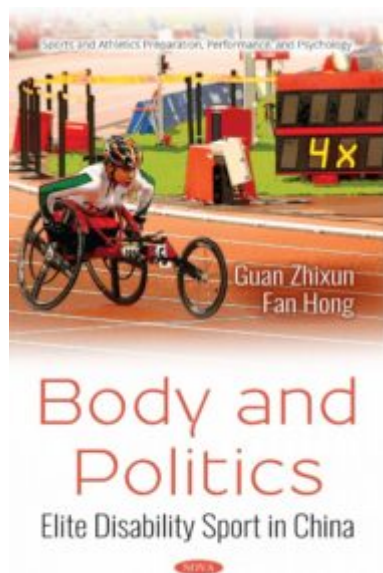


# Guan Zhixun & Fan Hong ~ Body and Politics: Elite Disability Sport in China



There has been growing interest in research on disability sport internationally, yet little research has concentrated on the development of disability sport in China. This book focuses on elite disability sport in China in the context of history, politics, policies and practice from 1979 to 2012. It examines the relationship between athletes with disabilities and the three major disability games: the Paralympic Games, the Special Olympic Games and the Deaflympic Games. Three key questions are asked: What policies have ensured the success of elite disability sport? How do the elite sport system and management of elite disability sport work in

China? In what way has elite disability sport empowered athletes with disabilities in China?

The book includes a comprehensive literature review on the historical development of disability sport in China and beyond. Functionalism and empowerment are the major theoretical backgrounds for the research. The former analyses the function of elite sport policies, systems and other factors occurring during the process, whilst the latter examines the relationship of empowerment between elite disability sport and athletes in China. The three major disability competitions are used as case studies. A qualitative research methodology with specific methods of semi-structured interviews, data collection and documentary analysis is applied to the research. The thesis concludes that the development of elite disability sport in China has received strong support from the government. Elite disability sport is closely linked with China's politics and international image. The success of athletes with disabilities on the international stage has raised the awareness of the issues facing people with disabilities. This has changed their image in Chinese society in general, and has empowered athletes with disabilities in particular. However, there is unbalanced development in elite disability sport. The book concludes by indicating some potential future directions

for further research.

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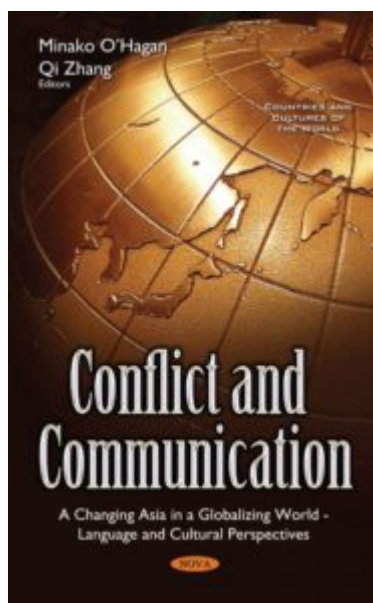
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# Minako O'Hagan & Qi Zhang ~ Conflict And Communication: A Changing Asia In A Globalizing World - Language And Cultural Perspectives



The chapters within this volume comprise selected papers from the 5th Annual Conference of the Asian Studies Irish Association (A.S.I.A.) held at Dublin City University in November 2013. Discussing the conference theme Conflict and Communication: A Changing Asia in a Globalising World, this volume presents multiple perspectives articulated by scholars across disciplines that include translation studies, language studies, literary studies and computer science.

Within such disciplinary diversity emerged a unity which converged on language and culture as fundamental points of analysis. This volume covers research topics relating to China, Korea, Japan, Thailand, and Vietnam, as well as Asia as a whole in a globalising world. Insights shared by the ten authors each addressing Asia through a different disciplinary lens hope to provide future research impetus for students and established scholars alike within and beyond Asian Studies.

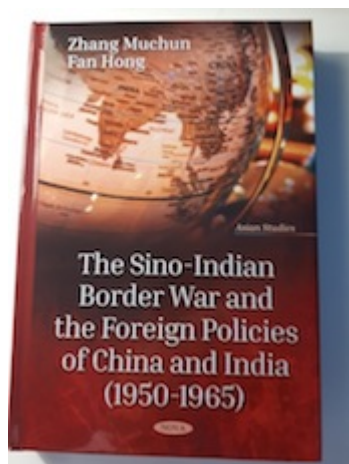
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# **Zhang Muchun & Fan Hong ~ The Sino-Indian Border War And The Foreign Policies Of China And India (1950-1965)**



There has been growing interest in the historical analysis of the Sino-Indian relations and the Sino-Indian border issue, yet little research has focused on the impact of two government's foreign policies concerning the Sino-Indian border issue and border war. This book examines the Sino-Indian relations, particularly the Sino-Indian border issue and border war, Tibetan issues, and China and India's foreign policies from the 1950s to 1960s. This book will discuss the origin and development of the Sino-Indian border issue and connections between national diplomatic policies and the border disputes in China and India.

More specifically, this book aims to illustrate the origins of the Sino-Indian border

dispute, the role Tibet played in the Sino-Indian border issue, the impacts of their foreign policies on the Sino-Indian border issue from the 1950s to the 1960s, the measures both states took to ease boundary tensions and conflicts, the reasons for the outbreak of the 1962 Border War, and the changes to foreign policies the two governments made before and after the 1962 Border War. This book involves the collection and analysis of historical archival materials and official documents from both China and India.

The book is mainly aimed at researchers, undergraduates and postgraduate students in the subject areas of the history of international relations and Chinese studies. It could be used in a wide range of courses since it offers insights into the aspects of historical and international relations found within Chinese society. It will be of interest to academic libraries, research institutes, universities, and students either as a textbook or as reading material. Due to the appeal and relevance of the subject, this book would also be of interest to people who want to know more about the history of Sino-Indian border disputes as well as China and India's foreign policies from 1950 to the 1960s through such a particular and appropriate topic.

Asian Studies (Series Editors: Fan Hong, Auke van der Berg and Peter Herrmann – Bangor University, UK, Rozenberg Quarterly, Netherlands and EURISPES – Istituto di Studi Politici, Economici e Sociali, Italy) – Nova Science Publishers, New York, 2018 – ISBN 978-1-53613-770-5

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# **The Rise And Fall Of The “Up To The Mountains And Down To The Countryside” Movement: A**

# Historical Review



## *Abstract*

The *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Countryside (UMDC) Movement* (上山下乡运动) was an important event in the history of the People's Republic of China (PRC). It changed the fate of a whole generation of Chinese and had far-reaching effects on the history of the PRC. As a nationwide urban-

to-rural migration (i.e. the reverse of the urbanization process), it is also unique in human history for its complex origin and the wide scope of its impact (16 million urban youths and nearly every Chinese family), as well as its long duration, tortuous process, and contradictory attributes. However, compared to the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) and other political events of the 1960s, the UMDC Movement is rarely known to people who are unfamiliar with Chinese history. Even in the area of Chinese Studies, the UMDC Movement has been misunderstood as a constituent part or a ramification of the Cultural Revolution. This paper reviews the process of the development of the UMDC Movement and analyses the social structural factors in its rise and fall in Chinese history.

## *Introduction*

From 1967 to 1979, more than 16 million[i] Chinese urban youths were sent to the countryside to engage in agricultural production. This was known as the Up to the Mountains and Down to the Countryside Movement (上山下乡运动). Those 16 million participants, who were named *Zhiqing* (educated youth 知青) after this movement, lived and worked in the countryside as ordinary agricultural labourers during their teenage years. In the early 1980s, when most *Zhiqing* eventually returned to the city, they were immediately faced with the residual issues of the UMDC Movement as well as the challenge of readjusting to urban society.

The UMDC Movement not only changed the fate of a whole generation of Chinese but also had far-reaching effects on the history of the People's Republic of China. However, in overseas Chinese Studies, much less attention has been given to the UMDC Movement than to the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). For many researchers, the UMDC Movement is a constituent part or a ramification of the Cultural Revolution.[ii] In terms of the relationship between the two historical

events, the Zhiqing Office of the State Council announced an official conclusion in 1981:

“First of all, the ‘UMDC’ was a major experiment carried out by the Communist Party from the 1950s, based on fundamental realities of the country, which then had a large population, a weak economic foundation, and employment difficulties; it was not the result of the Cultural Revolution. Second, the ‘UMDC’ was aimed primarily at resolving employment problems; during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution, it evolved as a political movement under the ultra-left ideology and resulted in serious mistakes in practice.” [iii] (Gu 1997, pp. 283–285)

As indicated in the above quotation, the UMDC Movement was characterized by its complex origin, tortuous process, and contradictory attributes. Simply associating it with the Cultural Revolution has led to the neglect of these historical facts. Therefore, to clarify the unique and significant position of the UMDC Movement in Chinese history, this paper reviews its rise and fall and further argues that its origin, development, and termination were all rooted in structural and fundamental contradictions of Chinese society, as well as the evolution of these contradictions under different historical circumstances.

Another theme of this chapter is to identify the *Zhiqing*’s position in the history of the UMDC Movement and in Chinese society. The UMDC Movement created the *Zhiqing* group – a whole generation of youths who have been allocated “Zhiqing” as their collective identity. Based on the historical review, this chapter argues that the constitution of the *Zhiqing* group and the connotation of the *Zhiqing* identity both underwent transformations at different stages of the UMDC Movement.

To summarize, a comprehensive historical review lays the foundation for an advanced understanding of the UMDC Movement and *Zhiqing*. The following sections present a clear development process, including a pre-movement phase and three distinct stages of the UMDC Movement.

### *Pre-Movement Phase: 1953–1965*

Mobilizing and organizing the Chinese youth to engage in agriculture can be traced back to the 1950s. After 1953, the problems caused by the country’s overheated economy became acute. Large numbers of rural youths rushed into the cities to search for jobs. To alleviate employment pressure in the cities, the state sought to encourage these rural youths to go back to their home villages and engage in agricultural production. Those rural youth were called *HuixiangZhiqing*



to distinguish them from the subsequent *Zhiqing* – urban youth. Because they were originally from the countryside, their return was regarded as normal and they were not entitled to a resettlement fee or other preferential treatments which were provided to urban youth when they settled down in the countryside. In addition to urban unemployment, another influencing economic factor was the development of agricultural cooperatives. Mao Zedong, the major promoter of rural collectivization, emphasized his opinion that educated young people should move to remote rural areas to make contributions to the nation and achieve personal development.[iv]

Another significant development in the 1950s was youth reclamation teams, which were arranged, organized, and guided directly by the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League. The two models used for these teams were the Beijing Youth Voluntary Reclamation Team(北京市青年志愿垦荒队) and the Shanghai Youth Voluntary Reclamation Team (上海市青年志愿垦荒队).[v] Driven by the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, youth reclamation teams soon spread throughout the whole country as a new trend. However, they came to an end in 1956 because of economic deficiency and poor management (Ding, 1998, pp.60-68). Moreover, the majority of the urban youths in these reclamation teams failed to adapt to intense farm work and harsh conditions, and they did not settle down in the countryside as they were supposed to (Ding, 1998, p. 60).

The *Huixiang Zhiqing* and the youth reclamation teams were the predecessors of the *Zhiqing*. Apart from this successive relationship, the dilemmas they faced in the 1950s continued to influence the UMDC Movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Subsequent history has demonstrated that these dilemmas, revealed later as inherent problems of the UMDC Movement, had determined in advance its direction and final results.

Of those dilemmas and problems, the most significant one was the employment issue, which cyclically intensified alongside general economic fluctuations. This was relevant with regard to the contradiction between population growth and development in the economy and education, as well as shortcomings in population, economy, and education policies. The second and consequent problem was that employment pressure and other social problems in the cities were often shifted to the countryside. Lastly, turning educated young people into simple labourers objectively resulted in a waste of human and education resources.

Initially, it was hoped that young people would contribute to rural construction by exploiting their knowledge and skills and transforming the rural society with advanced urban culture. However, most urban youths failed to settle down in the countryside. So the ironic fact was that “educated young people were less capable than illiterate peasants” (Ding, 1998, p.63). It is clear now that this was due to the poor production conditions, which stopped these young people from using their advantages. However, in that particular historical period, these young people’s failure and resistance were interpreted ideologically as the weakness and individualism of the bourgeoisie.[vi]

After a few years of try-outs, in 1956, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the state decided to adopt mobilizing youth to the countryside as a conventional method to address the employment issue. This time, the urban youth became the target for mobilization. On 23 January 1956, the Political Bureau of the CCP Central Committee (中共中央政治局) issued an “Outline of National Agricultural Development from 1956 to 1967 (draft)” (1956 年到 1967 年全国农业发展纲要[草案]). According to Article Thirty of the Outline, graduates of urban secondary and primary schools, except for those who had managed to enter into further studies and those who had found jobs in the cities, should respond to the call and go down to the countryside and up to mountains to join in agricultural production and participate in the great cause of socialist agricultural construction. For the first time, “Down to the Countryside and Up to the Mountains” (下乡上山) appeared in an official document as a set term, though the sequence here was contrary to the later well-known expression, “Up to the Mountains and Down to the Countryside” (上山下乡).

In 1958, under the impact of the Great Leap Forward, the implementation of “Down to the Countryside and Up to the Mountains” was halted suddenly. By the end of 1962, the number of idle urban youths had reached 2 million.[vii] Soon, the UMDC work was brought back onto the agenda. In October of 1962, the Agriculture and Forestry Office of the State Council (国务院农林办) held the “Reporting Conference of Resettling Urban Redundant Staff and Young Students in State Farms, Forest Farms, Pastures, and Fisheries (关于国营农林牧渔场安置家居大中城市精简职工和青年学生的汇报会议). Zhou Enlai attended the meeting and delivered a speech. In this speech, he pointed out that resettling the urban population in the countryside was an effective solution to the problem of surplus labour forces in the city. Participants discussed a series of practical issues,



including the target and methods of resettlement, expenditure, and resources, as well as corresponding policies, plans, and safeguards. At this meeting, the Leading Group of Resettlement Work of Agriculture and Forestry Office (农林办安置领导小组) was founded, which was the predecessor to the Leading Group Office of *Zhiqing* UMDC (知识青年上山下乡领导小组办公室).

In the two years from 1960 to 1962, the chief method of resettlement was to send youths to state farms. In any case, resettling urban youth in the countryside was a constituent part of the main task of urban population retrenchment, which aimed to alleviate employment pressure in the cities and other associated issues. The situation started to change in 1963. That year, the national economy started to recover; yet, it was in this year that the state announced its decision to carry on the UMDC work as a separate and long-term programme.

From June to July of 1963, the Leading Group Leaders' Meeting of Resettlement Work for Urban Redundant Staff and Young Students (城市精简职工和青年学生安置工作领导小组会议) was held in Beijing. At this meeting, Zhou Enlai claimed that mobilizing urban youth to go up to the mountains and down to the countryside ought to be deemed a long-term task. In August 1963, the report from this meeting was approved and issued by the Central Committee of the CCP and the state. Key statements in this report included: the subject of mobilization would no longer be redundant workers but secondary school graduates who had failed to enter into higher education and those who could not find jobs; the age of eligibility would be lowered from 18 to 16; mobilization should be carried out primarily in large and medium-sized cities, and then in towns; each province, city, and autonomous region should set up a 15-year resettlement plan; the main destination for resettlement shifted from state farms to production teams; the ultimate aim was to develop these young students as agricultural workers equipped with knowledge and skills, as well as socialist consciousness, through education and influences from the poor and lower-middle class peasants (贫下中农) and farm workers (Gu, 1997, pp.38-40).

On 16 January 1964, the state issued the "Decision on mobilizing and organizing urban *Zhiqing* to participate in socialist construction in the countryside (draft)" (关于动员和组织城市知识青年参加农村社会主义建设的决定[草案]). Following this document, the Leading Group of *Zhiqing* UMDC (知识青年上山下乡领导小组) and the Resettlement Office (安置办) were set up, followed by the establishment of corresponding organizations at each administrative level.

In February 1965, the Leading Group held a work meeting. In the report of this meeting, Zhou Enlai made several important statements: the UMDC work was significant in terms of cultivating revolutionary successors, eliminating the “three main differences” (worker-peasant, city-countryside, and brainwork-manual work) and constructing the new socialist countryside; the state was responsible for the resettlement of *Zhiqing* and for providing them with a good livelihood in the countryside; a 15-year plan should be drawn up cautiously and the UMDC work should be brought into the integrated planning of the urban workforce (Gu, 1997, pp.60-64). By the time of this meeting, the pre-movement phase had reached its end. A new chapter of the UMDC Movement was about to start.

The above historical review shows that the UMDC work from early 1950s to 1965 went through the following stages:

Stage 1: secondary and primary school graduates were encouraged to go back to their home villages or to form youth reclamation teams (1953-1956);

Stage 2: unemployed urban youth and those who had failed to enter higher education became the target groups for mobilization (1957);

Stage 3: mobilization and resettlement work was suspended during the Great Leap Forward (1958 and 1959);

Stage 4: mobilization and resettlement work was reactivated; the main destination in resettlement was state farms (1960-1962);

Stage 5: production teams became the main destination; mobilization and resettlement work was institutionalized and regularized and was highlighted as a separate, routine, and long-term project by the CCP and the state (1963-1965).

Thus, it can be seen that during the pre-movement phase, mobilizing educated young people gradually changed from a provisional measure into well-planned and rigorously managed routine work. This was a phase of exploration and intentional preparation for the following massive UMDC Movement. By turning a provisional solution to the cyclical unemployment problem into a significant routine project, the CCP and the state put a much higher value on the UMDC work after 1962. This strategic change led to significant transformations of the UMDC work, including the regularization and institutionalization of mobilization and organization, as well as the formation of guiding ideologies.

First of all, a complete model of mobilization and resettlement work was established. This model, as summarized by Ding (1998), was made up of unified organization and rigorous planning by the state, political mobilization, and state

provision of material needs. This led to the institutionalization and regularization of the mobilization and organization work. For example, the resettlement plan was incorporated as part of the annual national economic plan; specialized organizations were established at different administrative levels; and a special fund was provided and planned by the state to provide resettlement fees (Ding, 1998, p. 236-241).

Second, since the early 1960s, ultra-left ideologies gradually took control over the UMDC work and turned it into a political movement. In April 1964, the Communist Youth League submitted the “Report on Organizing Urban *Zhiqing* to Engage in Socialist Construction in the Countryside” (关于组织城市知识青年参加农业社会主义建设的报告) to the Central Committee of the CCP. This report stated clearly that mobilizing urban youths to go to the countryside was of great importance to the revolutionization of educated young people, and hence it ought to be carried out as an important political task. The guiding ideology was: “Educated young people, as part of the petty bourgeoisie category, needed reinvent themselves. The only way was to integrate with workers and peasants by engaging in manual labour . . . It was the first step in the revolutionization of these youth.”[viii]

Third, the *Zhiqing* group gradually took shape during the pre-movement phase. It was differentiated from other social groups in terms of its exclusive rights and obligations. On the one hand, *Zhiqing* were entitled to a certain resettlement fee, which guaranteed their basic needs were met at the initial stage of resettlement, including grains for the first year, expenses related to new houses, and farm tools.[ix] On the other hand, *Zhiqing* were obliged to transfer their registered permanent residence (户口) from an urban residence (城市户口) to a rural residence (农村户口), and were thereby in a very real sense forced to settle down in the countryside.[x]

From the early 1960s, domicile control became more and more important in the UMDC work. Through the control over registered permanent residence, the UMDC work became an effective means of urban population control and labour force allocation. This was the major reason that sending *Zhiqing* to the countryside had been implemented as a long-term task since the early 1960s. Moreover, because of the economic and hierarchical implications of the household registration system, the identity change from urban youth to *Zhiqing* had fundamental significance for these young people’s livelihoods and self-

development.[xi] When *Zhiqing* left their home cities for the countryside, their registered permanent residences were transferred simultaneously to the corresponding production teams or farms, so that they would take root in the countryside and become real peasants.[xii] As a result, “Zhiqing” was no longer associated with its original meaning: youths who have had a certain amount of knowledge (知识青年). Rather, it referred specifically to young urban students who were sent to the countryside and were supposed to take root there and become agricultural labourers thereafter. A whole generation’s destiny was changed completely.

### *The UMDC Movement: 1967-1981*

After the commencement of the Cultural Revolution, all universities and schools shut down in May 1966. On 13 June, the Central Committee of the CCP and the State Council issued the “Notification of University Entrance Examination Reform”(关于改革高等学校招生考试办法的通知). Another document, “Notification of University Enrolment Reform”(关于改革高等学校招生工作的通知), was released on 24 July. As a result, university and college enrolment was suspended until 1970.[xiii]

Driven by restless red guards, the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution soon swept over the whole country. To control the situation, the Central Committee of the CCP, the State Council, the Central Military Commission, and the Central Cultural Revolution Group released the “Notification of Resuming Revolution in Classes”(关于大、中、小学校复课闹革命的通知) on 14 October 1967. This notification “indicated that the Red Guards Movement had completed its historical mission” (Gu, 1997, p.108). In November of 1967, most school students went back to their classes. Secondary school enrolment started as usual but universities and colleges were still closed. At the same time, the economy had experienced a 9.6 per cent decrease in the gross output value of industry and agriculture, while job recruitment had been suspended in most factories because of the unrest. As a result, millions of secondary school graduates became surplus urban labour, causing enormous pressure in terms of employment and social stability.

Under such circumstances, the UMDC work was brought back on the agenda. On 4 May 1967, *The People’s Daily* published an editorial: “*Zhishi Qingnian* Must Integrate with Workers and Peasants” (知识青年必须同工农相结合). Later, on 9 July, it published another editorial, “Asserting the Right Direction of *Zhiqing* UMDC” (坚持知识青年上山下乡的正确方向). These editorials showed that the

propaganda at that time followed the theme of the pre-movement phase: the revolutionization of the youth. A few red guards like Cai Lijian (蔡立坚) and Qu Zhe (曲折) responded to the call and volunteered to go to the countryside.[xiv] After this, sending urban youth to the countryside soon became a nationwide UMDC Movement.

The entire UMDC Movement can be divided into three main stages in accordance with policy changes: stage one, from 1967 to 1969; stage two, from 1969 to 1973; and stage three, covering the period from 1974 to 1978 and the termination of the movement between 1978 and 1981. Table 1 illustrates this development process.

Table 1. Number of *Zhiqing* (1962-1979)

Year	Total	Production Teams	Collective Farms & Production Teams	State Farms
Total	17,764,800	12,822,100	2,030,800	2,911,900
1962-1966	1,292,800	870,600		422,200
1967-1968	1,996,800	1,659,600		337,200
1969	2,673,800	2,204,400		469,400
1970	1,064,000	749,900		314,100
1971	748,300	502,100		246,200
1972	673,900	502,600		171,300
1973	896,100	806,400		89,700
1974	1,724,800	1,191,900	346,300	186,600
1975	2,368,600	1,634,500	496,800	237,300
1976	1,880,300	1,228,600	415,100	236,600
1977	1,716,800	1,137,900	419,000	159,900
1978	480,900	260,400	189,200	31,300
1979	247,700	73,200	164,400	10,100

Source: Table 3B in *Spring Tide*(Liu, 1998, p.863).

### *Stage one: 1967-1969*

During this transition period, ordinary *Zhiqing* work eventually turned into a political movement – the UMDC Movement. A crucial event was the announcement of the “Re-education Theory” (再教育理论), which replaced the old slogans like “Revolutionization of the Youth” and “Revolutionary Successors”, and became the dominant ideology of the UMDC Movement.

Since the commencement of the Cultural Revolution, ideological factors had started to play a more and more critical role in mobilization and propaganda. Two typical examples were the Propaganda Team of the People’s Liberation Army (军宣队) and the Workers’ Propaganda Team (工宣队).<sup>[xv]</sup> Under these specific circumstances, many politically activist students joined the UMDC Movement out of genuine aspirations. For others, joining the UMDC Movement became an important way to prove their trustworthy political position and their loyalty to the Party and to Chairman Mao.

In September, *People’s Daily* quoted Mao Zedong’s instruction:

“Most of the students educated in old schools are able to integrate with workers, peasants, and soldiers . . . but they should be led under the right direction and re-educated by workers, peasants, and soldiers, and thus completely change their old mind-set. This kind of intellectual is welcomed by workers, peasants, and soldiers.”<sup>[xvi]</sup>

Before 1966, “Revolutionization of the Youth” was a slogan for encouraging *Zhiqing* to undertake the transition from educated urban youth to simple labourer in the countryside. The new guiding ideology – the “Re-education Theory” – had a much stronger mandatory significance, as young students were now obliged to go to the countryside to receive re-education there.

On 22 December 1968, the *People’s Daily* published a report on the story of urban citizens in Huining County, Gansu Province, who had moved to the countryside to engage in agricultural production. The reporter quoted Mao Zedong’s special instruction on this:

“It is necessary for *Zhiqing* to go to the countryside and get re-educated by poor and lower-middle class peasants. We should persuade urban cadres and other people to send their children who are graduates of junior and senior high schools and universities to the countryside, to carry out the mobilization. Comrades in various rural areas should welcome them.”<sup>[xvii]</sup>

It soon became the guiding ideology of the UMDC Movement, known as the “12/22 Instruction”. Under the effect of Mao’s powerful command, the scope of the UMDC Movement was soon extended from big cities to all cities and towns. From 1967 to 1969, over 4.6 million urban youths joined the UMDC Movement (over 2.6 million joined in 1969 alone), making these three years the first climax of the movement.[xviii]

To summarize, the first stage was of significant importance to the entire UMDC Movement for the following reasons.

First, it created a specific group: the “Old Three Grades”(Laosanjie 老三届), secondary school students who had graduated in 1966, 1967, and 1968 and who had been stuck at home since the commencement of the Cultural Revolution. In other words, they were the original reason for the restoration of “UMDC”. It is worth mentioning that many *Laosanjie* went to the countryside before the “12/22 Instruction”, and that some of them were among those volunteers who had initiated the UMDC Movement in 1967. In this regard, within the *Zhiqing* group, *Laosanjie* had relatively idealistic and positive attitudes towards the UMDC Movement.

Second, from the pre-movement phase to the first stage of the UMDC Movement, the ever-changing guiding ideology resulted in multiple connotations of the *Zhiqing* identity: a new generation of educated peasants as contributors to socialist rural construction; revolutionary youth as successors of the socialist course; and, children of the petty bourgeoisie that ought to be re-educated in the countryside. In fact, throughout the process of the movement, these three connotations often fused together and manifested as a single *Zhiqing* identity. This ambiguity has been a main cause of individual *Zhiqing*’s identity problems.

### *Stage two: 1969-1973*

After the upsurge in take-up in the first stage, the routine work began, of which a major part was resettlement work, including the regulation and management of the resettlement fee[xix] and methods of resettlement.[xx] Compared with the routine work, a more challenging task for the authorities was to cope with a low tide in engagement with the UMDC Movement.

As Table 1 above shows, the number of *Zhiqing* started falling in 1970, followed by a sharp three-year slump: fewer than nine hundred thousand signed on in each



year from 1971 to 1973. Reasons for this are summarized in Gu's (1997) "The Whole Story of *Zhiqing* UMDC in China" as follows: senior high schools and vocational schools started recruitment again, which postponed job assignment for a few school graduates; in the national economy's three-year recovery period (1970-1972), actual numbers of new workers substantially exceeded annual recruitment plans; and, realizing that opportunities to stay in the city had increased, urban youth became less enthusiastic about joining the UMDC Movement (Gu, 1997, p.125).

Fundamentally, the sharp slump was a result of serious problems of the UMDC Movement. After settling down in the countryside, many *Zhiqing* lived in dire poverty because of maladjustment and their incapability for agricultural work. They thus became heavy burdens on local finances, causing conflicts between *Zhiqing* and peasants, as well as between cities and villages. Furthermore, some *Zhiqing* suffered discrimination and even persecution, which was due to weak regulation and poor management.**[xxi]** According to Liu (1998), an over-emphasis on mobilization led to the neglect of planning and preparation for possible problems after resettlement; moreover, "Re-education Theory" resulted in an inferior social status for *Zhiqing*, which consequently intensified their plight in the countryside (Liu, 1998, p.275). In other words, the low tide of the UMDC Movement during the second stage was an inevitable consequence of the climax in the previous stage.

In 1970, the central authorities started to look for solutions to these problems. One approach was to adjust the guidelines for and the operation of the UMDC Movement.**[xxii]** In addition to this, the state also relaxed education and employment policies to provide more opportunities for *Zhiqing*. In June 1970, the Central Committee of the Communist Party approved the "Report on Recruitment (pilot projects) by Beijing University and Qinghua University" (北京大学、清华大学关于招生[试点]的请示报告).**[xxiii]** According to this report, university and college recruitment would be resumed based on the new method of "a combination of masses recommend, leaders approve, and university/college recheck" (群众推荐、领导批准、学校复审相结合的办法). This method was applied nationwide from 1972. After 1970, a few *Zhiqing* were permitted to go back to cities every year through this programme.**[xxiv]** In February 1971, the "National Planning Conference" (全国计划会议) ended in Beijing. *Zhiqing* were included in the plan for job recruitment for the first time. The eligibility requirements

included recommendations from poor and lower middle peasants and at least two years' work experience in the countryside.



Opportunities for higher education and job recruitment placated *Zhiqing* but gradually led to new troubles. First, fierce competition for these opportunities caused disputes and low spirits in the *Zhiqing* group. Second, a few cases of favouritism, fraud, and abuse of authority in quota allocation damaged the reputation of the UMDC Movement and further aggravated the difficulties of mobilization. Fundamentally, policy adjustment could not address the structural problems and inherent contradictions of the UMDC Movement. Nevertheless, even these effective adjustments were interfered with or dropped due to a series of political incidents. Consequently, the first low tide of the UMDC Movement had become a crisis by the early 1970s. A typical manifestation of this serious crisis was Li Qinglin's letter to Mao Zedong.

In December 1972, Li Qinglin, the parent of a *Zhiqing* from a small town in Fujian Province, wrote a letter to Mao Zedong. In this letter, he stated the difficulties his son had in the countryside and the financial burden this had placed on his family, as well as his concerns for the futures of his two sons.[xxv] In April 1973, he got the reply from Mao Zedong. To his letter, Mao Zedong attached 300 Renminbi, and wrote: "There are many similar issues around the country. Please allow us to comprehensively address them through overall planning" (全国此类事甚多, 容当统筹解决). This became a turning point in the history of the UMDC Movement because it triggered the "National Conference on the UMDC Work"-a response to Mao's instruction regarding "overall planning".

In 1973, the State Council held the "National Conference on the UMDC Work" (全国知识青年上山下乡工作会议) from 22 June to 7 August. After this conference, important policy changes and concrete measures were implemented. First, administrative bodies were established so as to strengthen the management and organization of the movement and *Zhiqings'* lives. Second, the state increased its financial input to improve *Zhiqings'* living conditions in the countryside. Third, the abuses of power for personal gain - "getting in through the back door" (走后门) - were addressed. Fourth, criminals who persecuted *Zhiqing* were

interrogated and punished. Fifth, favourable policies were issued in relation to disabled youths, only children, and others with particular situations. Sixth, new methods of resettlement were applied, including the establishment of collectively-owned farms and production teams for *Zhiqing* and the appointment of cadres to support and lead *Zhiqing*. Seventh, a six-year plan (1973–1980) was released to guide overall organization of the Movement. Eighth, four routes of access to the city were clarified: job recruitment, university enrolment, conscription, and promotion (Gu, 1997, pp.141–142).

The National Conference marked the end of the second stage of the UMDC Movement. *Zhiqing* who had gone to the countryside during the five years from 1969 to 1973 were called *Xinwujie* (The New Five Grades 新五届). The “xin” (new 新) in “Xinwujie” was in contrast to the “lao” (old 老) in “Laosanjie”. As indicated by the contrast between “Laosanjie” (the Old Three Grades) and “Xinwujie” (the New Five Grades), stage two was the opposite of the first: it was a period of low uptake and adjustments.

As pointed out earlier, this low tide had resulted directly from the over-heated mobilization in stage one. As a reflection of underlying issues, fluctuations of the UMDC Movement were rooted in the inherent contradictions of the UMDC Movement. These contradictions included the interrelation of population growth, employment, and economic development, the urban-rural gap and rural construction, overall planning and adjustments in practice. These fundamental contradictions had existed since the pre-movement phase of “UMDC”. As “UMDC” gradually turned into a political movement under the control of the ultra-left faction, these contradictions intensified and resulted in the first crisis of the UMDC Movement. Through the National Conference and subsequent adjustments, the authorities suspended the deepening of this crisis. From then on, the UMDC Movement entered into its third stage, which was characterized by a second climax in participation.

### *Stage three: 1974–1978*

The second climax of the UMDC Movement lasted from 1974 to 1977. In these four years, over 7.6 million *Zhiqing* went to the countryside (over 1.7 million per year). This can be attributed to the aforementioned adjustments to policies and methods after the National Conference on the UMDC Work.[xxvi] Some of these adjustments were temporary administrative modifications, while other structural changes did impact the trend and the nature of the UMDC Movement. As a result,

during stage three, the UMDC Movement gradually deviated from its original purpose and moved towards its end.

One significant change occurred in relation to changes in the method of resettlement. In the third stage of the UMDC Movement, resettlement destinations moved closer to the *Zhiqings'* home cities or even to surrounding suburbs; relocation sites moved from production teams to production brigades and communes; new farms and brigades were established for *Zhiqing* (Liu, 1998, p.439). Two typical examples were the Zhuzhou Model (株洲模式) and the Leading Cadre System (干部带队制), which were promoted throughout the country.[xxvii]

The Zhuzhou Model was developed in 1973 in Zhuzhou City of Hunan Province. In this city, mobilization and resettlement work was organized by urban factories and mines in which *Zhiqing's* parents worked, and was also supported by the close cooperation between these factories and mines and the villages. The Leading Cadre System aimed mainly to protect the safety and rights of *Zhiqing* and to assist them in daily life and education in the countryside. The Zhuzhou Model highlighted the fact that, in order to sustain the UMDC Movement, the city ought to play a more significant role by sharing the responsibility with the countryside. Considering that initially *Zhiqing* were sent to the countryside in order to reduce burdens on the cities, the Zhuzhou Model was inconsistent with that original purpose. The Leading Cadre System showed that the state had to step in to reconcile divergence between the *Zhiqing* group and rural society. The failure of the *Zhiqing* to blend into rural society had proved that the Re-education Theory was not feasible in reality. Most importantly, the Zhuzhou Model and the Leading Cadre System were both expensive solutions. In fact, the increasing cost of the UMDC Movement became a main reason for the authorities to eventually abandon it.

Another significant change came in terms of the job assignment system. Since 1973, disabled youth, only children, and other urban youths with particular situations had been exempted from "UMDC". Due to these favourable policies, more and more secondary school graduates were staying in the city. Meanwhile, the number of returned *Zhiqing* had also increased rapidly as the relevant policies had been relaxed since the National Conference on the UMDC Work. By 1976, over 7.3 million *Zhiqing* had left the countryside, which was nearly half of the total number. The growing number of remaining graduates and returned *Zhiqing* gave rise to an increasing sense of relative deprivation in the *Zhiqing* group and

hence affected its cohesiveness and morale. Not to mention that it was a huge waste of money and resources to send urban youths to the countryside and then recruit them back to the cities around two years later. As their stay in the countryside grew longer, the *Zhiqing* turned away from revolutionary ideals and enthusiasm towards hopes for opportunities to return to the cities. Hence, the ironic fact was that the authorities had to keep channels for returning available to *Zhiqing* in order to continue the UMDC Movement.

Judging from the implications of these significant changes, the UMDC Movement had gone off its designed track. In an economic sense, the movement had been designed to reduce the financial pressure on the state and to develop agriculture and rural society. The fact, however, was the UMDC Movement became a heavy burden on the state's finances, and most *Zhiqing* did not have any opportunities to use their knowledge or skills in the countryside. In a political and ideological sense, "UMDC" was intended to transform a whole generation into qualified successors of the socialist course. However, instead of becoming a new generation of educated agricultural labourers, the *Zhiqing* turned into a special group in rural society which was at odds with its environment and was dependent upon the state. Another ideological objective of the UMDC Movement, "eliminating the three major differences", also became empty talk. Because of their personal experiences, these social structural inequalities only became more prominent to *Zhiqing*, intensifying their desire to leave the underdeveloped countryside.

However, it became clear that, to resolve practical problems and carry on the UMDC Movement, the state would have to adjust its original plans and established measures. This meant that the state had to accept compromise in terms of the various opinions of *Zhiqing*, their parents, peasants, administrative bodies, and other stakeholders. As pointed out by Liu (1998, p.461): "The result was that the UMDC Movement deviated from its original purposes. Leaders were stuck in a vicious circle."

These compromises were supposed to provide a next-best outcome. However, most of the effective adjustments were disrupted by the "Gang of Four" from 1974 on. Before the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, many problems had become acute due to the negative impacts of the power wielded by the ultra-left faction.[xxviii] Under these circumstances, Mao Zedong issued another important instruction on the UMDC Movement on 12 February: "It might be

better to carry out special research on the *Zhiqing* issue. [We] should first make preparations and then hold a conference to solve this issue.”[xxix] This was known as the “2/12 Instruction”. Following this instruction, related organizations and officials started to prepare for the “Second National Conference on the UMDC Work”.

The Eleventh National Congress of the CCP in 1977 marked the official termination of the Cultural Revolution. At that time, the guiding ideology, the “Two Whatevers”, [xxx] became a big obstacle to a thorough settlement of the *Zhiqing* issue. On 11 May 1978, “Practice is the Sole Criterion for Testing Truth” (实践是检验真理的唯一标准) was published in the *Guangming Daily*. This article was soon reprinted by the *People’s Daily*, the *People’s Liberation Army Daily*, and other major newspapers. This triggered a nationwide debate on the “Two Whatevers” and the “Practice Criterion”. By the end of 1978, the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP had noted the success of the “Practice Criterion”. This debate paved the way for the ideological settlement of the *Zhiqing* issue.

From 31 October to 10 December 1978, the “Second National Conference on the UMDC Work” took place in Beijing. On 12 December, the Central Committee of the CCP released two documents: the “Minutes of the National Conference on the UMDC Work” (全国知识青年上山下乡工作会议纪要) and the “Trial Provisions about Several Issues of ‘UMDC’ by the State Council” (国务院关于知识青年上山下乡若干问题的试行规定). The main resolutions recorded in these documents are summarized by Gu (1997): first, the UMDC Movement would be continued for the purpose of terminating it under appropriate circumstances; second, the movement would be downsized gradually, and some qualified cities were allowed to stop mobilizing their urban youth; third, resettling *Zhiqing* in production teams would be replaced by establishing *Zhiqing* farms and production teams with preferential policies; fourth, *Zhiqing* in production teams would be relocated; and fifth, cities and towns would be required to expand employment (Gu, 1997, pp. 178-185).

Like the National Conference in 1973, the Second National Conference was another watershed event in the history of the UMDC Movement. However, the second conference led it in the opposite direction to the first – namely, towards the end of the movement. As indicated by the five key points listed above, this conference sent out, to the whole country, a signal that the termination of the

UMDC Movement had been put on the agenda. In reality, large numbers of *Zhiqing* in production teams started flocking into cities through channels that had opened after this conference.

The above review of the three stages of its development shows clearly that, despite the unusual climax in stage one, the UMDC Movement underwent a process of “risk - adjustment - another risk - re-adjustment”. For the movement and its leaders, this was a vicious circle. For individual *Zhiqing*, it was a significant developmental stage in their course of their lives. During their stays in the countryside, they experienced what they had not been taught in school: the reality of rural society and peasants’ real lives. Through their personal experiences, they were able to rethink ultra-left ideologies which, in the meantime, were losing their dominance.

This was directly related to *Zhiqing* who went to the countryside in the final stage, from 1974 to 1978, who were known as *Houwujie* (the Post Five Grade 后五届). *Houwujie* was a group of *Zhiqing* who witnessed drastic changes in policies and measures throughout their UMDC experiences. From stage one to stage three, the UMDC Movement underwent two periods of significant adjustment and eventually moved towards its end. Apart from this explicit clue, changes to the ethos of the *Zhiqing* group concatenated into an implied clue as to the course of the UMDC Movement. Moreover, these explicit and implied clues or factors influenced each other and both became embedded in the general history of Chinese society. In this way, they constitute the history of the UMDC Movement and the *Zhiqing* group and were interwoven into its rich context.

#### *Termination: 1978-1981*

A crucial event happened before the official termination of the UMDC Movement: the resumption of the University/College Entrance Examination in 1977.[xxxi] This had a significant impact on the *Zhiqing* group. On the one hand, *Zhiqing* regained their hopes for higher education; on the other hand, it accelerated the disintegration of the *Zhiqing* group. Another important trend was that the state had started to use economic means to resolve the *Zhiqing* issue after the end of the Cultural Revolution. In March 1978, Deng Xiaoping expressed his desire to bring the *Zhiqing* issue into the overall planning for urban employment. In a series of preparatory discussions before the Second National Conference, central leaders like Deng Xiaoping, Li Xiannian, and Hu Qiaomu emphasized the necessity and significance of developing the economy and creating more jobs for



*Zhiqing*.**[xxxii]**

It was clear that even before the Second National Conference, the CCP and the state had sought to end the UMDC Movement in a gradual way by shifting the focus from ideological to economic measures. This time-consuming strategy required overall planning and the collaboration of many government sectors. However, the reality was that the *Zhiqing* would not wait any longer.

In October 1978, *Zhiqing* in Jinghong Farm in Yunnan Province sent two successive joint letters to the State Council. In December, a petition group of these *Zhiqing* arrived in Beijing where they were received by Vice-Premier Wang Zhen and Minister for Civil Affairs Cheng Zihua.**[xxxiii]** After this meeting, the Yunnan *Zhiqings'* protests ceased for a while but then started again in January 1979. The protests soon developed into a trend that swept across 21 provinces and areas in February 1979. The state had to take a series of emergency measures to calm the situation.**[xxxiv]** The state further relaxed the controls on returning to the city, which led to a mass exodus of *Zhiqing* from the countryside in a short period of time. In 1979, only 247,000 *Zhiqing* went to the countryside, while nearly four million *Zhiqing* returned to the city. This suggested that the UMDC Movement had come to an end, although it had not officially been announced yet.

In August 1980, the Central Committee of the CCP and the State Council convened the “National Conference on Labour Employment Work” (全国劳动就业工作会议). After the conference, comprehensive solutions were applied to ensuring employment for *Zhiqing* in the cities.**[xxxv]** In 1981, most of the unemployed *Zhiqing* found jobs. The unemployment rate decreased from 5.4 per cent in 1979 to 3.8 per cent. Apart from creating jobs for *Zhiqing*, the authorities also went to great efforts to resolve left-over problems of the UMDC Movement, such as making arrangements for disabled *Zhiqing* and married *Zhiqing* and their children, as well as calculating *Zhiqing's* working years and auditing UMDC funds.**[xxxvi]**

In October 1981, the *Zhiqing* Office drafted the “Review and Summary of *Zhiqing* Work over Twenty-Five Years” (二十五年来知青工作的回顾与总结). This official document summarized important aspects of the UMDC Movement, including its origin, processes, faults, and experience. At the end of 1981, the *Zhiqing* Office was incorporated into the State Labour Bureau, followed by similar changes in

provincial and municipal governments. This marked the official termination of the UMDC Movement as well as the beginning of a post-movement era. The latter has been a difficult on-going journey of recovery and adaptation for *Zhiqing* and the whole society in both material and spiritual senses.

### *Summary*

The UMDC Movement was a unique event in human history. As was shown in the above historical review, it was characterized by its long time-span, wide scope, multiple changes, and complex background and factors, as well as its contradictory nature. Its origin, development, and termination were all rooted in structural and fundamental contradictions in Chinese society, as well as the evolution of these contradictions under different historical circumstances. Even the most criticized ultra-left ideologies and the resultant politicization of the UMDC work followed a historical logic, rather than being products of power struggles or Mao Zedong's personal aspirations.

The uniqueness and complexity of the UMDC Movement has created difficulties for its researchers. Just as Bernstein[xxxvii] pointed out in 1977, assessment of the UMDC Movement should consider alternative options under the same circumstances as well as the cost-benefit ratios of these options. This leads us to several questions: first, what costs would have the state and the society paid to deal with the issue of urban surplus labour if there had been no "UMDC"?; second, how many of the 16 million urban youths would have received higher education if they had not gone to the countryside?; third, what would have the rural economy and rural society been if the urbanization process had started in the 1960s? A profound understanding of the UMDC Movement should take these questions into consideration.

These questions evolve into more detailed and more complex questions, and point out directions for future studies which would necessarily need the participation of researchers from multi-disciplinary backgrounds. As a comprehensive review, this article has presented complicated historical details and represented a rich social historical context for future researchers to further develop a study on the UMDC Movement and the *Zhiqing* group, providing the basis for a better understanding of the history and the nature of their research object.

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## NOTES

**[i]** Historians disagree as to the exact number of *Zhiqing*. This article adopts the figure given in *Spring Tide* (Liu, 1998, p.863).

**[ii]** This conclusion is based on the author Wu's literature review on previous studies in her PhD thesis, *A Study of the Zhiqing Identity* (Wu, 2013).

**[iii]** "Review and Summary of *Zhiqing* Work over Twenty-Five Years" (二十五年来知青工作的回顾与总结). See the original context of this document and other summaries and evaluations of UMDC Movement in *The Whole Story of Zhiqing UMDC in China*, (Gu, 1997, pp.283-285).

**[iv]** In 1956, *The Climax of Socialism in Rural China* (中国农村的社会主义高潮) (General Office of the CCP Central Committee, 1956) was published and included 104 notes by Mao Zedong.

**[v]** The Beijing team went to Luobei in Heilongjiang and established the first communist youth farm, which they named Beijing Village (*Beijing zhuang*北京庄), in August 1955. The Shanghai team set up a Communist Youth Commune in De'an in Jiangxi a month later.

**[vi]** Ding Yizhuang argues that this was in fact where the guiding ideology of the UMDC Movement - "Re-education Theory" (再教育理论) - derived from (Ding 1998, p.63).

**[vii]** The majority of them were redundant workers, secondary school graduates

who had failed to enter higher education, and those who had not found jobs in the cities. For more details, see *History of Zhiqing in China: The First Wave (1953-1968)*, (Ding, 1998, p.194).

**[viii]** Ding Yizhuang [定宜庄] (1998), *History of Zhiqing in China: The First Wave (1953-1968)*, [中国知青史：初澜□1953-1968□], Beijing: China Social Sciences Press [中国社会科学出版社], p.241

**[ix]** Usually, the money was distributed to corresponding farms, production teams, and other receiving units and was not given to individual *Zhiqing* directly.

**[x]** The “Household Registration Regulation” (户口管理条例) was approved by the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress on 9 January 1958 and has been implemented by the Ministry of Public Security ever since. According to this document, spontaneous rural to urban population flow is strictly prohibited. Since the urban residence (城市户口) was combined with commodity grain provision, once a *Zhiqing* transferred to rural residence, backflow became virtually impossible.

**[xi]** Problems arising from the unequal household registration system started to impact on *Zhiqing’s* lives in the latter stage of their staying in the countryside. Accordingly, regaining their permanent urban residence certificates became a common major request when *Zhiqing* sought to return to the cities in the late 1970s.

**[xii]** It was only when the ultra-leftist faction took control of the UMDC work after the commencement of the Cultural Revolution that the state enforced mandatory household relocation. When the UMDC work was operated by the CCP and the state as a long-term routine work (1962-1965), in order to mobilize as many urban youth as possible, the authorities hadn’t applied any explicit stipulation or coercive measures in terms of *Zhiqing’s* registered permanent residences (Zhao, 2009, pp.500-508).

**[xiii]** In 1970, university enrolment resumed through the new method of recommendation. Students who entered into higher education from 1970 to 1976 were called “worker-peasant-soldier students”.

**[xiv]** For more details on these early volunteers, see *The Whole Story of Zhiqing UMDC in China* (Gu, 1997, pp.111-115) and *Spring Tide* (Liu, 1998, pp.123-137).

**[xv]** See detailed explanation of the mission and activities of these propaganda teams in *Spring Tide* (Liu, 1998, pp.158-177).

**[xvi]** *People’s Daily*, September 13, 1968.

**[xvii]** *People’s Daily*, December 22, 1968.

**[xviii]** See Table 1.

**[xix]** For more details on the regulations and management of the resettlement fee, see *Spring Tide*, (Liu, 1998, pp.204-208).

**[xx]** For further information on methods of resettlement, see *Spring Tide*, (Liu, 1998, pp.208-231).

**[xxi]** Further details are available in *Spring Tide*, (Liu, 1998, pp.291-370).

**[xxii]** In March 1970, the State Council held the “Forum for Youth in Production Teams in Yan’an” (延安地区插队青年工作座谈会). This forum aimed to discuss solutions to problems that had emerged in Yan’an and thereby establish a model for the whole country. For more information on this forum, see *Spring Tide* (Liu, 1998, pp.276-284).

**[xxiii]** During the Cultural Revolution, the state focused mainly on basic education. The primary concern was to provide basic education to the large population and thereby bring down the illiteracy rate.

**[xxiv]** Students who entered universities and colleges from 1970 to 1976 were known as “Worker-Peasant-Soldier students” (工农兵学员). Before the resumption of the University/College Entrance Examination, this was the only way to access higher education.

**[xxv]** See the original text of Li Qinglin’s letter and its subsequences in *Spring Tide* (Liu 1998, 376-382) and in *The Whole History* (Gu 1997, 129-134).

**[xxvi]** Each of the eight major changes is explained in detail in *Spring Tide* (Liu, 1998, pp.397-496).

**[xxvii]** See the detailed description of the Zhuzhou Model and the Leading Cadre System in *Spring Tide* (Liu, 1998, pp.439-460).

**[xxviii]** For details on the disturbance caused by the ultra-leftist faction, see *Spring Tide*, (Liu, 1998, pp.546-620).

**[xxix]** In February 1976, Wu Guixian (吴桂贤), the vice premier sent a letter written by two *Zhiqing* in Shaanxi Province and her own letter to Mao Zedong, in which they expressed their concerns about the UMDC Movement. On February 12, Mao wrote this brief comment on Wu’s letter, which then became the new supreme instruction.

**[xxx]** The “Two Whatever’s”: We must support Chairman Mao’s decisions, whatever they are; we must consistently follow Chairman Mao’s instructions, whatever they are. (凡是毛主席作出的决策，我们都必须拥护，凡是毛主席的指示，我们都要始终不渝地遵循。)

**[xxxi]** In September 1977, the Ministry of Education held the National Conference of Colleges and Universities Enrolment Work. On 21 October, the State Council announced the decision to resume the University/College Entrance

Examination. According to the conference resolution, the entrance examination was open to workers, peasants, *Zhiqing*, veterans, cadres, and new school graduates, and was guided by the principle of “unified examination, merit-based enrollment”.

**[xxxii]** For more details, see *The Whole Story of Zhiqing UMDC in China* (Gu, 1997, pp.165-173).

**[xxxiii]** For further details on the conversations between central leaders and the petition group, see *The Whole Story of Zhiqing UMDC in China* (Gu, 1997, pp.187-192).

**[xxxiv]** See more details about these measures in *The Whole Story*, (Gu 1997, 198-204).

**[xxxv]** For details, see *The Whole Story of Zhiqing UMDC in China* (Gu, 1997, pp.211-216).

**[xxxvi]** See *The Whole Story of Zhiqing UMDC in China* (Gu, 1997, pp.218-228) and *Spring Tide* (Liu, 1998, pp.844-862) for further discussion of residual problems and solutions.

**[xxxvii]** Thomas P. Bernstein published the first monograph on the UMDC Movement, *Up to the Mountains and down to the Villages: The Transfer of Youth from Urban to Rural China*, in 1977. He is the originator of studies on the UMDC Movement in Western academia.

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# Purifying Islamic Equities ~ The Interest Tax Shield



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Arab Bank headquarters in Amman,  
Jordan

## *Abstract*

This paper seeks to add to the debate regarding the appropriate methodology to purify tainted components from *shari'ah* compliant equities. Based on the *Qur'anical* prohibition against *riba* and an analysis of the purification methodology recommended by AAOIFI *Shari'ah* Standard 21, this paper highlights shortcomings in Standard 21 and references the corporate finance literature to argue for the need to also purify the interest tax shield from debt. Purification is a pivotal element of the Islamic investment process yet Standard 21 permits a loose interpretation which causes portfolios to be under-purified. Standard 21 also makes no mention of the interest tax shield from debt even though the benefits there from are at odds with the principles of social justice in



Islam. That there is no mention of the interest tax shield from debt in the (limited) literature on the purification of Islamic equities is puzzling. This paper has implications for the Islamic funds industry as well as for compliant Muslim investors.

### *Introduction*

The Islamic funds industry is estimated at 5.5 per cent (Ernst & Young, 2011) of the over \$1.0 trillion (Wilson, 2009) global Islamic finance industry. Although small in comparison with the conventional funds industry, the potential growth from targeting the largely untapped Muslim market (estimated at 23 per cent of the world's population) has garnered significant attention (Hassan and Girard, 2011). But the nascent Islamic funds industry is already at a crossroads. There are a number of issues which could derail its early promise – chief among these is confusion about how to purify Islamic portfolios to ensure *shari'ah* compliance.

Purification refers to the need to quantify and donate to charity all impure components deemed unacceptable under *shari'ah* principles and teachings (Elgari, 2000). Impure components include *riba*, which in modern Islamic finance has become synonymous with interest-related activity and is unequivocally prohibited in the *Qur'an*. Because nearly every company in the world receives/pays interest on its cash/debt balances, the practical effect of an absolute interpretation of the prohibition against *riba* is that the funds industry is, *ipso facto*, off limits for Muslim investors (Moore, 1997; McMillen, 2011). As a result, the *shari'ah* Supervisory Boards (hereafter SSBs) that determine the compliance of any investment have had to make a number of compromises to allow some permissible variation from absolute *shari'ah* principles. While some research has been done relating to the construction and application of Islamic stock screens, there is a paucity of literature about how *haram* elements resulting from permissible variation should be purified.<sup>[i]</sup><sup>[ii]</sup> Although the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) recommends one method for purging impure amounts in *Shari'ah* Standard 21 Financial Papers (Shares and Bonds) (hereafter S21), the terminology used throughout is not consistent and, in certain sections, lacks specificity. Also, not all jurists adhere to AAOIFI standards such that several methods are used in practice. The result is that, even for those adhering to AAOIFI standards, differing interpretations are possible, meaning that confusion remains and *haram* components go unpurified. To some *shari'ah* scholars, the entire permissibility of an Islamic fund hinges on

purification, so this lacuna needs to be addressed (Elgari, 2000).

This paper discusses the unequivocal prohibition against *riba* in the *Qur'an* and the *hadith*, and its impact on commercial activity in the Islamic world. It documents how the practice of permissible variation has evolved in the Islamic funds industry to allow a degree of deviation from absolute concepts and analyses some of the various current methodologies suggested for purging the consequent impurities from Islamic portfolios, with a focus on S21. Given what is at stake for the nascent Islamic funds industry, this chapter also suggests a comprehensive methodology for the purification of prohibited components which includes the need to also purify the benefits from the interest tax shield from debt –the benefits of which to the firm are well understood in the corporate finance literature.

### *Islam and Commercial Activity*

Islam is a complete way of life, a lifestyle which constitutes a part of every Muslim's cultural and spiritual identity (Abbasi, Holman, and Murray, 1989; DeLorenzo, 2002). Islam aims at striking a balance between individual freedoms (including commercial activities, *Qur'an* 62:10) and ensuring that these freedoms are conducive to the growth and benefit of society at large (Ebrahim, 2003). Indeed, the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* (Islamic custom and practice) place tremendous stress on justice. All leading jurists therefore, without exception, have held that justice is a central indispensable ingredient of the *maqasid al-shari'ah*, or the goals of Islam (Chapra, 2000). In economics, justice can be interpreted to mean that resources are used in a manner that ensures, *inter alia*, the equitable distribution of income and wealth and economic stability (Chapra, 2000). Since the emergence of post-independence Muslim states in the global economy in the 1960s, there has been much debate about how commercial activity, and for this chapter the Islamic funds industry specifically, can be organized to conform to Islamic justice and *shari'ah*. Chapra (2000) contends that these goals cannot be realized without a humanitarian strategy which injects a moral dimension into economics — the prohibition against *riba* is part of this moral dimension.

### *The Prohibition against Riba*

*Riba* in *shari'ah* technically refers to the premium that must be paid by the borrower to the lender together with the principal amount as a condition for the loan or for an extension of its maturity (Chapra, 1986). *Riba* is prohibited in the *Qur'an*—a popular translation of the *Qur'an* (Al-Baqarah) translates key verses

pertaining to *riba*(2:278-279) as:

278. "O you who have believed, fear Allah and give up what remains [due to you] of interest, if you should be believers.

279. "And if you do not, then be informed of a war [against you] from Allah and His Messenger. But if you repent, you may have your principal –[thus] you do no wrong, nor are you wronged."

Karsten (1982) explains that *riba* is prohibited because it reinforces the tendency for wealth to accumulate in the hands of a few (i.e. it works against social justice), and thereby diminishes human beings' concern for their fellow people. Based on the strict application of the *Qur'anical* prohibition, it is not permitted for compliant Muslims to be involved with *riba* in any way, shape or form –a *hadith* narrated by Abu Dawud states that "The Messenger of Allah cursed the one who devours *riba*, the one who pays it, the one who witnesses it, and the one who documents it".

Despite the universal agreement about the unequivocal prohibition against *riba*, it is also broadly agreed that the *Qur'an* does not provide a detailed explanation of what exactly constitutes *riba* (Ahmad and Hassan, 2007). At the time of the revelation of the verses about *riba*, the only type of *riba* known was *riba-al-nasi'ah* (pertaining to the application of an exploitative, exorbitant, or penal rate of interest). Over time, with the growth of global economic activity and the development of new methods of trade and commerce, this narrow definition of *riba* has been broadened based on *hadith* – The Fiqh Academy of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) has condemned all interest-bearing transactions as void (Al-Omar and Abdel-Haq, 1996). The objective served by this broadened definition of *riba* is not only the avoidance of injustice of interest when interest is exploitative or penal but the avoidance of injustice of interest in all its forms. Any material benefit above the capital sum lent is prohibited such that economic credit is most definitely *riba* (Ahmad and Hassan, 2007).

### *Permissible Variation*

In the conventional financial sector, financial intermediation is effected through lending and the time value of money is reflected in interest payments such that publicly listed companies operating within this system are inescapably contaminated by either the payment or receipt of interest (and usually both simultaneously). Since *riba* has become synonymous with bank interest, compliant

Muslims are concerned about whether investing in equities is lawful. Obviously, if the absolute *shari'ah* prohibition against *riba* is applied (along with other *shari'ah* based restrictions), the pool of permitted equities would be too small for any reasonable diversification to be possible and investment in equity markets would, to all intents and purposes, be off limits for compliant Muslims (Wilson, 2004).**[iii]**

This fundamental impasse has motivated compromise by jurists to allow broad-based equity participation within *shari'ah* limits. These compromises are symptomatic of a new impetus in the geo-economics of the Islamic world over the past 20 years, referred to as “The Metamorphosis Period” (Haniffa and Hudaib, 2010). For example, the AAOIFI was set up in 1991 to prepare accounting, auditing, governance, ethics, and *shari'ah* standards for Islamic financial institutions (IFIs). Despite the fact that for most IFIs these standards are not mandatory, the AAOIFI has been successful in promoting its standards to IFIs globally (Kamla, 2009), which contributes to legitimizing the financial products that incorporate these standards as Islamic to the Muslim public (Kuran, 2004; El-Gamal, 2006).

The AAOIFI has used a variety of adaptive mechanisms such as *Ijtihad* (reasoning and argumentation), *urf* (local custom), and *darura* (necessity) to, legitimize innovation and the modernization of the Islamic finance industry. The result has been a collaboration of interested parties that has laid the foundations for, and instigated the development of, *shari'ah*-compliant products to enable IFIs to compete with their traditional Western interest-based counterparts and has meant that the Islamic finance industry has been transformed to compete on the global financial stage. The end result for compliant Muslim investors is that, within *shari'ah* limits and subject to purification, an investment programme has been developed to permit investment in common equity shares, i.e. absolute application has been replaced by permissible variation (Elgari, 2000).**[iv]**

### *Purification in Practice*

Purification is therefore a crucial element in the Islamic investment process. Indeed, Elgari states that “no part of [the Islamic investment process] is on more solid ground from a *shari'ah* point of view, than that of purification” (2000, p.2). If permissible variation is the “quid” of the Islamic funds industry, then purification is the “proquo”. A problem for the Islamic funds industry is that while there is some research on the construction and application of Islamic stock screens used

to deem companies as Islamically acceptable, there is a paucity of literature on the pivotal purification element to explain how forbidden elements of these acceptable companies should be purged.[v] This is because the purification process is difficult and the result is that there is no consensus about what is best purification practice; consequently, there are a number of methods used in practice (Elgari, 2000). The most common methods used can be grouped into the “dividend” and the “investment” methods (Ayub, 2007).

One issue in relation to these methods is whether the amount to be purified is purified before or after tax to the holder of the shares. Obviously, allowing the application of a tax rate on tainted amounts will lower the amount needed to be purified. While after-tax amounts are often used in practice, Clause 3/4/5/5 of Standard 21 stipulates that:

*“It is not permitted to utilise the prohibited component in any way whatsoever nor is any legal fiction to be created to do so even if this is through the payment of taxes.”*

This clause is itself based on the the *hadith* narrated by Abu Huraira who said that the Prophet said: *“Allah . . . is pure and accepts only that which is pure”*. Therefore, per S21, the compliant Muslim investor cannot derive any benefit, including the payment of taxes of any kind, from the prohibited components. This includes permitting the company to pay corporate taxes with the prohibited component in the investor’s name – prohibited components must be purified in full.

Another issue for these methods is whether the amount to be purified is pre- or post-distribution (i.e. dependent on the dividend pay-out ratio). The dividend method focuses on post-distribution amounts requiring that only dividends distributed to investors (i.e. dividend income) need to be purified; capital gains, as the argument goes, are a market element not requiring purification. Obviously, this method is problematic for investors in companies which, though deemed *shari’ah* compliant per the application of Islamic stock screens by SSBs, generate some *riba* gains but do not pay dividends. Finance theory explains how, by retaining some or all of the company’s earnings, a company is simply reinvesting unpurified elements in the investor’s name. This is unacceptable from a *shari’ah* perspective. The investment method focuses on pre-distribution amounts, i.e. on dividendable rather than dividend income. By focusing on the company’s ability to generate returns rather than the distribution of those returns, the investment

method is (versus the dividend method) more comprehensive. S21 (Clause 3/4/5/4) prescribes a methodology for purifying *haram* amounts as follows:

*“The figure . . . is arrived at by dividing the total prohibited income of the corporation whose shares are traded by the number of shares of the corporation, thus, the figure specific to each share is obtained. Thereafter the result is multiplied by the number of shares owned by the dealer — individual, institution, fund or another — and the result is what is to be eliminated as an obligation.”*

This favours the investment method over the dividend method (Ayub, 2007). S21 is clear –all prohibited components should be purified when they are generated by the company rather than when they are received by the investor. Diminishing an obligation to purify prohibited components via the application of the payout ratio or the corporate tax rate is not allowed. The clarity on this issue has the additional benefit that personal tax rates on dividends and the additional calculations this causes do not have to be considered in this chapter (Graham, 2003).**[vii]** Therefore, the total *haram* amount to be purified, from the shares owned by an investor of any company  $j$  in year  $t$ , is calculated as:

$$P_{jt} = [H_{jt} + R_{jt}] * \frac{CSO_{jt}}{TCS_{jt}}$$

(1)

where  $H$  is the pre-tax *haram* amounts from operations,  $R$  is the pre-tax *haram* amounts from *riba*,  $CSO$  is the number of common shares owned by the investor, and  $TCS$  is the total number of common shares outstanding.

Another area of confusion is in the determination of the specific *riba* amounts that need to be purified. Insofar as S21 can be viewed as best practice recommendations, this confusion is demonstrated by reference to a “prohibited component” is Clauses 3/4/4 and 3/4/5/5 and “total prohibited income” in Clause 3/4/5/4. Because of the unequivocal *Qur’anical* prohibition against *riba*, “prohibited component” implies that *riba* in all its forms (interest expense as well as interest income) needs to be purified. This is in line with the *hadith* narrated by

Al-Asqalani, al-Hafiz Ahmad IbnHajar, where he says that the Prophet said that “every loan that attracts a benefit/advantage is *riba*”. “Prohibited income”, on the other hand, implies that only *riba* from interest income matters. Focusing on interest income alone (as is common in practice) seems an obviously correct step because allowing investors to net interest expenses paid from interest income received appears to be directly in opposition to the goal of purging *riba* amounts in full. This is based on the logic that anything that causes a reduction in the amount of *haram* components to be purified (i.e. taxes, as previously discussed), even if it is itself *riba* (i.e. interest expenses), should be ignored (Elgari, 2000). However, what remains in question, and the specific focus of this chapter, is at what point in the purification process should interest expenses be ignored.

### *The Interest Tax Shield*

The value of the interest expense tax shield is well documented in the corporate finance literature. The interest tax shield arises because interest on debt is tax-deductible, such that by taking on debt (i.e. leverage) a company can reduce its tax bill. Chapra extends the definition of *riba* discussed previously, stating that “[*r*]iba represents, in the Islamic value system, a prominent source of unjustified advantage” (1984, p.1). Since the interest tax shield is a way to keep cash flows that would otherwise have been paid as tax, it represents a real gain for investors and is a *riba* amount that can be estimated for any company,  $j$ , in any year,  $t$ , as:

$$\text{Interest expense tax shield} = \tau_{jt} X_{jt}$$

(2)

where  $X$  is interest expense paid and  $\tau$  is the marginal corporate tax rate, meaning that the product of the two is the tax that is saved by company  $j$  per dollar of interest expense paid in year  $t$ .

Cooper and Nyborg (2006, p. 224) have shown conclusively that the value of the tax shield is a crucial aspect of corporate valuation according to the equation:

$$V_L = V_U + \sum_{t=1}^{\infty} E(\tau_{jt} X_{jt}) / (1 + K_{jt})^t \quad (3)$$



Where  $V_L$  is the value of a levered company,  $V_U$  is the value of an unlevered company,  $E(.)$  is the expectations operator, and  $K$  is the discount rate appropriate for the tax saving for any company,  $j$ , in any year,  $t$ .**[vii]** One of the criticisms of estimating the value of tax shields per equation (3) is that, due to the lack of visibility regarding corporate tax rates in the future, there is uncertainty about the appropriate discount rate for those tax shields (Cooper and Nyborg, 2007), as well as about whether interest will continue to be tax deductible in perpetuity (De Mooij, 2011), and so their estimation is not reliable with any degree of certainty. However, all that is required for the purification of any company's equity in the most recently reported year is historical information, so any problems caused by the expectations operator and the appropriate discount rate,  $K_{jt}$ , in equation (3) are moot, i.e. the value of the interest tax shield in the most recently reported year can be calculated with relative ease per equation (2).

From a practical perspective, it is argued that the debt bias induced by the tax deductibility of interest expense has an insipid detrimental impact on the whole society via the erosion of the corporate tax base (De Mooij, 2011). While it is the general view of experts that the debt bias was not a major cause of the financial crisis (Lloyd, 2009; Slemrod, 2009; Keen, Klem, and Perry, 2010; Hemmelgarn and Nicodeme, 2010), by contributing to the excessive leverage of firms, it might well have deepened the crisis. Chapra (2000) argues that by subjecting dividend payments to taxation while allowing interest payments to be treated as a tax deductible expense, the tax system indirectly promoted the use of debt over equity, encouraged the excessive build-up of public and private debt, and contributed to the volatility of financial markets. Indeed, arising from concerns about the debt bias causing companies to take on too much risk and the subsequent detrimental impact this can have on society in general, a number of countries have imposed thin capitalization rules which limit the tax deductibility of interest expense.

Another practical criticism of debt bias is that the financial system from which the debt is sourced tends to reinforce the unequal distribution of capital (Bigsten, 1987). The *Qur'an* maintains that wealth should not be concentrated and mobilized in the hands of a few individuals (Kamla, 2009), warning that such wealth mobilization engenders social imbalances (Qur'an, 59:7) (Gambling and Karin, 1991). Indeed, Abu Yusuf advising Caliph Harun Al-Rashid proclaimed that rendering justice to those wronged and eradicating injustice raises tax revenue

[and] accelerates development. In light of these proclamations the interest tax shield could be seen as facilitating, and even encouraging, the unequal distribution of capital, income, and wealth and perpetuating injustice.

Obviously the tax deductibility of interest and the interest expense tax shield were not in existence at the time of the Prophet and so it is the sources of *shari'ah* other than the *Qur'an* that will determine its permissibility for compliant equities. Iqbal (2008) explains that the principle for determining the permissibility of something is that if it adds to the overall welfare of society and does not contradict any other settled act or issue in the *Qur'an* and the *hadith*, then it should be deemed permissible; otherwise, if either or both of these conditions are not met, it should be declared impermissible. Cooper and Nyborg (2006) have shown that all of the benefit of debt for companies is in the value of the interest tax shield such that not only does debt bias directly decrease the overall welfare of society by eroding the tax base and facilitating the unequal distribution of wealth, but the existence of the interest tax shield also indirectly jeopardizes the long-term welfare of society by encouraging companies to take on too much risk (DeMooij, 2011). In the absence of a settled act or issue in the *Qur'an* or the *hadith* to suggest the contrary, the interest tax shield and the *riba* components generated therefrom would appear to be impermissible and requiring purification.

Therefore, it is the contention of this paper that interest expenses should be ignored only after the benefit of the tax shield arising therefrom has been accounted for such that the appropriate *riba* amount to be purified is:

$$R_{jt} = I_{jt} + \tau_{jt}X_{jt} \quad (4)$$

where  $I$  is pre-tax interest income received and other variables are as previously defined. By including equation (4), equation (1) can then be modified so that the total amount to be purified from all *haram* sources generated by the company is given by:

$$P_{jt} = [H_{jt} + I_{jt} + \tau_{jt}X_{jt}] * \frac{CSO_{jt}}{TCS_{jt}}$$

That is, *haram* elements should be purified in full, before tax, and include the interest tax shield. This formula can be easily extended from the individual equity

to the portfolio level. That is, assuming a compliant Muslim investor has a portfolio of companies,, then the total amount to be purified from the portfolio is given by:

$$\sum_{j=1}^{j=n} P_j C_j$$

### *Summary and Conclusion*

If the Islamic funds industry is to follow through on its early promise to become accepted permissible practice among Muslim investors, then any suspicion as to its Islamic nature needs to be assuaged. The development of Islamic accounting standards and regulations by the AAOIFI goes some way towards achieving this, essentially legitimizing Islamic finance, banking, and the funds industry. But adherence to AAOIFI standards is not mandatory and it is argued that the industry departs from the holistic Islamic principle of social justice, leaving a gap between the claims of the industry and what is delivered to compliant Muslim investors (Kamla, 2009). It is important, if not essential, then, that balanced as it is precariously between secular goals and sacred intentions, the industry is seen to abstain from what is doubtful in favour of what is clear. That is, insofar as permissible variation is tolerated at all, maximum effort should be made to purify *all* tainted components (Maurer, 2002; El-Gamal, 2006).

While the recommendations in S21 are a significant contribution in this regard, the lack of agreement among SSBs in practice about the need to purify even seemingly obvious and unequivocally prohibited elements is a concern. It is hardly surprising then that, to the best of this author's knowledge, no consideration has been given to the need to also purify benefits to investors generated by the interest tax shield. Perhaps it has been previously considered and rejected as an overly conservative step too far. If this is the case, then the literature is silent with the exception of Pomeranz who, perhaps knowingly, comments that purification is "more easily done with interest income than interest expense" (1987, p.125).

At the very least, the need for the interest tax shield to be purified is worthy of

consideration since, according Abu Dawud, one of the sayings of the Prophet which summarises Islamic Law is that which is lawful is clear, and that which is unlawful likewise, but there are certain doubtful things between the two from which it is well to abstain (Kishna, 2010). If the benefit to investors from the interest tax shield is not immediately obviously forbidden as a benefit from *riba* activity, then it certainly seems to qualify as doubtful. This is a non-trivial point for Muslim investors who want to abide by the guidance of Islam and be convinced that nothing prohibited (*haram*) is made permissible (*halal*). While it can be argued that, in certain circumstances, the information required to calculate the gains from the interest tax shield (i.e. a breakdown of interest income and interest expense rather than just a net value) might not be available, for most companies this is not the case, and for others some basic assumptions can achieve the same goal. That is, if comprehensive purification based on Islamic principles is the aim then minor impediments should not be used as an excuse, *a priori*, not to achieve that goal. In addition, at a much more fundamental level, it has been shown that the debt bias caused by the tax deductibility of interest expense erodes the tax base, encourages the unequal distribution of capital, income, and wealth, encourages risk-taking behaviour, and perpetuates injustice in society. In short, it can be argued that, by failing to meet the moral duty to achieve benefit for all Muslims (Moore, 1997), the interest expense tax shield is also doubtful on the grounds of social justice.

The adoption and amendment of *shari'ah* standards by the AAOIFI is not done lightly. It is a painstaking, diligent, and precise elucidation process to determine if, how, and when concepts should find application (McMillen, 2011). There is a constant, healthy tension in the process between undue expansion of the concepts and pragmatic implementation so as to advance the development of the Islamic finance industry. This paper attempts to add to the debate on this topic regarding the appropriate steps to be undertaken to comprehensively purify tainted components that arise in *shari'ah* compliant portfolios as a result of permissible variation, up to and including the interest tax shield. The observations in this paper are inclined to facilitate the legitimacy of the Islamic funds industry in the minds of Muslim investors by engendering conservatism at the margin and leaving no room for loose interpretation or the acceptance of any doubtful components.

## NOTES

- [i]** In Islamic Jurisprudence, haram is used to refer to any act that is forbidden and operates as a dichotomy with *halal*, which denotes the permissible.
- [ii]** See Derigs and Marzban (2008) for a comprehensive discussion of the application of Islamic stock screens.
- [iii]** The difficulty in sourcing suitable Islamically qualified companies is apparent from a study by Al-Baraka Islamic Bank, which identified only 560 companies as “compliant” from a potential pool of 19,000 (O’Sullivan, 1996).
- [iv]** The specification that the shares be common shares is to exclude preferred shares, which are hybrid debt/equity securities that provide a guaranteed return; investing in a company’s preferred shares or its bonds is not permitted. Common shares were approved as an instrument for investment by the Council of the Islamic Fiqh Academy in 1993 (Forte and Miglietta, 2007).
- [v]** For a comprehensive analysis of how *shari’ah* limits are used by SSBs to create and apply Islamic stock screens, see Derigs and Marzban (2008).
- [vi]** If applied, personal tax rates will lower the amount to be purified further. Nisar (2009, p.1) comments that when various methods are used in combination, the purification process often appears “to be window dressing, whereby . . . a small amount of income is purged to solace the conscience of the *shari’ah* compliant investor”.
- [vii]** This basic relationship also satisfies the approaches used by Modigliani and Miller (1963), Miles and Ezzell (1980, 1985), and Ruback (2002) to the value of the tax shield, although these studies make different underlying assumptions.

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# The Case Of “Fukushima” ~ Notation Choice As A Highlighting Device In Ad Hoc Concept Construction

a 0087	b 0088	c 0089	d 0100	e 0101	f 0102	g 0103
カ	ソ	ス	ク	ウ	ケ	コ
h 0104	i 0105	j 0106	k 0107	l 0108	m 0109	n 0110
ナ	ツ	ニ	ヌ	ネ	ヒ	ハ
o 0111	p 0112	q 0113	r 0114	s 0115	t 0116	u 0117
テ	ト	ア	エ	キ	オ	チ
v 0118	w 0119	x 0120	y 0121	z 0122		
セ	イ	シ	タ	サ		

## Abstract

The irregular use of *katakana* has been analysed mainly in descriptive terms and is often considered to be a device for creating homonyms or communicating emotions (See Ogakiuchi, 2010). This chapter examines the irregular use of *katakana* notation from the perspective of relevance theory. Unlike previous studies,

which have focused on the images and emotions the *katakana* notation system is said to communicate, this chapter focuses on concepts communicated by the use of words when they are written in *katakana* rather than other usual notations. I show that the irregular use of *katakana* is just one of many devices used for highlighting ad hoc concepts that can be found universally and should be analysed in a wider context than describing the functions of this notation, which is unique to Japanese. I argue that a cognitively grounded relevance theoretic account, in particular the notions of ad hoc concepts and metarepresentation, enables us to provide an explanation for observations made in previous studies. The paper concludes that emotions attributed to the use of *katakana* and the homonyms which *katakana* notation appears to create can be explained in terms of repeated metarepresentation of ad hoc concepts and attributed thoughts communicated by the concepts.

## Introduction -The Japanese Writing System

The Japanese writing system uses three different types of notation. The first is *kanji*, which is logographic. Each *kanji* character has a “meaning” and is used for conceptual words. There are also two alphabet systems, *hiragana* and *katakana*. *Hiragana* is phonographic and used for particles, connectives, and other “function words”, as well as being used by children (and adults) when they do not know

which *kanji* to use. *Katakana* is also phonographic and is mainly used for loan words, onomatopoeia, and the names of animals, species, flowers, etc. It is convention that all three notation systems are used as required. Example (1) demonstrates this:

(1) ジョンの 庭にネコが 入ってきた.

John no niwa ni neko ga haitte kita

John GEN garden LOC cat SUB entered

*“A cat came into John’s garden.”*

In (1), two conceptual words, “garden” and “enter”, are written in *kanji*: 庭 and 入, respectively. *Hiragana* is used for particles, “no” (の) and “ni” (に), part of verb conjugation (ってきた), and the subject marker “ga” (が). Although they are conceptual words, *katakana* is used for “John” (ジョン) and “cat” (ネコ) as John is non-Japanese and “cat” is the name of an animal.

The choice of notation system is based on this convention and one’s ability – if one does not know or remember how to write a certain *kanji*, one might choose to write the word in *hiragana* or *katakana*. This is particularly the case for children and in hand-written texts. This paper does not aim to analyse these cases, where choice of notation is based on personal abilities. Nor does it deal with cases where *katakana* notation is used as it is expected to be. Instead, this study will focus on cases where the use of *katakana* cannot be explained in terms of personal abilities or preferences. In particular, I shall focus on cases in which *katakana* is used where it is not expected or not because of personal preference/abilities. A particular focus will be placed on correlations between choice of notation and construction of *ad hoc* concepts, where the use of *katakana* seems to trigger concept adjustment. See “Fukushima” in (2)[i]:

(2) チェルノブイリからフクシマへ「同じ道たどらないで」

Chernobyl kara **Fukushima** e “onaji michi tadoranaide”

Chernobyl FROM **Fukushima** LOC “same road follow-NEG-IMPERATIVE”

From Chernobyl to **Fukushima**: “Please do not go the way we did”  
(Sekine 2011)

“Fukushima” is the name of a town and, normally, it is written as 福島 in *kanji*. However, in (2), it is written as フクシマ in *katakana*, and it seems to communicate more than just a name. What does it communicate? How is it different from “Fukushima” written in *kanji*? In following sections, I will first look at how *katakana* notation has been dealt with in previous studies and then present an alternative account from the perspective of relevance theory.

### *Literature Review*

The recent increase in apparent irregular uses of *katakana* has been analysed in descriptive terms and there are two main points that are often discussed. First, there seems to be a preferred argument that the use of *katakana* in some cases indicates the word in question is independent of the original lexical item and should be treated as a homonym (e.g. Narita and Sakakihara, 2004; Norimatsu and Horio, 2006; Okugakiuchi, 2010). Second, some uses of *katakana* are often considered to communicate some kind of emotion (Norimatsu and Horio, 2006; Sugimoto, 2009; and, to some extent, Okugakiuchi, 2010). The shape and the look of *katakana* characters are often cited causing these issues. Let us examine Okugakiuchi (2010) closely, as his account seems to be the most comprehensive and tries to account for not only what *katakana* notation communicates, but also how *katakana* notation comes to motivate meaning changes.

Okugakiuchi (2010) examines a range of *katakana* uses from the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics (cf. Yamanashi, 2000) and claims that *katakana* notation is a method of creating new words. He argues that the images and the visual characteristics associated with the *katakana* writing system could explain linguistic meaning, based on an assumption that the notation itself is part of “meaning” and leads the reader to the different “images”, hence motivating the difference in meaning. He lists “foreign”, “cold”, “stuck-up”, “modern”, “fashionable”, and “sharp” as components of the images of *katakana*.

While Okugakiuchi (2010) puts forward an interesting account of the apparent irregular use of *katakana* in cognitive terms, it gives rise to a number of questions. First, it is not clear what he means by “meaning”. He repeatedly claims that the visual characteristics of *katakana* lead to different “images”, which motivates a difference in meaning. This suggests that a difference in appearance indicates a difference in meaning. It is true that when written in different fonts, in any language, you might get a different “feel” from the text. For example, if the notice “DO NOT DISTURB” is written in Comic Sans, one might not take it as

seriously as when it is written in Times New Roman. However, the question should be whether this “feel” is linguistically encoded or not, rather than how it is perceived by the readers. This is an important question for Okugakiuchi, as it is related to his explanation of how *katakana* can create homonyms by separating an expression from the original word. Okugakiuchi reasons that compared to *kanji*, which is logographic, *katakana* is “weaker in meaning” (2010, pp.82–83) as it is phonographic and is thus more likely to become separated from the original meaning of the word written in *kanji*. However, it is not clear what he means by “weaker in meaning”. Does he mean that “meanings” have varying degrees of strength? Is it a matter of linguistic encoding, or is it about inferential aspects of “meaning”? Moreover, he seems to overlook the importance of contextual assumptions. The supporting evidence for his claim is an observation that if a word, “koen”, is written in *katakana*, it is impossible to determine the intended concept as it simply is a phonetic representation of the word – it could be a PARK, a LECTURE, or a PERFORMANCE. In contrast, if it is written in *kanji*, the reader will have no problem recovering the intended concept: if it is written as 公園, then it would be “park”, and if it is written as 講演, then it would be “lecture”.

Okugakiuchi (2010) is right and, of course, if you see a word written in *katakana* on its own, out of context, it is near impossible to determine which meaning has been intended. In that sense, the use of *kanji* provides more of a “clue” for the reader. However, Okugakiuchi (2010) seems to have overlooked the fact that utterances are usually produced in a context and the reader will be able to interpret the utterance without any particular difficulties. For example, if I email my friend, “if the weather is nice tomorrow, let’s have a picnic at ‘koen’”, “koen” would not be interpreted as “lecture”, even if it is written in a phonographic notation. It would, instead, be interpreted as “to have a picnic in a PARK”. This inference is based on existing assumptions about picnics, normal behaviour in lectures, and the weather. In other words, the contribution that the use of *kanji* makes is to provide extra contextual information rather than to strengthen the meaning of the word.

Second, there is the fundamental question of what the image of *katakana* is. Okugakiuchi (2010) says that the use of *katakana* adds meaning to the original, and the meaning should be something that suits the image of *katakana*. We have seen the images associated with *katakana* he listed (“foreign”, “cold”, “stuck-up”, “modern”, “fashionable”, and “sharp”). When something (e.g. *koji*, meaning

construction work) does not fit in with the image, he argues, it cannot be written in *katakana*. While this argument might capture one's intuition about this particular word, "koji", it still raises a few questions. For example, what are these "images"? Are there any more components in addition to what he has listed ("foreign", "fashionable", etc.)? What if *koji* is used in a context where construction work is fashionable? By what means does something become acceptable for use in *katakana*? Okugakiuchi's (2010) analysis does not provide answers to these questions.

### *Relevance Theory and Key Concepts*

The lack of explanation for the apparent irregular use of *katakana* might be because previous studies have described the functions of notation systems rather than the concepts the notation is used to encode. In the following section, I shall give an overview of how a cognitively grounded theory of communication, relevance theory, deals with concepts and linguistic expression, and present an alternative view on the relationship between choice of notation and construction of ad hoc concepts.

### *Relevance theory - an outline*

Relevance theory is a cognitive theory of human communication and aims to explain how the hearer recovers intended meaning based on the evidence provided by the speaker. **[ii]** The central claim is based on the definition of relevance and two principles that govern human cognition and communication. Relevance is defined as a function of cost (processing effort) and effect (positive cognitive effects - contextual implication, contradiction, and elimination of existing assumptions, and strengthening of existing assumptions) (Wilson and Sperber, 2002, p252-253):

Relevance of an input to an individual:

"a. Other things being equal, the greater the positive cognitive effects achieved by processing an input, the greater the relevance of the input to the individual at that time.

b. Other things being equal, the greater the processing effort expended, the lower the relevance of the input to the individual at that time." (Sperber and Wilson, 2002, pp.252-253)

Sperber and Wilson (1995, 2002) claim that human cognition has evolved in such

a way that we tend to work towards maximizing the effects and towards maximizing relevance by aiming for the most cost-effective processing. Based on this fundamental assumption, they propose the Cognitive Principle of Relevance:

### Cognitive Principle of Relevance

“Human cognition tends to be geared to maximisation of relevance.” (Sperber and Wilson, 2002, p.255)

Note that there can be no guarantee of maximum relevance. Instead, when the speaker produces an utterance, the hearer is entitled to expect a degree of optimal relevance (Sperber and Wilson, 1995).

### Communicative Principle of Relevance

“Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance.” (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, p.260)

An ostensive stimulus is optimally relevant to an audience if:

- a. It is relevant enough to be worth the audience’s processing effort;
- b. It is the most relevant one compatible with communicator’s abilities and preferences.

(Wilson and Sperber, 2002, p.604)

The presumption of optimal relevance is only applicable for ostensive communication, where the speaker’s informative and communicative intentions are obvious. In other words, accidental communication (e.g. you having a runny nose tells your audience that you have a cold) is not ostensive communication and thus does not carry the presumption of optimal relevance (Wilson and Sperber, 2002:255).

### “Ostensive-inferential communication

- a. The informative intention:

The intention to inform an audience of something.

- b. The communicative intention:

The intention to inform the audience of one’s informative intention.” (Wilson and Sperber, 2002, p.255)

An utterance is a form of evidence which is linguistically encoded. Sperber and Wilson (1995) consider that utterance interpretation includes not only linguistic

decoding but also inference. When an utterance is produced, the hearer performs inferences on conceptual representations which the grammar delivers. This conceptual representation is used as an input to the inferential phase of utterance interpretation. The presumption of optimal relevance justifies the hearer following the most cost-effective interpretation path (the relevance theoretic comprehension procedure: “follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects: test interpretive hypotheses in order of accessibility, and stop when your expectations of relevance are satisfied”(Wilson and Sperber, 2002: 262)).

Note that this relevance theoretic comprehension procedure does not apply only to interpretation of the utterance as a whole. The hearer’s search for relevance starts at the very basic level of identifying the intended concepts that are components of the explicit content of the utterance. In other words, even lexical-pragmatic processes are motivated by relevance, and the hearer looks for the interpretation that matches his/her expectations of relevance. Wilson (2004, p.354) argues that the relevance theoretic approach to utterance comprehension implies that one cannot expect literalness:

“[T]here is no presumption of literalness: the linguistically encoded meaning (of a word, a phrase, a sentence) is no more than a clue to the speaker’s meaning, which is not decoded but non-demonstratively inferred.”

In other words, the hearer uses the linguistically decoded meaning as a departure point, and builds on it to recover an explicature, and seeks for implicature until s/he reaches an interpretation that matches his/her expectation of relevance [iii]. Once s/he gets to this point, s/he stops and goes no further. The recovery of the intended concept is also guided by relevance. Let us see how it actually works. Example (3) illustrates this point:

(3) [Peter told Mary that his niece has passed the bar exam]

Mary: She has got a brain!

In (3), like in any other ostensive communication, Peter will expect Mary’s utterance to be optimally relevant. In addition to this, he expects Mary’s utterance to be relevant as a response to the information he has just given to her (that Peter’s niece has passed the bar exam). If the intended interpretation is literal, then the utterance would not achieve relevance (i.e. yield no cognitive effect), as we all have a brain, and the information that she has a brain (if taken

literally) does not change anything in Peter's cognitive environment. However, in this case, her utterance "she's got a brain!" will certainly yield some interpretation that achieves an optimal relevance, together with existing assumptions Peter can access. For example, he might have an assumption that in order to pass the bar exam, one must be very intelligent, or one must work very hard. Following the path of least effort, Peter will recover the intended concept of "brain", not the literal BRAIN, but something different (but related), such as "an intellectual ability that enabled her to pass a notoriously difficult exam". The intended concept is not encoded, but is constructed in context, based on assumptions about the encoded concept. In relevance theory, this type of concept is called *ad hoc* concept.

### *Relevance theory, concepts and concept adjustment*

Relevance theory takes a Fodorian view of linguistic semantics and considers that words encode "mentally-represented concepts, elements of a conceptual representation system or 'language of thought', which constitute their linguistic meanings and determine what might be called their linguistically-specified denotations" (Wilson 2003, p.344) (see also, Sperber and Wilson, 1995; Wilson and Sperber, 2002; or Carston, 2002). An encoded concept works as an address to the intended atomic concept, and it enables the hearer to access information about the concept:

"The content or semantics of this entity is its denotation, what it refers to in the world, and the lexical form that encodes it, in effect, inherits its denotational semantics. This conceptual address (or file name) gives access to a repository of mentally represented information about the concept's denotation, some of which is general and some of which, such as stereotypes, applies only to particular subsets of the denotation." (Carston, 2010, p.9)

Note that there is no one-to-one correspondence between words and concepts. As is often pointed out, the communicated concept is often different from what is encoded by the word in question. For example, we could communicate many concepts by the use of a verb "open":

- (4) Alfie can now open the stair gate.
- (5) [Teacher says to class] Please open page 532.
- (6) John opened a bottle of wine.
- (7) Sainsbury's opens at 11am on Sundays.
- (8) I need to open a savings account for Alfie.



(9) Open Microsoft Word and open the document called “lexical pragmatics”.

The above examples are only some of the actions that can be denoted by “open”. The reader will have to determine, via inference, which concept is intended. This illustrates how much richer our conceptual system is than what appears at the linguistic level, and how lexical items are “adjusted” in the interpretation process. The fact is, we can never communicate what we intend solely by means of encoded elements. This is called linguistic underdeterminacy, and it requires a number of inferential processes to determine what the explicit content of the speaker’s utterance is:

(10) He is too old.

In order to determine the proposition expressed by the utterance in (10), the referent of “he” needs to be assigned and the constituent that does not appear on the surface of the grammatical sentence should be supplied (enrichment, “too old for what”). This pragmatic enrichment will then help the hearer determine the intended concept for “old”, since if the referent of “he” is “too old to use a highchair”, then the possible age would be around three or older, when toddlers stop using highchairs, but if it is “too old to play in the U-21 football team”, then it will be any age over 22. This again shows that there is a discrepancy between the encoded concepts and the concepts the speaker intended to communicate. Wilson (2003) says that the aim of lexical pragmatics is to account for this gap. Particular attention has been paid to lexical approximation (i.e. broadening), as illustrated in (11), narrowing, as illustrated in (12), and metaphorical extension, as illustrated in (13) (see, for example, Carston, 2002, 2010; Wilson, 2004; Wilson and Carston, 2006, 2007; Sperber and Wilson, 2006).

(11) I shouldn’t have had a large glass of wine on an empty stomach.

(12) [In a pub] Let’s get some drinks, shall we?

(13) John is Mary’s ATM.

“Empty stomach” in (11) does not literally mean a stomach that contains nothing. It means, instead, a stomach that contains less than the ideal amount of food to stop the speaker from getting drunk. “Drink” in (12) only highlights a specific member of the subset of concepts that could be encoded by DRINK, and it is normally interpreted as “alcoholic drinks”. Metaphorical extension is a radical case of category extension, and in (13), “ATM” can be seen as representing the

category of “place for withdrawing cash”. As Wilson (2004) says, these processes have been analysed separately as distinct processes. However, these are just descriptions of the outcomes, not the process itself, of lexical adjustment, as Carston (2010, p.13) points out:

“The denotation of the pragmatically inferred concept is narrower or broader (or both) than the denotation of the lexical concept which provided the evidential input to its derivation. The idea is not that there are two distinct processes – of making narrower and making broader – but rather a single overall pragmatic adjustment/modulation process with these various possible results.”

Every time a word is used, the concept encoded by the word provides a blueprint for the interpretation process. Based on this blueprint, the hearer recovers a new concept that is either narrower or broader than the encoded concept via a pragmatic process of lexical adjustment. After all, natural language does not correspond to the language of thought but provides a basis for building up representations. These new concepts that are constructed only for single occasions of use are called ad hoc concepts. An ad hoc concept is constructed as a one-off and does not constitute our language of thought (i.e. is not established as a fully-fledged concept that can be encoded by a lexicon). It is used to represent an entity that is not encoded but accessible in our conceptual system (Carston, 2010, p.15):

“Strictly speaking, these new, possibly one-off, ad hoc entities are not concepts, although they have the potential to become concepts, that is, stable, enduring components of Mentalese. Nevertheless, even in their preconceptual manifestation, they can make a contribution to structured propositional states, specifically explicatures, alongside fully-fledged concepts (whether lexical or ad hoc) and play a role in warranting certain implications of the utterance.”

When the communicated concept is an ad hoc concept, the word the speaker chooses is used interpretively in order to metarepresent whatever s/he intended to communicate. In other words, by mentioning a particular linguistic item, the speaker is trying to guide the hearer to a specific conceptual representation that is not encoded by the expression but can be highlighted/ activated by the use of the word. It can be a concept that has a narrower/broader category than the encoded concept. Or, it could be an ad hoc concept that denotes a context-specific entity. The lexical comprehension is guided by expectation of relevance – the

hearer will construct an ad hoc concept as part of an explicature that will achieve an optimal relevance. Let us see how this can be applied to a specific example. Recall example (13), where an ad hoc concept needs to be constructed for “ATM”. Rather than considering the literal meaning of ATM, the hearer would interpret the utterance as “Mary spends John’s money” or “Mary takes advantage of John’s generosity”. However, the use of “ATM” in this utterance is not something that is already in the hearer’s conceptual system. It is context specific and a one-off. In other words, it is ad hoc. The speaker “mentioned” this word in order to metarepresent the intended concept. Note that there is a varying range for this *ad-hocness*, as Carston (2010) points out. For example, calling someone an “ATM” or describing having an “empty” stomach might not be too creative and thus one might have the ad hoc concept in the conceptual system more or less firmly, while there will also be more creative and very context-specific ones. After all, all communicated concepts are ad hoc to some extent. The point is, however, that lexical comprehension involves pragmatic processes of lexical adjustment and in some cases requires the construction of ad hoc concepts.

#### *Ad hoc concepts and katakana notation*

So far, we have seen how concept adjustment and linguistic expressions are treated in relevance theory. The question now is, exactly what happens if katakana is used where it is not supposed to be? Consider example (2) and examples (14) to (16) below. These examples contain the word “Fukushima”, the name of a town located in the north east of Japan. Generally, town names are written in *kanji* and “Fukushima” is normally written as 福島. However, in the cases below, “Fukushima” has been written in *katakana* as フクシマ:

(2) チェルノブイリからフクシマへ「同じ道たどらないで」

Chernobyl kara **Fukushima** e “onajimichitadoranaide”

Chernobyl FROM **Fukushima** LOC “same road follow-NEG-IMPERATIVE”

From Chernobyl to **Fukushima**: “Please do not go the way we did”  
(Sekine 2011)

In this example, “Fukushima” does not merely refer to the town. It seems to include a wider range of information related to FUKUSHIMA, the encoded concept. Similar cases are found in many examples:

#### (14) フクシマ後の世界の原子力産業

**Fukushima**-go no sekai no genshiryoku sangyo

**Fukushima**-after GEN world GEN nuclear industry

“International nuclear industry after the disaster at **Fukushima**.”  
(Johnson 2011)

(15) 軍用ロボ、フクシマに投入 米ハイテク企業が名乗り  
Gunyo robo, **Fukushima** ni tonyu.

military robot **Fukushima** DAT throw-in  
Bei haiteku kigyo ga nanori.

U.S. HIGH-TECH company NOM bid

“Military robots to be sent to **Fukushima**, a U.S. high-tech company has offered.”  
(Komiya 2011)

(16) 世界の原発大国、フクシマを助けて

Sekai no genpatsutaikoku, **Fukushima** o tasukete.

World GEN nuclear-countries, **Fukushima** ACC help

“‘To major countries with advanced technology for nuclear power – please help’, **Fukushima**.”  
(Asahi Shimbun Digital 2011)

In these examples, “Fukushima” is written in katakana rather than conventional kanji, and whatever is intended by the author does not seem to be just the encoded concept of FUKUSHIMA (i.e. the town). What the author intends the reader to construct, based on the encoded concept, is not something the reader has had in his/her memory as an existing concept. In other words, the intended concepts are *ad hoc* concepts rather than encoded concepts. “Fukushima” in *katakana* contributes to the recovery of the *ad hoc* concept FUKUSHIMA\*, which becomes part of explicature of the utterance. The process is based on the encoded concept FUKUSHIMA, and it would be interpreted as “the tragedy and disaster in the Fukushima area”, “people affected by the disaster in Fukushima”, or something similar. In other words, FUKUSHIMA\* is an *ad hoc* concept and

metarepresents thoughts the author intends by using katakana, rather than attempting to linguistically express ineffable concepts.

Note that this does not necessarily mean the *ad hoc* concepts FUKUSHIMA\* in (2), (14) to (16) are all identical. In fact, the reader would recover different *ad hoc* concepts, similar to ones below, from the use of “Fukushima” in (2) and (14) to (16)[iv] :

(2') Area and people affected by the disaster at the Fukushima nuclear plant.

(14') What happened at the Fukushima nuclear plant during the 3/11 earthquake and tsunami.

(15') The Fukushima nuclear power plant.

(16') The Fukushima nuclear plant and area and people in Fukushima

This suggests that whatever the author intended to communicate, it is an *ad hoc* concept that denotes something that is adjusted from the encoded concept, and the role of katakana in these cases seems to be to highlight the intended *ad hoc* nature of the concepts, to make them stand out from other possible members of the set of concepts that a word could encode.

Interestingly, *katakana* is often used when we write Japanese words that are frequently used as loan words in other languages:

(17) 日本でスシを食べるための確実に押さえるべき10のステップ

Nihon de **sushi** o taberu tame no

Japan LOC sushi ACC eat purpose GEN

kakujitsuni osaerubeki 10 no suteppu

Certainly ensure-should 10 GEN steps

“10 steps for eating **sushi** in Japan”

(Gigazine 2010)

(18) 『サケ・ソムリエ』なんて言うんじゃないよ。サケは日本のものだ。ワインの世界から言葉を借りてくる必要がどこにある？」

“**Sake**-Sommelier ”nante iunjanai yo.

**SAKE-SOMMELIER** such say-NEG SF

**Sake** wa nihon no mono da.

**Sake** TOP Japan GEN thing SF

Wine no sekai kara kotoba o karitekuru hitsuyou ga doko ni aru?’

Wine GEN world from words ACC borrow necessity SUB where LOC exist?

*“Don’t call me a **Sake**-Sommelier.’ **Sake** is Japanese. Why do you need to borrow a word from the wine world?”*

(Noge 2012)

(19) ジュードーから柔道へ

**Judo** kara judo e

**Judo** from judo to

“From **judo** to judo.”

(Sports Navi Plus 2013)

In examples (17) to (19), *katakana* is used for concepts that would normally be written in *hiragana* or *kanji*: “sushi” in (17) is written as スシ rather than 寿司, “sake” in (18) is written as サケ rather than 酒, and “judo” in (19) is written as ジュードー rather than 柔道. Recovery of all of these concepts includes broadening processes and the author intends the reader to construct ad hoc concepts that become part of the explicature of the utterance. Based on the encoded concepts SUSHI, SAKE, and JUDO, the reader would recover *ad hoc* concepts of SUSHI\*, SAKE\*, and JUDO\*. So, exactly what sort of *ad hoc* concepts are intended? The contexts for (17) to (19) all involve some sort of international aspect. (17) is a guide for foreign tourists who want to experience sushicuisine in Japan. Example (18) is a quote from an American sake specialist. In this interview, he particularly objects to the idea of calling sake experts “sake-sommeliers” like a wine expert in French. Example (19) is particularly interesting – it is a title of blog entry which describes the return of Japan as winners in the world-class Judo tournament. In this example, kanji (柔道) is used when the word in question is used to refer to

original judo (or traditional judo in these examples), while *katakana* (ジュード) is used for the word “judo” after it became known internationally. In all these examples, *katakana* is used in order to trigger an interpretation of concepts as the world, not the Japanese, is thought to perceive them. In other words, the intended concepts SUSHI\*, SAKE\*, and JUDO\* metarepresent conceptual entries as they are perceived by the global community.

So far, I have only examined cases of Japanese words used in international contexts – loan words or the disaster which was reported worldwide. However, this type of *katakana* use is not limited to these cases. Example (20) is about differences in personality between girls and boys. *Katakana* is used instead of kanji in order to narrow down the denotation of original lexicon where the thought that is metarepresented is only specific parts of the encoded concept.

(20) [Mothers are discussing differences between having daughters and having sons]

女の子は演技する？女の子は小さい頃から**オンナ**？男の子は優しく素直で単純？男の子はいつまでも**コドモ**

Onna no ko wa engisuru?

woman GEN child TOP perform?

Onna no ko wa chiisai koro kara **onna**?

Woman GEN child TOP little period from **woman**?

Otoko no ko wa yasashiku sunao de tanjun?

Man GEN child TOP gentle honest and simple?

Otoko no kowaisu made mo **kodomo**?

Man GEN child TOP when till **child**?

*“Are girls good actresses? Are girls women from a very early age? Are boys gentle, honest and simple? Do boys stay like a child forever?”*

(Yomiuri Online 2011)

In (20), “onna”(woman) is written in *katakana* as **オンナ**, rather than in kanji as 女.

Similarly, “kodomo”(child) is written in *katakana* as コドモ, rather than in *kanji* as 子供. The intended concept for “onna”,WOMAN\*, contains only specific parts of the encoded concept WOMAN. It may include information about stereotypical characteristics of WOMEN, such as “women like to go shopping”, “women gossip” or, even worse, “women are manipulative”. It may also include other stereotypical views of women, such as “women like to care for others” or “women are good at multi-tasking”. However, the intended, ad hoc concept WOMEN\* does not include other information, such as “ female human being above certain age”. Similarly, the intended concept for “kodomo”(child) is also more than the encoded concept CHILD. In this case, it does not include “young” or “small”. Instead, it only includes stereotypical characteristics such as “children like to play outside”, “children love toys and cartoons”, or, even, “children don’t think about consequences”.

So, *katakana* can be used to represent a particular concept which is related (or even part of) to the original concept. The question now is why *katakana* is used this way more often than other notation systems. Maybe the nature of *katakana* notation will explain this function of *katakana*. Historically, *katakana* notation has been used for onomatopoeic expressions and loan words. It would be safe to say that onomatopoeic expressions are an interpretation of sound/noise in the world and that loan words are an interpretation of phonological properties of words that do not originate in the language in question. In other words, the primal function of *katakana* is to metarepresent -*katakana* is an alphabet system for metarepresentation[v]. Authors use *katakana* to attribute the conceptual representation to others at a lexical level, and thus contribute to the recovery of an “adjusted” concept.

This analysis also explains why the use of *katakana* often communicates “emotions”, as pointed out in previous studies (e.g. Norimatsu and Horio, 2006). In her analysis of metalinguistic negation as an echoic use, Carston (1999, p.12) argues that an echoic use of language involves “ metarepresenting and attributing an utterance (or part thereof) or a thought (or part thereof), and expressing an attitude to it (broadly, either endorsement or dissociation)”. Metarepresenting and attributing a thought are what is happening with the use of *katakana* we have seen in this chapter. If an echoic use involves metarepresenting and attributing thoughts and expressing an attitude to it, then it is not surprising that the use of *katakana* in this way could also express an



attitude to the metarepresented thoughts. The author could, for example, justify his/her own emotion by endorsing the metarepresented thoughts, hence emphasizing the emotion. In fact, it does not matter who the thoughts are attributed to. Thoughts need not be attributed to anyone real at all. The fact that thoughts appear to be attributed to someone else is enough to enable the author to distance him/herself from these thoughts and express his/her attitude towards them.

Earlier, we examined Okugakiuchi's (2010) claim that katakana notation is a device for creating homonyms. His central claim was that when written in katakana, the meaning can more easily be separated from original meaning written in kanji, especially since (1) as a phonographic system, katakana-written words carry meanings "more weakly", and (2) the visual characteristics of *katakana* evoke different images which motivate the difference(s) in meanings. Although I did argue against his homonym analysis, he is right that katakana-written concepts can sometimes be seen as independent lexical items. See (21) and (22), where both KUSURI and KEITAI can be seen as new lexical items that encode new concepts, KUSURI\* and KEITAI\*:

(21)クスリでちょっと遊ぼうよ

**Kusuri** de chotto asobo yo.

**kusuri** with little play SF.

*"Let's have fun using some drugs"*

(Mie Prefecture 2008)

(22)スマートフォンの “ ケータイ化 ” を進める、各社の夏商戦戦略

Smart phone no '**keitai**-ka' o susumeru,

Smart phone GEN **mobile**-change' ACC promote

kakusha no natsushosen senryaku

companies GEN summer-sales strategy

*"Summer sale strategies of each company - changing smart phones into '**mobiles**'"*

(Sano 2008)

In (21), “kusuri” is written in *katakana* as クスリ, rather than in the conventional *kanji* as 薬. The encoded concept of KUSURI is “medicine” or “drugs”, with no negative connotation. However, what is intended by “kusuri” in (21) is “illegal drugs”. While “kusuri” in *katakana* can still be used to deliver KUSURI, it is KUSURI\* (illegal drugs) that the reader would be likely to access first. Similarly, in (22), “keitai” is written in *katakana* as ケータイ, rather than in the conventional *kanji* as 携帯. While the encoded concept of “keitai” in (22) is KEITAI (mobile/carrying), the concept that stands out from other possible interpretations when written in *katakana* is KEITAI\* (a mobile phone). In particular, KEITAI\* seems to include encyclopaedic information such as “the device everyone has” or “the device that is the key item in the current consumer market”, which is not included in the original, non-shortened KEITAI DENWA (MOBILE PHONE). Does this mean that Okugakiuchi is right and *katakana* is a device for creating new lexical items?

It is true that there are cases where *katakana*-written items become so routinized that they now appear to be homonyms to the original lexical items. KUSURI\* in (21) and KEITAI\* in (22) are the obvious examples. However, *katakana* notation does not necessarily lead the item to become an independent lexical item. It would be more logical to think that the ad hoc concepts written in *katakana* could sometimes become routinized and thus established as an independent lexical item, rather than that *katakana* notation is a device creating new words. When the “metarepresented” concept is used over and over, it then becomes a case of “dead” metarepresentation (as in “dead metaphor”).

### *Ad Hoc Concepts and Highlighters*

So far, I have shown that the apparent irregular use of *katakana* can be explained in terms of marking *ad hoc* concepts. I have also explained why *katakana* is used for writing words expressing *ad hoc* concepts. This analysis also enables us to explain why *katakana*-written words can sometimes become an independent word, thus giving an impression that *katakana* notation is a device for creating new homonyms to original lexicon. What I have not done, however, is to explain why authors “point to” or “highlight” *ad hoc* concepts by using *katakana* – not why it is *katakana* that we use, but why we mark *ad hoc* concepts in the first place

As we saw earlier, according to the Communicative Principle of Relevance, any stimulus used in an ostensive communication creates a presumption of optimal relevance. In other words, one can assume that there is no unjustifiable

processing effort imposed when processing an ostensive stimulus (utterance, gesture, anything that can be used to communicate). If a stimulus is costlier to process, then the hearer will be rewarded with extra cognitive effects. Wilson and Wharton (2006) illustrate how this idea enables us to account for contrastive prosody patterns (from Wilson and Wharton, 2006, p.1568):

(23)

a. Federer played Henman and he be'at him.

b. Federer played Henman and he' beat hi'm.

In (23), the differences in prosody patterns (the neutral pattern for (a) and the contrastive pattern for (b)) affect the reference assignment of "he". Under normal circumstances, the preferred interpretation would be "Federer played Henman and Federer beat Henman", which is what the reader would recover by the use of a neutral prosody pattern in (a). It is obvious that the contrastive pattern in (b) is costlier. However, this extra processing effort is balanced out by increased effect. In this case, the contrastive prosodic pattern will guide the hearer, who is following a relevance theoretic comprehension procedure, to the less salient interpretation, "Federer played Henman and **Henman** beat **Federer**". In other words, contrastive stress in this case is used as a highlighter, which spotlights an intended interpretation. The use of a costlier stimulus is balanced out by this extra effect, which cannot be achieved via any other means without imposing extra processing effort.

If this is the case, switching notation systems where it is not expected would surely cost more processing effort and thus there should be extra effects. And indeed, the use of *katakana* to mark metarepresented ad hoc concepts seems to play a similar role. Recall the FUKUSHIMA examples. We saw that by using *katakana*, "Fukushima" can communicate a range of ad hoc concepts:

(2') Area and people affected by the disaster at Fukushima nuclear plant

(14') What happened at the Fukushima nuclear plant during the 3/11 earthquake and tsunami

(15') The Fukushima nuclear power plant

(16') Fukushima nuclear plant and area and the people in Fukushima

If “Fukushima” is written in *kanji*, as it conventionally is, the encoded concept FUKUSHIMA (i.e. the town) would be preferred as an interpretation. Of course, the reader might be able to recover these ad hoc concepts above even when it is written in *kanji*. However, the use of *katakana* instead of *kanji* can make it easier for the reader choose the intended ad hoc concept that denotes a specific subset (or a specific (pre)conceptual entity) that can be denoted by the encoded concept. Note that there is potentially an infinite set of entities that can be the intended concept for “Fukushima” and the list above is but a few examples of what it can refer to.

In (17) to (19), we saw that Japanese words that are often used as loan words in foreign languages (“sushi”, “sake”, and “judo”) can be written in *katakana* and the intended concepts are ad hoc concepts rather than the encoded concepts. We also saw a case, (20), where *katakana* was used in a case of lexical narrowing. In these cases, again, the role of *katakana* is to put a spotlight on the intended concept, denoting a specific subset of the category out of the other possible entities and to so balance out the extra processing cost imposed by switching the notation.

Marking ad hoc concepts is not particular to Japanese. The code switching illustrated in (24) and the use of capital letters such as in (25b) can also be used to mark ad hoc concepts:

(24) “They have to ‘**sumimasen**’ their way through life while biting their tongue [sic].”

(After Hours Japan 2011)\_

(25)

- a. We’ve had some troubles with our neighbours about car parking.
- b. The Troubles in Ireland caused too much hurt.

*Ad hoc* concepts contribute to the recovery of explicature and hence to relevance by communicating whatever the speaker cannot communicate by using encoded concepts without imposing unjustifiable processing costs. Marking *ad hoc* concepts using these devices is another way of ensuring that no unjustifiable processing cost is imposed. For example, in (24), the speaker could have chosen the English equivalent “excuse me”, etc. Again, however, it may not capture what “sumimasen” can communicate. While “troubles” in (25a) denotes the encoded concept TROUBLE, when “Troubles” is written with a capital T as illustrated in (25b), especially in a context of Ireland, the intended concept is not what is

encoded. Instead, the intended concept is the ethno-political conflict in Northern Ireland since the 1960s.

So far, we have seen that *katakana* notation is a way of marking metarepresented *ad hoc* concepts. As I have just shown, it is not particular to Japanese to mark *ad hoc* concepts and there are a number of devices a speaker can use to mark *ad hoc* concepts, including code-switching and the use of capital letters. The choice of devices is up to the speaker – his/her ability and preference. It might be a stylistic choice or it might be restricted by mode of communication (e.g. gestures would only occur in spoken discourse, and *katakana* would be used only in written discourse). This is in line with the Communicative Principle of Relevance and the definition of optimal relevance introduced earlier. Whatever stimulus the speaker chooses to use in an ostensive communication, the reader can expect it to be optimally relevant. That is, the reader can expect the stimulus to be worth his/her attention and to be the best and most preferred stimulus that the speaker can offer in the particular context.

### *Conclusion*

In this paper, I took observations made in previous studies as a departure point and examined the concepts communicated by the use of words written in *katakana*, rather than discussing the image of the notation system or emotions that *katakana* use can communicate. My main claim is that the apparent irregular use of *katakana* is one of many devices we can use as a highlighter for metarepresented *ad hoc* concepts. Rather than creating homonyms that are independent of original lexicon, as often claimed in previous studies, the irregular use of *katakana* notation marks a metarepresentation of an *ad hoc* concept that is recovered as a result of pragmatic lexical adjustment. As a highlighter, it contributes to relevance by guiding the reader to CONSTRUCT the intended concept IN CONTEXT rather than retrieving and using, for the interpretation, some kind of basic concept found in the lexicon.

I also showed that when used over and over, *katakana*-written words can become independent lexical items. This is not because *katakana* is a device for creating homonyms, as Okugakiuchi (2010) claims. In fact, it does not matter whether it is *katakana* or any other method that is used to mark metarepresentation. It is more to do with the fact that a particular *ad hoc* concept is used repeatedly and thus become established as an entity in our mind. In other words, the *ad hoc* concepts can become established as an independent word when used repeatedly.

It is interesting that there are language-specific and language non-specific highlighting devices. Quotation marks or an equivalent might be universal for literate speech communities, while *katakana* notation is restricted to Japanese only. The bottom line is, however, that the process is universal and applicable across languages, and a relevance theoretic cognitively-grounded analysis enables us to provide a unified account.

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I would like to thank Seiji Uchida, Rebecca Jackson, and anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments. However, all errors and misunderstandings that may be contained in this paper are my responsibility.

### NOTES

**[i]** For convenience, I have marked the use of *katakana* in bold and underline when transcribed in the Roman alphabet. This does not mean that I believe bold underline and *katakana* have the same function

**[ii]** Relevance theory conventionally uses speaker' and 'hearer'. I will, therefore, follow the convention and use the 'speaker' and the 'hearer' rather than the 'author' and 'reader' in this section where I present fundamental notions of Relevance theory.

**[iii]** The explicit/implicit distinction in relevance theory is slightly (and fundamentally) different from Grice's distinction between "what is said" and "what is meant" (Grice 1989). In relevance theory, explicature is defined as "an ostensively communicated assumption which is inferentially developed from one of the incomplete conceptual representations (logical forms) encoded by the utterance" (Carston 2002, p.377) and implicature is defined as "a communicated assumption which is derived solely via process of pragmatic inference" (ibid.). See, for example, Carston, 2002, Sperber and Wilson 1995, and Wilson and Sperber, 2002 for detailed discussion.

**[iv]** Please note that these paraphrases are provided as indication of its interpretation only. In relevance theory, as Carston (2010) explains, ad hoc concepts are considered to be ineffable, and they are not considered lexicalized, nor are they considered fully encoded.

**[v]** This is not to say that *katakana* notation is the only way to mark metarepresentation. As Uchida (personal communication) points out, other notation systems can be used to mark ad hoc concepts, especially with proper names (cf. え ~ ごがく - "Eigogaku", written in hiragana, the title of newsletter for

The EnglishLinguistic Society of Japan), or 布恋人 -“Friend”, written in kanji, the name of a bar). The point is, however, that this happens more often with katakana, perhaps because of its original function to mark metarepresentation.

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