A Comparative Study of the Anti-Confucianism of Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

The purpose of this thesis is to make a critical interpretation of the nature and implications of anti-Confucianism in East Asian political thought by examining the works of two representative anti-Confucianists; Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su. In terms of its historical significance, Anti-Confucianism can be said to be equivalent to enlightenment thought in eighteenth century Europe. Yet notwithstanding its importance, there have been few detailed studies of Anti-Confucian thinkers.

This study is an examination of the work of two of the most important anti-Confucianist thinkers — Fukuzawa Yukichi in Japan and Yi Kwang-su in Korea. These writers both sought to attack Confucianism in the light of Western political ideas. In doing so, they employed two cardinal Western political concepts: liberal individualism and nationalism. Their theories contributed to a two phased assault on Confucian values: in the first phase, liberal individualism was used to undermine the Confucian emphasis on the family. But while this first wave of opposition weakened Confucianism, it did not destroy it. The second wave of opposition, however, based on nationalism succeeded in redirecting Confucian collectivism into an illiberal nationalistic form. In the writings of both Fukuzawa and Yi this study traces the path of each of these assaults. In both theorists' work, liberal individualism gave way to nationalistic sentiments, thereby exemplifying and contributing to the currents running through their respective societies, Japan and Korea.

The thesis has five chapters. The first two chapters are an introduction to the nature of Confucianism. In chapters three and chapter four, which respectively deal with Fukuzawa's and Yi's anti-Confucianism, discussion centres around the following themes: their conceptions of liberal individualism and nationalism; how they reinterpreted Confucianism in the light of their conception of liberal individualism and nationalism; and how they attempted to reconcile the two different demands of liberal individualism and nationalism in their anti-Confucianism.

The conclusion of the thesis is that Fukuzawa's and Yi's anti-Confucianism failed, in that their association of liberal individualism with nationalism led to a jettisoning of the liberal individualism in their later life. This resulted in an insufficient challenge to the Confucian legacy and a constraint on the growth of liberal individualism in the two countries.

Transliteration of Korean and Japanese Words and Names

Romanization of Korean names and words used in this thesis is in accordance with the McCune-Reischauer system, but common usage and personal preferences have been prioritized over the system for some names and places, such as, for example, author Lee Hong-ku (Yi Hong-ku), the city of Seoul (Sŏul).

Romanization system for Japanese names and words used in this thesis is Hepburn system.

The names of people appear in the text and the bibliography as they are commonly used in Korea and Japan — that is, last name first, and first name last.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to make a critical interpretation of the nature and implications of anti-Confucianism in East Asian political thought by examining the works of two representative anti-Confucianists: Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su. Given the wide range of anti-Confucianism I do not intend to deal with it in all its manifestations. The scope of this study is confined to the works of those anti-Confucianists who adopted Western ideas as the groundwork of their political ideas. I have chosen these two thinkers, because their work represents the essence of this strand of anti-Confucianism.

My main motivation for undertaking this thesis arises out of my study of Western political ideas and the recurrent question of what has hindered the development of Western political ideas in Korea. After long reflection on this question, I have come to the conclusion that the answer lies in the resilient nature of the Korean Confucian heritage. Encouraged by my former supervisor, Kim Hong-u in Seoul National University, I engaged in the study of anti-Confucianism in Korea to test this hypothesis. The first result of this study was my M. A thesis "The Political Thought of Yi Kwang-su — Focused on Anti-Confucianism". Since submitting that thesis, it has become clear to me, however, that in order to understand fully the nature of Korean anti-Confucianism, I needed to study anti-Confucianism as it manifested itself in Japan and China, since Yi Kwang-su's anti-Confucianism was the product of the interaction between his anti-Confucianism and Japan's and China's. Naturally, therefore, in order to correctly grasp the nature of Yi's anti-Confucianism an examination of anti-Confucianism in Japan and China is required.

In the old Confucian world, China was at the centre of culture in East Asia while Korea and Japan were on the periphery. However, the intrusion of the Western powers into East Asia changed this whole situation. Japan emerged as the first country to achieve modernisation through the influence of Westernization. In turn, China and Korea began to accommodate Western culture through the influence of Japan. Ch'en Tu-hsiu, the Chinese anti-Confucianist, and Yi Kwang-su, the Korean anti-Confucianist, were regarded as the prime anti-Confucianist political thinkers among those intellectuals who spent long periods as students in Japan in order to learn Western culture and ideas. The fact that most of the leading intellectuals of China and Korea came into contact with Western culture through Japan has profound implications for the question of the tension between Western ideas and Eastern Confucianism. It is evident that knowledge of Western culture obtained by Korean and

Chinese scholars through Japan was not the same as that obtained first hand from the West itself. Inevitably, the Western ideas possessed by them represented only their Japanese version. Accordingly, anti-Confucianism in Korea and China strongly resembled anti-Confucianism in Japan. The anti-Confucianism of Yi Kwang-su, for example, was influenced by Fukuzawa Yukichi — the Japanese archetypal anti-Confucianist. This makes it essential to discuss Fukuzawa Yukichi's anti-Confucianism in order to understand Yi Kwang-su's anti-Confucianism. Furthermore, for all common grounds which they shared, both writers showed many differences in their anti-Confucianism. Hence this comparative study of anti-Confucianism of Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su will help us to understand the complex aspects of anti-Confucianism and its significance. It is hoped that my examination of Fukuzawa Yukichi's and Yi Kwang-su' anti-Confucianism will throw new insight on the vexed question of the conflict between Western ideas (liberalism and nationalism) and Eastern ideas (Confucianism).

1.2 The definition and implications of anti-Confucianism

Anti-Confucianism refers to a major trend of anti-traditionalism to be found in East Asian countries that took the road of modernisation by accommodating Western ideas and institutions from the late 19th century onwards. For the convenience of the discussion, anti-Confucianism is defined tentatively as the set of ideas which attacked and criticised Confucianism in the light of Western political ideas.[1]

Using a metaphorical expression, anti-Confucianism can be seen as a confluence of two rivers — the East Asian (Confucian) tradition, and the Western tradition of political thought.[2] The political theories of East and West that had evolved along different routes for several thousand years met to create anti-Confucianism, arising out of the process of modernisation during the late nineteenth century to early twentieth century. As the introduction of Western political ideas and institutions disclosed the defects and weakness of Confucianism which had dominated every aspect of life in the society of these countries, the leading intellectuals of the three countries realised these

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1. The term, "anti-Confucianism" was used by Tse-tsung Chow, "The Anti-Confucian Movement in Early Republican China", in *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960) and Chester C. Tan, in *Chinese Political Thought in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Doubleday, 1971). Maurice Meisner uses the term "Cultural Iconoclasm" in place of anti-Confucianism; Lin Yu-sheng uses the term "radical iconoclasm" and "totalistic anti-traditionalism", "radical iconoclasm in "The May Fourth Period and the Future of Chinese Liberalism", in *Reflections On the May Fourth Movement: A Symposium* (Cambridge, Mass: East Asian Research Center Harvard University, 1973), and in *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Anti-traditionalism in the May Fourth Era* (Madison: University of Wisconsin press, 1979)
2. In Fukuzawa's words, it is expressed as "Two lives in a body".

deficiencies in relation to the new needs of modern times and started to attack Confucianism in the light of Western ideas. Anti-Confucianism both owed its existence to, and bore the marks of, these two traditions of political thought. On the one hand, anti-Confucianism's re-evaluation and re-interpretation of Confucianism was informed by Westernised ideas. On the other hand, anti-Confucianism's interpretation of Western ideas was made in the light of the Confucian tradition. Even the intellectuals who absorbed Western ideas could not completely shake themselves free from the influence of the Confucian world view under which they were educated.

Accordingly, there are two distinct perspectives on the meaning of anti-Confucianism. One perspective signifies that anti-Confucianism was a reinterpretation of Confucian political ideas in the light of Western political ideas. The other perspective signifies that anti-Confucianism was a reinterpretation of Western political ideas in the light of Confucian political ideas. If we put these two perspectives together, we can see that anti-Confucianism represented both a modification of Confucianism and a modification of Western ideas. In other words, anti-Confucianism was a unique synthesis of modified forms of the two highly developed, contrasting sets of political ideas.

Moreover, this synthesis was an extremely complex and varied one. Part of this complexity and variation is due to the different manifestations of Confucianism — Chinese, Japanese and Korean Confucianism each had its own distinct character. Partly, however, the complexity and variety of anti-Confucianism is due to the ambiguity of Western political ideas, expressed in particular in the tension between Western liberalism and Western nationalism. This ambiguity is reflected in the preoccupation of anti-Confucianists with two main tasks. One was the emancipation of the individual from the shackles of the Confucian tradition. Confucianism was blamed for the ideology of despotism, which pervaded all aspects of social life. In this context, for anti-Confucianists the issues of the abolition of class discrimination, the liberation of women, and the protection of human rights emerged as the major issues. The freedom and happiness of the individual were emphasised.

The other major task was the building of the modern nation state. Confucianism was criticised for obstructing the emergence of the nation-state. Confucianism supported familism that demanded exclusive loyalty to the head of the family through the idea of filial piety. According to Confucianism, when filial piety and loyalty to the state were in conflict with each other, filial piety took precedence over state loyalty.

These two tasks can be represented in terms of liberalism and nationalism.[3] In Japan they were typically expressed in the movements of popular rights (the right of people)

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3. Lin Yu-sheng, *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Anti-traditionalism in the May Fourth Era* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), 62.

and national rights (the right of the state).[4] Chester C. Tan, a renowned scholar of modern Chinese political thought, divided the problems into those "of the justification of the strong state and of the definition of good government".[5]

Hence anti-Confucianism can be seen to be operating at two levels: at the level of the individual (liberalism) and at the level of the state (nationalism). The focus of my discussion will be placed on each of these two levels. Let me make a brief statement here about each of these levels.

First, the individual level. When anti-Confucianists encountered Western political theory, they marvelled at its idea of the independent individual. The notion of individuality, strange to the Confucian world view, was regarded as the core or kernel of Western political ideas. Their discovery of the independent individual in Western thought made a great impact on the minds of East Asian intellectuals. Second, the state level. Western ideas of nationalism had a dramatic effect upon anti-Confucianists. Together these two notions, liberal individualism and the nation state seemed to provide the key to the secrets of the prosperity and power of Western society. Those East Asian thinkers who had experience of suffering from the despotism in their own society, readily saw a solution to this problem in Western ideas of liberalism and nationalism. In doing so they supposed that nationalism could be accomplished within the boundary of liberalism. Indeed anti-Confucianists tried to establish nationalism on the basis of the principle of liberalism.

However, herein lies the central dilemma for anti-Confucianists: they had to defend their position against the claims of those who considered the idea of the people's rights incompatible with that of state power. This incompatibility was pointed out by Kang Yu-wei:

> When you talk about equality, freedom, and the rights of the people, you extend the rights and privileges of individuals. When individual rights and privileges are extended, the power of the state will necessarily be weakened.[6]

In fact, the association of nationalism with liberalism poses many problems both in principle and in practice. It seems to be inevitable that the two demands, for greater individual freedom and for a strong nation state, are in conflict with each other. In order to meet this charge, liberal anti-Confucianists are forced to seek some theoretical framework for securing a balance between the two conflicting demands, in order to minimise the conflict between them.

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4. Maruyama Masao. "Meiji kokka no shisō." [The Thought of the Meiji State], chap. in *Senchūto sengano aida* (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1987), 225-242.
5. Tan, *op. cit.*, 19.
6. *Ibid.*, 23.

In spite of the efforts of anti-Confucianists, however, history shows that as the conflict between these two demands developed, liberalism gave way to nationalism in the East Asian countries, just as temporarily it did so in some countries in Europe during the 1930s and 1940s.

In the first stage of anti-Confucianism, liberalism was initially very effective in liberating the individual from the yoke of the Confucian tradition. The idea of freedom imported from the West at first exerted considerable influence in challenging Confucianism. At that time, the catch phrase of the anti-Confucianists was liberation from all restraints of tradition. But in the event, traditional Confucian values were able to resist the influence of Western individualism.

To understand the reason why individualism did not prevail, it is necessary to examine the contrast between Western political ideas and Confucian ideas on the place of the individual in society. Western political ideas reflect an atomistic, anthropo-centric and mechanistic world view. In this world view, conflict is affirmed as natural: indeed, the idea of conflict is an important premise of Western ideas in general. Conflict exists between man and nature; between man and society; between individual and individual; between individual and institution. So, in the Western political tradition, much emphasis is placed on the arrangements for establishing institutions that can minimise conflict. By contrast, Confucian political ideas reflect a holistic and organic world view, in which the idea of conflict is negated. In place of the idea of conflict, the idea of harmony is valued. According to this world view, the individual is absorbed in the whole in order to prevent conflict arising. There is no conception of an independent individual, the absence of which in Confucianism contributed to the very limited accommodation of liberal individualism, and to resistance to liberalism in general, in East Asia.

In the second stage of anti-Confucianism, the emphasis accordingly switched from Western liberalism, which had failed to undermine Confucianism, to Western nationalism. Western nationalism proved to be a much more serious threat than Western liberalism to Confucianism. This was because, unlike Western liberalism, which collided head on with Confucianism, Western nationalism was able to draw on certain Confucian ideas, and utilise them for its own purposes. For example, in Japan, Japanese nationalists did not seek to abolish Confucian familism but to use it as a ground for nationalism. By extending the scope of familism to the state, incorporating filial piety into state loyalty, they overcame the problem of Confucian familism. This indicates that the group conformity of Confucianism had more affinity with Western nationalism than with Western liberal individualism. However, the fact that it was a Confucian interpretation of Western nationalism which provided the foundation for nationalism in East Asia, meant an abandonment of the chance of the development of

liberal nationalism, and this inevitably paved the way for the appearance of ultra-nationalism; i.e., authoritarian nationalism.[7]

In short, what had happened was that Confucianism was faced by the challenge of two distinct elements in Western political ideas — liberal elements and nationalistic elements, each of which was held in balance in the Western tradition. After initially succumbing to the first element, Confucianism was able to resist its spell by drawing deep on the well of traditional familism that was diametrically opposed to liberal ideas. However, Confucianism was much more vulnerable to the nationalist element in Western political ideas, since nationalism could absorb familism within it. But having rejected the liberal element, anti-Confucianism abandoned the only restraint powerful enough to contain nationalism within constitutional limits and in the end it succumbed to the seduction of authoritarian nationalism. The Western legacy thus turned out to be a poisoned chalice.

1.3 Conclusion

There exist two kinds of political thinkers: those who find questions of grave importance to political thought, and those who find answers to these questions. On this classification, I think anti-Confucianists belong to the former. The political ideas and arguments of anti-Confucianists are not so profound as those of Western liberal thinkers such John Stuart Mill, and Herbert Spencer (so worshipped by anti-Confucianists), but they do raise a question of great value to students of modern East Asian political thought; the question of how to synthesise and integrate two traditions of political ideas. That this task of synthesis was the explicit aim set for themselves by anti-Confucianists is eloquently expressed by Fukuzawa Yukichi:

> I trust that we present-day scholars will measure up to this challenge. But let me point out that in addition we have an accidental opportunity for greatness thrust upon us. Since the opening of the ports Japanese scholars have been assiduous in mastering Western learning. Though the results have been sketchy and limited so far, we have been able to get some idea of Western civilisation. Yet just twenty years ago we scholars were steeped in a purely Japanese civilisation; there is little danger of our falling into vague inferences when discussing the past. We also have the advantage of being able directly to contrast our own personal pre-Meiji experience with Western civilisation....
>
> Here we have an advantage over our Western counterparts, who, locked within an already matured civilisation, have to make conjectures about conditions in other countries, while we can attest to the changes of history through the more reliable witness of personal experience. This actual experience of pre-Meiji Japan is the accidental windfall we scholars of the present day enjoy. Since this kind of living memory of our generation will never be repeated again, we have an especially important opportunity to make our mark. Consider how all of today's scholars of Western learning

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7. For a discussion of Japanese nationalism, see Maruyama Masao, *"Thought and Behaviour in Modern Japanese Politics"*, ed. Ivan Morris (London: Oxford University, 1963), 143-144.

were. but a few years back. scholars of Chinese Learning. or of Shinto or Buddhism. We were all either from feudal samurai families or were feudal subjects. We have lived two lives. as it were: we unite in ourselves two completely different patterns of experience.

What kind of insights shall we not be able to offer when we compare and contrast what we experienced in our earlier days with what we experience of Western civilisation? What we have to say is sure to be trustworthy. For this reason. despite my personal inadequacies. I have endeavoured in this humble work to put to use my own limited knowledge of Western learning. I have generally paraphrased rather than directly translated Western sources in order to apply their content to the Japanese context. For my whole purpose has been to take advantage of the present historically unique opportunity to bequeath my personal impressions to later generations.[8]

Yi Kwang-su expressed similar views. In the writing. "Uri-ŭi isang" (On Our Ideals) Yi maintained that the role of the Korean people in world history is to fuse Eastern culture with Western culture. and he declared that the Korean people were in a more advantageous position than the West to integrate Eastern culture and Western Culture.[9]

I hope that my study of anti-Confucianism can contribute to political thought. firstly by providing a framework through which a profitable analysis can be made of this question of the confluence of two of the most important perspectives in political thought — that of East and West. — and secondly by supplying an explanation of why liberalism has had such a difficult time taking root in East Asian soil.

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8. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*. Trans. David A. Dilworth and G. Cameron Hurst (Tokyo: Sophia University. 1973). 2-3.
9. Yi Kwang-su. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip* [Collected Works of Yi Kwang-su]. IX. 248-249.

Chapter 2 Preliminary Discussion: General Features of Confucianism

2.1 Introduction

In this section, the general features of Confucianism will be reviewed. I make no attempt to offer an encyclopaedic coverage of the whole range of doctrines that make up Confucianism. The discussion will be confined to the points that are relevant to an understanding of the distinctive features of the anti-Confucianism of Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su.

The term "Confucianism" is a Western designation of an ideology that has dominated the thought, ethics and institutions in East Asia: particularly in China, Korea and Japan. Confucianism in English usage, refers to three aspects of Confucianism: Confucianism as *Ju-chiao*, the religious teachings and practices of the scholars; secondly, Confucianism as *Ju-hsueh*, study of political, ethical, and other humanistic teachings of the scholars and of Chinese classics; and finally, the study of the teachings and life of a particular historical person, Master Kung (Confucius). These three aspects, of course, are very closely related and indeed are inseparable; in Japan and Korea Confucianism been called Chinese learning.

Whether or not Confucianism is a religion

One of the controversial questions that we face whenever we discuss Confucianism is whether Confucianism is a religion or a philosophy. Anti-Confucianists did not want to give Confucianism the status of religion, because it would be more difficult to challenge its authority. Accordingly they attempted to "relegate" it to the status of philosophy. This issue was one of the central controversies in the May Fourth Movement in China. Kang Yu-wei who advocated that China adopted Confucianism as her national religion claimed that Confucianism had been regarded in China as a religion for more than two thousand years. Kang pointed out that in the *Record of Rites* and the *Book of Changes*, Confucius had shown his reverence to Heaven and affirmation of the existence of spirits and gods. Against this argument, Chang Ping-lin asserted that in the *Analects* and *Mencius*, Confucius avoided discussion of Heaven and death, only "assuming" that God "existed" (*tsai*). The fact that Confucius did not made any concrete assertion of religious traits weakens the position of those who regards Confucianism as a religion. Ch'en Tu-hsiu, one of the representative anti-Confucianists in the period of the May Fourth Movement in China, took the position that Confucianism was not religion but philosophy in that "the essence of religion was

a quest for the salvation of man's soul and that Confucianism, not dealing with the problem, was only a philosophy concerned mainly with man's life on earth."[1] In communist China, however, Confucianism is interpreted as a religion, in order to give it lower status than philosophy.

> The presupposition in communist China is that Karl Marx was the greatest philosopher the world ever produced and that philosophy is superior to religion. To call a tradition a religion is therefore to put it in a place that is lower than that of philosophy, but higher than that of 'superstition'. Thus those scholars (including Fung Yu-lan and Kuang Yaming) who have more respect for Confucianism prefer to see it as a philosophy, while others who have less respect for it (especially Ren Jiyu) prefer to call it a religion.[2]

Fukuzawa did not regard Confucianism as a religion, because "it [Confucianism] speaks exclusively about the principles of human relationships, about ritual, music, and the six arts." He called it as a system of morality[3] Yi Kwang-su also did not accord Confucianism the status of a religion. In Yi's view, religion presupposed the existence of transcendental God and held that the prime obligation was to God. Confucianism, however, did not presuppose the existence of a transcendental God and held that the supreme duty in life was to parents.[4] It should be noted, however, that in the process of denying Confucianism as a religion, Fukuzawa and Yi overlooked the implication of ancestral worship in Confucianism connected with filial piety. In what follows, Confucianism will be regarded primarily as a philosophy, but with some quasi-religious features.

Are the theory and practice of Confucianism separable?

One of the distinctive features of anti-Confucianism is that it looked at Confucianism as a whole, criticising both its theory and its practice. Anti-Confucianists faced the argument sometimes used by pro-Confucianism scholars that while the Confucian **ideal** is good, in **practice** it is often misused and distorted. On this view, the way forward is reform of Confucianism rather than abandonment of it. K'ang Yu-wei took this view, thereby acquitting Confucianism itself of the blame for despotism and inequality. A modern scholar, Hiseh Yu-wei, provides us a typical instance for this reasoning.

> The central idea of Confucian ethics is *jen*, "humanity." Confucian ethics could not ignore the significance of any individual; otherwise, it would be in conflict with *jen*.

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1. Tse-tsung Chow, "The Anti-Confucian Movement in Early Republican China", in *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 297.
2. Julia Ching, *Chinese Religions*, (London: Macmillan, 1993), 52.
3. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 151.
4. Yi Kwang-su, "Sinsaenghwal-non" [Treatise on New Way of Life], X, 333

What is *jen*? In *The Analects* (*Lun yu*). "Fan Ch'ih asked about *jen*. The master said. "It is to love all men." (*Analects*, XII. 22.) Since *jen* is to love all men. the importance of the individual is necessarily emphasized. But. owing to historical accidents and to wrong interpretations by emperors for centuries the importance of the individual in Confucian ethics was not always made explicit. Also. owing to the lack of clear discussion about the individual's equality. freedom. and rights in Confucian ethics. the suspicion naturally arose that it neglected the importance of the individual. But the implied affirmations of the importance of the individual. the individual's equality. freedom. rights. and duties. are clear.[5]

Derk Bodde points out that this approach which is based on a dichotomy between the theory and the practice of Confucianism. runs the risk of tendentiousness. He makes it clear that even though there is an element of democracy in Confucian morality. it "cannot possibly be equated with Western political definitions of the word."

> . . . we should not overlook a seeming contradiction between the Chinese belief in a strongly hierarchical society and the other Chinese belief. discussed in the preceding section. in the universal perfectibility of all men. In other words. there seems to be a clash between the practical need of the Chinese for social stability and their theoretical advocacy of social mobility. as implied by their belief in the moral worth of the individual. Undoubtedly. the latter concept explains why certain writers have tried to read a "democratic" meaning into Confucianism. even though the former shows clearly why such "democracy" cannot possibly be equated with Western political definitions of the word.[6]

However, even anti-Confucianists on occasion adopted a selective position. For example. they sometimes acknowledged some Confucian values even when they fiercely attacked Confucianism in general. Total rejection seemed almost impossible considering the long history of Confucian influence on every aspect of life in East Asia. K'ang Yu-wei asserted that "To give it [Confucianism] up meant to give up the whole of Chinese culture".[7] Moreover anti-Confucianists sometimes adopted a selective critique of Confucianism for tactical reasons. The tactic lay in proving the impracticality of Confucianism in modern times. conceding that while Confucianism might have been right for ancient times it could not be compatible with the demands of modern times. For Fukuzawa. for example. Confucianism was reduced to the ideology of the past that was incompatible with the needs of modern times. In Yi Kwang-su's critique of Confucianism. we see another tactical response. in his saying that he intended to critique only Korean Confucianism and its practice. not the whole system

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5. Hsieh. Yu-wei. "The Status of the Individual in Chinese Ethics". in C. A. Moore *The Chinese Mind* (Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press. 1977). 307-308.
6. Derk Bodde. "Harmony and Conflict in Chinese Philosophy". in *Studies in Chinese Thought*. ed. Arthur F. Wright (Chicago: The University of Chicago. 1967). 50-51.
7. Quoted from Chow Tse-tsung. "The Anti-Confucian Movement in Early Republican China". in *The Confucian Persuasion*. 298. Original source: K'ang Yu-wei. "Chung-kuo hsüeh-hui pao t'i-tz'un" (Introduction to the Journal of the Society for Chinese Studies). *Pujen*, No 2 (March 1913). "Chiao-shuo." 2-3.

of Confucianism. Confucianism was a historical product, and history changed so earlier forms of Confucianism had become redundant.

However, a selective critique of Confucianism raises two practical problems: the selection of which elements are not to be attacked, and the danger of weakening the overall effect of criticism of Confucianism, by admitting that Confucianism has survived, in part at least, for the good. This was why, at other times, anti-Confucianists argued that the Confucian ideal itself is a deception. For example, Fukuzawa claimed that the Confucian concept of benevolent government based on *jin* (humanity) was nothing but despotism. Unlike Yi Kwang-su, who at first took the view that Confucianism was despotism, but later accepted some Confucian principles (harmony), Fukuzawa never wavered in his belief that Confucianism was the source of despotism.

> Of all the Confucianists who have ever been in Japan, those who enjoyed a reputation as most talented and most capable were the greatest experts on absolutism, and the greatest tools of the government. In regard to absolutism, then, the Confucianists were the teachers and the government was the pupil.[8]

The components of Confucianism

What are the general features of Confucianism? Definitions of Confucianism by anti-Confucianists are inseparably linked to their line of attack on Confucianism.

Fukuzawa's view of the major distinctive features of Confucianism can be summed up in four principles: 1) respect for ancient tradition, 2) supremacy of morality over law, 3) class rule or imbalance of power, 4) discrimination against women. In Fukuzawa's eyes, the primary defect of Confucianism was "the vice of attachment to antiquity."[9] Fukuzawa stressed that Confucianism was incompatible with modern demands since Confucianism stuck to old principles which were created in ancient times and did not allow for change according to time and place. Fukuzawa's view was clearly expressed in the sentence "It is indeed regrettable that it [Confucianism] does not know the meaning of change and progress".

In his "Sinsaenghwal-non" [Treatise on the New Ways of Life], Yi Kwang-su designated 10 points as the distinctive features of Confucianism: (1) its idea of filial piety, (2) its idea of class, (3) its reverence for the past and its respect for China, (4) its neglect of economy, (5) its formalism, (6) its subjection of women, (7) its effeminacy

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8. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 151.
9. *Ibid.*

(the neglect of the military arts), (8) its fatalism, (9) its neglect of science, (10) its lack of vitality.[10]

According to a neutral observer, Arthur F. Wright, Confucianism's operating principles can be summed up as: (1) submissiveness to authority — parents, elders, and superiors. (2) submissiveness to the mores and the norms (*Li*). (3) reverence for the past and respect for history. (4) love of traditional learning. (5) esteem for the force of example. (6) primacy of broad moral cultivation over specialised competence. (7) preference for non-violent moral reform in state and society. (8) prudence, caution, preference for a middle course. (9) noncompetitiveness. (10) courage and sense of responsibility for a great tradition. (11) self-respect (with some permissible self-pity) in adversity. (12) exclusiveness and fastidiousness in moral and cultural matters. (13) punctiliousness in treatment of others.[11]

In the light of these varied explanations, in my view the major elements of Confucianism can be summed up as: harmony, the rule of morality, the Confucian concept of *jen* (humanity), filial piety, formality and the subjection of women. Fukuzawa's emphasis on respect for tradition is reflected in these six ancient principles of Confucianism. I will discuss each of these elements in turn.

2.2 Harmony: social harmony

Most scholars agree that harmony is the major principle of Confucianism. I would like to confine myself to the idea of social harmony — i.e., the conception of harmony applied to society and politics. Arthur F. Wright raises a question: "What values did the Confucian sage or worthy assert, and what institutions did he favour, as he persisted, generation after generation, in his Sisyphean labours?" He answers:

> Harmony, universal and unalloyed, was perhaps the highest good, but in a less abstract sense harmony meant the good society. And the good society was seen as a past utopia, a golden age, the ideally frictionless holistic order that had existed in remote antiquity. That order was a hierarchy. State and society were fused into a seamless whole, and every man knew his place and was content.[12]

John C. H. Wu points out that in this respect Confucianism is a reflection of ancient Chinese values. He maintains that "The most deep-rooted desire of the Chinese people is for harmony." He points out that Confucianism centres around the idea of harmony: "Whether they are speaking of self-cultivation or dealing with the affairs of the world,

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10. Yi Kwang-su "Sin saenghwal-non" (Treatise on the New Ways of Life).
11. Arthur F. Wright, "Values, Roles, and Personalities" in *Confucian Personalities*, eds. Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1978), 8.
12. Arthur F. Wright ed., *Confucianism and Chinese Civilization*, viii.

harmony is the keynote of all their thinking."[13] Bodde also points out that harmony is the integral element of traditional Chinese culture. According to him the central idea of Chinese social harmony can be reduced to the conception of society as "a graded but harmonious organism".

> Society, in Chinese eyes, consists of a large number of small social units (the family, the village, the guild, etc.), each of which consists in turn of individuals varying greatly in their intellectual and physical capabilities. Because of these inequalities, it is inevitable that class differences should exist. The social order, in other words, is a rationalisation of existing human inequalities.
>
> It does not follow, however, that there should be conflict between social classes. On the contrary, the welfare of the social organism as a whole depends upon harmonious co-operation among all of its units and of the individuals who comprise these units. This means that every individual, however high or low, has the obligation to perform to the best of his ability those particular functions in which he is expert and which are expected of him by society.[14]

As Bodde suggests, the distinctive feature of the Confucian conception of harmony is that it takes a negative view of conflict. John C. H. Wu perceptively explains the distinctive difference between the East (Confucianism) and the West on the relation between harmony and conflict.

> We are inclined to think of it too exclusively in terms of concord or a succession of concords. Whenever there is a discord, our harmony is disrupted. In other words, we seldom if ever think of a discord as an opportunity for rising to a new concord. The West is more adept in the art of resolution of discord, thus continuing the harmony through the discordant interval. When confronted with such a discordant interval the Chinese too often feel utterly at a loss as to what to do except to wait patiently for the turning of the tide, and, when patience is exhausted, to burst out in uncontrollable passion and emotion. We have much to learn from the West in the way of resolution of discord.[15]

Confucianism does not acknowledge the value of conflict or competition in the way that it is acknowledged by Western liberalism. In Western liberalism the existence of conflict and competition between individuals in society is justified on grounds that they contribute to the development of society by stimulation. In Western liberalism conflict or competition is acknowledged as healthy, whereas in Confucianism conflict and competition are regarded as unhealthy. Their affirmative view of conflict led Western liberals to develop ways of handling conflicting interests, e.g., through contracts. By contrast, their negative view of conflict led Confucianists to concentrate on ways not of mediating but of abolishing conflict in society. This is closely related to the Confucian

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13 John C. H. Wu, "Chinese Legal and Political Philosophy", in Moore ed., *op. cit.*, 227.
14 Derk Bodde, "Harmony and Conflict in Chinese Philosophy", 46.
15 John C. H. Wu, "Chinese Legal and Political Philosophy", in Moore ed., *op. cit.*, 232-233.

superiority of morality over law.[16] This brings me to the role of morality in Confucianism.

2.3 Role of morality

One of the most distinctive features of Confucianism is that mind is a more decisively important factor in social affairs than matter. Lin Yu-sheng explains this as follows.

> One of the most important characteristics of Confucian modes of thinking or categories of analysis is the stress placed on the function of the inward moral and/or intellectual experience of the mind.[17]

He calls it the monistic intellectualistic way of thinking,[18] which placed more stress on the human factor (or agent) than on institutions. The stress on morality as the most important factor in politics is derived from this Confucian tendency. In Confucianism, politics starts with the individual's moral cultivation. Politics has four stages, with the discipline of the self as the first stage, the management of the family as the second stage, the government of the nation as the third stage, and the pacification of the world as the last stage. In this way of thinking, moral self-cultivation is regarded as the fundamental means of ruling the people.

Essentially this places morality higher than law. Rule by morality is regarded as one of major features of Confucianism which distinguishes it from Western political theory. To understand the rule of morality in Confucianism more clearly, it is helpful to make a comparison between Confucianism and Legalism. In the application to state administration, Charles O. Hucker helpfully distinguishes between Legalist and Confucian doctrines. According to him, the Legalist's position may be summed up as follows:

1. Man is amorally self-seeking.
2. The people exist for the sake of the state and its ruler.
3. The people must therefore be coerced into obedience by rewards and harsh punishments.
4. Law is a supreme, state-determined, amoral standard of conduct and must be enforced inflexibly.
5. Officials must be obedient instruments of the ruler's will, accountable to him alone.

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16. In this context Yi Kwang-su argued: "East Asian people [in Confucian society] did not know the word for conflict before the advance of Western ideas to East Asia." Yi is himself a good example of the strong influence of the Confucian principle of harmony. Though renowned for his antipathy towards Confucianism, he succumbed to the power of the Confucian principle of harmony in later life. His surrender to the principle of harmony led to the collapse of his anti-Confucianism, as will be discussed in detail in the final chapter of this thesis.
17. Lin, Yu-sheng. *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Anti-traditionalism in the May Fourth Era* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1979), 41.
18. *Ibid.*, 26-28.

6. Expediency must be the basis for all state policy and all state service.
7. The state can prosper only if it is organized for prompt and efficient implementation of the ruler's will.[19]

In contrast to the Legalist position the Confucians maintain that:

1. Man is morally perfectible.
2. The state and its ruler exist for the sake of the people.
3. The people must therefore be encouraged toward goodness by education and virtuous example.
4. Law is a necessary but necessarily fallible handmaiden of the natural moral order and must be enforced flexibly.
5. Officials must be morally superior men, loyal to the ruler but accountable primarily and in the last resort to Heaven.
6. Morality — specifically, the doctrines of good government expounded in the classics and manifested in the acts of worthy men of the past — must be the basis for all state policy and all state service.
7. The state can prosper only if its people possess the morale that comes from confidence in the ruler's virtue.[20]

He sums up the major difference between Confucianism and Legalism: "classical Confucianism stands for the claim of the people against the state, for the supremacy of morality. At the other hand, Legalism stands for the supremacy of the state and its inflexible law."[21] This stress on morality is exemplified by Chu Hsi who "always insists that the reform of society begins with the moral reformation of ruler and court, that it will then spread to officialdom, then out to communities and individuals who will be moved to rectitude by the combined forces of example and persuasion."[22]

Fukuzawa Yukichi also saw as one central feature of Confucianism the moralistic nature of Confucianism. He distinguished four categories: private virtue, public virtue, private knowledge and public knowledge.

> Morality and intelligence are in turn each divided into two types. Firstly you have what may be called private virtue: fidelity, purity, modesty, integrity, and the like — things that pertain to an individual's own heart. Secondly you have the sense of shame, justice, straight-forwardness, courage, and the like, which appear in men's dealings with others and in social relationship; these may be called public virtue. Thirdly you have the capacity to fathom the principles of things and respond to them; this may be called private knowledge. Fourthly you have the ability to evaluate men and events, to give weightier and greater things priority, and to judge their proper times and places; this may be called public knowledge. Private knowledge can perhaps be called the lesser knowledge of know-how, while public knowledge can be called the greater knowledge of wisdom.[23]

Fukuzawa himself put the highest stress on public knowledge.

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19. Charles O. Hucker, "Confucianism and the Chinese Censorial System", in Arthur F. Wright, ed., *Confucianism and Chinese Civilization* (New York: Atheneum, 1964), 51.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*
22. Wright, "Values, Roles, and Personalities", 17-18.
23. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, trans. David A. Dilworth and Umeyo Hirano (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1969), 77.

> Without wisdom, private virtue and private knowledge cannot develop into their public counterparts, or the public and the private functions can end up at odds with each other. There has never before been a clear discussion of these four, but by examining the views of scholars and what people commonly say one can see that they are aware of these distinctions.[24]

But according to Fukuzawa, Confucianism put the highest stress on private virtue — i.e., passive receptivity.

> Because the function of wisdom is to regulate knowledge and virtue, when speaking about morality we should really call it the supreme virtue. However, because we are here using terms according to the popular understanding of them, wisdom should not be called a virtue. In ancient Japan the term 'morality' referred principally to an individual's private virtue. It was expressed in such phrases as 'be gentle, modest, and deferring to others', or 'rule by inactions', or 'the holy man does not have ambition', or 'the gentleman of the highest virtue is like a fool', or 'the benevolent man is like a solid mountain'. These all refer to inner states which in the West would be described as merely 'passive'. For the word described an attitude of passive receptivity, rather than one of aggressive initiative; virtue was conceived only in terms of liberation of a man's inner heart. The Chinese Classics, of course, do not teach only this kind of passive virtue. Some few passages imply a more dynamic frame of mind. However, the spirit which breathes throughout those works stirs up in people an attitude of patient endurance and servility. Shinto and Buddhism are practically the same as the Chinese Classics when it comes to their teachings on the cultivation of virtue. Because we Japanese have been reared according to such teachings, the popular understanding of the concept of virtue is extremely narrow; the term does not include the function of wisdom.[25]

2.4 Concept of *jen*

Jen means reciprocity — mutual fair conduct. The importance of *jen* in Confucian ethics is very clearly explained by Y. P. Mei:

> *Jen* is, of course, the cornerstone of Confucianism, and it may be assumed that reciprocity, or the Golden Rule, is an expression of *jen*, and that it is just as proper to regard *jen* as the one unifying principle of all of Confucius' teachings. Historically, *jen* is a distinct Confucian concept, a concept that was little used before his time.[26]

There are four cardinal virtues recognised by the Confucian founders: namely, *jen* [humanity], *yi* [righteousness], *li* [propriety], and *chih* [wisdom]. To these, later Confucianists added a fifth virtue, *hsin* [constancy]. All of these virtues are applied to the everyday life of the Chinese people. *Jen* is the heart of the moral life of a man and *yi* is the norm of human conduct in relation to government. Both *jen* and *yi* are intrinsic values springing from the nature of man. *Li* is concerned with the forms of manifesting

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24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79.
26. Y. P. Mei, "The Basis of Social, Ethical, and Spiritual Values in Chinese Philosophy", in Moore ed., *op. cit.*, 152.

the intrinsic virtues i.e., with the proper behaviour of man. *Chih* is the grasp of these virtues achieved through the educational programme in Confucian China. *Hsin* is the trust to be maintained between man and man in their social relations.

Jen and *yi* constitute the intrinsic and deeper "content" of motivation, forming the substance of human action. *Li* [propriety] is the outward expression of the intrinsic virtues. It prescribes the "form" of human action. *Li* can be translated variously into politeness, etiquette, ritual and courtesy. Its original meaning was "to sacrifice," but this meaning was extended first to the ritual in sacrifice, then to all forms of ceremony and courtesy, and finally to the proper conduct in human relations. *Li*, being the essence of the Chinese way of life, constitutes the substance of Chinese customs and traditions, including social order, class, distinction, manner of speech, timeliness, punctiliousness of behaviour, pride and even some degree of hypocrisy. The practice of *li* is also responsible for the Chinese temperament and behaviour pattern, as Creel points out in the following passage:

> Balance, poise, is the hallmark of the Chinese who has been reared in the tradition of his nation's culture ... Where does it come from? Not just from moral maxims; this is not merely a way of thought but a way of life. And that way of life comes in part from the practice of *li*, which Confucius taught twenty-five hundred years ago and the Chinese have continued to cultivate to our own century.[27]

The Chinese motto of moral cultivation is often stated as "Sageliness within and Kingliness without," where the former represents *jen* and the latter signifies *li*.

In Confucian eyes, *jen* is intrinsic to human nature and the goal of moral cultivation. The difficulty of defining this fundamental Confucian concept is illustrated by the existence of various translations of it as follows: "magnanimity", "benevolence", "perfect virtue" (James Legge); "moral life", "moral character" (Ku Hung-ming); "true manhood", "compassion" (Lin Yu-tang); "human-heartedness" (Derk Bodde); and "man-to-manness" (E. R. Hughes).[28] Y. P. Mei proposed the use of the transliteration "*jen*" rather than a translation of "*jen*" since any English translation of "*jen*" fails to convey the exact Confucian concept of "*jen*". Confucius declared that "*jen* is to love men."[29] *Jen* is also defined as *chung* which means to know other men's desires by one's own desires and also means that because I do not desire, I know what others do not desire. Thus, *jen* is the Golden Rule of Confucianism. Mencius described *jen* as "the expression of the human heart."[30] The *Chung-Yung*, one of the Confucian Four Classic Books, states that *jen* is manhood.

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27. H.G. Creel, *Chinese Thought from Confucius to Mao Tse-Tung* (New York: New American Library, 1960), 209.
28. Y. P. Mei, *op. cit.*, 152.
29. *The Analects*, 12: 22.
30. *The Works of Mencius*, VI A.

Now *jen* is a very general and abstract concept which designates the cardinal elements of Confucian ethics. The ethics of *jen* is said to be expressed in terms of five particular social relations into which the Chinese man enters. These five social relations are succinctly given in the writings of Mencius:

> Between father and son there should be affection; between ruler and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate function; between old and young, a proper order, and between friends, good faith.[31]

It is true that these five social relations are carried over from the existing social order of ancient China, but what is unique in Confucian ethics is that *jen*, as a general intrinsic virtue, is concretely manifested in these five social relations.

The idea of *jen* exercised strong and profound influence on the formation of Confucian political ideas, as will be seen later in this section. Even critics of Confucianism acknowledged the value of Confucian *jen*.

2.5 Filial piety

The meaning of filial piety

Anti-Confucianists regarded filial piety as a central principle of Confucianism. It cannot be overstated that to anti-Confucianists, an attack on filial piety is equivalent to an attack on Confucianism as a whole. Their major ground for criticising Confucianism is that it supported despotism. Confucian filial piety justified slavish subservience to authority and a hierarchical system of human relationships. The lack of freedom and equality in Confucian society is attributed to filial piety.

I would like to base my discussion of filial piety on Hsieh Yu-wei's pro-Confucian discussion. In "Filial Piety and Chinese Society", Hiseh provides a stereotypical Confucian position on filial piety, arguing that it is inseparably combined with benevolence. According to Hiseh, anti-Confucianists did not properly understand the Confucian conception of filial piety, and their view that filial piety is despotic is derived from their lack of recognition that benevolence and filial piety are combined.

> Why should benevolence and filial piety be joined? And why should the latter serve as the foundation of all benevolent actions? This point may be generally overlooked or misunderstood, not only by Western Sinologists, but also by many Chinese students. Some intellectuals in the New Cultural Movement in the early years of the Chinese Republic went so far as to vow against filial piety. Such a radical campaign demonstrated that in modern China there are many literati who are ignorant of the meaning of this traditional virtue. In fact, the tenet of filial piety has always held the

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31. *Ibid.*, III A, 4.

most important place in Chinese ethics and also in the Chinese cultural tradition as a whole.[32]

The other reason that Confucian filial piety is a central idea in Confucianism is that filial piety has universal application to every aspect of life in Confucian society. Filial piety is the departure point for all Confucian doctrines; indeed all Confucian ethics and political ideas are nothing more than an extension of filial piety.

Filial piety along with the Chinese family system is one of the outstanding features which characterise Chinese life throughout centuries of her civilisation. According to Confucianism, Confucianists were interested in discovering the root of *jen*, and they found this in filial piety. Confucius confirmed this by saying: "filial piety and fraternal submission: Are they not the root of all benevolent actions?"[33] Mencius also observed that the most natural demonstration of *jen* (humanity) is loyalty to parents which to Mencius was the greatest of all virtues. He said:

> The ability possessed by men without having been acquired by learning is their "intuitive ability." and the knowledge possessed by them without the exercise of thought is their "intuitive knowledge." Children carried in arms all know to love their parents and when they are grown up, they all know to respect their older brothers.[34]

Men's love towards their parents is an innate feeling and the moral obligation toward parents is expressed in terms of filial piety. *Jen* teaches that one should love all men; but where does one begin? One should love one's parents to start with. Thus filial piety is the starting point of one's practice of benevolence (*jen*). Tseng-Tzu, the chief exponent of the Confucian doctrine of filial piety, said:

> Those who lack propriety in private life, loyalty in serving the sovereign, seriousness in discharging official duties, faithfulness in treating friends or bravery in waging war, are all found wanting in filial piety.[35]

Thus all virtues derive from filial piety and they are all contained within the full development of filial piety. This notion is crystallised in the *Hsiao Ching* (the Classic of Filial Piety), which was compiled at the end of the Warring States Period, for it reads:

> Therefore to be without love of parents and to love other men (in their place) means to be a "rebel against virtue; "to be without reverence for parents and to have reverence for other men" means to be a "rebel against sacred custom."[36]

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32. Hsieh Yu-wei, *op. cit.* 169-170.
33. *The Analects*, I: 2.
34. *The Works of Mencius*, VII A. 15.
35. *The Book of Rites*, VIII 24.
36. *Hsiao Ching*, IX.

What is the meaning of filial piety and what are its practical implications? The basic meaning of filial piety is first to serve parents — i.e., to follow and obey the commands of parents. Secondly, it means to take care of one's parents. To carry out these duties, in addition to natural affection, there must be a moral effort on the part of the children, for filial piety is an ethical obligation to undertake moral conduct for its own sake.

Filial piety and ancestor worship

In the process of discussing Confucian filial piety we are bound to face the question of why it exerted such strong influence for so long. Today Confucian filial piety has lost most of the power which it enjoyed in the past, but even now basic elements of it are still observable. In my view, the reason for Confucianism's lasting influence can be found in the fact that Confucian filial piety is interwoven with ancestor worship.

The major distinctive feature of Confucian filial piety is that it is not confined to the life time of parents; it is extended to the time after their death. For this reason, filial piety includes all the ceremonial duties of the "three years mourning" period after the death of a parent and also elaborate rituals for ancestor worship. Confucius gave an explanation of the "three years mourning" as follows: "It is not till a child is three years old that it is allowed to leave the arms of its parents. And the three years' mourning is universally observed throughout the empire."[37] Ancestor worship is an extension of filial piety, and offering sacrifices to deceased ancestors was regarded as the duty of offspring. The faithful observance of this duty is considered to be the cause of blessings upon one's posterity. Ancestor worship is a commemoration of one's origins, repaying the debt that one owes to one's ancestors. The rituals involve praying for blessings with the expressed desire of avoiding calamity and obtaining purification from sin. When facing some critical decision such as making war, ancient Chinese emperors or kings appealed to their ancestors for oracular revelations and blessings. The religious value of ancestor worship lies in its emotional consolation involving death, the soul, rewards and punishment.

The importance of filial piety is related to the great family system of China, developed for the purpose of controlling family life and of giving stability and solidarity to members of the family. Filial piety is the nucleus of the family system and the family is the foundation and the unit of society. Hsieh Yu-wei points out the inseparability of filial piety from Chinese family systems:

> Later, during the past half-century, since Western culture seeped into Chinese society with some ill effects, the former Chinese large-family system was gradually dissolved and the virtue of filial piety was also gradually relegated to obscurity. Nevertheless,

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37. *The Analects*, XVII: 21. (Translated by James Legge)

> most Chinese families still maintain reverential service to their elders as the Heaven-ordained obligation of all children. In practically all Chinese households elderly parents are living with their married son or daughter in harmony. Such a condition may be found less often in the Western world. This characteristic of the Chinese family system unmistakably demonstrates the practice of filial piety, which prevails in Chinese society.[38]

Filial piety can be divided into three relationships: the relationship between husband and wife, the relationship between siblings, and the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. In the next section, I shall discuss each of these relationships.

Filial piety and spouses, siblings, and rulers and ruled

Confucian filial piety defines the marital relation. Marital relations in Confucianism can be said to be evolved out of filial piety. The main purpose of marriage is to continue the blood line which is an important phase of filial piety. Marriage is based on the concept of creating new life or lives so as to prolong those of one's ancestors, including one's parents. Hsieh Yu-wei gave us the three essential points governing traditional Chinese marriage on the basis of filial piety as follows: (1) wedlock, once formed, was not to be dissolved without adequate reasons strictly prescribed; (2) the parents should see to it that their children were properly married, though not necessarily in terms of mutual love prior to the wedding; (3) the younger couple had an obligation to produce offspring, and bore the responsibility of getting their children married when they became of marriageable age.[39] These three points of the Confucian conception of marriage based on filial piety by Hsieh Yu-wei confirm that the primary purpose of marriage in Confucianism is not for the individual spouses but for the family. This naturally led to the development of arranged marriages, since individual spouses were not allowed to express their opinion on their marriage partners.

The fact that the primary purpose of marriage is to perpetuate the family line leads to the subjection of women. As Julia Ching remarks: "The obligation of providing a male of the ancestral cult became woman's sacred duty, to assure the continuation of the ancestral cult."[40] When the couple failed to produce a male descendant, it was permissible for the husband to divorce his wife, or for the husband to take one or more concubines. Having no son who will continue the family line is regarded as unfilial, as Mencius remarks: "There are three things which are unfilial, and having no posterity is the greatest of them."[41] A man's offspring are the continuation of his own and also of

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38. Hsieh Yu-wei, *op. cit.*, 176.
39. *Ibid.*, 77.
40. Ching, *Chinese Religions*, 60.
41. *The Works of Mencius*, IV A 26.

his ancestors' lives. With such continuation. his ancestors' lives are looked upon as being immortal.

Filial piety is also applied to the relations between brother and sisters. Within the family. Confucian ethics calls for mutual respect between the elder and the younger brothers. The younger brother (*ti*) is to respect his elder brother (*hsiung*) with submission. whereas the elder must love and take good care of the younger. The fraternal duty is correlated with filial piety. for brothers are creatures of parents.

The outcome of the family system based on filial piety is the "cult of the old." The older person in age is always respected and revered by the younger in any social gathering. Hence the custom to ask the other's age when you meet a stranger. and when you discover that the other person is older than you are. you know that you have to respect him.

The relationship between the ruler and the ruled is also defined in the structure of filial piety; the ruler is regarded as parent and the ruled are regarded as children.

2.6 Formalism

Anti-Confucianists castigated Confucianism as ritual teaching. Why has formalism or propriety developed in Confucianism? It is derived from the religious aspect of Confucianism: the ritual of the veneration of ancestors. According to etymological analysis of the Chinese word for ritual (*li*). it is related to "worship" and "sacrificial vessel". Julia Ching explains:

> . . . the term has a much broader range of meanings in the Chinese context. straddling the sacred and the profane spheres. Somewhat like the contemporary English term. it came to include social practices. partaking even of the nature of law. as a means of training in virtue and of avoiding evil. And going beyond the English term. it refers also to propriety. that is. proper behaviour.[42]

Rituals have taken up an important place in Confucius' teachings. Since much stress is placed on ritual, it is not surprising that Confucianism has been understood as a school of rituals. This is illustrated by the fact that the most serious criticisms of Confucianism by Mo-tzu (479-381 B.C) are focused on the Confucian stress on rituals.

> According to Mo-tzu. "the principles of the Confucianists ruin the whole world in four ways": (1) The Confucianists do not believe in the existence of God or of spirits. "with the result that God and the spirits are displeased." (2) The Confucianists insist on elaborate funerals and the practice of three years of mourning on the death of a parent. so that the wealth and energy of the people are thereby wasted. (3) The Confucianists lay stress on the practice of music. leading to an identical result. (4) The Confucianists believe in a predetermined fate. causing the people to be lazy and to resign themselves to this fate. (The Mo-tzu. Ch. 48.) In another chapter entitled "Anti-Confucianism." the

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42. Ching. *op. cit.*. 59-60.

> Mo-tzu also says: "Even those with long life cannot exhaust the learning required for their [Confucianist] studies. Even people with the vigour of youth cannot perform all the ceremonial duties. And even those who have amassed wealth cannot afford music. They [the Confucianists] enhance the beauty of wicked arts and lead their sovereign astray. Their doctrine cannot meet the needs of the age, nor can their learning educate the people." (Ch. 39.)[43]

The reason for the stress on rituals is inherent in Confucian teachings which emphasise the practical observance of their doctrine. The moral prescriptions for "proper behaviour" in family and society naturally lead to the development of proprietary formalism. The development of ritualistic propriety is interwoven with the older cult of veneration for ancestors, and the worship of Heaven, a formal cult practised by China's imperial rulers.

> . . . while the *Book of Rites*, with its elaborate instructions for correct deportment, especially regarding mourning and funerals, became the backbone of Chinese society.[44]

But Confucianism did not value ritual for its own sake: ritual was to complement virtue, not replace it, as Confucius put it.

> The Master said, if a man be without the virtues proper to humanity, what has he to do with the rites of propriety? If a man be without the virtues proper to humanity, what has he to do with music?[45]

Moreover, Julia Ching pointed out that in early Confucianism the rigidity of Confucianism was not severe. She maintained that "In Confucianism, early Confucianism is concerned about the *jen*, while in the later period of Confucianism it is more concerned about the propriety."[46]

2.7 Subjection of women

Anti-Confucianists attributed discrimination against women to Confucianism. But is Confucianism responsible for the subjection of women in Confucian society? The answer is yes, since the fact is that the more Confucianisation of society proceeds, the lower is the status to which women are relegated:

> Women usually enjoyed more freedom during those periods when the country was disunited, under the influence of non-Confucian teachings. By Sung times, with the restoration of an ethnic Chinese dynasty as well as more 'civilised' moral principles, women became largely confined to the home. Although no law forbade a widow to remarry, those women who lost their spouses were encouraged to remain unmarried — especially by the school of Ch'eng Yi and Chu Hsi. Female chastity, or loyalty to one's

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43. Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: The Free Press, 1966), 52.
44. Ching, *op. cit.*, 60.
45. *The Analects*, III: 3.
46. Ching, *op. cit.*, 60.

> husband. was made parallel to political loyalty. or the man's commitment to one dynastic government.[47]

Some scholars contend that in the earlier period of Confucianism women were less discriminated against than in the later period of Confucianism.

The reason for discrimination against women in Confucianism is traced to the Confucian patriarchal family system. According to the Confucian worship of ancestors, only male descendants are eligible as heirs. An unfilial act is to be without a male heir. When a wife failed to bear a son, the husband was justified in taking concubines. This testifies to the low status of women in Confucian society.

It is difficult, however, to find direct evidence in Confucius's writings of discrimination against women. Confucian justification for the subjection of women is mainly supported by the help of *yin yang* theory. The source of it is provided by the *Appendices to the Book of Changes* in which the male-female relationship is defined in the supremacy of male (heaven) over female (earth). The three Obediences which are castigated by anti-Confucianists as the main source of the Confucian subjection of women appeared in *the Book of Ceremonials* (*I-li*).

2.8 Political rule: government and law

On government, Confucianism is blamed for supporting despotism and lacking democratic principles. To understand the anti-Confucianists' arguments properly it is necessary to examine Confucian political ideas in the context of their historical formation.

Confucianism took over the political views expressed by the Chou founders who overthrew the Shang dynasty, which emphasised the importance of virtues and responsibilities on the part of the rulers. From ancient times, the governments of China have been autocratic. Confucius and his followers did not suggest altering this form of government, assuming it to be ordained by Heaven. Instead, Confucius stressed that the government, particularly the rulers, must be moral, for it was the duty of the rulers to guide and help the people realise their moral potential. The early idea of government in China was closely attached to the religious views of the Chinese, and with Confucius and Mencius, this religious affiliation was transformed into a moral one. In the following statement, Creel paraphrases the explanation given by the Chou conquerors when they overthrew Shang power:

> Heaven had commanded it. It was the practice of Heaven, they said, constantly to inspect the conduct of the ruler, and if he were incorrigibly wicked to give its mandate.

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47 *Ibid.*, 168

> the decree. to one whom it charged to set up a new dynasty. It was in response to his command. as the servant of Heaven. that the Chou ruler conquered Shang.[48]

The reasons given by the Chou rulers for the downfall of Shang are: failure to sacrifice properly to the gods. drunkenness. and failure to treat the people well.

The sources of political authority in ancient China as given in *the Book of History* are three: (1) the Mandate of Heaven; (2) the people's will; (3) the ruler's virtue.[49] Since political authority is conferred by the Mandate of Heaven to the ruler for the welfare of the people. the government is created for the people. not the people for the government and the ruler assumes a great responsibility in governing his people. Hence. the qualifications required of a ruler are that he be a steward of the common good. that he possess the virtue of humility towards the people. that he guard against luxury. against the lust of power. against giving reign to his arbitrary will, against violence and extreme measures. and especially against pride and complacency.

Confucius advocated the doctrine of "the rectification of names" as his main principle of government. The times in which Confucius lived were chaotic and disordered. and the primary concern of Confucius for the world was to restore order and the proper discharge of various functions in society. To do so. he wanted to re-establish a benevolent government after the pattern of the Sage-Kings of China's Golden Age with a strong moral emphasis. and believed that order could only be restored by "the rectification of names" — i.e., by the rulers modelling themselves on the moral character of the legendary sage kings. Yao and Shun. in whom the ideal of the motto of the Confucian man. "Sageliness within and Kingliness without" is perfectly manifested. On "the rectification of names" Confucius has the following to say in the Analects:

> When Duke Ching of Ch'i inquired of Confucius the principles of government. Confucius answered saying: "let the ruler be ruler. the minister be minister; let the father be father. and the son be son. "Excellent!" said the Duke. "For truly if the ruler be not ruler. the minister not minister; if the father be not father. and the son not son. though grain exist. shall I be allowed to eat it?"[50]

Confucius does not reject the Chinese institution of hereditary rulers. but the rulers are to "reign but not rule." and the actual affairs of government are primarily handled by the ministers. So Confucius insists that the ministers should be appointed on the basis of their moral character and knowledge. The Confucius' emphasis on the idea of government by virtue was at the hands of Mencius turned into "government of *jen*." which Mencius called "government of *wang*" (King) in contrast with "government of the *pa*" (feudal lord). The government of a king exists for the benefit of the people so

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48. H. G. Creel. *Confucius and the Chinese Way* (New York: Harper. 1960). 147.
49. Wu. *op. cit.*. 213.
50. *The Analects*. 12:11.

that the people will delight in and obey him. On the other hand, the government of *pa* only gains the allegiance of the people through military force. Mencius writes:

> He who, using force, makes a pretence at virtue is a *pa* . . . He who, using virtues, practises human-heartedness (*jen*), is a King . . . When one subdues men by force, they do not submit in their hearts, (and submit outwardly only because) their strength is insufficient. When one subdues men by virtue, in their hearts' core they are pleased and sincerely submit, as was the case with the seventy disciples in their submission to Confucius.[51]

Those who argue that there are some democratic elements in Confucianism pointed out that Confucius speaks of an ideal government as having three conditions: first, sufficient food, secondly, sufficient weapons, and finally the confidence of the common people; and he regarded the last condition as the most important of all.[52] Mencius says that; "The people rank the highest, the spirits of the land and grain next, and the sovereign the lowest."[53] Further evidence of the existence of the democratic idea in Confucianism is derived from the Confucian ethical doctrine that everyone is capable of becoming the "superior man" like Yao and Shun. Moreover, since the sovereign is believed to be a sage, and the right of the sovereign rests on a trust and Heaven exercises its powers through the people, it is a logical consequence that revolution becomes a part of the legitimate political schema. John Wu remarks on revolution as follows:

> In ancient China, revolution was not regarded as a right, but a solemn duty that the new leaders of the people owed to Heaven to rectify the abuses or perversions of its Mandate, and to relieve the people from intolerable oppressions of the tyrant.[54]

Mencius hinted at the possibility of revolution to overthrow a dynasty when the government was corrupt.

Creel defends Confucianism by arguing that although Confucian political theory lacks the necessary machinery such as voting to democratise the Chinese society, the teaching of Confucian masters is pervasively democratic in spirit:

> While the influence of Confucianism on the government has been greater at some periods than at others, it has been pervasive, and in general, it has tended toward what we call democracy. Perhaps in no great nation has it as continuously been the accepted theory, for the past two thousand years, that the government exists for the purpose of bringing about welfare and satisfaction of the people, and that if it fails to do so it may properly be criticized and even overthrown. This has given great power to public opinion.[55]

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51. *The Works of Mencius*, II A, 3.
52. *The Analects*, XII: 7.
53. *The Works of Mencius*, VII B, 14.
54. John C. H. Wu, "Chinese Legal and Political Philosophy", in Moore ed., *The Chinese Mind*, 214.
55. Creel, *op. cit.*, 251.

On law, as government is based on ethics, so law is dependent on morality in Confucian society. The law is strictly a system of duties rather than rights. Herbert Franke points out the difference between the European conception of law and the Chinese conception of law:

> The vast bulk of Chinese juridical literature and the highly developed systematism of traditional Chinese law cannot obscure the fact that law was regarded (similar to economy) not as an entity in itself and potentially superior even to the ruler, but as a mere governing tool. . . . What is important is that the administrator of law never developed into a position comparable to that of the juridically trained adviser who played such a role in early modern history in Europe. It is significant, that apart from some abortive reforms (Wang An-shih), a special training in law was never attempted, and that juridical reasoning, based *solely* on the letter of the law, did not develop. Again and again ideology and ethics, that is, extra-legal considerations tend to appear in juridical texts and documents. In one word, Legalism did not produce a class of jurists in China. Law remained but one of the many-faceted activities of the scholar-official.[56]

Confucianists advocated as a principal method of government the practice of virtue on the part of the ruler and the inculcation of good manners among people. For this reason the Confucianists are opposed to the Legalists who believed that human nature is essentially selfish and that the people obey the law for fear of punishment. The corollary of Confucianism based on the government by morality is that a person is more important than the abstract institutions. The tendency to stress human factors more than institutional factors can be seen in the remarks of even Huang Tsung-hsi (Huang Tsung-hsi is renowned for his concern for institutions) in his attempt to find an institutional check on the army. "There has been a man who never revolts, however, there has never existed an institution that cannot revolt."[57] Man, rather than institutions, has been the controlling factor in Confucian political life. This emphasis on man rather than institutions, virtue rather than law, constitutes the political essence of Confucianism. Against this Confucian tendency, anti-Confucianists endeavoured to bring institutions and law into politics. We will find a representative instance of this in Fukuzawa Yukichi's anti-Confucianism.

2.9 Social consciousness — familism, equality, freedom

Roughly speaking, it can be said that in ancient China there was almost no concept of social consciousness besides family relations and the relationship between the ruler and the minister. This deficiency left a deep imprint on anti-Confucianists. It is true that

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56. "Salient Aspects of China's Heritage," in *China in Crisis: China's Heritage and the Communist Political System*, ed. Ping-ti Ho and Tang Tsou, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1968), 45.
57. Hwang Chong-ŭi (Huang Tsung-hsi in Chinese), *Myŏng-i-tae-bang-nok* (*Ming-i tai-fang lu* in Chinese) [*A Plan for the Prince*]. Translated by Chŏn Hae-jong (Seoul: Samsŏng munhwa-jaedan, 1971), 105.

Confucianism emphasises the public duty of man, but this is confined to Confucian scholar-officials; ordinary people are regarded as being guided by Confucian scholar-officials.

Chinese society treats the family as the foundation and the basic unity of society. Mencius said that "The root of the empire is in the state, and the root of the state is in the family."[58] Since Confucian society is an expansion and extension of the family life, the root of all social relations and life can be reduced to the practice of filial piety. In the Chinese community, kinship was formed through the marriage relationship, clans were established through the blood relationship, and villages were built up through the regional relationship in which one was born and brought up. Tutors were respected, ranking next to the father's position in every household. Village elders were regarded as the leaders of the community who were at once administrators, judges and executors of rituals in the village, this custom was also due to filial piety and the Chinese family system. Chinese society based upon the family system, which Mei calls a system of "familiocracy," not only affected the individual's way of life but also informed all social organization and social relations.[59] The individual's decisions were not only dependent upon his own wishes and purposes, but also dependent upon their consequences to the family; the individual acts always as a member of the family. The family system is in fact the prototype of all social organisations; the emperor is called the "son of Heaven", the local magistrate is regarded as "parent-official"; and good friends are endeared as "sworn brothers." The traditional system of five social relations is patterned after the family. An individual in the Chinese society is not therefore an isolated atom, but always a member of the family. As a result, in Confucian society we do not find individual rights, equality and freedom as in the Western world, but an emphasis on the social character of man centred on family relations.

Anti-Confucianists criticised Confucianism for its lack of equality. But Confucianists point out that the notion of equality among all individuals is laid out by Confucian's teachings of *jen*, in that the seed of humanity is to be found in everyone and everyone can become a sage. In this sense, men are born equal.

> Confucian ethics asserted the equality of all individuals, but what Confucius called equality is the equality of humanity. It is the equality of man's value insofar as man is man, equality a priori, that is to say, all men are born equal. In the *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Chung yung*), it is said, "What Heaven has conferred is called the "nature," and this "nature" is human nature. Human nature is what everybody has received from Heaven. And what everybody has received from Heaven must be equal. This is the

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58. *The Works of Mencius*, IV A, 5.
59. Mei, *op. cit.*, 331.

> justice of Heaven. It is the equality of every man's possibility. the opportunity to be a man.[60]

But the notion of equality in China is primarily ethical. not political. The fact that the duties of an individual rather than rights are stressed in Confucian society is also an expression of Confucian concern for morality rather than equality.

Confucianism is blamed by anti-Confucianists for its lack of freedom. Against this criticism. Confucianists argue that Confucianism has an ethical idea of freedom. though it has not a political concept of freedom. A typical instance for this argument is found in Hsieh Yu-wei's writings. According to him. Confucian freedom is ethical freedom of choice. which is limited:

> The freedom advocated in Confucian ethics is the freedom to do good or the freedom to choose what is good. It is ethical freedom of choice. But such freedom has its own ground and its own limits. It is a limited freedom. There is no such thing as an unlimited freedom. "Free" does not mean "free from." To be free from everything free from other men. free from law. free from morality. free from thought. free from sense as F. H. Bradley points out. "is to be nothing." Unlimited freedom is impossible in fact and should not be demanded by ethics.
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> The truth that the freedom which is possible and which ought to obtain must have some ground or limitation is recognized in Confucian ethics. This ground or limitation is goodness. One should choose good; one should not choose evil. If we grant that every individual has the freedom to choose evil. then the freedom of everyone will be threatened by the evil. If evil prevailed. freedom might disappear. Hence. from the point of view of ethics. we should allow only the freedom to choose good and not the freedom to choose evil. . . . Freedom to choose is freedom to choose. within the complex of good and evil. what is good and not what is evil. This is man's freedom. and the only freedom which is permitted in Confucian ethics.[61]

It is indisputable that Confucianism lacks a political concept of freedom. In this respect Maruyama Masao perceptively argued that the Confucian conception of freedom confines itself to mental freedom.[62] In Confucianism freedom has been interpreted mainly in spiritual or ethical terms. Nakae Chomin's interpretation of the Western notion of freedom illustrates this tendency.[63] He accommodated the Western conception of freedom through Mencius's notion of *haolan-zhi-qi*. which refers to the natural greatness of a soul. a magnanimous and free spirit.[64]

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60. Hsieh. Yu-wei. "The Status of the Individual in Chinese Ethics". in C.A. Moore's *The Chinese Mind*. 308.
61. *Ibid*., 311.
62. Maruyama Masao. "Meiji kokka no shisō" [The Thought of Meiji State]. Chap. in *Senchūto sengo no aida* [Between War and Post-war] (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo. 1976). 236.
63. Takao Sakamoto. "Meijiki Nihonniokeru seijiteki dentō" [The Democracy and the Political Tradition in Meiji Japan:]. *Tonga yŏn'gu* (Seoul) [The Journal of the Institute for East Asian Studies]. no.15. (Oct.1988): 185-210.
64. Mencius used the term to express a natural greatness or elevation of soul. fostered by strict practice of duty forwards one's neighbour.

However. Wm. Theodore de Bary claims to find a liberal (i.e. political) conception of freedom in the translated word. *jiyu*:

> The term *jiyu shugi* (Chinese. *tzu-yu chu-i*) which was used to represent "liberalism" emphasised the autonomy of the self. the idea that one should be able to "follow one's own inclination." Tzu-yu has appeared in many modern compound terms rendering different aspects of "liberty" or "freedom" in Western political thought.
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> The *tzu* of the *tzu-yu* in "liberalism." is a term for "self." frequently used in combination with *chi*. *shen* or *ssu*. like chi and *shen*. it is often translatable simply as "self." In classical Chinese usage *yu* also has the connotation "from. in. or of itself." much like our prefix "auto." This sense of self-originated or self-motivated gains added emphasis when used in combination with *yu*. "from" or "out of." Thus *tzu* readily forms compounds corresponding to ours with the prefix "self-." For instance in the Great Learning it says: "to make the will sincere means allowing of no self-deception (*tzu-ch'i*). as when we hate a bad smell or love what is good-looking. which is called self-satisfaction (*tzu-ch'ien*).[65]

Bary attempted to find other liberal ideas in Confucian philosophy in his work: *The Liberal Tradition in China*. I disagree with his argument; while it is a commonplace fact that there are some liberal elements in Confucianism identical with those of Western liberalism, there is no concept of freedom as a political and social right in Confucian thought.

2.10 Confucianism in Korea and Japan

So far the common features of Confucianism have been discussed. Here I will discuss the Korean version of Confucianism and the Japanese version of Confucianism. From China Confucianism spread to Korea and Japan. They shared common features of Confucianism in China, but there are differences between the Japanese version of Confucianism and the Korean version. Next, I will examine the Confucian influence of Korea and Japan.

In discussing the Confucian influence on Korean society, I will adopt the three useful categories: political influence and cultural influence and social influence which are made by James Huntley Grayson. Following Grayson's classification, political influence referred to the "influence which Confucianism exercised in the reformation of and creation of systems of government."[66] Cultural influence referred to "the influence which Confucianism exercised over arts, letters, education, and philosophy."[67] Social influence referred to "the influence which Confucianism had on the restructuring of

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65 Quoted from Wm. Theodore de Bary. *The Liberal Tradition in China* (New York: Columbia University Press. 1983). 44.

66. James Huntley Grayson. *Korea: A Religious History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1989). 61-62

67. *Ibid., 62.*

society."[68] It comprises changes in mores and values of society. Even though Confucianism was introduced to Korea in the fourth century, we cannot call Korean society Confucian society until the founding of the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910) in which Confucianism established itself as a dominant ideology in Korea by exerting great influence in political and cultural and social spheres.

Next, it is therefore necessary to outline the history of Confucianism in Korea in order to understand Confucian influence on Korean society.

Korean Confucianism

For the convenience of discussion, I will divide the history of Korean Confucianism into five periods: the period of three kingdom, unified Silla, Koryŏ, Chosŏn dynasty and modern times.

The period of three kingdoms

Confucianism was said to be introduced to Korea from China in the period of three kingdom. In Koguryŏ the influence of Confucianism is confirmed by the establishment of two education institutions. T'aehak, a national college, was established for the education of the sons of the aristocracy in 372 along with *kyŏngdangs* which were private academies. In these schools, the Confucian classics, Chinese literature, and the martial arts were taught to youths of the aristocracy in Koguryŏ. These schools' limitation of Confucian education to the aristocracy indicated that Confucian influence did not extended to social influence.

Confucian influence increased in Paekche, by the late fourth century, when Confucian thought and letters were introduced. Under the reigns of Kings Kŭnch'ogo (r. 346-75) and Kŭn'gusu (r. 375-84), from the fourth century onwards, an important cultural influence of Confucianism was confirmed by the development of literary scholarship and the writing of historical records. The Koguryŏ dynastic records were compiled into a hundred-chuan work called the *Kuk-sa* (National History), and then in the year 600 were condensed into a connected five-volume work, the *Sinjip* (New Compilation) by a scholar of the National Academy, Yi Munjin. The Paekche scholar Ko Hung (4th cent.) wrote the first connected history of Paekche called the *Sŏgi* (Documentary Records) in 375. This was followed in later times by the *Paekche-gi* (*Records* of Paekche) and the *Paekche pon'gi* (Original Records of Paekche) and the *Paekche sinch'an* (New Records of Paekche). In the mid-sixth century, in 545, the Silla scholar Koch'ilbu (6th cent.) wrote the first history of his native state, the *Kuk-sa* (National History).

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68. *Ibid.*

In the Three Kingdoms period. Confucianism seems to have had mostly an indirect influence on Silla. One piece of evidence which indicates Confucian influence on Silla is the rules of conduct for the *hwarang*. In the rules of conduct for the *hwarang*. only one of the rules comes from Buddhism. The first three laws — loyalty to king. parents. and friends — are derived from Confucian thought. There was influence on thought and letters. but there was not yet the development of a defined school of Confucian philosophy. There was cultural influence and political influence to a limited extent. but there was virtually no social influence.

Confucianism of the Unified Silla

The Unified Silla (668-935) saw the development of Confucianism in the creation of Confucian institutions. In 682 a national academy. the Kukhak was founded. The course of study in Kukhak included *the Book of Rites*. *the Book of Filial Piety*. *the Analects*. and *the Book of Changes*. In 788 government examinations the Sambun-gwa (The Three-part Examination) were instituted at the national academy. In line with the creation of Confucian educational institution and government examinations. what indicated the rise of influence of Confucianism in Unified Silla was the establishment of the Mun-myo (a national shrine for memory of Confucius and his disciples) during the reign of King Sŏngdŏk (r. 702-36). What was noted in Confucianism of Unified Silla was the emergence of a class of Confucian scholars. Kang Su (?-692). Sŏl Ch'ong (7th cent.). Kim Tae-mun (Late 7th-8th cent.). and Ch'oe Ch'i-won (857-?) were the major Confucian scholars who represented the Confucianism in Unified Silla. The main characteristics of Confucianism of Unified Silla was that Confucianism of Unified Silla had "few metaphysical interests. inclining rather towards matters of more practical concern".[69] Confucian scholars in this period showed more concern for ethical issues than metaphysical issues. which was indicated by their stress on filial piety.

The Confucianism in the Koryŏ dynasty

In the Koryŏ dynasty (918-1392) Confucianism worked as a guiding principle in the socio-political sphere. In spite of the strong influence of Buddhism in intellectual and religious spheres. Confucianism proceeded to expand its influence in the political area. With the establishment of *kwagŏ* (civil office examination) under King Kwangjong and the support of King Sŏngjong who pursued the policy of *Sungyu chu-ŭi* (Honouring Confucianism). this trend was consolidated. Confucian studies vitalised with the help

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69. *Ibid.*, 96.

of the founding of the Kukhak-kam (National Confucian college) and twelve private schools of Confucianism uphold the rising influence of Confucianism in Koryŏ.[70]

The Confucian scholars of early Koryŏ period (935-1200) had been "more intersted in the literary rather than the philosophical aspect of Confucian studies."[71] Chŏng Chi-sang (?-1135) and Kim Pu-sik (1075-1151) represented this early Koryŏ Confucian scholars. The Confucian scholars of late Koryŏ period (1200-1392) accomodated neo-Confucianism from Sung dynasty (960-1279) and showed more interest in the philosophical aspect of Confucian studies than the early Koryŏ Confucian scholars. An Hyang (1243-1306), Yi Saek (1328-1392), Yi Sung-in (1347-1392) and Chŏng Mong-ju (1337-1392) were representative scholars of late Koryŏ period.

Confucianism in Koryŏ did not have fundamental social influence although it exerted primary cultural and political influence in Koryŏ. True Confucian social system was not established until Chosŏn dynasty.[72]

Confucianism in the Chosŏn dynasty

In the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910) Confucianism attained the status of dominant ideology which controlled all aspect of society. With neo-Confucianism which had its metaphysical system the power of Buddhism was dwindled. A massive transformation of Korean society was made during the Chosŏn dynasty. Confucianism penetrated into every aspects of society. It cannot be overstated that Chosŏn society was restructured and reorganised by Confucianism. The most conspicuous changes were the adoption of a new system of education, a restructuring of social organization along patrilineal groups, the adoption of Confucian ritual, and the propagation of Confucian ethics through local associations. In terms of education, a nation-wide public school system was established. Four schools in the capital and one school in each county supposedly would make primary education widely available, while the Royal College in the capital would provide advanced education for qualified students. Private schools and academies began to appear in the mid-fifteenth century; although government-supported, they became alternatives to government service for renowned scholars.

By the sixteenth century, the Ch'eng-Chu school of Confucianism was established as an orthodox Confucianism. Yi Hwang and Yi I are regarded as the representative scholars of Korean neo-Confucianism. Yi Hwang and Yi I were respectively of the founder school of Principle and the school of Material Force in Neo-Confucianism. It was Yi Hwang (1501-1570) who established the orthodox nature of Korean Neo-

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70. The first of the twelve private Confucian academies, known as the Twelve Kyŏndo, was founded by Ch'oe Ch'ung (984-1068) in 1055. See Grayson, *op. cit.*, 115.
71. JaHyun Kim Haboush, "Confucianism in Korea", in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), IV, 10-11.
72. Grayson, *op. cit.*, 131.

Confucianism. He contributed to defining orthodoxy, to distinguishing "right learning" from deviant thought.[73]

What was the main distinctive feature of neo-Confucianism in the Chosŏn dynasty was its intolerance of heterodox thought. Pak Se-dang (1629-1703) was termed a heterodox thinker for his work *Sabyŏn-nok*, in which he directly opposed Chu Hsi's scholarship and offered his own views. With the fall of the Chinese Ming dynasty to the Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1911) seventeenth century Korean intellectuals adhered to the nature of orthodox neo-Confucianism. Song Si-yŏl represented this trend. Song Si-yŏl's position can be characterised by his desire to maintain Chu Hsi orthodoxy intact in Korea. Song Si-yŏl maintained strict loyalty and commitment to the supremacy of the Ch'eng-Chu school. Yun Hyu attempted to make his own interpretations on several of the *Four Books*. This led Song and his followers to blame and ostracise Yun Hyu as heterodox. Yun Hyu's case indicates how rigid Korean neo-Confucianism was.

In the eighteenth century, the *Sirhak* (Practical Learning) school appeared. the *Sirhak* school was divided into two groups: early *Sirhak* school and *Pukhak* school. Yu Hyŏng-wŏn (1622-1673) and Yi Ik (1681-1763) represented early *Sirhak* school which pursued social reform through land reform and moral rule. Pak Chi-wŏn (1737-1805), Hong Tae-yong (1731-1783), and Pak Che-ga (b. 1750) represented *Pukhak* school which was named by their stress on the need for Korea to learn from northern neighbour Ch'ing which was viewed as barbarians by orthodox Confucian scholars. *Pukhak* school scholars were concerned with such issues as commerce, trade, and technology which were neglected by orthodox Confucian scholars. The greatest *Sirhak* school scholar was Chŏng Yag-yong (1762-1836) who encompassed both trends in his reform ideas. It should be, however, noted that while *Sirhak* school scholars are praised as forerunners of modernisation for their stress on practical things and pursuit of reform, *Sirhak* school scholars remained within the Confucian political and value system.

In the late nineteenth century when Korea was faced with the encroaching Western powers, Confucian scholars became more conservative and opposed treaties and modernising measures. Ch'oe Ik-hyŏn (1833-1906) was a represented Confucianist of nineteenth century.

Confucianism in modern Korea

How Confucian is modern Korea? How much of Confucian elements still remain? Many observers find Confucian remnants in modern Korean society. For James H.

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73. Martina Deuchler, "Reject the false and uphold the straight: Attitudes toward Heterodox Thought in Early Yi Korea," in *The Rise of Neo-Confucianism in Korea*, eds. Bary, Wm. Theodore de and Jahyun Kim Haboush. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 387-392.

Grayson, Korea is a Confucian society, in that "the social implications of Confucianism which penetrated into Korean society well after the political and cultural aspects had been adopted survived the demise of the Confucian system of government."[74] He sees Confucian influence in Korean society on two levels: the structural and cognitive levels. On the structural level, he designates as the indicators of remaining influences of Confucianism the importance of the extended-family group and the continued performance of the *chesa* or ancestral rites. On the cognitive level, attachment to one's family, loyalty to one's friends, and respect for one's teachers are cited as evidence for showing continued Confucian social influence on Korean culture.

> Although formally Confucianism would seem to be a dead letter in Korean culture, something only of historical interest, its influence is pervasive and powerful, if ineffable. At a recent seminar on the contemporary influence of Confucianism in which the author participated, virtually all the Korean participants denied the importance of Confucianism in modern Korea. Later, the comments of a participating scholar about the role of his son in the family and the relationship of a student to his teacher prompted the author to remind the speaker that these views were very Confucian.[75]

Grayson cited Confucian concepts of filial piety, loyalty, and formal propriety as major indicators that show how Korean society is still dominated by Confucian influence.[76] Although Confucianism lost its influence as a state ideology, its residual influence, therefore, still remains strong. Koh Byong-ik identifies another aspect of modern Korean society — ancestor worship rituals — which indicates the remaining hold of Confucianism.[77] Michael Robinson presents as indicators of the remaining Confucian influence on Korean society arranged marriages, ancestor worship, respect for elders and subordination of women. He confirms the strong legacy of Confucianism in Korean's adherence to "Confucian norms in their private lives".[78]

Confucianism in Japan

Japanese Confucianism to the early Eighth century

During the course of the fifth century, Confucianism was transmitted to Japan by way of Korea. It was said that the scholars Achiki and Wani who came from Korean state of Paekche in 404 and 405 brought Confucianism to Japan. From the late sixth century, the influence of Confucianism on government institutions was increased as the

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74. *Ibid.* 215
75. *Ibid.*, 216.
76. *Ibid.*
77. Koh Byŏng-ik, "Confucianism in Asia's Modern Transformation", *Korea Journal* (Winter 1992): 59.
78. Michael Robinson, "Perceptions of Confucianism Twentieth-century Korea", in *The East Asian Region: Confucian Heritage and Its Modern Adaptation*, ed. Gilbert Rozman, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1991), 218-19.

centralisation of Japanese state proceeded. What represented the Confucian influence in Japan those days was the Seventeen-Article Constitution promulgated by Prince Shotoku (573-621) in 604 which comprised the Confucian idea of harmony. Confucian influence was confirmed in the Taika Reforms of 645 and 646 which established the legal system and administration which emulated institutions and codes of the Chinese Tang dynasty during the eighth century. As the political power of the imperial court dwindled, the influence of Confucian principles in government administration declined during the ninth and tenth centuries. Until the early seventeenth century, Confucianism was overshadowed by Buddhism which dominated the culture and society in this period. Although the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Chu Hsi (*Shuki*, more commonly, *Shushi* in Japanese; 1130-1200) were introduced to Japan, it could not achieve prominence until Tokugawa Bakufu encouraged the spread of the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Chu Hsi in seventeenth century. That Confucianism could not compete with Buddhism was indicated by the fact that patrons of Confucianism were the Buddhist priests through the sixteenth century.

Tokugawa Confucianism (1600-1868)

The establishment of Tokugawa Bukufu encouraged the spread of Confucianism as it found Confucianism an effective ideology which helped consolidate political power and maintain social order. Confucian belief in a permanent natural and social order was welcomed by Tokugawa Bakufu which wished to secure political and social stability. Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616), the founder of Tokugawa Bukufu, employed Hayashi Razan (1583-1657) a disciple of Fujiwara Seika (1561-1619). With his appointment to Ieyasu's government, Hayashi Razan's family and descendants served as official Confucian advisers to the Tokugawa government throughout the period and established their doctrines, the teachings of Chu Hsi as orthodox Confucianism in the Tokugawa government. In 1630 The Hayashi family was endowed to establish a school, the Shoheiko (School of Prosperous Peace).

By the middle of the seventeenth century Confucianism established itself as a dominant philosophy and its influence increased in the spheres of education and society. However, as many daimyo appointed Confucian advisors and patronised the founding of Confucian schools in their domain, this provided an environment in which other independent schools of Confucianism competed with the neo-Confucianism which was orthodox Confucianism in Japan. Japanese Confucianism did not show strict observation of orthodox Confucianism. The rising influence of non-orthodox schools of Confucianism was confirmed by the promulgation of the Prohibition of Heterodox Studies (*Kansei igaku no kin*) in 1790 which was proclaimed to protect the declining influence of orthodox Neo-Confucianism teaching.

There were three branches of Japanese Confucianism which are worth examining in order to understand the characteristics of Japanese Confucianism: Mito school, kokutai school, Wang Yang-ming school.

The Mito School

In the seventeenth century, another branch of Confucianism, the Mito school, which took its name from the domain of Mito, appeared. The distinctive feature of this school which is also called Mito Confucianism was an attempt to make a synthesis of Confucian and Shinto ideas. Mito scholars published the *Dai nihon shi* (History of great Japan). By stressing the imperial house and line as the ultimate object of the loyalty and devotion of all Japanese people, this school provided theoretical support for the royalist movement which was to restore the power of the emperor who was under the shadow of the shogun in the Meiji restoration.

The school of Wang Yang-ming

The teachings of Wang Yang-ming (Oyomei in Japanese), known in Japan as Yōmeigaku, were first propagated by Nakae Tōju (1608-1648), who emphasised the Wang school's teaching on intuition and action. Kumazawa Banzan (1619-1691), a pupil of Tōju, interpreted these activist teachings in terms of their relevance to the samurai class. These teachings would have their greatest impact in Japan during the nineteenth century when such leaders as Sakuma Shozan (1811-1864) and his disciple Yoshida Shōin (1830-1859) became ideological leaders of the Meiji restoration. Sakuma's advocacy of "Eastern ethics and Western science" inspired generations of later reformers.

Ancient Learning school of Confucianism (Kogaku)

The Ancient Learning (*Kogaku*) school is concerned to find the true message of sages and placed high stress on going back to the original source of Confucius and Mencius: the *Analects* and *Mencius*, disclaiming the commentary and interpretations of Chu Hsi and Wang Yang-Ming. Yamaga Sokō (1622-1685), the first proponent of Ancient Learning, insisted that Japan, and not China was the true central kingdom and repository of Asian culture. Itō Jinsai (1627-1705) and his son Ito Tōgai (1670-1736) further developed the fundamentalist assumptions of Ancient Learning. The most important scholar in the Ancient Learning school of Confucianism was Ogyū Sorai (1666-1728). He made a radical assertion which contradicted Chu Hsi on the nature of human society. Sorai disputed that the principles of the Confucian Way were *a priori* principles (*tendō*). He declared that "The moral Way of man is not the way of the

natural world. It is a Way created by the Sages."[79] His assertion that the Five Relations except the relation between parent and child were not natural but man-made had political implication of grave importance, in that it could provide the theoretical ground for the dismantling Tokugawa feudal social order.

Confucianism in Modern Japan

During the mid-nineteenth century, combined with Shinto-influenced patriotism of the nativist (Kokugaku) school, the historical, emperor-centred nationalism of the Mito school played the part of bringing about the Meiji restoration of 1868 by providing theoretical basis of the change. Spurred into action by the philosophy of Yōmeigaku, Confucian activists took the lead in restructuring the Japanese polity in the Meiji restoration of 1868. After the restoration, the influence of Confucianism began to decline. As the Meiji government adopted the policy of modernisation or Westernisation, Confucianism was fiercely attacked for being the central ideology of the previous Tokugawa government.

In spite of the frontal attack on Confucianism by Meiji intellectuals such as Fukuzawa Yukichi, Confucianism regained its influence owing to the Confucian tutor and adviser to the Meiji emperor, Motoda Eifu's efforts (1818-1891)[80]. In 1890 Motoda Eifu who was concerned about the decline of ethical teachings in Japanese society played a major part in promulgating the Imperial Rescript on Education curriculum, that stressed Confucian teachings on loyalty and filial piety and brought them into the standard curriculum of the new public school.

In 1930s, the influence of Confucianism was boosted as Confucian ethics was combined with nationalism. The Japanese government encouraged Confucianism as a effective means for "achieving the ideological mobilisation of the nation". *Kokutai no hongi* (Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan) of 1937 represented this trend.[81]

After 1945, Confucian influence decreased especially in the area of education when the occupation authorities sought to abolish the Imperial education system which upheld Japanese militarism and introduce a democratic system to Japan. Today, although Confucian influence hass drastically weakened, Confucian influence on Japanese society is still found in the area of politics: Confucian ideals of paternalism and in the family and society along with Confucian emphasis on loyalty, hierarchy and

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79. Quoted in Carmen Blacker, *The Japanese Enlightenment: A Study of the Writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 103.
80. Motoda Eifu served as Confucian lecturer in the Imperial Household Ministry from 1871 to 1891.
81. James McMullen, "Confucianism", in *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan*, ed. Gen Itasaka (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1967), I, 358.

harmony. Considering that the Japanese continue to respect such Confucian values as harmony and loyalty, it cannot be denied that in Japan Confucianism has survived as a moral philosophy.

Comparison of Confucianism between Korea and Japan

As we examined Korean and Japanese Confucianism respectively above, it is evident that Korean Confucianism was more orthodox than Japanese Confucianism. Grayson points out its Conservative nature as one of the distinctive features of Korean Confucianism. Confucianism in Korea has meant only the thought of Chu Hsi, to the exclusion of all other forms, especially the philosophy of Wang Yang-ming.[82]

On the other hand, Japanese Confucianism was marked by its tendency of eclecticism. The Mito school of Confucianism showed this characteristic of Japanese Confucianism. It is also noted that in Japan there were many schools of Confucianism which were competing against official Neo-Confucianism. The Wang Yang-ming school of Confucianism which was suppressed by Korean orthodox Confucianists was one of the major schools of Confucianism in Japan. In contrast to its Korean counterpart, Japanese Confucianism showed toleration of other schools of Confucianism. This legacy of Japanese Confucianism which showed toleration of other schools of Confucianism allowed intellectuals in the Meiji period to embark on an attack on Confucianism with less difficulty than in Korea and China.

Another point which is to be noted in comparing Confucianism between Korea and Japan is that the influence of Confucianism in Korea is stronger than in Japan. Grayson explains this:

> It is an interesting fact that in no other society in East Asia did Confucianism take as strong a hold on the culture as it did in Korea during the Chosŏn Dynasty. China as a continental nation with a cosmopolitan society always had many cultural factors present which would mitigate against the development of a monolithic society. Consequently, although Confucianism originated in China, it never had the overall impact on Chinese society that Neo-Confucianism had on Korean society. In Japan, Confucianism was primarily a concern of the ruling elite and the associated scholarly class. It is only in Korea that we find a society in which the predominant political, cultural, and social influences were — and are still to an extent — Confucian.[83]

We can pick out several points to support this view: the absence of civil-service examinations and Japanese emphasis on royalty as a central principle. Although in Japan Confucianism dominated education as in Korea, Japan never established civil-service examinations. Filial piety is the central principle of Korean Confucianism which was superior to other values, but in Japan loyalty to lord was more emphasised

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82. James Huntley Grayson, *Korea: A Religious History*, 272.
83. *Ibid.*, 274.

than filial piety. This explains why Japanese Confucianism could be associated with Japanese nationalism since 1930.

This different legacy of Japanese Confucianism provided a better environment for the anti-Confucianism started by Fukuzawa Yukichi which appeared in Japan before the other two countries: China and Korea only witnessed full-scale anti-Confucianism in the 1910s.

2.11 Conclusion: comparison between liberalism and Confucianism

In Fredrick Watkins' critical comparison of Western liberalism and Confucianism, the distinctive difference between the two is that liberalism is mainly concerned with the sovereign state, while Confucianism is mainly concerned with the family.

> Confucianism succeeded in preserving the traditional values of Chinese civilisation by incorporating them in an all-pervasive complex of social institutions. The rituals and procedures of parliamentary negotiation are the liberal counterpart of the Confucian family system. The future of liberalism depends on the ability of these rituals and procedures to maintain liberal habits of thought and action within the Western world.
>
> The great weakness of the liberal experiment lies in the fact that it has devoted most of its attention to the institutions of a single form of social organization, the modern sovereign state. This is the feature which most strongly differentiates it from the Confucian experiment in ancient China. Confucius and his followers believed that the smallest units of social life were the most effective instrumentalities of ethical training. They therefore concentrated on the development of family rituals, and relied on the behaviour patterns thus established to permeate the imperial and other more comprehensive forms of social organization. Liberalism, on the other hand, has been mainly interested in the institutions of parliamentary government. National legislatures and, to a lesser extent, local and municipal assemblies have been at the centre of most liberal efforts to reform society. Universal suffrage and the establishment of free elections for public office have been the accepted criteria of liberal progress. Although the value of these developments has been considerable, the result has been to make the parliamentary state the only fully effective institution of modern liberalism. But the state is at once too large and too small a unit for the regulation of contemporary society. Each of these contrasting inadequacies has helped in its own way to jeopardise the success of the liberal experiment.[84]

This distinction is a reflection of the deeper division between the concept of individualism in liberalism and the concept of filial piety in Confucianism.

Having established what is the nature of Confucianism, I can now go on to explain and discuss the anti-Confucianism of the first of the two anti-Confucianisms studied in this thesis, Fukuzawa Yukichi.

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84. Fredrick Watkins, *The Political Tradition of the West* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1948), 351-352

CHAPTER 3 FUKUZAWA YUKICHI'S ANTI-CONFUCIANISM

3.1 Introduction: Fukuzawa Yukichi's life

To understand Fukuzawa's thoughts, it is necessary to examine his life and social back ground. Fukuzawa Yukichi spent his life as an educator, writer and propagator of Western Knowledge during the Meiji Japan. He was the foremost champion of liberalism and anti-Confucianism, attacking the Confucianism which was inveterate in Tokukawa feudal society in Japan.

Fukuzawa Yukichi was born on 10 January 1835 and died in Tokyo on 3 February 1900. His life can be divided into two distinctive halves separated by the Meiji Restoration in 1868, because he was born exactly 33 years before the Restoration and died after another 33 years. His life reflected the character of this transitory period in Japan.

First period

His family belonged to the lower samurai class of the Okudaira clan of Nakatsu in the province of Buzen in Kyūshū, a fact which made him realize the problems of inequality in the Tokugawa feudal system. In this system, there was a strict rule dividing the common people (peasants, artisans and tradesman) from the ruling class of *samurai*. There were divisions not only between the *samurai* and commoners, but also among the *samurai* themselves. The strict feudal discipline which was based on discrimination between the high and the low, controlled all aspects of life. Each person's place was fixed according to birth, and their lives were regulated in accordance with their place in society. In his autobiography, *Fukuo Jiden*, Fukuzawa Yukichi stated that even when he was a child, he was acutely resentful of the oppression of the hierarchical feudal system:

> Not only on official occasions, but in private intercourse, and even among children, the distinctions between high and low were clearly defined. Children of lower samurai families like ours were obliged to use a respectful manner of address in speaking to the children of high samurai families, while these children invariably used an arrogant form of address to us.[1]

As a child, he believed that he was mentally and physically superior to most of the children belonging to the upper class, but he resentfully realised that neither intelligence nor ability could free those who were born of lower rank from the shackles of inequality imposed by feudal social order.

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1. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *The Autobiography of Fukuzawa Yukichi*. Translated by Eiichi Kiyooka (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 21.

> In school I was the best student and no children made light of me there. But once out of the school room, those children would give themselves airs as superior to me; yet I was sure I was no inferior, not even in physical power. In all this, I could not free myself from discontent though I was still a child.[2]

There is no doubt that this experience as a member of the lower class of samurai in the strict hierarchical feudal system had a significant effect upon the formation of his thought. Indeed, Fukuzawa's resentment against the feudal society led directly to his anti-Confucianism. He regarded Confucianism as the ideology which held up the feudal social order. To Fukuzawa, Confucianism and the feudal system were one and the same. The fact that Fukuzawa was born to a low ranking samurai family is therefore a significant factor in trying to understand Fukuzawa's thought. One commentator observed that "If Fukuzawa had been born of a well-to-do higher-ranking family", he would not have craved for the world outside the clan and would not have been enthusiastic as to get a wider field of vision.[3] Mikiso Hane says that the reason why British liberalism, imported into Japan, enjoyed wide support among a considerable number of Japanese, is because those who felt the discontent and resentment towards the oppression of Tokugawa feudal social order "were emotionally and intellectually prepared to embrace a philosophy which emphasized individual freedom."[4] In Hane's observation, "significantly enough most of the early Meiji liberals came from the ranks of the lower class samurai." Hane pointed out that of the ten founding members of the Meirokusha, all except Nishimura came from the lower strata of the samurai class.[5]

In 1847 Fukuzawa started learning later than his fellows, for he only began schooling in Confucianism at the age of 14. But once he started, he proved to be very studious and the progress he made was much faster than other boys. As he himself stated in later years, he used to read exclusively in Chinese philosophy, history and literature. His early education was exclusively in Confucianism, and it is noteworthy that he proved to be a scholar himself with considerable knowledge of it. This placed him in a more advantageous position when he embarked on an attack on Confucianism than those who lacked adequate knowledge about Confucianism and Chinese culture. His thorough knowledge and deep understanding of Confucianism enabled him to undertake a fundamental critique of Confucianism, not superficially but profoundly. As he explained in his autobiography:

> It is not only that I hold little regard for the Chinese teachings, but I have even been endeavouring to drive its degenerate influences from my country. It is not unusual for

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2. *Ibid.*
3. Shinozo Koizumi, "Yukichi Fukuzawa and Modernization of Japan", *Philosophical Studies of Japan*, 7 (1966), 36.
4. Mikiso Hane, "English Liberalism and the Japanese Enlightenment, 1868-1890," PhD. diss. (Yale University, 1957), 37.
5. *Ibid.*

scholars in Western learning and for interpreters of languages to make this denouncement. But too often they lack that knowledge of Chinese which would make their attacks truly effective. But I know a good deal of Chinese. for I have given real effort to the study of it under a strict teacher. And I am familiar with most of the references made from histories. ethics. and poetry. Even the peculiarly subtle philosophy of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu. I have studied after hearing my teacher lecture on them. All of this experience I owe to the great scholar of Nakatsu. Shiraishi. So. while I frequently pretend that I do not know much. I often take advantage of the more delicate points for attack both in my writings and speeches. I realise I am a pretty disagreeable opponent of the Chinese scholars — "a worm in the lion's body."[6]

His learning of Western civilization started with the study of Dutch. In 1854 when he was nineteen years old he went to Nagasaki to study Dutch. It was the year after US naval commodore Matthew Perry's arrival. The following year he left for Osaka and entered the school of Ogata Korin, a well-known Dutch scholar of the period. In 1858, four years later he was sent to Edo by the *han* officials and ordered to establish a school for Dutch studies that other young samurai from his *han* could attend--the school that later grew into Keio University. The following year, after he discovered that he could not communicate with the foreign merchants in Yokohama, he began to study English. In 1860, owing to his knowledge of English, he accompanied the first mission which was part of the official mission going to San Francisco for the ratification of the Harris Treaty. While in San Francisco it was not so much the technological achievements that impressed Fukuzawa, for his years of Dutch study had acquainted him with the scientific principles involved. What attracted his attention far more were American social practices and institutions. In his biography, Fukuzawa said. "As for scientific inventions and industrial machinery, there was no great novelty in them. It was rather in matters of life and social customs and ways of thinking that I found myself at a loss in America."[7]

In 1862, Fukuzawa had second chance to visit the West. He accompanied as a translator the delegation which was sent to Europe for six months to negotiate the postponement of the opening of the ports of Hyogo and Niigata to foreign trade and of Edo and Osaka to foreign residence. The countries which the delegation visited comprised France, Britain, Holland, Germany, Russia and Portugal. What Fukuzawa wanted to obtain from this initial tour of Europe was real day-to-day contact with common place things which he could not learn from the books. In Europe he gave his chief attention to such immediately interesting things as the running of such institutions as hospitals, banks, and the postal systems. Britain, which delegates visited for six weeks, left a deep impression on Fukuzawa. He was especially attracted to the British parliament system which he had much difficulty comprehending. In his biography. Fukuzawa stated that "a perplexing institution was representative government."

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6. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *The Autobiography of Fukuzawa Yukichi*., 216.
7. *Ibid*., 116.

When I asked a gentleman what the "election law" was and what kind of a bureau the Parliament really was. he simply replied with a smile. meaning I suppose that no intelligent person was expected to ask such a question. But these were the things most difficult of all for me to understand. In this connection. I learned that there were bands of men called political parties--the Liberals and the Conservatives--who were always fighting against each other in the government.

For some time it was beyond my comprehension to understand what they were fighting for. and what was meant. any-way. by " fighting " in peace time. " This man and that man are enemies in the House." they would tell me. But these "enemies" were to be seen at the same table. eating and drinking with each other. I felt as if I could not make much out of this. It took me a long time. with some tedious thinking. before I could gather a general notion of these separate mysterious facts. In some of the more complicated matters. I might achieve an understanding five or ten days after they were explained to me. But all in all. I learned much from this initial tour of Europe.[8]

This visit to Britain made Fukuzawa a representative Anglophile in Meiji Japan.

This experience of his tour to Europe materialised into the writing a book entitled *Seiyo jijo* (Conditions in the West) published in three parts between 1866 and 1869. *Conditions in the West* brought Fukuzawa fame and established him as an authority on the West. The book enjoyed enormous popularity among Japanese readers; according to Fukuzawa's estimate. 150.000 copies of the first part were sold. If many pirated editions of *Conditions in the West* were included. about 200.000 to 250.000 copies passed into the hands of the public.[9] Fukuzawa believed that everybody who was interested in the modernization of Japan had a copy of this book at his side. and that it played a part in guiding officials when the new government was being organized in 1868. It established itself as a essential book for those who wanted to know about West during the early Meiji restoration period in Japan.

Second period

Fukuzawa's second period of life can itself be divided into two parts by the Meiji jūyonen no seihen (Political Crisis of 1881): during the first part of this period Fukuzawa advocated liberal nationalism. and during the second part of this period he turned to ultra-nationalism.

It is a well-known fact that Fukuzawa did not take an active role during the upheaval of Meiji Restoration. He kept himself detached from the struggle of the two contending parties: the shogunate (the supporters of Bakufu) and the imperialists (supporters of Emperor). He was a non-partisan in the restoration. keeping a neutral position between the contending two parties. for he had a strong antipathy against the Bakufu government in that it represented the Tokugawa feudal order. and the imperialists seemed even more fanatically anti-foreign than the Bakufu.

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8. *Ibid.*, 134.
9. *Fukuzawa Zenshū*. I. 30 .

But when he realised that the new Meiji government was receptive to reform proposals and prepared to adopt a pro-Western policy, the whole tenor of his writings changed. Prior to the Restoration, he restricted himself mainly to the task of introducing facts about the West. But the abolition of *han* by the Meiji government heralded to Fukuzawa the end of the Tokugawa feudal order. In line with this social and political change, Fukuzawa changed his role from that of a publicist to that of a fighter for a cause. Instead of merely recording information about Western society, he began attacking Confucianism and advocating liberalism to bring about a fundamental transformation of Japanese culture. As he stated:

> I, too, in accordance with the new current of the period, began a new phase in my life, that is to say, I began to campaign to spread concepts such as "rights of the people," "freedom," "independence," throughout the country and tried to win converts to these ideals. I worked to destroy the old ways engrained in the feudal, hierarchical, social structure and attempted to influence public opinion in favour of popular rights.[10]

Fukuzawa's *Encouragement of Learning*, which was published between 1872 and 1876, established his reputation as a champion of liberalism and anti-Confucianism. It was published in seventeen instalments in pamphlet form and was widely read by the public. Fukuzawa estimates that about 200,000 copies of each instalment were sold. This was his first major effort to transform the mode of thought of the Japanese people. In it he criticised Confucianism which stifled the individual and advocated instead the twin ideals of liberalism: freedom and independence.

In 1868 he named his school Keio Gijuku and expanded and reorganized it. He made his one and only venture into the political field when, in 1879, he was elected to the Tokyo Prefectural Council. In 1882 he founded his own newspaper, the *Jiji Shinpo*. Throughout the greater part of the Meiji period he continued his work as educator, writer, journalist, publicist, and moulder of public opinion.

3.2 Different interpretations of Fukuzawa's thought

There is no doubt that Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901) was a major thinker of the Meiji era in Japan, but in evaluating his merit, scholars are very divided.[11] Thus, in the

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10. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Zoku Fukuzawa Zenshū*, VII, 467.
11. The diverse interpretations of Fukuzawa are very clearly indicated by Jynosuke Yasukawa: "The historian Hani Goro called Fukuzawa a great thinker who developed a systematic philosophical theory; the political scientist Maruyama Masao described him as a man of principle and creativity; Toyama Shigeki claimed that Fukuzawa's frequent conversions did not stem from opportunism but rather from flexibility based on principle. Others took a more critical position. The economist Ouchi Hyoe called Fukuzawa a conformist undeserving of the honours that have been bestowed upon him; the scholar and critic Kuga Katsnan claimed that Fukuzawa never opposed feudalism and was essentially an arch-conservative." Jyunosuke Yasukawa, "Fukuzawa Yukichi",

course of examining Fukuzawa's anti-Confucianism it is inevitable that we will be confronted by much controversy. I do not, however, intend to deal with every controversy, and, in this section, I shall confine myself to the debate of major importance to the central theme of this thesis: whether or not Fukuzawa was a liberal. The controversy on this issue can be divided into two debates: one debate is whether Fukuzawa was a liberal rather than a nationalist; the other debate is whether Fukuzawa was a liberal rather than a conservative. Both debates centre around the question of whether or not there is inconsistency in Fukuzawa's thought.[12] Through my examination of each of these debates, I shall point out that some elements of the controversies arise out of mistakes made in interpreting Fukuzawa's thought.

The first debate — whether Fukuzawa was a liberal or a nationalist — is resolved by some commentators in terms of the evolution of Fukuzawa's thought. According to these commentators, Fukuzawa was liberal at the earlier stage of his thought, but turned to nationalism at a later stage of his thought. The logic of this interpretation is grounded on the assumption that Fukuzawa had taken an optimistic and idealistic view on international relations at the earlier period of his life, but that in the later period he was awakened to the harsh reality of international relations, which forced him to change his position from liberalism to nationalism.

Albert M. Craig exemplifies this interpretation.[13] According to Craig, the change in Fukuzawa's position on liberal ideas started in 1875, and by 1878 he had entirely abandoned his liberalism and had adopted the doctrine of nationalism. Craig traced back to this period a change in Fukuzawa's attitude toward natural rights and natural law. The logic of Craig's argument is that Fukuzawa's increasingly realistic perception of international relations led him to alter his ethical views on natural rights, and this resulted in his abandonment of liberal ideas.

However, contrary to Craig's view, Carmen Blacker maintains that Fukuzawa's beliefs in natural rights and natural laws did not change throughout the 1880s.[14] Similarly, Mikiso Hane in Japan maintains that although by the 1880s the initial enthusiasm among anti-Confucianists for Westernization abated somewhat, and a period of political conservatism and cultural nationalism was beginning to set in, and

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in *Ten Great Educators of Modern Japan*, ed. Benjamin C. Duke (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1989), 30-34.

12. Those who saw inconsistency in Fukuzawa's thoughts sometimes rely on an abstract dichotomy in studying Fukuzawa's thought. This abstract dichotomy may be misleading, as we shall see later.

13. Albert M. Craig, "Fukuzawa Yukichi: The Philosophical Foundations of Meiji Nationalism," in *Changing Japanese Attitudes toward Modernization*, ed. Marius B. Jansen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

14. Carmen Blacker, *The Japanese Enlightenment: A Study of the Writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 129-33.

many early Meiji liberals were caught up in this trend. the one person who remained loyal to liberal ideas was Fukuzawa.[15]

In my view, on this point, Blacker and Hane are right. The dichotomy asserted by Craig is misleading. The supposition that Fukuzawa was a liberal without any element of nationalism at the beginning of his thought. and that he later became a nationalist without any element of liberalism. is false. An accurate reading of Fukuzawa's works shows that he started as a nationalist as well as a liberal. For example. in the letter to a friend in Nakatsu written in 1870, Fukuzawa revealed his nationalist orientation at an early period of his thought. Indeed, he made it clear that his advocacy of Western learning and individual independence and freedom started from his concerns about the nation.

> Now that foreign trade has opened our country. there at times have appeared some outrageous foreigners who endeavour to make our country poor and make fools of us by reaping profits for themselves. And those among us who advocate old Japanese or Chinese studies — looking back longingly to the past and never taking to the new, nor caring to know anything of the world or the people of the world as they now are. thus remaining ignorant of their own accord — they are the easy victims of these foreigners. At such a juncture. the only way to defy these foreigners is Western studies. We should read widely in the books of all the countries and learn the true circumstances of the world and enable ourselves to discuss the public affairs of the world in the common language of the world. We must accumulate the knowledge and virtues for giving free rein to the independence and freedom of each citizen. and in international business abide by the laws of the world to exalt the independence of our nation. Such is the way to establish the true greatness of Japan. This is what I am seeking. And this is the reason I urge the pursuance of Western studies without weighing the merits and demerits of the Japanese. Chinese. and Western schools.[16]

Clearly. then. Fukuzawa possessed both a nationalist and a liberal view of international relations even at the earlier stage of his thought.

The misunderstanding of Fukuzawa's views seems caused by an inadequate examination of the context of the development of his thoughts. The context of this particular development was the shock of the encroachment of Western powers symbolised by the appearance of the "black ship" (Western gunship).[17] Fukuzawa was not alone in his reaction. He tried to seek an answer to the central question of his age:

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15. Mikiso Hane. "Fukuzawa Yukichi and Women's Rights." in *Japan in Transition: Thought and Action in the Meiji Era, 1868-1912*, ed. Hilary Conroy. Sandra T. W. Davis. and Wayne Patterson. (London and Toronto: Associated University Press. 1984). 96-112.
16. Fukuzawa Yukichi. "Nakatsu Ryubetsu no Sho." [Words Left in Nakatsu] in *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*. 41.
17. Japan closed herself to foreigners in the early seventeenth century and remained isolated until the era of the steam engine. when she was opened by force. Decisive influence came from the West in two explosive events. The first was initiated by U.S. Commodore Matthew C. Perry's "black ships." which forced their way into Tokyo Bay in July 1853.

the independence of Japan. This national question was given the highest priority in his thought, other issues being subordinated to this goal.

Accordingly, Fukuzawa's point of departure in his thought was the question of nationalism.[18] But he is to be distinguished from those of his own age who also advocated nationalism, in that he tried to establish nationalism on the basis of liberalism. The whole course of his political thought represented his pursuit of the goal of associating liberalism with nationalism, a task which proved very difficult.

It is, therefore, inappropriate to impose a framework of dichotomy between liberalism and nationalism on Fukuzawa's thought. As Maruyama Masao has pointed out, any such dichotomy is thoroughly misleading. It is too simplistic to claim that the ideas of popular rights are exclusively associated with liberalism and that the ideas of national rights are exclusively associated with nationalism. Maruyama Masao shows how Fukuzawa sought to bridge the gap between these two sets of ideas in his concept of liberal nationalism. According to him, Fukuzawa's thought was a typical example of the idea of Popular Rights that defies any dichotomy between liberalism and nationalism. In Maruyama's view the followers of Popular Rights and those of National Rights pursued the same purpose in attaining national goals. The difference between them was how to attain these goals. In Fukuzawa's system, both were inseparably interwoven.[19] Dichotomisation prevents us from seeing Fukuzawa's thought as a whole, by artificially forcing Fukuzawa's thought into separate parts without unity or consistency or connection. As a result it prevents us from seeing that the distinctive aspect of Fukuzawa's thought resulted from his unique association of liberal principles and national principles. It is imperative that we should see the thinker's work as it manifested itself, and to resist any attempt to fit the thought into an interpreter's own theoretical framework. By contrast to this dichotomised interpretation, I shall demonstrate the proposition that Fukuzawa was a liberal nationalist.[20] This interpretation allows us to see Fukuzawa as a consistent thinker in

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18. Nationalism, defying brief and definitive definition, may be tentatively described as a national consciousness, a political creed, or a patriotic feeling of a people in a given territory, with a common culture, with common economic and social institutions, with loyalty and devotion to the nation-state, and with the hope of maintaining its independence, sovereignty, rights, and equality in its relations with other nations or peoples.

19. See Maruyama Masao, "Meiji kokka no shisō" [The Thought of Meiji State], chap. in *Senchūto senga no aida* (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1987)

20. Liberal nationalism emphasised the absolute sovereignty of the nation state but sought to limit the implications of this principle by stressing individual liberties — political, economic, and religious — within each nation state. In general, liberal nationalism stood for an independent constitutional government to end despotism, aristocracy, and ecclesiastical influence, and thus to assure every citizen that he could exercise personal liberty. See Louis L. Snyder, *The New Nationalism* (New York, Cornell University Press, 1968), 2-6.

spite of many changes and transformations in his ideas. Indeed, we can overcome the confusions and problems generated by the critics of Fukuzawa's thought only if we interpret him in the light of this framework.

Next let us turn to the second debate — whether Fukuzawa was a liberal or a conservative. Unlike the first debate, which is grounded in a **contextual** controversy over the evolution of Fukuzawa's thought, this debate is grounded in a **textual** controversy conducted within Fukuzawa's writings. Most critics who regard Fukuzawa's theory as conservative make two assertions: one is that his liberal ideas did not possess any philosophical depth; the other is that there were a number of Confucian (feudal) residues in his thinking in spite of his ostensible position as an anti-Confucianist.

First, let me examine the former assertion. The critics have interpreted the frequent conversions seen in Fukuzawa's thought as evidence of absence of system and principle in his theory. However, this criticism has been met by those who argue that there is a systematic set of principles in Fukuzawa's thought, and that the critics' misunderstanding arose out of their failure to distinguish his practical statements (expediency) from his theoretical statements (principles). Toyama Shigeki took the position that "Fukuzawa's frequent conversions did not stem from opportunism but rather from flexibility based on principle."[21] Similarly Blacker points out that his stress on state sovereignty (to critics this was cited as evidence of Fukuzawa's illiberal position) was a temporary political expedient.[22] Joseph Pittau supports Blacker's point:

> It is wrong to regard Fukuzawa either as an undiscriminating adulator of the West or as a mere nationalist. For him, even the independence of Japan and the preservation of the *kokutai* [national polity] were conditional in character. When he said that the independence of the country was the end and civilization the means, he always stressed the qualification "at present, in the present historical situation." His fundamental attitude remained always his sense of the "relative" value of movements and systems, which have to be judged according to differing specific circumstances. Such an attitude is sometimes interpreted as mere opportunism or lack of solid principles. In the case of Fukuzawa, it seems that this judgement is out of place. He never denied the existence of a universal truth. His attitude can probably be described best by saying that he was a pragmatic politician who, without forgetting the ideal, always had in mind the principle that politics is the art of the possible.[23]

Reading Fukuzawa's works of anti-Confucianism it is clear that Fukuzawa's expediency is firmly based on philosophical relativism. The epistemology of Fukuzawa's thought represents a typical historicist view; e.g., his emphasis on the

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21. Quoted from Jyunosuke Yasukawa, "Fukuzawa Yukichi", in Duke, ed., *Ten Great Educators of Modern Japan*, 35.
22. Carmen Blacker, *op. cit.*, 129-33.
23. Joseph Pittau, *Political Thought in Early Meiji Japan* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1969), 63-64.

factors of time and place in thinking which is found in his *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*.[24] His philosophical relativism made it easy for him to change and compromise his ideas. But care is required to discern the philosophical principles underlying his changing positions.

The second criticism — that there remained Confucian (feudal) elements in Fukuzawa's thought — is made by many commentators. Despite Fukuzawa's contention that he was an all-out opponent of Confucianism, it is often claimed that in many respects he was following the Confucian mode of thinking. As Western social theories were introduced into Japan during the 1860s, they were fitted within the conceptual framework of Confucian Dutch learning. Fukuzawa's vocabulary during the early 1870s was a mixture of the old and the new. Craig summarises the Confucian mode of thinking as follows.

> There is a natural order in the universe.
> The natural laws of science inhere in this order.
> Ethical norms are also grounded in this order; ethics are objective or natural.
> Man is a part of this order and is thus moral in character.
> The ideal social order is one that completely conforms to the natural ethic.[25]

Mikiso Hane points out that in Confucian thinking, private morality (*Shushin saika* — cultivation of personal life and regulation of the family) and public morality-politics (*chikoku heitenka* — order in the state and peace in the world) were linked together.[26] She then draws attention to Fukuzawa's familiar assertion that, "When an individual gains his independence, the family becomes independent. When the family gains its independence, the nation becomes independent. When the nation becomes independent the world becomes independent."[27]

Of course, it is inevitable, considering Fukuzawa's educational background, that he did not entirely escape the Confucian mode of thinking, but I do not think this vestigial Confucianism point is a serious indictment of the content of Fukuzawa's thought. Fukuzawa's self-imposed task of making Japan into an independent nation state involved a complete transformation of the traditional Japanese world view and a total reconstruction of the traditional Japanese mentality. Without a new world view and a new mentality adaptable to modernisation, all institutional changes would eventually be futile. But his conception of how this was to be achieved — including his stress on education and spirit — can be derived from the Confucian tradition. In other words,

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24. In *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, Chapter 7: The Proper Times and Places for Knowledge exemplifies this.
25. Craig, *op. cit.*, 115.
26. Hane, *op. cit.*, 96-112.
27. *Ibid.*, 102. Original source is Fukuzawa Yukichi, "Questions on Moral Education," in *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*, trans. and ed. Eiichi Kiyooka (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1985), 161.

the end remained consistently anti-Confucian; only the means betrays signs of the Confucian mentality.

3.3 Fukuzawa's conception of liberty and individual independence

In Fukuzawa's thought, the ideas of freedom and individual independence were major weapons with which to attack Confucianism. These ideas were used to formulate his assault upon "the dependency and subservience", which according to Fukuzawa formed the social and political ideas of Confucianism. Hence, an examination of Fukuzawa's conception of these ideas is of central importance to an understanding of the meaning of Fukuzawa's anti-Confucianism.

A question

A reading of Fukuzawa's view of liberty leads immediately to the question of whether Fukuzawa's conception of liberty was that of a means to a higher political end (i.e., nationalism) or itself the highest political end. This question is of major significance to Fukuzawa's thought, but it is a very difficult question to answer, since Fukuzawa's position can be interpreted in both ways. In chapter 1 (Introduction), two levels of anti-Confucianism — the individual level and the state level — were discussed. To decide whether Fukuzawa's conception of freedom was oriented towards the individual or the nation is the key to an understanding of the true intention of Fukuzawa's anti-Confucianism.

Fukuzawa presupposed two kinds of freedom. One was the individual's freedom and the other was the freedom of the nation.[28] According to him," freedom and independence refer not only to the private self, but to the nation as well."[29] The question can be raised as to which one was given priority by Fukuzawa? This question is also closely related to the question whether or not the social role of the individual was more emphasised than the human rights of the individual in Fukuzawa's thought.

The argument that, for Fukuzawa, individual freedom was a means to national freedom — i.e., a precondition for nationalism — is supported by many statements in his writings. *An Outline of Civilization* which was written to urge Japanese people to adopt nationalism and patriotism is a typical instance. Fukuzawa explained the reason

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28. John Stuart Mill held that the freedom of the individual was compatible with that of the nation, while E. H. Carr took a negative view of the marriage of the two ideas, rejecting the analogy of individual to nation. See J. S. Mill, "Considerations on Representative Government." In *On Liberty and Other Essays*, ed. and with an Introduction by John Gray. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 428. And see also E. H. Carr, *Nationalism and After* (London: Macmillan, 1968), 38-42.
29. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement of Learning*, 3.

why "Western civilization [liberalism] is an incomparable means for attaining and strengthening our national polity and increasing the prestige of our imperial line" as follows.

> Now, the only duty of the Japanese at present is to preserve Japan's national polity. For to preserve national polity will be to preserve national sovereignty. And in order to preserve national sovereignty the intellectual powers of the people must be elevated. There are many factors involved in this, but the first order of business in development of our intellectual powers lies in sweeping away blind attachment to past customs and adopting the spirit of Western civilization. We can only enter into the world of modern science by completely doing away with blind attachment to outdated Confucian cosmological conceptions. The same holds true for human affairs. Social intercourse cannot be preserved without getting rid of the blind attachment that shackles us to outdated customs. Once this blind attachment has been stripped away we shall be able to enter the realm of vital intellectual activity. We shall have achieved success when national sovereignty and national polity are supported by and grounded on the intellectual power of the whole nation.[30]

In *An Encouragement of Learning* whose major aim was to advocate personal independence, Fukuzawa made clear that Japanese personal independence could be instrumental to Japanese national independence.

> As I have said above in the first section, this is the case in which every Japanese citizen, to the last man, should be willing to sacrifice his life to prevent the decline of the prestige and glory of Japan ... If we Japanese will begin to pursue learning with spirit and energy, so as to achieve personal independence and thereby enrich and strengthen the nation, why shall we fear the Powers of the West? Let us associate with men of truth, and be rid of those who are not. We shall achieve national independence only after we achieve personal independence.[31]

Here Fukuzawa clearly emphasised the priority of the freedom of the nation, implying that individual freedom was a mere means to nationalism. However, for Fukuzawa, the granting of liberty in order to facilitate active participation in the nation state was not the only ground for freedom; he also stressed the intrinsic value of freedom for the "private self". For example, as some commentators point out, Fukuzawa was a major advocate of human rights in Japan.[32] The following passage which emphasised human rights clarifies that Fukuzawa's conception of the value of freedom was not confined to the instrumentality of liberty; everyone had a fundamental right to equal freedom.

> At the beginning of the first section I said that all men are equal, and that they can live in freedom and independence without hereditary status distinctions. I want to develop that idea further here. The birth of man is the work of nature, and not the power of man. Men should love and respect one another, and each person should fulfil his own

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30. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 31.
31. *Ibid.*, 16.
32. See Hane *op. cit.*, 96-112. See also Tōyama Shigeki, *Fukuzawa Yukichi — shiso to seiji to renken* [Fukuzawa Yukichi: in Connection with Thoughts and Politics], (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1985), 265-266.

> functions without infringing upon others. For they are men of the same species who share the same heaven and are creatures between the same heaven and earth. . . . If we inquire into the balance of human relations. we must say that all men are equal. They may not be equal in outward appearances. Equality means in essential human rights. Thus while they differ like the clouds above and the mud below. still from the point of view of inherent human rights all men are equal without the least distinction between superior and inferior human beings.[33]

Fukuzawa regarded equality and freedom as fundamental human rights. For him human rights comprised the rights to preserve life and property and honour.

> In other terms. human rights are the great moral obligations that give dignity to individual human life. protect man's fortune and possessions. and value his honour and reputation. When heaven gives birth to man. it gives him faculties of body and mind and the powers to realise his rights in practice. Therefore under no circumstances should a man be deprived of his rights. The lives of the feudal daimyos and their porters were equal in essential value. . . . The lord of a manor and his peasants may have differed in outward circumstances. but they were equal in essential human rights. . . . It is a basic human right for man to be able to attain what he wants. as long as he does not infringe upon the rights of others.[34]

In my view. both the freedom of the individual and of the nation are based on the same ground in Fukuzawa's thought. The two are not exclusive elements in Fukuzawa's thought. as we shall see by examining closely Fukuzawa's definition of liberty.[35]

Fukuzawa's conception of liberty

For the convenience of discussion I shall make a tentative definition of liberalism. Liberalism can be defined as a political doctrine in which primary importance is given to freedom. or liberty. and whose major principles comprise personal liberty. human rights and equality of status for all human beings.[36] Using this definition as a criterion. I intend to examine Fukuzawa's understanding of liberty.[37]

Fukuzawa was keen to secure his definition of liberty against misuse. It was. however. not an easy task. considering the fact that there was no Japanese or Chinese conception of freedom equivalent to that in Western culture. As he observed. the

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33. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Encouragement of Learning*. 10.
34. *Ibid.*. 11.
35. This point shall be discussed in detail at the section 3.5 (Fukuzawa's critique of Confucianism from the pespective of nationalism)
36. See Anthony Arblaster. *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism* (Oxford: Blackwell. 1984). 348.
37. Steven Lukes points out that the basic integral ideas that make up of the concept of freedom are notions of autonomy. privacy and self-development: "three faces of freedom." See Steven Lukes. *Individualism*. (Oxford: Blackwell. 1973). 127.

principle of freedom and independence were "something that neither the Chinese nor the Japanese have noted in the past."[38]

> This word "freedom" when spoken carelessly would seem to imply wilfulness or selfishness. but it does not by any means. The true meaning of freedom is to act according to one's own mind without obstructing the freedom of others.[39]

Fukuzawa's translated Japanese word for freedom, *jiyu*. appeared first in *The Condition to the West* in 1867. In Japanese the word *jiyu* is closer in meaning to libertarianism than freedom. But Fukuzawa took pains to protect the meaning of freedom from this negative Japanese connotation. Fukuzawa valued public virtues and sought the ground for the obligation and responsibility of the individual in freedom of choice and personal autonomy.

> The true meaning of freedom is to act according to one's own mind without obstructing the freedom of others. Father and son, lord and vassal, man and wife. friends. each should extend his heart's desires freely. and without enslaving others with his mind. accomplish his own independence. Then. with the inborn goodness of man prevailing. no one would stray to evil ways. . . . Thus freedom and independence are important. When they are taken wrongly, a person will lose his moral sense, his intellect will not develop, his household will not be maintained, a clan cannot hold its own, and even a nation cannot hope to preserve its independence.[40]

Although the passage that "The true meaning of freedom is to act according to one's own mind without obstructing the freedom of others" reminds us of Herbert Spencer's "law of equal freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man,"[41] Fukuzawa was not a proponent of atomistic individualism. Those who deal with the question of freedom cannot escape discussing the relation between freedom and social harm. Fukuzawa was no exception to this.[42] An understanding of his view of the relation between freedom and social harm is vital to comprehend Fukuzawa's perception of freedom. The fact was that the freedom of the individual may lead to damage to society.

> The boundary between freedom and waywardness lies in whether or not one infringes on others. For instance. when using one's own money. it may seem that a person is free to indulge in wine and women and to abandon oneself to licentiousness. But it is not so

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38 "Words left in Nakatsu" in *Fukuzawa on Education*. translated and edited by Eiichi Kiyooka (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press. 1985). 36

39. *Ibid.*

40. "Words left in Nakatsu", *Fukuzawa on Education*. 36.

41. Quoted in Tim. S Gray. "Herbert Spencer's Liberalism — From Social Statics to Social Dynamics." in *Victorian Liberalism*, ed. Richard Bellamy (London: Routledge. 1990). 110.

42. Kinmonth claimed that Fukuzawa's *An Encouragement of Learning* lacked any discussion of individual social responsibility. In my view. this is a completely misleading interpretation. for there are many instances of Fukuzawa's emphasis on individual social responsibility. Earl H. Kinmonth. *The Self-Made Man in Meiji Japanese Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press. 1981). 53.

> by any means. One person's licentiousness will become the temptation of many, causing the general degeneration of the society and the disruption of education. Even if the money he spends is his, his sin cannot be pardoned.[43]

In the above passage the statement that "One person's licentiousness will become the temptation of many, causing the general degeneration of the society and the disruption of education" casts doubt on the question of whether Fukuzawa possessed an objective criterion for distinguishing between licence and freedom, in that it opened the way for an arbitrary interpretation of licence. This phrase implied that for the sake of the moral health of society every individual's freedom could be limited. But who is eligible to make a judgement as to which acts of individuals are likely to cause the degeneration of society? By what standard do we make such a judgement? These questions were not overtly answered by Fukuzawa.[44] though he seemed indirectly to adopt a Confucian criteria in order to safeguard the concept of freedom against misuse: criticising the "anarchy and lawlessness that are caused by superficial knowledge of independence and freedom."[45]

> For the pursuit of learning it is necessary that each person knows his capacity. There are no innate bonds around men. They are born free and unrestricted, and become free adult men and women. Nevertheless, many will become selfish and fall into dissipation, if they assert only their own freedom and do not know their place. "Place" or capacity means to achieve one's own personal freedom without infringing upon that of others, based on natural principle and in harmony with human feeling.[46]

The question at issue is whether or not Fukuzawa's use of the word "place" in the passage which was derived from the Confucian notion of *meibun*[47] indicated that Fukuzawa's notion of freedom had not escaped Confucianism. Kinmonth who is critical of the interpretation of Fukuzawa as a liberal individualist, points out:

> Fukuzawa explained that all men had an equal right to live out their own lives provided they did not infringe upon others, but he explained this in terms of each person's properly knowing his or her "place" (*bungen*). Such a concept did not differ much from that found in Tokugawa-period ethics texts, and the terminology was identical. Fukuzawa linked "place" to rank (*meibun*) and declared that there were "talents and ethics" (*saitoku*) for each and every rank. To know the talents and ethics of one's rank

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43. *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*, 68. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement of Learning*.
44. Fukuzawa regarded the middle class as the leading people in society: for him, public opinion is regarded as the opinion of the middle class, and he entrusted the criterion of public opinion to the middle class of scholars.
45. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement of Learning*, 74.
46. *Ibid.*, 3.
47. "*Meibun*" is referred to a Confucian idea of moral obligation according to one's name or station [place].

> requires knowing the principles of things: to know the principles of things. one must study.[48]

However, Blacker has argued convincingly that Fukuzawa's use of the word of "place" was essentially non-Confucian. She rightly pointed out that there was enormous gap between the idea of *bun* and that of rights. *Bun* had generally been used to mean a sphere which one must not exceed. It was one's *bun* which forbade one to live more luxuriously than one's station warranted, or to behave inappropriately to one's superiors. It was scarcely regarded as a sphere particular to oneself within which others must not encroach. A person of inferior status could not have appealed to his bun to protect him against unjust treatment by a superior. *Bun* contained no idea of claims that could be made against superiors; it was simply something which prevented people from having ideas too big for their status in the hierarchy. At most, Fukuzawa used the concept of *bun* as an analogy to help Japanese people to understand the notion of rights.

> But by invoking the idea of *bun* as a part or portion. and stressing the fact that. rather than worrying about whether one is exceeding the portion. one should pay attention to what is one's own within that portion. Fukuzawa may have succeeded in clarifying the difficult concept of rights to the Japanese.[49]

Contrary to Kinmonth' assertion, my view is that Fukuzawa did not make any attempt to establish the concept of freedom and independence by using the Confucian term of "*bun*". He did not regard the law of equal freedom as compromised by the idea of *bun* — i.e., that a person only had freedom to do what his *bun* allowed. On the contrary, for Fukuzawa a person's freedom was only limited by people's rights, not their *bun*.

In theory, it is plausible to argue that there is no problem so long as people do not impinge upon one another's rights. However, when that happens, who settles the dispute between conflicting interests? For Fukuzawa, the answer was the intervention of government as an arbitrator and an executive organ of law. Accordingly, the role of government was emphasised.[50] But governmental sanctions and the use of law are, of course themselves, restrictions on liberty. Where the boundary between law and individual's freedom is drawn is a thorny question, for it is inevitable that the emphasis on law or social order presents the danger of eclipsing individual freedom. Like Spencer who solved this problem by stipulating that the government had a duty to protect everyone's equal freedom. Fukuzawa attempted to solve the conflict between

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48. Kinmonth, *op. cit.*, 53
49. Blacker, *op. cit.*, 106.
50. In *An Encouragement of Learning*, Fukuzawa devoted one section in the title of "The Importance of National Laws".

state (government)[51] and individual freedom by defining the scope of the role of government in terms of protection of individual rights.

> Men have a right to preserve their property. life and honour — rights which may not be infringed in the least without due reason.... But the individual alone is not strong enough to protect his rights in a society where good and evil are so intermingled in human character and behaviour. It is for this reason that governments are set up to protect people's rights.[52]

> Wherever there is a country. there is a government. It is the duty of the government to administer the country. to establish and maintain military power to protect the people of the land. and to guarantee to the individual citizen the inviolability of life. property. honour. and liberty. In return for these benefits. it is the duty of the citizens to give military service and to contribute to the expenses of the nation.[53]

The above passages indicate that for Fukuzawa the role of government was protective rather than interventionist. Fukuzawa sought to minimise government power by setting a limit to the role of government. In explaining this. he made use of the notion of balance of power between people and government by, interestingly, employing an organic analogy, again like Spencer.

> The government is a country's internal processes. Their harmonious activity and maintenance of national independence require a balance of internal governmental power with the external power of its subjects. There must thus be a balance of internal and external systems. The government is the body and the people are its outside stimuli. Our national independence would also not last a single day were the external stimuli removed so that the government be left with only its own inner organs. A person who understands the structure of the human body and can see the analogy with a country's economic system will have no doubts about my comparison.[54]

By using the metaphor of the "human body and its outside stimuli" Fukuzawa stressed the importance of the peoples' role in society in keeping the government aware of those it represents.

> Human affairs should not merely be under government control. Scholars and merchants also have their jobs to do, as scholars and merchants. The government is what it is. a Japanese government; and the people are what they are. Japanese people. Therefore the people should be shown that they can approach the government without fear and suspicion. They will then gradually understand this direction, and the ingrained spirits of both despotism and social subservience of the government and the people will gradually disappear. For the first time a Japanese people will be born who will be a stimulus to the government instead of its plaything. Scholarship. business. and law will naturally return to their rightful owners. There will be a balance of powers between

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51. Fukuzawa used the expression of the conflict between individual and government not that of the conflict between individual and state.
52. Fukuzawa Yukichi. "Jiji Taiseiron." in *Fukuzawa Zenshū* [Fukuzawa's Collected Works]. V. 413.
53. "Fukuzawa Yukichi's Moral code." in *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*. 269-273.
54. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Encouragement of Learning*. 21-22.

> government and the people. through which we shall be able to preserve national independence as well.[55]

Fukuzawa's argument that the people constitute a check on governmental monopoly was connected to the role of the scholar. Fukuzawa designated the middle class as the agent of the private sector. since he saw the middle class as the leading people of society. and within the middle class he entrusted its role to scholars. Fukuzawa drew his justification for the dominance of the middle class from Western society. In Fukuzawa's eyes the achievement of Western civilization was accomplished by the hands of "scholars in the middle class".

> Consequently. the civilization of a nation can be initiated neither from the government above nor from the people below. It must begin from a middle position which expresses the directions of the people as a whole. Success can be expected only after the people stand on terms of equality with the government. In Western history. not one form of business or industry was the creation of the government alone. Their foundations were always laid by the plans of scholars in the middle class. The steam engine was invented by Watt [1736-1819]. the railroad was designed by Stevenson [1781-1848]. It was Adam Smith [1723-90] who explained the principles of economics and completely changed the methods of business. These great scholars belonged to the so-called middle class. They were neither government administrators nor the labouring masses. Theirs was exactly that middle position which leads the world by power of intellect.[56]

What is striking about this passage is that by including engineers such as James Watt and Stevenson in the category of 'scholars'. Fukuzawa indicated that Confucian influence still remained strong in his thinking. Even though he indicted the role of scholar-officials in Confucianism, Fukuzawa did not intend to abandon the role of scholars in leading people in society. Indeed he confirmed that he favoured the elitist approach which characterised Confucianism, though not a government elite.

> Once some device or invention takes form in someone's mind. a private association is founded to concretise progress. At this juncture the duty of the government is to let the creativity of the people take its own course without interference, to understand and protect the direction of public sentiment. Therefore. the people should initiate the affairs of civilization. while the government protects their efforts. The people should own civilization as if it were their private property. They should compete and dispute with one another over its forms. They should take pride in their achievements. The whole nation should respond to each commendable achievement made within the country. Their only fear should be that other nations might beat them to it. In such a situation the matters of civilised progress will all become the instruments of strengthening the spirit of the nation. Everything will be conducive to fostering national independence. But this state of affairs is the exact contrary of what actually prevails in Japan. . . . At present. the only Japanese in the middle class who can advocate national independence and modern civilization are the scholars.[57]

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55. *Ibid.*, 26.
56. *Ibid.*, 32.
57. *Ibid.*

i es ew o anFukuzawa's ustification for liberty

Fukuzawa tried to justify freedom in two ways: from natural rights and utilitarianism. Let me first examine the natural rights justification.

Fukuzawa's familiar phrase: "Heaven did not create one man above or below another man", as seen in the following passage showed clearly a natural right basis of human freedom.

> It is said that heaven does not create one man above or below another man. This means than when men are born from heaven they all are equal. There is no innate distinction between high and low. It means that men can freely and independently use the myriad things of the world to satisfy their daily needs through the labours of their own bodies and minds, and that, as long as they do not infringe upon the rights of others, may pass their days in happiness.[58]

Fukuzawa justified freedom through the idea of nature, following the Japanese accommodation of the Western concept of natural law by adapting it to the Eastern concept of heaven. The traditional concept of "heaven" (*ten* in Japanese), implying the basic principles of the universe, is an integral concept of Confucian philosophy which regarded morality, natural sciences, social sciences, government, and all subjects of learning as well as all human activities as belonging to one system of rules.[59] Blacker explains the mode of reasoning by which the Japanese accommodation of the Western concept of natural law proceeded through the Confucian concept of heaven. Natural law, Grotius had believed, was the law emanating from man's reason. "This conception of Natural Law, as a moral pattern or norm inherent in man's nature, was easily identifiable with Chu Hsi's doctrine of man's Good Nature — again a moral pattern or norm inherent, albeit in an obscured state, in man's nature."

> It was scarcely surprising, therefore, that the Japanese, with no legal terminology of their own to correspond with the Western concepts, should have tried to render the ideas of Western Natural Law by means of old and familiar Confucian words expressing the roughly similar idea of a pattern or norm in nature. Words such as *tenri*, *tendo*, *seiho*, *hshizen-no-ho*, were all either Confucian in origin or very easily associated with Confucian doctrine. In Uryu Mitora's translation of Wheaton, for example, the phrase jus gentium is rendered *bankoku no Kōdō*, and defined, in purely Confucian terms as *tendō no jōri yori ideataru jindō no ikka* — part of the moral Way of man proceeding from the laws of Nature. These early works on international law, therefore, not unnaturally led the Japanese to believe that *Bankoku Kōdō* or the Law of Nations was something akin to the Confucian Way of the Sages, or at any rate was something of the nature of a moral way in the Confucian sense.[60]

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58. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement of Learning*, 1.
59. Quoted from the note in *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*, 36.
60. Carmen Blacker, *The Japanese Enlightenment: A Study of the Writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 127.

A question is raised as to what is meant by 'natural' in natural law. The difference between Western natural law and Confucian moral law lies in the criterion for, and scope of, what is natural.[61] One major difference in the conception of nature between Western thought and Confucianism is the different conception of the position of man in nature. In Western thought, man can be contrasted with nature, while in Confucianism, he is inseparable from nature in that he is part of nature. Hepburn gives us a good summary of the different positions on the relationship of man with nature between Western thought and Confucianism.

> To set man against nature is to emphasise his distinctiveness — his rationality, creativity, and freedom. But it may also support an unwarranted and distorting anthropocentricity. To count man as part and parcel of nature emphasises the continuity of the human, animal, organic, and inorganic worlds and suggests that human behaviour may be amenable to the same kinds of investigation that are effective in studying other domains of nature.[62]

Freedom is regarded as a natural right of human beings in the West —setting mankind apart from other creatures — but the notion of freedom as a natural right did not exist in the Confucian world. Against Confucianism which negated the idea of freedom as a natural right, Fukuzawa advocated freedom as human's inalienable right.

> When we inquire into the cause of such evil customs, we find that the government had violated the great principle of the equality of man by taking advantage of the conditions of wealth and poverty, strength and weakness, as evil instruments to obstruct the rights of the poor through its own wealth and power. We must keep uppermost in mind that all men are inherently equal. This is the most important principle of human society. It is called 'reciprocity' or 'equality' in the West. This is what I meant by the equality of all men, of which I spoke in the beginning of Section One.[63]

Next, let me examine Fukuzawa's utilitarian justification for freedom. His phrase "A thing is not to be valued for itself, but for its function"[64] represented Fukuzawa's most obvious utilitarian doctrine. In this line of thinking, the concept of "convenience" was used as the criterion of value of things. Fukuzawa's view on government indicated it very clearly:

> Every government in the world is the product of convenience. If convenient for a country's civilization, the form of government can be a monarchy or it can be a republic. For government is a pragmatic matter.[65]

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61. For a discussion of definition of nature, see "nature," by Ronald W. Hepburn, in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (New York: Macmillan, 1967) 454: "In its widest sense 'nature' can mean 'the totality of things', all that would have to appear in an inventory of the universe. It can also refer to the laws and principles of structure by which the behaviour of things may be explained."
62. *Ibid.*
63. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Encouragement of Learning*, 13.
64. *Ibid.*, 33.
65. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 39.

In the utilitarian way of thinking, freedom is justified in terms of utility for man, i.e., human happiness. To utilitarianism, affirmation of desire is a prerequisite of value. The importance of human pleasure was suppressed in Confucian morality, but it was a natural value for Fukuzawa who (especially in his later writings) attempted to seek the justification for freedom in terms of its promotion of pleasure. The negative attitude of Confucianism toward desire was reflected in Confucian contempt for money and sexual pleasure. In his *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, Fukuzawa pointed out Confucian's negative attitude toward money:

> . . . over time such precedents developed into a custom whereby the rulers were not supposed to discuss economic matters. It was not considered shameful to be ignorant about finance. Rather, it was shameful if one knew something about it.[66]
>
> To fight for one's own advantage was prohibited by the ancients, but to fight for one's own advantage is really to fight for principles. . . .[67]

In his autobiography, Fukuzawa took the example of his father as a Confucian scholar.

> I must mention a very important characteristic of our family. My father was really a [Confucian] scholar. And the scholars of the time, different from the Western scholars of today, disdained to spend any thought on money, or even to touch it. My father always longed for a quiet scholarly life with his books and the noble philosophy of the ancient sages. Yet he was forced to attend to the most worldly affairs, for it was his duty as treasury overseer to associate with merchants, and to count money, and to negotiate loans for his lord. Sometimes when his lord was in difficulty, my father had to bargain with the rich men like Kajimaya and Koneike of Osaka.
>
> In this work he was unhappy, and so when it came to bringing up his children, he tried, it seems to me, to give them what he thought was an ideal education. For instance, he once sent them to a teacher for calligraphy and general education. The teacher lived in the compound of the lord's storage office, but, having some merchants' children among his pupils, he naturally began to train them in numerals: "Two times two is four, two times three is six, etc." This, today, seems a very ordinary thing to teach, but when my father heard this, he took his children away in a fury.
>
> "It is abominable," he exclaimed, "that innocent children should be taught to use numbers — the tool of merchants. There is no telling what the teacher may do next."
>
> I heard of this incident later from my mother, for I was too small at the time to be sent with the others to the teacher.[68]

The Confucian ethic set a high value on harmony and supposed that competition and conflict were derived from human desire. This way of thinking gave Confucianism a negative view of desire. Fukuzawa gave an illustration of the rigidity of this Confucian attitude in his autobiography:

> I was reading Chambers' book on economics. When I spoke of the book to a certain high official in the treasury bureau one day, he became much interested and wanted me to show him a translation. He said that if translating the entire book was too much, he would like to see the table of contents. I at once began translating it (it comprised some

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66. *Ibid.*
67. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 75.
68. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *The Autobiography of Fukuzawa Yukichi*, trans. Eiichi Kiyooka (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1934), 2-3.

twenty divisions) when I came upon the word "competition" for which there was no equivalent in Japanese. After trying several words, I was obliged to use an invention of my own, kyoso, literally, "race-fight". When the official saw my translation, he appeared much impressed. Then he said suddenly, "Here is a word 'fight'." What does it mean? It is such an unpeaceful word." "That is nothing new," I replied, "that is exactly what all Japanese merchants are doing. For instance, if one merchant begins to sell things cheap, his neighbour will try to sell them even cheaper. Or if one merchant improves his merchandise to attract more buyers, another will try to take the trade from him from by offering goods of still better quality. Isn't the same true of money lenders? They try to out-trade each other in reducing the interest on loans. Thus all merchants `race and fight' and this the way money values are fixed. This process is termed kyoso in the science of economics."

"I understand. But don't you think there is too much effort in Western affairs?"

"It isn't too much effort. It is the fundamentals of the world of commerce."

"Yes, perhaps," went on the official. "I understand the idea, but that word 'fight' is not conducive to peace. I could not take the paper with that word to the chancellor."

I suppose he would rather have seen some such phrase as "men being kind to each other" in a book on economics, or a man's loyalty to his lord, open generosity from a merchant in times of national stress, etc. But I said to him, "If you do not agree to the word 'fight,' I am afraid I shall have to erase it entirely. There is no other term that is faithful to the original."

I did delete the offending term in black ink and let him take the papers. From this little incident one may gather the character of the other officials whom he represented in the government.[69]

This passage is frequently cited by many commentators as an instance of the stark contrast between Western liberal individualism and Confucianism. According to Ralph Ketcham, "The Meiji official, for example, in disdaining Fukuzawa's translation of "competition," in a way simply asked him to consider "the other face" of the ideas of assertive individualism and social contentiousness."[70] The official could not accept the concepts which seemed "inimical to precepts of peace and harmony that to him were the essential foundations of a good society."[71]

How did Fukuzawa formulate and develop his utilitarian thinking? A reading of Fukuzawa's writings confirms that he accommodated British utilitarianism through the ideas of John Stuart Mill: a utilitarian thinker who exerted great influence on Fukuzawa. In Fukuzawa's works, we can find many illustrations of the influence of John Stuart Mill. As Fukuzawa did not always disclose the source of citation, it is difficult to distinguish his own original ideas from ideas he borrowed from other thinkers. But in the case of Mill, Fukuzawa cited the following source: *On Liberty*, *Considerations on Representative Government*, *The Subjection of Woman* and

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69. *Ibid.*, 190-91.
70. Ralph Ketcham, *Individualism and Public Life — A Modern Dilemma* (New York: Blackwell, 1987), 101.
71. *Ibid.* In the Confucian society where harmony and peace of group are of supreme value, a person's conformity to the group is dominant over individuality and diversity, and there is little development of individuality. For a discussion of Confucian society in connection with this idea of harmony see Chap 2 of this thesis.

Principles of Political Economy, confirming Mill's influence on his thought.[72] Japanese intellectuals had easy access to Mill through translated works. Mill's *On Liberty* was first published in England in 1859, and a complete Japanese translation of it was published by Nakamura Masano in 1871. Nagamine Hideki published a partial translation of *Representative Government* (1861), as *Daigi seitai* in 1875. Hayashi Shigeru and Suzuki Juko brought out a complete translation of *Political Economy* as *Keizai ron* in 1875. According to Endymion Wilkinson, John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* was the best-seller of 1872 in Japan.[73] This shows Mill's influence on Japan.

Mill's argument for liberty as a necessary condition for the growth of human progress was clearly to be found in Fukuzawa's thought.

> What, then, does civilization mean? I say it refers to the attainment of both material well-being and the elevation of human spirit. . . . By material well being and spiritual refinement is meant a state in which these two aspects are really making progress, and by civilization is meant the progress of both man's well-being and his refinement. Since what produces man's well-being and refinement is knowledge and virtue, civilization ultimately means the progress of man's knowledge and virtue.[74]

The word "civilization" was defined in terms of freedom and independence. Fukuzawa referred to "the spirit of civilization, which in turn is the spirit of independence of a people."[75] According to Fukuzawa, Japanese society under Tokugawa rule was stagnant because there was no individual initiative; progress of society depended on individual freedom.

In particular, Mill's argument that there is a necessary link between creativity and originality and the freedom of the individual, and that arts and sciences flourish most healthily in the pure air of freedom and tolerance were reflected in Fukuzawa's writings. Fukuzawa set a particular high value on the freedom of expression, because it gave people the opportunity to give free rein to their talent, and thereby social discontent was prevented. The avenues of human expression were regarded by Fukuzawa as safety-valves of society, avenues of fair competition which secured the progress of England and America.[76] Fukuzawa stated the importance of free speech and free competition:

> The vital energies of human life cannot develop unless they are in contact with things. Let men speak and work freely, and leave fortune and social station to the persons themselves to attain, without being impeded by others.[77]

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72. Endymion Willkinson, *Japan versus the West*, (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 58-59.
73. *Ibid.*
74. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 37.
75. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement of Learning*, 30.
76. *Ibid.*, 84.
77. *Ibid.*, 85.

Like Mill, Fukuzawa valued the tolerance which was lacking in Japanese society and was vital to secure free speech. He ascribed the obstruction of free expression and human enterprise to the force of custom which was prevalent in Japanese society, suppressing the natural tendency in human nature towards tolerance.

> In other words, there are sincere feelings of human nature which incline a person toward being tolerant. Once there is tolerance on both sides, they will understand one another, and resentment will vanish away. For example, the many assassinations of past and present times might not have happened.[78]

For Fukuzawa, however, the most important example of freedom's utility was national independence. The progress of civilization which guaranteed national prosperity and independence could not be attained without individual freedom.

Why should Fukuzawa attempt to demonstrate the utility of freedom in relation to national independence? The answer is that at the time he was writing, the primary concern in Japan was to safeguard national security or independence against Western encroachment into East Asia. Hence it was natural for Fukuzawa to think it imperative to demonstrate the utility of freedom in this area. The result was, however, to provide ground for those who saw his conception of liberty as a means or condition of nationalism. As a result, Fukuzawa's real purpose in safeguarding liberty itself was overshadowed or eclipsed by association with a more powerful phenomenon —as we shall see.

The utilitarian justification of freedom in Fukuzawa's thought is stressed by Tetsuo Najita who maintains that Fukuzawa should be seen as a utilitarian rather than a natural right theorist. Tetsuo points out that it is hard to find in Fukuzawa's elaboration of innate right anything that exists prior to experience, such as that to be found, for example, in the most celebrated theory of right, that of Kant's categorical imperative. Tetsuo contends:

> He [Fukuzawa] consistently stressed the hedonistic propensity of men as the basis of individual choice, and his idea of "liberty" was actually a psychological power to "endure" that is conceptually distinguishable from the theory of natural rights.[79]

In my view, Tetsuo's assertion that Fukuzawa's idea of liberty was essentially a psychological power rather than a natural right is exaggerated, for Fukuzawa presented a highly developed theory of natural right and social contract. We may understand natural right theory as follows:

> Nature bestows on man qua man certain inalienable rights, such as life, liberty, property, security, and the right to take measures to protect these rights.

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78. *Ibid.*
79. Tetsuo Najita, *The Intellectual Foundations of Modern Japanese Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 93.

> Natural right is anterior to the establishment of the state.
> The state comes into existence when men contract with one another to establish an agency (the state) whose sole purpose is to protect and guarantee these rights.
> The authority of the state is derived from its duty to promote and protect these rights.
> Laws should reflect the recognition of natural rights.
> If the state fails to perform this duty properly, then revolution is justified.[80]

On this view of natural right theory, Fukuzawa's position fell squarely into the category of natural rights, in that it satisfied each of the above mentioned tests except the fifth, the right of resistance.[81] Moreover, while it is true that Fukuzawa advocated the value of desire and pleasure he was not a mere hedonist. For Fukuzawa moral considerations served to check excessive pleasure seeking.

In my view, in Fukuzawa's thought, the utilitarian and natural rights positions were so closely intertwined that we cannot separate them. However, it is true as Craig points out, that Fukuzawa later abandoned the natural right position as a justification for freedom.[82] Craig provides us with two instances of the shift: one is in 1878 and the other is in 1881. In both cases, Fukuzawa cast doubt on the universalism of the concept of nature. What was 'natural' varied according to circumstances.

> The Boddhisattva of Asakusa. . . . is said to have miraculous powers and many make pilgrimages to her. But few believe in the Buddha statues of lonely villages and out of the way places. . . . It is not the statues in which believers believe. They believe other believers and make their pilgrimages to temples accordingly. Writers are apt to speak of what is natural (*tenri jindō*). They say that such and such is based on the principles of nature (*tenri*) or that such and such goes against the nature of man (*jindō*) — as if these were fixed, unchanging, immovable principles true for all time. . . . Putting aside the distant past, even at present what is viewed as natural varies from country to country. Or it may change within a few years. In Chinese and Japanese families it is natural for the husband to be pompous and domineering. In the West it is natural for the wife to be arrogant. A few years back during the feudal period it was natural for the vassal to give up his life for his daimyo; today it is natural for him to treat his [former] daimyo as an equal.... What some writers refer to as natural is not a careful explication of the principles underlying their own thought, but merely consists of the ideas in the prevailing opinion of their society by which they have been carried along. If public opinion holds that something is a true principle, they believe it. If opinion holds that it is false, they doubt it. . . . They do not seek that which is truly natural (*tenri jindō no*

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80. Quoted in Roger W. Bowen, *Rebellion and Democracy in Meiji Japan* (London: University of California Press), 182-183.
81. The fact that Fukuzawa took a passive and compromising attitude toward the issue of "What should people do when the government oversteps its bounds and rules in an oppressive manner" provoked much criticism. See Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement of Learning*, 45.
82. Albert M. Craig, "Fukuzawa Yukichi: The Philosophical Foundations of Meiji Nationalism," in *Changing Japanese Attitudes toward Modernization*, ed. Marius B. Jansen, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press), 125-26. In my view some caution against misunderstanding is required in reading this sentence. It does not mean that Fukuzawa abandoned the idea that freedom is an inalienable human right, just that he ceased to use the natural right argument for tactical reasons.

hontai). . . They are not a whit different from those who believe in the Boddhisattva of Asakusa.[83]

Just as the concept of a perfectly healthy body, needing no medicine, was utopian, so the concept of a perfectly good person, needing no artificial restraints, was also utopian.

> In human society good and evil are mixed just as sick and healthy individuals are mixed. Originally it was not man's nature to become sick. That he becomes so is due to malnutrition, the spread of infectious disease, or to his heredity. Yet under prevailing conditions it would not be a wise policy to abolish medicine as a useless art on the grounds that man is naturally without disease. It would be better to wait until that time in the distant future when disease has actually disappeared. We cannot guarantee that such a time will come. Thus, not realizing that good and bad are mixed in the present human society, to advocate the abolition of governmental laws as useless is to lean too much to one side. To speak of what is natural is like wanting to abolish medicine while forgetting the sick . . . Laws are made for evil men as medicine is for the diseased. Millions of years hereafter, when disease has vanished and all men are good, laws and medicine may be abandoned. In the meantime it is useless to speak of popular rights based on nature (*tennen no minkenron*); they are not worth discussing.[84]

The truth is that there is no basis in human nature on which an idea of rights can be founded. This withdrawal from the natural rights position resulted from Fukuzawa's awareness that natural right theory which was used for attacking Confucianism, was based on the same epistemological assumption — i.e., nature — as Confucianism itself. It seemed inevitable that the root of the philosophical foundation of Fukuzawa's thought, historicism (relativism), was incompatible with the universalism of natural right.[85] This made Fukuzawa move from a natural theory position to a utilitarian position in the later period of his thought.[86]

Many interpreters of Fukuzawa have taken for granted that Fukuzawa can be put into the category of English liberal individualists. However, little serious attention has been paid to this assumption since there are few studies on the relationship between Fukuzawa's and English liberal individualism[87] with the notable exception of Mikiso

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83. *Ibid.*, 125
84. *Ibid.*, 126.
85. The term 'historicism' used in this paper is different in meaning from that used by Karl Popper. It refers to the relativism that knowledge or truth alters over place and time. Historicism was the basis of Fukuzawa's attack on Confucianism; Confucianism was incompatible with the demands of modern times.
86. In *An Encouragement of Learning* written 1872 to 1876, the natural right position was predominant while in *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, the utilitarian position gained ascendancy.
87. According to Arblaster, liberal individualism is defined in terms of "seeing the individual as primary; as more 'real' or fundamental than human society and its

Hane's.[88] Here I shall examine Fukuzawa's understanding of individualism. with a view to determining whether Fukuzawa is a liberal individualist or a nationalist.

For Fukuzawa. the concept of the independent individual was of much significance. for it was the fundamental idea that should replace the Confucian ideas of dependency and subservience in human relationships.

> Discipline in society was based on the spirit of mutual dependence — lord and vassals. parents and children. husband and wife. elders and youths all depended on each other. loved and respected one another. All moral teachings were built on such mutuality. But today under the philosophy of individual independence. one must first become independent. develop self-respect. regarding oneself as pure and precious. and on this basis build relations with others and thus preserve discipline in society.[89]

The concept of the independent individual is composed of two constitutive ideas: independence and individual. The idea of independence implied the concept of autonomy which was regarded as an integral element of liberty by Fukuzawa.[90] In a moment I shall discuss Fukuzawa's use of the notion of autonomy as a tool of analysis in his concept of freedom.

Let me first. however, discuss Fukuzawa's conception of the individual. He put much stress on individuality. This is confirmed by the fact that one of his fiercest attacks on Japanese feudal society was directed at its lack of individuality. Fukuzawa traced the lack of a clear sense of individuality in Japanese character back to the feudal system that governed Japan for hundreds of years. According to Fukuzawa's diagnosis of Japanese society, people lived in closed boxes with iron walls. Fukuzawa blamed the strict four-level class structure of warriors, farmers, artisans, and tradesmen which separated each one in Japanese society for freezing human relationships relationships and making Japanese society a stagnant society. Even within the samurai class there were distinctions in terms of stipends and offices. Fukuzawa observed as the extreme case the fact that the occupations of Confucian teachers and doctors became

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institutions and structures. It also involves attaching a higher moral value to the individual than society or to any collective group. In this way of thinking the individual comes before society in every sense." Quoted from Arblaster. *op.cit.*. 15.

Similarly. Jean Leca presents Michel Foucault's definition of 'individualism' in terms of "the individualistic attitude. characterised by the absolute value attributed to the individual in his singularity and by the degree of independence conceded to him vis-à-vis the group to which he belongs and the institutions to which he is answerable ..." Quoted from Jean Leca. "Individualism and Citizenship". in *Individualism: Theories and Methods*. ed. Pierre Birnbaum and Jean Leca (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1990)

88. Mikiso Hane. "English Liberalism and the Japanese Enlightenment. 1868-1890." Ph. D. diss. Yale University. 1957.
89. "Questions on Moral Education" in *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*. 160.
90. Lukes claims that the basic integral ideas that make up the concept of freedom are notions of autonomy. privacy and self-development: "three faces of freedom" See Lukes. *Individualism*. 127.

hereditary. This class system dictated that each of the classes in society would carry out its own determining patterns of behaviour.[91] There was no progress because there was no individual initiative, due to lack of freedom. In terms of human relations, Japanese society was seen as a society of death and decay. Fukuzawa wrote:

> The walls separating them were as strong as iron and could not be broken by any amount of force. Having no motivation to employ their talents in order to progress forward, people simply retreated into the safety of their own shells. Over the course of several hundred years this routine became second nature to them. Their spirit of initiative, as it is called, was lost completely.
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> In general, we Japanese seem to lack the kind of motivation that ought to be standard equipment in human nature. We have sunk to the depths of stagnation. This is why there were so few people in this country who accomplished any great works during the 250 years of Tokugawa rule. The feudal *han* were abolished recently, but the Japanese people have not suddenly changed their character because of it. The ancient distinction between ruler and ruled has not changed one iota, even now. All of this is the result of the imbalance of power, an evil that has arisen from not paying attention to the second step of things. If we do not take cognisance of this evil and get rid of the disease of imbalance, whether the country is at peace or in turmoil no real progress will be made in the level of civilization of the country.[92]

Fukuzawa criticised the samurai class, who had been the ruling class in Tokugawa Japan, for their lack of an independent spirit, individuality. The Japanese society observed by Fukuzawa is a collectivist society: "within the group this system did have the evil aspect of one man being subservient to another, yet the glory of the whole could be considered by an individual warrior as his personal glory, and, conversely, he could disregard its evil aspect by abandoning his own individual interests." This collectivism extended to political rule:

> As I have mentioned above, human relationships in Japan since high antiquity exhibit this division between rulers and ruled. This imbalance of power has endured right up to the present time. Needless to say, the common people never asserted their own rights. Both religion and learning were under the control of the ruling class and never succeeded in becoming independent. Although in the Sengoku period the warriors seem to have been loyal and courageous, they never knew the taste of individuality.[93]

According to Fukuzawa, the lack of individuality in Japanese feudal society is derived from the nature of dependency which is inherent in it. One's value is dependent on one's status in society.

For Fukuzawa, what the individual ideally is, is the man with autonomy, that is, the independent individual.

> Human beings are the lords of creation! This saying does not mean that anyone would deserve the title when he has a body complete with the organs — ears, eyes, nose, mouth, hands, and feet — and he is able to talk, eat, and sleep. One must cultivate

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91. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 160.
92. *Ibid.*, 160.
93. *Ibid.*

> moral virtues by following Heaven's rule. acquire knowledge and understanding worthy of a human being. associate with people and experience things. work for one's own independence and succeed in living for one's family — only after these. may one be called a lord of creation.[94]

For Fukuzawa. only those who "work for one's own independence and succeed in living for one's family" were entitled to deserve the name of man.

Fukuzawa's conception of independence

Fukuzawa's ideas on individualism were closely combined with freedom of choice and responsibility. which were themselves derived from self determination.[95] Indeed Fukuzawa's notion of independence comprised every aspect of self-determination. In *An Encouragement of Learning*. Fukuzawa set out his definition of independence. He divided independence into two parts; material and spiritual. both of which were integral to a person's independence.

> Independence means to manage one's own personal affairs and not to have a mind to depend upon others. The person who can himself discern the right and wrong of things. and who does not err in the measures he takes. is independent of the wisdom of others. The person who makes his own livelihood through his own physical or mental labours is independent of the financial support of others.[96]

Material independence was encapsulated in the phrase that one should be responsible for oneself. It was attained when "each person in society may possess his own property and conduct his own affairs. and thereby provide for himself and his family without being a burden to others."[97] Fukuzawa's stress on economic freedom or independence ran through his whole writings. For example. when Fukuzawa advocated women's rights. he devoted much discussion to the question of women's economic rights. Fukuzawa had no difficulty defining material independence because it was something tangible. However. defining spiritual independence was not an easy job. since the spiritual notion that "Each person should take the measure of himself."[98] had "a profounder meaning and wider implications." To obtain independence and freedom one

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94. "Words left in Nakatsu". *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*. 36.
95. For the discussion of the notion of freedom and autonomy. Kant is seen as the representative thinker who places the highest stress on the inherent character of freedom which cannot be separated from autonomy. For Kant freedom can be reduced to autonomy. According to Lukes: Kant argued that to "the idea of freedom there is inseparably attached the concept of autonomy. and to this in turn the universal principle of morality" and that "when we think of ourselves free. we transfer ourselves into the intelligible world as members and recognise the autonomy of the will together with its consequence – morality." From Lukes. *Individualism*. 55.
96. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Encouragement of Learning*. 16.
97. *Ibid*..101.
98. *Ibid*.. 106

was required to have the independence of wisdom from others. That goal was attained through learning. One of Fukuzawa's main aims in publishing *An Encouragement of Learning* lay in stressing the importance of education as a means to securing personal independence. In this respect, it can be said that Fukuzawa trod the track of Confucianism which emphasised the importance of education as a means to bring about change. However, the contents of Fukuzawa's learning was radically different to the content of Confucian learning. Fukuzawa distinguished his learning from Confucian learning by calling his practical learning. For Fukuzawa the first step towards attaining spritual independence was to be free of blind faith in every custom. As a way of realising it he suggested a way to call into doubt customs which had been observed since time immemorial.[99] The ability to call into doubt established ideas and opinions led to the ability to make a critical choice. For Fukuzawa, the person who could make critical choices of things had attained spiritual independence. Fukuzawa's own moral code, which was written one year before his death, helps us to grasp his conception of independence. Here are 15 of its 29 articles:

1. It is the universal duty of Man to raise his personal dignity and to develop his moral and intellectual faculties to their utmost capacity, never to be contented with the degree of development already attained, but ever to press forward to higher attainments. We urge it, therefore, as a duty upon all those who hold the same convictions as ourselves to endeavour in all things to discharge their full duty as men, laying to heart the principles of Independence and Self-respect as the leading tenets of moral life.
2. Whosoever perfectly realises the principle of Independence, both of Mind and Body, and, paying due respect to his own person, preserves his dignity unblemished, — him we call a man of Independence and Self-respect.
3. The true source of independence of life is to eat one's bread in the sweat of one's brow. A man of Independence and Self-respect should be a self-helping and self-supporting man.
4. Strength of body and soundness of health are requisites of life. We should, therefore, always take care to keep mind and body active and well, and refrain from any action or course of life likely to prove injurious to our health. . .
5. To realise the Principle of Independence and Self-respect demands nothing short of an audacious, active, and dauntless spirit. It requires a combination in a man's character of courage and fortitude.
6. A man of Independence and Self-respect should not be dependent upon others for the determination of his own conduct. He should be intelligent enough to think and judge for himself.
7. To treat women as though they were inferior to men is a barbarous custom. Men and women belonging to a civilised society should love and respect one another as equals, each sex realizing its own independence and self-respect. . . .
13. Society having both individuals and families as its units, it should be borne in mind that the foundation of a healthy society is to be found in the independence and self-respect of the family as well as of the individuals.
14. The only way in which social life can continue is for each individual to keep unimpaired his or her own independence and self-respect as well as that of others. This may be done by respecting the rights and happiness of others at the same time that we seek our own happiness and protect our own rights. . . .

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99. *Ibid.*, 95

16. Every man should be faithful in the discharge of the duties of his vocation. He. who regardless of the importance of the trusts committed to him. neglects his responsibilities. is unworthy to be called a man of Independence and Self-respect. . .

19. It is an act of humanity. and one of the human virtues. to strive to extend to others that love which we feel for ourselves. to lighten the burdens. and promote the happiness. of our fellowmen. . . .

26. The number of nations in the world is by no means small. and they differ from us in religion. language. colour. and customs. Yet they are our brothers. In our intercourse with them there should be no partiality. and no attempt at swaggering or boastfulness. Such conduct only leads us to despise other people and is wholly at variance with the Principle of Independence and Self-respect.

27. It is the duty of the men living today to improve the civilization and happiness which they have received from their forefathers and so to hand them on unimpaired to their posterity.

28. It is natural that men should be born into the world with varying degrees of intellectual and physical strength. It is the Province of Education to increase the number of the wise and strong. and to diminish that of the weak and foolish. In short, Education instructs men in the Principle of Independence and Self-respect. and enables them to form plans for putting the principle into practice.

29. Those who share our convictions. whether men or women. will do well to lay these teachings to heart. They should also strive to spread them throughout Society at large and thus to advance. hand in hand with the whole people. towards the state of greatest happiness.[100]

A reading of Fukuzawa's complete moral code composed of these 29 articles indicates that the fundamental principle of his moral code was independence. This notion of independence or autonomy as a universal principle was applied by him to every area of human activity from individual and family to international relations.[101] The central core of Fukuzawa's notion of liberty boiled down to autonomy; freedom can be understood as the necessary and sufficient condition of the attainment of autonomy or independence.

How did Fukuzawa suppose we could get autonomy? Fukuzawa's answer was "through knowledge".

> By grasping the practical matters of each science. which vary in subject matter and content. he can search for the truth of things and make them serve his present purposes. The above-mentioned subjects are ones common to man. and matters which everyone should have an interest in. irrespective of rank or position. After acquiring such learning. men will go on to create social distinctions as a matter of course. Each will then be able to manage his own family business. and the individual. family. and nation will achieve independence.[102]

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100. "*Shushin Yoryo*" [Fukuzawa's Moral Code]. Quoted from *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*. 89.

101. Fukuzawa Yukichi. "Tokuiku Ikan" (Questions on Moral Education). in *Fukuzawa Yukichi zenshū*. V. 469. This is illustrated by Fukuzawa's attempts to replace Confucian values such as filial piety and loyalty with new valuse which was based on independence: filial piety of independence and loyalty of independence. See Fukuzawa Yukichi. "Dokuritsu no kō" (filial piety of independence). in *Fukuzawa zenshū* [Fukuzawa's Collected Works] (Tokyo: 1926). VII. 256.

102. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Encouragement of Learning*. 2.

To take the measure of himself it was necessary for man to possess sufficient knowledge to be free of the sway of custom. The "Doubt generated from within"[103] was essential for Japanese people to be freed from the custom of mental servitude.

Fukuza a s conception of citizenship

So far I have discussed several salient features of Fukuzawa's conception of freedom. Summing up the discussion, the most distinctive element of Fukuzawa's notion of freedom lay in his stress on individual's autonomy and social obligation. This point is confirmed by his definition of civilization. Fukuzawa did not acknowledge any society lacking public virtue as having reached the stage of civilization.

> Now let's take a fourth group of people, free and unhindered, with no distinction between great and small or powerful and weak, so that a man can give free reign to his energies on the basis of equality with everyone else. However, these people still have no appreciation of the values of social intercourse. Each person uses his energies solely for himself without considering the overall public good.[104]

His emphasis on social obligation was linked with his conception of Confucianism. He criticised Confucianism as private virtue.

> This is clear proof that the basis of civilization does not lie solely in private virtue, and yet the wise men of moral conduct stop the discussion at the very extreme right from the beginning, leaving no room for objective thought. They press on in one direction. Knowing neither the vastness nor the complexity of civilization, knowing neither how it functions nor how it progresses, little realizing the complexities of the human mind, not knowing the distinction between public and private spheres in matters of knowledge and virtue, nor their mutual complementarity and parallelism, not knowing how to examine the whole picture prior to making a judgement, their sole aim is to lessen the number of evil men in society.[105]

Just as Tocqueville observed that the negative consequence of individualism in America was overcome by active citizenship, so through citizenship Fukuzawa sought to solve the problem of the tension or conflict between the individual and the state or government. Fukuzawa's pursuit of the justification for citizenship in the notion of self realisation made his conception of freedom close to that of 'positive freedom'.

In the process of developing the notion of citizenship, it is notable that while at the early period of his thought, Fukuzawa used simultaneously the words "freedom" and "independence", at the later period he used only the word "independence". This might be because he sought a more positive notion as a means of overcoming the negative connotations of liberal individualism.

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103. *Ibid.*, 95.
104. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 37.
105. *Ibid.*, 93

To sum up Fukuzawa's conception of liberty and individual independence — it was not a narrow, abstract or mechanical conception. Although he does draw on ideas of classical Western liberalism, Fukuzawa's idea of individual freedom is not simply the absence of impediments, but a much richer and fuller notion of individual moral development and citizenship. Fukuzawa did not think we were free only in private, but that our freedom was embodied in our relationship with others. In short, for Fukuzawa, liberty was not licence, but moral autonomy, individual self development and civic virtue.

3.4 Fukuzawa's critique of Confucianism from the perspective of individualism

So far we have discussed Fukuzawa's conception of liberal individualism. In this section Fukuzawa's criticism of Confucianism from the perspective of the individual shall be examined in the light of the foregoing analysis.

The central points of Fukuzawa's criticism of Confucian society were the imbalance of power and the moral subordination of inferiors to superiors. Hence Fukuzawa's attack on Confucianism began with the criticism of Confucian family ethics: especially the parent-children relation and the man-woman relation.

Fukuzawa's criticism of filial piety

Fukuzawa observed that imbalance of power (inequality) permeated the entire network of Japanese society. At the level of the family, imbalance existed in all relations; between man and woman, between parents and children, between brothers, and between young and old. At the level of society, the same imbalance of power appeared in various forms; teacher and student, lord and retainer, rich and poor, noble and base-born, newcomers and old timers, main family and outer families. It was endemic in Japanese society in the form of an unending cycle: A is oppressed by B, B in turn is controlled by C.[106]

Fukuzawa castigated Confucianism for its principle of moral subordination of inferiors to superiors which justified this imbalance of power. The imbalance of power which Fukuzawa criticised as the great evil of Japanese feudal society originated from this Confucian family ethics which was based on the principle of the moral subordination of inferiors to superiors, but which was nothing more than "might makes right". Fukuzawa saw one of its central presumptions as: "regarding the people as ignorant beings who are easy to control, i.e. who should be succoured and guided by

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106. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 137.

their total subservience to the commands of their superiors, who are to handle all matters according to their own discretion."[107] In it, people were synonymous with immature children.

Another presumption under which this principle of moral subordination of inferiors to superiors worked was that "The minds of superiors and inferiors are supposed to be in perfect unison on the national level, the village level, or in a shop or household."[108]

By saying that "All human relations are to be treated after the parent-child relation.", Fukuzawa concluded that the parent-child relation was the archetype of all human relations in Confucian society. Fukuzawa criticised Confucianism for applying the parent-child relation to **all** human relations. In Fukuzawa's view, the parent-child relation could only be "one between real parents, whose wisdom is mature, and their own immature children". Thus the parent-child relation had two natural limits to the scope of its application. One was that the parent-child relation could not be extended to another person's child. The other limit was that parents could not handle children's matters after their children reached the age of maturity. That parents decided things for their children when their children were under the age of maturity was justified. But "when their own child grows up to over twenty years of age", the attempt by parents to handle all matters concerning their children according to parental discretion had to stop. It was needless to say that this parent-child relation which had its own limits could not prevail with adult strangers. Nation, village, government, or business companies were "all relations between grown-ups and between strangers." It stood against reason that this latter relationship be based on the same principle. Moreover, in practice, applying the principle of parent-child relationship all relations, Fukuzawa believed, caused tremendous difficulty. Given these drawbacks, why did such a theory of moral obligation based on the parent-child relation emerge in society, and why did tyranny subsequently prevail? Fukuzawa found the answer in people's irrationality;[109] it provided a spurious ground for justifying tyranny, but it was accepted by the people.

> In the countries of Asia, the ruler has been called the parent of the people, the people have been called his subjects and children. In China, the work of the government has been called the office of shepherd of the masses, and local officials were called the shepherds of such-and-such provinces. Since this word *boku* means to feed animals, it had the connotation of treating the people of single provinces as cows or sheep, and that name was publicly written on the notice boards. Was this not an extremely discourteous way of saying and doing things? Even so, the word originally did not necessarily have such an evil meaning. It had something like the idea of the care of children by their parents. First, the ruler was described as a sage and enlightened man; then, wise and virtuous officials were employed to assist him. These leaders were without any selfishness of mind or the slightest personal desires. They were pure as water, and straight minded as an arrow. They extended their own affection to the people, whom

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107. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Encouragement of Learning*, 69.
108. *Ibid.*
109. *Ibid.*, 69-70.

> they cherished and loved. In times of famine they gave them food; in the event of fires they gave them money. Thus they relieved them in their sufferings. so that the people could enjoy peace and happiness in their daily lives. The moral influence of the superior class was as redolent as the fragrance which the south wind brings. The people. in turn. submitted like the grasses bending in the breeze. Or their docility was like soft cotton. Their innocence was like wood and stones. Superiors and inferiors could then sing of the great harmony in perfect unison. All this was the original intention of the theory. Indeed. it was an imitation of the conditions of paradise.[110]

Its deceitful nature lay in the fact that Confucian leaders treated people not as independent persons but as children. In Fukuzawa's eyes, Confucian morality was nothing more than the rationalisation of authoritarian relations between superiors and inferiors. Fukuzawa attacked the deceitfulness of Confucianism by bringing to light the corruption of royal retainers who made it a regular rule to take bribes. By disclosing their corruption, Fukuzawa exposed those who were regarded as the shepherd of people as "false gentlemen".

> It seems to have been almost a regular rule in the families of the three hundred feudal lords that the head official in charge of construction would demand a pay-back from the carpenters; and the finance officials took presents from the merchant under their patronage. Was it not extremely improper for loyal retainers who had pledged even to die for their lord by risking their lives in front of his horse to take commissions for buying things? They should be called false gentlemen plated superficially with gold. Some rare honest official might gain a reputation in the domain for being above bribery. But he was in fact only doing his job without stealing. It is no cause for praise just because one has not set his heart on robbery. He who is an ordinary person becomes conspicuous only by contrast with the rest, who are false gentlemen. In the last analysis. the cause of the abundance of those false gentlemen was the ancient wild fancy that the people of the land were all good and easily controlled. This error finally led to despotism and oppression. The dog ultimately bit his master's hand.[111]

Fukuzawa concluded that the concept of moral subservience was an utter failure. Fukuzawa went on to criticise in detail the idea of filial piety which crystallised the parent-child relationship.

Fukuzawa's criticism of Confucianism was directed particularly against the obligations which it imposed on the weaker party. First, Fukuzawa pointed out that the Confucian parent-children relationship was based on the unilateral obligation of children; parents had no obligations.

> However. the one unfortunate drawback about Confucianism is that it was written chiefly as guidance for the young and lowly persons. There is very little guidance for elders or people in positions of leadership. It taught filial piety to children. but neglected to explain the duties of fathers and mothers; it commanded the young to work diligently but failed to remind elders to give rewards. The basic point of this doctrine

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110. *Ibid.*, 70.
111. *Ibid.*, 73.

> was that children and the lowly were to be commanded and whipped. but fathers and the elders were never to be censured.[112]

Secondly, Fukuzawa complained that filial piety went to extreme lengths of irrationality. It was natural for a human being to be dutiful to his parents. That children should be filial to their parents came out of natural sincerity, simply because they were his parents. But for Fukuzawa the extreme case of filial piety was unnatural.

> There are many stories in Japan and China from ancient times that encourage filial piety. beginning with the story of the twenty-four filial sons. But when we look at these stories, eight or nine out of ten encourage things which are too difficult to do. or things which are too foolish and ridiculous. Even worse. they sometimes praise things which are irrational as acts of filial piety. To lie on the ice in midwinter with no clothing on, and wait for the ice to melt — as one story has it — is impossible for a human being. Or, instead of pouring sake over one's body on a summer evening to attract the mosquitoes away from one's parents — as another story has it — would it not be wiser to buy a paper mosquito net for the price of the sake? Or the man who buried his innocent child alive because he had no way to support his parents must have had the heart of a devil or viper. Such persons violate natural law and human nature.[113]

Fukuzawa attacked the basis of the Confucian justification of filial piety: the idea of reciprocation. Three years of parental care for a child was presented as a ground for children's permanent subordination to parents.

> We just saw that Mencius says that there are three kinds of unfiliality, and that the most unfilial is not to have an heir. Now we read that a man, out of a filial piety to his parents, tries to bury his child alive. Which is the real instance of filial piety? Or are they both not false theories and self-contradictory? In the last analysis. such theories which endeavour to clarify the duties between high and low end up excessively depreciating the child. They give such reasons as that the child has been a source of pain to the mother during pregnancy and childbirth. or that it cannot be separated from its parents for three years after birth. They therefore say that it owes a great debt of gratitude. But the birds and the beasts all bear young and support them. The only difference is that human parents must educate their children and teach them the ways of human life in addition to providing daily necessities.[114]

Contrary to Confucian unilateral obligation of children, Fukuzawa asserted that parents also should have obligations towards their children. The most important obligation which parents had, he believed, was to educate their children. In the following passage, he contended that the neglect of parental obligation was a crime against the ways of Heaven.[115]

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112. Fukuzawa Yukichi. "Hinko Ron" [On Morality], in *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education* 75-76.
113. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement of Learning*, 53-54.
114. *Ibid.*
115. It is interesting that Fukuzawa made such a remark, considering that in Confucianism the violation of filial piety is the most serious crime against the ways of Heaven. Here the stress on parental obligation by Fukuzawa confirms that he attempted to bring about a fundamental change in the conception of parent-child relationship. By doing

> In society, children are often blamed for their lack of filial piety, but too rarely are parents blamed for their lack of love toward children. They are indeed criminals against the ways of Heaven. A parent must cherish the child as such. When a child is born, the father and the mother must join their forces in bringing him up and keep him close until the age of ten or more, and with their love and influence, lead the child toward goodness. When the child is ready for an education, send him to school in care of a teacher, and let him grow into a person worthy of the name. Such is the parents' mission, and their dutiful service to Heaven.[116]

Fukuzawa observed that parental abuse was not confined to the relationship between father and son. It appeared also in the relation between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

> The mother-in-law torments the heart of her daughter-in-law. Both parents control their son and his wife according to their own desires. The unreasonable parents are always right, the protests of the son are always wrong. The daughter-in-law is a slave the whole day through, as if she were in a hungry devil's hell. Whenever she does anything contrary to her husband's parents' wishes, she is called an unfilial daughter.[117]

One of the points which Fukuzawa made against Confucian filial piety was that it allowed parents to exert an indefinite period of parental power over children. A limitation of parental authority was sought by Fukuzawa. He proposed that independence should be allowed to children when they reached the age of 21. The morality of the parents-children relationship could not but start from the premise of inequality. It was natural that parents as grown-ups had superior ability to children in every respect: intelligence, physical power and experience. The natural necessity of parental care, however, disappeared as children reached the stage of adulthood; at which point, parental power or authority, which was justified by children's weakness and the necessity of parental care, should be ended. Parents should allow the children to go their own way — though the bonds between parents and children would remain.

> When the child reaches the age of 21 or 22, he is said to have reached adulthood, and in fact he is able to care for himself. Thereupon, the parents will withdraw and let him earn his own living or let him go wherever he wishes and do whatever he likes. Yet, the bond between parents and a child will not be altered throughout their lives or even after death. A child must continue his devotion to parents and the parents must preserve their love for him. The statement made earlier that the parents are to withdraw simply means that they must not interfere with the independence and freedom of their children. In a Western book, it is said that after the child has reached adulthood, parents may give him advice, but not orders. This is an eternal saying that one must stop to ponder.[118]

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so. Fukuzawa succeeded in getting rid of the dominance in Confucian morality of moral subjugation.

116. "Words left in Nakatsu", in *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*, 38. Fukuzawa Yukichi Zenshu, 20, 49-53. Written in 1870.
117. *Ibid.*
118. "Words left in Nakatsu", *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*, 38.

This was the most serious and powerful attack which Fukuzawa made on Confucianism to overthrow the base of Confucianism by changing the hierarchy of human morality. According to Confucianism the most important element of human morality was based on the parent-children relation i.e., filial piety. In Confucianism of the five universal forms of human relations: the first was that of parent-children.

> Between father and son, there shall be love and harmony; Between lord and vassal, there shall be loyalty and discipline; Between husband and wife, there shall be discretion and discernment; Between elder and younger, there shall be order and discipline; Between friends there shall be faithfulness.[119]

Fukuzawa wished to exchange the parent and children relationship for the husband and wife relationship in the hierarchy of morality. According to his argument, filial piety should be secondary to husband and wife relations. Because "The foundation of the human family is the married couple, the husband and the wife. Following this is the parent-child relationship."[120] Fukuzawa thought that the husband and wife relationship was fundamental to private morality in that it was the husband and wife alone who formed the family: they constituted the natural order, and once their relationship was established, the parent-child relationship emerged. Fukuzawa argued that Confucianism, which claimed that every central principle of society should be based on the natural way (Heaven's way in Confucian terms) actually violated the natural order, because it focused on inequality rather than equality. According to the natural order, Fukuzawa maintained, the husband and wife relationship started from the premise of equality, whereas the parent and children relationship started from the premise of inequality (justified by children's weakness and the necessity of parental care). Fukuzawa believed that a transformation of the relations between man and women (towards equality) was essential to bring about a change of morality. For Fukuzawa this amounted to a transformation of the whole society.[121] We must now proceed to an examination of Fukuzawa's critique of Confucian thoughts on women.

Fukuzawa's criticism of discrimination against women

In Fukuzawa's view Confucianism was characterised by *danson jyohi* (respecting men and belittling women) which naturally led to polygamy. The issue of monogamy was important in Fukuzawa's criticism of Confucian treatment of women and conjugal

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119. *The Works of Mencius*, III A. 4.
120. "Nihon Fujinron" [On Japanese Women], in *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women*, 29. It is worth noting that in Japan the emphasis on filial piety was not so extreme as in Korea and China. Fukuzawa also was aware of this fact.
121. In the writings which are designated for the critique of Confucianism, the writings on the woman issue outnumberd all others. For the list, see the appendix 3-3A of this thesis.

relationships.[122] An insistence on monogamy ran through all of his writings which dealt with the issue of women. His view on this issue appeared first in his *Seiyo jijo* (Conditions in the West), which was published in 1866. However, since this book was a collection of translations from various sources, the selection disclosed Fukuzawa's position only indirectly. A more direct and refined example of his views was presented in the letter "Words left in Nakatsu" in which his basic argument on women was established.[123]

> The fundamental basis of human morality is the relationship between man and wife. And following this relationship are the bonds between parents and children, brothers and sisters. When heaven brought forth human beings, the very first must have been a man and a woman. However long a time may pass the proportions of their numbers will remain the same. Man and woman, both are individual human beings standing between heaven and earth; there is no reason to distinguish the relative importance or dignity of the two.[124]

Then in 1874 he raised the question of the subjection of women in fully-fledged form in his *Gakumon no susume* (*An Encouragement of Learning*) in which he allocated one chapter to the issue.[125] The Japanese society which Fukuzawa observed was permeated by the domination of women by men. He argued that this discrimination against women could not be justified in any way; it was simply a reflection of the practice that the strong oppressed the weak by means of brute force. He wrote:

> In the first place, they [men and women] are both born as human beings. They are both indispensable for social life. Their capabilities are about the same, but men are generally stronger than women. If a strong man fights a woman he will always win. In society, a person who steals by force or who puts another to shame is called a criminal, and is punished. Why, then is it that a man may openly put others to shame within the family without even being reproached for it?[126]

The issue of women's inequality came to the fore in the controversy over the question of concubines. Fukuzawa tackled the question of concubines directly, warning against the danger of polygamy. He believed that polygamy led to the collapse of the family: the family in which the wife was not treated as a human being was equivalent to that without a mother at all.

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122. In the letter "Words left in Nakatsu", *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*, 36-37. And "*Hinkoron*"
123. The letter was written in 1870.
124. "Words left in Nakatsu", *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*, 36-37.
125. This chapter was written as a result of controversy between 1874 and 1875 in *Meiroku Zasshi*, the scholars' journal of Enlightenment, which published several essays on women: "On Wives and Concubines" by Mori Arinori; "Creating Good Mothers" by Nakamura Masanao; and "On Destroying Prostitution" by Tsuda Mamichi. Fukuzawa's contribution to this journal was "The Equal Numbers of Men and Women." But these essays at best were only expressions of the accepted ideals of women as "good wives and wise mothers."
126. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement of Learning*, 51.

> By nature's decree, the number of male and female births seem to be about equal. According to some statistics in the West, more males are bore than females, the proportion being 22 males to every 20 females. Accordingly, it is clearly against the law of nature when one husband has two or three wives. We should not hesitate to call such men beasts.[127]

Fukuzawa argues that polygamy was not a personal issue but a social one. It had great implications for social stability. He indicted polygamous men as criminals of society:

> Those who have a common father and mother are called brothers and sisters, and the place where parents and children live is called a home. But there are brothers who have a common father but different mothers, and the single father is independent, while the mothers constitute a group. Can we call this a truly human home? It is not worthy of that name. Even if the house is many-storied and lofty, and the rooms are all beautiful, it is to me more like a shed for animals than a home for human beings. From ancient times we have never heard of a harmonious home with a plurality of wives. Even if a man keeps a secret mistress, she is a human being just the same. A person who uses a human being like a beast just for the pleasures of the moment, who disturbs the customs of the family and harms the education of his children and grandchildren, who spreads evils all over the country and leaves poison to future generation, must indeed be called a criminal.[128]

Fukuzawa examined one by one the Confucian justifications for discrimination against women. One justification for women's subjection was based on the natural inferiority of women to men in intelligence and physical power.

> *The Greater Learning for Women* declares: "The five worst maladies that afflict the female mind are: indocility, discontent, slander, jealousy, and silliness. Without any doubt, these five maladies infest seven or eight out of every ten women, and it is from these that arises the inferiority of women to men. A women should cure them by self-inspection and self-reproach. The worst of them all, and the parent of the other four, is silliness. Woman's nature is passive (lit, shade). The passiveness, being of the nature of the night, is dark. Hence, as viewed from the standard of man's nature, the foolishness of woman fails to understand the duties that lie before her very eyes, perceives not the actions that will bring down blame upon her own head, and comprehends not even the thing that will bring down calamities on the heads of her husband and children. . . ".[129]

Against this argument Fukuzawa claimed that women's inferiority was not inborn but was the product of social discrimination based on Confucian teaching.

> The purpose of the above articles is to enumerate the five "diseases" peculiar to women and to prove that women are inferior to men and that they must therefore obey men in everything. When men perform the examination, women will naturally be found mentally deficient, and they will discover some symptoms not found in men. However, when one inquires into the cause of the disease, the origins will always be traced to Confucian-type teachings.[130]

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127. *Ibid.*, 52.
128. *Ibid.*, 53.
129. *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women*, 40-41.
130. *Ibid.*, 41.

Fukuzawa was highly critical of the role of *Yin-yang* theory in justifying Confucian discrimination against Women. In Fukuzawa's eyes Confucian *Yin-yang* theory was a fantasy which served as merely a pretext to support the oppression of women.

> Confucianism characterises men as *yang* (positive) and women *yin* (negative); that is, men are like the heavens and the sun, and high and the other is humble, and there are many men who take this idea as the absolute rule of nature. But this *yin-yang* theory is the fantasy of Confucianism and has no proof or logic. Its origins go back several thousand years to dark and illiterate ages when men looked around and whenever they thought they recognised pairs of something, one of which seemed to be stronger or more remarkable than the other, they called one yang and the other yin. . . .
>
> This theory simply attached itself to people's minds with not much of a basis. On seeing a pair of similar objects, one somewhat superior to the other, they classified it in the yang category and the other in the yin category. Then they would think up ideas to embellish their theories. That was all. Therefore, between men and women, there never existed any such distinctions as yin and yang. The idea itself being fictional to begin with, there could not have been any actual features to suggest such a theory.[131]

Asking why women were classed as *yin*, Fukuzawa stated that it was only the prejudice of Confucians that led them to do so, reflecting their tendency of belittling women.

> It was a great nuisance on the part of women to have been thus involved in an empty theory which extended to the sun and moon and heavens and earth, and which had nothing to do with women's relation to men. It was truly a misfortune for women to be made thus victims of the Confucian scholars' ignorance in science.[132]

As a means of liberating women from Confucian oppression, Fukuzawa advocated extending education and economic freedom to women. Education gave women the power to attain spiritual independence. This, however, was not enough for women to be fully independent; Fukuzawa asserted that woman's status as an independent individual could not be attained without economic freedom.[133]

> At home, she owns no property of her own, and in society she cannot hope for a position of any consequence. The house she lives in is a man's house and the children she brings up are her husband's children. Where would such a person, without property, without authority of any sort, and with no claim on the children she bears, and herself a parasite in a man's house, make use of the knowledge and learning acquired? Science and literature will be of no use. Even less would her knowledge in law serve her — the normal reaction of the general public is to regard a woman who discusses law and economics as liable to bring misery upon herself.[134]

Fukuzawa's ground for supporting the proposal that women are allowed to possess personal property was based on the premise that there was no responsibility without personal property.

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131. *Ibid.*, 39.
132. *Ibid.*
133. Many commentators acknowledge Fukuzawa's advocacy of women's economic rights as one of the distinctive points which characterised him as the women's champion.
134. *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women*, 12.

> If the rights are to be equal between the two parties in marriage. we need a new law for insuring equality in ownership of property. When civilizations advance. it is usual to find that affluence brings forth all sorts of rights and powers. But strangely. in Japan. since olden times. women have had no personal property of their own. and they lived like parasites in men's households. If they had no personal property. they had no responsibility either. To have no responsibility means they were shut out from all incentives for gaining knowledge and training. It is futile to expect women to develop with their own power.[135]

In his consideration of women's property rights. Fukuzawa's concern was addressed not at the level of rhetoric but at a practical level. In the sequel to the "Nihon fujinron." (On Japanes Women) Fukuzawa reiterated the need to maintain equality between husband and wife, but he added other points. For example. he called for equality of job opportunities for women. Women, he pointed out. were as capable as men in performing a given task, and they should be allowed to hold any job they wished. As he frequently did when he advocated specific reforms, he cited examples from the West. There, and in particular in the United States, all sorts of jobs were being opened to women.

Fukuzawa's commitment to equality between men and women was also illustrated by his suggestion of creating a new family name after marriage. He claimed that it was unfair to trace only the father's ancestors to maintain the lineage, considering that: "In the new family one member comes from one pair of parents and the other member is from another pair of parents; that is, offspring of two families create a new family together."[136] Thus, the new family must not use the man's name only, nor should it adopt only the woman's family name. As an alternative Fukuzawa suggested that upon marriage a new family name be created out of both family names, which signified equality between man and women. For example, if the husband's name was "Hatakeyama" and the wife's was "Kajihara", "Yamahara" which took "Yama" from the former and "hara" from the latter, could appear as the new family name. This, Fukuzawa maintained, would signify a true marriage of two parties in which the rights enjoyed by both the husband and the wife would be equal. It would indicate that a woman was not marrying into a man's family and that a man was not being adopted into a woman's family. This suggestion was revolutionary in Confucian society in which ancestor worship based on partrilineage was integral, and in Confucian eyes it was construed as a serious attempt to overthrow Confucian society.[137] Fukuzawa's bold assertion, however, was less radical in Japanese society, where changes in the family name were frequently found.

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135. *Ibid.*, 30.
136. *Ibid.*, 29.
137. In Korea. Confucian ancestor worship is still observed despite the diminishing influence of Confucianism.

The link with nationalism

In our examination of Fukuzawa's criticism of Confucianism from the perspective of the individual, we have found that most of his criticism was centered on woman's inequality. Fukuzawa's writings advocating women's rights were regarded by many interpreters as evidence that Fukuzawa was a liberal. However, some of his justifications for female equality did not have a liberal ring to them. In some of his writings — for example, in a letter, "Words left in Nakatsu" written in 1870 — Fukuzawa justified woman's rights on liberal grounds or natural rights ground. But elsewhere, such as in the following passage from "On Japanese Woman" which has been regarded as a major work of advocacy of women's rights[138] Fukuzawa adopted a highly instrumental view of women's rights. The argument that women were allowed freedom and human rights was presented on the basis of their usefulness. Woman was thus treated by Fukuzawa as a means rather than an end in herself. Women were seen in terms of the roles of 'manpower', mother and citizen.

> Our discussions on the status of women do not mean that we are acting as their agents to help them start challenging men. The truth is that it will be a great advantage for men to train women to be fully capable, because that will increase the "man power" of each household, and for the country it will mean increasing its work force twofold. One household is supposed to comprise one husband and one wife, but if the wife is in effect equal to nothing, it will mean that the house is supported by one man. As for the whole country of thirty-seven million people, if the eighteen million and five-hundred thousand women are to be disregarded as useless, the number of effective citizens will be the remaining one-half, and they must support the country.[139]

The following passage, written from a eugenic point of view, indicated an even wider gap from that of "Words left in Nakatsu" in which women's rights were claimed on the basis of natural or human rights .

> I have described women as having no responsibility or freedom, and that it is therefore impossible to expect them to improve their health or develop as human beings. When the mother's body is not strong, the child's body cannot be strong or healthy. This lamentable situation has caused the small size and weak constitution of today's Japanese. They are far below the standards of earlier people' whose living conditions were much lower than ours, and what may be expected for the future generations is something I hesitate to surmise.[140]

> The basic purpose of my argument is not to side with women to contest their rights. My purpose is the improvement of the Japanese race. And because it will be impossible to expect women today to bring forth a posterity of better physique, our first necessity is to make our women more active mentally and physically. To make them more active, they

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138. In it Fukuzawa advocated woman's rights of property.
139. *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women*, 54.
140. *Ibid.* 27.

> must be given more responsibilities and more enjoyments. This is the general gist of my present discourse.[141]

Fukuzawa's later attitude toward women was thus strongly tinged with the demands of nationalism. What brought about this change from a liberal to a nationalist justification of female equality? To answer this question it is necessary to examine Fukuzawa's intention in publishing the later writings on women. Blacker explains it:

> Fukuzawa's main essays on the subject of women are: "Nihon fujinron" (On Japanese Women, 1885); "Hinkōron" (On proper Conduct. 1885). "Danjo kōsairon" (On the Association of Men and Women. 1886). The first group of essays was written at a time when anxiety to secure revision of the unequal treaties was particularly acute. and it was felt in certain quarters that if the Western nations were to be convinced that the Japanese were 'civilised' enough to be considered as equals. both the position of Japanese women and the prevalent standards of morality among Japanese men would have to be improved. Fukuzawa reflected these anxieties even more urgently in "Onna daigaku hyōron" (A critique of The Greater Learning for Women. 1899); and "Shin onna daigaku" (The New Greater Learning for Women. 1899). In these essays Fukuzawa wrote a final plea to urge an improvement in morality before the impending revision of the treaties in 1899 which would inaugurate an era of 'mixed residence' with foreigners.[142]

Fukuzawa's liberal justification for women's rights was weakened as he drew nearer to the doctrine of nationalism during the last period of his life. This indicates that Fukuzawa's advocacy of individual independence is closely interwoven with his advocacy of nationalism — an issue which we must now explore in more detail.

3.4 Fukuzawa's critique of Confucianism from the perspective of nationalism

Fukuzawa's li eral nationalism

In this section, Fukuzawa's national ideas will be discussed in the context of his anti-Confucianism. There is general agreement that although Fukuzawa was consistent in his anti-Confucianism, he was not consistent in his liberal ideas.[143] In the early stage of his thought he endeavoured to establish nationalism on the basis of liberalism. Later, he appeared to withdraw from liberalism.[144] For the convenience of discussion, I shall divide his thoughts on nationalism into two parts: his early liberal nationalism and his later conservative nationalism.

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141. *Ibid.*, 36.
142. Blacker, *op. cit.*, 156.
143. See Tōyama Shigeki, *Fukuzawa Yukichi: shiso to seiji to renken* (Fukuzawa Yukichi: in Connection with Thoughts and Politics) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press. 1985); Imanaga Seizi, *Fukuzawa Yukichi no sisou keise* (Fukuzawa Yukichi's Formation of Thought), 199.
144. *Ibid.*

There are two problems faced by those who try to establish ideas of modern nationalism in Confucian society. One is how to extend individual loyalty from the clan to the nation. The other is how to mobilise the masses for nationalism.

The first problem was identified by Fukuzawa in the following terms:

> For instance, in former days, there were 300 clans in the country, and the solidarity of the lord and the vassals was by clan unit. Today the whole country has become one unit, and the idea of loyalty had to take on a new form, the old type of loyalty being no longer appropriate. People's concerns used to be confined to the conflict of interest between clans, and no one knew of a country existing outside of the 300 clans. Now the entire country has become one great clan, and the old loyalty of defending clan rights must be transformed into defending national rights.[145]

The second problem — mass participation — arose out of the Confucian hierarchical social stratum which was made up of four classes: samurai, farmers, artisans, merchants. Confucianism was blamed for the social inequality which prevented the formation of national consciousness through the advent of common citizenship.

As to the question: how can these two problems be overcome?, in *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, Fukuzawa observed that three options presented themselves; first, National Learning which advocated theories of *kokutai* [national polity]; second, Western Learning which proposed the introduction of Christianity; and third, Chinese Learning which espoused the Way of Yao and Shun.[146] But Fukuzawa rejected all of these options, and instead founded nationalism on the basis of liberalism. Fukuzawa examined the three options before outlining his own proposals.

First, National Learning. A literal translation of *kokutai* is "substance" or "body of the nation." "National polity" or "national entity" are general English translations.[147] It refers to the entire social and political structure of the nation. *Kokutai* designates the permanent and fundamental constituents of the Japanese nation which is distinguished from other peoples. It is reduced to the Japanese imperial system which is regarded by *Kokutai* scholars as distinctive of Japan.[148] Fukuzawa firmly criticized those who

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145. Fukuzawa Yukichi, "Questions on Moral Education", in *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*. Trans. and ed. Eiichi Kiyooka (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1985), 160.
146. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 179.
147. See Graham Healey, "Kokutai", *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan*, V, 262.
148. *Kokutai* was originally a Chinese term used to mean "organ of the state" or organization of the state." In Japan the first use of this term traced back to Kitabatake Ghikafusa (1293-1354), the author of *Jinnō shōtōki* (Record of the legitimate Succession of the divine emperors). In it the uniqueness and the divinity of the imperial line of Japan were emphasised to justify the demand that the people gave loyal and unselfish service to the rightful emperor. Kitabatake claimed that the uniqueness of the imperial institution made Japan superior not only to China but also to India. He placed special emphasis on the idea that a very close relation existed between the emperor and the people, and this relation he called *kokutai*. This notion stressed the absolute homogeneity of Japanese culture, characterised by the link of loyalty and love between the people and the emperor.

adopted National Learning as a guideline to nationalism, on the ground that this was to appeal to nostalgia, not reason, and would not succeed. Fukuzawa referred to National Learning as 'a return to the past through revival of the concept of "true relations of sovereign and subject".'[149] National Learning was based not on reason but on emotion. It was irrational in that it sought ground for their theory of national polity in Japan's ancient mythology.

> The approach is not completely unjustified. It only stands to reason that, in a country with a sovereign, he should be revered and should hold the power of administration; since it is absolutely vital from the standpoint of government, no one can reject the idea of reverence for the ruler. However, the National Learning scholars go a step further. Rather than deriving their reverence for the ruler from reasons of political desirability, they find it in people's natural nostalgia for the past. Worst of all, they do not abhor assigning the ruler a fictitious status, preferring sham to truth.[150]

Fukuzawa drew attention to the impracticality of using the emperor for the purpose of national unity:

> . . . For several centuries our people have had no personal experience of the emperor — the imperial institution was nothing more than a legend. . . . . it will be extremely difficult to create in them a devotion to the Imperial Family and to try to turn them into infants, given our present level of civilization and people's present moods; in fact, it will be almost impossible to do this successfully.[151]

It is true that Fukuzawa did not deny the value of the emperor, but he believed that the role of emperor should be like that of the British monarchy. The fact that Fukuzawa could make such a bold assertion was evidence that the emperor or Shinto ideology had not established a firm status at that time though it did so later.[152]

For all Fukuzawa's harsh critique of National Learning ideology, history shows that it succeeded in establishing itself as a ruling ideology with the help of the sustained Meiji government's attempt to make Shinto the national religion.[153] Joseph M.

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149. In *kokutai*, 'true relations of sovereign and subject' referred to 'a very close relation existed between the emperor and the people' in Japan.
150. *Ibid*, 219
151. *Ibid*, 219-220.
152. In the nineteen thirties, the *kokutai* established the metaphysical foundation of a Japanese state commanded by the imperial throne, whose mission was to bring a higher civilization to the Far East. It was an organic theory of the state used to justify a repressive, militaristic, anti-foreign political system. The official interpretation of the *kokutai* theory was presented by the Ministry of Education in the book *Kokutai no hongi* (Fundamentals of the national polity), issued in 1937. It was an authoritative and comprehensive statement rejecting directly all theory that tended to weaken the absolute powers of the emperor. See Josep Pittau. *Political Thought in Early Meiji Japan*, 2.
153. The Meiji regime in 1868 established the Department of Shinto. In 1870 the government issued the Proclamation of the Great Doctrine that was to restore the "way of the kami [god]" (*kan-nagara*) as the guiding principle of the nation. Accordingly, reversing the Tokugawa system that required all households to register in Buddhist temples, the Meiji government initiated compulsory Shinto registration (*ujiko-shirabe*)

Kitagawa described the struggle for the position of dominant national ruling ideology which took place between liberalism and National Learning as a struggle between faith in the past and faith in the present and future — the former — National Learning. represented by immanental theocracy — could not be reconciled with the latter —liberalism, represented by modernity. Joseph M. Kitagawa presented a good summary of this:

> The advocates of the pristine Japanese tradition were motivated by the desire to find the model of society and culture in the past — the way of the kami (*kannagara*). "Back to the Emperor Jimmu!" they cried. The advocates of modernity. on the other hand. placed their faith in the present and future. in the new and the novel. To them the Meiji Era was the beginning of a permanent revolution along the path of enlightenment and civilization (*bummei kaika*).[154]

Second, Fukuzawa examined the argument that the crisis faced by Japan could be solved by Western Learning (Christianity). Western Learning also used the power of religion — an attempt to "propagate religion and extend it to the political realm, by this means attempting to establish an independent nation" Fukuzawa summed it up as "a theory of spiritual renovation through Christianity so as to rectify men's errors, bestow spiritual peace and enlightenment, convert and thereby unify the masses, and establish a single great purpose at which mankind can aim." For Fukuzawa, those who advocated Christianity as the basis of national independence lacked a sense of reality. They failed to note the difference between the reality and the ideal. In Fukuzawa's eyes, the international world was "a world of commerce and warfare", not of brotherly love and compassion. Fukuzawa argued that nationalism, which necessarily placed priority on national interests, was incompatible with a religion such as Christianity which was based on the ethic of impartial and universal brotherhood. Fukuzawa equated patriotism with partisanship; patriotism was an "artisan spirit that divides the globe into smaller sections and establishes within each section political factions, then calculates what benefits these political factions." Hence the attempt to use Christianity as a means for attaining national goals could not succeeded. Fukuzawa stated:

> Religion pertains only to private morality, and its goals differ from those of the spirit of national independence. Therefore, even if one were able to bolster people's hearts by means of religious teachings, as far as protecting the country and the people is

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whereby every Japanese subject was ordered to enrol in the shrine of the local kami of his residence. Also, rejecting the traditional pattern of funeral services, conducted according to Buddhist rites, the government actively promoted Shinto funeral rites. The Department of Shinto was replaced in 1871 by the Shinto Ministry and one of the duties of the new department was to conduct a nationwide teaching program centering around three principles: (1) reverence for the kami, (2) the importance of the Law of Heaven and the Way of Humanity, and (3) loyalty to the throne and obedience to the authorities. Quoted from Joseph M. Kitagawa, *Religion in Japanese History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 201.

154. Kitagawa, *op. cit.*, 204.

> concerned, religion cannot in actual fact be so very efficacious. Generally speaking, a comparison of present conditions in various countries in the world with the aims of religion would show religion to be too vast, too good and beautiful, too lofty, too impartial, while conditions in those countries would be seen as too narrow, bare, superficial, and partisan for the two to be reconciled.[155]

Third, Fukuzawa regarded Chinese Learning (Confucianism) as the biggest foe of nationalism. In Fukuzawa's eyes, Chinese Learning (Confucianism) was, like National Learning an ineffective appeal to the disciplines of the past. Confucianism was reduced to an ideology which gave a theoretical justification for subservience of the lower class to the ruling class.

> Another sort of scholar, the specialist in Chinese Learning [Confucianism], takes a somewhat broader view. He does not, like the National Learning scholar, merely rely on sentiments of nostalgia for the past. Yet, in the final analysis, this is the school of thought which would control the lower classes with the old Confucian ideas of ritual, music, and chastisement, and would attempt to bolster people's hearts by a combination of leniency and law. It therefore cannot at all be made to suit present social conditions. If this theory were to be followed, the people would have personal experience only of the government but not of the people, of officialdom but not of personal endeavour — this would result in an ever-worsening situation, with elevation of general conduct eventually rendered impossible.[156]

According to Fukuzawa's definition of nationality, there was no concept of nation in Confucian society. Fukuzawa's interpretation of Confucianism showed it to be based on dynastic ideology rather than genuine nationalism. Fukuzawa found clear evidence for this claim, in *kokka*, the Japanese term which means nation or state. The word *kokka* is made up of two elements: *kok* (state) and *ka* (family). Following Fukuzawa's analysis, the element *ka* [family] did not refer to the family of the people, but meant the family of the rulers. The family equalled the country. Giving the example of Rai San'yo's evaluation of the government of the Ashikaga confirmed Fukuzawa's claim that the Confucian view of country was a family of rulers.

> Such extreme slogans have been used as: "The enrichment of the government is the benefit of the country." In this way the country was reduced to ruin for the sake of some family. Because the basic principles of government were defined in terms of such ideas, all policies were for the sake of retaining the imbalance of power within one family. Rai San'yo judged the government of the Ashikaga to be weak at the top and claimed that its policies were a failure. He was simply saying that the Ashikaga did not enjoy one-sided power and therefore did not have full control. For a Confucianist of that time this seemed a defect, but, when you come right down to it, it was a view which recognised only a family and not a country.[157]

Moreover, according to Fukuzawa, Confucian society made the people indifferent spectators to national affairs. In Fukuzawa's view, Japanese history was essentially the

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155. *Ibid.*
156. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 179.
157. *Ibid.*, 158. The term *kokka* [nation] has been in use since ancient times.

story of the ruling class. People were deprived of the right to participate because "physical force, knowledge and virtue, learning, religion — all have belonged to the ruling class." Similarly 'wealth and talent, honour and shame were all in the possession of the ruling class.'[158] As a result, Fukuzawa concluded that in Japan "there is a government but no nation."[159] In other words, there was subject culture but no citizen culture in Japan. Japanese people were not able to realise their real capacity as citizens because "never having had an example of equal rights, they are oppressed and blindly led by the spirit of subservience."[160]

Confucianism was blamed for this lack of nationhood, by keeping the people in a condition of subservience. In Fukuzawa's view Japan whose people "do not have these independent qualities of mind and are merely reliant on the power of others" is "like a procession of blind men without a guide." Fukuzawa attacked the central Confucian political idea that government was the function of only a specialised ruling group, an idea represented by Confucius's assertion: "The people can be made to follow it; they cannot be made to understand it."[161] Fukuzawa stated:

> Some may say that the people should be kept in a state of dependence and left uninformed. . . . Thus let the wise control the masses from above; let the masses obey the will of their superiors. This argument is in fact from the school of Confucius. But it is a great error in actual fact. [162]

Let me now examine this view. In Fukuzawa's conception of the nation, individual autonomy was a central idea. For Fukuzawa, the national polity referred to "the grouping together of a race of people of similar feelings, the creation of a distinction between fellow countrymen and foreigners, the fostering of more cordial and stronger bonds with one's countrymen than with foreigners." It meant "living under the same government, enjoying self-rule, and disliking the idea of being subject to foreign rule". It was epitomised in the phrase '*independence and responsibility for the welfare of one's own country*".[163] What determined nationality? As general characteristics of nationality, such factors as similarity of physical characteristics, or language, or geography could be cited. For Fukuzawa the most important factor was "for a race of people to pass through a series of social forms and share a common past." Fukuzawa confirmed this in two cases: the Swiss and German. In his view, the Swiss had a strong national structure and a feeling of brotherhood despite the fact that the various cantons which made up of country had different peoples, languages, and religions. In the

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158. *Ibid*, 142.
159. *Ibid*, 144.
160. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Encouragement to Learning*, 25.
161. Confucius. *Analects*, VIII, 9.
162. *Ibid*, 16.
163. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 23.

German case, although Germany was divided into virtually independent states. "the Germans have till this day preserved a German national polity which distinguishes them from other peoples because they have same language and literature and share a common legacy of the past."[164] This indicated that for Fukuzawa. common heritage or history was the major criterion for nationality. Anthony Smith emphasises the importance of common history for nationalism by saying that "the discovery and uses of a common history constituted one of the fundamental goals of the nationalist ideal of individuality."[165] Some explanation, however. is required to grasp the implication of Fukuzawa's requirement to "share a common past." For "to share a common past" cannot be attained when every person merely resides in a particular place but takes no part in its affairs, and, as in Japanese history, are made into indifferent bystanders. mere guests of a lodging house. In such a case there is not a nation but only a ruling class.

Against Western Learning and Chinese Learning and National Learning. Fukuzawa presented liberalism as the basis of nationalism. His liberal nationalism was made up of two major elements: the social contract and liberalism applied directly to the nation state. Let us first examine his treatment of social contract theory. Fukuzawa's nationalism can be reduced to a theory of the creation of citizens. The Confucian concept of subject must be transformed into the modern citizen. In this transformation of subjects into citizens. Fukuzawa's idea of the social contract played a major part. The new citizen. who was distinguished from the Confucian concept of subjects was based on the bond of contract. Fukuzawa regarded the distinctive difference between Confucianism and modern Western political ideas (liberalism) as the lack of a contractual bond between ruler and the ruled. In Confucian political ideas. the relationship between ruler and the ruled was an extension of family relationships: the ruler governed the people with benevolence and intimidation. (benevolence in Confucianism was the conterpart of law in liberalism.) Fukuzawa described the country under a Confucian ruler as "a single family or a classroom. with the ruler as the parent or teacher". The ruler was like a god, "to the extent that his power and virtue were inscrutable." Without any distinction between the public and the private realm. the ruler "held control over everything. from the power over life and death down to the minute affairs of private households." Fukuzawa concluded that the ruler in Confucian world was "simultaneously parent. teacher. and god."

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164. *Ibid.*

165. Anthony D. Smith. *Nationalist Movements* (London: Macmillan. 1971). 16.

> He [Ruler] ruled over the people of his race as though they were his race as though they were his children. making them happy by his benevolence or intimidating them with his authority.[166]

Fukuzawa derided this Confucian concept of benevolent government and of harmony. He claimed that the great harmony pursued by Confucians was in fact nothing more than a hypocritical policy to control affairs for the benefit of the ruling class or the strong.

> Nevertheless, if we consider the facts more deeply, the relation between government and people is not that of flesh and blood. It is in essence an association of strangers. Personal feelings cannot be the guiding principle in an association between strangers. It is necessarily based on the creation of a social contract. Even when they dispute over minute points of interpretation, this too contributes to a larger social order and good government. And for this reason national laws are created. It may be essential to have the above hierarchy of enlightened ruler, excellent ministers, and docile people, but by entering what schools can such faultless sages be created? By what educational process can such splendid citizens be obtained? The Chinese have in fact been concerned with these ideas since the Chou dynasty. But from the Chou to the present there never has been a time of peace and good government based on those essential ingredients. Has not the upshot been that China has been oppressed by foreigners, as witnessed again today? Not seeming to learn the significance of this, they are like persons who swallow the same inefficacious medicines over and over again. They employ an extremely artificial concept of 'benevolent government'. These sages, who were not divine, would endeavour to blend injustice with benevolent government, and thus force blessings upon the people. But when blessings turn into burdens, and virtuous rule changes into harsh laws, do they still sing of the great harmony? If they desire to sing, let them sing alone. No one will join them any more. For their original intention was itself too wide of the mark. China may be our close neighbour, but her situation is unendurably ridiculous.[167]

Next, Fukuzawa attacked the Confucian assumption that the relation between the ruler and the ruled was innate (or transcendental). This assumption blocked the introduction of the idea of social contract into political ideas. He distinguished "natural" from "artificial" in relation to the claims of rulers to rule: — in the East that claim was based on nature: in the West it was based on contract. And the West, it seems, was right, not least because rulers may become ruled, and vice versa, thus indicating that the ruler and ruled relationship could not be innate.

> In China and Japan the ruler-subject relationship was considered inherent in human nature, so that the relationship between ruler and subject was conceived as analogous to the relationships between husband and wife and parent and child. The respective roles of ruler and subject were even thought of as predestined from a previous life.[168]

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166. *Ibid.* 110.
167. *Ibid.*, 70-71.
168. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 39.

Fukuzawa pointed out that "the ruler-subject relationship is essentially something that accrues to a person after his birth, so it cannot be termed an inherent part of human nature".[169]

> The same principle applies to the theory of the relationship between ruler and subject. This relationship is a relationship between one man and another. It may be possible to discover a natural connection in such a relationship nowadays, but the close connection is the result of the fact that there just happen to be rulers and subjects in our day and age, so the relationship cannot be termed inherent in human nature.[170]

In the East, there are no natural rights, but the rule over subjects by the emperor is natural; whereas in the West there are natural rights, but political rule is an artificial device to secure these natural rights. Clearly Fukuzawa endorsed the Western conception of the natural. As seen in the above passage: "why the ruler-subject relation is unnatural," Fukuzawa presented two criteria for "the natural." One was that of universality: "If it were an essential part of human nature, it would perforce be found throughout the world."

> The relationships between parent and child and husband and wife, as well as the relationships between young and old and friend and friend, are universal, and so may be called innate in human nature. The relationship between ruler and subject is different, for there are countries on the globe where men do not have this relationship; countries that have established a parliamentary government are examples of this. These countries do not have a ruler-subject relationship, but various duties are divided between government and people, and the style of rule is very admirable . . .[171]

The other criterion was that of immutability: "a thing that can be renewed or reformed is not a natural principle."

> Therefore, though the child cannot become the father, and the wife cannot become the husband, for such relationships are immutable, the ruler can change into a subject. Tang and Wu, after all, overthrew their rulers. Or ruler and subject can be put on equal footing; an example of this is our recent abolition of the *han* and the establishment of prefectures. Seen in this light, then, a monarchical government is also not immune to change.[172]

Now, let us examine the content of Fukuzawa's idea of social contract. Like Herbert Spencer and many other Western liberals, Fukuzawa sought to justify both the duty of governments and the duty of subjects by means of social contract theory.

> The government represents the people. It conducts its affairs in accordance with the wishes of the people. Its duty is to arrest those who commit crimes, and to protect those who are innocent. This is what the people desire. Therefore if this purpose can be achieved, the government will be serving the country well. . . . Therefore a government is founded to represent the people, and to perform the service of protecting the people.

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169. *Ibid.*, 40.
170. *Ibid.*
171. *Ibid.*, 41
172. *Ibid.*, 40-41.

> In compensation for this service. the people have promised to pay all the expenses of the government. not to speak of the wages of the officials.[173]

However. Fukuzawa's social contract theory was much stronger than Spencer's, in part resembling that of Rousseau in the nature and the extent of self-government it entailed. together with the obligations it imposed.

> Furthermore. since the government has become the representative of the people and has acquired the right to act in their behalf. its measures are the people's measures. and accordingly the people must obey the law. Hence obedience to the nation's government by the people means. not obedience to laws enacted by the government. but obedience to laws enacted by themselves. Violation of the nation's laws means. not violation of the government's laws. but violation of their own laws. Punishment for violation of the law means punishment by the laws which they themselves have set up. It is as if each subject performed the duties of two persons. The first duty is to found a government to represent the people by arresting the wicked and protecting the innocent. The second is strictly to obey the agreement they have made with the government. and to receive its protection in accordance with the law.
>
> As I have said above. since the people have made a contract to entrust the authority of the law to the government. they may on no account disobey the law. thereby violating the terms of that contract. It is the right of the government to arrest and execute a murderer. It is the right of the government to arrest and put a robber in prison. to settle lawsuits. to prevent violence and disputes.[174]

Individual citizens had no right to challenge the government.

> To take up first their status as guest: the citizens of a nation must honour the laws of the land. and not forget the principle of the equality of men. If I do not want my rights violated by others. then I must in turn not infringe upon the rights of others. Since others enjoy the same things as I do. I must not extend my pleasures by robbing from those of others. I must not steal to enrich myself. I must not kill or slander another. I must correctly uphold the law. and live according to the great principle of the equality of men. Again. there is no reason recklessly to violate laws enacted by the government. even if they are stupid or inconvenient to me. The government has the authority to declare war and conclude treaties with foreign nations. Since this authority ultimately derives from the citizens. a person not connected with administration of the government should not criticise its affairs. If this principle is forgotten. and people think that the measures of the government do not suit their own private liking. or if they criticise it as they wish. thus violating their agreement with the government. or if they raise up arms in revolt against the government. then the government of a country will not last a single day.[175]

Nevertheless. Fukuzawa's social contract theory placed government firmly in the consent of the governed; there was a reciprocal relation between the people and the government.

> The government established laws. by which it controlled the wicked and protected the good. This was the business of the government.
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> This government business costs a great deal of money. But since the government had neither rice nor cash to meet its expenses. it entered into an agreement with commoners

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173. *Ibid.*, 35.
174. *Ibid.*
175. *Ibid.* 41.

> that the latter should pay taxes in money and kind which would fund the treasury of the government. This was the contract, in other words, between government and people. Therefore the peasants and merchants could fulfil its duties by taking these taxes to make correct payments for its expenses and to protect the people. As long as both sides fulfilled their obligations without violating this contract, there could be no further objections. And each side could freely make use of its rights.[176]

Against Confucian obstacles to the nation state, therefore, Fukuzawa sought the solution to the problems of the individual's loyalty and mass participation in the creation of citizenship by means of the social contract — something which never existed in Confucian Society. The distinctive feature of Fukuzawa's viewpoint was that he endeavoured to establish the new citizen on the basis of the independent individual.[177] This is the second element in his liberal nationalism. When Fukuzawa sought to answer the question: how can "indifferent spectators" be transformed into citizens, his concept of the independent individual was proposed as "a guiding principle for all: from minor events in everyday life to the great policies of the world"[178] in contrast to Confucian familism and ethic based on dependency resulting in subservience.

Fukuzawa's contribution to nationalism in Japan therefore lay in the fact that he tried to establish nationalism on the basis of liberal indivdualism, not on the basis of National Learning or Confucianism or Christianity. His attempt to establish nationalism on the basis of liberal individualism manifested itself in *An Encouragement to Learning* and *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, the following passage from which shows Fukuzawa's belief that liberal individualism (in Fukuzawa's terms "civilization") was compatible with nationalism. He rejected the anxiety that adopting Western ideas of individualism would undermine the national polity.

> Many seem to feel that national polity and civilization are incompatible, and, indeed, at the present stage many refuse to discuss the issue. This is somewhat like both parties retreating before crossing swords; it will not resolve the matter. Only if we discuss the issues in detail shall we be sure to find the path to peace without coming to blows. Why should we skirt the issue and not discuss it? Not sparing lengths, I wish here to refute the argument of those who proclaim the primacy of national polity.[179]

He presented the case of Britain as an illustration of the compatiability of nationalism and liberal individualism: "Take again the case of England . . . . You see here again

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176. *Ibid*, 12.
177. Mazzini is frequently cited as a forerunner of this type of liberal nationalism. However, Mazzini placed less emphasis on citizenship and more emphasis on physical and legal unification.
178. Fukuzawa Yukichi, "Tokuiku Ikan" (Questions on Moral Education), in *Fukuzawa Yukichi zenshū*, V, 469.
179. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 23.

how civilization is not a threat to national polity. As a matter of fact, national polity is enhanced by civilization."[180]

This leads us to the third element of Fukuzawa's liberal nationalism — liberalism applied directly to the nation state. In Fukuzawa's *An Encouragement to Learning* equal rights for all individuals were used as a justification for the argument that nation states possessed equal rights one with another.

> In the previous section I stated that all men, whether rich or poor, strong or weak, members of the government or citizens of the government, have the same inherent human rights. Here I want to broaden its meaning to discuss the relations between nations as well. Since a nation is a community of people, Japan is a community of the Japanese, England is a community of the English. Japanese and English both live between the same heaven and the same earth. Therefore there is no reason why they should infringe upon each other's rights. If there is no reason for one man to harm another, there is equally no reason for two men to harm two others. The same logical principle applies for one million or ten million; the truth of things does not change according to the number of persons involved.[181]

Fukuzawa's analogy between the equal rights of individuals and the equal rights of nations was a prime example of the way in which he combined liberal principles with nationalism. But it is a type of analogy that has been much criticized. For example, E. H. Carr denounced the application of individual rights to the nation, since he feared that in the name of freedom for the nation, individual freedom would be sacrificed. In this sense, for Carr, such "combination was in principle something bad."[182] Carr is very sceptical about the possibility that the notion of national freedom is compatible with individual freedom, though he admitted that national freedom can be justified "in so far as it is demanded by the men and women who make up the nation and felt by them as essential to their freedom."[183] History, however, shows that the opposite is the case.

> But national freedom which opens the way, as it did in some countries between the two wars, for the consistent denial of elementary rights and liberties to large sections of the nation is little better than a contradiction in terms.[184]

Carr cannot find any justification for "the assumption that ordinary men and women gladly accept loss of their means of livelihood or of their personal liberties as the price of the freedom of their nation." He pointed out that the assumption "will be readily made only by those who have not suffered the experience."[185]

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180. *Ibid.*, 31
181. *Ibid.*, 15
182. Quoted from Arblaster *op. cit.*, 46.
183. E. H. Carr, *op. cit.*, 41.
184. *Ibid.*
185. *Ibid.*

Let us examine Fukuzawa's reasoning that personal rights and freedoms were essential to national rights and freedom. It was epitomised in the argument that "Persons without the spirit of personal independence will not have deep concern for their country."[186] Fukuzawa warned against the danger that a country where people were not independent citizens faced when a foreign country invaded:

> The people of the nation are divided into masters and guests. The masters are the one thousand intelligent persons who direct the affairs of the state. The rest are ignorant guests. Being only guests, they have few real concerns. They rely entirely on their masters without taking any initiative themselves. Therefore their solicitude for their country will not be as great as their masters'. Their attitude will indeed be like that of strangers. . . . But if war should break out with a foreign country, the absurdity of this arrangement will be clear. The ignorant and powerless masses may not betray their country, but there will be many who will desert the cause, saying that "since we are only guests, our lives are uncalled for". Thus the population of the country is a million strong, but considerably less in actual fact when it comes to defending the nation. It will be quite impossible for that nation to secure its independence.[187]

By contrast, to meet this threat, the independent person will serve the role of citizen who, like Fukuzawa, takes the responsibility of the nation upon himself, regardless of personal status or prestige.

> No matter what social origins, every man must stand up independently and protect Japan. In short, a common liberation of man and a common share of the nation's joys and sorrows will be better than the initiative of the few who bind the majority to their will and bear the burdens of government alone.[188]

So Fukuzawa is claiming that personal independence is a prerequisite of national independence in that personal independence provides the consciousness of self-direction which is essential to the formation of citizenship.

But why should a person who had attained his own personal independence, be led to citizenship? Fukuzawa took it for granted that the independent individual would take the road to citizenship, calling it "the natural order of progress".

> Thus when one's independence is attained, the independence of one's fellow citizens should be sought, and finally forces should be joined in securing the independence of the country — this should be the natural order of progress.[189]

But this underestimates the difficulty of transforming the free individual into the citizen. Yi Kwang-su and Chinese anti-Confucianists who attempted to solve this problem within the boundary of liberalism were so troubled with it that they had to abandon their commitment to liberal principles in the end. But Fukuzawa adhered to

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186. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement to Learning*, 16.
187. *Ibid.*, 17.
188. *Ibid.*, 20.
189. Fukuzawa Yukichi, "Tokuiku ikan" [Questions on Moral Education], Quoted from *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Education*, 161.

liberal principles, and tried to solve the problem by means of the notion of the social contract — which supplied a strong theory of citizenship. Let us examine Fukuzawa's theory of citizenship in detail.

When we deal with the question of citizenship, we are to face the duality of citizenship. In her study of Kant's political ideas, Susan Meld Shell described it as "inherent doubleness."

> Through an original contract, an aggregate of men constitute themselves a people and subject themselves as individuals to their united sovereignty. The civil community has from the beginning an inherent doubleness, setting citizen as sovereign against citizen as subject. The citizen gives up his external freedom in order to take it back immediately as a member of the commonwealth. He abandons a wild, lawless freedom in order to "find his whole freedom again undiminished in a lawful dependency," which comes "from his own legislative Will." In entering civil society a person divides himself, much as his will is already internally divided. Juridical freedom, like its moral counterpart, means submission to laws one lays down for oneself. Juridical freedom is freedom externally focused, autonomy mediated by an external power.[190]

Fukuzawa expounded this "doubleness of citizenship" in his own plain terms using the metaphor of master and guest.

> Each citizen has a double office. The first is to be subordinate to the government with the mentality of a guest. The second is to join together with the other citizens of the nation to form a company, as it were, that is called the nation, to enact and implement the laws of the nation. This is the mentality of being a master . . . Hence the nation is like a company, and its citizens like the members of the company. Each man has both functions of master and guest.[191]

In discussing the first element of his liberal nationalism, I pointed out that Fukuzawa drew his justification for political obligation from social contract theory. However Fukuzawa was not content with contract theory as a justification for political obligation, since it rested that obligation too much upon self interest. It was in terms of Kantian moral duty rather than in terms of self interest, that Fukuzawa looked for a superior justification of political obligation. In doing so, he used the idea of self realisation as a justification for the obligation of the individual as citizen. In Fukuzawa's view, the mental and physical functions of man could be divided into two parts: the functions of the individual man, and the functions of man as a social being. Fukuzawa stressed the importance of "the functions of man as a social being" by asserting that man cannot be satisfied with providing only for himself and his immediate family.[192] There were higher bonds than this in human nature. In Fukuzawa's view, the men who were satisfied with acquiring happiness in daily life

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190. Susan Meld Shell, *The Rights of Reason: A Study of Kant's Philosophy and Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 156.
191. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Encouragement to Learning*, 41. (Emphasis added)
192. *Ibid.*, 63.

through the powers of their own body and mind without participating in social communities and working for the good of society, should be called the pupils of ants, not the lords of all creation. Following Fukuzawa's logic, man could not be called to attain personal independence without the opportunity of participation in the state as a citizen. This justification seems to be parallel to the organistic conception of state and the concept of positive freedom, entailing that through the state the individual achieved self-fulfilment: "The wider their associations, the more men feel fulfilment."[193]

> Secondly, man is by nature social. Hardly anything can be done in complete isolation. Man's nature is not yet satisfied by the circle of spouse, parents, and children. He must have wider human associations in the community. The wider their associations, the more men feel fulfilment, and this is the reason that human intercourse begins. And with community life there must naturally be attendant responsibilities.[194]

Fukuzawa's intention to create an independent Japanese citizen and attempt to combine liberalism with nationalism was confirmed by his urge to scholars to realise this mission:

> What, then, should be the goal of scholars today? Does it not lie in seeking the great principles of independence, and in reviving the rights of self-autonomy and freedom? And freedom and independence already imply responsibilities. Men can be said to have fulfilled both internal and external obligations only if they do not bring disgrace upon the name of Japanese citizens, and if they strive together with their countrymen to secure the free and independent status of Japan as a world nation.[195]

The liberation of the individual from the shackle of Confucianism was an incomplete liberation. The liberation of the individual could be completed only when an independent individual emancipated from the yoke of Confucianism turned into an independent Japanese citizen.

Fukuzawa's conservative nationalism

So far we have examined Fukuzawa's liberal interpretation of nationalism. Here, we will discuss his shift at a later period of his thought towards conservativism, when he abandoned his liberal position and adopted a Conservative interpretation of nationalism. Many commentators have pointed out this shift; for example, Blacker noted that:

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193. *Ibid.*, 57.
194. *Ibid.*
195. *Ibid.*, 64.

> If Fukuzawa's sudden neglect of people's rights in favour of national strength at this period might appear illiberal. the policy he recommended Japan to adopt towards the other Asiatic countries was frankly imperialistic.[196]

Tōyama Shigeki observed in his book, *Fukuzawa Yukichi — shisō to seiji to renken* that Fukuzawa's conversion to the conservative position was coincident with the turning of his attention from domestic to international issues.[197]

The shift of Fukuzawa's thought from the domestic arena; the principle of *kammin-chowa* (harmony between government and people), towards foreign relations — aggressive expansionism in the foreign arena — started with *Jiji Shōgen* written in 1881 and culminated in the article, *Datsu a-ron* (On abandoning Asia) written in 1885. This shift was due to Fukuzawa's frustration with domestic politics, and his hope that by encouraging Japan to intervene in other countries, this would produce reform abroad which would then lead to reform in Japan. This was an attempt to escape deadlock or the limits of domestic politics. In this he was following the members of the popular movement who exploited international relations for goals of domestic politics. Akira Iriye has given us a good summary of this process:

> Political movements evolved around the domestic issues of constitutional government and the convening of a national Diet, but the dissidents and popular rights activities often called on the nation to turn their attention overseas and promote reforms in China and Korea. Many of them felt frustrated in their challenge to the domestic leadership and believed that the best strategy was to arouse popular opinion about the government's alleged passivity toward Korea. Some were convinced that reforms in Japan would follow those in Korea.[198]

Before he changed his attitude toward Asia in "*Datsu a ron*" in 1885, Fukuzawa seemed to advocate a strategy of a "united front of Asian countries". In *Jiji Shōgen*, he argued that the countries of Asia must combine together to resist the West. Since Asian countries were so vastly different from those of the West, mutual friendship and understanding with Western countries was impossible, and hostility was inevitable. The Asian countries should therefore make a united stand.[199] For Japan to simply form an alliance of Asian countries was not, however, Fukuzawa's intention: his real concern was for Japan to becoming the leading nation in the Far East. China was certainly the largest of the three main East Asian nations, but she was entirely unfitted for the task of leadership, since although she had been in contact with the Western nations for over a hundred years she had not troubled to learn a single thing about their civilization, but had remained stolidly complacent in her own superstitions of astrology, dragons and

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196. Blacker, *op. cit.*, 135.
197. Tōyama Shigeki, *Fukuzawa Yukichi – shisō to seiji to renken* [Fukuzawa Yukichi: in Connection with Thoughts and Politics]. (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1985)
198. Akira Iriye, "Japan's drive to great-power status" in *The Cambridge History of Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1989) vol. V, 752.
199. Fukuzawa Yukichi, "Jiji Shōgen", in *Fukuzawa Zenshū*, V, 351-353.

kirins [200] The Koreans were incapable of looking after themselves. had no idea how to live decently and honourably, and were maltreated by their own government.

> Hence if England or Russia were to invade their country they would let them do so. for they would be only too happy to become subjects of England or Russia. To be invaded by another country is not at all pleasant. but rather than live in hopeless misery and die in disgrace. it is at least a blessing in the midst of troubles to receive the protection of a strong and civilised country and to have one's life and property made secure.[201]

Accordingly the only country capable of assuming leadership in the Far East. Fukuzawa argued, was Japan. For her own sake Japan should take it upon herself to try to strengthen the other Asiatic countries. The justification of Japan's intervention into China and Korea was dressed in the common good. as Fukuzawa's metaphor of stone house and wooden house disclosed :

> A man with a stone house was no more secure against fire than a man with a wooden house. if his neighbour's house was made of wood. He must go to his neighbour and persuade him to build a stone house like his own if he was to feel secure against fire. When necessary he could force him to do so. During a crisis. he could intrude on his neighbour's land at his discretion — not because he is covetous of his neighbour's land or abhors his neighbour. but simply to protect his own house from fire.[202]

Japan facing the threat of Western aggression was in just the same predicament as the man in the stone house facing the threat of fire. She must use her armed forces to protect her neighbours in order to ensure her own safety. In short. Fukuzawa's advocacy of a "united Asia" before "Datsu a ron" [On abandoning Asia] was nothing more than a disguised form of Japanese imperialistic expansionism dressed up as cooperation among Asian countries against the threat of Western expansion into Asia. This justification was developed further in the "Datsu a ron" when the disguise of "united front of Asia" was thrown off.

> We cannot wait for our neighbour countries to become so civilised that all may combine together to make Asia progress. We must rather break out of formation and behave in the same way as the civilised countries of the West are doing. . . .We would do better to treat China and Korea in the same way as do the Western nations.[203]

Fukuzawa's "Datsu a ron" [On leaving Asia] was published in 1885 and was intended to dispute Tarui Tokich's Daitō gappō ron [Unification of Great Asian Power] written in the same year. Tauri advocated that two Asian countries should unite to become a strong Asian power. Against this argument Fukuzawa now. however.

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200. *Ibid.*
201. Fukuzawa Yukichi. "Chōsen jimmin no tame ni sono kuni no metsubō wo kasu" (For the Korean people we should celebrate the fall of Korea). in *Zoku Fukuzawa Zensū* (Second Series of Fukuzawa's Collected Works). II. 65.
202. Fukuzawa Yukichi. "Jiji Shōgen." *Fukuzawa Zenshū.* V. 353-54.
203. "Datsu a ron". *Zoku Fukuzawa Zensu.* II. 42.

contended that to become a strong power. Japan should abandon the idea of voluntary association or cooperative solidarity with neighbouring countries like China and Korea since it would be impossible to unite on equal terms with a more backward country.[204] The main gist of "Datsu a ron" [On abandoning Asia or On leaving Asia][205] is:

> Not only have we escaped the old habits of Japan. but we have devised a new strategy concerning Asian countries; its fundamental idea is "escape from Asia.". . . Today China and Korea are no help at all to our country. On the contrary. because our three countries are adjacent we are sometimes regarded as the same in the eyes of civilised Western peoples. Appraisals of China and Korea are applied to our country. . . . and indirectly this greatly impedes our foreign policy. It is really a great misfortune for our country. It follows that in making our present plans we have not time to await the development of neighbouring countries and join them in reviving Asia. Rather. we should escape from them and join the company of Western civilised nations. Although China and Korea are our neighbours. this fact should make no difference in our relations with them. We should deal with them as Westerners do. If we keep bad company. we cannot avoid a bad name. In my heart I favour breaking off with the bad company of East Asia.[206]

Japan must treat its neighbours as Westerners do — as countries to be conquered. Fukuzawa's "Datsu a ron" was nothing more than the attempt to seek a justification for Japanese intervention. Fukuzawa thus abandoned his attempt to associate nationalism with liberalism. He now justified nationalism on grounds of the greater good of Asia. not on grounds of protection of human rights.[207] Japan's intervention in Korea was defended by the plea that it was for the sake of strengthening the whole of Asia against the West. But Carmen Blacker sharply pointed out the hypocrisy in Fukuzawa's justification for Japanese intervention:

> The argument that it was better to be colonised by a civilised country than remain in independent misery and barbarism Fukuzawa would obviously never allow to apply to Japan, at any stage of her history. As applied to Korea. however, it formed a convenient premise for an invasion of that country by Japan herself.[208]

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204. *Ibid.*
205. The literal translation of "Datsu a ron" is "On Leaving Asia". But I believe that the translation of "On abandoning Asia" is closer to the meaning that Fukuzawa wished to convey.
206. For the quoted passage. see Fukuzawa Zenshu X. 238-40. Quoted in Kenneth B. Pyile. *The New Generation in Meiji Japan.*. (Stanford California: Stanford Uni. Press. 1969). p. 149. (Translated by Kenneth B. Pyle)
207. Blacker described this justification as follows: "Questions of internal government were. in other words. to be unashamedly subordinated to those of strength in international relations. People's rights and the might of the nation were no longer interdependent. The nation transcended people's rights. If an authoritarian government could ensure a stronger nation than could a liberal one. then let there be an authoritarian government. In a sense this was a plain denial of the very arguments by which Fukuzawa had justified the overthrow of the Bakufu: because the Bakufu was authoritarian and the people not free. it could not strengthen the country." (Blacker. *op. cit.*, 134.)
208. Blacker. *op. cit.*. 136.

There seems little difference between Fukuzawa's views and a conservative nationalist position. Earlier, in his *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, Fukuzawa had asserted that liberalism was necessary as the basis of nationalism, and he had rejected Confucianism and Shintoism as inimical to nationalism. It is, however, evident that later, Fukuzawa's nationalism abandoned liberalism which was one of his two axes of anti-Confucianism. The question of whether this undermined Fukuzawa's anti-Confucian stance, remains to be discussed.

3.6 Conclusion: the failure of Fukuzawa's liberal nationalism

The central goal that Fukuzawa pursued was to establish nationalism on the basis of liberal individualism, and he attempted to achieve this goal by creating citizenship based on classical liberal principles. He assumed that individuals turned automatically into citizens — indeed he regarded this process as self-evident. However, there was no ground given for his belief that liberated individuals or independent individuals automatically turn into citizens. According to liberals, individuals turned into citizens voluntarily ie., by rational choice. Fukuzawa was keenly aware of this argument, and articulated it in the typical liberal way — by the device of the social contract. As such, there was no internal theoretical contradiction in his framework of liberal nationalism. However, in 1894 with the Sino-Japanese war, Fukuzawa believed he had to choose between two conflicting alternatives: — liberalism or nationalism, — and he pushed aside his liberal position to advocate an aggressive militaristic foreign policy. After the Japanese victory in the Sino-Japanese war, however, he returned to his liberal principles, justifying this move by saying that the crisis was over. In my view this flexibility reflects Fukuzawa's philosophy of relativism, by contrast to Confucianism, which is based on the unchangeable natural law. The disadvantage of Fukuzawa's relativism was that it undermined the authority of his principle of liberal nationalism, and left the field open for conservatives to develop a concept of Japanese nationalism, based on a combined form of Confucianism and Shintoism.

The Change in Fukuzawa's Anti-Confucianism

When we compare Fukuzawa's earlier period of anti-Confucianism with his later period we notice that the scope of his anti-Confucianism was narrowed down considerably. For example, he no longer touched on the fundamental question of the ruler-subject relationship, evading this sensitive issue because it would be seen as a criticism of the authoritarian government. What led him to change from an uncompromising to a moderate form of anti-Confucianism?

Maruyama Masao argues that Fukuzawa's anti-Confucianism changed only in scope and degree, not in fundamentals. He explains that the reason for the shift of scope and degree was tactical. In his early period of anti-Confucianism, Fukuzawa is compared to the soldier who must dislodge the well-entrenched enemy (Confucianism). In his later period, Fukuzawa is compared to the soldier who has taken up the position of champion and defends this new position from attack. A challenger is required to make an all-out attack on the enemy, but when he secures the dominant position from the enemy, he doesn't have to be so radical. Even when there is a serious attack threatening his position he can afford to confront it selectively.[209] Mikiso Hane defends Fukuzawa's shift in anti-Confucianism in a similar way, focusing on women'srights.

> Though enlightened for its time, Fukuzawa's *Shin Onna Daigaku* is still conservative and, in some ways, even traditionalist. Moreover, in light of some of the statements he had made earlier, he appears to be hedging or even backsliding somewhat. This may be explained partly by the fact, when he first launched his campaign for women's rights, society had to be given a dramatic shaking up. That is, the "cake of custom" had petrified to such an extent that the only way to loosen it up would have been to use a sledgehammer. And this is what Fukuzawa and some of the early Meiji advocates of reforms initially did. They may have written and said things that were much more radical than they themselves would have been willing to accept in reality. By the time he wrote his *Onna Daigaku Hyōron* and *Shin Onna Daigaku*, he had been pleading the case for women's rights for three decades. Others had also joined the movement and some limited progress had been made. . . . Some women were beginning to join the small circle of socialists. Higher education for women, after suffering many setbacks, was beginning to make some headway. In 1899 the government issued an ordinance to establish higher schools for women. After the turn of the century a few women's colleges, including a medical college, came into existence. . . . Perhaps it was for these reasons that Fukuzawa began to tone down his remarks about equality for women to some extent.[210]

In addition to this pragmatic explanation, Hane provides a psychological explanation — Fukuzawa's increased moderation is derived from his personal character. According to Hane's observation "as soon as someone went one step beyond him toward radicalism in whatever area, Fukuzawa pulled back and started to urge moderation." Hane presented as a typical instance of this tendency, Fukuzawa's attitude toward the movement for popular rights.

> For instance, although he was an early and vociferous advocate of popular rights, when the movement began to gain wider support and started to turn in a more radical direction, he commenced to counsel moderation. Eventually he began to condemn the radicals as "vulgar advocates of popular rights."[211]

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209. Maruyama Masao, "Fukuzawa Yukichino jukyōhihan," [Fukuzawa Yukichi's Critique of Confucianism] in *Senchūto senga no aida* (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1976).
210. Hane, *op. cit.*, 104.
211. *Ibid.*

Hane concluded that "by temperament, he was an outsider and a streak of contrariness runs through his life."[212]

In contrast to these explanations, however, in my view the change in Fukuzawa's anti-Confucianism was due to the change of political circumstances surrounding the Meiji government. The start of this shift in his anti-Confucianism was caused by the defeat of the English faction in government. After the ousting of Ōkuma Shigenobu from the government, Fukuzawa started to adopt a more compromising attitude toward the Meiji government, fearing government's oppression. Tōyama Shigeki pointed out that Fukuzawa's compromise with government was triggered by a financial crisis in his school which he valued as the most important enterprise of his life.[213] Faced with the closure of his school by financial problems, he received financial aid from the government. The fall of the English faction in government made him aware of the reality of Japanese politics: conservative supremacy. As a result, he toned down his advocacy of liberal individualism against the authoritarian government. By abandoning all political issues except the issue of women's rights, he managed to maintain only a very limited position of liberalism.[214] He lost the central purpose of his anti-Confucianism; to establish nationalism on the basis of liberalism.

Evaluation of Fukuzawa's anti-Confucianism

Despite the abandonment of his central purpose, however, Fukuzawa's anti-Confucianism was not futile. It contributed importantly to the development of East Asian political thought, in that he reinterpreted Confucianism in the light of liberalism. He was the first to show why Confucianism was a major obstacle to modernisation and was incompatible with liberal political ideas. His antagonistic view towards Confucianism exerted great influence on those who were to attack the Confucian legacy. It cannot be overstated that most anti-Confucianists in China and Korea owed the formation of their view of Confucianism to Fukuzawa Yukichi. It should be remembered that most of them were students who studied in Japan including, for example, Wu Yu who is regarded as a pioneer of anti-Confucianism in the May Fourth Movement.[215] Fukuzawa's influence on the intellectuals in East Asia is illustrated by

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212. *Ibid.*
213. Tōyoma Shigeki, *Fukuzawa Yukichi*, 158-162.
214. Tōyoma Shigeki pointed out that without the issue of women's right Fukuzawa should have lost all justification for being called liberal. *Ibid.*, 253.
215. Liang Ch'i-ch'ao who is famous for his "new citizen" theory also stayed in Japan.

Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's remark: "Of Voltaire, Tolstoy, and Fukuzawa Yukichi: if these men had not lived, it is doubtful whether their countries could have advanced."[216]

Fukuzawa must also have exerted some influence on Korea's reformist leaders: Kim Ok-kyun (1851-1894), Pak Yŏng-hyo (1861-1939) and intellectuals who tried to use the Japanese experience in modernizing their own country. Fukuzawa had contacted them in Japan and was involved with them in Korea.[217] But it is very difficult to tell to what extent Fukuzawa's ideas influenced their formation of ideas. (Kim Ok-kyun did not leave any works which show influence from Fukuzawa's ideas). Yu Kil-jun (1856-1914) was the first major Korean intellectual who shows unequivocally Fukuzawa's influence on Korean intellectuals. Yu Kil-jun visited Japan in 1881 as part of a Korean cultural mission and studied at Fukuzawa's Keio College for one year.[218] Yu's work *Sŏyu kyŏnmun* (Observations on a Journey to the West) established him as one of leading pioneers of Korean enlightenment group. In *Sŏyu kyŏnmun* Yu introduced and recommended institutions, ideas and values of Western society for the purpose of reforming Korea by accommodating Western culture. Fukuzawa's influence on Yu Kil-jun is confirmed by Yi Kwang-rin (Lee Kwang-rin) who pointed out that most of the contents of Yu's *Sŏyu kyŏnmun* are similar to Fukuzawa's *Seiyo jijo* (Conditions in the West).[219]

Although Fukuzawa's liberal nationalism failed to prevail and guide Japan, the value of his first experiment in liberal nationalism was recognised by the Japanese in reviving his legacy when they faced the introduction of liberal democracy by American occupation forces. This is confirmed by the fact the Japanese subsequently issued bank notes which carried the portrait of Fukuzawa Yukichi.

> In 1984, the picture of Fukuzawa Yukichi first appeared on the Y10,000 bank note of the Japanese currency. It was a symbolic recognition of Fukuzawa's contribution as one of the most out-standing and enlightened figures in the modernisation of Japanese society and culture following the Meiji Restoration. . . . Indeed, of the great educators

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216. Quoted from Joseph R. Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* (London: Lowe and Brydone, 1965) Liang, "Lun hsüch-shu chih shih-li tso-yu shih-chich," 42b.
217. Fukuzawa's involvement with Korean politics during 1881-1885 is well illustrated by Hilary Conroy. See Hilary Conroy, *The Japanese Seisure of Korea: 1868-1910: A Study of Realism and Idealism in International Relations* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1974), 124-220. See also Tōyama Shigeki, *Fukuzawa Yukichi — shiso to seiji to renken* [Fukuzawa Yukichi: in Connection with Thoughts and Politics]. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1985.
218. His complete works were recently published in Korea. Yi Kwang-rin eds., *Yu Kil-jun chŏnsŏ*, 5 vols. (Seoul: Iljogak, 1971-1972).
219. Yi Kwang-rin (Lee Kwang-rin) , *Han'guk kaehwa sasang yŏn'gu* [Studies on the Ideas of Enlightenment in the later Yi Dynasty] (1979, Iljogak, Seoul, 1979)

included in this study. Fukuzawa is probably the most widely recognised and popular among the Japanese people.[220]

The continued failure of liberalism in Japan can be attributed to the fact that individualism as the philosophical foundation of liberalism failed to take root in the soil of Japan where the influence of collectivism was and still is strong. The following article headlined "Tokyo doctor breaks long silence over war crimes" illustrates this.

> Sitting in his clinic wearing his doctor's white coat, Ken Yuasa calmly told how he killed 13 Chinese men 50 years ago in medical experiments that he admits constituted war crimes. Working in a Japanese army hospital in Shanxi province from 1942-45, he shot healthy people in the stomach to practise removing the bullets and cut open throats and removed parts of human brains in experiments that violated the most basic tenets of the medical profession.
> . . . Dr Yuasa was not a member of Unit 731, which was set up in Harbin in north-eastern China to test plague, cholera and other potential biological warfare agents on humans. He was an ordinary doctor in a standard Japanese military hospital. But he said human experimentation was practised throughout China and not just in the Unit 731 installation.
> "You wonder how we doctors could have done this? And how so many have forgotten what they did? In China at the time it was normal for Japanese soldiers to kill, rape, rob and so on. It was nothing special. The Chinese were regarded as animals, not humans. Because of the nationalist spirit of the time, we thought the emperor was the living god and we could use the dirty Chinese. No one thought Japan would lose the war. It was a great shock to us."
> Dr Yuasa did not return to Japan until 1956: left behind by the retreating Japanese army, he was finally captured by Chinese Communists and forced to undergo "self-criticism". He says it was only then that he realised he was a war criminal.
> When he got back to Japan he went back into medicine, despite what he had done. "I had a family to support, first of all. And I thought that by treating patients well I could make up for what I had done." He said that many of his patients knew what he had done in China: "But they did not blame me because they thought we were all forced to go to war. This is the Japanese character — we do every thing in groups, so no individual is to blame."
> Did he realise that if he had been a German doctor he would have been sentenced — possibly to death — for war crimes? He was silent for a moment. "The Japanese government was lenient with us. They told us we were not war criminals."[221]

The above passage suggests that Japanese society in the 1940s was still characterised not by liberal individualism but by collectivism. The following passage from Inazo Nitobe shows how difficult it still is to establish liberal individualism in Japanese society; despite Fukuzawa's influence, the Japanese still equate individualism with selfishness.

> It is greatly to be regretted that our people frequently identify individualism with egotism. They speak of the individualism of the Anglo-Saxons as selfishness. The race is criticized for indifference to the welfare and comfort of others. Children, it is said, neglect their parents. Parents love their offspring only as animals do their principle of

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220. Jynosuke Yasukarwa, "Fukuzawa Yukichi", 17. Jynosuke points out, however, that Fukuzawa's liberal-individualism did not exert much influence; rather, it was his later conservatism that affected Japanese society.
221. *The Independent*, 11 September 1993.

life in those countries. The weak are left to perish in the gutter. The strong alone survive.

Such a charge against the Anglo-Saxon peoples is radically wrong. It is founded on an erroneous conception of the term Individualism.

The idea that it means selfishness is itself mistaken. The two terms are not synonymous. They may even prove to be antonyms. Individualism is not a contradiction of altruism. These two ideas are in fact closely connected in their inner spirit.

Individualism is the consciousness of being a whole that is indivisible, an entity whose separate parts and functions form a complete and organic whole. It signifies the maintenance of and respect for the wholeness of a person, and a whole personality cannot exclude any of the traits that constitute it.[222]

The fact is that the Confucian conception of filial piety continues to obstruct a proper understanding by the Japanese of Western individualism.

This completes the study of Fukuzawa Yukichi's anti-Confucianism. In the next chapter, where Yi Kwang-su's anti-Confucianism is discussed, we will find much common ground between the two thinkers, though they differed significantly both in the premises upon which their anti-Confucianism was based, and in some of the implications they derived from it.

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222. Inazo Nitobe, "A Mistaken Notion of Individualism". *The Works of Inazo Nitobe* Volume V. (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1972), 259-260

CHAPTER IV YI KWANG-SU'S ANTI-CONFUCIANISM

4.1 Introduction: Yi's life

In the foregoing chapter Fukuzawa's anti-Confucianism was examined. In this chapter Yi Kwang-su's anti-Confucianism will be discussed. Yi Kwang-su (1892-1950) is a very controversial and complex thinker, difficult to interpret. This is partly because of the diverse activities in which he engaged during his life: he was a novelist, a poet, a teacher, a political writer, a political activist (nationalist), a journalist, a literary critic, and a translator. Kim Yun-sik's comment on Yi Kwang-su sums up the problems which the interpreters of Yi's thought face:

> Some people thought of Yi as a great figure in literature, others believed him to be a thinker or a nationalist leader, and still there were others who criticized him as a betrayer of the cause of nationalism.[1]

During Yi's life span, Korea experienced tremendous turbulence and change. After winning the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 and the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-1905 Japan started to tighten its control over Korea. Yi witnessed both the First world War and the Second World War, and suffered under Japanese colonial rule for thirty-five years followed by the division of the country by the United States and the U.S.S.R. after World War II. Later, he was kidnapped by the North Korean communists during the Korean War.[2] Grant S. Lee who is renowned for his study of Yi's philosophy presents a good summary of his tragic life.

> Orphaned at the age of nine, faced loss of his country's independence at the age of eighteen, stricken with tuberculosis at twenty-six and battling it throughout his life, suspected and rejected by the fellow Koreans he loved at twenty-nine because of his unorthodox approach to the nationalist movement, jailed and sentenced to prison at forty-five, compelled to cooperate with the enemy against his will only to protect his fellow Koreans from age forty-seven through fifty-three. Confined again in prison by a special committee of the Republic of Korea for alleged pro-Japanese activities during the Japanese occupation at fifty-seven, and captured by the Communist North Korean soldiers at fifty-eight-these trials of Yi's life are tragic, yet they are real.[3]

For the convenience of discussion, Yi's life will be divided into three periods: the first period until 1921, the second period from 1921 to 1930, and the third period from 1930 to 1950.

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1. Kim Yun-sik, "Yi Kwang-su", in *Han'guk kŭndae inmul paekin-sŏn* (Hundred Great People in Modern Korea) (Seoul: Tonga Ilbosa, 1970), 276.
2. Yi died in 1950 at the age of 59 in North Korea.
3. Grant S. Lee, *Life and Thought of Yi Kwang-su*, (Seoul: Usin-sa, 1984), 49.

1892-1921

Yi Kwang-su was born in 1892 in North P'yongan Province, Korea, toward the end of the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910). He was born into a *yangban* family whose fortunes declined into poverty. Yi started his education at a very early age by reading the Four Books of Confucianism, showing his superior ability by reading the *Ta hsueh* (The Great Learning) at the age of five and the rest of the books, *Chung yung* (The Doctrine of the Mean), *Mencius* (The Book of Mencius) and *Lun yu* (The Analects) at the age of six. He was a child prodigy, but when he was ten years old, he lost both parents, and this put him under strained circumstances, forcing him to lead a hard life from an early age.

At the age of ten, Yi joined the *Tonghak* Party where he worked as a secretary and messenger-boy for the regional commander of *Tonghak* Party who was an old friend of his father. His experience of working for the *Tonghak* Party left an indelible impression and contributed to his early awakening to the nationalist feeling.

At the age of 13 (1904), Yi went to Seoul to escape the arrest of members of *Tonghak* party by Japanese police and in 1905 he was given the opportunity to study in Japan as a recipient of a scholarship from *Ch'ŏndogyo*.[4] In 1907, he entered the ninth grade of the Meiji Gakuin, a combined institute of high school and college, which gave him an understanding of Christianity.[5] Yi graduated from the Meiji Gakuin in 1910, and in the same year entered the prestigious First High School in Tokyo. After he heard news that his grandfather was seriously ill, Yi returned to Korea and started to teach at Osan School[6] for three years until he left in 1913. While at Osan school, Yi read many Confucian classics, including the *Book of Changes* and the *Book of History*. While he was in Osan, Yi married Paek Hae-sun, a daughter of his father's friend, but this arranged match ended unsuccessfully after eight years. This unhappy experience of marriage led to him to criticise the Confucian family institution including the marriage system. After he left Osan school, he travelled to Antung, Manchuria, Shanghai, China, and Chita, Russia. In these places he met independence movement leaders in exile such as Sin Ch'ae-ho, Sin Kyu-sik, and Yi Kap.

In 1915, Yi had a second chance to study in Japan, with Kim Sŏng-su's financial support. He entered the department of philosophy of Waseda University. This period is of great significance for Yi's anti-Confucianism, in that most of Yi's anti-Confucianism

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4. The *Ch'ŏndogyo* was the successor of the *Tonghak* movement, but had turned into a religious institute after it was banned for its political activities in 1904.
5. The Meiji Gakuin was established by the Presbyterian Mission in Japan. Yi later recalled that the "Sermon on the Mount" and Leo Tolstoy's ideas of non-violent and civil disobedience strongly appealed to him.
6. Osan school was founded by Yi Sŭng-hun in Yi Kwang-su's home town.

writings were written during this period. There is no question that Yi's contact with Japanese society as well as its intellectual world was a major factor in shaping some of his view of Western culture. Yi received Western thought from books which was mostly written in Japanese and not from direct contact with the West. Translation necessarily involves interpretation. By receiving Western ideas through Japanese translations Yi could not escape the Japanese influence on his ideas. The influence of Japanese society and Japanese intellectuals on his ideas was well exhibited by his "Tong'gyŏng chap'sin" [Correspondence from Tokyo] which was written in 1916 to suggest to learn Western culture through Japan. Yi's intention to receive Western thought through Japan was clearly expressed in section 2, "Yuhaksaeng-ŭi sasang-gye" (The Trends of Ideas of Korean Students Studying in Japan) in "Tong'gyŏng chap'sin" which was made up of 14 sections. In it Yi stated that the duty of Korean students in Japan is "to study the course which other nation [Japanese people] took in importing civilisation and establishing the national prosperity and to apply it to Korea."[7]

Which Japanese author had a significant influence on Yi's ideas? In his writings, Yi rarely mentioned the authors whose works he had read. This makes it difficult for us to make a detailed examination and full assessment of the influence of Japanese authors on Yi Kwang-su. In "Tong'gyŏng chap'sin" Yi, however, wrote a section of 1,000 words "Pokt'aek yugil-ŭi myo-rŭl paeham" (Pay reverence at Fukuzawa Yukichi" which introduced and evaluated Fukuzawa Yukichi's life and ideas. This section is of great significance in understanding the link between Yi's thought and Fukuzawa's. In it Yi evaluated highly Fukuzawa Yukichi as a pioneer of introducing Western thought to Japan and one of greatest founders of modern Japanese society. Yi summed up Fukuzawa's central idea as follows.

> The essence of his [Fukuzawa] teaching is to abandon old ways of life and adopt new ways of life, and individual's independence and self-respect. Individual's independence and self-respect means to manage one's own personal affairs and not to have a mind to depend upon others.[8]

The idea of individual's independence stressed by Fukuzawa was also one of central ideas in Yi Kwang-su's writings of anti-Confucianism. That Fukuzawa Yukichi was a formative influence on Yi Kwang-su is confirmed in Yi's works of anti-Confucianism.[9] Yi Kwang-su's indebtedness to the Fukuzawa Yukichi in anti-Confucianism cannot be

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7. Yi Kwang-su. "Tong'gyŏng chap'sin". in *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X. 303.
8. *Ibid.*, X. 318.
9. We cannot say exactly which works of Fukuzawa Yukichi Yi Kwang-su had read because Yi had rarely disclosed the source of citation. We can, however, infer from Yi's remarks of *Fukuzawa Zenshū* (Collected Works of Fukuzawa) and *Fukuō hyakuwa* (One Hundred Discourses of Fukuzawa) in "Tong'gyŏng chap'sin" that Yi had read Fukuzawa Yukichi's works during 1916 to 1919.

overstated. in that Fukuzawa provided Yi Kwang-su with a prototype of anti-Confucianism.

It is noteworthy that there was few writings of anti-Confucianism written by Yi Kwang-su before "Tonggyŏng chapsin". Before his departure to Japan for study Yi published a writing. "Konghwaguk-ŭi myŏlmang" (The Fall of Republic) in which he criticised superficial Westernisation for bring Korea into anarchy of morality and urged Korean students in Japan keep traditional (Confucian) moral values.[10] This standpoint held by Yi in "Konghwaguk-ŭi myŏlmang" was contrary to that of writings of anti-Confucianism published after "Tonggyŏng chapsin". In the light of this. "Tonggyŏng chapsin" was a point of departure for Yi's anti-Confucianism and was a lead of importance to shows the connection between Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su. "Tonggyŏng chapsin" was followed by several anti-Confucian tracts. First. "Usŏn su-ga toego yŏnhu-e in-i toera" (Before becoming a man. be a animal) which criticised Confucianism for its morality centred world view. Second. "Kyoyuk-ka chessi-ege" (To Educators) which criticised the traditional way of education for neglecting practical life. Third. "Chosŏn kajŏng-ui kaehyŏk" (The reform of the Korean family) which criticised the abuses of the family institution in Korea. Fourth. in 1917. at the age of 26. he published "Mujŏng" (The Heartless) at the *Maeil sinbo* (The Maeil Daily) in Seoul.[11] The novel "Mujŏng", which was the first long novel in the history of Korean literature. opened a new chapter in Korean literature and established his reputation as a writer of modern novels. "Mujŏng" was a description of the downhearted days of his youth and the prevailing social background. In "Mujŏng". Yi criticised the Confucian family ethic which oppressed the free individual. and he advocated liberal individualism. "Mujŏng" brought him enormous popularity among younger Korean readers. The reason for its popularity can be attributed both to the fact that it met the demands of those youths who felt oppressed by the yoke of Confucian family morality and social ideas. and to the fact that it was written in a plain style. using *han'gŭl* in place of the ideographic Chinese language.

Fifth. encouraged by the popularity and support for "Mujŏng" from the younger Korean readers. Yi published two works of great significance which waged an all-out war on Confucianism; the novel "Kaech'ŏk-cha". which declared war against the traditional Confucian social thoughts. customs and family ethic and institution. marriage institution. and "Sin saenghwal-non" (Treatise on a New Way of Life) which

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10. See Kim Yun-sik. *Yi Kwang-suwa kŭ-ŭi sidae* [Yi Kwang-su and His Times] (Seoul: Han'gil-sa. 1986) vol. II. 494-498.
11. "Mujŏng" (The Heartless) was written in Yi's junior year at the university (1917). During this period in which he suffered from financial difficulties. to alleviate his financial difficulties he had written a lot of writings and novels which appear in newspaper. the *Maeil sinbo* (The Maeil Daily) in Seoul.

was a systematic critique of Confucianism in all aspects of Confucianism. It was written in a more scholarly and less popular manner than Yi's earlier works of anti-Confucianism as this work was to be addressed to more educated people. In terms of quality, quantity, and influence, few writings of anti-Confucianism in Korea, including Yi's other writings were equivalent to this treatise. It comprised all Yi's previous writings of anti-Confucianism in a system and was as important as Fukuzawa Yukichi's *An Encouragement of Learning* or *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*. The influence and effect which these writings of Yi exerted on the Korean people was enormous, as demonstrated by the formidable response from both those who opposed the views raised by Yi and those who supported them. On the one hand, it brought a vociferous protest from Confucian circles, which organised public meetings to denounce him at Kyŏnghak-won[12], and sent the Governor-General a letter to ask him to prohibit Yi's writings from appearing in *Maeil Shinbo*. On the other hand, young Korean people welcomed enthusiastically the main arguments of "Treatise on New Way of Life".

The success and popularity of "Mujŏng" convinced Yi of the power of the novel,[13] and drove him to write Kaech'ŏk-cha (The Pioneer) addressed to a wider readership. In the "Pioneer" Yi urged Korean youths to be liberated from the shackle of Confucian morality and custom, using more direct and blunt language than in "Mujŏng". It enjoyed enormous popularity though its quality as a literary work was inferior to that of "Mujŏng".

In 1918, faced with the opposition to his second marriage by the brides' mother, Yi eloped to Peking, with his lover Dr. Hŏ Yŏng-suk. There, president Wilson's Fourteen Points, which contained the doctrine of self-determination, prompted Yi to return home. In Seoul, Yi met Ch'oi Rin and urged him to prepare a demonstration.[14] In Japan Yi joined the Korean Youth Independence Corps, and when in January 1919 Korean students in Tokyo staged an independence movement under the aegis of the Korean Youth Independence Association, Yi Kwang-su drafted its declaration which asserted that annexing of Korea by Japan was a deceptive and violent outrage against Korean will and opinion. It denounced the Japanese exploitation that deprived Koreans of their means of survival, and it demanded independence for Korea without delay. In February 1919, Yi was sent to Shanghai by the Korean Youth Independence

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12. In 1911, the governor-general abolished the highest Korean Confucian institution, the Sŏnggyun-gwan in Seoul and created a new institution called Kyŏnghak-won, or Keigaku-in, in the same old buildings with the same old Confucian literati. Kang Wi-Jo, *Religion and Politics in Korea under the Japanese Rule*, 62.
13. In "Munye soedam" written in 1925, Yi stressed the role of literary works (especially novel) as a medium of spreading ideas. *Yi Kang-su chŏnjip*, X, 407-410.
14. Ch'oi Rin was a leader of the *Ch'ondogyo*, who took a leading role later in the famous March First Movement.

Association to publicise internationally the English version of the independence declaration which he had translated.

In Shanghai, Yi participated in establishing the Provisional Korean Government as a permanent independence organization.[15] He was appointed in August 1919 president-cum-chief editor of the "Tongnip sinmun" (Independence News), the main outlet of publicity for the Korean Provisional Government. What is of greater significance is the fact that In Shanghai Yi met An Ch'ang-ho, the great spiritual leader of the Korean independence movement,[16] a meeting which influenced his entire life from that time on. In October 1919, he assisted An Ch'ang-ho in drafting "Tongnip undong pang-ryak" (Strategy for the Independence Movement). Yi was so deeply impressed with An Ch'ang-ho's personality heartedly and consented to An's ideals programs and approach to attain independence, that his approach for independence can be traced directly to An's gradualist approach. In April 1920, Yi Kwang-su became a member of *Hŭngsadan* (the Corps for the Moral Advancement of Individuals). The Corps was founded by An Ch'ang-ho for the sake of meeting the long-range goal of building a healthy nation by nurturing moral principles in individual citizens.[17] During the two years when Yi stayed in Shanghai the situation of the Provisional Government became harder. The Provisional Government suffered from shortage of funds as it was disconnected from Korea by the reinforced surveillance of Japanese police. This led Yi to take a sceptical view of the effectiveness of the independence movement outside Korea.

The strategy of the Independent movement during the Japanese colonial days can be divided into two approaches: first, the armed resistance movement; second, the attempt to promote self-improvement through literacy, co-operatives and the moral awakening movement. The first course was pursued by the "ŭibyŏng" (righteous army) within Korea before 1910. As Japanese tightened its grip in Korea it was increasingly difficult to pursue the armed resistance movement strategy within Korea. Thus the military groups concentrated on waging a guerrilla war in Manchuria which borders Korea. The second strategy was the gradualist approach advocated by An Ch'ang-ho. The advantage of this approach was that it could be pursued within Korea, not least

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15. The Provisional Korean Government was borne, headed by premier Yi Sŭng-man (Syngman Rhee), and Home Minister An Ch'ang-ho.
16. An Ch'ang-ho came to Shanghai from the U.S. in May 1919.
17. An Ch'ang-ho organized "Sinmin-hoe" (New People's Association) in 1907 which advocated a program of cultural activities, education and economic advancement to serve as a foundation for nationhood in the later days, rather than direct and immediate resistance to Japanese rule or reliance on military means to attain independence. The Sinmin-hoe was destroyed in 1910 by mass arrests on alleged charge of attempting to assassinate Terauchi, the Japanese governor-general. In 1911 An Ch'ang-ho found his way back to the U.S. and organized "Hŭngsadan" (Young Korean Academy) to promote the training of future national leaders in overseas Korean communities.

because of the changed circumstances in Korea. Confronting such strong resistance by the Korean people against Japanese colonial rule, the Japanese leaders changed their policy in Korea. They loosened a little the iron grip of military rule and introduced a cultural policy which permitted Koreans a little more freedom of speech, and more freedom in their cultural and educational areas. In January 1920, Japanese authorities allowed the publication of Korean language news papers, and *Tonga Ilbo* (The Oriental Daily) and the *Chosŏn Ilbo* (The Korean Daily) were established in 1920. In 1921, Yi decided to adopt the gradualist approach and start the independence movement within Korea, returning to Korea in March 1921, where he assumed leadership of movement for "cultural nationalism," a gradualist approach to attain independence, which sought to raise the national consciousness, and the level of literacy and economic welfare. This movement was based on a realistic awareness of the situation in Korea that it was futile to attempt open revolt against Japanese in the 1910s.

1921-1930

However, Yi's sudden return to Korea in April 1921 received an icy welcome from the Korean people, who were disappointed at his abandoning the armed resistance movement. Yi was the chief-editor of the independence newspaper which had consistently urged the armed resistance movement against Japanese occupiers, and people suspected that he had changed sides and began to collaborate with the Japanese. This suspicion was supported by the Japanese police's attitude toward Yi; They arrested him for a short while but discharged him without imprisonment. As a result of this hostility, Yi withheld his name from several essays he wrote to a monthly magazine called *Kaebyŏk* (Creation). In one essay, "Sonyŏn-ege" (To Youth), which was written in 1921, Yi tried to diagnose Korean problems and pointed out how Korea was bankrupt in every field; the bankrupt state of the economy; the moral bankruptcy of the Korean people; and finally the bankruptcy of the intellectual world. In May 1922, he published an article in *Kaebyŏk* entitled "Minjok kaejo-non" (Treatise on National Reconstruction) this time using his real name. "Minjok kaejo-non" stressed actions that could be taken within the legal bounds and framework of Japanese rule, a moderate, gradualist approach for independence. This brought public outrage against him, as people felt hurt by Yi's stress on the defects of Korean national character. People could not accept Yi's non-political approach, since it appeared to undermine the independence movements which focused on military struggle against Japanese, and for almost one year, Yi was ostracised from literary circles.

In 1923, Yi resumed writing editorials and novels as an editorial writer to *Donga Ilbo*. In December 1923, Yi participated in the Korean Production Movement in alliance with Cho Man-sik, (nicknamed the Gandhi of Korea and leader of the Society for the Promotion of Korean Production) and with business leaders including Kim Sŏng-su, president of the *Tonga Ilbo* and Kim Tong-won, president of the Kyŏngsŏng Spinning and Weaving Company. The goal of this movement was to promote Korean-produced goods, stressing the positive value of preference given to Korean native products as a means of promoting the spirit of national unity. In February 1922 Yi organised the *Suyang tonmaeng-hoe* (The Moral Cultivation League) with some like-minded friends. This organisation was in effect an exension of the Corps for the Moral Advancement of Individuals. In January 1926, Yi organised the *Tongu-hoe* (Association of Compatriots) with An Ch'ang-ho as its leader. Moral rehabilitation, enhancement of national consciousness, and promotion of cooperative movements were the philosophical goals and action programs of Tongu-hoe. Another highlight of this period was his appointment as the editor-in-chief of the foremost nationalist newspaper, Tonga Ilbo, in November 1926.

During the latter half of this second period, it should be noted that Yi's writings shifted from treatises to novels (especially historical novels), and he lost the influence over the Korean people as a controversialist which had been established by his earlier writings (mainly treatises) such as "Sin saenghwal-non", "Minjok kaejo-non". This trend paralleled the decline of the influence of cultural nationalism among Korean youths. From 1924, Yi's writings were mainly made up of novels, including "Chaesaeng" (Renewal, 1924)", Maŭi taeja" (Prince in Hemp Dress, 1928), "Tan-jong ae-sa" (Tragic History of King Tan-jong, 1928), Yi Sun-sin (Biography of Admiral Yi, 1931), "Hŭk" (Soil, 1933), "Yi ch'adon-ŭi sa" (Death of Yi Ch'adon, 1935), "Sarang" (Love, 1938-39), "Wonhyŏ taesa" (Great Buddhist Monk Wonhyŏ, 1941). In 1927 published the "Chŏlmŭn Chosŏnin-ŭi sowon" (The Wish of Young Korean) which indicated strong influence of Buddhism for the first time in Yi's thought. This treatise showed that Yi continued to struggle to maintain the balance between liberal individualism and nationalism, allocating one section to warn against the mis-conceived idea of freedom.

1930-1950

From 1932, Yi showed a significant shift in his position toward liberal nationalism. In "Yet Chosŏnin-ŭi kŭnbon todŏk" (Fundamental Morality in Ancient Korea)" written in 1932, Yi criticised American and British individualism and praised *chiptan-juŭi* (Group-ism or Collectivism) which was, Yi maintained, the central morality of the old

Korean village in pre-Confucian period. His anti-Confucianism reflected this change of focus from individualism. The central contents of his anti-Confucianism were now his criticism of sino-centric world and Sinicisation of Korean culture. Chosŏn minjok-non written in 1933 was a typical example of the shift.

From 1931 to August 1945, Japanese colonial rule in Korea pursued a policy of Japanisation and industrial development, in order to exploit the human and natural resources of Korea for Japanese imperial expansion in Asia. Japanisation aimed both to assimiliate the Koreans into Japanese culture, and, by the industrial development in Korea, to establish a strong logistic base for Japan's continental expansionism. Many oppressive measures were taken to achieve these ends; for example the use of the Korean language and the study of Korean history was banned; and Korean names were replaced by Japanese style names. In March 1937 Yi was asked by the Japanese to undertake the chairmanship of the pro-Japanese Chosŏn munin-hoe (The Korean Association of Literary Men), but he refused to cooperate. Then in June, one month before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, Yi Kwang-su and thirty members of the Suyang tongu-hoe were arrested by the Japanese police under the charge that An Ch'ang-ho, Yi, and others had plotted against the Japanese. In December1939, Yi accepted chairmanship of the pro-Japanese Chosŏn munin hyŏphoe (Korean Association of Literary Men) (though he relinquished it in January 1940). Yi also changed his name, in accordance with the Japanese government's policy, to "Kayama mitsuro". This may have helped to secure the release of all members of Suyang tongu-hoe by the Keijo Appellate Court on November 17,1941, three weeks before the Pearl Harbor incident.

Yi made himself available to the Japanese as a pro-Japanese speaker and he went around the country speaking to Koreans. For example, in December 1942, he went to Tokyo for speaking engagements with Korean students, and he told the students to join "Hakpyŏng" or the student volunteers army which the Japanese expected them to do. He made statements to the same effect in the newspapers, and he wrote some pro-Japanese essays and novels.[18]

For all he had done for Korea, Yi was loudly denounced as a collaborator after liberation in August 1945. He was indicted in February 1949 on alleged charges of pro-Japanese activities, though the indictment was dropped in August 1949. Was Yi a collaborator? If he was not, how could his actions be explained? Yi claimed that his actions were motivated to "preserve the Korean nation."

It is ironical that in 1940 the colonial administration put a dozen of Yi's works including "The Heartless" and "Soil" on the prohibition list, and in 1944, his entire

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18. Yim Chong-guk, *Ch'in-il munhak-non* (The Pro-Japanese literature) (Seoul, Korea: P'yŏnghwa Printing Company, 1966)

works were put on the prohibition list. The period from 1940 to 1944 coincided with the period in which Yi collaborated with the colonial authorities. The publication ban of his works demonstrated most eloquently that the spirit contained in his works was inimical to, and not compatible with, Japanese interests and the colonial administration did not trust him in spite of his "outward collaboration."

After liberation from Japanese occupation, Yi's thought showed some change from the previously held position. In "Sarang-ŭi kil" (The Path of Love) and "Nae nara" (My Country) written in 1948 Yi acknowledged the value of Confucianism. He praised the Confucian way of government: the rule of morality and harmony. But what was not changed from his early anti-Confucianism was his strong antagonism against the idea of *chunghwa* (Sino-centric world) and the Sinicisation of Korean culture through Confucianist scholar-officials in the Chosŏn period. In "Nae nara" (My Country) Yi criticised the Confucianists in the Chosŏn dynasty for attempting to assimilate Korean culture to Chinese culture by Confucianism.

4.2 Different interpretations of Yi's thought

An examination of the published interpretations of Yi's thought will be helpful to an understanding of Yi's thought. Yi's thought has been discussed mainly in the light of the philosophy of the Enlightenment in Europe which it exemplified. Kim Pung-gu, Chŏng Myŏng-hwan, Kim Hyŏn and Yi Sŏn-yŏng are representative interpreters who have identified the French Enlightenment as a key element in Yi's thought.

In general, these interpreter's common position can be summarised in two critical points. First, Yi's thought lacked a political dimension; second it was inconsistent. On the first point, the critics attached much importance to Yi's critique of Confucianism as the essence of his enlightened thought. Kim Pung-gu understood the characteristic of Yi's enlightened thought as "Chaa chungsim-juŭi" [self-centred-ism or individualism], and "Sinsedae-juŭi" [New generation-ism] or revolt against the old customs. Yi attacked Confucianism because it suppressed and stifled self consciousness or individual consciousness.[19] Chŏng Myŏng-hwan pointed out that the task faced by Yi was to overcome the Confucianism which Korean society had accommodated — that is, the Koreanized version of Confucianism.[20] Yi Sŏn-yŏng interpreted Yi's enlightened

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19. Kim Pung-gu. "Sinmunhak ch'ogi-ŭi kyemong sasang-gwa kŭndae-jŏk chaa" [The Thought of Enlightenment in the Early Period of Modern Korean Literature and Modern Self], in *Han'gukin-gwa munhak sasang* [Koreans and literary thought] (Seoul, Korea: Iljogak Publisher, 1964), 6.
20. Chŏng Myŏng-hwan. "Yi Kwang-suwa kyemong sasang" [Yi Kwang-su and Enlightenment], *Han'guk chakka-wa chisŏng* [Korean Writers and Intellect] (Seoul: Munhak-kwa Chisŏng-sa, 1978), 28.

thought as a criticism and reform of the irrationality of Korean national thought and customs formed by the Confucian tradition.[21]

The critics accused Yi of failing to sustain his anti-Confucianism in the political arena. The charge of "pyŏnjŏl" [betrayal] is implied in this criticism, in that the critics noted Yi's change of political stance from fighting to compromise from the year 1921. They accepted as an established fact that Yi's change of political stance led to a turnabout in his thought. "Minjok kaejo-non" [Transformation of National Character] and "minjok-chŏk Kyŏngnyun" [Administration of the Nation] were seen as typical writings which disclosed his attitude of compromise to Japanese colonial rule. Song Uk's view provided a typical instance of this critics' position:

> Such a change in Yi, according to a critic, Professor Song Uk, from political struggle against the Japanese to moral exhortation to Koreans, indicates Yi's guilt after giving up his resistance against the enemy, the Japanese imperialists. Yi suffered from his split between political and moral consciousness and also between his political and literary consciousness. Yi is only a hypocrite who contributed to the masochistic consciousness which helped diminish the resistance consciousness against the real enemy, the Japanese.[22]

Such critics found the source of this failure in Yi's anti-Confucianism, which, according to them, lacked a political dimension. As Kim Hyŏn's remarks: "It must be his [Yi Kwang-su's] fatal defect that his rationalism was conducted at the level of customs and manners, not at the level of nation."[23] Chŏng Myŏng-hwan contends that Yi's anti-Confucianism lost its political significance by confining its scope to the individual level represented by self-centred-ism (individualism) and "Free Romantic Love", in spite of the fact that it had to be conducted at a political level: "to modernize the nation by awakening people chained by Confucian tradition."[24] Thus they concluded that Yi Kwang-su was essentially only a moralist in that his anti-Confucianist thought lacked a political dimension.

On the second point — that Yi's enlightened thought was not consistent — critics such as Kim Pung-gu contended that Yi did not meet the standard of consistency required by philosophy. In Kim's view, Yi's thought is seen not as an unfolding pattern but as a confused mosaic, made up of a mixture of heterogeneous ideas. Kim asserted that the poverty of Yi's philosophy was derived from the fact that Yi's philosophy was based merely on visual perception not on reason.[25]

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21. Yi Sŏn-yŏng. "Yi Kwang-su-non" (On Yi Kwang-su) *Munhak-kwa chisŏng*. (Winter 1975): 1064-1068.
22. Grant S. Lee, *Life and Thought of Yi Kwang-su* (Seoul: Ushin-sa, 1984), 44.
23. Chŏng Myŏng-hwan, *ibid*., 22.
24. *Ibid*.
25. Kim Pung-gu, *ibid*., 107.

> Because our visual perception is imperfect. the nearest and farthest things become invisible. Realizing this (doubt) our curious minds (desiring to inquire) invented the microscope and the telescope through inference. and we experiment with things and further attempt to uncover hidden meanings and laws. However. an excessive belief in our eyes (senses) or in intellect (of the sense type) which lacks the curious mind (desiring to inquire) remains on a horizontal plane. The historical consciousness which gives far-sightedness and directives can never come to arise from the sense type of intellect. Yi's intellect is close to this type. He was decisively judgmental. sometimes arrogant and radical. and sermonising and self-convinced.

Yi Sŏn-yŏng sees inconsistency at the heart of Yi's anti-Confucianism. He points out that "In "Yaso-kyo-ŭi Chosŏn-e chun ŭnhe" (The Contribution of Christianity to Korea) he [Yi Kwang-su] castigated Confucianism for obstructing the development of ideas by the Confucian neglect of individual consciousness, and then made a complete change by emphasising collectivism or totalitarianism in "Yet Chosŏnin-ŭi kŭnbon todŏk" (Fundamental Morality in Ancient Korea)"[26]

However, Yi can be defended against both of these charges. Taking the second charge first — that of inconsistency — it can be argued that the charge is misconceived, since it is imposing rationalist criteria on a philosophy that included considerable elements of Romanticism. A reading of Yi's writings shows that his thought is replete with the philosophy of Romanticism, whose concept of man rejected the supremacy of reason advocated by eighteenth-century Enlightenment thinkers, and acknowledged the priority of emotion as a determining factor of human conduct.[27] The differences between Enlightenment and Romantic thinking run deep; for example, in the area of ethics and political ideas, rationality is emphasised by Enlightenment thinkers while emotion or feeling is stressed by Romantic thinkers; in the Enlightened conception of man as a rational being, his universality detached from time and place is taken as a central idea, while in the Romantic world view, uniqueness or individuality is the dominant idea; Enlightenment thinkers are cosmopolitan while nationalism is embraced by romantics. It is my contention that Yi drew upon both philosophies: Enlightenment philosophy fuelled his individualism; Romanticism fuelled his nationalism. This is not inconsistency, but eclecticism.

Kim Pung-gu pointed out that Yi's thought comprised two different elements — individualism and nationalism — which could not coexist in Enlightenment philosophy. Kim Pung-gu may be right to argue that Yi Kwang-su thus failed to meet the requirements of Enlightenment philosophy. This does not, however, automatically show that Yi was not a consistent thinker, because Kim's criticism may be only the

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26. Yi Sŏn-yŏng, *op. cit.*, 1067.
27. Yi regarded sentiment or emotion as the prime mover of human conduct. Grant S. Lee's study shows us Yi Kwang-su in light of this aspect of his thought. See Chapter 2. "Yi's Theory of Man: Some Aspects of Human Expression and Nature" in Grant. *op. cit.*

result of artificially applying Enlightenment philosophy as the only framework for analysing Yi's thought. What we must do is to attempt to find a more appropriate framework or approach that is relevant to Yi's thought. In my view Kim Pung-gu should have paid more attention to Yi's attempt to combine individualism with nationalism through a framework provided by both the Enlightenment and Romanticism , rather than the former alone.

Inevitably, such a one-sided perspective leaves much of Yi's thought inconsistent, combining pro-Enlightenment ideas with anti-Enlightenment ideas. This problem is pointed out by Grant S. Lee:

> Both Professors Song and Kim look at Yi from an analytical, rational, and critical view point leaving out, for the most part, the existential and religious dimensions. The contention here is not to argue against the critics' analyses or the reasons behind them. The point, rather, is whether they took the existential and the religious world into consideration adequately. Consideration of the two accounts would clarify the issue better.[28]

Why did these Yi's critics adopt the Enlightenment philosophy alone as a framework for analysing his thought? Why did they try to interpret Yi's thought purely through the lens of French Enlightenment thought? Because they believed that Yi acquired his theory solely from Enlightenment thinkers — in particular he held to the Enlightenment ideas of Reason, Nature and Progress. According to Crane Brinton, however, Reason, Nature and Progress are three key concepts of **both** the Enlightenment **and** Romanticism. The difference between them lies in their content. He sums up the difference between the two:

> [T]he Romantics give a different content to the clusters of ideas — Reason, Nature, and Progress — of our model of Enlightenment. What was reason to the philosophy was, to the Germans and to their English disciple Coleridge, merely "understanding" (Verstand), the kind of thinking a bookkeeper does; the higher, better Reason (Vernunft) had a component of intuition, depth, transcendence, the kind of thinking a real philosopher does. Nature, to the eighteenth century, was calm, uniform (if really understood), the Golden Mean revealed, while to the romanticist it was wild, varied, unruly, and favoured the unique, the individual. Progress was to the eighteenth century basically a physical, almost mechanical, process; to the romantic, who also usually believed in progress, it was a growth, an organic unfolding. The words of reproach are always important in these matters. For the romantic, his predecessors were guilty of holding a world view that was mechanistic, nominalist, atomistic, unfeeling, therefore unrealistic and inhuman.[29]

As we shall see, many of the romantic versions as well as the Enlightenment versions of these ideas were present in Yi's thought. In the Enlightenment, "Church, state, social and economic class, superstition, ignorance, prejudice, poverty, and vice" were under

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28. Grant S. Lee, *ibid.*, 45-46.
29. Crane Brinton, "Enlightenment", in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards, (New York: Macmillan, 1967) vol. 2 519-25

severe attack for hindering the progress of reason. Christianity is especially the antithesis of the Enlightenment.[30] If we substitute Confucianism for Christianity, we can see how Yi could be seen to be enunciating solely Enlightenment thinking in his anti-Confucianism. But this is a simplistic comparison. Yi attacked Confucianism also from a Romantic perspective — for example, because it suffocated the communitarian urge.

Another charge of inconsistency levelled at Yi was that in his views on education he uttered both anti-Confucian and pro-Confucian views. In his study of Chinese anti-Confucianism, Lin Yu-sheng argued that the emphasis on education by anti-Confucianists was derived from the Confucian tradition itself,[31] that is to say, from the Confucian mode of thinking: its cultural-intellectualistic approach.[32] Robinson applied this assumption to the Korean intellectuals:

> Although they had isolated core values in Western society that underpinned its strength, Korean intellectuals continued to be deeply influenced by their own tradition of social reform. . . . When enlightenment thinkers turned to the problem of social reform in the early twentieth century, they focused on the job of understanding the value system of the West, learning how this system supported state power, and, finally, instilling these ideas in the population at large. Thus, to some intellectuals, the fundamental task at hand was education. This would be the means to rid Korean society of its traditional intellectual baggage that inhibited change. In short, changing fundamental values was a prerequisite to social change.[33]

However, although at first glance, Yi seemed to face both ways, the fact is that he consistently advocated the use of education for distinctly different reasons from Confucianists.

Basically, these interpreters view Yi's anti-Confucianism as confined to an attack on Confucian conventions in the light of his liberal individualism (an Enlightenment notion). But, Yi's anti-Confucianism reflected two aspects of his thought — his liberal individualism and his nationalism (a Romantic notion) — and it is mistaken to believe that it was pitched exclusively at an individual level; Yi's individualistic and nationalistic attacks on Confucianism were inseparably combined.[34]

In answer to the first charge advanced by Yi's critics — that his anti-Confucianism lacked a political dimension — it can be pointed out firstly that Yi's thought was

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30. See. Lucien Goldmann. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*. trans. Henry Maas. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1973). 65-80.
31. Mencius's remarks illustrate the Confucian stress on education: "But men possess a moral nature; and if they are well fed, warmly clad, and comfortably lodged, without being taught at the same time, they become almost like the beasts. (Translated by James Legge) From *The Mencius*. Book III. part I. chapter IV.
32. Lin Yu-sheng. *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Anti-traditionalism in the May Fourth Era* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. 1979). 26-27.
33. Michael Edson Robinson. *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea, 1920-1925*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press. 1988). 33.
34. This point will be discussed in detail later.

deliberately expressed in an ambiguous way, largely to escape the coils of censorship. The censorship of Japanese colonial rule was very harsh and few writings by Yi in the colonial period escaped its attention. Indeed we can find much blank space, the marks of scissoring by a censor, in most of Yi's writings. Even in the pro-Japanese writings by Yi Kwang-su, we can see the trace of censorship.[35] Yi himself stated what censorship in colonial Korea was like: "the Japanese censorship system in Korea could never be predicted if you were not Korean (for its discrimination and oppression against Korean writers)."[36] This harsh situation forced Yi to dilute his political message, by wrapping up his intentions in abstraction, allegory, and metaphor. In this context, the novel served the role of essay.

> The original reason why I write novels is: for the uplifting of our national consciousness and love among brethren; for the recording of our national movement; for the praise of our national movement within the limits set by the Japanese censors; and for inciting nationalism if possible. This has been my credo not only in the past, but will be also throughout my life.[37]

Hence, careful reading was required to unwrap his real intention, and to uncover his political views.

Secondly, as is argued below, Yi's attack on the morality of Confucianism was also an attack on the politics of Confucianism. The two elements — ethics and politics — could not be separated in either Confucianism or anti-Confucianism.

4.2 Yi's individualism

Yi's conception of individualism

Many interpreters of Yi Kwang-su have called him a liberal or individualist. There certainly seems to be a consensus among commentators that Yi was a liberal or an individualist before the year 1920.[38] There are, however, few studies except Kim Pung-gu's study which have seriously analysed the nature of that liberalism and individualism.[39] Take for an example, Robinson, who studied Yi's cultural nationalism

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35. See. "Sinch'eche-ha-ŭi yesul-ŭi panghyang" [Direction of Art in New System] written in the year of 1941. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 257-259.
36. "Chosŏn-ŭi munhak" [Literature of Korea]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 468.
37. "Yŏ-ŭi chakka-jŏk t'aedo" [My attitude as a Writer]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 462.
38. See Lee, *op. cit.*, 62. Kim Pung-gu, "Sin munhak ch'ogi-ŭi kyemong sasang-kwa kŭndae-jŏk chaa" [The Thought of Enlightenment in the Early Period of Modern Korean Literature and Modern Self], in *Yi Kwang-su yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Dongguk taehakkyo han'guk munhak yŏn'gu-so, 1983), 94.
39. Kim Pung-gu, *ibid.*

and has described Yi as "a champion of individualism"; he does not provide us with a definition of what Yi's individualism refers to.[40]

> Yi Kwang-su had attained considerable stature by the early 1920s as a nationalist activist. By the appearance of the "Minjok Kaejoron" in May 1922, Yi had touched on all the major issues dominating the colonial press. He lashed out at the Korean tradition as an obstacle to progress, became a champion of individualism and free will, criticized early nationalist reformers for failing to maintain Korean independence, and encouraged capitalist economic development as the basis for the rise of a middle class leadership. Finally, he brought these ideas together in his controversial essay which gave the name to the subsequent reconstruction movement.[41]

In order to understand Yi's individualism, it is necessary to examine his analysis of its constituent concepts of individuality, freedom, and hedonism. For Yi Kwang-su, the concept of individuality was of great significance in that it was used as a powerful weapon to liberate individuals from the shackle of Confucianism, and to support the ground for the nation state. The notion of individuality denoted a character possessing something of its own, distinguished from others. In his novel, "Mujŏng", which was written to spread the ideology of liberalism, Yi tried to explain individuality by using the same analogy of a rubber doll which was used by Fukuzawa Yukichi to refer to the Japanese who lacked individual independence.

> Though I laughed and cried, I did so like a rubber doll which laughs and cries when the abdomen of it is pressed. Therefore the laughter and cry do not come from my mind voluntarily. . . . . So far what I believed as right or wrong and felt as sad or joyful did not come from my intellectual judgement and my feeling of emotion but from my implicit following of the conventional way of doing things and social custom. I regarded as right what is asserted as right since ancient time, and accepted as right what others maintain as right. However what is the use to me of what is believed by others as right in the past? What is the meaning of what others like for myself? . . . I have my own intellect and will. I have nothing to do with them unless the judgement or feeling of right and good and sadness and joy are in the light of my own intellect or will.[42]

> I abandoned what I have believed without a second thought since it was regarded as wrong from old times and others assert that it was wrong. My fault lies in this. I killed my own self and forsook it. I did not realise my own life and the existence of my own self until now. As the polar star has features of quite its own, one has one's own intellectuality and will and tasks and a colour which is distinguished from every other. . . . Of course, man is his own being. Everyone has his own self. Everyone is entitled to do what he wants with his free will. It is impossible for one to control another's self. It can be allowed that one can advise and encourage others according to one's opinion. It is absurd that one force one's own opinions upon others.[43]

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40. It is true that Robinson gave a concise explanation of the early Korean enlightenment conception of individualism. He does not, however, explain whether or not this early Korean enlightenment's conception can be applied to Yi Kwang-su.
41. Robinson, *op. cit.*, 64.
42. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, I, 118.
43. *Ibid.*, I, 148.

Yi cited two major factors which contributed to the emergence of the consciousness of the independent individual in Western society. One was the Christian concept of man. The other was the philosophy of self-reliance. According to Yi, Christianity set the soul of each individual as the ultimate standard of each person. The consciousness of the individual and the idea of individuality were based upon the Christian idea of man that all human beings possessed their own individual soul. The idea of equality originated from this Christian concept of man. Equality in Christianity did not, however, mean uniformity; it was connected rather with the idea of individuality. All humans were equally children of God whose own unique purpose recognised the diversity and difference of individuals. Yi observed in Western society that the Christian concept of man which lays stress on the individuality of each person, provided Western moral and political thought with a spiritual ground. He put it as follows:

> It [Christianity] contributed to the awakening of individuality and individual self consciousness. Christianity is fundamentally individualistic. Confucianism built up a system of proprieties of sages and inculcated in common people implicit (blind) obedience. It is epitomised in the phrase "The people may be made to follow a path of action, but they may not be made to understand it." [*Analects*, VIII. 9] Thus, Confucian morality ignores individuality. This ignoring of individual consciousness did severe harm to the development of ideas.
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> Christianity tells us that each person can gain eternal life since one sees and looks for God by individual prayer and meditation. Therefore, the criterion of the human being is the individual soul. That each person has an individual soul forms the foundation for individual consciousness. The ideas of individuality and democracy which are central to new moral and political ideas are currents from the sources; Christianity and natural science.

Yi noted that Christianity contributed to the appearance of the idea of equality in Western society with the Christian belief that "each person including women, slaves and everyone else with human shape, has their own soul" and "the idea that one should love one's fellow man and respect individual persons."

> That each person including women, slaves and everyone else with human shape, has their own soul implies that all are created equal (i.e., rights and status as human beings, though there are distinctions of ability) as well as the idea that one should love one's fellow man and respect individual persons.
>
> The idea of the equality of sexes originates in Christianity. The foundation of modern morality is thus indeed laid down by Christianity.[44]

The other major factor explaining the emergence of the independent individual in modern Western society was the outlook on life which laid stress on the self and the free will of each person. In the Confucian outlook on life that abandoned everything to fate, the autonomy of the individual cannot be attained. The emergence of the

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44. *Ibid.*, X. 19.

independent individual required an outlook on life that one's destiny depended on one's will. Yi's argument for this is clearly seen in the following passage:

> What a difference there is between the people with the outlook on life that "The universe is the product of self," and "The essence of self is endless activity and the conquest." (Fichte). and the people with a fatalistic outlook on life that everything is abandoned to fate! Modern civilisation comes out of humankind's confidence in the power of human kind. The confidence that I can conquer nature with my power to satisfy my need. I can turn my fortunate life into a happy life. I build my own destiny, not that others decide my destiny for me.[45]

The idea of individuality played a double role in Yi's thought: first it was used for attacking Confucian collectivity in the area of personal conduct. Second, in a later period of Yi's thought, the idea of individuality was transformed into collective individuality: national individuality.

Yi's conception of freedom

Yi's idea of freedom embraced several different meanings: the conception of freedom as effective power, as absence of impediments, as self-development and as availability of choice. In order to get a correct understanding of Yi's conception of freedom as effective power, it is helpful to first examine the early Korean anti-Confucianists' conception of freedom. They identified freedom with dynamism or effective power: freedom as the prime mover of progress. Tim Gray summarises the distinctive characteristic of this conception of freedom as "the ability to overcome impediments."[46] In this conception, the focus of concern consists in "how freedom can be made meaningful to the agent in terms of contribution."[47] To those who hold the conception of freedom as power, it is natural that they interpret freedom as being instrumental to an end. Early Korean anti-Confucian thinkers accommodated this conception of freedom as an effective means to nationalistic ends. Such a view of freedom reflects Yen Fu's Darwinian conception of freedom which led to the early Korean enlightened thinkers' views.[48] The following passage reveals Yen Fu's Darwinian conception of freedom as instrumental to national progress.

> "Wealth" and "power" have no meaning except as means to improve people's welfare. Whenever a policy to improve the people's welfare is introduced, it contains within itself the necessary assumption that each individual in the society is able and willing to improve himself. How can an individual improve himself? To improve himself, he must be free. How can he be free? To be free, he must learn how to govern himself. This is a logical sequence, and to reverse it will bring about only confusion. The fact is that the

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45. *Ibid.*, X, 48.
46. Tim Gray, *Freedom*, (London: Macmillan, 1991), 4.
47. *Ibid.*
48. Yen Fu's writings enjoyed popularity among those intellectuals.

> people who can govern themselves and enjoy freedom are also those who in intellectual capacity. physical prowess. and moral character are superior to those who cannot. Therefore. insofar as our nation's basic policies are concerned. their purpose cannot be more than the attainment of the three essentials. i.e.. the strengthening of people's physical prowess. the enlargement of their intellectual capacity. and the uplifting of their moral character.[49]

Robinson has pointed out a similar argument put forward by Lin Yu-sheng. that for the first generation of Chinese enlightened thinkers freedom was instrumental to nationalism.[50]

> Koreans approached the Western concept of individualism from a frankly instrumentalist point of view. They de-emphasised the fundamental doctrine of human rights and focused on individual freedom as a source of dynamism and vitality. Intellectuals linked directly Western creativity and initiative with individual freedom; and conversely. they identified the strong collective orientation of traditional Korean society as a source of stagnation. In iconoclastic writing on the Korean tradition. intellectuals criticized the Confucian family system for its role in repressing individual talent and initiative. Thus. liberating individuals from the web of Confucian social norms became a first step toward creating a source of creative dynamism.[51]

It is true that Yi's thinking was under strong Social Darwinian influence. as seen in his reference to "the fittest is the most powerful and the most powerful means the one who consummates one's functions, that is bring one's function into full play." However Yi is distinguished from the early Korean anti-Confucian thinkers' Social Darwinian views in that his conception of freedom is closely associated with human rights. There is no necessary conflict between Social Darwinism and human rights; Herbert Spencer held to both ideas.

A notion of freedom seen frequently in Yi's writings is freedom as "absence of impediments". In particular. for Yi. freedom seemed synonymous with liberation from the shackles of tradition. This meaning of freedom corresponds with the assumption of classical liberalism; that "Freedom grew as restraints were lifted."[52]

Yi also enunciated the conception of freedom expressed in terms of choice. since this was closely related to the idea of the independent individual. Indeed freedom of choice was indispensable to individual autonomy. and for this reason Yi attacked Confucianism for its disregard of freedom of choice in relation to education. marriage. and occupation.

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49. Yen Fu: "The Three Essentials in Making a New Nation". in *China in Transition: 1517-1911*. ed. Dun J. Li. (London: Van Nostrand Reinhold. 1969). 45.
50. Lin Yu-sheng. "Radical Iconoclasm in the May Fourth Period and the Future of Chinese Liberalism". in *Reflections on the May Fourth Movement: a Symposium* (Cambridge. Mass.: East Asian Research Center Havard University. 1973)
51. Robinson. *op. cit.*. 32.
52. Harold J. Schultz ed.. *English Liberalism and the State: Individualism and Collectivism* (London; D.C. Heath and Company. 1972). Introduction. xx

> The thing here which one should consider in relation to one's work is freedom, which is the important condition for attaining joy. Joy is not the product of servile labour, but of the production of the labour of a free man. This is the point of grave significance in that the criterion of whether social organization is rational or not lies in it: that is, an individual's free choice of an occupation is the fundamental principle of idealistic organization.[53]

However, Yi's favourite conception of freedom was a mental conception, expressed in terms of self-fulfilment or self-development — i.e., creativity.

> Though it is needless to say that the great source of man's joy is freedom, such freedom is not unlimited. In the first place, our life is governed by laws of nature, which punish those who would violate it. Therefore though one lives by oneself in a desert island being far apart from the laws of the state and the rule and law and morality of society, one cannot enjoy unlimited freedom. However, as man is not an animal who leads such a solitary life, but forms society and lives in it, everyone is subject to the restraints of family, friends, industry, nation, and morality. If we took a pessimistic view of things, a human being's life would be regarded as that of a slave, without the slightest freedom, but we can enjoy unlimited amounts of the creative freedom even in such a condition. Indeed, man's true freedom lies in such creativity.[54]

Mere licence — doing what one wants — did not mean happiness; only mental freedom was fully fulfilling.

> Therefore, if (we) understand the demand of the workers, that is, "Give us sufficient wages for living," in terms of what it says, we miss the whole point by being shallow and misunderstanding. The essential want (of the workers) is to attain artistic freedom and joy in their occupation. If they have these two they may be satisfied with less wages for the same job. When man is in dire need for material gain, one is often misled to think that material gain is the sole source of all happiness, but when he attains his goal he comes to realise how mental satisfaction is more fundamental than material satisfaction. Man is an animal who regards mental freedom and creative joy as essential to life. These two are his original nature and truth.[55]

To achieve "mental freedom and creative joy", or man's "original nature and truth", Yi proposed, "a proper mental attitude". For example, a trained man through "a proper attitude can tolerate and can even take confinement in prison as an interesting experience in life."

Yi's conception of hedonism

Another element of Yi's individualism was a positive view of pleasure and happiness. Yi emphasised the pleasure which was suppressed by Confucianism. In "Sin saenghwal-non" (Treatise on New Ways of Life) he criticised Confucianism as passive, because it did not encourage the individual pursuit of happiness. The idea of happiness

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53. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 364.
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*, X, 365.

and pleasure which is central to the enlightened world view played a major role in forming individual consciousness.[56] To Yi, the independent individual meant those who sought their own happiness and pleasure. By contrast to Confucian ethics which took a negative view of desire, Yi presented the ethics of pleasure and happiness.

Pleasure was combined with Darwinian concepts such as self preservation and the preservation of the species. In "Kyoyuk-ka chessi-ege" (To educators) Yi stated that "all activity of human kind is the struggle for survival and the motive power of it is the desire or will of survival." In Yi's view, the world was changing from the Ancient ethics that humanity, love and good were central to human nature, to modern ethics and philosophy which emphasised the desire for life. "If the purpose of living things is life, the end of life is the preservation and development of an individual and a species. It is evident that the purpose of our education lies in cultivating the ability to preserve and maintain an individual and a species."[57] But Yi stated that a human being could not rest content in mere survival (unlike other creatures). After he attained his existence, man had the desire to seek happiness.

> [W]hile the desire of life is showed by other organic beings, the desire of happiness, that is, well-being of life, is unique to human kind. Most of the purpose of civilisation consists in happiness and well-being. The desire of survival is limited but the desire of happiness is limitless; from which endless progress and activities are generated. The history of mankind is the pursuit of well-being in this sense.[58]

Yi's idea of individualism, was not, however, a purely utilitarian one; it also had elements of romanticism in it in that his conception of freedom embraced the tendency of ***internalisation***. Many commentators on Yi Kwang-su's idea took it for granted that Yi's conception of liberalism or individualism was akin to the British version of liberalism or individualism; i.e., that Yi was a typical Anglophile. But the fact is that Yi's conception of individualism was closer to the German version than the British version of individualism. According to Steven Lukes' definition, the German version of individualism has a distinctive inclination to "stress the romantic idea of individuality, the notion of individual uniqueness, originality and self-realisation" and it "applied initially to the cult of individual genius, notably the artist, and developing into an organic theory of community, notably the nation or the state."[59] These features of the German version of individualism reflect a Romantic view of individualism. Yi's conception of individualism was synonymous with this Romantic view of individualism.

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56. Arblaster, *op. cit.*, 186.
57. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnch'ip*, X. 55.
58. *Ibid.*, X. 56.
59. "Individualism", in *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, ed David Miller (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), 239-241.

In the next section, an examination of Yi's criticism of Confucianism will be made in the light of his conception of individualism as discussed here.

4.4 Yi's critique of Confucianism from the perspective of individualism

In the previous section, Yi's conception of individualism, especially as it is centred on his idea of freedom, was examined. Here in the light of that conception, Yi's anti-Confucianism shall be discussed. I have divided this section into three parts: filial piety, the inequality of women, and the institution of marriage.

Yi's criticism of Confucian family morality: filial piety

Yi's, paper "Chosŏn kajŏng-ŭi kaehyŏk," (Reform of the Korean Family) is of much significance in analysing and understanding the character of Yi's anti-Confucianism.[60] Many commentators have maintained that Yi's attack on Confucianism was pitched exclusively at the individual level, that is, Yi's attack on Confucianism focused entirely on Confucian family ethics. This assertion implies that Yi's anti-Confucianism lacked a political dimension.[61] Such a view is, however, misleading. This misunderstanding seems to be derived from a lack of understanding of the organic character of Confucianism; in Confucianism, morality is inseparably interwoven with political ideas. The critics' misunderstanding is reflected in the fact that while they attached much importance to the "Chanyŏ chungsim-non" [Treatise on Children Centred World View] as a major text, they neglected the writing of "Chosŏn kajŏng-ŭi kaehyŏk," in which Yi clearly argued that his attack on Confucian family ethics was a prerequisite for an attack on Confucian political ideas, by showing that Confucian political ideas were based on Confucian family ethics and institutions. In the article "Chosŏn kajŏng-ŭi kaehyŏk," [The Reform of Korean Family], Yi's point of departure was that Confucianism as a whole was based on Confucian family ethics. On this view the ruler of the state was synonymous with a patriarch of the family; i.e., the state was an expanded version of the family. As Wright notes:

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60. Yi's attack on the Confucian family was published earlier than Wu Wu's paper "Confucian Family Institution is the Source of Despotism", which is regarded as the first major attack on the Confucian family institution and filial piety in China. Yi's "The Reform of Korean Family" is equivalent in influence to Wu Wu's paper, in that it paved the way for attacking Confucianism as a whole.
61. See about 4.1.1

> The basic social unit of the Confucian system was the well-ordered family. The family was seen as a microcosm of the socio-political order; the wise father was a model for the wise ruler or minister, and dutiful children were the models for properly submissive subjects who knew their place, their role, and their obligations to others. Both the family and the state were governed by the Li, the norms of proper social behaviour.[62]

Thus, an attack on Confucian political thought should start from the attack on Confucian family ethics. Accordingly, the attack on Confucian ethics and the institution of the family necessarily took on a political character, as Yi's article, "The Reform of the Korean Family" clearly indicated.[63]

> Korea has been the nation whose basic constitutive unit has been the family since ancient times. Hence, the family institution of Korea was so highly developed that it was regarded as the standard ideal to others. But the abuses of family institutions went to an extreme in line with other institutions' decline . . . . . In this article, I shall point out the defects of the institution of the Korean family and suggest an alternative way of reforming the institution of the Korean family in the light of the institution of the family of modern civilised nations.[64]

Yi pointed out that the central problem of the Korean family institution was the absolute patriarch. The following passage shows that Yi fully recognised the link between Confucian family ethics and politics.

> A Korean patriarch is similar to a despotic monarch; every thing in a family is under the firm command of a patriarch. The decision about matters of grave importance, affecting the destinies of a family was left entirely to the discretion (arbitrary will) of a patriarch, while other family members are not allowed to express even a word of opinion about it. Fortunately, if a patriarch is a wise man though he has arbitrary power, he would be a benevolent and wise ruler like Yao and Shun, and contribute to the welfare and prosperity of the family. But unfortunately if a patriarch is a tyrant like Gul and Ju the family members cannot escape ruthless tyranny and eventually the family is doomed to go to ruin. A ruler like Yao and Shun may appear once in a thousand years while ruthless tyrants are very common from generation to generation. There is more vice than good when a patriarch wields arbitrary power. . . . The major cause of present vice lies in the absolutism of a patriarch even though it can be attributed to the numberless factors such as corruption of society, and insufficient diffusion of education.[65]

Yi drew evidence from the West that political reform was accompanied by family revolutions.

> Since the French revolution, in many countries of the world absolute monarchy was abolished and constitutional government predominant. The same was true of a family as

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62. Wright, *op. cit.*, Viii.
63. "Chosŏn kajŏng-ŭi kaehyŏk" [The Reform of Korean Family System] is made up of four parts; I. An absolute patriarchism II. Subjection of woman III. Strict hierarchy of family and lack (insufficiency) of love or affection IV. To live an idle life in inactivity or eat the bread of idle life. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, I, 536.
64. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, I, 536.
65. *Ibid.* Yao and Shun were legendary, benevolent kings in ancient China and they are regarded as the ideal lords by Confucians. Gul and Ju were notorious tyrants in ancient China.

> well as state. In fact, as in the family of civilised nations, patriarchal despotism was abolished and constitutionalism was put into practice, so the Korean family comes to have the chance to be in touch with the trend of revolution.[66]

How could the family revolution be achieved? According to Yi, the family revolution was attained by the emergence of the independent individual through education:

> It is diffusion of education that makes a revolution ripen for realisation. When all family members regardless of sex and age get an education appropriate to them, which contribute to their awakening to their own individuality and with the help of the power of an independent personality they come to be conscious of individual right, patriarchal despotism cannot be allowed and eventually the revolution of family is accomplished.[67]

How was the family to be reformed? Yi suggested that democracy be introduced into the family:

> In the past, all family members and the wealth of a family were the personal possession of a patriarch. Family members took this for granted. That is not right. As a family belongs to all family members not just the patriarch, all family members share the obligation and responsibility to maintain and develop the family. Hence, as it is natural that every matter of a family should be decided on the principle of the consent of all family members the absolutism of a patriarch should not be allowed. A patriarch can be compared to the president of an association whose sovereignty resides in the family members and who is commissioned by family members for the sake of convenience.[68]

The essence of Yi's family revolution was to attain equality of family members. The ground for attacking Confucian patriarchism was liberal individualism which valued human rights:

> Generally speaking, one of the distinctive features of modern civilisation is respect for an individual's personality. In past days, the most severe crime of the three thousand categories of the five classes of punishments is to commit an unfilial act. In modern times, the most severe one is to disregard another's personality and violate their human rights. It is within the Korean family where this crime is predominantly committed. That the head of family has everything his own way is to disregard the personality of family members, by regarding his family members as animals or machinery. . . . At any rate, patriarchal despotism should be eradicated, if there is to be peace and comfort and progress for the family.[69]

In the article "The Reform of Korean Family", Yi's attack on Confucianism was not so severe as in "Chanyŏ chungsim-non" [Treatise on Children Centred World View] and "Sin saenghwal-non" [Treatise on New Way of Life], because he did not attack directly the Confucian idea of filial piety which he regarded as the core idea of Confucianism. Yi refrained from directly attacking Confucianism in "Chosŏn Kajŏng-ŭi kaehyŏk" [The Reform of Korean Family], by using the word "Korean" in place of the word

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66. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, I, 536.
67. *Ibid.*, I, 536.
68. *Ibid.*, I, 536-537.
69. "Chosŏn Kajŏng-ŭi kaehŏk" [The Reform of Korean Family], in *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, I, 537.

"Confucian". The reason why he did not explicitly attack Confucianism was because of his apprehension of a reaction from the conservatives. Yi's explicit attack on Confucianism only started in "Chanyō chungsim-non" [Treatise on Children Centred World View]. where he made it clear that Confucianism was responsible for the system of absolute paternalism. He attacked Confucian morality for obstructing the emergence of the independent individual. and he asserted that for the sake of the emergence of independent individuals it was necessary to liberate women and children from the yoke of Confucian ethics.

> In a sense civilisation is liberation. In the West there is a liberation of the individual spirit from religion. common people from aristocrats. subjects from a despotic monarch. and slaves from masters. Generally speaking. the characteristic of modern civilisation is liberation from what individuals or associations impose on other individuals or organizations in whatever kind or form. The liberation of women and children is deeply significant and essential as it cannot fail to ride on the tide of modern civilisation. But this was beyond the wildest dreams in Korea. only realised to some extent in Europe and America.[70]

In Yi's eyes. Confucianism was not a religion but a dogma of morality whose core idea was filial piety.[71] The idea of filial piety which has been the supreme virtue in Korea. was blamed by Yi for forcing children into slavery. The gist of filial piety was unconditional obedience of sons and daughters to their parents. and this meant that they had no freedom during their parent's life. Yi compared children under the rule of filial piety to the subjects under a despotic monarch. In Yi's eyes. the child who was under the rule of Confucian filial piety was only as good as the cattle or slave at the disposal of the parent's free will. In a society which Confucian filial piety dominated. the lives of children were reduced to lives of sacrifice of everything for their parents:

> A son who wants to become a devoted son must do nothing but sacrifice himself for his parents. . . . The sons and daughters in Korea sacrificed their individual lives for their parents. They lived and worked and died for their parents. The will of parents is that of the son and daughter. If any son or daughter insists on his/her own opinion and attain his/her own object without his/her parents' permission no matter how good a deed it may be. he/she will be regarded as a sinner who disobeys his/her parents.[72]

This obligation of children to their parents did not confine itself to the period during which parents lived; it extended to the period after the parent's death.

> Korean children lived and worked and died only for their father and grandfather. The will of the father and grandfather was that of their children. The purpose of the father

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70. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 34.
71. As we saw in chapter 2 there is a controversy over the question of whether or not Confucianism is a religion.
72. "Chanyō chungsim-non" [Children Centred World]. in *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 33.

> and ancestor was the purpose of the child. If any child insists on carrying his own will. however good it may be. he would be a sinner.[73]

What brought the Chosŏn dynasty of Korea under the rule of absolute filial piety? Yi attributed it to *Sohak* [Confucian Learning for Children]. It was "a representative text book for ethics for the last three hundred years whose content is to dictate filial piety from beginning to end, and so infused the idea of filial piety that it made children the slaves of their fathers and ancestors."[74]

To Yi, independent individuals were entitled to lead their own lives. Free choice of marriage, education and job was taken as a touch stone of independence. If one were not guaranteed such rights, one was nothing more than a slave. What Yi was most concerned about in the mistaken idea of filial piety was the question of absolute parental authority.

> According to the common conventional interpretation of filial piety in Korea, a child is meant to obey his parent's will without any reservation and act for his parents in every movement. Thus, in order to become a filial son or daughter, children must sacrifice themselves for parents. and they lead a life for their parents' good. not for their own good. or that of society, or that of their wives and children. In other words. the children who are to become citizens of the state and members of the nation and husbands of wives and fathers of children are appropriated by parents. The decision about children's education, job and marriage are all made by their parent. So long as parents decide their children's marriage, education and occupation, which are affairs of grave importance to children's life. at their free will, parents hold the power of life and death over children. and children must be obedient to parental will whatever misfortune it may bring them. regardless of their opinion. . . . . In this way. the children who are under the sway of filial pity are deprived of their own right and duty towards their nation by their parents and lead a life of body and flesh without any freedom and ability. If one sentence can cover the whole, the idea of filial piety makes parental authority absolute, and this inflicts dreadful damage on society.[75]

What was missing in Yi's account was an explanation of why Confucianism attaches the highest value to filial piety, and how Confucian filial piety provided a justification for parental authority. His analysis of filial piety did not explain that the Confucian ideal consisted of continuing the ancestral cult by worshipping ancestors, and this is why children had to pay respect to living parents. It is important to recognise that behind the Confucian understanding of the parent-child relation lay a view of eternal life. Confucianism was centrally concerned with the perpetuity of life. Death, of course, was inevitable, but it was the Confucian belief that life was eternally perpetuated in the transmission of life from parent to child, child to grandchild. From this perspective, parent and child were essentially one, and it was this religious orientation that led to the Confucian idea of the parent-child relationship as something

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73. *Ibid.*
74. *Ibid.*
75. "Sin saenghwal-non" [Treatise on New Ways of life], in *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 334

absolute. This aspect of filial piety — ancestor worship — explains the discrimination against daughters because women were not entitled to attend the ceremony of ancestor worship.

However, this explanation of filial piety in terms of ancestor worship was implied in Yi's ground for the liberation of the individual from filial piety. Yi maintained that the value of individualism superseded the Confucian value of the perpetuation of life throughout posterity (ancestor worship).

> If the purpose of life of human beings is to preserve and develop the individual like every other living thing as biology teaches, the centre of the world would be one's own self, next to it would be posterity. It is a vice to sacrifice one's own self for others except in special circumstances; moreover it is, needless to say, wrong that the act of sacrifice is made not at one's own free will but under another's command. Children are independent individuals, born for themselves not for their parents. Therefore children have no obligations to sacrifice themselves to parents and parents have no right to claim their children's sacrifices.[76]

The above passage indicates that like Fukuzawa Yukichi, Yi's primary charge against Confucian family ethics was that it denied the independent individual. This is confirmed by the following passage where Yi pointed out the problem of absolute patriarchism as dependency.

> The first is a propensity to dependence. If even middle class children aged overthirty are taken under parental protection, how many persons could lead an independent life in that society? Children must follow parental direction in their every action. Thus, there is no need to use their intellect and their will and they are not allowed to have freedom. Children who do not receive a higher education and are to live as protégés of their parents do not possess the qualification as fighters of life which can be attained only by the struggle of an independent life, and lead a life of submitting to the strong and of dependence. This is needless to say a poor destiny for a state and society made up of such a people.[77]

The emphasis Yi placed on the independent individual is revealed in his demand that the Law of Inheritance should be abolished in order to secure individual independence.

> First of all, independent and free individuality should be secured for children. Children should abandon the idea that they are owned by their parents. Next, children should adopt the idea that they are their own, and the idea that their supreme obligation as children is not for their parents but for themselves and their children.
>
> If the points above mentioned are acknowledged, children will be free from the idea, detrimental to society, that they depend on their parents. The stagnation of Korean society and economic loss is caused by the lack of the will to struggle which has resulted from the attitude that expects parents' and predecessors' wealth without trying to attain their own status and honour and wealth with their ability.[78]

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76. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 34.
77. "Sin saenghwal-non", in *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 334.
78. *Ibid.*, X, 34

> Therefore it is an ideal that the Law of Inheritance should be abolished and individuals should lead independent lives after having received an appropriate education. If this ideal is realised. the complete liberation of children will be attained.[79]

Yi's secondary charge against Confucian family ethics was that it blocked the progress of society. In any society where paternal authority predominated. individual initiative could not be exerted.

> Secondly. society suffers from lack of the spirit of reform. Reform must be accomplished by the hands of youth. Where Korean youths are not allowed by parents the slightest freedom. and consider following the parents' will as the central aim of learning. and make it their business only to preserve faithfully what is handed down from previous generation. in such a society there cannot exist reform or progress.[80]

Yi's criticism of Confucian discrimination against women

One of Yi's most ferocious attack on Confucian morality was directed at Confucian discrimination against women.

> What is dreadful for the development of the nation and humanity is the absence of women's right to education. . . . Such an idea of the subjection of women came from the remnants of poisonous Chinese influence. Samchongchido. Chilgujiak [Seven vices of women]. and the prohibition of re-marriage brought numberless Korean women into the miserable and painful life of the beast and slave for several hundred years. Such suppression of women enormously damaged Korean civilisation.[81]

Yi's ground for attack on Confucian sexism was based on the idea of reciprocity which was central to both J. S Mill's argument for the liberation of women. and Fukuzawa's attack on Confucian discrimination against women as discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis. Yi noted that the relationship between duty and right in the Confucian family morality was heavily biased toward man. What revealed the greatest inequality was the Confucian view of chastity.

> The women in the Korean family are deprived of all human rights by their husbands and brothers. For instance. woman as wife must preserve her chastity but she was not allowed to demand her husband's chastity; — her husband was allowed to see tens or hundreds of woman without a word of protest from his wife. yet if his wife talked with another man for a while. she would be regarded as committing a great moral sin.[82]

This role of chastity was not limited to the period during her husband's life: it continued after her husband's death. prohibiting her from remarriage.

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79. *Ibid.*, X. 35.
80. *Ibid.*
81. *Ibid.*, I. 538.
82. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, I. 537.

> Moreover, a wife must remain faithful to the memory of her husband after her husband died. yet when a wife died. her husband could enjoy the pleasure of a new marriage before the soil of his wife's grave was dry.[83]

Another inequality which Korean women suffered from was economic inequality.

> A husband is allowed to use the whole wealth of family at his pleasure. yet his wife is not permitted to spend even a penny of money at her pleasure. . . . It is demanded that the wife should fulfil her duties without rights while her husband enjoys a unilateral monopoly of every right.[84]

To get rid of this economic and sexual discrimination, Yi urged husbands to treat wives as partners, not subordinates.

> First of all. make the husband recognise his wife as a person. next make the husband realise that it is right to make every decision through mutual consent since husband and wife both bear their share of duty and rights for a family.
>
> If a husband asks his wife for her fidelity, he must repay his wife's obligation with his own fidelity to his wife. If a husband wants to remarry after his wife's death, it is natural that the wife is also allowed to remarry. The husband must respect his wife's words and conduct. When everything is done in this way. the ideal of husband and wife is realised.[85]

Women's inequality was also conspicuous in relation to divorce.

> Confucianism establishes *ch'ilgŏjiak* [Seven valid cause for divorce] which allows a husband to divorce his wife but not vice versa — showing that a wife is a means and a belonging of her husband. That divorce is allowed not for woman but only for man discloses Confucian discrimination against women as human beings.[86]

So Confucianism reduced women to mere servants of their husbands.

> In these ways. the subjection of woman is a fundamental principle of Confucian conjugal relations. . . . As conjugal relations are based on the subjection of woman, the conjugal relation is not equal but that of master and servant. lord and vassal. Thus the wife calls her husband the lord of house. . . . Accordingly the virtue of the wife is only submission and toleration. In Confucian conjugal relations, the wife must not be so insolent as to pursue equal status with her husband.[87]

Confucianism even entailed the subjection of mothers to their sons. Yi castigated the absurdity of *samjongjido* which taught the subjection of woman during the life of her husband, and then to her son. This was made clear in Yi's novel "Mujŏng" [Heartless].

> "*Samjongjido*. the several letters of vengeance have killed millions of women and put millions of men into misery."
> Young-chae in surprise asked. "Then. is Samjongjido wrong?"

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83. *Ibid.*
84. *Ibid.*
85. *Ibid.*
86. *Ibid.*, X. 335
87. *Ibid.*.

"It is children's obligation to obey the words of their parents. It is a wife's duty to obey the words of her husband. Are. however. the children's life and the wife's life more valuable than the words of parents and husband? To have other people decide one's life will kill one's own self. It is the crime of humanity. That woman should follow her son when her husband dies shows man's outrageous tyranny. disregarding woman's personality. It is in the nature of things that mothers teach and control sons. How can there be the absurdity that mother should obey her son? . . .
"you suffered tremendous pain as a slave of old ideas. You must break off the fetter. You must awaken from illusions. Become a human being and live for your own self. Attain freedom."[88]

Yi's criticism of the Confucian institution of marriage

Yi regarded marriage as a free contract between equals, terminable on either side. His discussion of the ideal marriage focused on the notion of reciprocity.

> Marriage is a sort of contract. It is a matter of course that a contract be terminated as the cause for it on the part of either contracting party becomes extinct. Marriage. roughly speaking. is a contract for living together. Therefore. it is a corollary that the marriage contract is nullified when either contracting party cannot meet the condition of living together. In the light of this. it is not right that this truth has not been applied to women while it holds true for man.[89]

This view of marriage as a contract was a typical liberal view. though considered radical at that time even in Europe. The following passage sums up the distinctive feature of the liberal view of marriage.

> The idea of marriage as a contract was a radical and liberating one for women. It encapsulated the idea that women were persons whose autonomy should be respected equally with that of men. It suggested that marriage was a non-hierarchical relationship. based on individual rational choice and planning: a fully contractual conception of marriage.[90]

This leads us to Yi's frontal attack on Confucianism. Yi realised that in order to reform the Confucian family. it was necessary to get rid of the Confucian marriage system. since the Confucian marriage institution was an integral element of the Confucian family institution. Through marriage. the Confucian family was established and maintained. and Neo-Confucianists were much concerned to defend the traditional marriage institution which was in accord with Confucian precepts. Chu Hsi formulated

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88. Yi Kwang-su. "Mujŏng" [Heartless]. in *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. I. 155.
89. "Honin-e taehan kwan'gŏn" [My Views on Marriage]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 46.
90. Mary Stokes. "A Comment on Mendus" edited by Richard Bellamy. *Liberalism and Recent Legal and Social Philosophy*. (Franz Steiner verlag wiesbaden GMBH. Sttugart. 1989). 81.

The Propriety of Marriage.[91] in which the arranged marriage was the core of Confucianism. Yi took the view that the Confucian family cannot be reformed before the emergence of a family created by free marriage by independent individuals. Against marriage arranged by parents, Yi advocated free marriage through romantic love. The following passages from C. K. Yang help us grasp the significance of Yi's assertions:

> For the traditional Chinese family marriage was not so much an affair of the matured children as an affair of the parents and of the family, with its chief purpose not so much the romantic happiness of the marrying children but (1) fulfilling the sacred duty of producing male heirs for the perpetuation of the ancestors' lineage, (2) the acquiring of a daughter-in-law for the service and comfort of the parents, and the begetting of sons for the security of the parents' old age. . . .
>
> To fulfil this purpose, marriage could not be allowed to transfer the centre of affection, loyalty, and authority from the parents to the new couple. Hence the traditional discouragement of open affection between husband and wife, particularly when they were newly wed. In every way marriage and its ensuing relationships remained subordinated to the welfare and happiness of the parents and the continuity of the family organization. Such a consideration applied not only to the marriage of a son; the marriage of a daughter was subjected to the same consideration by the husband's family.[92]

Yi explained how the Confucian arranged marriage was more of a contract between parents than a contract between bride and groom.

> Conjugal relations are not the relation between husband and wife but that of contract between parents concerned in marriage, and between two families. Marriage is decided by parental will without considering the intentions of contracting parties in marriage. This is made by absolute parental authority.[93]
>
> [T]he husband does not love his wife until his parents love her. If he doesn't follow this, he is considered to commit one of the sins of impiety to one's parents. Therefore, if his parents do not like her, however much he loves his wife, he must leave her. In a word, the wife exists not for the husband as wife but for parents as daughter-in-law. Examination of the marriage institution which is based on Confucianism shows that the fundamental requisite for marriage is not love and understanding, and mutual consent

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91. Martina Deuchler gives a good explanation for this: "The Confucian wedding ceremony, which found its permanent form in Chu Hsi's *Chia-li*, was based principally on two great Chinese works of ritual, the *Li Chi* (Book of rites) and the *I Li* (Book of etiquette and ceremonial). The six parts of the wedding procedure outlined in the *I Li* were collectively known as the six rites and became the blueprint for the Confucian style wedding ceremony. In his *Chia-li*, Chu Hsi adopted this form, but tightened it and renamed its parts. His outline of procedure was as follows: (1) marriage proposal (*ŭihon*), (2) betrothal (*napch'ae*), (3) sending of wedding gifts (*napp'ye*), (4) bridegroom meeting the bride in person and inducting her into his home (*ch'inyong*), (5) presentation of the bride to the parents-in-law (*pugyon kugo*), and (6) presentation of the bride in the ancestral temple (*myogyon*). Chu Hsi added (7), the presentation of the bridegroom to the bride's parents (*sogyon puji pumo*)." Martina Deuchler, "The Tradition: Women during the Yi Dynasty", in *Virtues in Conflict*, ed. Sandra Mattielli (Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch, 1977), 13-14.

92. C. K. Yang, "The Chinese Family in the Communist Revolution", Part I in *Chinese Communist Society: The Family and the Village* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1959), 22-23.

93. *Yi Kwang-su chonjip*, X, 335

but parental intention and the form of the *yuk-rye* (six proprieties). If marriage is in accord with parental intentions and meets the form required by propriety of marriage. the conjugal relation is established regardless of the love and consent of both partners in marriage. Conversely. if the marriage does not meet the intention of parents and the form required by the Confucian propriety of marriage. it is called an elopement and illicit union even though there is an understanding and love and consent between the partners. This is the result of the absolute parental authority and formalism which is discussed in detail above. . . . The end of marriage lies not in the happiness of individuals as wife and husband and the progress of society and state. but in the pleasure of parents and the means for home management.[94]

What was Yi's alternative to the Confucian conception of marriage? Against the Confucian version Yi proposed a new style of marriage: free marriage through romantic love. To Yi, the end of marriage was reproduction and the happiness of the individual spouses.

> Generally. marriage is the act of the contract made by adult men and women by their free will. Parents should not be allowed to make marriages for their children by parental will but only to provide children with appropriate guidance and assistance. Marriage is made not by another's opinion but by the spouse's opinions. . . . The one who is to love his wife is not the husband's parents but the husband himself. The one whose wife is to serve is not the husband's parents but the husband. The husband is the wife's husband and the wife is the husband's wife. Husband and wife are never owned by the parents.[95]
>
> [A] conjugal life is the great happiness which individuals should enjoy and plays the greatest part in the preservation and development of the nation. What should determine conjugal relation lies not in the selfish will of the parents, the condition of the family. and propriety but only the intention of the partners and the ideal of the nation. Only after these two requirements are met. does parental consent and the ceremonial form of marriage have any meaning. Conventional conjugal institutions put the cart before the horse.[96]

To meet this end of marriage, Yi presented five conditions: First, the health of both partners. Second, their mental (intellectual) power. Third, the physical maturity of both partners. Fourth, the economic ability of both partners. Fifth, mutual love between both partners. Of these five conditions, Yi maintained that the fifth — romantic love — was the decisive factor:

> Romantic love is a fundamental condition to marriage. While we can imagine love without marriage. we cannot imagine marriage without love. Marriages in Korea. however. have disregarded this fundamental condition. which caused numberless personal tragedies and tremendous damage to the nation.[97]
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> The happiness of marriage lies in love and a peaceful family life for individuals. and the good influence derived from the two for society. It is said that the greatest happiness of man is romantic love. "A hundred years of life toil is the price to pay for such romantic

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94. *Ibid.* X. 336.
95. *Ibid.*, X. 101.
96. *Ibid.*, X. 336.
97. *Ibid.*, X. 43

love." a poet said. Even if one discounts such sayings. it seems at least that romantic love occupies one half of the total happiness that man experiences in life.[98]

Romantic love, for Yi, was not purely sensual: it was spiritual also.

> The ground for love between man and woman lies in passionate attractive affection arising from the mutual understanding of individuality and respect. Though superficial beauty of personal appearance. voice and manners. is an important condition. modern people with highly developed intellects cannot be content with this superficial beauty. Their satisfaction with beauty is not met until they are fascinated by the deep beauty of individuality. that is. spiritual beauty. The love which is confined to the beauty of personal appearance may be primitive or animal-like. In the evolved love the attractive power of ardent emotion and cool judgement of intellect are paralleled. That is the standard of the love of the young with good education and good health.[99]

Thus, in Yi's view. those who were able to enter into free marriage through romantic love were synonymous with independent individuals. Indeed. romantic love was the touch-stone of an independent individual.

The issue of marriage was actually a power struggle between parents and children over the individual's independence. Yi described it through the heroine character in the novel "Kaech'ŏk-cha" [Pioneer] as follows.

> That is to act according to what one thinks to be right. You are your own. Are you owned by your parent or brother? . . . Do you have a desire to demonstrate your freedom and authority of personality without another's restraint or check so long as you can. . . . Indeed it is a war. First we must wage a war against parental power. secondly against the power of social convention.[100]
>
> "I raise the banner of revolt against mother. brother. family and convention which has been handed down for several thousand years. . . . Take the sovereignty of society and morality from them." . . . She [Sŏngsun] is no longer a subject of a despotic kingdom. she is the most revered queen. She is the lord who deals with everything with her wisdom and emotion.[101]

The significance of romantic love in Yi's writings has not been recognised by commentators in spite of the fact that it served as a very effective means for attacking the foundation of the Confucian family system. Most commentators took Yi's advocacy of romantic love as commonplace, and were content with finding evidence in it for criticising Yi for his apolitical position. They failed to see the fundamental political implication of his promoting romantic love. It was connected with the right of free choice.

> Romantic love is apt to be misunderstood in Korea. When Korean people heard the notion of romantic love between man and woman they felt disgust toward it as love is thought to be connected with scandalous relations and vices. They cannot bear to refer to the subject for the words `romantic love' are looked upon as tabooed to the man of

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98. *Ibid.*, X. 42
99. *Ibid.*,
100. "Kaech'ŏk-cha" [Pioneer]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, I. 257.
101. *Ibid.*, I. 259.

> virtue and the Confucian gentleman. This is inevitable for those who had been contaminated by Confucian morality for a thousand years and accordingly have seen indecent love. Love is, however, an important function of life, and it is based upon human nature.[102]

Why did Confucian family institutions suppress romantic love? C. K. Yang explains that it was in order to protect and secure the parent's authority. When the marriage had been dictated and arranged by the parents, "the son was made to feel that the affair was seriously related to the parents, even though he might not be entirely convinced that his own role in it was totally unimportant."[103] Especially critical was the parents' authority over the choice of a daughter-in-law. The marriage arranged by parents prompt the daughter-in-law to recognise the authority of parents-in-law, in that "she came into the family by their order and choice, not by her personal love for the son." This led to the legitimate control of the parents over the daughter-in-law". Marriage which is made by romantic love has all the opposite effects of an arranged marriage. The marriage which is made by romantic love makes the husband-wife relationship central, which diminishes the role and authority of parents. Take for instance the relationship between the daughter-in-law and parents-in-law. "If the daughter-in-law should come into the family of her own volition and through affection for her husband, it would be difficult for her to subordinate her role to the will of the parents-in-law."[104] In order to maintain parental authority, therefore romantic love is suppressed.

> Thus one device to maintain parental control over the married son and his wife was to deny to the young the ecstatic experience of romantic love and to seek to divert it by other institutional means, such as concubinage and tacit approval of prostitution, while trying to keep the latter from becoming too disruptive an influence to the family organization..[105]

The link with nationalism

Yi's attack on the Confucian conception of family morality was thus based on liberal individualism; i.e., human rights, freedom and the idea of contract. It should be noted, however, that there was another significant aspect of Yi's attack on Confucian family morality based on Yi's nationalism.

The following passage from "Chanyŏ chungsim-non" [Children Centred World View] made it clear that Yi did not conduct his attack on Confucianism solely on the basis of individualism.

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102. *Ibid.*, X. 42.
103. Yang, *op. cit.*, 24
104. *Ibid.*
105. *Ibid.*

> Children are not their parent's possessions but their own and the nation's. Parents should treat their children with respect as respect is paid to the whole nation and with their true heart or devotion. They must not regard their children as their belongings with which they can deal at their pleasure. . . . It is necessary to advocate the idea that children can not be the parent's possession but the nation's. . . . The adoption of compulsory education and liability for military service in modern Western civilised countries shows us that ordinary parents in the age of nationalism regard their children not as their own children but as members of the nation. Therefore it must not be forgotten by parents that children are members of the nation when they give birth. educate them and see them enter the society and become successful.[106]

As stated above, the Confucian idea of filial piety justified absolute parental power. But

> absolute parental power is detrimental to both individual and society. In civilised countries, the scope of parental authority is reduced and children's rights are expanded. What belonged to parental power is transferred to the state, take for example, compulsory education and the legal age of marriage. . . . Whatever morals, law and customs may impede the happiness and progress of the individual and society, it is vice. Therefore such a false idea of filial piety must be eradicated.[107]

Yi's contention has obvious affinities with Fukuzawa's argument that independent individuals made an independent nation. Yi's novel "Kaech'ŏk-cha" [Pioneer], which advocates individualism against Confucianism, exemplified this nationalistic reason in its attack on Confucian female subjection. It is to be noted that the ground which he here adduced for attacking Confucian morality was not right but duty.

> Woman is a human being, so woman has a lot of duties as a human being such as the duties of daughter, wife and mother. Moreover there are many opportunities for a woman to do her duty in the area of religion, science, arts, society and state. In Korea since ancient times, a woman's duty has been limited to a wife's role. To become a wife is decided by other's will and words. So far, woman is nothing but a man's belongings, possession. You were the possession of your father. Now you are supposed to be the possession of Mr. Yi as one item of goods which is transferred from one hand to another. . . . You must become a human being before you become a woman. . . . You have many duties to do by yourself. You are not born in the world only for parents and your husband. You are born for the sake of previous millions of generations of Korea and the present millions of brothers and thousand millions of descendants of Korea. Therefore you have duties to ancestors, brothers and descendants. Hence it is a sin that you die before you do your duty.[108]

This passage is certain to weaken the view that Yi advocated the liberation of women from Confucian morality and institutions solely on the basis of liberal individualism. Yi tried to justify the liberation of women by expanding the role of woman for the benefit of the nation, raising the question whether his advocacy of women's rights was only instrumental to nationalism. In a rather oblique passage, Yi implied that national growth depended upon the liberation of women.

> Parents should not be allowed to discriminate between sons and daughters. . . . There is no need of worrying that heaven will produce male and female in the proportion of one

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106. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 36.
107. *Yi Kwang-su, "Sin saenghwal-non", in Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 334
108. *Ibid.*, I, 155.

> male to 1,000 females. There should not be discrimination between sons and daughters as children. . . . There should not be distinctions between sons and daughters about food. education. the inheritance of wealth. Supposing that the whole population of Korea is 15 million. women amount to half of the population. but in reality. the population is nothing more than 7.5 million. The population of Korea cannot become 15 million until women are offered personality. education. and women become independent persons.[109]

What, then, was Yi's ultimate purpose in advocating the emancipation of children and women? Individualism or nationalism? Was the liberalism in Yi's attack on Confucian familial morality confined to the role of an instrument for nationalism? It seems certain that Yi's individualism, which his attack on the Confucian family was based on, was coloured by a nationalist tone. We cannot, however, conclude that this entailed that Yi's liberal individualism was exclusively instrumental to the end of nationalism. Rather as we shall see in the next section "Yi's Critique of Confucianism from the Perspective of Nationalism," it indicated that liberal individualism and nationalism in Yi's thought should be treated as two sides of the same coin. This is supported by the fact that in Yi's writings, the individual and society (or nation) went together, as frequently seen in such typical expressions as "the happiness of the individual and the development of the nation". Indeed Yi virtually conjoined the words "individual" and "nation"; they were to him inseparable.

4.5 Yi's critique of Confucianism from the perspective of nationalism

Turning now from Yi's liberal ideas to his nationalist ideas we can divide this aspect of his anti-Confucianism into three parts: first his advocacy of citizenship; second his theory of nationalism in "Minjok kaejo-non"; and third his cultural nationalism.

Yi's advocacy of citizenship

In Yi's attack on Confucianism in relation to citizenship, there were two elements: one was the question of loyalty, the other was the extent of citizenship.

The nation state demanded its citizens supreme loyalty to the nation — something Koreans were not yet able to give:

> Koreans are not disciplined enough yet for social life. The Korean conception of welfare reaches out only to his own family, his own friends, and his own party. He shows his disinterest for his society and he works only for his interest or the interest of his family.

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109. "Ch'osŏn Kajŏng-ŭi kaehyŏk" [The Reform of Korean Family], in *Yi Kwang-su chŏ njip*, I, 538. This argument by Yi resembles Fukuzawa's. See *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women*, 54

> This way will not work in the end. We have to learn how to extend our scope of interest to the Korean race as a whole.[110]

The absolute patriarchalism in Confucian familism was a major obstacle to loyalty to the nation. The absolute patriarch was ideologically supported by the idea of filial piety which demanded obligation to the family over any other loyalty, including loyalty to the nation.

With regard to the extent of citizenship, nationalism demanded the mobilisation of national members on the principle that every national member should be a bearer of responsibility for the nation's destiny. This assertion implied that every national member turned into a citizen. For the sake of this goal, the equality of people was guaranteed. Thus the idea of class in Confucianism was to be abolished.[111]

In Yi's view, Confucianism was based on the idea of class. What clearly disclosed the hierarchical character of Confucianism was the Confucian principle, "*myŏngbun*" [Know One's Place] which demanded that people behaved according to their status in society. Yi observed that this idea of "*myŏngbun*" was closely connected to fatalism in Confucianism. The idea of *myŏngbun* worked strictly in the concrete form of proprieties.

> There is no freedom where there is class. There is no class where there is freedom. In the primitive age when individual freedom is not developed, the idea of class prevails everywhere. One of the major distinctive features of Confucianism, the relic of the feudal age, is the idea of class.[112]

Yi pointed out that *Chun-Ch'u* (Spring and Autumn) was the source of the idea of class. "The reason why *Chun-Ch'u* (Spring and Autumn) written by Confucius is highly praised lies in the fact that it is designated to make distinctions between classes." One of the central ideas of Confucianism, *Taeŭi myŏngbun* (Know one's place) was nothing but class. In Yi's view, the Five Cardinal Relations definitively demonstrated the extent to which Confucianism was class-centred. "Lord and subject, father and son, husband and wife, senior and junior relations of the Five Cardinal Relations except between friends are based on the principle of class." Yi noted the fact that in Confucianism, proprieties had been highly developed, and that the reason for that was that "Proprieties were created for the sake of distinctions of class."

> Proprieties were procedures between different classes as to clothes and accommodation, coaches, language, marital ceremony and funeral. Therefore, the central principle of proprieties is higher and lower. The expression of higher and lower is class.[113]

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110. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 141.
111. Nationalism emphasises equality but is less concerned about human rights.
112. "Sin saenghwal-non" [Treatise on New Ways of Life], *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 339.
113. *Ibid.*

Yi concluded that "The idea of equality cannot be seen in Confucianism." because:

> The Confucian distinction of low and high is applied to everything such as *namjonyŏbi* [the subjection of women]. *kwan-jon-min-bi* [putting government above people or the exaltation of official above private life]. *chang-yu-yu-sŏ* [the younger should give precedence to the elder or elders first]. *yangban* [aristocrat]. *chungin* [the intermediary class standing between the *yangban* and the commoner]. *sangnom* [commoner] . . . . . As a result of this distinction of class in everything. the upper class has its own way of conduct. and the lower class has its own way of conduct.[114]

And he concluded that this permeation of class consciousness was responsible for blocking the emergence of national consciousness.

> As one's class is determined at one's birth. class is hereditary and turned into a sort of tribe. So each class has its distinctive idea and feelings and customs and habits. The gap between classes grows with the passage of time. and in the long run they turned into tribes each of which has a different history and blood line. In this way. in Korea there are countless small tribes who hold their own ground and cannot be harmonised among one another. For example. *no* (seniors). *so* (juniors). *nam* (south). *puk* (north). *chungin* (intermediary class). *yurim* (Confucian scholars circle). *nong* (peasant). *kong* (artisan). *sang* (merchant). *kiho*, *yŏngnam*, *sŏbuk*. . . . As these innumerable classes conflict one with another, they never have a common feeling that they belong to one nation. In such a society. how can we expect the common good and the development of culture? Unity and solidarity is the backbone of struggle for existence and the development of culture.[115]

Another focus of Yi's attack on Confucianism in relation to citizenship arose out of the concept of "Confucian individualism". i.e. egoism[116] This was closely connected to Yi's perception of the current Korean crisis. which in his view. originated from the Korean inability to develop organisations. The lack of development of free associations. which were vital to modern national life. was ascribed by Yi to "Confucian individualism".

An examination of Yi's perception of the situation facing Korea is helpful to an understanding of his criticism of Confucian individualism. Yi regarded the worst threat by the Japanese to be their attempt to dissolve Korean unity as a nation. In "Sonyŏn-ege" (To Youth) Yi's fear was represented as follows:

> Those who are in patriotic lamentation say that the Korean people fell into an extreme decline. and that as the Korean people have reached the bottom of their decline. from now on there will be no decline for the Korean people. But this is an ignorant perception of a situation which is derived from the mentality of those are looking for

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114. *Ibid.*
115. *Ibid.*
116. Yi claimed that Confucianism is "individualistic." Here "individualism" is the literal translation of "kaein-juŭi." A distinction must. however. be made between liberal individualism and Confucian individualism in order to avoid confusion. Yi used the latter term to denote egoism and lack of public virtue in Confucianism. In his view. Confucianism was mainly concerned with personal relations. and as a result. it lacked public virtue. He ascribed the lack of public morals to Confucian education which focused on personal self cultivation. This view is paralleled to Fukuzawa's.

luck. Many areas of potential decline are left to the Korean nation; there is enough room for the Korean people to go on declining for a further hundred years. That is, the Korean people could turn into the Ainu of Japan. You can't imagine that the Korean people who have 17 million population and a long history of culture could fall into such a destiny as the Ainu. However look at history. Though it is a mere several hundred years since the empire of Islam collapsed, the Arab people have lost their territory, wealth, learning, honour, and are reduced to nomadic barbarians. Because the Arab people were no longer able to survive in the fierce competition of the world they declined. Unless the Korean people strive to learn and correct their defects and become a new people, in less than a hundred years this Korean people will be driven from the big cities such as Seoul and P'yongyang, like the present Seoul citizens were driven from the high street to the outskirts of city, to an outlying place [by the Japanese], and in the long run they would be the people who find themselves among nomads around the Changbaek (Changbai in Chinese) Mountains. I could see the picture vividly.[117]

In these circumstances, to maintain national solidarity was the most urgent concern, and in order to do so the significance of organization was stressed by Yi.

> The life of a nation is that of a great organization which is made up of the aggregate of innumerable corporate lives. The life of a nation is that of a great organization which is organized in cells such as industrial, educational, religious, charitable, associations of scholars, too many to be countable. . . . On the one hand, there is an aspect of the state which resembles a whole aggregate of individuals. On the other hand, the state is seen as the whole aggregate of big and small organisations. The life of the modern state or nation is explained best by this second aspect. In the past, the nation's constitutive unit was the individual or family. Nowadays the constituent unit of a nation is the association. Indeed without sound and prosperous associations, national life could be doomed to decline. Accordingly, free associations are as significant socially and politically as is the political institution of the state. They are inseparably linked to the political institutions of the state. However, as we do not trust each other, it is difficult to establish and maintain and develop these associations, and this makes the corporate life of the nation impossible. This leads to the perishing of the nation. According to Kropotkin, those who are fittest for existence are the ones who have the habit of mutual aid and by doing so build the strongest solidarity. But such a unity can only be attained by mutual trust. How can individuals ridden with dishonesty, develop such a solidarity?[118]
>
> The power of organising is central to individual leadership and denotes a national survival ability. The nation which lacks the power of organising cannot be the fittest in the struggle for survival. A thousand organised people can defeat ten thousand disorganised people . . . In the athletic field we often find that the team in which each player has a superior quality but is not organised loses the game.[119]

In Yi's eyes the Korean people were as unorganised as grains of sand.

> The present Korean people is less like a nation organized and united under a certain principle than like an aggregation of individuals such as grains of sand. When the organization representing Korea as a whole is called, there is no one who can respond to the call. Korea is nothing but the body and limbs without the nucleus or central nerve

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117. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 161.
118. *Ibid.*, X, 155.
119. "chŏlmŭn Chosŏnin-ŭi sowon" [The Wishes of Young Korean], *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 199.

> system which ought to represent Korea and be at the centre of Korea and play the part of the head and eyes of Korea.[120]

What is wanting in Korean corporate life was the ability to collaborate naturally in collective activities.

> It seems that we greatly lack the ability to closely collaborate in collective life. Were it not so, we would not have failed so often. If we look for the cause of this failure in collective and structured life in external circumstances, it goes against the principle of self-criticism. It is also the power of organization that overcomes any external obstacle. Great work is done by great force. Great force is generated by the power of knowledge and the co-operation of the collective.[121]

According to Yi, even the ruling class of the Chosŏn (1392-1910) period lacked a sense of co-operation: "[T]hey did not have societal life, namely, the spirit of social service in their collective life. They have committed malicious deeds because they lacked the spirit of serving the country and people."[122] As noted earlier, what brought the Korean people to this failure to collaborate closely in collective life was Confucian individualism, which Yi regarded as synonymous with a lack of public virtue.[123]

> Korean education is directed only at personal self-cultivation and thus the knowledge of organization and training for organization is neglected. It is the corollary of the education of sages [Confucianism]. An evil or abuse of education went to an extreme by producing the class of the "*bamboo thicket*" (jungle) whose goal is self-cultivation completely separated from the needs of the populace. Even the man who has the ambition of "governing the state and pacifying the world" waits for the ruler's appointment by practising the military arts and enlarging his stock of knowledge. There are few who tried to take power to put their ideal into practice by rallying to form a party with men of the same mind. At that time, if anybody formed an association, he would be persecuted for the crime of conspiracy to rebellion. . . . Such being the case, as we are deficient at organization and despise the training for organization, we have come to our destiny today.[124]

Yi's theory of nationalism in minjok kaejo-non

The second part of Yi's anti-Confucianism from the perspective of nationalism is by far the most significant part — the theory of nationalism which was expressed in his

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120. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X. 200.
121. *Ibid.*
122. "Minjok Kaejo-non" [The Reform of Nation]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X. 126.
123. It was Professor Kim Hong-u who first pointed out that Yi's anti-Confucianism focused on the critique of Confucian individualism. Kim, Hong-u. "Munhak chakp'um-esŏ pon han'guk hyŏndae chŏngch'i sasang — ch'unwŏn Yi kwang-su-rŭl chungsim-ŭro" [The Characteristic of Modern Political Thought, Seen in Literature Work — Centred on Chunwon Yi Kwang-su] *Sahoe kwahak-kwa chŏngch'aek yŏn'gu* [*Social Science and Policy Studies*]. Vol. IV, No. 3. (Spring, 1983), 158.
124. Yi Kwang-su, "Chŏlmŭn Chosŏnin-ŭi sowon" [The wishes of young Korean], in *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X. 200.

"Minjok kaejo-non", (The Reconstruction of National Character)[125] which may be taken as the major source of Yi's conception of nationalism. No writing in modern Korea provoked as much critical controversy as "Minjok kaejo-non". The critics attacked it for two main reasons; first "Minjok kaejo-non" was criticised for its unjust interpretation of Korean culture, as Robinson explains:

> It was precisely this attitude that offended many patriots in Korea. If Korean society was without merit, why bother to transform its culture at all? Such an opinion was offered by Sin Sangu's writing in *Sin saenghwal* in June 1922, a month after the publication of the Kaejo-non. Most offensive to Sin was Yi's callous and arrogant judgement on the level of Korean civilisation. Dismissing Yi's charge that Korean civilisation "bordered on barbarism." Sin criticized Yi for disparaging the great historical and spiritual heritage of the Korean people. How could Yi believe that a cultural movement could undo the cumulative effort of 5,000 years of historical development? Furthermore, Sin asserted that Koreans had nothing to be ashamed of, considering general patterns of development world-wide.[126]

The criticism that Yi's evaluation of Korean history and culture was unjust seemed to indicate that Korean self esteem was offended by Yi's undue focus on Korean defects. However this would be a superficial observation; the criticism went much deeper than mere self-esteem — Yi's attack touched the question of the value of Korea's entire history or culture. Robinson points out that:

> Sin concluded his critique of Yi with a stirring recitation of past Korean cultural and political achievements. According to Sin, Yi's formula for cultural development, based as it was on a mistaken judgement of Korean capabilities and strengths, was tantamount to a denial of his own identity. It is clear by Sin's remarks that, to some at least, Yi's Kaejo-non bordered on a total rejection of past Korean accomplishments. If past cultural development had not laid a base for the future of an independent Korea, upon what did Yi propose to build?[127]

But one should not jump to the conclusion that Yi rejected totally "past Korean accomplishments". It should be noted that Yi did not identify the Korea of the Chosŏn dynasty with authentic Korea. To Yi Kwang-su, the Chosŏn dynasty of Korea was to be negated as a false Korea which had lost its authenticity by being contaminated with Confucianism. Hence Yi made every efforts to find the archetype of Korea in pre-Confucian periods of Korea.

According to Robinson, Yi's attack was also resented because it implied that he advocated dependence by Korea on Western culture.

> As we can see by this early attack on the *Kaejo-non*, some intellectuals were openly offended by Yi's attitude toward Korean culture. Implicit in this attack was a hint of the *sadae* issue and past cultural subservience to China. Was Yi advocating a similar bias by supporting a cultural movement to spread Western ideas and values? Certainly the

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125. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X. 116-147.
126. Robinson, *op. cit.*, 67.
127. *Ibid.*, 127.

> cultural nationalists were vulnerable to this charge, given their heavy emphasis on modern education and Western liberalism. Yet, by pointing out in great detail the failures of Korean culture and linking the causes of colonial subjugation to flaws in Korean society, the *Kaejo-non* came close to a curious back handed justification of Japanese rule. To Sin Sang'u, Yi's theory was "basic and worthless," an "insult" to the nation.[128]

In my view, such critics failed to note that Yi was fully aware of this danger of dependency on Western culture. For an example of this awareness, we may note that in "Sin saenghwal-non" [Treatise on New Ways of Life] Yi criticized Christianity in the same way as he attacked Confucianism.

The third criticism levelled against "Minjok kaejo-non" was that it underestimated the value of politics. That is to say, Yi was charged with conducting the movement for independence not in a political way but in a cultural way. It is true that "Minjok kaejo-non" emphasised the superiority of morality over politics — but only as a kind of compromise to avoid Japanese persecution. In the period of Japanese colonial rule, politics meant independence. "Without politics" can be taken as "without any struggle for political independence". However, we must be careful not to accept the writings by Yi "without politics" at face value. In the colonial period, even writing a novel could be taken as a serious political act. Yi defended his gradualist or preparatory programme by inserting in "Na-ŭi kobaek" [My confession] the following passage which described his prosecution by a Japanese colonial prosecutor for organizing the Suyang Tongu-hoe:

> On the question of whether or not Suyang Tong'u-hoe is for the Independence Movement, I made an excuse by saying that" I want Korean independence but this organization is not for the Independence Movement but for individual cultivation."
> He [Japanese prosecutor] asked "What is self-cultivation made for?"
> I replied " Cultivation is to build up individual and national strength.
> He pressed hard on the purpose of building up national strength in order to draw from me the answer that it is intended for National Independence.[129]

The above passage shows just what political implications Yi's apolitical approach had in the colonial situation in which an assertion of morality was interpreted as an act of politics. In the long run, what is at issue between Yi and his critics is reduced to a difference of view in evaluating how effective and realistic it was as a strategy for independence. "Minjok kaejo-non" supported the strategy of gradualism by which stress was placed on preparation for independence, not direct struggle with the Japanese. Such a strategy could, however, be interpreted as a pessimistic or defeatist strategy.

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128. *Ibid.*
129. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, VII, 270.

More seriously, Yi's assertion that morality was superior to politics was criticised for being very close to the Confucian view of politics. "Minjok kaejo-non" adopted some of the customary Confucian terms and ways of thinking which had been criticised by Yi's previous writings: especially its frequent usage of cultivation and the stress on morality. This went against the grain for young intellectuals who had received modern Western education and who had earlier strongly applauded Yi's attack on Confucian morality and ideas. They had good reason to suspect that Yi's sudden change to a conservative position was related to his compromise over Japanese colonialism.

To understand "Minjok kaejo-non", an examination of "Sonyŏn-ege" [To Youth], "Chungch'u kyegŭp-kwa sahoe" [Society and Central Class], and "Sin saenghwal-non" [Treatise on New Ways of Life], is necessary, because these writings are the necessary preliminaries of "Minjok kaejo-non." In "Sonyŏn-ege," Yi diagnosed the crisis of Korea as due to a triple bankruptcy: economic, intellectual and moral. In "Chungch'u kyegŭp-kwa sahoe", the value of organization and the central class (i.e., the future leading class the nature of which will be discussed later) was presented. In "Sin saenghwal-non", Confucianism was systematically criticised for blocking individual happiness and national development. The argument attacking Confucianism was similar to Fukuzawa's argument in *An Encouragement of Learning*, that "individual independence leads to national independence." Individual consciousness freed from the yoke of Confucian indoctrination was valued for nation-building purposes.

But in "Minjok kaejo-non" we note the absence of direct criticism of Confucianism. This may be explained by the fact that Yi was more concerned with "how" (means) than "what" (ends). That is, his priority was here placed on organization and morality. The stress on morality appeared, for the first time, in "Sonyŏn-ege". It is ironic that Yi who attacked moralism in "Usŏn su-ga toego yŏnhu-e saram-i toera" [Before becoming a man, be an animal] maintained the importance of morality in "Sonyŏn-ege" [To Youth]. Yi's "Before Becoming a Man, Be an Animal" which was written under the influence of social-Darwinism was a scathing satire on the moral-centred world view of Confucianism. According to Confucianism, those who lacked a sense of morality and courtesy were nothing more than animals. Following this Confucian standard, Western culture belonged to the culture of animals. But Yi ascribed the down-fall of Korea to this moral-centred world view of Confucianism, and in the face of national crisis, Yi urged that Korea abandon the moral-centred world view of Confucianism.

> Morality and courtesy is generated after an individual or nation entered the period of senile decline through the period of adolescence. When an individual becomes a slave of morality and courtesy, he is drawn near to his grave; while where a nation venerates only morality and courtesy, she is doomed to be on the way to defeat and down-fall. To

> civilised morality is attributed the fall of Rome. The same can be said of China and India.[130]

By contrast to this antagonistic position towards moralism in "Before Becoming a Man, Be an Animal", in "Sonyŏn-ege" Yi insisted upon the value of morality: "Morality is the most important requirement of life (especially in corporate life)." Yi criticised the view that knowledge is the most important requirement of corporate life as the most dreadfully erroneous view. He warned those who neglected the importance of morality that "the corporation whose first priority is given to knowledge and the second to virtue is doomed to collapse." In "To Youth", Yi diagnosed the causes of the problems from which Korea suffered as bad political institutions and lack of industrial development, education, and military power and heroes. But underlying all these is morality:

> I suppose that our down-fall is attributed to present day Korean morals. Is the decline of Korea attributed to such factors as bad political institutions and lack of industrial development, education, and military power and heroes? Indeed that is true. If political institutions had been good, it would have improved Korea with the full utilisation and development of all capabilities of Korean people. If industry had prospered, it would have brought the Korean people and state much wealth. If Korea had had the right ideal of education and spread it into Korean society, Korea would not suffer from the shortage of human resources capable of maintaining the state. If it had been so, Korea could not have fallen into decline. But what is the fundamental power which makes political institutions right, and industry and education develop? It is morality. Morality is life and soul.[131]

Yi recognised this major shift in his position and attempted to defend it by distinguishing between the morality which he advocated and Confucian morality:

> The morality of "the country of courtesy" is not the morality that I refer to. Our elders asserted that foreign people have no morality on the ground that they do not observe mourning for three years after their parents' death and they marry even those who have the same family origin.[132]

However, although Yi contended that the morality that he referred to was quite distinct from Confucian morality, and that the content of the two moralities was very different; for Yi morality was instrumental to politics, whereas for Confucianism politics was instrumental to morality; their mode of thinking shared one common factor — morality was taken by both as the supreme factor in the fate of society.

What brought about the change in Yi's position over the place of morality? One possible explanation is that Yi was influenced by An Ch'ang-ho. An Chang-ho's ideas show that he was under the influence of the two Chinese thinkers: Yen Fu and Liang

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130. Yi Kwang-su. "Usŏn su-ga toego yŏnhu-e saram-i toera" [Before becoming a man, be an animal]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 243.
131. "Sonyŏn-ege" [To Youth]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 151.
132. *Ibid.*

Ch'i-ch'ao. It seems that An may have believed that what Liang advocated for China could be applied to Korea. This is suggested by the fact that An adopted Liang's *Yinping shinwen chi* as a textbook for his Taesŏng School:

> A Korean aspirant from a southern district of Korea visited An and asked him what he should do first for his nation. An replied: "It is not that only great achievements can benefit the country. I advise you to acquire several copies of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's *Yinping Shinwen chi* and give them to famous scholars in your district. By doing so, you will contribute to the country."[133]

To what extent did An influence Yi's thought? In my view, the answer lies in a comparison between the "Sin saenghwal-non" and "Minjok kaejo-non". "Sin saenghwal-non" was written in 1918, four years earlier than "Minjok kaejo-non"; that is, "Minjok kaejo-non" was written after Yi joined the Hŭngsadan [Young Korean Academy] organized by An.

In "Sin saenghwal-non" [Treatise on the New Ways of Life], one of the major works of anti-Confucianism, Yi argued that a consciousness change was required if national progress was to be achieved. The Confucian way of life was dismissed as a failed way of life. Confucianism was attacked for its idea of filial piety, its notion of class, its reverence for the past, its respect for China, its neglect of economy, its formalism, its unequal relationship between husband and wife, its effeminacy (the neglect of the military arts), its fatalism, its neglect of science, and its lack of vitality. Confucianism was castigated as an impediment to both the happiness of the individual and the development of the nation. Thus it must be abandoned. Yi advocated change initiated by human will:

> Life, as indicated by the two words *saeng* and *hwal*, is fluid and mutable rather than fixed like a rock. Compared with water, it is like a flowing current in a river, not stagnant water in a lake. . . . . Those who advocate the fixed-life view are the ones who would say that we ought to meet in only one session of the national assembly at the time of nation building and obey the laws for ten thousand generations. Such views go directly against the greatest principle of the universe whose golden rule is: "Life constantly changes." The reason why we [Koreans] failed in the past was because we forgot this truth.[134]

Yi urged Korean people to take the path of man-made change, not waiting for natural or unconscious evolutionary change.[135] In order to bring about such change, self-criticism was required — that is to say, a re-evaluation of old Confucian ways of life: " the moving force of such change is self-criticism. Self-criticism is indeed the

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133. Chu Yo-sŏp ed., *An Tosan chŏnsŏ* [Complete Works of An Tosan] (Seoul: Samjungdang, 1971), 87.
134. "Sin saenghwal-non" [Treatise on New Ways of Life], *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 326.
135. *Ibid.*, X, 327.

fundamental moving force of progress, and the greatest power and glory of civilised man."[136]

By contrast to "Sin saenghwal-non", which urged the need to liberate individuals from the prison of Confucianism, in "Minjok kaejo-non" Yi was concerned with how to change. Accordingly, the practice and method of change was much more stressed in "Minjok kaejo-non" compared with "Sin saenghwal-non". The value of organization was emphasised, along with that of morality. Yi argued that the development of the nation depended on national character which was in turn based on morality. Thus in order to reconstruct the nation, the transformation of the people's morality was a prerequisite.

Yi's nationalism here can be regarded as a development of the idea of the new citizen which may be traced back to earlier writers including Fukuzawa Yukichi. Yi's treatise "Minjok kaejo-non" resembled Fukuzawa's *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization* in that the transformation or reform of national character was an idea which can be seen in both their writings. Three premises of this idea of the development of national character can be identified: First, every nation had her own national character. Second, national character is exemplified in the habits or customs of a nation. Third, national character could be changed by human will. In the following passage from *An Outline of a theory of Civilisation*, Fukuzawa Yukichi confirmed the central importance of customs.

> The explanation for such a state of affairs can be found entirely in custom. A long ingrained custom becomes second nature, with the result that certain responses become a matter of course. Since the practice of having parliaments has been a custom in the West for several hundreds of years, everybody just takes them for granted and people spontaneously structure their activities accordingly.[137]
>
> If none of the citizens in the land feels a desire to discuss local issues and men as individuals lack the courage to put priority on questions of honour, then all discussion will become useless. Since this lack of concern and courage is not a natural defect but something lost as the result of custom, methods to reactivate these attitudes must also rely on custom. The only conclusion one can come to is that changing our customs is a matter of extreme importance.[138]

In the above passage, we find words and phrases familiar to those in Yi's "Minjok kaejo-non". Another contemporary writer, Nishi Amane also stressed the importance of customs in "National Character".

> Therefore, these national customs and public temperament indeed produce a character that is ideal for despotic government. But this national character produces people described by Fukuzawa as without spirit and without power at a time when a world is emerging in which we are opening foreign relations, in which intellect is stronger than

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136. *Ibid.*, X. 328.
137. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, 73.
138. *Ibid.*, 75.

> force. Still more will this [subservient] character be a principal hindrance when we reach the day when we want to establish a popularly elected assembly.[139]

A cognate view is expressed by Nakamura Nasanao in "On Changing the Character of the People"

> If we desire to change the people's character and thereby encourage elevated conduct and virtuous feelings, we will accomplish absolutely nothing if we only reform the political structure, which is only changing round containers for hexagonal or octagonal vessels without altering the character of the water within. Rather than changing the political structure, therefore, we should aspire instead to change the character of the people, more and more rooting out the old habits and achieving "renewal" with each new day.[140]

The above passages suggest that changing national character was a common idea among contemporary East Asian reformist intellectuals.

We must now examine in more detail Yi's argument in "Minjok kaejo-non". "Minjok kaejo-non" was made up of eight sections: First, the significance of the transformation of the nation. Second, the movements for the transformation of the nation in past history. Third, the Korean movement for reform of the nation since 1894. Fourth, the reform of the nation as a moralistic phenomenon. Fifth, the length of time needed to reform national character. Sixth, the content of reform. Seventh, the path of reform. Eighth, conclusion. In what follows, most of these sections will be touched on.

Yi divided change into natural change and change brought about by man's will. The latter began with setting one's goal and making plans for it to be achieved in a systematic and unified way. Yi held that Socrates was right in arguing that the rise and fall of states lay not in the hands of rulers but in the people and in the people's thoughts. Socrates devoted his whole life to educating youth under the belief that the reform of the thinking of youth was a precondition for the reform of popular character. However, to Yi, though Socrates was the pioneer of the idea of national reform through national education, there were limitations to this view of reform. One was that Socrates had not realised the necessity of organization in reforming people. Organization was very important in that it provided an environment in which reforming individuals continued to preserve and develop the ideas of reform through propaganda and practice.

This point was also affirmed in Yi's evaluation of the Korean reform movement since 1894 — in particular in his assessment of the Independence Club which was

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139. Nishi Amane, "National Character," in *Meirokuzassi* [Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment], translated and with an introduction by William Reynolds Braisted (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1976), 32 (March 1875): 389.
140. Nakamura Masanao, "On Changing the Character of the People," in *Meirokuzassi* [Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment], translated and with an introduction by William Reynolds Braisted (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1976), 30 (February 1875): 373.

regarded as a major Korean reform movement. Yi attributed the failure of the Independence Club: first to its loose organisation: secondly to its political colour; and third to its shortage of capable men. On the third failing, Yi observed that capable men were divided into three categories: leaders, specialists and ordinary members, and he attributed the failure of many Korean associations to deficiency of qualifications in all three categories. This point is important, since cultivation of these qualities was a precondition of establishing an effective organization for the reform of the nation. A fourth defect of the Korean reform movement was that the leaders failed to recognise the value of morality as a means of *minjok kaejo* [Transformation of the Nation]:

> Another fundamentally important point which leaders of those days were not aware of, is that the reconstruction of the nation should enter the sphere of morality. Indeed, the fundamental reason why the Korean nation is on the decline lies in its morality. Thus the reform of morality, and spiritual reform is fundamental to the reconstruction of national character. As they did not realise this, they cried loudly for inculcation of new knowledge [Western culture]. It is a grave mistake and lack of awareness (knowledge) that they sought the fundamental cause of the downfall of the Korean nation not in the corruption of morality but in the deficiency of knowledge.[141]

This twin emphasis upon **organization** and **morality** identified the two pillars of the "Minjok kaejo-non."

Yi interpreted *minjok kaejo* as the transformation of national character. According to Yi, Korean national character would be transformed only if it followed the example of, for instance, British national character. British national character was characterised by freedom, a practical, enterprising spirit, sociality (or social nature) and gradualism.[142] By contrast, the national character of Germany was intellectual and speculative and systematic; that of Latin countries[143] was characterised by the preference for equality and emotions; and the Chinese national character was typified by selfishness and individualism.[144] The British national character was suggested by Yi as an ideal standard for national reform. Here we can notice the strong Anglophilia of Yi Kwang-su (like that of Fukuzawa Yukichi).[145]

Basically, what Yi was calling for was moral transformation. According to Yi, the fundamental cause of the decline of the Korean people lay in its corrupted national

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141. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 123.
142. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 124. The word "sociality" or "social nature" is a literal translation of "Sahoe-sŏng". The word was used by Yi to refer to the social virtues of co-operation. This term was borrowed from Kropotkin who frequently used it and calibrated the degree of evolution with the development of sociality. Kropotkin was quoted in "Minjok kaejo-non". See. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 155.
143. Here "Latin" refers to France.
144. This view of the Chinese was identical to Yi's view of Confucianism.
145. Unlike Fukuzawa, Yi Kwang-su never visited Britain. His Anglophilia seems to have been influenced by Fukuzawa Yukichi and Gustav Le Bon whose view on national character was quoted by Yi Kwang-su.

character, which in particular meant the corruption of morals. This may remind us of typical Confucian thinking that social disorder was caused by moral corruption and accordingly that the task of restoring must start by rectifying corrupted morals, but Yi's conception of true morality was very different from the Confucian conception. For him it demanded sociality not simply private virtue.

Yi placed the blame for Korean immorality squarely on the ruling class which was responsible for wide spread maladminstration. According to Yi, members of the ruling class in Chosŏn were men of dishonesty, in that they were deficient in the sociality that is the spirit of public service, which is vital to corporate life.

> In attending to political affairs the subject of a king sought his or his party's interest first rather than that of the country and people. This is indeed a malicious policy. Suppose X became the premier, he would appoint his subordinates and establish governmental policy for the sake of the expansion of his own power, the successes of his relatives and friends, and of his own party, rather than the nation. All the appointees of his will do the same. The malicious governmental policies of Korea followed this evil circle.[146]

Dishonesty and self-interest were not, however, confined to the ruling class. The reason that the populace failed to back reform lay in its own deficient morality. Yi offered three reasons for this. First, the people were lazy and did not possess the spirit that was required for reform. Second, they did not possess the courage to implement reforms. Third, they failed to attain a strong sense of solidarity because of their lack of trust and social virtue. Yi concluded that:

> If my viewpoint on the history mentioned above is correct, it is clear that the fundamental cause of the fall of the Korean nation lies in her morality, that is to say, dishonesty, selfishness which is antagonistic to society, idleness, lack of belief, and cowardice.
>
> The prosperity of the English and the Americans is due to their national character. Our nation's decline is also due to our national character. Indeed, the rise and fall of a nation depends on her national character. Hence the reform of a nation should begin with its [social] morality.[147]

The above passages show clearly that for *minjok kaejo* (transformation of nation), morality is the most decisive factor that determines national destiny.

From this diagnosis, Yi proceeded to the question: Is it possible to bring about a transformation of national character? He classified the national character into fundamental and secondary (or subordinate) elements and contended that fundamental national character was more difficult to change than secondary character.

Yi raised the question as to whether or not the fundamental national character of Korea was wrong — a precondition of deciding the best way of reforming the national

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146. *Ibid.*, X, 126.
147. *Ibid.*, X, 127.

character. In analysing the fundamental Korean character, Yi identified five positive points of the Korean national character: generosity, compassion, courteousness, honesty, and self-confidence. First, Koreans distinguished themselves from the Japanese by being generous in forgiving. Second, Koreans demonstrated their capacity for caring for others by assuming responsibility for lodging any stranger at their homes at any time. Third, Koreans were extremely sensitive about the matter of courtesy and ceremonies. Fourth, Koreans were known for their honesty. Fifth, Koreans were self-confident in the sense that each man stood for himself and cherished whatever was to his own choosing. For example, Koreans chose to manage their own business rather than accept better paid employment:

> There is a prevailing spirit of independence and autonomy in the life of common folks. There has never been a system of serfdom of the multitudes under a man or a large-scale family which demands obedience of the many to one. Small they might be in size but he enjoyed his own house and he engaged in his own business. . . . In every aspect of Korean life is manifest the Korean flair for the autonomy of the individual.[148]

This last point is surprising — suggesting that Koreans already possessed the independence and autonomy that Yi's argument in "Sinsenghwal-non" criticised Koreans for lacking. However it should be noted that the Koreans whom Yi talks about are referred to the Koreans of the pre-Confucian period.

Turning to weaknesses in the national character, Yi could only find secondary, not fundamental, points. Focusing on these secondary points that militated against progress, Yi held, first, that in the past Koreans had valued ceremony to an extreme, which led to sterile formalism and an emphasis on form over content in individual and political life. Second, venerating ceremony led to situational ethics that inhibited respect for truth and the principle of universal law. Third, exclusivity and veneration for saving "face" inhibited unity and trust, thereby factionalising associational life and making organization difficult. Fourth, Yi considered the traditional preference for abstract philosophy over empirical, scientific thought as another weakness, since it caused Koreans to place a low value on scientific and technological development. Finally, Yi complained that the traditional bias against commerce and the creation of wealth had inhibited the development of Korean industry. However, these negative points were not so serious as the positive points, because they were secondary characteristics. Nevertheless, even secondary weaknesses in the Korean national character could not be overcome quickly; indeed national reconstruction was to be a long and gradual process of individual cultivation, mass education, and economic development.

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148. *Ibid.*, X, 130.

Turning now to the method of reform, Yi discussed the way of *kaejo*. According to Yi, self-awakening to the necessity of *kaejo* was only the beginning of the process — and he observed that Korean reform had not gone further than this level of self-awakening. To Yi Kwang-su, *kaejo* was not completed until self-awakening has turned into a habit, a process which took a long time. An examination of the 10 stages of *kaejo* set by Yi will help us to understand his scheme.

First, one individual in the nation became aware of the necessity of reform. Second, he made a plan for reform. Third, this person persuaded another person to participate in reform. Fourth, the first and second persons got a third person and formed an association. In this way members were increased. Fifth, the idea of organization for reform was spread into the general populace. Sixth, the idea of reform became an issue of discussion among the populace. Seventh, the ideas attained popularity and became public opinion. Eighth, the core class that represented public opinion guided the populace with the ideas of reform. Ninth, the ideas obtain contagious power beyond discussion. Tenth, the process of reform of national character was completed when the idea of reform was turned into a habit.

This ten stage scheme showed that organization and the emergence of a central class of people was indispensable to *kaejo*. The decisive condition whereby certain ideas dominated the public opinion of the whole nation was the support of more than half of the intellectual class of the nation. The success of *kaejo* depended on creating such a central class to carry out the task of *kaejo*.

> In this way, ten or twenty years from now the numbers of enlightened leaders will have increased to several thousands. The middle class which must handle the various specialised tasks in society will be augmented by the influx of these new leaders who have both confidence and ability. These men will gradually expunge society of its old ways and will shake society out of hibernation. In several generations the vital spirit of the middle class will transform society. In fifty or a hundred years the process of reconstruction will thus be advanced.[149]

In "Chungch'u kyegŭp-kwa sahoe" (Society and Central Class), Yi made it clear that he took an elitist view of society by saying that the leader was comparable to a Queen bee under whose leadership bees were brought into collective life, and without whom all the bees dispersed.[150] Yi justified the need for a "central class":

> What is the need for the central figure or central class?. . . The great mass cannot participate in every decision-making process in collective life. Hence it needs a group of people who represent the members of society and also who control and lead them. In the

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149. *Ibid.*, X, 129.

150. Yi Kwang-su, "Chungch'u kyegŭp-kwa sahoe" [Society and Central Class], in *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 104.

> fields of politics, economy, religion, arts, education, and science, there should be central members who lead the group.[151]

Yi proposed education as a means of creating leadership by this central class:

> When a great man of natural gifts (talent and accomplishments, strength, knowledge of the laws of things, and virtuous conduct) cultivates his gifts whereby he shows himself head and shoulders above others and satisfies the needs of people around him, then he is the leader given by Heaven. It is quite accidental to obtain such a man. Sages and heroes belong in this category. The instance of the Israelites who stood in the ruins of the temple praying for a Messiah is a good example of seeking a central figure that Heaven bestows. However, this central class of society can be obtained by other means. By means of a broader kind of education men can achieve the same end out of an ordinary man, which is a change indeed from the heaven-bestowal point of view.[152]

It is worth noting that this view of education as a prime means of social reform was not far from the Confucian way of thinking. In Confucianism, Confucian scholars or officials were entitled to guide people by showing them examples of good morals. Where Yi's views differed from Confucianism was over the question of who were those who constituted the central class? Yi's emphasis on the role of education in creating the central class gave the answer; "the intellectual class and the bourgeois class which can be seen in America, Britain, and Japan."[153] By designating the intellectual class and the bourgeoisie class as the central class, Yi made a very similar point to that of Fukuzawa.[154] This new class would replace the *yangban* class which dominated the Chosŏn dynasty for five hundred years: until that happened, Korea would drift aimlessly.

> In what conditions is Korea situated? The new class which will supersede the *yangban* class after its downfall has not emerged. As a result, twenty million people are comparable to the sand which is swept by wind, that is, they lack social solidarity.[155]

What we note in Yi's theory of the central class is that his stress on the human factor overshadowed the importance of institutions. When this argument is pushed too far, there is a danger of neglecting the importance of institutions. In Yi Kwang-su, we find that this neglect of institution eventually led Yi to an exclusive stress on morality, and his earlier discussion of the social contract was lost sight of. At this stage, however, he emphasises both institutions and human factors.

> However good the purpose of organization may be and however precise are the institutions which put it into action, an organization cannot attain its goal without central figures who manage it and direct members. The same can be said of the state.

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151. *Ibid.*, X. 106.
152. *Ibid.*, X. 105.
153. *Ibid.* X. 106.
154. Fukuzawa Yukichi. *An Encouragement to Learning*.
155. "Chungch'u kyegŭp-kwa sahoe" [Society and Central class]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 106.

For the state. making a constitution is less important than forming a central class and the central figures. who constitute the central class. and carry out the purpose of the constitution by managing and putting it into practice and guiding the whole nation. Nowadays as the Chinese constitution is up to date. it seems perfect in theory. But the reason why the constitution does not make China a perfect state lies in the lack of men of ability to run the constitution.

Therefore. the life of society depends on the men who run it. Because the life of society is in its institutions. the life of institutions is driven by men of ability. i.e.. central figures of personality and knowledge who embody the institutions and represent the whole people.[156]

Yi's conception of the central class was elite-oriented in nature. He defended it by first defining its role in terms of Korean aspirations: "The leading class of the Korean people ought to be able to embrace the common ideal of Korean life. organise such life. and direct the organisational functionaries."[157] Second. Yi distinguished between true and false equality in order to justify elite leadership:

> Today crude doctrines of freedom and equality which are widely prevalent in Korea hinder the progress of society. In general. equality designates equality in the status of human beings or in human rights. However. the mistaken interpretation of equality defies the distinction of duties. Even the distinction of leader and followers is disregarded. In such circumstances. no corporate life could be led. Though a president and the lowly patrolmen are equal in civil rights. they are distinct in duties between them. Thus the patrolman should obey the president according to his duty. not his civil rights.[158]

Next. let us examine the contents of the reform of national character proposed by Yi. Yi presented seven points as making up the content of *kaejo*. First. people need to become persons of integrity — without lies and deception. Second. they had to exchange fanciful ideas and empty theory (or armchair thinking) for diligent practice of what was believed to be right and what was thought of as an obligation. Third. they had to become loyal and faithful. Fourth. they had to develop strong determination and abandon mere makeshift existence and cowardice. Fifth. they had to put public interest before private interest and to take social service as the life and soul of their lives. Six. they had to choose an occupation which depends on a special subject of learning or expert skill rather than common knowledge. Seventh. they had to lead an independent economic life by thrift and saving. Yi summed up these points in terms of the education of virtue and health and knowledge. and the accumulation of wealth. and the cultivation of a spirit of social service.[159] These points may be reduced to two qualities — sincerity and diligence — a catch phrase of An Ch'ang-ho and the Hŭngsadan. In the contents of *kaejo*. we notice An's influence. that morality (mutual trust) was prior to any other element:

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156. *Ibid.*. X. 108
157. *Ibid.*.
158. *Ibid.*
159. *Ibid.*. X. 137.

> It is needless to say that the most sound and advantageous way of life for human kind is corporate life. The prime mover which makes corporate life possible is the trust among the members of the organization. Without trust, organization cannot be made. What creates the trust? It comes from truthfulness. Therefore, the reform of a nation inevitably starts from sincerity. We must realise that the cost of dishonesty is the downfall of a nation and the reward for virtue is re-living.[160]

Yi's point that trust among members was important in corporate life is largely incontrovertible. But as to the question, "What creates trust?" Yi explained it in terms of morality rather than in terms of social contract, which had played such a role in his individualistic justification of anti-Confucianism. The contractarian aspect of Yi's liberalism was not included in the above passage. Yi's exclusive emphasis on morality resembled Yen Fu's (1853-1921) claim that the reform of morality, sincerity and faithfulness, was fundamental to strengthen the nation. In "The Three Essentials in Making a New Nation," Yen Fu maintained that the "wealth" and "power" of a nation can be attained by three essentials: "the strengthening of people's physical prowess, the enlargement of their intellectual capacity, and the uplifting of their moral character". Of the three essentials for building a new nation, Yen Fu placed more emphasis on the refinement of moral character, and regarded it as the most difficult of all to attain. What attracts our concerns is Yen Fu's comparison of morality between East and West. Yen Fu designated freedom, honesty, and faithfulness as the principal virtues of the West, thereby revealing a moralistic inclination in his interpretation of Western culture. Yen Fu's moralistic interpretation of Western culture influenced An Ch'ang-ho. In An Ch'ang-ho we can find without difficulty the same stress on "sincerity" and "truthfulness".

> The West preaches the principle of equality and consequently emphasises the importance of popular will as the ideological foundation of its government. It places high priority on the virtues of freedom, honesty, and faithfulness. We in China make filial piety the cardinal principle of governing the nation and the world; the honouring of parents is often given such priority that it outweighs any other virtues, including honesty. The corollary of this over-emphasis is hypocrisy and mutual deception — each person merely wishes to shift the burden of his own responsibility to the shoulders of somebody else. To me at least, "loyalty" and "filial piety" which we cherish seem much slighter virtues than "sincerity" and "truthfulness" emphasised by the Westerners.[161]

This passage suggests that Yi was influenced by Yen Fu through the influence of An Ch'ang-ho whose ideas and world view were strongly affected by Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Yen Fu.

In his discussion of the contents of *kaejo*, Yi stressed repeatedly that *kaejo* should be free of political and religious colour. *Kaejo* could be compared to laying the

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160. *Ibid.*, X. 139.

161. Yen Fu, "The Three Essentials in Making a New Nation," in *China in Transition: 1517-1911*, ed. Dun J. Li (London: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1969), 158-59.

foundations for a house, in that it was the fundamental substrata that supported every political and religious creed. This way of thinking contrasted with that in "Shinsaenghwal-non" where Yi advocated a particular ideology — individualism — which, he argued, was central to the new way of life. The fundamental content of "Minjok kaejo-non" was not individualism, but moral cultivation: faithfulness and diligence and truthfulness. In some respects these qualities were typical of Confucianism, and as such they indicated why Yi's work had lost some of its appeal to anti-Confucianist intellectuals which "Shinsaenghwal-non" had enjoyed.

What then was the ultimate purpose of "Minjok kaejo-non"? Who was the citizen who was reconstructed according to the principle of *Kaejo*? Yi answered: "He is a citizen who performs his every duty to the state and a member who is faithful to the association to which he belongs."[162] Yi's "Minjok kaejo-non" was a theory of citizen creation which laid great stress on public virtue.

> What should be stressed as much as sincerity and diligence is the spirit of social service, which is mentioned as the fifth point of the principles of reform above. It is the spirit to put the organization before the individual, that is, to stress public interest before private interest, and to regard social service as life. It is evident that this is the opposite of selfishness. Family, private group, friends belong to private life. Korean are not disciplined enough yet for social life.[163]

> As their purpose is to reform not only themselves but only the whole nation, they must be filled with the spirit of public good and the power of solidarity.[164]

It is true that Yi linked his notion of social duty to the individual's independent life.

> Therefore, by transforming man's character, this doctrine of reform is to make a man who has sincerity and ability to perform his social duties and lead an independent life as an individual, as a member of civilised society without distinction of one's doctrine and one's occupation [165]

But his stress on public virtue, which was akin to Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's "New Citizen Theory", distanced him from Fukuzawa Yukichi's liberal nationalism which was based on the idea of social contract. Yi's nationalism instead stressed the role of education. In effect this was to replace politics with education, following An Ch'ang-ho's *chunpi-non* which adopted the line of avoiding direct political confrontation until the preparation for independence was completed by a moral revolution. An Ch'ang-ho's ideas of *chunpi-non* can be summarised in three positions:

1. Independence cannot be won with help by others; but it can be realised only when we cultivate ourselves to possess the requirements for it. Independence which we win by ourselves will last forever.

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162. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X. 141.
163. *Ibid.*
164. *Ibid.*, X. 135.
165. *Ibid.*, X. 137.

2. We can display our ability when we become honest and true through moral training and when each of us learns one skill in technical or academic fields.
3. We should fortify our national unity by dedicating ourselves to fidelity and co-operation.[166]

After "Minjok kaejo-non", Yi's nationalism was a form of cultural rather than liberal nationalism, characterised by An Ch'ang-ho's gradualism and *chunpi-non* (preparation for independence first policy). It is not surprising, therefore that "Minjok kaejo-non" lost the power of his appeal to young Koreans of the March First Movement, just as Li'ang Ch'i-ch'ao's New Citizen Theory forfeited his influence among young Chinese of the May Fourth Movement. Robinson gives a good summary of the responses to "Minjok kaejo-non"

> The appearance of Yi Kwang-su's Kaejo-non stimulated a fierce reaction by the left wing of the nationalist movement. Yi's pessimism and elitism offended the leftists' patriotic sensibilities, and his gradualist tactics provoked their political and theoretical objections. Yi was the first to admit the defeatist tone of the piece, but based his thesis on the belief that Koreans had yet to demonstrate a true capacity for unified action or the political capability to maintain their independence. Therefore, according to the Kaejo-non, long-term cultural and educational development was a necessary precondition to regaining independence.[167]

Let us examine the cultural nationalism of Yi Kwang-su in more detail.

Yi's cultural nationalism

The third part of Yi's nationalistic anti-Confucianism was his cultural nationalism. Yi argued that the nation might be hard to define, but it was undoubtedly an inescapable living reality.

> The definition of "nation" is a controversial issue among scholars; so there are lots of definitions of nation. But however many definitions of nation, and however controversial they may be, there is no one in the world who is not aware of to which nation he belongs. The nation is a reality regardless of definition. The nation is a destiny. Thus no one can escape the boundary of nation. . . . Furthermore, even the Creator has no power to change and control the Korean national character, which is natural and hereditary and flows in the blood of the Korean people. . . . In this way while the political form of the nation changes, the essence of the nature of the nation is unchangeable so long as history exists.[168]

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166. *Complete Works of An Tosan*, pp. 71-72. Quoted in Lee Kwang-rin (Yi Kwang-nin). "Korea's Response to Social Darwinism". *Korea Journal*, vol. 18 (April, May, 1978)
167. Michael Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea, 1920-1925*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 127.
168. Yi Kwang-su, "Chosŏn minjok-non" [Treatise on Korean Nation], in *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 215.

Nation was defined, according to Yi, as "a unity of territory and a people." It denoted a "people with common blood and common past." Every nation had its own national character, which was very difficult to change.

> To analyse it further, national character is based upon the feeling of the people. Often we think that national character is changeable, but, even in an individual case, the mutable aspect of personality is very thin. From the viewpoint of national psychology or social psychology, customs and institutions change slowly. In a certain sense, they never change. Especially so, because they are related to human emotion and will.[169]

National identity is attained by establishing a national individuality. Some common culture constitutes a national individuality. The idea of culture comprises politics, religion, philosophy, language, literature, arts, science, habit, and leisure/recreation. Amongst these elements of culture, what Yi evaluates as the most important factor in forming national identity was language. In Yi's view, language was the soul of a nation. For "it is through language that we communicate among ourselves, and transfer to the next generation the thoughts and feelings of the nation".[170] Yi's definition of nationalism indicates that his central idea of nationalism was culture. On his view, every nation had its own culture which was a reflection of its national individuality. The purity of language played an important role in shaping national individuality.

> There is a big gap between the Chinese word *hyo*, Filial piety, and the Korean word "to support parents". The Chinese word *hyo* came to Korea with the Chinese idea of filial piety. What sinicized Korean people is not Chŏng Mong-ju and Song Si-yŏl. What is most to be blamed for it is the Chinese character. If Koreans read the translated version of the Chinese Great Classics into Korean, they avoid such an extent of Sinicization.
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> Because the Japanese translate Chinese writings into Japanese whenever they read Chinese texts, they maintain Japanese character and spirit, unlike the Korean upper class which was sinicized. When any foreign ideas are put into the language of the country which is to import them, they lose the original colour and are tinged with the colour of the land which they are transferred to.[171]

The role of literature in forming national culture was also of great importance. Literature was compared to the music which described the movements of the soul of a nation. Therefore, language comprised the pieces which constituted the national life, and literature was what the pieces were put together to form. The artisan who performed this job was a poet, a litterateur. Thus, literature had a task of importance in preserving and developing national identity.[172]

However, Confucianism was based on a sino-centric world view, and thereby took on the character of universalism. This universalism served as a hindrance to the

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169. *Ibid.* (Translated by Grant Lee)
170. Yi Kwang-su, "Chosŏn minjok-non" [Treatise on Korean Nation]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 216.
171. *Ibid.*
172. *Ibid.*, X, 217.

emergence of nationalism.[173] Confucianism was therefore castigated by Yi as a body of foreign ideas, and he ascribed to Korean Confucians a lack of national consciousness: "For a thousand years since the Koryŏ dynasty, Korea led a unified national life. What is deplorable is the Chosŏn dynasty's ideas of respect for China, which has destroyed the whole Korean national culture since Tan'gun."[174] Yi equated the history of Chosŏn dynasty whose dominating ruling ideology was Confucianism with a process of Sinicization. He define Confucianism as a foreign ideology (Chinese) which destroyed native Korean ideas.

> Not to mention the Sinicization of the names of places, person's names, clothes, and customs, traditional religion (Sŏnwang, history and national hero worship) was suppressed by law, and worship of China as a national religion [the worship of Confucius is meant] was enforced. Sŏnwang-tang and pukun-dang were abolished as superstition and instead, shrines were built for Confucius, Mencius, Chu-Hsi, and Koreans who were Sinicized [Korean Confucian scholars]. Worship at the ancestral shrine was also Sinicized. Moak-won turned into Mohwa-kwan and even the Kŏm mountains in Korea were renamed in Buddhist or Sinicized style. Abŏji [father in Korean] was changed into *ch'unbu* [father in Chinese]. . . . In this way, ideas native to Korea were destroyed and as a means of destruction of them, the Korean language was neglected and suppressed and indeed an attempt was made to annihilate the Korean language.[175]

To Yi, Korean Confucian scholars were the venomous insects who destroyed Korean national culture. They were criminals "who preserved their status by defacing national identity."

> The *yangban* class of the Chosŏn dynasty deforested mountains and dried up rivers and devastated the Korean national spirit. They made morality loose. They frustrated Korean courage. They destroyed the Korean spirit of diligence. They dried up the national identity and the power of solidarity. . . . . In this way, Korea was turned into a people with the name of Little China who lost their national ego and national identity.[176]

Thus, Yi tried to protect Korean national identity by devaluing Confucian elements in Korean culture. The issue is, however, not so simple. Confucianism dominated Korea for five hundred years, so it was inevitable that the native culture of Korea was intermingled with Confucianism. Accordingly it is very difficult to dissociate the native ideas and culture of Korea from Confucianised Korean culture. The negation of

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173. For the study of the effect of the Sino-centric world view on Korean nationalism see Park Ch'ung-sŏk, *Han'guk chŏngch'i sasang-sa* [History of Korean Political Thought] (Seoul: Samyŏngsa, 1982)
174. "Chosŏn minjok-non," [Treatise on Korean Nation], *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 218.
175. *Ibid.*
176. *Ibid.*

Confucianism in Korean culture risks denying the whole of Korean culture.[177] Yi sought to find the archetype of Korea which escaped the contamination of Confucianism. His strenuous search for an authentic Korea traced back to the time before Korea was Confucianised. Since he criticised Confucianism as foreign, he must present the idea of a native origin of Korean culture. Yi drew his examples of native origin from Sin Ch'ae-ho's studies on Korean history.[178] He found it in folk religion and *rang* ideas. Sin Ch'ae-ho classified three major ideas of Ancient Korea into *rang* and *yu* (*ju* in Chinese: Confucianism) and *pul* (*fu* in Chinese: Buddhism). Sin Ch'ae-ho tried to solidify national history by substituting his theory of history for Kim Pu-sik's *Samguk sagi* [History of the Three Kingdoms] which interpreted Korean history as subordinate to Chinese history.[179] According to Sin's new interpretation of history, the archetype of the Korean people was the *puyŏ* tribe which was the descendant of Tan'gun and hold the hegemony of East Asia on the basis of the Tan'gun myth and the glory of Koguryŏ.

> *Sŏn-wang* means *sŏn-yin* [immortal man] in the person of Wang-gŏm [or Tan'gun, who was said to have been a descendant of Heavenly Being; thus he enjoyed both a divine and a human nature]. Sometimes son means sage according to Ch'oe Ko-wŭn. As recorded in the ancient writing, Wang-kŏn was mentioned as a sage. During the Silla period the sages were called *kuk-sŏn* [national immortals]. It would seem then that "*sŏn*" is an epithet for a special person and whom the ancient people worshipped, believing in him both as super-human and human, i.e., as a demigod. This idea was of native origin, not foreign. Again Ch'oe Ko-wŭn defines "*sŏn*" as neither *yu* [*ju* in Chinese: Confucianism] nor *pul* [*fu* in Chinese: Buddhism], not still *to* [*tao* in Chinese: Taoism], but as the combination of loyalty and filial piety of *yu*, compassion of *pul*, and purity and the emptiness of Tao.[180]

Another source of original Korean nationhood was the idea of *hongik in'gan* (meaning to benefit all men). Yi Kwang-su presented the Korean social ideal as the ideas of

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177. This point is highly controversial. Yi took the view that literature written in Chinese was not Korean literature. Cho Tong-il criticised such a view. In the discussion of Yi's "Puhwal-ŭi sŏkwang", (*Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 24-32) Cho pointed out the danger that Yi's negation of the Confucian past undermined the capability of Korean people. See Cho Dong-il, *Han'guk munhak sasang-sa* [The History of Korean Literature Thought]. (Seoul: Chisik sanŏp-sa, 1978), 335-337.

178. The fact that Yi Kwang-su was strongly influenced by Sin Ch'ae-ho's interpretation of Korean history was confirmed in Yi's writings "Kŭ-ŭi chasŏjŏn" [His Autobiography]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, 408-409. In it Yi described Sin Ch'ae-ho as "Yŏksa-ka T sŏnsaeng" [Historian, Mr. T].

179. Kim Pu-sik as a Confucian scholar and high rank official wrote the history of *Samguk sagi* [History of Three Kingdoms].

180. Yi Kwang-su, "Chosŏn minjok-non" [Treatise on Korean Nation]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 218. (Translated by Grant.) This seems to have been borrowed from Sin Ch'ae-ho's *Chosŏn sanggo munhwa-sa* [The Ancient Cultural History of Korea], in *T'anje Sin Ch'ae-ho chŏnjip* [Collected Works of T'anje Sin Ch'ae-ho]. (Seoul: Hyŏngsŏl, 1987), vol III, 384-387, and see "Chosŏn yŏksa-sang il ch'ŏnyŏn-rae cheil tae sagŏn" [The Most Significant Event of Korean History], in *T'anje sin ch'ae-ho chŏnjip*, vol. II, 105.

hongik in'gan whose origin was traced back to the mythical king Tan'gun (ca. 2300 B.C.). According to Yi, the essence of *hongik in'gan* could be explained as follows:

> Tan'gun's constitution, composed of three hundred and sixty subjects can be summed up, in one word, *hongik in'gan*, which means "to benefit all men." The purposes of both individual and national lives ought to be directed to assisting human needs. The scope of assisting ought to include anyone who is in need, whether he is a stranger or a friend, in the spirit of brotherhood. In fact, all mankind under heaven, that is, all races ought to be helped by Koreans. This indeed is the noblest and most liberal ideal of our race.[181]

Here Yi's anti-Confucianism resembled Romantic nationalism. Comments on Romanticism made by Dankwart A. Rustow correspond with Yi's pursuit of an authentic Korea in the remote past:

> For all their historical romanticism, they are usually straining for a break with their society's immediate past of dynastic fragmentation or foreign subjection. Hence the glories of a remote past (real or mythical) become their allies against the recent past in the struggle for a better future.[182]

Yi's pursuit of the authentic Korea in Korean history showed the shift of his concerns; the more he wrote about history, the less he wrote about liberal individualism. This indicated that Yi's liberal nationalism turned into a Romantic nationalism which lay more stress on collective individuality (the nation) than on the individual. Although throughout his advocacy of nationalism, Confucianism was the target which was under attack, it is evident that the focus of Yi's charge against it had changed. Confucianism was now criticised less for its suppression of freedom and more for its suppression of native culture by an ideology that buttressed the Sino-centric world.

In the next section, I will discuss the conflict between the individual and the nation in Yi's thought. The strain of integrating liberal individualism and nationalism affected the character of his anti-Confucianism. Indeed the failure to find a balanced synthesis of liberal individualism and nationalism led to the transformation of Yi's anti-Confucianism. Thus, an examination of how Yi tackled this conflict is indispensable to understand the nature of Yi's anti-Confucianism and the transformation of his anti-Confucianism at a later period of his thought.

4.6 The conflict between the individual and the nation in Yi's thought

In the previous discussion, I have maintained that Confucianism was criticised by Yi in terms of both liberal individualism and nationalism. However, these two concepts seem mutually antagonistic. The demand of nationalism that all other interests be sacrificed

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181. "Nae nara." [My Country]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 233.
182. Dankwart A. Rustow, "Nation", in *International Encyclopedia of Social Scienc*, ed. David L. Sills (New York: Macmillan, 1968), II, 10.

to the interests of the nation rests on the assumption that society is prior to the individual. This assumption is contrary to individualism which maintains that the individual is prior to society. Yi was well aware of this antagonism.

> We demand independence for individuals. We do not want other people to interfere with our independence and we do not want to live a dependent life economically and intellectually. . . . while we are asked to sacrifice ourselves. We praise the beauty of obligation to be obedient to the legitimate orders of a leader and the general will of the majority in corporate life. In past days. we [Korean people] made a mistake by emphasising only one of these two aspects.[183]

How did Yi Kwang-su attempt to resolve this conflict? He sought the answer to this problem in the example of Britain which he saw as the ideal model of modern Western society.

> British people are liberal individualists to the back bone who do not permit the state to intervene in the liberties of each individual. However. as they realised the need for corporate life. social life in the state. they have an excellent spirit of social service. Thus. they are ready to sacrifice their own freedom for the organization to which they belong. As sacrifice is made voluntarily. it doesn't infringe upon the freedom of the individual. They won victory in the First World War with volunteers.[184]

Here the conflict between the individual and society was expressed in terms of freedom and social responsibility. Yi tried to find a solution to the problem of conflict between individualist values and collectivist values (or obligations to society) in individual voluntary sacrifice of freedom. But the question as to how he could justify voluntary sacrifice remained. There are two main types of justification that have been advanced by other thinkers for voluntary sacrifice of freedom. rational self-interest. and emotion.

The rational self-interest justification is put forward by liberals. for whom political obligation is derived from an autonomous individual's free choice since choice is taken as consent, and the criterion of rational choice is whether or not it is in accord with the individual's interest. The claim that allegiance to the nation is in the individual's greatest interest was asserted in the light of a rational calculation of costs and benefits. But Yi realised that it was absurd to seek political obligation in terms of freely chosen self-interest in a situation in which Japanese colonial rule meant that Koreans did not have the possibility of choosing their own state. The following passage indicated Yi's problem: the only mode of self-rule for Koreans was in exile.

> If the fundamental ideas are established. the way of the independence movement is self-evidently derived from it; to organise a state without territory which constitutes as citizens a million Korean people who live abroad in places such as North Kando. West Kando in Manchuria. America. Hawaii. and to foster economic and cultural power and maintain a provisional government. and by doing so. to continue the Independence Movement. Since Korean people living in other countries are to be citizens. legal force

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183. Yi Kwang-su. "Segaji panŏ" [Three Ironies]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. IX. 413.
184. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 124.

> cannot be used for the sake of creating citizens. instead. there is no choice but to make patriotism and the voluntary obligation of solidarity a compelling force.[185]

The difficulty of deriving political obligation for Koreans at home from a rationalistic liberal way of thinking drove Yi to turn his attention to a religious and moral argument as an alternative. This corresponded the second justification for voluntary sacrifice — that based on emotion rather than reason.

> The psychological foundation of service is love. Human love like animal love makes man willing to sacrifice himself for whatever he loves: man. ideologies. state. The deeper love man has. the more sacrifice he makes for it. The man who has deep love is ready to sacrifice his own happiness and wealth and even his life for ideology, state. parents, children, or lover.[186]

An emotional commitment to an ideology of public virtue provided a viable alternative to rational self-interest as the basis of obligation. Indeed, Yi argued that healthy organisations are founded not upon interest but upon ideological commitment.

> It is needless to say that doctrine or ideology is fundamental to organization. Organization is made in order to attain the power to realise the doctrine or ideology. There would be no need of organization without doctrine or ideology to be realised.
>
> A people who has a high degree of culture in terms of knowledge and morals is able to carry out the enterprise which is based on doctrine or ideology. Generally the formation of a private association is motivated by the inferior side of human nature since a private association is formed by private interest. On the other hand, the enterprise of organization which is based on doctrine or ism is motivated by the sense of truth or justice which is difficult for a lower personality to have. In an association whose goal is to attain self-interest and self-desire, its members can get the gain, but in an organisation which is founded on doctrine or ism, the members are bound to sacrifice their fame, wealth, and life rather than get gain. Those who seek not interest but a just cause and are ready to sacrifice their life for justice are united under a common cause in an organization which survives the temptation of personal happiness or threat of force.[187]

Another way of justifying obligation on the basis of emotion lay in human instinct, i.e., the evolutionary instinct of preservation of the species which complemented the instinct of self-preservation.

> The animal that leads a social life has two lives. He cannot be said to preserve his life completely when he fails to help preserving the life of society which he belongs to, even though he preserves his own life. So the animal who leads a social life has the obligation of preserving two lives. Especially in a highly advanced society, we cannot imagine the life of an individual detached from the life of society. Individuals in a highly advanced society sacrifice their lives to the life of society. This sacrifice results

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185. "Na-ŭi kobaek" [My confession]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. VII. 260.
186. "Sŏmginŭn saenghwal" [Life of Service]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 256.
187. "Chŏlmŭn Chosŏnin-ŭi sowon" [The Wishes of Young Koreans]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 201.

> from the obligation of recompense for the benefits from society and the desire for one's offspring's prosperity and happiness.[188]

Yi believed that this was the foundation of an instinctive desire for public service.

> Though man has a desire for pleasure. he has also the instinctive sense of obligation to society. Let me call this obligation the social service as against pleasure. There is nothing more to be desired if the instinct for pleasure is in good accord with the obligation of service. However. in most cases. these are in conflict with each other. When the individuals who form a community pursue their own pleasure. society will be dissolved and abolished. Therefore. society always demands that each person sacrifice part of his pleasure as occasion requires and to give his service for the common purpose of society. This is the objective dictation from the reality of society to the individual and is also the subjective dictation of a sound-minded individual with a normal moral judgement. who is referred to in Kant's categorical imperative.[189]

To justify his claim that humans had an instinctive sense of obligation to society. Yi drew on Peter Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*. To Kropotkin. although the world was the scene of competition for survival, those human beings who possessed the ability of mutual aid were the fittest for survival. In *Mutual Aid* Kropotkin declared unequivocally that "life is struggle" and in that struggle "the fittest survive". In asking the question "Who were the fittest to survive?", Kropotkin could not accept a single-minded emphasis placed by Herbert Spencer and others on competition and conflict in the evolutionary process. Against this Darwinian view, Kropotkin argued that in the process of mutual selection, spontaneous co-operation amongst animals was far more important than ferocious competition, and that "those animals which acquire habits of mutual aid are undoubtedly the fittest to survive."[190] He found that among humans. too. mutual aid had been the rule rather than the exception. He traced the evolution of voluntary co-operation from the primitive tribe, peasant village and medieval commune to a variety of modern associations which continued to practise mutual support despite the rise of the coercive bureaucratic state. Kropotkin's thesis. in short. was a refutation of the doctrine that competition and brute force were the sole — or even the principal — determinants of social progress. In his view. mutual aid has played a far greater role — indeed. it has been "the chief factor of evolution".[191]

For Kropotkin. mutual aid was also the basis of all our ethical principles. Morality. he argued. has evolved from the instinct of human sociability. the unconscious recognition "of the close dependency of everyone's happiness upon the happiness of all: and of the sense of justice. or equity. which brings the individual to consider the rights

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188. "Kyoyuk-ka chessi-ege" [To educators]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 58.
189. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 188.
190. Peter Kropotkin. *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (London: Freedom Press. 1987). 71.
191. *Ibid*.. 69.

of every other individual as equal to his own".[192] Indeed, survival itself depends upon it: "We all know that without uprightness, without self-respect, without sympathy and mutual aid, human kind must perish, as have perished the few races of animal living by rapine, or the slave-keeping ants."[193]

This view exerted great influence on Yi Kwang-su. In Minjok Kaejoron, Yi's stress on sociability and free association was borrowed directly from Peter Kropotkin.[194] What is of more importance is that Kropotkin's ethical principle led Yi to be concerned about the idea of mutual sympathy. This is associated with the Buddhist notion of compassion which was present in the later writings of Yi Kwang-su.

However, even when mutual sympathy existed, there was also a need for discipline. Yi pointed out that one reason why Korean radicals were unsuccessful in forming organisations was because they disliked the discipline it entailed.

> Nowadays, no word seems so offensive to the ears as the word "obedience". Those who are intoxicated with liberal ideas are so impatient that they are inclined to eliminate the word "obedience" from the dictionary. They said that the word "obedience" as well as "lord" and "vassal" are cursed remnants of feudal age . . . Today the opposite of obedience is not freedom but defiance. The dominant spirit which swayed Korean youth is far from obedience and is found not in liberty but in defiance.[195]
>
> Then what is the use of freedom? Freedom is used in choosing the principle which guides oneself. It depends on individual freedom whether one chooses to participate in party A or party B. Thus with the freedom of choice we join an organization. It is my freedom to select a leader of the organization. We are free in this sense.
>
> However once we agree to join any party, organization or choose anyone as a leader we are obliged to observe the rule of the organization and to follow the orders of the leader.[196]

To a Korean, liberty was synonymous with "libertarianism". Yi thought that it was this excessive individual liberty that made it difficult for Korean people to subject themselves to organisational discipline. So long as they remained unorganised like sand, all revolutionary struggle would be impossible, and the hope for a nation state which demands well-organized citizens could never be accomplished. He observed that after the March First Movement a wild libertarianism, destructive to corporate discipline and unified action, prevailed.

4.6 Yi's shift from liberal nationalism to moralistic nationalism

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192. *Ibid.*, 22.
193. Peter Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread*, (London: The Penguine Press, 1972), 49.
194. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 155.
195. "Chŏlmŭn Chosŏnin-ŭi sowon" [The Wishes of Young Koreans], *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 201.
196. *Ibid.*, X, 202.

Let us now review the broad shift that took place in Yi's thought from liberal nationalism to moralistic nationalism. We can divide Yi's thought into two distinct periods: the early period of advocating liberal individualism which was in accord with nationalism; and the later period of withdrawing from individualism during which Yi tried to seek an alternative justification for nationalism in a moral law, based on the idea of sympathy and love.

In the earlier period, Yi was enthusiastic in championing liberal individualism against Confucianism in all its aspects. In his major work of anti-Confucianism "Sin saenghwal-non" [Treatise on the New Ways of Life], Yi attacked Confucianism for its idea of filial piety, its notion of class, its reverence for the past and its respect for China, its neglect of economy, its formalism, its unequal relationship between husband and wife, its effeminacy (the neglect of the military arts), its fatalism, its neglect of science, and its lack of vitality. Confucianism was castigated as an impediment to both the happiness of the individual and the development of the nation. At this stage Yi had no doubt that individualism was compatible with the demands of nationalism. This period of his work is characterised by the happy association of liberal individualism and Social Darwinism as theoretical foundations to support his idea of liberal nationalism. Social Darwinism exerted great influence upon East Asian intellectuals, performing the role of an ideology justifying change by invoking the idea of evolution. The Spencerian concept of "the survival of fittest" and "the preservation of individual and species" contributed much to the formation of national consciousness.[197]

However, Yi's thought during his later period showed a gradual withdrawal from his whole hearted support of liberal individualism. There are three explanations for this change. The first was his scepticism about the West as an ideal model after the First World War. The second was the aftermath of the failure of the March First Movement. The third was Yi's fear of unbridled individualism. Let us first examine the influence of the First World War.

The First World War gave intellectuals in East Asia a grave shock, showing that the Western society which they admired as the ideal standard had deep contradictions and

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197. For a detailed discussion of this, see the study by Lee Kwang-rin on the contribution of Social Darwinism to Korean nationalism. Lee, Kwang-rin (Yi kwang-nin). "Korea's Response to Social Darwinism". *Korea Journal*, vol. 18 (April, May, 1978).

conflicts.[198] Yi was no exception to this general reaction: the First World War forced Yi to confront a darker face of Western culture. The following passages showed his great disappointment.

> As this First World War discloses defects of modern culture. with the end of the war. modern culture faces great confusion and great reform. Take for example. the right or wrong of nationalism. the incompleteness of economic organization. the over-emphasis on material culture over spiritual culture. international law. and international morality — these are the great problems which await solutions.[199]

> The modern way of life is lost in a maze. They tried to make their lives happy with the help of the development of industry and the advance of science. army. criminal law. and treaties on the basis of nationalism and imperialism. But now. they realise dimly that their belief is a vagrant fancy and are at a loss what to do.[200]

The First World War forced Yi to make a critical re-evaluation of Western society. He re-examined Social Darwinism and liberalism which constituted the two pillars in his thought. A reading of Yi's early writings indicates that he was very enthusiastic about Social Darwinism:

> If the purpose of creatures is life. the end of life is the preservation and development of the individual and species. It is evident that the purpose of our education lies in cultivating the ability to preserve and maintain the individual and species.[201]

> "Do Live!" The only want of an animal is to live. hence to achieve the goal there is no morality. no right and wrong. How can robbing others. when starving. be a crime? If I have to die others must die too. Therefore. the struggle for life (want for survival) is the most sacred duty of all men. If you attain health. happiness. and affluence. then you can talk about philanthropic causes and peace among men. Welfare activities are the works of a wealthy people. Be an animal; be a child; be a boy; be a youth; finally be an adult.[202]

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198. An interesting example is Yen Fu (1854-1921). After being educated at the University of Edinburgh he became a pioneer in translating Western philosophical works into Chinese. His translations of books by T.H. Huxley. John Stuart Mill. Herbert Spencer. Adam Smith. and others played an important part in introducing Western thought to China. Yet after the First World War he came to think that China's culture was. after all. the better way. He wrote: "Western culture. after this European War has been corrupted utterly. . . . Formerly. when I heard our scholars of the old school say that there would come a day when the teachings of Confucius would be practiced by all mankind. I thought they were talking nonsense. But now I find that some of the most enlightened men in Europe and America seem to be coming gradually to a like opinion. . . . It seems to me that in three centuries of progress the peoples of the West have achieved four principles: to be selfish. to kill others. to have little integrity. and to feel little shame." Quoted in Benjamin Schwartz. *In search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West* (Cambridge. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 1964). 235.

199. "Uri-ŭi isang" [Our Ideal]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 247.

200. "Yesul-kwa insaeng" [Art and Life]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 360.

201. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 58.

202. "Usŏn su-ga toeko yŏnhu-e sarami toera" [Before Becoming a Man Be an Animal]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 244.

But Social Darwinism had also negative elements, and after the First World War, Yi realised that Social Darwinism could be used as an ideology for the justification of imperialism. He re-examined Social Darwinism from this critical viewpoint and abandoned his earlier support for it. The following passages show this clearly. Although Spencer himself opposed imperialism, his law of evolution indicated that change was a process in which the unfit could not survive in the struggle for existence. Nature eliminated the unfit without mercy. This reasoning could be used as a justification for the colonisation of Korea by Japanese imperialism. Yi, fully aware of this, criticized Social Darwinism in "sangjaeng-ŭi sekye-esŏ sangae-ŭi sekye-ro" (From a World of Struggle to World of Mutual Love), written in 1921 as follows.

> The concept of right already comprehends the meaning of conflict. This idea incorporated with the human kind's instinct for struggle, turned white races into beasts. In modern times, with the help of the formidable power of natural science, it injects the poison of the ideas of right into the East Asia struggle which has been dormant in purified human nature. The motto for this idea of rights is the "competition for survival". We, East Asian people, knew the principle of living together, but didn't know even the words "competition for survival", i.e., the principle of antipathy (antagonism) to each other. It is the white race which taught us this idea, which provoked our feeble selfish instinct for struggle. Undoubtedly, though East Asian people had the instinct for struggle, we regarded it as a grave duty of life to see this instinct as a vice and endeavoured to suppress and get rid of it, while Western people, the pupils of Rome, sanctified it with the name of the quite strange science, that is, a principle of law and promoted it as good. Now, however, Western people who worshipped this devil pay the penalty for their sins. They are the greatest sinners in mankind. It is time for them to repent of their sins. The First World War and the sufferings of European peoples are truly the penalty for their sins. Korea and China fell a victim to their sin.[203]

Yi's second reason for scepticism about liberal individualism was general disillusionment after the March First Movement in Korea when the objective of independence by means of peaceful demonstration was not achieved. Since the March First Movement was an expression of the self-determination of peoples based on liberalism, the failure of this led to a weakening of Yi's commitment to liberalism. In "Na-ŭi kobaek" [My confession] written in 1948, Yi states:

> After the international conference for peace in the Hague, Poland and Czechoslovakia emerged as new nation states based on the principle of the self-determination of peoples as advocated by Wilson. These countries are called revived states.
>
> The principle of self-determination of peoples is, however, in name only. In reality, it is used to divide the territories of defeated nations. Though India believed the promise by Britain that India was to have self-governing dominion status after Britain won the war and fought for Britain in the First World War by sacrificing their wealth and blood, the promised freedom was not offered and instead the Indian people who rose to claim their independence promised by British were subjected to military suppression and their leader Gandhi was imprisoned. In the light of this, there would not be any member of

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203. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 170.

> the Allied Nations which would force Japan to allow Korea the status of independence under the name of the principle of self-determination by a people.[204]

Many commentators take it for granted that Yi abandoned liberalism after 1920. In my view, however, it would be more accurate to say that Yi continued to try to reconcile liberalism with nationalism at least until 1930. Indeed liberal values performed too effective a function in his anti-Confucianism for him to abandon them quickly. However, Yi eventually confronted the stark reality that individuals liberated from Confucianism do not automatically turn into citizens.

The third reason for Yi's coolness towards liberalism was his fear of license. In the 1930s, Yi came out quite vehemently against unbridled individualism. This reflected his disappointment at the fact that after the emancipation of the individual from the traditional Confucian shackle, the libertarian idea that one could do whatever one liked without the least regard for authority began to take root.

> Today's mainstream of morality is the individualism whose characteristic is self-centred and thinking of oneself only and looking to one's own self interests. A campaign for the liberation of the individual since the period of the Renaissance goes to extremes. It is very effective to emancipate the individual from fixed ideas and institutions. However, when it goes beyond bounds and turns into extremist individualism, egoism, it becomes the cause of a fatal disease of mankind's civilisation. As British or American individualism, liberalism is imported to Korea, and people pursue only their own happiness, or at most only their families' happiness. The spirit that one should serve or sacrifice oneself to the group to which he belongs, grows weak. This is greatly deplorable.[205]

In the 1932 he appealed to people to substitute "I" for "We".

> Now is the time when we Koreans must be awakened to the consciousness of "We" rather than that of "I", and value the man of ability. . . . . Depend on only "I". Depend on ourselves. Depend on our task and power. This is our faith and religion. This can be called the religion of self-reliance or the religion of union or solidarity, in that it is not individualistic.
>
> People, lacking the team spirit and training of organization, are jealous of one another and struggle. We are wanting in leaders. We are deficient of men of ability who are in charge of every field of society. Twenty three million people are like sand scattered. . . . Then, what is the last hope and first step of new life? First, forsake "I" and unite "we". Second, seek the men and women who devote their whole lives to the ideal of rebirth and unite with them. . . .[206]

Yi proposed as the first step for rebirth to forsake "I". This showed the extent of the drastic change in his belief in liberal nationalism. For the theory of liberal nationalism, "I" (individual) was the preliminary condition of "we" (group). To form "we", we must have independent "I" (individual). In accordance with this belief, Yi made every effort

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204. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, VII, 236.
205. "Yet Chosŏnin-ŭi kŭnbon todŏk" [Fundamental Morals of Old Korean], *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 210.
206. *Ibid.*, X, 357.

to liberate the individual from the yoke of Confucianism. But now Yi indicated that he had abandoned the central premise of his theory of liberal nationalism.

There are two interpretations of this first step. One is that Yi gave up his attempt to marry liberal individualism and nationalism — i.e., his attempt to find a balance between the individual and society (for him, read nation) completely collapsed — and he took refuge in extreme nationalism. In support of this interpretation there were even seeds of national socialism in Yi's writings during the 1930s: for example, in "Chosŏn-ŭi munhak" [Korean Literature] and "Kandi-wa musolini" [Gandi and Mussolini]. In "Chosŏn-ŭi munhak" written in , Yi appeared to endorse national socialism.

> Broadly speaking, present Korean thought can be divided into nationalism and XXism [Marxism]. Recently national socialism which comprises these two elements, stimulated by Fascism, spread into Korea with rising speed. If we take this into consideration, present Korean thought can be said to be made up of these three ideologies. . . . Thus, what is the picture of Korean literature in future? It would be nationalist literature. More correctly speaking, it would be national socialist literature.[207]

It is noteworthy that in the writing, "Kandi-wa musolini" (1932), Yi who was known to follow the line of Gandhi's non-violent resistance movement, evaluated Mussolini in an affirmative way **before** he was forced to adopt a pro-Japanese line in the late 1930s.[208] This might be the clue to explain why Yi's defection to the pro-Japanese line was made, in that he had expressed sympathy for Fascism many years earlier. Hence when, subsequently, in "Sincheje-ha-ŭi yesul-ŭi panghyang" [The Direction of Arts in New System] written in 1941 for the purpose of supporting Japanese Fascism, Yi criticised individualism and liberalism, it may be said that Yi changed the form of his ultra nationalist ideology from Korean to Japanese without changing its content.

The second interpretation is that Yi simply tried to separate egoism from individualism by stressing the individual's moral obligation to society. In the process of seeking political obligation in a religious and moral basis, the idea of sympathy which is very similar to Adam Smith's conception took hold in Yi's thought, combined with Buddhist compassion. To Yi, Buddhism was a religion of sacrifice and altruism.

> The Buddhist school uses the terms of "wishing for" and "the power of wishing for". For instance, the forty-eight wishes of Amitabha Buddha can be the greatest wish of all wishes. Are there greater wishes than the wish of the Amitabha who refused to go into nirvana [to reach the Western Paradise]? Born a man, we ought to wish for Compassion.[209]

Such wishing, Yi believes, would never be in vain:

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207. Yi Kwang-su, "Chosŏn-ŭi munhak" [Korean Literature]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 468.
208. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, VIII, 354-355.
209. *Ibid.*, X: 191.

> The power of wishing has an unbelievable and mysterious fulfilment. It is said that once a great wish is made it will become a cause that will bring an effect someday, if not right away. Furthermore, once a great wish is made, the wish will come through no matter what the wisher feels about it.[210]

Yi's definition of a great wish was: "willingness to sacrifice one's own well-being, and even one's life for the sake of eliminating the suffering of others and giving happiness and joy".[211] If the greatest love one can give to others is one's own life, the definition of a great wish was in terms of compassion expressed in a different way. This was confirmed by the fact that in "Chŏlmŭn Chosŏn-in-ŭi sowŏn" [The Wishes of Young Koreans] Yi discussed the scope of compassion after he discussed the great wish. A great wish which was selfless at heart had three aspects in its motivation: the feeling of truth, the feeling of morality, and the feeling of beauty. Yi's thought here was completely at one with the teaching of many religions. For example, the Confucian idea of *jen* and illustrious virtue, the Mahayana Buddhist key virtue of compassion, and the Christian *agape* were all brought into his affirmative view of human nature's capacity for self-sacrifice.

It is interesting that the Chinese anti-Confucianist, Chang Ping-lin (1868-1936) who criticised Confucius for his excessive subservience to the ruler, also tried to draw the motivation for social obligation from Buddhism. In the process of seeking the motivating spirit of revolution, like Yi Kwang-su he relied on an explanation of human nature. Chang contended that the motivating spirit of revolution was man's compassion for humanity — his natural sympathy with those who suffered from injustice and oppression — that moved him to join the revolution and martyr himself. Chang reinforced this doctrine with the Buddhist teachings of the Fa Hsiang and Hua Yen [flower garland] schools. The Fa Hsiang Buddhists believed that all precepts were in the mind, while the Hua Yen school advocated self-sacrifice for the salvation of others. The Buddhist approach disregarded material considerations and regarded danger and death with equanimity.

What made Yi Kwang-su seek such a moralist —i.e., quasi Confucian — way of thinking as a justification for social obligation? This question is related to one of the central premises of this thesis. In the beginning of this thesis, I pointed out that anti-Confucianists were not free of the influence of Confucianism: their ideas sometimes replicated the Confucian way of thinking. Here is a case in point. In my concluding chapter I will discuss how far a strong Confucian legacy remained in Yi Kwang-su's writings.

4.7 Conclusion: the failure of Yi's liberal nationalism

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210. *Ibid.*
211. *Ibid.*, X. 192.

The collapse of Yi's anti-Confucianism

After 1945 when Korea was liberated from Japanese colonial rule, Yi's writing showed that he admitted some value in the Confucianism that he had once castigated. In "Nae nara" [My Country] he made an affirmative evaluation of Confucianism. His stress on morality showed the failure of his anti-Confucianism.

> The reason we respect Chinese culture is that it comprises teachings that can lead us to a peaceful world if we understand and practise it properly. The most distinctive feature of it is the idea of the rule by proprieties that is made and practised in the Chou dynasty of China. The teaching of Confucius, that the way of guiding people by virtues and governing people by proprieties is better than guiding people by politics and ruling by law, is the most highly developed of the political ideas of mankind.[212]

The ultimate purpose of Yi's anti-Confucianism was liberal nationalism. At first he held that in order to establish liberal nationalism the adoption of the liberal contractarian way of thinking was essential. This was opposed to the Confucian central principles of harmony and the preference for morality over law as a means of government. The above passage indicates that Yi subsequently abandoned this earlier contractarian form of anti-Confucianism.

In "Sarang-ŭi kil" [The Path to Love], written in 1949, Yi divided political ideas into two categories. One was the rule by *kyŏngu* (the discrimination of right and wrong, law, institution or reason and justice). The other was based on love, which is superior to law.

> Law and justice originated from *kyŏngu*. It is the state ruled by law that administered the law equally without any distinction. . . . The existence of law is the indicator of the degree of civilisation of one nation. Love, however, is more advanced than law. *Kyŏngu* means "give and take" while love means only "give" . . .[213]

The ideal Confucian society presented by the later Yi was almost like an anarchists' view of utopia.

> There is no one who has no love. Birds and animals have love. Love is inherent in nature. The difference is the scope and extent. Love comprising the whole nation deserves the name. In the country where those who have this kind of love live, law exists only for a few foolish people and there is no need of law since most people in the country do not make any dispute about serving and conceding for others without calculating each other's interest. This state is the ideal country in which, Confucius remarked, people are guided by virtue and governed by proprieties. Confucius put the state governed by law into a category that people can manage to avoid penalties, but lose their sense of shame.[214]

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212. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 233
213. "Sarang-ŭi kil" [The Path to Love]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, X, 226
214. *Ibid*. See, Confucius, *The Analects*, Bk. 2, Ch. 3.

The most striking feature of this shift in Yi's thought was over his conception of freedom: he now denigrated the liberal concept of the right to freedom. as a concept rooted in selfishness.

> Today in the age of *kyŏngu*. justice merely means the just and fair distribution of retaliation. and freedom is nothing more than the freedom to satisfy one's selfish desire.
>
> The emergence of the idea of freedom is due to those who want to oppress others. The idea of freedom comes out of the situation that one resists the demand of subjection from others.[215]
>
> "Freedom or death" is a cry from the oppressed. In our country there will be no one who is oppressed. If a father does not oppress his son. and wife and husband respect each other. and officials serve the people. and people serve officials there would be no one who suffers from oppression.
>
> So long as people make claim for *Kyŏngu* [their right] and cry for freedom. peace will not come to the state or world. When people forget justice and freedom. peace will come. The world of peace will not come either by force or *Kyŏngu* [law].[216]

Abandoning the idea that freedom was a political right. Yi's conception of freedom returned to the idea of mental freedom which was typical of the Confucianist or East Asian way of thinking.

> Freedom is attained when one is liberated from slavery. The border of love starts when one abandons one's freedom and serves voluntarily for others.
>
> Therefore. freedom at a higher level refers to being free from one's own selfishness [self interest]. It is not freedom from others. In other words. one should have the freedom to love and serve others through liberating oneself from one's selfishness. This is emancipation. Christ's washing his disciple's feet after the Last Supper taught us this. *The Book of Documents* sees freedom as following heaven's mandate. The Buddhist *sutras* told us that freedom is an emancipation from all selfishness.[217]

It is important to note that Yi now claimed that the political freedom of individuals is an obstacle to nationalism. In other words. Yi now maintained that social harmony was to be attained only at the cost of political freedom. The Confucian idea of social harmony had returned to dominate his way of thinking. He no longer thought that political freedom was a prerequisite of. or even compatible with. nationalism. His long pursued attempt to establish nationalism on the basis of liberal individualism was abandoned.

What produced this drastic transformation of Yi's position? Perhaps. even the fieriest anti-Confucianist could not escape the spell of Confucianism? The failure of his anti-Confucianism began with Yi's inability to provide a framework to give due balance between liberal individualism and nationalism. At first Yi seemed to succeed in liberating the individual from Confucian fetters. However. when his anti-Confucianism proceeded to confront the perennial problem of political thought — the conflict

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215. *Ibid*., X. 226.
216. *Ibid*.. 227.
217. *Ibid*.

between the individual and society, or freedom and political obligation — he did not provide a convincing framework for solving it. Like Fukuzawa, Yi could have continued to follow the path of the social contract as a way of solving the problem. He could have elaborated the balanced relationship between right and duty by maintaining his acknowledgement of the positive value of competition and self-interest. In the earlier period of his thought, Yi made an affirmative evaluation of conflict and self-interest as the prime movers of the progress of civilisation. Later, however, as he took a more negative view of conflict and self-interest, he moved away from the framework based on liberalism's contractarian principle. As an alternative he took the path of moral suasion, preferring emotion to reason, the extreme form of which was his advocacy of love as a solution to conflict between the individual and society.

No Chae-bong called Yi Kwang-su's later nationalism "moralistic nationalism" or "Romantic nationalism".[218] According to No, Yi Kwang-su's later thought represents a cultural nationalism whose strong influence still exists in Korean politics. One problem of moralistic nationalism, however, is that it leads to the disappearance of politics by internalising it. This is well illustrated by Yi Kwang-su who was criticised for the lack of politics in his writings.[219]

Summing up this discussion, Yi's attempt to associate liberal individualism with nationalism failed. One of the reasons for this failure was his attempt to seek the justification of social obligation not in a rationalistic way but in a moralistic way. As a result he failed to accommodate the ideas of conflict and competition. It is strange that Yi did not, like Fukuzawa, use the contractarian mode of justification of political obligation, since he stressed the contract in his criticism of Confucian family ethics at the level of individual. He criticised Confucian conjugal relations in terms of a contract in a typically liberal form of argument, but he did not stress the contractarian justification of political obligation. He did not focus on the right to participate, but only on the duty. It is evident therefore that there was a disjunction between his earlier and his later critique of Confucianism.

An evaluation of Yi's anti-Confucianism

Yi was less a thinker who gave answers than a thinker who raised questions. The questions and problems that he faced in developing his anti-Confucianism still remain unresolved. In this respect, he is acutely relevant to modern political thought. Yi's anti-Confucianism epitomised the conflict between Confucianism, liberalism and

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218. No Chae-bong, "Han'guk minjok-chuŭi-wa chayu-juŭi" [Liberalism and Korean Nationalism] in *Sasang-kwa silch'ŏn* (Seoul: Nokdu Publisher, 1985), 373.
219. As already mentioned in this thesis, the attitude that makes light of politics is derived from Confucianism in which the role of politics is equivalent to that of education.

nationalism, and showed why the Confucian legacy has remained strong in Korea. The principle of harmony and the preference of virtue over law are strong residues of Confucianism; Yi's failure to challenge the Confucian way of thinking demonstrates the difficulty of overcoming this Confucian legacy.

However, thanks in no small part to the efforts of Yi, some crucial elements of Korean society have changed. For example, Yi stressed the parent's obligation to children rather than children's obligation to parents, and insisted that parents had a duty to their children to give them a proper education. Nowadays, Korean parents are willing to make any sacrifice for their children, especially in the area of education. Yi also urged the transformation of the focus of the family: from parent-centred to children-centred. A Korean commentator, Lee Kwang-gyu recently made the following observation of Korean society:

> Roles within the family have altered. Authority and privilege of the elder generation is, perhaps, no longer unconditional, but offered to parents as a reward for providing. The idea of filial duty has been transformed toward a concept of intergenerational compromise. The focus of modern families also tends to be children-centered rather than husband/ wife-centred.[220]

This passage reminds us of Yi's advocacy of anti-Confucianism in "Chanyŏ chumsim-non [Treatise on Children-centred World View].

However, much of contemporary Korean society shows the limits of the inroads into anti-Confucianism made by Yi. By attacking Confucianism on two fronts: — liberal individualism and nationalism — Yi had a good chance of establishing and developing a theory of liberal nationalism. But, the failure of Yi's anti-Confucianism to provide a framework to balance the two demands from liberal individualism and nationalism contributed to the deformed and ill-balanced development of liberal democracy in Korea.[221] This is clearly illustrated by Yi Hong-gu (Lee, Hong-ku) who perceptively pointed out the problem of Korean liberal democracy by using a new term, "Pan chayu-juŭi-jŏk minju-juŭi" [Democracy with an Anti-liberal Tendency].[222] According to Lee, in the long process of establishing democracy in Korea, the values which are

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220. Lee Kwang-gyu (Yi Kwang-gyu). "Changing Aspects of the Rural Family in Korea in *Family and Community Change in East Asia,* ed. K. Aoi and K. Morioka (Tokyo: Japan Sociological Society, 1985), 158-87.
221. Yi Hong-gu's (Lee, Hong-ku) term, Pan chayu-juŭi-jŏk minju-juŭi [Democracy with Anti-liberal tendency] symbolises it. Yi Hong-gu (Lee Hong-ku). "Pan chayu-juŭi-jŏk minju-juŭi-wa han'guk chŏngch'i munwha." [Democracy with an Anti-liberal Tendency and Korean Political Culture] in *Han'guk sahoe-ŭi pyŏndong-kwa paljŏn,* ed. Seoul National University sahoe kwahak yŏn'gu-so (Seoul: Bummun-sa, 1985), 35-37.
222. Yi Hong-gu (Lee, Hong-ku). "Pan chayu-juŭi-jŏk minju-juŭi-wa han'guk chŏngch'i munwha." [Democracy with an Anti-liberal Tendency and Korean Political Culture] in *Han'guk sahoe-ŭi pyŏndong-kwa paljŏn,* ed. Seoul National University Sahoe kwahak yŏnku-so (Seoul: Bummun-sa, 1985), 35-37.

most conspicuously emphasised are collectivity and equality, not individual freedom.[223]

Yi Hong-gu (Lee, Hong-ku) attributes liberalism's failure in Korea to the influence of the Confucian tradition and the place of nationalism in the Korean political tradition.[224] This is for three reasons. First, the Confucian disposition in Korean political culture gave an understanding of the individual not as an independent being but as a being in relation to his post, occupation, role, and status in the established social institutions. Second, the focus of concern in Korean political culture lay less in the individual's rights than in one's loyalty, service and contribution to the state or collectivity. Third, the Western principle of the nation state based on liberalism was not fully internalised and has not taken root in Korean daily life. As a result, an understanding or recognition of human rights or natural rights is scarce in Korean traditional culture.

To conclude, Yi's anti-Confucianism was in the end confined to nationalistic goals, especially in opposition to the sino-centric world view.[225] Thus, the overcoming of Confucianism in the sphere of liberal individualism in Korea is still left as an unfinished task.

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223. Yi Hong-gu (Lee, Hong-ku). "Han'guk kŭndae chŏngch'i-sa-ŭi chŏn'gae-wa minju-juŭ i" [Korean Modern Political History and Democracy], in *Hanguk chŏngch'i yŏnku* [The Studies of Korean Politics] (Seoul: *Han'guk chŏngch'i yŏnku-hoe*, 1987), 132-33.
224. Yi Hong-gu (Lee, Hong-ku). "Pan chayu-juŭi-jŏk minju-juŭi-wa Han'guk chŏngch'i munwha," in *Han'guk sahoe-ŭi pyŏndong-kwa paljŏn*, ed. Seoul National University sahoe kwahak yŏn'gu-so (Seoul: Bummunsa, 1985), 40-41.
225. Robinson pointed out that the start of anti-Confucianism in Korea was motivated by nationalist demands which are centered around "sadae issue" [sino-centric world view]. Robinson, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION: EVALUATION OF ANTI-CONFUCIANISM IN FUKUZAWA AND YI

5.1 Comparison between the anti-Confucianism of Fukuzawa and Yi

In order to conclude this study of Fukuzawa's and Yi's anti-Confucianism, I will directly compare the work of the two writers, by highlighting their similarities and their differences. Beginning with the similarities, clearly Fukuzawa and Yi were both radical thinkers who attempted to demolish the edifice of Confucianism. There are seven elements of common ground between them.

First, they both shared an attachment to relativism, which they used to shake the base of the authority of Confucianism. This relativism was epitomised by Fukuzawa's statement that, "the values of things are judged by their usefulness." Their relativism which is based on historicism that truth can be changed in accordance with time and place was in contrast to the absolute authority of Confucianism which is based on a sort of natural law. Following their line of historicism, Confucianism was the ideology in past (feudal age), thus it could not be compatible with modern society. Their historical relativism was influenced by the Social Darwinism represented by Herbert Spencer. However, this relativism weakened Fukuzawa's and Yi's earlier positions as advocates of natural rights.

Second, both thinkers conducted a systematic attack on Confucianism in the belief that the edifice of Confucianism was built on the family system. To topple the edifice of Confucian power, it was a prerequisite to destroy the base of family ethics and institution. Thus, much of their anti-Confucianism was directed to the critique of Confucian family ethics and institutions. This has misled some of their interpreters to neglect the political aspects of their anti-Confucianism.

Third, they regarded filial piety as the central idea that provided the ground for Confucian despotism. They criticised filial piety for its unilateral obligation. They asserted that in a society where filial piety dominated there was little chance that independent individuals could emerge. They endeavoured to transform filial piety into bilateral obligation by stressing parents' obligation to their children. In their view, the prime duty of parents to their children was to provide a good education for their children. Fukuzawa sought to transform the family institution which was based on unilateral parent-children relations into one which was based on the husband-wife relation, while Yi Kwang-su sought to transform the family into a children-centred one.

Fourth, they both attacked Confucian discrimination against women; indeed this constituted a dominant part of their anti-Confucianism. In both cases the ground for attacking Confucian discrimination against women was based initially on natural

rights; they both took the view that marriage was a free contract. At a later period of Yi and Fukuzawa's thoughts, however, the stress on the inequality of women shifted from natural right to the instrumentality of equal rights for nationalism, and eugenic considerations for the good of the nation dominated their discussion of women's issues. This indicates that their thought became more coloured by nationalism than by liberalism in their later writings.

Fifth, Fukuzawa and Yi Kwang-su shared an ultimate goal in anti-Confucianism of establishing a modern nation state by creating a new citizenry. They observed that there were no citizenry but only bystanders in Confucian society. They tried to transform their countrymen (subjects) into citizens. Both of them claimed that a prerequisite for creating a citizen was the independent individual. The point of departure in their anti-Confucianism is the premise that without the emergence of independent individuals the goal of establishing a modern nation state could not be attained. Fukuzawa's criticism centred on Confucian social inequality (the imbalance of power) which obstructed the emergence of citizen, while Yi's criticism centred on Confucian filial piety which enslaved people within the boundary of the family. In contrast to Fukuzawa who waged his campaign against Confucianism to emancipate individuals from the yoke of Confucian social inequality, Yi concentrated his efforts on liberating individuals from the prison of the family.

Sixth, they both stressed the role of the middle class in general and scholars in particular. Although Fukuzawa opposed the scholar's participation in government, he wanted scholars to play the leading role in society. In this respect, both of them may be criticised for not being free from Confucian elitism.

Seventh, Fukuzawa and Yi both criticised Christianity. They believed that discrediting all religion was a way of accommodating Western civilisation. They rejected the view that the accommodation of Western civilisation must encompass that of Christianity. Their attitude to Christianity was parallel to their attitude towards Confucianism. Like Confucianism, Christian universality was incompatible with nationalism. These seven elements of common ground discussed above strongly testifies Yi's indebtedness to the Fukuzawa.

These radical objectives of Fukuzawa and Yi might be explained by their similar personal backgrounds. They were both marginal men in two senses. One sense is that they were born into the lower ranks of Samurai and Yangban. This put them in a position to observe the contradictions of Confucian society and be less bound to its traditional values.[1] The other sense is that their lives spanned a transitory period in the

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1. This interpretation is supported by the fact that Choe Nam-sŏn who was one of the major figures in the Korean Enlightenment also came from the *Chung-in* class which is below the *Yangban* class.

history of each of their countries, giving an added stimulus to them to embark on anti-Confucianism. This point is epitomised by Fukuzawa's phrase, "Two lives", signifying that they each united in themselves two completely different patterns of experience.

Another common feature of their childhood is that they were both orphans. Their radical challenge to Confucianism might be explained by the absence of a father's authority in their life. Yi Kwang-su's radical criticism of Confucian family ethics, especially on the issue of filial piety, brought him criticism from Confucianists who called him the child without a father. In the study of Yi's thought "*koa ŭisik*" [orphan consciousness] is stressed by Kim Yun-sik.[2] According to Kim, "orphan consciousness" was linked to the loss of national independence and was one of the important keys to an interpretation of Yi's complex thought.

We now come to two important differences between the anti-Confucianism of Fukuzawa and Yi. First, by contrast with Fukuzawa, Yi was more influenced by the Confucian way of thinking on morality. Yi's later negative attitude towards conflict and law was influenced by the Confucian principles that the idea of harmony overshadows other values. It is ironical that Yi, who had earlier condemned the moralistic features of Confucianism, in the end relied on moralism. Aware of the contradiction, Yi excused himself by arguing that his moralistic approach was different from the Confucian approach in its contents. It is, however, incontrovertible that Yi's stress on morality and emotion resembled Confucianism, and undermined his attempt to find a balance between the individual and the state. We can find strong Confucian influences on Yi's idealism in his critique of Marxism.

> I am not seeking to deny that the material environment conditions human life (ideas and activities); however the prime mover of the direction and quality of human life is the power of the human mind.
>
> Though the merit of Marx's historical materialism is that it contributed to turning our attention to the power of the environment, its demerit is that it went to an extreme in taking the environmental factor as the only factor.[3]

> In seeking the explanation of social phenomenon, I take the position of both materialism and idealism. This is my principle that gives account of social phenomenon in terms of common sense rather than in terms of metaphysics. I believe that the activities of human kind, economic activities, not to mention cultural activities, are determined not only by geographical conditions: weather and climate, and physiological conditions: hunger and sexual desire, and social conditions: institutions, but also individual desire — moral desire over instinctive desire. For example what made Karl Marx write *Capital* was not necessarily the social environment of Germany at that time, and not hunger and sexual desire. I believe that the important factors that made Marx write *Capital* were his unique sense of justice and truth, and diligence and talent. The same truth can be said of Buddha, Christ, and Sun Yat-sen, and Gandhi, and Mussolini. That is to say, social phenomena occur by a combination of objective condition, material

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2. Kim Yun-sik (Kim, Yoon-shik). *Yi Kwang-su-wa kŭ-ŭi sidae* [Yi Kwang-su and His Times]. Seoul: Han'gilsa, 1986.
3. Yi' Kwang-su. "Yusim sagwan." [Historical Idealism]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, VIII, 356

> condition. and subjective (i.e.. mental) condition. When the relevant social phenomena are cultural. mental factors assume even more weight.[4]

Placing more stress on spiritual values than material ones was a typical Confucian way of thinking. In his short editorial entitled "Enterprise and Spiritual Cultivation" Yi proposed "spirit" as an essential element of commerce-industry. His definition of "spirit" was as follows:

> What is this spirit? First it is the courage to launch out resolutely to open a shop or factory. and the subsequent stamina to maintain it. There will be seven failures but one who stands up the eighth time is still standing. Nay. one ought to be engaged in his business even if he fails seventy times. The spirit of business is to avoid closed-mindedness. the fast-buck mentality. and complacency with a little success.[5]

The "spirit" of commerce-industry required merchants and industrialists to be men of truth:

> . . . the spirit ought to uphold *satyagraha* (holding on to Truth). This may sound a little out of context here. But there is deeper meaning in this. A) It entails man's adherence to reason and science rather than merely to chance and magic when one is engaged in business. B) It forbids the falsehood of Korean commerce-industrialists. It urges the truth of a Koreans' promise over a certified check or mortgage (both for Koreans and foreigners as well). This can be called the *satygraha* of commerce-industrialists.[6]

This spirit also confered peace of mind (*pu-tong-sim*). Here Yi elevated the man of commerce-industry into practically a man of religion:

> . . . "peace of mind" which is *pu-tong-sim* (unmovable mind) is the heart in promoting the commerce-industry of Korea even though the idea may stand out as surprising. The concept is a religious one but without peace of mind both courage and *satyagraha* are impossible to attain. One wishing to be successful in commerce-industrial enterprise ought to be a possessor of a calm and transparent mind. like autumn water in a pond which is unstirred. One ought to be overwhelmed neither by pleasure nor pain. nor by vainglory. nor by success nor failure. Unwearied. unscathed by fire. and undestroyable like the state of Zen spirit. one should be unmoving. unretreating and unreturning. All these are possible only if one's mind is calm and can render correct and brilliant judgement. A great entrepreneur's spirit is as deep as that of a great religionist or a great statesman. When a man can sit above his emotional turbulence and attains "peace of mind" he is truly a man among the spirited and has resources upon resources.[7]

Conceding so much to idealism. Yi blunted the force of his anti-Confucianism. and was in danger of reducing it to a minor critique of some selected Confucian doctrines.

In contrast to Yi. Fukuzawa tried to avoid as much as possible the trap of Confucianist moralistic ways of thinking which could undermine his anti-Confucianism. Throughout his campaign of anti-Confucianism. he made it clear that

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4. "Chosŏn-in-ŭrosŏŭi nae insaneng-kwan" [My Outlook on Life as Korean]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*. X. 353.
5. *Ibid*.. 403. (Translated by Grant Lee)
6. *Ibid*.. 404. (Translated by Grant Lee)
7. *Ibid*. (Translated by Grant Lee)

Confucianism was a bundle of morality that was incompatible with the demands of modern society. Distinguishing between morality and knowledge, Fukuzawa argued that Confucianism fell into the category of morality, while Western ideas fell into the category of knowledge. In Confucianism, the cultivation of self and private virtue were stressed. In Western ideas, institutions and law were stressed. Sticking to these distinctions enabled Fukuzawa to be consistent in his anti-Confucianism.

Second, although Fukuzawa and Yi Kwang-su both used freedom as a means to a nationalistic goal (to establish a nation state by creating the modern citizen), and both shared a conception of freedom as power, they offered different strategies to deal with the self-interest of individuals. Unlike Yi, Fukuzawa accepted self interest as a necessary condition of the progress of civilisation, and tried to solve the conflict between individual self-interest and society by the concept of the social contract. Both thought that the nation's interest was the ultimate good of each individual, but whereas Yi relied on the unilateral sacrifice of individual interest; Fukuzawa viewed the relationship as a form of deal between the individual and the state.

In my view, these differences of focus in the anti-Confucianism of Fukuzawa and Yi are derived from two factors: first, the different background of Confucianism in their countries: second, their different conceptions of man. First, Confucianism in Japan did not penetrate as deeply as it did in Korea. McMullen's evaluation of the Confucianisation of Japan in his paper "How Confucian is Modern Japan" is significant.

> Japan's prolonged exposure to Confucianism, no one can reasonably deny, has exerted an influence, often subtle and elusive, at many different levels of her society. But we have suggested that Japanese society may not derive its often noted cohesiveness and energy primarily from Confucianism, but even, in some respects, in spite of it. The Japanese, it is seriously arguable, have not been radically Confucianized at any level. Their family system has remained smaller in scope and differently organized from the Confucian ideal. Most important, perhaps, the succession and inheritance principle was different. Primogeniture left younger sons relatively free to seek primary loyalties beyond the family. At the same time, the development of a military society characterised by binding loyalty between leader and follower made loyalty itself an important principle of social and political organization. Thus, at the ideological level in Japan, loyalty takes precedence over other values. This loyalty is in some ways congruent with Confucian teaching, but it had indigenous roots which determined the form it has assumed historically and its importance relative to other values. In contemporary times, focused on the commercial or industrial enterprise, it helps account for the success of modern Japanese society.[8]

In comparing Japanese Confucianism with the Chinese counterpart, McMullen used as his standard test of Confucianism the idea of filial piety which is "the most important

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8. I. J. McMullen, "How Confucian is Modern Japan", in *Asian Affairs*, Vol XI, (October, 1980): 282-283.

moral duty of the individual from a Chinese Confucian point of view."[9] Applying this standard to Japan, McMullan found that Japanese Confucianisation was not equivalent to Chinese Confucianism since the dominating value in Japan was not by filial piety but by loyalty. This different background of Confucianism helps to explain the difference between the two writer's focus in attacking the Confucian family ethic. Fukuzawa's vision of the family focused on the egalitarian relation between husband and wife, while Yi's vision was children centred. This reflected the fact that filial piety was much more deep rooted in Korea than Japan, and was the most important element of Confucianism to be eradicated there.

Second, the difference in the anti-Confucianism of Yi and Fukuzawa can be derived from their different conceptions of man and evaluations of reason. Fukuzawa believed in man's rationality and the supremacy of reason over emotion, while Yi took the view that man was irrational and that emotion was the prime mover of human beings. Thus Fukuzawa is closer to the philosophy of the Enlightenment, and Yi is close to that of Romanticism. Yi's stress on emotion rather than reason appeared early in Yi's writings; for example, "Kŭmil ahan ch'ŏngnyŏn-gwa chŏngyuk" (Present Korean Youth and Education for Emotion) written in 1910 indicates it:

> The Human being is an emotional animal. Without emotion, authority, knowledge, moral, health, honour, shame and life cannot exist. What prestige and power emotion has! Emotion has the supreme power more than any other thing in human life.
>
> Every effort should be made for the promotion of education for emotion. Emotion is the prime mover of every kind of obligation and source of every activity. Man should be allowed to demonstrate filial piety and loyalty and believe and love at his free will. It is true that we cannot become the man of virtue without the guidance and control of reason. However, true and significant work can be done with the power of emotion.[10]

Yi's emphasis on emotion precluded him from elaborating liberal contractarianism.

5.2 The contribution of anti-Confucianism

I have examined the anti-Confucianism of Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su from two perspectives, their liberalism and their nationalism. These two thinkers exemplify the fact that modern political thought in both Japan and Korea is a mixture of Confucianism, liberalism and nationalism. Present day Confucianism is no longer Confucianism as it was, because it has been transformed by the challenges of liberalism and nationalism.

In modern East Asia, liberal individualism is destined to be a prisoner of nationalism. No ideology has been free from the constraint of nationalism since East

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9. *Ibid.*
10. "Kŭmil ahan ch'ŏngnyŏn-gwa chŏngyuk" [Present Korean Youth and Education for Emotion]. *Yi Kwang-su chŏnjip*, I, 526.

Asian countries started to accommodate foreign political ideas. The import of foreign political ideas into modern East Asia was motivated by a nationalistic aspiration for building a modern nation state as a solution to the threat of foreign aggression. This led to a situation where the existence of a doctrine or ideology could be justified only when it proved to be favourable to nationalism. In this respect Western liberalism can be called the prisoner of nationalism.

The anti-Confucianism of Fukuzawa and Yi gives us a laboratory to observe the working of the marriage of liberalism with nationalism in two East Asian contexts. Why has liberalism had such difficulty in establishing itself as a leading ideology in East Asia? The answer can best be found in the study of anti-Confucianism since broadly speaking the failure of anti-Confucianism is equivalent to the failure of liberalism. The discovery of the individual and the emergence of the nation state are distinctive features of modern Western political thought. The spread of individualism in East Asia occurred in a comparatively short period considering that the process took several centuries in the West, and it served to partially and temporarily liberate the individual from the shackles of Confucianism. Under the extensive attack of anti-Confucianism launched by such eminent writers as Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su, Confucianism partially and temporarily lost its prestigious authority in East Asia. However liberal individualism, which played the pivotal role of demolishing the edifice of Confucianism was subsequently swept away by the strong current of nationalism from the West which followed in its wake. This resulted from the anti-Confucianists' failure to provide a framework robust enough to provide a balance between the demands of liberalism and those of nationalism. The two leading anti-Confucianists, Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su, at first endeavoured to sustain the association of liberalism with nationalism. But when they believed, for one reason or another, that it was no longer possible to maintain the marriage, and when they felt they were forced to make a choice between liberalism and nationalism, they jettisoned liberalism in order to save the nationalist aspect of anti-Confucianism. Anti-Confucianism thus lost liberalism, which was one of its essential two pillars. The failure to establish liberal nationalism therefore can be explained as a result of the resilience of Confucianism. The anti-Confucianists may have been effective in abolishing Confucian customs, class inequality and women's discrimination and in weakening absolute paternal authority. But they showed themselves never entirely free from the illiberal Confucian way of thinking with its stress on morality over law, elitism over democracy, and harmony over conflict.[11]

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11. In his study of Chinese anti-Confucianists, Lin Yu-sheng argued that anti-Confucianists (iconoclasts in Lin's terms) share a common feature: they adopt a cultural-intellectualistic approach which originated from the traditional Confucian way of thinking.

5.3 Modern defenders of Confucianism

Confucianism has many modern day defenders in East Asia. For example, the post-war economic success of New Industrialised Countries led to many writers claiming that the most important factor in the economic success of the East Asian region is Confucianism. These writers argue that Confucianism is not a hindrance to modernisation; indeed they put forward a Confucian version of modernisation or industrialisation. For example, Rozman divides the modern world into three main areas: East Asia, made up of China, Japan and Korea, "the West, led by the United States and Western Europe, and the North, centred in the Soviet Union".[12] Rozman suggests that the major ideologies in these areas are, Confucianism, Liberalism, and Marxism-Leninism, respectively, therefore demonstrating the importance of Confucianism by giving it equivalent status to Liberalism and Marxism-Leninism. Rozman argues that: "Confucian traditions contribute to the unparalleled dynamism in East Asia during recent decades. . . . we highlight how Confucianism operates as an engine of dynamism and as a positive force."[13]

On this view Confucianism is no longer regarded as the evil heritage that is responsible for retarding national development and stifling individualism. Rather, Confucianism is praised as an engine of dynamism. According to Rozman and others, Confucianism provided a ground for growth with a societal proclivity toward hard work and education.

However, one of the drawbacks in Rozman's triadic typology is its over-simplified classification. Although some elements of Confucianism still remain in East Asia, China, Japan and Korea are no longer predominantly Confucian states. They have undergone fundamental transformations in every aspect of society since they imported Western political ideas: liberalism, nationalism and Marxism. Also it should be noted that the residual Confucianism that has survived in modern Japan and Korea is no longer the old version of Confucianism. The elements of Confucianism that are taken as obstacles to nationalism — excessive filial piety, excessive paternal authority, class ideas, and discrimination against women have undergone most transformation. For example, in the case of filial piety nowadays, parents often devote their life to the education of their children. Today the political ideas that dominate Korea and Japan are an inseparable combination of liberalism, nationalism and Confucianism. Hence the contrast drawn between liberalism and Confucianism by Rozman is no longer

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12. Gilbert Rozman, ed., *The East Asian Region: Confucian Heritage and Its Modern Adaptation*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 14.
13. *Ibid.*, X in preface.

appropriate. That contrast belongs to a period half a century ago, when Western ideas were still antagonistic to Eastern ideas.

A second defect of Rozman's study is his inadequate analysis of economic factors. For example, he ignores the Confucian disdain for money making.[14] Rozman cites the contribution of Confucianism diligence and education to economic development, but he seems to forget the elements of Confucianism which obstructed the development of capitalism in East Asia; Confucian contempt for material affluence and merchant activity had to be abolished before the elements of Confucianism which Rozman designated as a positive factor for economic development could work.

Third, Rozman does not take into consideration the political cost of economic development — authoritarian rule in Japan, Korea and China — which is derived from Confucian paternalism. By contrast to Rozman, Lucian and Mary Pye's study on Confucianism focuses on the political factor, more exactly on political culture.[15] It explains the present political implications of Confucianism in terms of the legitimation of paternal authoritarianism. The Pyes argue that Confucian paternal authority has obstructed the development of democracy in East Asia countries, thereby inhibiting national development.

Fourth, Rozman is basing his account on a relatively short time frame, as Yamaguchi Hisakaza points out:

> His [Rozman] placing of Confucianism on an equal footing with systems of thought of such influence as liberalism and Marxism-Leninism, simply on the basis of rapid economic growth achieved in East Asia over the last 20 or 30 years, is difficult for me to accept. In view of the long years of criticism of Confucianism, I question how its influence, especially its beneficial influence, can be weighed and evaluated in the context of such a brief span of history.[16]

5.4 The prospect for Confucianism and anti-Confucianism in East Asia

Going beyond Rozman's thesis, Huntington gives even greater prominence to Confucianism as a unique and enduring kind of civilisation. In Huntington's controversial paper the world is divided into Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African civilisations.

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14. The need to get rid of such Confucian anti-materialism which hindered the development of capitalism was urged by anti-Confucianists such as Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su.
15. Lucian W. Pye and Mary W. Pye. *Asian Power and Politics: the Cultural Dimensions of Authority*. (London: The Belknap Presss of Harvard University Press, 1985)
16. Yamaguchi Hisakazu, "Confucianism: Pretext for Economic Success", *Japan Quarterly*, (July-September 1991), 356.

> Civilization identity will be increasingly important in the future. and the world will be shaped in large measure by the interactions among seven or eight major civilizations. These include Western. Confucian. Japanese. Islamic. Hindu. Slavic-Orthodox. Latin American and possibly African civilization. The most important conflicts of the future will occur along the cultural fault lines separating these civilizations from one another.[17]

The danger of this re-evaluation of Confucianism is that it is used as an excuse and justification for authoritarianism in East Asian countries. In an interview with *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1994) entitled "Culture is destiny", Lee Kuan-yew made the controversial claim that East Asian Countries have a unique culture which is incompatible with Western democracy. On this argument. which is based on cultural particularism, the major difference between West and East Asian society is that the Western society is based on the individual while the counterpart of East Asian society is the family.

> **LKY:** I don't think there is an Asian model as such. But Asian societies are unlike Western ones. The fundamental difference between Western concepts of society and government and East Asian concepts (when I say East Asians. I mean Korea. Japan. China. Vietnam. as distinct from Southeast Asia. which is a mix between the Sinic and the Indian. though Indian culture also emphasizes similar values) is that Eastern societies believe that the individual exists in the context of his family. He is not pristine and separate. The family is part of the extended family. and then friends and the wider society. The ruler or the government does not try to provide for a person what the family best provides.[18]
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> In the West. especially after World War II. the government came to be seen as so successful that it could fulfil all the obligations that in less modern societies are fulfilled by the family. This approach encouraged alternative families. single mothers for instance. believing that government could provide the support to make up for the absent father. This is a bold. Huxlean view of life. but one from which I as an East Asian shy away. I would be afraid to experiment with it. I'm not sure what the consequences are. and I don't like the consequences that I see in the West. You will find this view widely shared in East Asia. It's not that we don't have single mothers here. We are also caught in the same social problems of change when we educate our women and they become independent financially and no longer need to put up with unhappy marriages. But there is grave disquiet when we break away from tested norms. and the tested norm is the family unit. It is the building brick of society.
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> There is a little Chinese aphorism which encapsulates this idea: *Xiushen qijia zhiguo pingfianxia*. *Xiushen* means look after yourself. cultivate yourself. do everything to make yourself useful; *Qijia*. look after the family; *Zhiguo*. look after your country. *Pingfianxia*. all is peaceful under heaven. We have a whole people immersed in these beliefs. My grand-daughter has the name *Xiu-qi*. My son picked out the first two words. instructing his daughter to cultivate herself and look after her family. It is the basic concept of our civilization Governments will come. governments will go. but this endures. We start with self-reliance. In the West today it is the opposite. The government says give me a popular mandate and I will solve all society's problems.[19]

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17. Samuel P. Huntington. "The Clash of Civilizations?". *Foreign Affairs*. (Summer 1993). 25.
18. Lee Kuan-yew."Culture is Destiny". *Foreign Affairs*. (March/April 1994). 113.
19. *Ibid*., 113-114

His comparison between East and West is reduced to Western individualism versus Confucian familism. Family values, which were described by Lee as the basic values of East Asian culture, are mainly Confucian, as is confirmed by his using Confucian terms such as "*Xiushen qijia zhiguo pingfianxia*". He enumerated the distinctive characteristics of East Asian culture: "the belief in thrift, hard work, filial piety and loyalty in the extended family, and, most of all, the respect for scholarship and learning." These values are praised by Lee as the key to the economic success of the NICs in East Asia, which indicates Lee's interpretation of Confucianism as economically-oriented.

> **LKY**: No. We have focused on basics in Singapore. We used the family to push economic growth, factoring the ambitions of a person and his family into our planning. We have tried, for example, to improve the lot of children through education. The government can create a setting in which people can live happily and succeed and express themselves, but finally it is what people do with their lives that determines economic success or failure. Again, we were fortunate we had this cultural backdrop, the belief in thrift, hard work, filial piety and loyalty in the extended family, and, most of all, the respect for scholarship and learning.
>
> **LKY**: that is an optimistic and attractive philosophy of life, and I hope it will come true. But if you look at societies over the millennia you find certain basic patterns. American civilization from the Pilgrim fathers on is one of optimism and the growth of orderly government. History in China is of dynasties which have risen and fallen, of the waxing and waning of societies. And through all that turbulence, the family, the extended family, the clan, has provided a kind of survival raft for the individual. Civilizations have collapsed, dynasties have been swept away by conquering hordes, but this life raft enables the civilization to carry on and get to its next phase.[20]

Lee's assertion seems to be related to the issue of social conservation which comprises the identity crisis when the radical transplantation of Western culture has been undergone.[21] His argument that Eastern culture cannot change and is fundamentally different from its Western counterpart boils down to the argument that democracy is not suitable for East Asian culture. But is this merely an excuse for authoritarianism? Lee's logic is to stress particularism against universalism but in a paper refuting the arguments made by Lee, Kim Dae-jung pointed out that liberal democracy is becoming established as a universal value in the modern world.[22] Francis Fukuyama has also enunciated this view, in his famous 1989 article "The End of History?"[23] Why should East Asia be an exception?

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20. *Ibid.*, 115
21. Lee, Hong-ku. "Social Conservation Reconsidered", in *Consequences of Modernization and Social Deveopment in Asian Societies*, ed. Hong Sung-chick. (Seoul, Korea: Asiatic Reserach Center, Korea University, 1987). 3-16.
22. Kim, Dae-jung. "Is Culture Destiny?: The Myth of Asia's Anti-Democratic Values." *Foreign Affairs* (November/December, 1994): 189-193.
23. Francis Fukuyama. "The End of History?", in *The National Interest*, no. 17 (summer). 1989. 3-18.

One thing that this recent debate indicates, however, is that in East Asia's new environment where Confucianism has been revived and encouraged by cultural nationalism, the issues raised by anti-Confucianism are still relevant at the present time. In East Asia, where accommodation of Western culture was motivated by both liberal and nationalist demands, nationalism is now the dominant ideology and the value of other political ideas are to be tested against it. In this context, the destiny of liberal nationalism in East Asia depends on how to overcome the vestigial Confucianism. This lead us back to the argument of anti-Confucianism advocated by Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su. Anti-Confucianism cannot be put aside as a defunct ideology of the past since the questions which anti-Confucianists then confronted still remain to be answered. Now there is an era in which we see tremendous self-questioning about the Confucian legacy and its relation to liberal individualism and nationalism. In this light, the study of Anti-Confucianism in the writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi and Yi Kwang-su has enabled us to go back to the roots and look again at what anti-Confucianism gave to Japan, Korea, and East Asia as a whole.

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