

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

What defines a country or the identity of a country? That is a question that academia tries to answer through various lenses. While some scholars look at the history of a nation, others look at the media representations of the country. Another path is looking at the cultural tint of a country, its ethnicity, and where its people come from. Politics are also involved: how does a country behave with its neighbors? Who are their allies, and how their political system behaves within the international community? Are their policies liberal or not? How are women treated in the country? While these are not the only questions made by researchers, these are the questions that our authors did during this YJIS Fall/Winter Issue. Up next is a brief introduction of our authors and their research.

The first paper of this issue is “The Fight for Korean Abortion Rights through Social Media Activism” by Veronica Coffey. This article examines which strategies and frameworks were used by pro-choice social media activists to promote legal change regarding women’s abortion rights in South Korea. The author takes an original approach by focusing on social media activists to understand the role of online feminist activism in the recent advancement of Korean women’s reproductive rights.

Our second paper is by Man Fung Yeung, called “The Change and Continuity of the US Asia-Pacific Policy: From Obama to Trump.” This paper compares the similarity and differences between Obama and Trump’s Asia-Pacific policy through John J. Mearsheimer’s Offensive Realism theory to conclude that even though both Presidents have different political ideals, the policy implemented by both administrations was similar and their goals were the same.

“K-pop, Affect, and Intimacy in Transnational Social Mediascapes During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study of BTS and Participatory Online Fandom” is our last paper. Written by our senior editor Simone Liew, this article focuses on the normalization of emotional interaction through digital spaces and innovative technology in K-pop under the COVID-19 pandemic. Using BTS as a case study, the author performs a quantitative analysis of BTS increasingly intimate online activities throughout the pandemic.

For our only essay and special literature analysis, we have two articles by graduate students from GSIS, Korea University. Overall, this mini collection examines communities and concepts often left out of the discussion of national identity. Author Bridgette Ellise Han looks at the chronological-historical emergence of multiculturalism. The essay called “The Presence

of Diverse Cultures in South Korea: Redefining South Korea’s Multicultural Society” takes us through a journey of multiculturalism across Korean history starting from the Goryeo dynasty until modern South Korea Society.

“Encountering the Ghosts of Gwangju: Tragedy and Trauma in Ch’oe Yun’s *There, a Petal Silently Falls* and Han Kang’s *Human Acts*” by Chelsea Proctor is a unique piece that we are proud and grateful to publish since we mostly do not receive submissions of this nature. This literature analysis seeks to understand the presence of ghosts in both novels as representations of the dead of Gwangju and as a historical burden that extends beyond characters into the language of grief and trauma.

Lastly, but certainly not least, this issue closes with an interview made to Philip Turner, New Zealand ambassador to South Korea. He has extensive experience as a diplomat and a business leader in North Asia, with a particular focus on the Korean Peninsula. He speaks fluent French and Japanese, conversational Chinese, and enjoys becoming acquainted with the Korean language. In this interview, he discusses New Zealand’s position as a middle power, the impact of Korean soft power, and AUKUS.

I am incredibly grateful to a team of extraordinary women and editors who dedicated their time and efforts to this issue’s success. Their diligence, excellent work, and incredible support are highly appreciated. Thank you to Julie Aase, Hannah Kim, Amanda Herath, Simone Liew, and Gabrielle Magnuson for being the motor behind YJIS. I would also like to extend my high appreciation to professor Sung-Eun Thomas Kim and TA Chelsea Proctor from GSIS Korea University for reaching out to the YJIS. We are moved and touched that our journal reaches other GSIS around Korea.

To our readers, I am grateful for your interest in this journal. In the name of the whole editing team, we wish you good health, safety, and happy holidays. Thank you and enjoy this Fall/Winter issue.

Grecia Dominique Paniagua Garcia

Editor-in-Chief