

# **Recession and Progression? Notes on Media, Labor, and Youth from East Asia<sup>1</sup>**

Prof. Jack L. QIU

*Associate Professor, School of Journalism and Communication, The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

Prof. Yeran KIM

*Associate Professor, the School of Communications, Kwangwoon University*

This paper discusses how Korea and China respond to the 2008-2009 global economic crisis with emphasis placed on (1) public discourse and state policy, (2) media, especially new media, developments, and (3) conditions of labor and youth, the two overlapping groups that occupy marginalized social positions where seeds for change and progression are also to be found. While each country has its distinct social and institutional legacy, the contemporary East Asian experiences converge in the prominence of the media, electronics, and information sector as an engine of economic growth that inevitably produces new labor and youth politics. Such a mode of production and the concurrent political dynamics have been severely affected by this financial meltdown. However, due to a shared history of labor-intensive capital accumulation, collective memories of the Asian Financial Crisis a decade ago, and ongoing debates on the East Asian model of development, Korea and China are in a similarly entangled position to transform the recession into an opportunity for social progression – as demanded by labor forces, old and new– for a viable alternative to the neoliberal doctrine.

Keywords: global economic crisis, labor, youth, alternative discourse, social progression

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