essential for herding (Ibraimov, 1992). The link between uruu and the land was further cemented by Soviet sedentarisation policies (see Luong 2002). A regional identity as part of the uruu/uruk genealogy system tends to be crucial, especially during electoral mobilisation in Kyrgyzstan (Jacquesson, 2012; Kartawich, 2005; Sjöberg, 2011). In fact, regionalism contributes to a north-south political cleavage in the country (Ryabkov, 2008). The regional identity as part of uruu/uruk is proposed in this paper as being integral to understanding and studying contemporary kinship and politics in Kyrgyzstan. In the uruu/uruk institutional analysis below, the study considers region as a central component of uruu/uruk imagination and treats "region/village" and "uruu/uruk" as complementary (further stated as uruu/village), despite the value of geographic areas in uruu/uruk not being well established in the existing literature. Schatz, for instance, could not adequately explain how kinship and territory are related, yet he still speaks of clan balancing in Kazakhstan and observes that "umbrella clan corresponds […] to specific territories" (2005, p. 241).

In this paper I apply an alternative theoretical approach, namely Elinor Ostrom's Institutional Analysis framework (IAD) (2005), to the study of traditional institutions in Kyrgyz electoral mobilisation and voting. The IAD allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the issue. Ostrom's IAD is especially useful in framing and explaining this phenomenon

because it was designed as an instrument to understand particularly complex situations, such as those which can be observed in post-independent Kyrgyzstan. This paper contributes to the studies on uruu/uruk and regional networks (village) from the perspective of their institutional structure using Ostrom's (1990, 2005) framework. The institutional analysis literature which uses IAD is lacking. I carried out the institutional analysis by studying patterns of post-communist elections using findings from existing scholarly works as well as media articles, and by analysing my own close observations of elections in Kyrgyzstan since 2009 in my role as an interpreter to OSCE election observation missions and as an independent observer with local NGOs. By using IAD framework, the paper considers elections as a *situation* where uruk/regional affiliation matters. Furthermore, in this paper I also study why uruu/village loyalty matters and how the role of the uruu/village remains an institutional solution for equilibrium. The key questions the paper addresses using IAD are the following: Why do voters prefer voting along uruu/village lines? Why do politicians rely on uruu/village networks in Kyrgyzstan to be elected? Before answering the posed questions, I present Elinor Ostrom's Institutional Analysis framework (2005), I give brief background information on the genealogical uruu system of Kyrgyzstan, and I outline the political implications.

Institutional analysis framework as a theoretical frame to explain uruu/village-based voting and mobilisation patterns in Kyrgyzstan

The IAD framework developed by Elinor Ostrom in 1990 argued that common resources could be successfully self-governed without external regulation through the development of common norms and rules (Ostrom, 1990). The IAD framework is an instrument that can be used to understand the complexity of situations for which individuals set rules. Therefore, the IAD framework is the best-situated framework for understanding and analysing the

complexity of the phenomenon of uruu-based voting and uruu-based support mobilisation patterns in post-independent Kyrgyzstan. In the literature on traditional institutions in Central Asia I have reviewed, in-depth institutional analysis of uruu-based voting and electoral mobilisation is lacking.

According to Elinor Ostrom, institutions are "the prescriptions that humans use to organize all forms of repetitive and structured interactions including those within families, neighborhoods […] and governments at all scales" (2005, p. 3). The central point for the IAD analysis is the "action situation." The action situation represents the social space where "participants with diverse preferences interact, exchange goods and services, [and] solve problems" (Ostrom, 2005, p. 14). The action situation is regulated by norms and rules. Participants are defined as "decision-making entities assigned to a position and capable of selecting actions from a set of alternatives" (Ostrom, 2005, p. 38). Relevant attributes of participants are the (1) number of participants, (2) status of participants and (3) individual characteristics, such as age, gender and education (Ostrom, 2005, p. 38). Ostrom refers to participants and action situations as "holons" and places them in the action arena. In the process of interaction and impact of "exogenous variables," participants and action situations result in different outcomes (Ostrom, 2005, p. 38).

Ostrom's exogenous variables are made up of three clusters of variables: (1) the rules for organising relationships, (2) the attributes of the biophysical world and (3) the structure of the general community (2005, p.15). Ostrom suggests taking into account all three factors because together they affect actions individuals take and may result in different actions. The concept of "rule" is elaborated as a regulation, instruction or principle. Rules are defined as "shared understandings by participants about *enforced* prescriptions concerning what actions (or outcomes) are *required*, *prohibited*, or *permitted*" (emphasis in original) (Ostrom, 2005, p. 18), and have an "OR ELSE component" (Ostrom, 2005, p. 141). Ostrom (2005)

also points to (1) the set of participants, (2) the positions of participants, (3) the potential outcomes, (4) the set of allowable actions, (5) the control that participants have, (6) the information available to participants and (7) the costs and benefits. These seven factors are some of the key variables among exogenous variables that help to analyse action situations (Ostrom, 2005). The institutional analysis provided by IAD is a well-suited theoretical frame that could be used to provide a deeper study of the internal machine or internal logic of the uruu/village institution's operation and to explain uruu/village-based voting and political mobilisation accordingly. As was noted above, this traditional pre-modern institution was studied as informal clan politics, kinship, patronage and tribalism. However, the phenomenon under study is more complex than it seems and needs a more comprehensive approach, which I claim is provided by IAD.

Kyrgyz traditional uruu/uruk system, regionalism and political implications

The Kyrgyz genealogical tree consists of three tribal groupings: the ong (right), the sol (left), and ichkilik (central). These uruu groupings are recorded and kept in the genealogical tree called Sanzhyra (transliterated also as sanjyra or sanjïra) as illustrated below (see below Fig. 1, Kyrgyz Genealogy according to Sanzhyra).

Historically, tribal systems in Central Asia replaced functions of the modern state. In Turkmenistan, a tribal system was a form of social, economic and political organisation of society which provided basic services, basic needs, and regulations (see Vasil'eva, 1954, p. 176). Likewise, in pre-modern Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyz people could not imagine their lives outside their uruu because it protected and supported them (Kenčiev, 2014, p.9). This was such an essential part of identity that Kyrgyz who did not know their seven ancestors within their lineage were perceived not ethnic Kyrgyz (Ibraimov, 1992, p.66). Usually, tribesmen lost support from uruu if they betrayed, shamed or worsened the well-being of fellows in uruu (Ibraimov, 1992, p.66). In 1920–1940, Kyrgyz became a settled nation only

under the Soviet sedentarisation, collectivisation and "kolkhoz" (collective households) systems. However, despite Soviet reforms, the uruu system has survived up to the present day (Collins, 2006; Roy, 2007; Suny, 1993).

After the country had gained independence, uruu further reinforced its influence both in the socio-economic and political life of the country. Hundreds of books were published on various genealogies of uruus by local historians and amateurs. As noted by Temirkoulov (2004), after the independence, different uruus competed against one another to get access to state resources on national, regional and local levels. According to Torogeldieva (2010), political parties in Kyrgyzstan, during their creation, had no political ideology but were based on regionalism and tribal ideology. Similarly, Kartawich notes that political parties in Kyrgyzstan are "restricted to a specific geographical area" (2005, p. 7). Kurmanov refers to existing factions within the parliament as "unstable" and "amorphous" (2003, p. 4). According to him, an elected MP is more attached to "his/her electors [region or uruu]" rather than "his/her party" (Kurmanov, 2003, p.4). Indeed, a high number of political parties in Kyrgyzstan—203 officially registered political parties in 2016 according to OSCE/ODIHR report (see OSCE/ODIHR, 2016), could speak extensively about the prevalence of regional interests over the national interest.
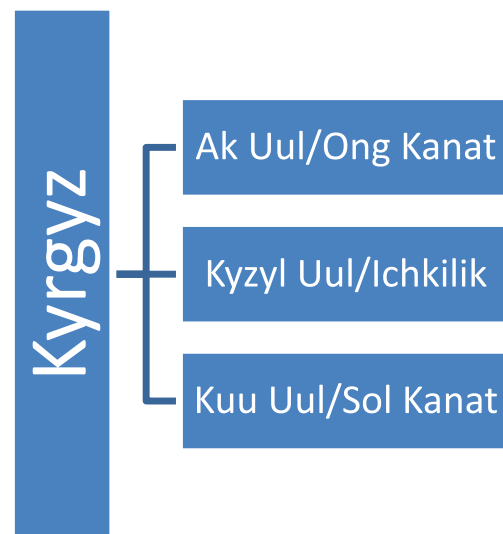
Figure 1, Kyrgyz Genealogy according to *Sanzhyra*

Recent literature on the subject also generally supports the existence of kinship in political life and notes that "kinship replaced the state as the people's caretaker" (Ismailbekova, 2017, p. 35). Based on observation of parliamentary elections in 2007, Ismailbekova proposes a concept of "a native son," which asserts that on the private level, kinship provides a support system, while on the political level, kinship is strengthened with the help of "political discourse" and "nation-building projects" (Ismailbekova, 2017, p. 22). For Ismailbekova, the genealogies from the public perception are primordial, but on the other hand, they are "constructed" and "manipulated" (2017, p.13). Based on this, she distinguishes between "desirable" and "undesirable" genealogical connections depending on different contexts. She continues that the genealogy of Kyrgyz was a subject for permanent manipulation:

> The Kyrgyz say once an individual becomes wealthy and powerful his kinsmen begin to increase in number; as his kinship network increases in size, it strengthens the whole group. For the patron, the advantage of having many kinsmen is that he can mobilize a large group of people for political purposes. ... When an individual loses his wealth and powerful position, his circle of supportive kinsmen immediately decreases. (Ismailbekova 2017, p.15)

A similar "manipulation" was observed in earlier studies along horizontal and vertical kinship networks in political support. Sheranova (2016) for instance points to horizontal relationships between non-elite uruu members (non-elite level), and vertical relationships between elite and non-elite uruu members (elite-non-elite level or top-down). In the non-elite relationship, non-elites seek to support their own kin, while at the elite-non-elite level or in the top-down relationship, both elite and non-elite uruu members use uruu membership and genealogy to gain political support (Sheranova, 2016, p.12). As noted in Jacquesson's paper, "[in] contrast to the Soviet type of elections in which people had no choice but to vote for party candidates, in 'clan-tribal elections' they at least were supporting a candidate of 'their own'" (2012, p. 3). Identically,

Fredrik Sjöberg's study on elections informs that among the "most important groups of people in their campaigning", respondents noted relatives and kin (2011, p. 33). According to Sjöberg, during election campaigns, kin-fellows usually provide "free labor" to agitate for their own candidates (Sjöberg, 2011, p. 133). Beyer (2016) rightly observes the invitation of community elders, aksakals, from villages to cities for events as one of the support-seeking strategies of elites. The media too blamed the presidential elections in 2017 for practicing regionalism (Orunbekov, 2017). In contrast, in her study of everyday uruu practice in Kyrgyzstan, Light states that role of uruu in social lives is not "central" and a greater "national lineage" has "little import" on social lives (2018, p.1). In brief, the literature I discussed here mostly describes this phenomenon in the political, economic and social lives of Kyrgyz. If authors provide any attempt to conceptualise this phenomenon, they leave out a comprehensive approach in conceptualising this complex institution. Building on the existing literature, in the remaining part of the paper I attempt to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the uruu/village institution in the context of voting in Kyrgyzstan.

Institutional analysis of uruu/village-based voting and mobilisation patterns in Kyrgyzstan

Situating the IAD framework to Kyrgyzstan's voting and electoral mobilisation context, voting and mobilising political support based on uruu/village lines is 'the action situation'. The two categories of participants are 'Participant A', a voter, and 'Participant B', a candidate running for elections. The scholarly literature, media articles and observations of elections show that if both participants are from the same uruu/village, they share common imagined kinship ties and feelings of loyalty. 'Participant B' manipulates her/his own uruu and region to mobilise the political support of 'Participant A', while 'Participant A', in response, relies on support from 'Participant B'. In this paper I propose four possible guiding norms, if not rules, in the action situation:

1. 'Participant A' is expected to provide support for her/his own uruu/village-fellows OR ELSE 'Participant A' might not receive support from other uruu/village-fellows.

2. 'Participant A' is expected to listen to a commonly made decision within uruu/village OR ELSE 'Participant A' might become excluded for some time from important social events (for instance, not be invited to feasts).

3. 'Participant B' is expected to provide support for own uruu/village-fellows OR ELSE 'Participant B' might not receive political support from other uruu/village-fellows.

4. 'Participant B' is expected to listen to a commonly made decision within the uruu/village OR ELSE 'Participant B' might become excluded from uruu/village political support.

Among the number of exogenous variables proposed by Ostrom (2005), in the action situation, we can elaborate on 'benefits' and 'costs' related to uruu/village-based voting and electoral mobilisation for Participants A and B. Similar to the above presented rules, a list of benefits and costs were developed based on previous studies, media articles and observations. Potential benefits for 'Participant A' of uruu/village-based voting are (i) benefits to residence social-infrastructure improvement if kin or villager gets elected, (ii) benefits from patron-client relationships and (iii) one-time or multiple material rewards from elected kin for loyalty. In the regions, voters expect their elected "sons" or "daughters" to address their social needs and problems, usually connected to improvement of infrastructure: rehabilitation or construction of roads, bridges, schools, policlinics, mosques or sport and recreation facilities. As noted in 2005 by Radnitz, "one's village of origin remains with a person for life and people readily assume that somebody from their region who gets elected will represent their interests" (p. 417). To this date, this expectation has not changed. To achieve this high expectation, elected deputies try to promote the needs of their own villages in the parlia-

ment and secure state funds or investments ("Kogda v Kyrgystan," 2018). Patron-client relationships are important in the political reality of Kyrgyzstan (Ismailbekova, 2017). Elected candidates act as patrons, while voters act as clients. In a mutually beneficial tandem, they use kinship/village ties to resolve their own issues (Korganbaev, 2019). Usually, clients resolve their own problems, get employed, get a job promotion, get access to economic resources, or have own patrons as protectors or "krysha" (translated from Russian as a roof) (Zabyelina & Buzhor, 2018). Finally, elected kins give rewards in exchange for loyalty from uruu/village supporters, such as giving a feast (toi) after winning the elections (Ismailbekova, 2017, p.179).

In opposition to the benefits listed above, the potential costs of voting against uruu/village-based voting for 'Participant A' can be formulated as (i) lack of benefits from social-infrastructure improvement if kin or villager gets elected, (ii) lack of benefits from patron-client relationships, and (iii) lack of one-time or multiple material rewards from elected kin in exchange for loyalty.

Similar to 'Participant A', there are several benefits for 'Participant B' if (s)he uses her/his own uruu/village lines: (i) the benefit of getting elected using uruu/village support, (ii) the benefits from patron-client relationships and (iii) long-term political support from a uruu/region for loyalty. As a rule, the potential costs for 'Participant B' of not using uruu/village support are (i) lack of benefits of getting elected with the help of uruu/village support, (ii) lack of benefits from patron-client relationships, and (iii) lack of long-term political support from uruu/region.

Finally, Ostrom's (2005) framework, in addition to the costs and benefits, also analyses these 'other exogenous variables': (1) the set of participants, (2) the positions of participants, (3) the potential outcomes, (4) the set of allowable actions, (5) the control that participants have and (6) the information available to participants. In the voting and mobilisation action situation, the set of participants

is made of a voter and a candidate representing the same uruu/region. There are four 'positions' among participants: a voter is voting/not voting based on uruu/region lines, and a candidate is using/not using uruu/regional lines for political ends. Likewise, there are four potential 'outcomes': (1) a voter voted along uruu/region lines, (2) a voter did not vote along uruu/region lines, (3) a candidate used uruu/region lines during elections, or (4) a candidate did not use uruu/region lines. Based on these variables and outcomes, 'the set of allowable actions' in the action situation are:

(1) 'Participant A' and 'Participant B' both use uruu/regional lines in voting and political mobilisation,

(2) 'Participant A' votes in line with uruu/region, but 'Participant B' does not use uruu/regional lines to get elected,

(3) 'Participant B' uses uruu/regional lines to get elected, but 'Participant A' does not vote in line with uruu/region or

(4) neither 'Participant A' nor 'Participant B' use uruu/regional lines in voting and political mobilisation.

'The control' that participants have over entering or exiting their positions is analysed as if they "have no choice" over them, as proposed by Ostrom (2005, p. 41). 'The information' available to participants during voting and mobilisation is "complete" and perfect because participants are aware of each other's positions and preferences. 'Participant A' acts based on the assumption that 'Participant B' will also act the way 'Participant A' did and vice versa. Thus, a general pattern during voting and mobilisation in Kyrgyzstan through IAD can be summarised as voters preferring to vote per uruu and region loyalty, and political candidates tending to "manipulate" or use uruu and regional connections to mobilise voters for their own benefit. The situation of voting and mobilisation in Kyrgyzstan based on uruu/village using Ostrom's IAD framework that

I have analysed provides an alternative and more comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon. As IAD of pre-modern uruu/village institution has illustrated voting based on uruu/uruk loyalty and regional loyalty in Kyrgyzstan are attractive practices for both the voter and the candidate because they both benefit from the situation and are committed to maintaining 'the structure' of the situation.

Conclusion

When studying and conceptualising traditional pre-modern institutions in voting and mobilisation, political scientists tend to focus on clan identities and clan politics, whereas anthropologists propose kinship and patronage as significant. Instead of entering into a debate, this article suggests using Elinor Ostrom's Institutional Analysis framework to have a more comprehensive analysis of voting and political mobilisation in Kyrgyzstan based on uruu or village loyalty. Existing literature fails to provide a comprehensive approach, while alternatively IAD can provide a more holistic perspective on the phenomenon. The action situation analysis presented in the paper stated about a mutually productive and beneficial interactions and outcomes between a voter (Participant A) and a candidate (Participant B) if they act in tandem. In other words, I conclude that voting based on uruu/uruk loyalty and regional loyalty in Kyrgyzstan are attractive practices for both the voter and the candidate because they both benefit from the situation and are committed to maintaining the "structure" of the situation. The IAD, by looking closer at the internal logic of the uruu/village institution, provides a valuable explanation to the durability of this pre-modern institution throughout the Soviet era and after independence, something that past approaches to studying this topic have failed to do comprehensively. This theoretical framework suits well to explain why traditional institutions, whether they are referred to as clans, kinships, patronages or tribes, had survived communism, post-Soviet transition and

challenge on-going democratisation in the region. Examination of this traditional institution through the IAD model brings light to the existing scholarship on Central Asia, and suggests a new path in the study of pre-modern institutions.

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