

Cover art, entitled *Missed Hanabi* by Mika Daniels, who is a rising junior at Washington State University, double majoring in accounting and Japanese. Outside of academia, Mika is a digital artist and comic writer. She is currently working on an online store that will eventually become a platform for her artwork and comics. She gives the following explanation about the cover artwork:

“While in Japan, I missed all three opportunities I had to see the fireworks. I heard stories, but circumstances didn’t permit. I plan to go back to Japan at some point and hopefully my day to see the fireworks awaits me. Also, I love traditional Japanese clothing and love to incorporate it in my art when I can.”

You can see her other artworks using the following platforms:

Instagram: mika.\_dzuki

Etsy: <https://www.etsy.com/shop/Kuraimz?ref=seller-platform-mcnav>

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## In Dedication

Every year the *Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal* is dedicated to a Wittenberg University faculty or staff member who is actively involved in the East Asian Studies Program, promotes academic achievement and encourages students to stretch beyond their limits in their chosen field of study. The student staff would like to dedicate this year's issue to Dr. Sunny Jeong, Associate Professor of Business and Economics and Director of the new International Business major at Wittenberg.

Dr. Jeong received a Ph.D. in Recreation, Sport and Tourism and an M.S. in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She additionally holds an M.Ed. in Social Studies Education and a B.A. in Geography Education from Seoul National University. As founder of the Korean Cultural Center in Champaign, Illinois, she served as the first executive director from 2007–2009. Dr. Jeong studies religion and spirituality in management. She conducts research on ways that faith and religion are incorporated into business practices as well as when and why people seek faith or spirituality through their endeavors. She also investigates the political, economic, religious, and social factors that shape the global economy, business practices, and our understanding of others.

Having visited or lived in over 32 countries, Dr. Jeong notes that, “my many years of interacting with people from diverse professional, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds have been grounded in a commitment to instill cross-cultural understanding by challenging cultural racism and consequent ‘demonization of the other.’” A cross-cultural competency and mindfulness coach for various organizations, Dr. Jeong has facilitated many cross-cultural workshops around the world.

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# The Mystery of Steam Wine

Langxi Lang

*Langxi Lang is an East Asian Studies and Environmental Studies double major student at the University of Arizona, 2023 UA EAS Outstanding Capstone Reward Holder, UA Navy and Golden Honor Cords Holder, Holder of nearly 20 Chinese national innovation and utility patents, previous member of United Nations, a life-time Wild Cat, a previous East Asian, English, Mandarin, and Environmental Sciences Teacher. He will study Environmental Health Science at the University of California at Berkeley later this year (2023).*

## Introduction

When people talk about China, in addition to the famous scholars that Chinese civilization produced, such as Mencius<sup>1</sup>, Confucius<sup>2</sup>, and Lao Tzu<sup>3</sup>, food culture is also an essential part. Among these, alcohol, especially *steam wine*<sup>4</sup>, is a crucial part. Steam wine, also known as the *steam-made wine*<sup>5</sup>, is one of China's long-established alcoholic beverages. Its history can be traced back to the mythical period of China<sup>6</sup>, when the technique of making steamed wine may have already appeared. Steaming wine has an important position in Chinese culture, not only as a way to drink and make good wine but also as an essential element of festivals, weddings, and banquets. However, there are still many unanswered questions about the categorization and birth of steam wine. Curiosity is the first motivation that drives academic research. As a lover of Chinese wines, I also maintain a constant curiosity about this historic beverage. Therefore, in this paper, I aim to analyze the mystery of the classification and the birth of steam wine from an objective and dialectical perspective to compare the different and controversial views, and provide an informed background and framework for further research.

## The Mystery of Classification: The distinction between steamed and distilled spirits in ancient China

If scholars want to study the role of something in a particular historical context, they need first to understand what it is. In recent

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<sup>1</sup> Mengzi, 孟子, 372 B.C.E. - 289 B.C.E.

<sup>2</sup> Kongzi, 孔子, 551 B.C.E. - 479 B.C.E.

<sup>3</sup> Laozi, 老子, 571 B.C.E. - 471 B.C.E.

<sup>4</sup> zhengjiu, 蒸酒.

<sup>5</sup> zhengniang jiu, 蒸酿酒.

<sup>6</sup> Zhongguo Shanggu Chuanshuo Shidai, 中国上古传说时代.

decades, scholars have often debated the distinction between steamed and distilled spirits in ancient China. In this regard, some scholars have relied on archaeological evidence to provide a possible answer. For example, based on archaeological evidence from Ma Chengyuan<sup>7</sup>'s *Examination and Experimentation of Bronze Distillers of the Han Dynasty*<sup>8</sup> and the *Chengde Summer Palace Administration*<sup>9</sup>'s *Bronze Boiling Pot of the Jin Dynasty Unearthed in Qinglong county, Hebei province*<sup>10</sup>, Wang Saishi<sup>11</sup> concluded: 1) there were many instruments could be used for distillation purposes in ancient China; 2) these instruments could also be used for a wide range of purposes; and 3) these excavated artifacts could be used for both distilled spirits and steamed wine.<sup>12</sup>

Overall, Wang's idea is relatively reliable, as modern scientific experiments have validated it. In 1975, a *Jin Dynasty*<sup>13</sup> copper-bearing pot, the same as was used for making distilled spirits or wine, was transferred to a laboratory. After analyzing the structure of this pot, Ma Chengyuan found a cooler and sink inside of the pot. These features reflected the standard structure of split double distillation. After closely measuring the volume of the entire vessel, Mr. Ma concluded that the distillation vessel/pot could contain only a very limited amount of distillation material, such as wine lees. This key archaeological evidence is of considerable value. It suggests that using delicate, small, and costly containers to make low-volume alcoholic beverages is inefficient for drinking and uneconomical. It seems unlikely that such use of time and labor to obtain a small amount of high-purity steam wine or a large amount of low-purity wine would be feasible. On this point, Wang added more detail, for example: he doubted that the apparatus is a distilling device, given its small size. The distiller is from the Jin Dynasty, and its hemispherical pot is only 26 cm high and can hold a limited amount of alcohol. Two tests were conducted, producing less than one kilogram of low-strength alcohol. Mr. Wang believes that such a small wine-making pot would limit the wine's quality. He also thinks that the Jin Dynasty copper burner found in Qinglong county was too small for wine steaming, but suitable for making insect repellent.<sup>14</sup> Mr. Wang notes that

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<sup>7</sup> 马承源, 1927-2004.

<sup>8</sup> Haidai Qingtong Zhengliuqi De Kaocha He Shiyuan, 《汉代青铜蒸馏器的考察和实验》.

<sup>9</sup> Chengde Bishu Shanzhuang Guanlichu, 承德避暑山庄管理处.

<sup>10</sup> Hebei Sheng Qinglong Xian Chutu Jindai Tongshao Jiuhu, 《河北省青龙县出土金代铜烧酒锅》.

<sup>11</sup> 王赛时, 1955 – now.

<sup>12</sup> Wang, “2010,” 240-241.

<sup>13</sup> *Jindai*, 金代.

<sup>14</sup> Hualushui, 花露水.

distilling a small amount of wine with the apparatus may not have much value, but producing a liter of insect repellent was valuable because it was expensive.<sup>15</sup>

*Figure 1. Bronze wine pot of the Jin Dynasty, front view 1<sup>16</sup>*



*Figure 2. Bronze wine pot of the Jin Dynasty, front view 2<sup>17</sup>*



In addition to the evidence in archaeology, ancient historical texts can give us more clues. For this point, Liu Yong suggests:

The existence of distilled and steamed spirits in ancient China remains controversial and unsupported, despite the presence of distillers at least as early as the Song Dynasty, the existence of many taverns in many cities during the Song Dynasty, and the existence of many words used to describe spirits in Song lyrics.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to distillers, this problem arises from the conflation of the terms *Shaojiu*, *Baijiu*, and steam wine in ancient Chinese literature. This is because *Shaojiu* can be interpreted as both *Baijiu* and wine made by steaming, as well as an independent type of alcohol. Moreover, steam can also be used to describe the method of making both *Baijiu* and *Shaojiu*. This has led modern scholars to analyze ancient texts with confusion and uncertainty. Some scholars have dealt with this uncertainty by simply accepting the vague interpretation of such

15 Wang, “2010,” 240–241.

16 One of the earliest wine pots found today, was discovered in December 1975 in the south of Xishanzui Village, Qinglong County, Qinhuangdao City, Hebei Province. This artifact is located in the exhibition hall of “Civilization - Exchange - Integration - Development - Hehe Chengde from Ancient Times” [“文明·交流·融合·发展——合和承德从远古走来”展厅] and is a national cultural relic. Chengde Museum. Accessed on February 3rd, 2023. <http://www.chdmuseum.cn/a/anli/diancangjingpin/2020/0801/380.html>

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18 Liu, “Chinese Wine,” 37.

uncertainty. For example, the Southern Song literary scholar Zhao Xiguan<sup>19</sup> mentioned in his work, *Tiao Xie Leibian*<sup>20</sup>:

Translation:

For someone who is drunk and cannot be woken, immediately use mung bean flour (...) Ginger should not be consumed with *alcohol*.<sup>21</sup> Consuming scallions with *white alcohol*<sup>22</sup> increases the risk of illness. Avoid consuming sweet foods when drinking *white alcohol*.<sup>23</sup>

Original text:

烧酒醉不醒者，急用绿豆粉粉 (...) 生姜不可与烧酒同用。“饮白酒生韭令人增病。饮白酒忌诸甜物”。<sup>24</sup>

The great pharmacologist Li Shizhen<sup>25</sup> recorded in his *Compendium of Materia Medica*<sup>26</sup>:

The practice of drinking *alcohol*<sup>27</sup> is not an ancient one. It was created during the Yuan Dynasty. The method involves putting *strong alcohol*<sup>28</sup> and *rice wine lees*<sup>29</sup> into a pot and steaming it, so the vapor rises. The liquid, then, can be collected by using a *container*.<sup>30</sup> Any sour or spoiled wine can be steamed and drunk. Currently, only glutinous rice, *millet*,<sup>31</sup> or barley is steamed and fermented in a *jar*<sup>32</sup> for seven days, then taken out. Its color should be as clear as water, and its flavor should be extremely strong, which is also the *alcohol dew*.<sup>33</sup>

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19 赵希鹄, 1170-1242.

20 调燮类编.

21 Shaojiu, 烧酒.

22 Baijiu, 白酒.

23 Baijiu, 白酒.

24 Deng and Shuai, “Qiannian Jiu Wenhua,” 37.

25 李时珍, 1518–1593.

26 Bencaogang Mu, 《本草纲目》.

27 Shaojiu, 烧酒.

28 Nongjiu, 浓酒.

29 Zao, 糟.

30 Qi, 器.

31 Li, 黍.

32 Quniang Weng, 曲酿瓮.

33 Jiulu, 酒露.

烧酒非古法也，自元时创始，其法。用浓酒和糟入瓶，蒸令气上，用器承取滴露。凡酸坏之酒皆可蒸烧。近时惟以糯米或黍或秫或大麦蒸熟，和曲酿瓮中七日，以甑蒸取，其清如水，味极浓烈，盖酒露也。<sup>34</sup>

When analyzed from the perspective of ancient documents alone, the mixed-use of *steaming*<sup>35</sup> and *burning*<sup>36</sup> as verbs and nouns made it uncertain about distinguishing between *Baijiu*, *Shaojiu*, and steamed wine. It is also likely that the mixed use of these words by the ancient Chinese represents the ambiguity of the distinction between alcoholic beverages at the time. But why is this puzzle of steam wine so hard to solve? On the one hand, it is challenging to determine if the ancient Chinese depictions of steamed wine, *Baijiu*, and *Shaojiu* are compatible with modern classifications of alcohol. This is because modern *Baijiu* mainly refers to highly distilled spirits made by brewing and steaming using pure grain solid or semi-solid fermentation techniques. Steamed wines, on the other hand, are the types of *Shaojiu* made by steaming as the primary process in brewing. This process uses raw materials such as corn, sorghum, and wheat grains with the principle of distillation. *Shaojiu*, on the other hand, is a kind of colorless distilled spirit made by distillation, fermentation, and blending. In summary, those common confusing distinctions of modern liquors seem like mapped ancient Chinese wine naming style trends in alcoholic beverages. Many scholars have noted the same awkwardness regarding this classification dilemma:

It is inconclusive from the names alone to determine the alcohol's actual types, such as *Shaojiu*, steam wine, and *Baijiu*, referred to in the above quotation, are what we call liquor today. Some people believe that it has been a long-standing tradition among Chinese folk to call steam wine *Shaojiu*, and that the wine produced in a *distillation vessel/specific wine pot*<sup>37</sup> is also called *Shaojiu*. However, arguments about whether liquor originated in the Tang Dynasty are still insufficient, and more rigorous scientific tests are needed.<sup>38</sup>

Hence, the continuation of the current state of confusion and inadequate evidentiary support regarding the classification of wines in China would be deemed unsuitable and perplexing for the readership of this scholarly work.

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34 Deng and Shuai, "Qiannian Jiu Wenhua," 38.

35 Zheng, 蒸.

36 Shao, 烧.

37 Shaoguo, 烧锅

38 Deng and Shuai, "Qiannian Jiu Wenhua," 37.

Thus, these types of spirits will be referred to as steamed wine in the following text, based on their typical production method. If other scholars use the terms: *Baijiu*, steamed wine, distilled liquor, or *Shaojiu* in different historical contexts, these terms will be retained as they are in the original work. But, in this paper, I invite readers to take the names of the liquors that other scholars mention as steamed wine from a broad perspective.



Figure 3. The Land Silk Road<sup>39</sup>

## The Mystery of Classification

The origin of steamed wine is also full of mysteries, but fortunately, this mystery is not as unfathomable as the ancient Chinese classification of alcoholic beverages. In general, most scholars support the following relatively plausible origins. First, some scholars believe that the origins of steam wine can be traced back to as early as the Northern Song Dynasty. Around 1000 AD, distilling methods and stills from the West<sup>40</sup> were introduced to China.<sup>41</sup> This idea is possible because the overland Silk Road, which emerged as early as the Western Han Dynasty, allowed Chinese and European cultures to interact with each other. This cultural exchange between China and the West was spread by merchants along the Silk Road. Ancient Chinese official documents record a variety of wines were spread from the West to China and loved by the Chinese people since the Han Dynasty. The most famous of these is the *Ancient and Modern Commentary*,<sup>42</sup> cited in *Taipingguang Ji*,<sup>43</sup> which describes a plant that produces large kernel(s) in the ancient region of Asak.

39 The Land Silk Road, Accessed on February 05, 2023 <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/丝绸之路>.

40 Including today's Central Asia.

41 Jiang, "Zhongguo Jiu Wenhua Yanjiu," 9-10

42 Gujin Zhu, 《古今注》.

43 《太平广记》

The kernel of this plant is as big as a gourd of five or six ancient Chinese liters. Using this empty kernel to hold water, the water would turn into wine in a short time. A man named Liu Zhang<sup>44</sup> once got two *Qingtian kernels*<sup>45</sup> and invited his friends to a *banquet/ party*.<sup>46</sup> The wine made from these two kernels could be drunk by twenty people.<sup>47</sup>

This statement that a single fruit kernel can produce wine for ten people almost instantly is undoubtedly an exaggeration. However, when we jump forward to the Tang Dynasty, there is solid evidence that grapes from the West were made into Chinese-style wine in China. For example, *Volume C*<sup>48</sup> of the *New Book of the South*<sup>49</sup> recorded the story of an ancient Chinese official who received grapes from Central Asia, planted the seeds in his garden, and used the grapes to make a green wine with a strong aroma.<sup>50</sup>

From the above examples and a wealth of other historical sources, it is clear that China has a variety of wines and related wine-making methods were introduced in ancient times. However, almost all documents indicate that most of the wine production methods introduced before the Song Dynasty were fruit-based, but there is a lack of information on imported steam wine production techniques. One of the fundamental techniques for making steam wine is distillation, and one of the vital manufacturing tools is the still. Some scholars consider that these two elements were invented in China. Some relatively radical scholars even believe that China was one of the first countries to invent the still and that brandy in Europe was born only after the distillation material was introduced to France before the 17th century. These scholars cited the writings of the Ming Dynasty pharmacologist Li Shizhen as evidence and argued that the *Shaojiu* Mr. Li made from grapes was the prototype of brandy.<sup>51</sup> According to archaeological evidence, this view is unreliable because the distillers excavated from the Western Han Dynasty appeared thousands of years before the Ming Dynasty. This suggests that the distiller recorded by Li Shizhen in the Ming Dynasty was not the first distiller

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44 Liu Zhang (? - ?).

45 青田酒核.

46 Jibin Shezhi, 集宾设之.

47 Xu, "An Introduction to Chinese," 233.

48 Bing Juan, 丙卷.

49 Nanbu Xinshu, 《南部新书》.

50 Xu, "An Introduction to Chinese," 235.

51 Deng and Shuai, "Qiannian Jiu Wenhua," 190.

in China. But scholars who oppose the origin of steam wine in China are unable to convince those who support that steamed wine originated in China. This makes the origin of steamed wine all the more confusing.

However, in recent years, scientists have unearthed a group of distillers from the Eastern Han Dynasty, providing evidence for steamed wine's emergence. For example, the bronze-made vessel, now in the Shanghai Museum, has a large volume and a full range of distillation accessories. These features gave the owner of this bronze vessel the function to make relatively large quantities of moderately strong wine. This could mark the beginning of the production of steamed wine in China. Through numerous tests by archaeologists and archaeological excavation records, the authors of *Thousands of Years of Wine Culture* concluded:

Mr. Ma Chengyuan, a famous archaeologist, has done several distillation experiments and brewed a cup of steam wine with an average of about 20° [based on modern alcoholic standards]. This bronze vessel was identified as an artifact from the early to mid-Eastern Han Dynasty, from which it was inferred that Baijiu had already appeared in the Eastern Han Dynasty.<sup>52</sup>

Other scholars believe the bronze vessels from the Eastern Han period were only isolated cases, probably created by some ancient Chinese wine enthusiasts for recreational purposes. They question this for two reasons: 1) there is too little evidence from excavated artifacts; 2) it is uncertain whether ancient people used stills for the purpose of making wine. They conclude that the Song Dynasty was when steamed wine was invented, without doubt about the purpose of distillers. Their view is mainly derived from the documentation of the Song Dynasty, which describes the use of alcohol in medicine in detail.<sup>53</sup>

However, the problem is: it is nearly impossible to verify whether the Siamese wine and *Shaojiu* mentioned in the text are what modern people consider to be steamed wine. This question is mainly due to the uncertainty of the evolution of the definition of alcohol over thousands of years in Chinese civilization and the fact that most of the writings on brewing in the Song Dynasty did not mention distilled spirits or steamed wines. For example, the Song Dynasty's *Northern Mountain Wine Book*,<sup>54</sup> a work on brewing techniques in larger breweries, documented the most popular brewing methods and

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52 Wang, "2018," 38.

53 Deng and Shuai, "Qiannian Jiu Wenhua," 39.

54 Beishan Jiuqing 《北山酒经》.

boiling processes in the Song Dynasty at the time, but did not mention steaming at all. This raises questions about the existence of steam wine in the Song Dynasty.<sup>55</sup>

To sum up, there is no evidence to show the presence of steaming process methods in the *Northern Mountain Wine Book*, but this work described the steps for boiling wine. Based on these steps, Wang Saishi believes that the Chinese mastered the method of steaming and boiling wine in water during the Song Dynasty.<sup>56</sup> And yet, the presence of steam in the making of wine does not mean that the making action was steaming. It is essential to understand this point. On the one hand, the Chinese often substituted the word “steam” for the steam produced by boiling water, resulting in multiple meanings and ambiguity. On the other hand, the *Northern Mountain Wine Book* is mainly about boiling and lacks a description of steaming. Therefore, this view, represented by Mr. Wang, is not a piece of conclusive evidence that steamed wine originated in the Song Dynasty.



砖雕壁画 (猿猴造酒) *Brick Mural Painting “Apes Making Wine”*<sup>57</sup>

Can ancient Chinese legends provide a breakthrough? Some scholars believe steam wine was first created by accident when primates (not humans) were storing food. When primates were foraging in the wild, if they gathered extra food for their daily needs, they would store it. As some of these primates chose relatively moist storage locations, these collected wild fruits were fermented with the water in the storage location. As time passes, this mixture of

<sup>55</sup> Deng and Shuai, “Qiannian Jiu Wenhua,” 39.

<sup>56</sup> Wang, “2010,” 155.

<sup>57</sup> Liu, “Chinese Wine,” 06.

rotten food and water that the primates made by accident produced the effect of brewing alcohol. When these primates tasted this magical drink that can bring much energy to the body and obtain the hallucinatory feeling to a certain extent, they used their relatively developed brains to replicate the step of wine making. In this case, if a human came to the ape's camp and found the animals had brewed wine, this person could carry the wine back home and use fire to heat and sterilize the drink. This process will make the drink more delicious, after it is heated and sterilized<sup>58</sup> and reduce the risk of being poisoned. This view of the birth of steamed wine is very unreliable on the surface of it. For this theory to be valid, scholars need to prove two events happened: 1) primates could make wine; 2) primates had the habit of drinking wine; and 3) ancient Chinese people discovered and drank wine made by primates.

Firstly, an observation by Li Rihua,<sup>59</sup> a Ming Dynasty writer and calligrapher, mentioned in his *Purple Peach Xuan Miscellany - Pengchao Night Talk*<sup>60</sup> allowed modern people to understand the connection between primates and wine. The primates collected wild fruits in spring and summer and placed the fruits in rock puddles filled with water. As time passed, the fruit and water reacted chemically and created a process called fermentation. The aroma of the wine made by these primates can be smelled from a long distance away. People who cut wood in the mountains and forests would steal the wine made by the primates to take back to their homes.<sup>61</sup>

Secondly, from ancient literature, we can find that the Eastern Han scholar Gao You's<sup>62</sup> statement in the commentary of the *General Discussion Session*<sup>63</sup> of the *Book of Huainan*.<sup>64</sup> He found that some primates not only drink but also became addicted to alcohol. Probably because gibbons have better blood circulation and metabolism, they also get drunk more slowly than humans. These primates are also unaware that they are drunk.<sup>65</sup> The information summarized by Mr. Gao's careful observation of primates also

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58 *Wenjiu*, 温酒

59 李日华, 1565 -1635.

60 Zitao Xuan Zazhui-Pengchao Yehua, 《紫桃轩杂缀·蓬拢夜话》.

61 Deng and Shuai, "Qiannian Jiu Wenhua," 05.

62 高诱, ?-?.

63 Silun Pian 《汜论篇》.

64 Huainan Zi 《淮南子》.

65 Deng and Shuai, "Qiannian Jiu Wenhua," 05.

matches the archaeological records discovered by Chinese scientists in the 20th century. For example, in 1977, scientists from the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences discovered gibbon fossils at the archaeological site of Songlin village,<sup>66</sup> near the ancient town of Shuanggou Town<sup>67</sup> in Northern Jiangsu.<sup>68</sup> After detecting and analyzing the fossils of these animals, the scientists found that these gibbons showed signs of drinking alcohol during their lifetime. This fossil evidence shows that gibbons were able to drink alcohol and may have had accidents due to excessive alcohol intake, which eventually led to their death and fossilization. On this point, Liu Yong added:

The “Ape Wine Version”<sup>69</sup> claimed that almost 10,000 years ago, apes discarded or stored fruits in stone crannies or tree holes, where the sugar content was naturally fermented into juice. The juice was drunk by ape-men during the Paleolithic Age and by early men during the Neolithic Age.<sup>70</sup>

From the modern scientific view, fermenting wine requires sugar and water. In the “Ape Wine Theory”, the plant’s fruit provides the sugar, and the water comes from some wild primates’ intentional or unintentional production of wine. The combination of fruit and water provides an excellent place for yeast to flourish. This theory is possible in combination with the fact that the humidity is high due to the long-term drifting fog in Huang Mountains. Also, it is very common for fruits with high sugar content to fall off after ripening. Even if those primates do not actively make wine, those fruits that fall in puddles will ferment with oxygen and turn into wine with the help of yeast. As one of the most popular and tasty food sources for primates, even apes that do not make wine are likely to have accidentally drunk wine while picking up ripe fruit from puddles. It may be that the aroma of wine is attractive to them or that the genes in animals are eager to obtain high-energy food; some primates collect the fermented and delicious fruit in their nests. Therefore, the “Ape Wine Theory” aligns with credible science. However, as there is no evidence that humans steamed the wine made by apes, the problem of steamed wine remains unsolved.

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66 松林庄.

67 双沟镇.

68 苏北.

69 Ape Wine Theory, Yuanhou Zaojiu Lun, 猿猴造酒论.

70 Liu, “Chinese Wine,” 06.

## Conclusion

In summary, it is difficult for scholars to agree on a clear conception regarding steamed wine. The lack of a clear and precise definition of such a drink that has grown up with Chinese civilization for such a long time reflects the lack of importance scholars attach to the study of steamed wine. The birth of steamed wine is still a mystery and full of room for discussion. This gap in scholarship also indirectly demonstrates the diversity and uncertainty in the translation of terminology from ancient Chinese. Yet, this diversity and uncertainty are what make ancient Chinese and modern Chinese so fascinating. I believe that the romance of history covered with a translucent veil in the form of Chinese characters is one of the most fascinating parts of steam wine in the cradle of Chinese civilization. This is partly what every archaeologist, ancient literature researcher, East Asian linguist, and other scholar who love Chinese wine culture should strive for, namely, to enjoy the search for the mystery of steam wine. Whether it is the Ape Wine Theory, the Chinese Birth Steam Wine Theory, the Theory of Importation of Steam Wine Technology, or other theories, a clear lineage of the evolution of steam wine in Chinese history will eventually emerge as the narrow concept of steam wine is defined, more ancient sites are excavated, and the Chinese language system is further analyzed. Whether in the past or the present, the multiple meanings of a single *Chinese character*<sup>71</sup> and the extension of the meaning of a single Chinese character have presented the flexibility of Chinese language, the diversity of lexical combinations, and the beauty of pictograms, while at the same time posing several obstacles to scholars in studying ancient texts. This hindrance is usually caused by the flexibility of multiple meanings of a single character and the difficulty of determining the exact meaning of a single character in a *Ci*<sup>72</sup> based on its context. This obstacle also created a challenge for me to write this paper on the translation of ancient Chinese. A typical example of this is the word “烧”. The reason why I used *Shaojiu* instead of the corresponding English word in my paper is 1. to distinguish it from Japanese *shochu*; 2. the Chinese character for “烧” in the context of alcohol can be interpreted as to burn / to cook / to stew / to bake / to roast / to heat / to boil (tea, water etc.). The multiple meanings of the same Chinese character are often indistinguishable from the contextual content. When this feature of Chinese characters is combined with the fact that the same character has

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71 *zi*, 字.

72 *word*, 词.

both verb and noun natures and unclear classification of Chinese alcohol, the precise meaning of most ancient Chinese literature on alcohol becomes ambiguous. This maze-like situation is illustrated on page seven. As I try to find the way out of the maze, the uncertainty about Chinese characters does not frustrate my exploration of the world of steamed wine. My real frustration is that many modern scholars have only studied classical Chinese writings in detail to the extreme while lacking detailed studies of Chinese alcohol, especially steam wine, a beverage that grew up with the Chinese people. This paucity has left steam wine and other Chinese alcoholic beverages a mystery in terms of classification and origin to this day. Although the Ape Wine Theory, the Chinese Birth Steam Wine Theory, the Theory of Importation of Steam Wine Technology, and other theories each have their own seemingly plausible explanations for the origin of steam wine, their evidence is not solid. In comparing different perspectives and collecting historical evidence, I have found that almost all of them are missing some keys. For example, in the Ape Wine Theory, there is a lack of evidence that humans used wine made by apes to make steamed wine. In exploring whether steam wine was born in China, small wine vessels excavated in China during different dynasties seem to prove that the ancient Chinese had the tools and technology to make steamed wine, while the lack of economic efficiency and quality of small wine vessels also suggest that steam wine may not have been born in China. Similarly, those who support the idea that steam wine was introduced from the West are again unable to prove their case with solid evidence.

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# Tribute and Trade: An Overview of Economic Relations between China and Southeast Asia During the Song and Ming Dynasty

John Meyer

*John Meyer is a 2023 graduate from Calvin University with majors in history and writing. Going forward he plans to work in the corporate, journalism, and publishing industries as a copy editor, line editor, proofreader, and developmental editor. He is interested in pursuing Southeast Asian studies sometime in the future.*

## Introduction

China and Southeast Asia have a long, shared history of commerce between them. Connections began to be formed during the Han dynasty, sharpened during the Tang, but only truly began to flourish during the Song.<sup>1</sup> From the end of the tenth century until the middle of the fifteenth, tribute and trade with Southeast Asia became the focal point of Chinese economic affairs. After the fifteenth century, Central Asian trade received more attention, but commercial relations with Southeast Asia continued to a significant degree well into the Qing.<sup>2</sup> The relationship between the two megaregions was complex. Both sides interpreted the tribute and trade that they exchanged in different lights. Both sides profited from the trade in different ways. And both sides would have their histories majorly impacted by this trade.

Ultimately, these commercial relations had more positive impacts in Southeast Asia and more negative impacts in China. I will focus on the crucial Song and early Ming dynastic periods, examining how Southeast Asian polities exploited flaws in the tributary systems to prosper at China's expense.<sup>3</sup> First, I will explain the Chinese tributary system, explaining how the Chinese differentiated tribute from trade and exploring the differences between Song and Ming tribute and trade. Second, I will explain the rise of global trade,

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1 Chau Ju-Kua, *Chau Ju-Kua: His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, Entitled Chu-fan-chi*, trans. and ed. Friedrich Hirth and W.W. Rockhill (Taipei, Taiwan: Ch'eng-Wen Publishing Company, 1967), 4–5, 8, 18–19, respectively.

2 J. K. Fairbank and S.Y.T'eng, "On the Ch'ing Tributary System," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 6, no. 2 (June 1941): 155–156.

3 The Yuan dynastic period shares many of the characteristics of the Song and early Ming dynasty vis-à-vis commercial relations with Southeast Asia. For brevity, they will not be examined in this work. Please see Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, eds, *The Cambridge History of China: Alien Regimes and Border States, 907–1368*, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) for examinations of Yuan commerce and foreign policy.

examining what the Song and Ming exported to Southeast Asia as well as how they viewed Southeast Asian imports. Third, I will examine Southeast Asian attitudes generally, then delve into regional, case study examinations of Vietnam, the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, and Java. In each region, I will focus on the strongest regional polities, describing that region's connection to China and further analyzing the goods they exported to China.

## The Tributary System

The tributary system is an idea deeply rooted in Chinese understandings of the world order. It is the institutionalization of “the age-old tradition of Chinese cultural superiority over the barbarians.”<sup>4</sup> China, as the middle kingdom, claimed to be at the center of the world, and at the center of that center stands the

Son of Heaven [who represents] all mankind, both Chinese and barbarian [yí, as barbarians were referred to by Chinese], in his ritual sacrifices before the forces of nature . . . [it was] the Emperor's mandate to rule all men . . . [as] mediator between Heaven and Earth.<sup>5</sup>

In other words, all peoples and nations owed their allegiance (and tribute) to the Son of Heaven, whether *yí* or *Huá* (Chinese). As seen from this understanding of the tributary system, the Chinese were “anxious to advertise . . . [their] cultural superiorities . . . to the rest of the known world.”<sup>6</sup> It involved culture as much as commerce or politics.

Aside from culture, however, the tributary system performed a number of other functions, such as self-defense, diplomacy, and commerce.<sup>7</sup> I will now explore these three functions in turn.

In pursuing self-defense, the tributary system was interested in keeping tributaries happy. Whenever a party of *yí* arrived in China, they presented their tribute of local goods to a representative of the emperor.<sup>8</sup> In return, they received imperial gifts, Chinese goods like silk or porcelain that “were usually more valuable than the tribute . . . a means of keeping the

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4 Fairbank and Têng, “Ch'ing Tributary System,” 137.

5 Ibid, 138.

6 Geoff Wade, “Engaging the South: Ming China and Southeast Asia in the Fifteenth Century,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 51 (2008): 588.

7 Fairbank and Têng, “Ch'ing Tributary System,” 137.

8 These goods had to be local, not reexported from somewhere else. “Envoys were expected to present things which were ‘locally produced,’ and nothing else.” Chau, *Chu-fan-chi*, 77–85.

barbarians [yí] in the proper state of submissiveness.”<sup>9</sup> In other words, tribute missions produced a net positive gain for tributaries and were essentially a ritualized form of trade. The tributary would avoid aggression against China to maintain profitable relations, achieving China’s aim of self-defense.

Sometimes the Song and Ming used the tributary system as more than a means of self-defense, utilizing it to inform their diplomacy with Southeast Asia. As the Son of Heaven, the emperor could legitimize or rebuke his tributaries when he deemed necessary. When a new ruler became sultan in Melaka, the sultan requested imperial legitimacy: Melakan envoys “[requested] than an Imperial letter of protection for the country, as well as many dragon robes and a parasol be conferred upon . . . the king of the country.”<sup>10</sup> Dragon robes, also called “robes of honor,” and parasols had legitimating value in Malay polities, as witnessed in the *Sejarah Melayu*.<sup>11</sup> When tributaries presented their offering of goods, they also had the opportunity to finagle more trading rights or complain to the court about their neighboring countries. Malay and Sumatran polities like Pahang, Melaka, and Samudera frequently used the opportunity to complain to the court about Siamese aggression in the fifteenth century.<sup>12</sup> Ming’s show of force through the Ming voyages (1405–1433) was still fresh in Siam’s mind, and Siamese intervention in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra was subdued during the fifteenth century. From their cultural high ground as *Huá* people ruled by the Son of Heaven himself, the Ming used the tributary system to bully Southeast Asian nations, especially during the Ming voyages, which had an essentially militaristic character. The pirate hideout of Palembang was wiped out and converted into a “‘pacification superintendency’ [under Chinese control],” Majapahit was threatened and extorted, as were Ava–Burma and Hsenwi, and Samudera found the scales of their civil war tipped in favor of a pro–Ming candidate.<sup>13</sup> These were the most

9 Quoted in Fairbank and Têng, “Ch’ing Tributary System,” 140.

10 Geoff Wade, translator, *Southeast Asia in the Ming Shi-lu: an open access resource*, Singapore: Asia Research Institute and the Singapore E-Press, National University of Singapore, <http://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/reign/zheng-tong/year-10-month-3-day-29> [1445], accessed April 18, 2022.

11 See “*Sejarah Melayu or Malay Annals*,” ed. and trans. C. C. Brown, *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25, no. 2/3 (1952): 157 for robes of honor, and *ibid.*, 54 for parasols. Melakans were very particular about parasols and their colors. White parasols were reserved for royalty.

12 Geoff Wade, translator, *Southeast Asia in the Ming Shi-lu: an open access resource*, Singapore: Asia Research Institute and the Singapore E-Press, National University of Singapore, <http://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/reign/yong-le/year-5-month-10-day-21> [1407] and Geoff Wade, translator, *Southeast Asia in the Ming Shi-lu: an open access resource*, Singapore: Asia Research Institute and the Singapore E-Press, National University of Singapore, <http://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/reign/yong-le/year-17-month-10-day-12> [1419], accessed April 18, 2022.

13 Wade, “Engaging the South,” 594–597.

active, political uses of the tributary system, but the Song and later Ming also spoke to other countries through the mouthpiece of the tributary system.

Whereas self-defense and diplomacy were the Chinese aims for the tributary system, the system's commercial basis was a decidedly foreign achievement, a mark of Southeast Asia's commercial influence on the imperial court. Though the court attempted to prohibit maritime trade several times—particularly in the late Song and early Ming periods for reasons that will be explored later—Southeast Asian envoys frequently extracted “trade concessions” and Chinese records of the time made “little effort to hide the essentially mercantile nature of the tribute/trade system in this period.”<sup>14</sup> This commerce was an illegal function of the tributary system, however, and when the court did punish these commercial interactions, they did so severely. One Arab merchant was caught, and the emperor denounced him himself: “Ali is . . . a rogue who has surreptitiously brought trade goods and, on the pretext of offering tribute, is seeking great profits.”<sup>15</sup> As seen from his complaint, this commercial illegality was a frequent occurrence, surviving through the tolerance of corrupt officials profiting from the trade.

It is worth noting that Chinese control of the tributary system was weakest during the Song dynasty. The Song approached Southeast Asia, trade, and tribute in a relatively hands-off manner, making them one of the most commercially and culturally open-minded dynasties.<sup>16</sup> They did not seek to actively expand the tributary system. Instead, as Schottenhammer notes,

Seaborne trade increasingly came to be regarded as a financial source that could serve the political purposes of the state. In order to turn it into a source to be tapped, local rulers and, subsequently, the Sung [Song] government made many efforts to expand and promote maritime trade.<sup>17</sup>

Whereas other dynasties focused largely on agriculture, the Song saw economic opportunity in maritime trade. Though Song policies towards trade

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 614.

<sup>15</sup> Geoff Wade, translator, *Southeast Asia in the Ming Shi-lu: an open access resource*, Singapore: Asia Research Institute and the Singapore E-Press, National University of Singapore, <http://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/reign/yong-le/year-5-month-10-day-21> [1487], accessed April 18, 2022.

<sup>16</sup> Kenneth R. Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development in Early Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), 212.

<sup>17</sup> Angela Schottenhammer, “China’s Emergence as a Maritime Power,” in *The Cambridge History of China: Sung China, 960–1279*, vol. 5 part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 463.

frequently changed, the posture was always one that welcomed trade.<sup>18</sup> An attitude of openness to foreign goods, however, weakened the tributary system because of the system's reliance on cultural superiority, which helps explain why Song's tributary network remained small, and the work of its merchants more often termed trade than tribute.

## The Rise of Global Trade

One of the most interesting aspects of China's trade with Southeast Asia is how it helped give birth to global, maritime trade. Near the beginning of the Song dynasty, the Sumatran-based empire of Srivijaya collapsed, leading to a shift in Southeast Asian trade patterns.<sup>19</sup> The center of trade moved to Java and the Sunda Strait.<sup>20</sup> A Java-based empire, Majapahit, rose from the ashes of Srivijaya, profiting from the shift in trade. In the latter half of the fourteenth century, Majapahit sent military expeditions throughout modern-day Indonesia, Malaysia, and Papua New Guinea, leading to "ritual hegemony" and the centralization of trade in all of those regions into Majapahit.<sup>21</sup> By binding together the previous regional markets into its empire, Majapahit contributed to a new pattern: global trade. As Hall notes,

During the fourteenth to early sixteenth centuries, a new pattern of world trade emerged linking the continents of Asia and Europe in an even more direct exchange of goods; the Southeast Asian trade regions described below were integrated into this world trade network. The new pattern left no single part of the world as the dominant "center" of the trading network. Each zone, along with the interconnected sea route from China to western Europe, was important to the whole system. . . . The exchange of goods in regional ports was intensive; each region in turn overlapped another.<sup>22</sup>

Rather than having disconnected regional markets—for instance a regional Bengali, Sumatran, or Guangxi market—every region was becoming increasingly interconnected with other regions, and the longer this pattern continued, the closer contact arose between far-away regions.

Global trade is fascinating, but it is something that China's court officials pulled the country away from time and time again. The main problem

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 469.

<sup>19</sup> Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development*, 194.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 195.

<sup>21</sup> Kenneth R. Hall, "Economic History of Early Southeast Asia," ed. Nicholas Tarling in *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia: From Early Times to c. 1800*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 218.

<sup>22</sup> Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development*, 223.

was China's export of copper coins. Just as Great Britain would have difficulty tolerating the outflow of their silver in exchange for Chinese tea in the early 1800s, the Song and Ming dynasties balked at how many copper coins they were losing to Southeast Asia. Throughout their dynastic periods, they suffered perennial copper shortages and inflation from the paper money printed to compensate for the shortage.<sup>23</sup> One Song official noted how, in Java, Chinese copper coins were so widely available they were used as currency, and that "Our Court has repeatedly forbidden all trade (with this country), but the foreign traders, for the purpose of deceiving (the government), changes its name and referred to it as Su-ki-tan."<sup>24</sup> Chinese copper coins also became accepted currency in Dai Viet, the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, and Maluku.<sup>25</sup> Hundreds of thousands of strings of copper coins flowed into Southeast Asia from China during the Song and Ming dynasties, creating a fundamental imbalance in the trade between the two. This imbalance helps explain the Chinese court's frequent attempts to prohibit maritime trade, especially in the form of exporting copper coins.

The other two main Chinese exports to Southeast Asia—porcelain and silk—had a different problem. The Song and Ming dynasties exported goods that had staying power. Porcelain and silk may become cracked or broken, but they have the potential to last for many years. The goods that the Song and Ming dynasties imported rarely had staying power. They were most often foodstuffs or aromatics, goods with a one-time use. This imbalance meant Chinese demand for Southeast Asian goods would always be high while demand for Chinese goods slowly crept down, especially as sericulture and porcelain manufacturing spread into Southeast Asia. When one remembers that many Southeast Asian countries often acquired these goods as bartered gifts for presenting tribute as part of the tributary system rather than through purchase, this imbalance looks even worse. Nonetheless, when Chinese merchants were able to sell porcelain and silk (especially during the Song dynasty, when merchants were freer), they profited tremendously, as both goods are luxuries with tedious manufacturing procedures: "Even the [Song] Emperor declared:

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23 Peter J. Golas, "The Sung Fiscal Administration," in *The Cambridge History of China: Sung China, 960–1279*, vol. 5 part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 209 and William Atwell, "Ming China and the Emerging World Economy, c. 1470–1650" in *The Cambridge History of China: The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644*, vol. 8 part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 385.

24 Chau, *Chu-fan-chi*, 78

25 Hall, "Economic History of Early Southeast Asia," 266 and Anthony Reid, "Economic and Social Change, c. 1400–1800," ed. Nicholas Tarling in *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia: From Early Times to c. 1800*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 464.

‘The profits from maritime commerce are very great. If properly managed, they can be millions [of strings of cash].’<sup>26</sup> And despite the longevity of these products, demand for porcelain in Java, for instance, was still quite popular. As one Ming official noted, ‘The people of the country are very fond of the blue patterned porcelain-ware of the Central Country.’<sup>27</sup>

## The Southeast Asian View

Thus far, we have seen how the Song and Ming dynasties relied on the tributary system for cultural and security reasons, with commerce forced into the system by the tributaries themselves. We have also seen that, while maritime trade with Southeast Asia was bad for China in the short term, it could be quite profitable in the short term, and it was often easy enough to continue trade despite prohibitions. As Wade notes, ‘[By] the late fifteenth century, [we see] a movement away from the formal, regulated tribute trade system toward one which, while perhaps not formally ‘allowing’ private shipping, at least tolerated it.’<sup>28</sup> This movement occurred because preventing illegal trade proved to be impossible, the profits too tantalizing for Chinese merchants and corrupt officials to ignore.

But why did Southeast Asians buy into the Chinese worldview of the tributary system? Why did so many agree to kowtow before the emperor as ‘Son of Heaven,’ adopt the Chinese calendar and other cultural influences, and accept Chinese interference? For Southeast Asians, trade was the foremost consideration. As Fairbanks and Têng have argued, ‘tribute, in the minds of the tribute bearers, was merely a formality connected with trade.’<sup>29</sup> From a Southeast Asian perspective, then, China’s request for them to conform to their system was a mere cultural idiosyncrasy. In the case of Siam, some scholars have argued that ‘“Thai kings paid tribute to China for centuries and allowed the Chinese to regard Thailand [Siam] as a formal tributary; at the same time the Thai thought of the tribute as gifts freely and generously given.”’<sup>30</sup> In essence, Southeast Asians would tolerate China’s nominal claims of suzerainty over them if it meant that they could trade.

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26 Quoted in Lo Jung-Pang, ‘The Emergence of China as a Sea Power During the Late Sung and Early Yuan Periods,’ *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (August 1955): 499.

27 Ma Huan, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan: ‘The Overall Survey of the Ocean’s Shores’ [1433]*, trans. J.V. Mills (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1970), 86–97.

28 Wade, ‘Engaging the South,’ 606–607.

29 Fairbank and Têng, ‘Ch’ing Tributary System,’ 140.

30 Ma, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan*, 107.

Perhaps another reason that they would choose to sacrifice even nominal independence would be the way in which trade forms the cornerstone of Southeast Asian polities. Unlike in East Asia and elsewhere in the world, where countries were and are defined by their borders, Southeast Asian societies were defined by their centers, their capitals; their power then stretched out from the center in a circle or “*mandala*” with permeable borders.<sup>31</sup> Southeast Asian rulers controlled a “core,” leaving “peripheral areas” increasingly autonomous the further they were from the core.<sup>32</sup> They shrouded themselves with mystical ceremony, rooted in Hindu and Buddhist cosmologies, to bestow authority on their royal persons and relied on charisma to handle the rest.<sup>33</sup> The result of such a political structure is a fragile society, with peripheral areas frequently changing hands as competing cores grew or shrank in power.

For *mandala* societies, trade was a necessity, not something to be ignored. Trade allowed for the expansion of the periphery. When Srivijaya collapsed in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries (its territory shrinking to only its core), Pagan-Burma exploited the opportunity, its *mandala* expanding to cover more peripheral areas, becoming “a focal point of regional commerce” and political control.<sup>34</sup> In Southeast Asian *mandalas*, political and commercial control came hand-in-hand. To maintain or expand their authority, Southeast Asian rulers “[brought] the resources of their realms—in the form of tribute, talent, men, and goods—to *their centers* [emphasis mine].”<sup>35</sup> They then used this wealth to maintain or increase the prestige of their core, which meant investing in urban infrastructure, armies, and (most frequently) “large temple complexes that emphasized the state’s theoretical powers.”<sup>36</sup> Temple-building emphasized theoretical powers because of how rulers mystically grounded their authority in Hindu and Buddhist ceremony. As seen from the archaeological landscape of Southeast Asia today, this temple-building craze has given the world hundreds of beautiful temples, such as Angkor Wat in Cambodia and Borobudur in Indonesia, built to expand the Khmer and

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31 Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development*, 9. The idea of the *mandala* has achieved wide consensus among scholars and has been highly influential in Southeast Asian historiography. O. W. Wolters was the first to propose the idea; see his *History, Culture, and Region In Southeast Asian Perspectives* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1999), 27–31 for a more thorough overview of the concept.

32 Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development*, 4.

33 *Ibid.*, 6.

34 *Ibid.*, 202.

35 *Ibid.*, 10.

36 *Ibid.*, 10–11.

Majapahit *mandalas*, respectively. They could not have been built without the wealth that trade brought into their polities. In sum, trade was necessary because it allowed for the continuation of the Southeast Asian political regime.

## Regional Examinations

I will now turn to regional examinations of Southeast Asian trade with China, in each case describing the strongest regional polities, the polities' relationships with the Song and Ming dynasties, and what goods those polities exported to China.

In the Middle Ages, modern-day Vietnam was split into Dai Viet (in the North) and Champa (in the South). Dai Viet's history emerges in the third century BCE, when the region was recorded as presenting tribute to the Han dynasty while remaining largely autonomous.<sup>37</sup> Dai Viet broke away from China at the beginning of the Song dynasty, becoming fully independent.<sup>38</sup> Two centuries later, however, a Song official noted how Tongkin and Annam (Chinese names for Northern Vietnam) annually presented tribute to China.<sup>39</sup> In the early Ming dynasty, the Yongle emperor invaded and conquered Dai Viet.<sup>40</sup> Dai Viet revolted, however, and drove out the Ming in 1428.<sup>41</sup> They remained independent until the French conquered large parts of mainland Southeast Asia in the 1800s.

Champa's history emerges a few centuries after Dai Viet. "Champa," however, may be a misleading name for this polity. Hall notes, "Cham epigraphic records reflect a weakly institutionalized state system that depended upon personal alliance networks to integrate a fragmented population."<sup>42</sup> In other words, the Cham peripheral areas were much more autonomous than the core than is usual in Southeast Asian *mandalas* and may have consisted of several independent but cooperating rulers instead of one. While Cham rule was somewhat unstable, the Chams' geographic position on the coast was excellent, allowing for easy trade and piracy with other nations, as well as agriculture, horticulture, and fishing.<sup>43</sup> The *Chu-fan-chi* makes no note of

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37 Hall, "Economic History of Early Southeast Asia," 261.

38 Ibid, 265.

39 Chau, *Chu-fan-chi*, 46, 49, respectively.

40 Geoff Wade, "Ming Chinese Colonial Armies in Southeast Asia," eds. Karl Hack and Tobias Rettig in *Colonial Armies in Southeast Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 84.

41 Ibid, 88.

42 Hall, "Economic History of Early Southeast Asia," 252–253.

43 Ibid, 256–257, 253.

Champa, even though they had existed for several hundred years by the time of the Song dynasty. It is only in Ming accounts like the *Ying-yai Sheng-lan* that Champa first appears.

Dai Viet and Champa were among the closest polities to China, and they exported a great deal to China as a result. Chinese records on Southeast Asia are often fragmentary, and as outside records they often do not know enough about trade goods to tell when a country is reexporting goods that they have imported from somewhere else. Nevertheless, they are the best indications scholars have of what trade between China and Southeast Asia was like, and Ming records are somewhat more complete than Song ones. During the Song dynasty, Dai Viet exported gharu wood, gold, silver, iron, cinnabar, cowries, ivory, kingfisher feathers, shells, salt, lacquer, cotton, lotus, sugarcane, bananas, coconuts, yellow wax, ebony, white rattans, cloth, bamboo matting, peacocks, and parrots.<sup>44</sup> There are no Song records for what Champa exported during their reign, but scholars have managed to piece together that they exported largely luxury goods to China, like ivory, tortoiseshells, pearls, peacocks, kingfisher feathers, spices, and aromatic woods. Dai Viet conquered Champa in 1471, and so Dai Viet and Champa trade goods can be considered jointly after that year.<sup>45</sup> During the Ming dynasty, Dai Viet (and conquered Champa) exported ebony, incense, bamboo, laka wood, ivory, oxen, pigs, goats, plums, oranges, watermelons, sugarcane, coconuts, jack fruits, bananas, gourd melons, cucumbers, bottle gourds, mustard, onions, ginger, areca fruit, and betel leaf. As seen from the goods that China imported above, they were largely foodstuffs or luxuries without staying power, like aromatic woods, feathers, or pets. All existing records agree that the two polities were quite prosperous from trading with China, the rest of Southeast Asia, and Indian traders.

The Malay Peninsula had largely primitive polities during the Song dynasty but was nevertheless a significant trading partner. The first advanced polity to develop was the Melakan Sultanate during the early Ming. Most polities in the Malay Peninsular before then were limited to a town or small city and the surrounding area, such as Ligor, Kwantan, Lengkasuka, and Beranang, the main polities in the Malay Peninsula during the Song. Under Chinese protection during the Ming voyages, however, Melaka rose above these polities, its mandala expanding over the entirety of the peninsula and much of Sumatra, with substantial influence over Java, Kalimantan, and the

44 Chau, *Chu-fan-chi*, 45–46, 47–50.

45 Wade, “Engaging the South,” 605.

Maluku islands. Melaka's fame spread far beyond Southeast Asia, as one Portuguese account notes:

Men cannot estimate the worth of Malacca, on account of its greatness and profit. Malacca is a city that was made for merchandise, fitter than any other in the world; the end of monsoons and the beginning of others. Malacca is surrounded and lies in the middle, and the trade and commerce between the different nations for a thousand leagues on every hand must come to Malacca. Wherefore a thing of such magnitude and of such great wealth which never in the world could decline . . .<sup>46</sup>

Melaka, despite its immense wealth, did decline, captured by the Portuguese themselves in 1511. After the conquest, European influences prevented the rise of a single *mandala* or commercial center in modern-day Malaysia and Indonesia, with the Melakan trade community dispersing throughout the islands.<sup>47</sup> Before then, however, they would have controlled most exports to China, including exported goods from Sumatra and Java (see below). From the Malay Peninsula itself, Melaka, Ligor, Kwantan, Lengkasuka, and Beranang exported cardamoms, pepper, gharu wood, yellow wax, red kino gum, laka wood, incense, ebony, camphor, ivory, sandal wood, yellow su incense, dammar incense, tin, gum sandarac, nipa palm, nipa wine, sugarcane, bananas, jack fruits, wild leeches, onions, ginger, garlic, mustard, gourd melons, and watermelons during the Song and Ming dynasties.<sup>48</sup> Compared to Vietnamese products, imports to China from the Malay Peninsula were more likely to be spices, incense, and aromatics, although foodstuffs still constituted a large percentage of Malay goods. Though mostly small cities, these Malay polities were critically influential over trade in the region and prospered as a result.

Whereas the Malay Peninsula moved from multiple polities down to only one, Sumatra moved from a single polity to multiple over the course of the Song and Ming dynasties. Srivijaya was on its last legs at the beginning of the Song dynasty but still exercised a considerable *mandala* over Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula, Java, Kalimantan, and the Maluku islands. Chola raids in the eleventh century, combined with a Majapahit raid in 1275 (coincidentally

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46 Tomè Pires, "The Suma Oriental: An Account of the East, From the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512–1515," trans. and ed. Armando Cortesão in *The Suma Oriental: An Account of the East, From the Red Sea to Japan, Written in Malacca and India in 1512–1515 and The Book of Francisco Rodrigues: Rutter of a Voyage in the Red Sea, Nautical Rules, Almanack and Maps, Written and Drawn in the East Before 1515*, Vol. 2, (1944), 286.

47 M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1200*, 4th ed. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 36.

48 Chau, *Chu-fan-chi*, 57–58, 67–68, 68–69, 69–70 and Ma, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan*, 108–114.

the same year that the Song lost a major battle to the Mongols), was enough to shatter Srivijaya into a flurry of independent city-states.<sup>49</sup> Sumatra would remain fractured through the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties, with various *mandalas* competing over peripheral areas, such as Melakan conquests in the south and the Sultanate of Aceh in the north, only reunified under Dutch control in the early 1900s.<sup>50</sup> The core of Srivijaya, from which its *mandala* extended, were the twin cities of Palembang and Jambi on the Southeastern coast. After Srivijaya's fracturing, Palembang retained influence, while Kampar, Besi, Samudera-Pasai, Aru, Lide, Aceh, and Lambri rose to create their own independent cores striving for influence. In combination, these polities exported wine, tortoiseshells, camphor, gharu wood, laka wood, sandal wood, eagle-wood, cloves, cardamoms, pearls, frankincense, rose-water, gardenia flowers, myrrh, aloes, asa-foetida, putchuk, liquid storax, ivory, coral, cats' eyes, amber, cotton, metalware, tin, birds, yellow su incense, gum benjamin, yellow wax, tapir, oxen, goats, pigs, dogs, fowls, ducks, vegetables, gourds, fruits, cloth, rice, grain, junket, *chin-yin* incense, sulfur, pepper, flowers, bananas, sugarcane, mangosteens, jack fruits, durian fruits, sour oranges, mangos, onions, garlic, ginger, mustard, gourd melons, watermelons, cotton, fish, and shrimp, quite possibly more trade goods to China than any other region.<sup>51</sup> Most of what Sumatra exported to China was either foodstuffs or aromatics, though spices figured heavily, just like in the Malay Peninsula trade.

Java was like the Malay Peninsula in how it developed, but like Sumatra in the wealth of its trade goods. During the Song dynasty, the island was split into regional polities with weak control. Majapahit (in the eastern part of the island) was the strongest. Starting in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Majapahit rapidly consolidated Java and then extended its *mandala* from the core in Trowulan.<sup>52</sup> The polity grew so wealthy and powerful that it was defeated by its own wealth. As Hall points out, "the spice business grew so great that Majapahit could not contain it."<sup>53</sup> The rise

49 Derek Heng, "State Formation and the Evolution of Naval Strategies in the Melaka Straits, c. 500–1500 CE," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 44, no. 3 (2013): 393.

50 Ricklefs, *Modern Indonesia*, 22 and Manuel Lobato, "'Melaka Is like a Cropping Field' Trade Management in the Strait of Melaka during the Sultanate and the Portuguese Period," *Journal of Asian History* 46, no. 2 (2012): 251. I recommend Leonard Andaya's excellent *Leaves of the Same Tree* to discover more about the various ethnicities and complex history of Sumatra.

51 Chua, *Chu-fan-chi*, 60–67, 71–72, 152, and Ma, *Ying-yai Sheng-lang*, 98–102, 108–114, 114–115, 115–121, 122, and 122–124.

52 Hall, "Economic History of Early Southeast Asia," 218.

53 Ibid, 226–227.

of the Melakan Sultanate in the Malay Peninsula only hastened the decline of Majapahit's *mandala*. Majapahit was so influential, however, that both the Sultanate of Melaka and of Aceh wrote into their court histories that their empires had been deemed ceremonial successors by Majapahit, and modern conceptions of Indonesia as a nation originate from the memory of this Javanese power.<sup>54</sup> During the Song dynasty, Javanese states exported pepper, pumpkins, sugarcane, gourds, beans, eggplants, rice (their main export by far), hemp, millet, salt, natural game, coconuts, bananas, taro, ivory, pearls, camphor, tortoiseshells, sandal wood, laka wood, sapan wood, aniseed, cloves, cardamoms, cubebs, mats, metalware, betelnuts, sulfur, saffron, parrots, cotton, clothing, wine, jack fruits, leeches, bay salt, sheep, and yellow wax. During the Ming dynasty, Majapahit and its successors exported rice, sapan wood, diamonds, white sandalwood incense, nutmegs, pepper, cantharides, steel, turtles' carapaces, tortoiseshells, parrots, pigs, goats, oxen, horses, fowl, bananas, coconuts, sugarcane, pomegranates, lotus seedcase, mangosteens, watermelons, langsat, gourds, vegetables, areca nuts, and betel leaves.<sup>55</sup> Like the other regions, most of the goods that Java exported to China had little staying power, being consumable foodstuffs and aromatics.

Aside from trade benefits, Southeast Asia was impacted by China in many other ways. Around the founding of the Ming dynasty, these Chinese-caused-changes started to have a sweeping effect on Southeast Asia. For instance, Chinese demand for Southeast Asian products resulted, according to Hall, in

a policy of territorial expansion that was actively pursued by important states in the Strait[s] of Malacca [and surrounding] region[s] . . . Loose federations of port towns characteristic of earlier times disappeared as in the new states only one dominant port [the core] . . . was tolerated.<sup>56</sup>

To meet trade demands, state centralization and *mandala* expansion became inevitable. Rather than the occasional voyage for luxury products like yellow *su* incense or kingfisher feathers, trading developed into a largely bulk trade, dominated by foodstuffs.<sup>57</sup> It is because of Chinese influence that Southeast Asian states centralized and helped kickstart global trade.

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54 See Bongsu, *Sejarah Melayu*, 82 and Heng, "State Formation," 394.

55 Chau, *Chu-fan-chi*, 70–71, 75–82, 82–87, and Ma, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan*, 97–98. On the export of rice: "Java's international position was based on its rice, the major commodity sought by the harvesters of spice. It was for rice that the Spice Islanders [Maluku islanders] came to Java." Hall, "Economic History of Early Southeast Asia," 220.

56 Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development*, 228.

57 *Ibid.*, 231.

## Conclusion

From 960 to 1550 CE, China and Southeast Asia enormously influenced one another economically (and politically and culturally to a lesser, but still quite significant, degree). Both the Song and Ming dynasties had an interest in commercial trade with Southeast Asia, albeit for Ming this interest was mostly confined to the fifteenth century. Chinese dynasties explored foreign affairs through the lens of the tributary system, seeing themselves, the *Huá* as culturally superior to the *yí*. In exchange for the tribute of local goods, they would give gifts to tributaries and meddle in diplomatic affairs, even though Southeast Asian nations thought of themselves as independent and thought of their tribute as gifts. Song and Ming officials at various times attempted to prohibit maritime trade due to the copper shortages both dynasties faced from the exporting of copper coins en masse to Southeast Asian countries. The export of silk and porcelain was also problematic, though to a lesser degree. The exchange of goods between China and Southeast Asia helped give rise to global trade. Southeast Asia participated in this trade because of how essential trade was for the maintenance and extension of *mandala* polities, leading to the construction of hundreds of beautiful temples across mainland and insular Southeast Asia. Dai Viet, Champa, Melaka, Srivijaya, and Majapahit, among other polities, profited from the trade with China.

This research has led to further questions deserving examination. The role of Arab traders and other foreign merchants in the region, especially during the Islamization of modern-day Indonesia, cannot be underestimated. How Arab traders impacted the commerce between Southeast Asian polities and China should be more thoroughly examined. Also, many of China's Southeast Asian tributaries positioned themselves as heads of their own regional tributary systems. This observation gains additional interest when considering how the peripheral areas of mandalas can be considered as mostly autonomous, tributary states. In this establishment of regional tributary systems, cultural exchange with China may be considered as a factor, as Southeast Asian polities may have done so out of imitation of the Chinese system. Turning again to China, it may be interesting to consider how Southeast Asian trade affected the status of Chinese merchants. Lufrano seems to think that the wealth merchants experienced during the Song and Ming dynasties helped fuel a status boost for merchants.<sup>58</sup> Finally, Southeast

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58 Richard J. Lufrano, *Honorable Merchants: Commerce and Self-Cultivation in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 3.

Asian polities were unafraid of using piracy to achieve their aims, as seen by Champa above, but also with Melaka, whose sultans employed pirates known as *orang laut* or “sea-people.”<sup>59</sup> I would tentatively suggest that there may have been more Southeast Asian *wokou* than previously believed, especially when considering how Southeast Asian polities pursued illegal trading with Chinese merchants during the maritime trade bans.

Aside from these questions, this history of political and economic influence will only gain in importance as people move further into the twenty-first century. Due to factors such as the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia and China’s rising global influence, relations between the two megaregions are advancing in ways that will indelibly impact all nations with ties to China. Beyond the political sphere, those who engage with the continued debate over globalization must contend with the birthplace of global trade; the Straits of Malacca continue to be a major trade lane, and Singapore is the world’s second busiest port. Knowing the history of tribute and trade between China and Southeast Asia may well provide key context to understanding the relations between them.

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59 Lobato, “Melaka Is like a Cropping Field,” 229–230.

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# China and LGBTQ+ Rights

Holly Westbrook

*Holly Westbrook is a 2022 graduate of Syracuse University's International Relations program, with a focus on International Law and Organizations in Asia, and a dual minor in Mandarin and Atrocity Studies and Practices of Social Justice. Holly currently works as a Project Integration Manager for Booz Allen Hamilton. She is based in Denver, Colorado and is passionate about LGBTQIA+ rights, and in her free time enjoys her other passion of rock climbing!*

## Introduction

Human rights have become a priority of many countries as the United Nations has promoted them across the world. With the transition to the United Nations Human Rights Council and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN has signaled to the world that human rights are and should remain important. Human rights efforts are shared openly at UN General Assembly (UNGA) and General Debate (UNGD) meetings, and states are encouraged to comply with international human rights standards with HRC's. However, some states have lagged behind in their adherence to international human rights norms. This makes research on global human rights practices important to hold governments accountable for the wellbeing of their people. The establishment of the Yogyakarta Principles (YP) in 2006 changed the way that states discussed LGBTQ+ rights and gave the issue a platform on the global stage. Understanding a country's lack of support for SOGIE rights is imperative in improving the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ individuals around the world.

China is very involved in the international human rights regime based on its participation as a state party to seven of nine core international human rights treaties. These nine core treaties set the standard for human rights norms internationally, and include protections for many marginalized communities, but do not include LGBTQ+ individuals. The nine treaties set standards for protecting individuals against racial discrimination (ICERD), protecting civil and political rights (ICCPR), economic, social, and cultural rights (ICESCR), protecting women from discrimination (CEDAW), preventing torture and inhumane treatment (CAT), protecting the rights of children (CRC), upholding rights for migrants workers and their families (ICMW), protecting against the deprivation of liberty by a state (CPED), and upholding the rights of individuals with disabilities (CRPD), all of which were established from

1965 to 2006.<sup>1</sup> Beginning in 1980 China ratified seven treaties. ICERD and ICESCR were respectively ratified by China 12 and 25 years after they were established in the UN, showing that China is a late joiner to parts of the human rights regime.<sup>2</sup> Because there are no treaties protecting LGBTQ+ individuals, and there are only resolutions or norms that have been established, it is difficult to hold states accountable for treatment of LGBTQ+ individuals and assess their support for SOGIE rights. However, there are some existing frameworks supporting LGBTQ+ individuals, so it is still possible for states to express support for SOGIE rights. This makes it essential that researchers assess state involvement in progressing the international LGBTQ+ rights regime. “Table 1” below displays China’s signatory status and ratification status to the nine-core international human rights treaties.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 1: Core 9 Human Rights Treaty China Signatory/Ratification Status**

Treaty	Date Treaty Was Concluded	Date Treaty Was Entered Into Force	China Signatory Status	China Ratification Status	China Ratification Year	Years Between Enforcement and Ratification
ICERD	1965	1969	Yes	Yes	1981	12
ICCPR	1966	1976	Yes	No	N/A	N/A
ICESCR	1966	1976	Yes	Yes	2001	25
CEDAW	1979	1981	Yes	Yes	1980	0
CAT	1984	1987	Yes	Yes	1988	1
CRC	1989	1990	Yes	Yes	1992	2
ICMW	1990	2003	No	No	N/A	N/A
CPED	2006	2010	No	No	N/A	N/A
CRPD	2006	2008	Yes	Yes	2008	0

The table shows that China is heavily involved in the international human rights regime and has ratified six of the nine core treaties. This establishes the state as a norm-follower of the international human rights regime and shows that China is more involved than other world powers, including the United States, which has ratified only three of the nine core treaties: ICERD, ICCPR, and CAT.<sup>4</sup> Despite China’s involvement in the human rights regime, the state is not involved in the international SOGIE rights regime. This reveals a major gap in China’s status as an overall norm-supporter of human rights, and establishes the country as a norm-defender of heteronormativity. Because of this gap in participation, this research aims to explore the extent of this lack of involvement and some potential explanations

1 OHCHR, “Core International Instruments.” Accessed November 8, 2021, 1.

2 HRIC, “UN Treaty Bodies and China.” Human Rights in China. Accessed November 8, 2021, 1-3.

3 HRIC, “UN Treaty Bodies and China,” 1-3.

4 ACLU, “Treaty Ratification.” American Civil Liberties Union, Accessed November 8, 2021, 3-5.

for why China is not involved in the SOGIE rights regime.

## Theoretical Perspective

This study uses a Constructivist perspective to analyze SOGIE rights norms in the UN system and the involvement of China in perpetuating or preventing the spread of heteronormativity in global governance. Heteronormativity is defined as the belief that “heterosexuality is the only normal and natural expression of sexuality.”<sup>5</sup> I determine whether China is a norm entrepreneur, norm-supporter, or norm defender of heteronormativity in global governance and its domestic policies. Constructivism shows the importance of international norms in influencing state decisions and reveals how culture, discussion between states, and international organizations impact global governance.<sup>6</sup> Realism argues that states are unitary actors that are solely responsible for influencing their national policies, resulting in policies and actions that are meant to maximize power and state security.<sup>7</sup> A Realist perspective would focus on power relations and neglect to consider how international organizations, culture, and international norms shape state decisions, and would provide an inadequate explanation for why China is either a norm entrepreneur or norm defender of heteronormativity. A Liberal perspective would recognize the roles of international institutions in influencing state decisions, but Liberalism still neglects the role of culture and norms, and sees institutions as secondary actors that do not independently affect global governance.<sup>8</sup>

## Research Subject

Advancing equality for LGBTQ+ individuals has become a major goal of the UN human rights regime in the new millennium. The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UNDP, and the UN Free & Equal Campaign are dedicated to furthering LGBTQ+ rights globally. The UNDP regional department of Asia and the Pacific’s *Being LGBTI in Asia and the Pacific* program focuses on addressing inequality and discrimination experienced by LGBTQ+ people in the region. The program wrote a China Country Report in 2014 and conducted a China

5 Wang, Min. “UNGA Human Rights Council Speech A/C.3/67/SR.35,” November 8, 2012, 1-3.

6 Mingst, Karen A, Margaret P Karns, and Alynna J Lyon. 2017 “The United Nations in World Politics.” Essay. In *The United Nations in the 21st Century*, 5Th ed., 1-18. Westview Press, 2017.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

National Survey in late 2015 regarding LGBTQ+ individuals. World Bank data shows China's current population is around 1.4 billion people, which is about 17.5% of the world population.<sup>9</sup> According to the Ipsos 2021 LGBTQ+ Global Survey, approximately 11% of people in China are members of the LGBTQ community, amounting to about 154,000,000 people.<sup>10</sup> LGBTQ+ individuals have higher rates of suicide, poor mental health, homelessness, risk for HIV/AIDS, and alcohol and drug consumption.<sup>11</sup> This makes assessing LGBTQ+ rights essential. Although China has gone through three cycles of the UPR, the country has only briefly mentioned SOGIE rights and LGBTQ+ individuals in its three country reports, and these mentions have regarded the government of Hong Kong that is separate from mainland China. The UPR reviews the human rights practices of all UN member states and provides suggestions for improvement. States produce human rights reports on their own and the Human Rights Council and other member states give feedback. The 2009<sup>12</sup> cycle only mentioned working towards gender inequality in mainland China, and the 2013<sup>13</sup> cycle mentioned the words "sexual discrimination," "sexual orientation," and "sexual minorities" for Hong Kong. The 2018 Country Report<sup>14</sup> mentions for the first-time specific ways in which the Hong Kong government has worked towards equality for "sexual minorities," including training for government personnel, telephone hotlines, and the 2014 establishment of the Inter-departmental Working Group on Gender Recognition, but mainland China still failed to mention LGBTQ+ rights. According to the 2018 UPR cycle, Mainland China also still has no written laws protecting LGBTQ+ individuals.<sup>15</sup> The lack of a legal framework shows a need to assess China's support for the LGBTQ+ community.

## Hypothesis

I hypothesize that China is a norm-defender of heteronormativity because of its indifference to international SOGIE rights norms. Preliminary

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9 The World Bank, "Population, Total - China." World Bank Data, 2020, 2.

10 Ipsos Group S.A., "LGBT+ Pride 2021 Global Survey." Ipsos Game Changers, June 9, 2021, 7.

11 Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health." Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health | Healthy People 2020, 1-3.

12 The Universal Periodic Review, "National Report Submitted in Accordance with Paragraph 15 (A) of the Annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 5/1: China." UPR Info, February 2009, 22-24.

13 The Universal Periodic Review, "National Report Submitted in Accordance with Paragraph 5 of the Annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 16/21\*\*": China." UPR Info, October 2013, 23.

14 The Universal Periodic Review, "National Report Submitted in Accordance with Paragraph 5 of the Annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 16/21\*\*": China." UPR Info, November 2018, 21.

15 Ibid.

research reveals that China has not signed on to major resolutions protecting LGBTQ+ individuals and has not mentioned SOGIE rights in many UN speeches. Based on some brief review of secondary sources and discourse analysis of the UPR China Country Reports, I argue that the lack of support for LGBTQ+ rights may be because of cultural norms and the intertwined relationships between traditional Chinese philosophy and international law. Scholar Jun Wu Pan observes that traditional Confucian hierarchies influence how China interacts within the framework of international law and whether China follows the rest of the world or maintains its own domestic laws.<sup>16</sup> Further, Pan notes that because of China's semi-colonial relations with Western powers in the past, the country views international law through a cultural and historical lens and sees international and domestic law as separate entities.<sup>17</sup> This suggests that China defends the status quo to maintain its domestic laws. While China is involved in some aspects of human rights governance, the state has resisted outside influence on its domestic policies, especially by Western states and institutions. Replacing domestic policies with international norms would be a dramatic change for a state that has functioned for centuries with specific traditional moral codes and laws.

## Research Methods and Data Collection

I use qualitative methods including content analysis of speeches and UN resolutions and discourse analysis of UN reports as well as an in-depth intrinsic case study of China's involvement in maintaining heteronormativity in global governance. The content analysis tracks the number of times SOGIE rights are mentioned by Chinese leaders and representatives in UNGA Human Rights meetings and UNGD speeches. I also recorded China's signatory status and voting records on major SOGIE rights meetings and resolutions. I documented China's existing domestic legal framework regarding LGBTQ+ individuals. The findings of the content analysis are displayed using tables to allow visual interpretation of China's participation in SOGIE efforts. Tables are provided on pages 14 and 17 to assess the number of times SOGIE rights are mentioned in UN Human Rights meetings and UNGD speeches, and then a separate table is provided on page 19 to assess China's ratification status on SOGIE resolutions, along with the titles and years of the resolutions. I explore any changes over time in national legal framework, including

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16 PAN, Junwu. "Chinese Philosophy and International Law." *Asian Journal of International Law* 1, no. 2 (2010): 233–48.

17 Ibid.

decriminalization of same-sex relations and laws regarding LGBTQ+ relationships and sexual activity. The discourse analysis is of documents created by the UNDP's Being LGBTI in Asia Program, including the *China Country Report* and the *National Survey on Social Attitudes towards Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression*. I analyze how SOGIE rights are discussed by China in the UPR. For the data collection, I digitally record the quotations relating to SOGIE rights in China and then analyze these in the context of China's legal philosophy, as well as examine how the language has changed over time in the UPR country reports.

My intrinsic case study of China examines the independent variables of laws protecting or harming LGBTQ+ individuals, the number of treaties, meetings, and resolutions that China has participated in regarding LGBTQ+ rights, as well as a brief background on legal philosophy in China and how that could explain state attitudes towards following international SOGIE norms. Case studies reveal deeper reasons for specific phenomena, and this case will help to explain whether China is defending or attempting to change heteronormativity.<sup>18</sup> I divided my case study into sections in my report so they can be easily understood. These include a background on China's legal philosophy, an analysis of national laws and policies regarding LGBTQ+ individuals, and an analysis of China's involvement with the international SOGIE rights framework. I use the timeframe of 2006 to present day, as 2006 was the year that the YP were established.<sup>19</sup> The YP created the first list of norms and obligations for states to protect LGBTQ+ individuals. They helped apply international human rights laws to issues of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination.<sup>20</sup> These Principles set the standard for international SOGIE rights. 2013 was the first year China partnered with the UNDP to create dialogue around LGBTQ+ individuals in China, showing a major turning point in China's work towards equality. Beginning with the year of the establishment of the YP shows how China's resistance to SOGIE norms has changed overtime. This pattern shows China has challenged more progressive opinions and the human rights regime's promotion of SOGIE rights.<sup>21</sup>

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18 Lune, Howard, and Bruce Berg. "Case Studies." Essay. In *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 9th ed., 160–70. Pearson, 2017.

19 ARC International, "The Yogyakarta Principles." *Yogyakarta Principles*, 2016, 1-4.

20 O'Flaherty, Michael. "The Yogyakarta Principles at Ten." *Nordic Journal of Human Rights* 33, no. 4 (2015): 280–98.

21 UNDP Asia and the Pacific, "Being LGBT in Asia: China Country Report; A Participatory Review and Analysis of the Legal and Social Environment for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Persons and Civil Society." United Nations Development Program. Accessed October 3, 2021, 8.

The limitations of my study include language barriers, limited access to government documents, and lack of generalizability. Because I only speak introductory-level Mandarin, I am unable to interpret government documents and must utilize documents produced or translated in English, which could lead to incomplete research. Government documents may be difficult to access because of media restrictions in the state. Because of censorship laws, Chinese news sources can be considered primary sources, and “China Daily” is available in English, but may differ from the Mandarin version. Although the China conducts a census every decade, the census contains no information about sexuality or gender identity and expression, so the true number of LGBTQ+ individuals cannot be determined.<sup>22</sup> However, the lack of regard in the census for LGBTQ+ individuals is a data point in itself, showing that China does not prioritize knowing the sexual orientation or gender identity of its population. This supports the argument that China is a norm-defender of heteronormativity. Because I only had access to documents in English, this study lacks information about domestic policies regarding LGBTQ+ individuals. According to Lune and Berg, the use of an intrinsic case study also has limitations.<sup>23</sup> The data cannot be generalized without a comparative analysis of other states. However, focusing on only China allows for a deeper understanding of its role in SOGIE rights governance.

## Literature Review

I found no scholarly research analyzing China’s position as a norm-defender of heteronormativity in the international SOGIE rights regime. However, scholars such as Junwu Pan<sup>24</sup> have conducted research to explain China’s tendency to avoid involvement in international law. Pan argues that China’s seemingly protectionist views on international laws reflect differences in domestic law and culture, and China’s desire to maintain its control over its own national policies. Pan argues that China’s traditional legal philosophy determines China’s interactions with other states and within global governance. Pan conducted a discourse analysis of Chinese legal cases and documents to support his hypothesis that China has had difficulty integrating into global governance to maintain traditional legal philosophy. Pan analyzes the traditional Chinese concepts of *Li* and *Fa*. *Li* is a set of traditional moral

22 Jizhe, Ning. 2021 “Main Data of the Seventh National Population Census.” Stats Gov. National Bureau of Statistics of China, May 11, 2021, 1.

23 Lune, Howard, and Berg. “Case Studies,” 160–70.

24 PAN, “Chinese Philosophy and International Law,” 233–48.

codes, while *Fa* is comparable to legalism or law, but differs from Western ideas of law in that it is specifically defined as punishment. The idea of using law as a way to protect rights has not been in practice in China.<sup>25</sup> He also argues that China resists following international law to maintain its position as a growing hegemon, as following predominantly Western international norms would subject China to colonial-like influence.<sup>26</sup> Pan's argument therefore supports the idea that China does not want to adhere to international SOGIE rights norms to preserve traditional domestic policies that value moral codes and view law as related to punishment more than protecting rights. Pan's theory connecting China's involvement in international law and traditional Chinese philosophy is the primary argument that I use to explain China's stance as a norm-defender of heteronormativity.

For primary sources, UNGD records and UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) meeting speeches show a pattern in China's logic that follows Pan's argument. China repeatedly argued in UNGD and UNHRC speeches that "developed" countries must be lenient on "developing" countries when analyzing adherence to human rights because each state has its own domestic policies that must be respected. These documents show China's efforts to maintain its domestic policy and avoid Western influence are manifested in its choices to not participate in international SOGIE rights norms.

The UPR also tracks China's involvement in the SOGIE rights regime. All UN member states participate in the UPR every three to five years. This process provides an opportunity for states to share how they adhere to international human rights laws and norms. Member states prepare reports for the UPR and then other member states, the Human Rights Council, and NGO's can respond. This study uses the UPR China Country Reports from 2009, 2013, and 2018. The report analyzes China's involvement in areas of the human rights regime and focuses on the state's legislative framework and national policies. Each report I analyzed found a change over time in the mentions of SOGIE rights, beginning with minimal mentions in 2009 to a full paragraph dedicated to the improvement of SOGIE rights in Hong Kong in 2018.

My discourse analysis and case study use the UNDP *Being LGBTI in Asia: China Country Report* and the UNDP *Being LGBTI in Asia: China Survey*, which analyze the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals in China. The

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

UNDP *Being LGBT in Asia: China Country Report* documents the presentations and discourse of China's two meetings on SOGIE rights in August and November of 2013. It summarizes both meetings and assesses China's support for LGBTQ+ individuals in law, policy, society, employment, education, health, family, media, and community. The report finds regional differences in support with urban areas being more supportive and rural areas being less supportive. It also identifies major organizations supporting LGBTQ+ rights in China. The country report reveals China's limited involvement in the discussion of SOGIE rights and refusal to participate in the legal aspects of the regime. The *China Survey* explores public attitudes towards LGBTQ+ individuals and how they are treated in society. The survey was conducted country-wide using a snowball technique to find participants. It surveyed LGBTQ+ individuals and non-LGBTQ+ individuals to assess national attitudes, and gaps in the survey were supplemented with in-depth interviews. The study found that society was not outwardly homophobic but that stigma prevented LGBTQ+ individuals from being widely accepted. It found that in terms of government support through public policy and services, "sexual minorities" find it difficult to access social services and that the lack of policy leaves them vulnerable to discrimination. Like the regional differences found in the *Country Report*, the *China Survey* found changes in LGBTQ+ support between younger and older individuals and changes in support depending on the context (such as more acceptance on college campuses but less acceptance in the workplace or family).

## Content Analysis

I found that China is uninvolved in the global SOGIE rights regime and is a norm defender regarding heteronormativity following the review of 35 UNGA Human Rights meetings, 15 speeches from the UN annual General Debates, and 7 different international treaties and resolutions related to the improvement of LGBTQ+ rights. I consulted the UN Digital Library when searching for documents to analyze. I specifically searched for "Speeches," within the UNGA, then used the country-specific search to find documents where China spoke, and then filtered for only human rights topics. I looked at the speeches from Chinese nationals to measure the times SOGIE rights are mentioned at the meetings when reviewing the UNGA Human Rights meeting and UN annual General Debate speeches. I searched for the words "Sexuality," "Gender," and "Sexual orientation," to account for topics related to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals. As seen in the table below, out of the 35 speeches from the UNGA Human Rights meetings

Chinese nationals did not mention any of these terms. The table shows the year of the UNGA Human Rights meeting followed in parentheses by the number of meetings held that year. The columns that follow list the words searched for in the speeches: “Sexuality,” “Gender,” and “Sexual Orientation.”

**Table 2: Mentions of SOGIE Rights by China in UNGA Human Rights Meetings**

Year and Number of UNGA Human Rights Meeting	“Sexuality” Mentions	“Gender” Mentions	“Sexual Orientation” Mentions
2006 (Three)	0	0	0
2007 (Five)	0	0	0
2008 (Two)	0	0	0
2009 (One)	0	0	0
2010 (Four)	0	0	0
2011 (One)	0	0	0
2012 (One)	0	0	0
2013 (Three)	0	0	0
2014 (Three)	0	0	0
2015 (Three)	0	0	0
2016 (Three)	0	0	0
2017 (Three)	0	0	0
2018 (Three)	0	0	0

The speeches span from October of 2006 to October of 2018. Each document records the discussions of member states regarding human rights. There are distinct patterns in their speeches that reveal that China has remained stagnant throughout the years regarding SOGIE rights. While other states began mentioning SOGIE rights in the 2010’s, China remained silent on LGBTQ+ issues. China argued that the UN must be more forgiving of developing countries when analyzing their participation in the international human rights regime. The UNGA began to regularly discuss SOGIE rights in 2009, but the conversation was dominated mainly by European countries. Many EU states urged other member states to sign onto the 2008 UNGA declaration supporting SOGIE rights.<sup>27</sup> China, however, did not add to the conversation and continued the pattern of defending itself against being reprimanded by other member states for allegedly violating human rights. China’s responses to being reprimanded for allegedly violating human rights use two main arguments: the UN should take it easy on “developing countries,” when evaluating human rights, and China has created its own

<sup>27</sup> Liu, Zhenmin. “UNGA Human Rights Council Speech A/C.3/64/SR.29,” October 26, 2009, 10-11.

set of human rights norms domestically that follow specifically “Chinese characteristics.” In 2012, China argued that “For three decades the Chinese Government had followed a human rights development path with Chinese characteristics, bringing benefits to the Chinese people and contributing to the international human rights endeavor,” in response to member states criticizing its role in upholding human rights norms.<sup>28</sup> This quote supports the argument that China’s reluctance to uphold human rights for LGBTQ+ individuals is about China’s ability and want to determine its own rules instead of following international rules, instead of about the specific norms. China continued in 2013 by stating that “Western countries should fully respect the endeavors of other countries, particularly developing countries, in ensuring human rights on the basis of their own national conditions.” This again supports the argument from Junwu Pan<sup>29</sup> that China’s semicolonial history with the West has led to reluctance to follow international norms.<sup>30</sup> In that same meeting, China argues that the country has developed its own human rights path, “reflecting its own realities,” in a socialist way. This shows how government structure and domestic law are determinants of a state’s involvement in international law. In 2014 this continued as China emphasized that states should not politicize human rights and that human rights standards should be suitable for each individual country’s conditions. Min Wang argued that “Governments and peoples had the right to choose the path of human rights development most suitable to their national conditions...” and that instead of setting international standards for human rights, states should “...achieve an international paradigm for human rights development that would allow different forms to prosper.”<sup>31</sup> This more blatant rejection of the international human rights regime in these meetings mirrors China’s lack of involvement in the international SOGIE rights regime. This is evident in China’s refusal to participate in global LGBTQ+ rights treaties and resolutions. In the table below, a similar content analysis of the UNGD speeches was conducted. Like the UNGA Human Rights meeting speeches, SOGIE rights were not mentioned at all. The UNGD speech content analysis was conducted from 2006 to 2020, while the UNGA Human Rights meeting speeches were only available up to 2018. The extra two years of analysis gave more opportunity to assess China’s involvement in the SOGIE rights regime.

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28 Wang, “UNGA Human Rights Council Speech A/C.3/67/SR.35,” 1-3.

29 PAN, “Chinese Philosophy and International Law,” 233–48.

30 Wang, “UNGA Human Rights Council Speech A/C.3/68/SR.35,” 1-3.

31 Wang, Min. “UNGA Human Rights Council Speech A/C.3/69/SR.34,” October 29, 2014, 6.

Despite the speeches being more recent, I found no mentions of the words “Sexuality,” “Gender,” or “Sexual Orientation” (gender was mentioned thrice but in the context of women’s equality and in response to other countries, so those mentions are not included in the table).

**Table 3: Mentions of SOGIE Rights by China in UN General Debate Speeches**

Year of UN General Debate	“Sexuality” Mentions	“Gender” Mentions	“Sexual Orientation” Mentions
2006	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0
2018	0	0	0
2019	0	0	0
2020	0	0	0

As previously mentioned, no Chinese national has signed on to the YP Plus 10. It is difficult to assess participation in the Principles because they are not something states typically sign on to. However, state representatives, organizations, and country nationals can become signatories which gives some ability to assess participation. A Chinese national and director of the Beijing AIZHIXING Institute of Health Education signed onto the original YP from 2006.<sup>32</sup> The 2017 Principles are an addendum to the original principles from 2006 that add new principles and state obligations.<sup>33</sup> This shows that China may be supportive of LGBTQ+ individuals, but is reluctant to follow policy recommendations. This pattern of participation follows China’s shift from abstaining to voting against SOGIE resolutions (seen in Table 4 below). China has abstained or voted against five different UNGA and Human

<sup>32</sup> ARC International, “The Yogyakarta Principles,” 1–4

<sup>33</sup> Wang, “UNGA Human Rights Council Speech A/C.3/67/SR.35,” 6.

Rights Council resolutions regarding SOGIE rights. In 2008, a declaration delivered to the UNGA by Argentina on behalf of 66 member states presented a resolution to the UN Declaration of Human Rights that had been already adopted by the Organization of American States. The 2008 Declaration expanded sections of the Declaration of Human Rights to include human rights norms based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.<sup>34</sup> China was not part of this group of 66 member states. This signals China's early refusal to join the fight for global LGBTQ+ rights. Then in 2011 and 2014, the Human Rights Council released two resolutions regarding sexual orientation and gender identity that urged the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to examine LGBTQ+ discrimination globally and to have a future panel to discuss LGBTQ+ rights.<sup>35</sup> Both resolutions were adopted, but China abstained from voting each time. This shows a reluctance to outwardly reject or support LGBTQ+ rights. After 2014, there was an observably more extreme shift in the way China was discussing the international human rights regime in general that also manifested itself in how China was involved with SOGIE rights. In a 2017 UNGA Human Rights meeting, China stated in reference to a resolution unrelated to SOGIE rights that China would "interpret the draft resolution according to Chinese law and its own understanding, and would not accept anything in the draft resolution that ran counter to the laws, regulations and policies of China."<sup>36</sup> This is a shift from requesting that other states consider China's domestic policy to refusing to participate in aspects of the international human rights regime that China did not deem as fitting in with their domestic situation. Around the same time, China began voting against SOGIE rights resolutions from the Human Rights Council, instead of simply abstaining. In June of 2016 and July of 2019 the Human Rights Council again released resolutions regarding SOGIE rights. The 2016 resolution established an Independent Expert (IE) to evaluate SOGIE rights among states. The 2019 resolution called on states to cooperate with said IE. Although the 2016 resolution called for the UN to be patient with developing countries regarding LGBTQ+ rights, China still voted against both resolutions (although both were passed). China's refusal to vote in favor of both SOGIE resolutions after efforts to consider the case of developing countries displays a shift in China's behavior in international law. China has gone from being

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34 Winocur, Mariana. "2008 Joint Statement." ARC International. ARC International, 2016, 1-4.

35 OHCHR, "United Nations Resolutions on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Sex Characteristics." Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2021, 1-3.

36 Yao, Shaojun. "UNGA Human Rights Council Speech A/C.3/72/SR.51," November 20, 2017, 2-6.

disengaged to publicly rejecting the influence of the international SOGIE rights regime. This supports the argument that China is a norm-defender of heteronormativity to avoid Western influence and maintain their own domestic policies. The table below displays each resolution and China's voting and signing status.

**Table 4: SOGIE Rights Resolutions China Signatory/Vote Status**

Resolution	Signing/Voting Status
Yogyakarta Principles (2006)	Chinese National Signed
Yogyakarta Principle Plus 10 (2017)	Chinese National Did Not Sign
UNGA December 2008 Resolution	China Did Not Sign
Human Rights Council Resolution 2011	China Abstained from Vote
Human Rights Council Resolution 2014	China Abstained from Vote
Human Rights Council Resolution 2016	China Voted Against
Human Rights Council Resolution 2019	China Voted Against

China has no domestic policies regarding or preventing discrimination against LGBTQ+ people. Examination of China's national policies by the Sexual Rights Initiative (SRI), a stakeholder in the 2013 UPR, shows that China is a norm defender of heteronormativity because the country does not protect LGBTQ+ individuals from discrimination. Currently, it is decriminalized in China to have same-sex relationships, but it is still greatly stigmatized. The Chinese government decriminalized same-sex relationships in 1997 by removing the law against "hooliganism" that had previously been used to discriminate against LGBTQ+ individuals.<sup>37</sup> Same-sex relations, however, are still not legally recognized in China, so while same-sex couples can exist they are not allowed to be legally married. Homosexuality was removed from the "Chinese Classification and Diagnostic Criteria of Mental Disorders" (CDCMD) in 2001, and transgender individuals that have had "sex reassignment operations" are able to change their sex on legal documents.<sup>38</sup> Despite these efforts, there is still no legal framework protecting LGBTQ+ individuals in China. Although transgender individuals can legally change their

37 Sexual Rights Initiative, "Stakeholder Submission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Rights in China For the 17th Session of the Universal Periodic Review - October 2013." Sexual Rights Initiative, October 2013. OHCHR, 1-7.

38 Sexual Rights Initiative, "Stakeholder Submission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Rights in China For the 17th Session of the Universal Periodic Review - October 2013," 1-7.

sex, being transgender is still considered a mental disorder in the CDCMD.<sup>39</sup> LGBTQ+ individuals are not included in the protections in China's legal framework against workplace discrimination.<sup>40</sup> This leaves them vulnerable to mistreatment in the workplace. According to the study by the SRI, 92% of LGBTQ+ Chinese individuals surveyed chose not to come out fully at work, and 61% of respondents said they had experienced discrimination based on their sexuality and gender identity in the workplace.<sup>41</sup> China was found to be a norm-defender of heteronormativity because of the country's lack of legal framework protecting SOGIE rights and the frequency of discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals.

## Discourse Analysis

This section is an analysis of the language used in UPR China Country Reports, the domestic policy and meetings outlined in the UNDP *Being LGBTI in Asia: China Country Report*, and the national attitudes and LGBTQ+ experiences documented in the UNDP *Being LGBTI in Asia: China Survey*. I found that although China has participated in some efforts to assess their support of LGBTQ+ individuals domestically, the country still lacks involvement in the international SOGIE rights regime and lacks domestic policy protecting LGBTQ+ individuals. This makes it apparent that China is a norm-defender of heteronormativity.

It is evident in the UPR that China's opinions towards SOGIE rights have slowly become more progressive overtime, but that the country still lacks involvement in the international SOGIE rights regime that would reflect these changing views. In the 2009 UPR China National Report, LGBTQ+ individuals are only indirectly mentioned when talking about the domestic policy of Hong Kong. SOGIE rights are not mentioned when discussing the efforts towards advancing human rights in mainland China.<sup>42</sup> Although 2009 is only three years after the initial founding of the YP, and one year after the UNGD addendum of 2008, there are major improvements in SOGIE rights in Hong Kong, but not mainland China. These differences between mainland China's efforts to support LGBTQ+ rights and Hong Kong's efforts show a divide between mainland China's traditional Chinese philosophical ideals

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39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 The Universal Periodic Review, "National Report Submitted in Accordance with Paragraph 15 (A) of the Annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 5/1: China," 22-24.

and avoidance of international influence in domestic policy, compared to Hong Kong's more globalized government and economy that is subject to international influence. China's lack of discussion about SOGIE rights in 2009 mirrors its existing lack of national policy regarding LGBTQ+ individuals. In 2013, the Chinese government again did not mention SOGIE rights. The government of Hong Kong, however, continues to discuss SOGIE rights in more detail, showing a great connection between state ideologies and involvement in the international human rights regime. The lack of discussion about SOGIE rights also continues the pattern of the content analysis around this time period. China was still abstaining from voting in favor of progressing the SOGIE rights regime, further emphasizing the country's status as a norm-defender of heteronormativity. In the most recent UPR cycle in 2018, China continued to avoid the topic of LGBTQ+ rights, despite the government of Hong Kong discussing them in greater detail. This reflects the continued lack of involvement in the international SOGIE rights regime and China's lack of domestic policy regarding SOGIE rights that make it apparent that China is a norm-defender of heteronormativity.

Analysis of the UNDP *Being LGBTI in Asia: China Country Report* shows that although China has made some efforts to discuss LGBTQ+ rights domestically, their absence in the international SOGIE rights regime maintains their status as a norm-defender of heteronormativity. China's 2013 meetings on LGBTQ+ rights do not outweigh their lack of domestic policy protecting LGBTQ+ individuals. These China LGBT Community Dialogues hosted by the UNDP were held in Beijing from August 16th through 18th of 2013, involving individuals from over 40 organizations to represent the LGBTQ+ community in China, as well as representatives of the central government and legal organizations.<sup>43</sup> A second consultation hosted by the UNDP occurred in November of 2013 and focused specifically on the experiences of transgender individuals in China, as the first consultation lacked transgender representation.<sup>44</sup> Both consultations examined China's involvement in the international SOGIE rights regime as well as China's domestic policy regarding LGBTQ+ individuals. The consultations found that China generally does not follow international norms regarding SOGIE rights. The report restates that although China is a member of the UN and a signatory to many

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43 UNDP Asia and the Pacific, "Being LGBT in Asia: China Country Report; A Participatory Review and Analysis of the Legal and Social Environment for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Persons and Civil Society," 3-4; 7-8.

44 Ibid.

human rights treaties, none of the core treaties that China is a party to include protections for LGBTQ+ individuals, and China has not signed on to or voted in favor of most resolutions and informal norms that do include LGBTQ+ rights. According to the report and the UNDP, the three historical goals of LGBTQ+ individuals have been decriminalization, anti-discrimination legislation, and legal recognition of same-sex relations. China has only accomplished the first goal. The report found that decriminalization was not purposeful, as the repeal of the anti-hooliganism law was not originally intended to decriminalize same-sex relations. This shows that the language used by the Chinese government is not necessarily directly against LGBTQ+ individuals but that there is more of a willing ignorance and indifference towards improving the SOGIE rights regime (a key characteristic of being a norm-defender).<sup>45</sup> In terms of anti-discrimination laws and laws supporting same-sex relations, China follows similar patterns in that the language is not directly criminalizing LGBTQ+ individuals but that the lack of language leaves room for LGBTQ+ individuals to be legally discriminated against. China has multiple anti-discrimination laws regarding marginalized groups in its Constitution and multiple anti-discrimination resolutions the country has signed on to. None of these laws or resolutions they supported directly mention LGBTQ+ individuals, leaving a major gap in their international and domestic policy. China does not have any laws directly criminalizing same-sex relations, but relations laws state that unions are between a man and a woman, leaving same-sex couples indirectly out of the picture.<sup>46</sup>

The language used in the UNDP *Being LGBTI in Asia: China Survey* also follows this pattern of indirect exclusion of the LGBTQ+ community. In late 2015 the UNDP, Peking University, the Beijing LGBT Center, and other national organizations surveyed around 30,000 individuals in China to conduct research on national attitudes towards LGBTQ+ individuals. The findings can be used to explain China's lack of involvement in the international SOGIE rights regime and lack of domestic policy. The report found that generally Chinese people do not necessarily view LGBTQ+ individuals negatively and that when asked directly individuals were majority in support of the LGBTQ+ community. The survey found that the existence of LGBTQ+ people is just not talked about, reflecting the lack of policy that the government has chosen to adhere to instead of a direct criminalization

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

or discrimination of LGBTQ+ individuals.<sup>47</sup> According to the survey, there is a distinct correlation between age of respondent and attitudes towards LGBTQ+ individuals. Younger respondents were found to be more open to LGBTQ+ individuals while older respondents were more likely to discriminate. These generational shifts could be promising for China's future in supporting LGBTQ+ rights as the younger generation enters the public sphere.<sup>48</sup> The survey found that the public was opposed to viewing LGBTQ+ individuals as "pathological" (viewing them as individuals with a mental illness or disease). However, there is still general stigma regarding LGBTQ+ individuals, especially transgender individuals and those living with HIV.<sup>49</sup> In terms of public institutions, a lack of education about and recognition of "sexual minorities" and transgender individuals was found, mirroring China's lack of domestic and international involvement with LGBTQ+ rights. This continues the language pattern that China does not directly discriminate against LGBTQ+ individuals but instead ignores their existence, leading to social stigma and no protection against discrimination.<sup>50</sup>

Overall, China's pattern of abstaining and voting against international resolutions on SOGIE rights, not mentioning LGBTQ+ individuals in any UNGA or UNGD meetings, not mentioning LGBTQ+ rights in the UPR cycles, and choosing to directly ignore LGBTQ+ individuals in domestic policy instead of directly discriminating against them shows that China has opportunity for improvement regarding involvement in the international SOGIE rights regime. The country's indifference towards LGBTQ+ people leave the minority vulnerable to discrimination and solidifies China's status as a norm-defender of heteronormativity. However, this indifference is promising for China's future because no direct discrimination allows for protections for LGBTQ+ individuals to be more easily added to domestic policy.

## **Lack of Involvement Explained Through Traditional Chinese Philosophy**

Although homophobia could be a motivation for China's lack of involvement in the international SOGIE rights regime, other factors are more likely to be at play. The lack of mentions of SOGIE rights and the absence

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47 "Being LGBTI in China: A National Survey on Social Attitudes towards Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression." UNDP China. UNDP, May 16, 2016. United Nations Development Program, 17.

48 Ibid., 19.

49 Ibid., 18.

50 Ibid., 16-17; 21-22.

of domestic policy regarding LGBTQ+ individuals instead of outright discrimination signals other political motivations. One striking cause of China's lack of involvement, argued by Junwu Pan in his journal article titled *Chinese Philosophy and International Law*,<sup>51</sup> is China's history of using traditional Confucian philosophy and ideology to guide state decisions on international and domestic law. This means that avoiding adherence to international norms is more about preserving the Chinese way of governance and less about rejecting the content of the international norms. According to traditional Chinese philosophy, two types of "law" exist, one being *Li* and the other being *Fa*. The concept of *Li* is loosely defined as the moral rules that individuals follow that are ingrained in them throughout their lives which shape behavior and society.<sup>52</sup> *Li* establishes hierarchy in society, and individuals must behave within these hierarchies, such as a son respecting his father, or a student following his teacher.<sup>53</sup> *Fa*, also known as legalism, is the traditional Chinese form of law that differs greatly from Western law. While Western ideas of law can be used as punishment or as protection to preserve societal order, *Fa* is purely criminal law. This means that if there is a law in place it exists to ensure that criminals are punished, rather than existing to protect an individual.<sup>54</sup> It is evident after applying this theory to China's existing lack of involvement in the international SOGIE rights regime and lack of domestic policy regarding LGBTQ+ individuals that China is a norm-defender of heteronormativity because of the traditional ways that laws are established in Chinese society. If China had laws that were outwardly discriminatory against LGBTQ+ individuals, then it could be argued greatly that homophobia is behind the laws. But because China does not mention LGBTQ+ individuals in their legal framework and has not mentioned LGBTQ+ issues in UN meetings, the lack of policy and involvement is more about preserving traditional ways of governance than refusing to protect LGBTQ+ individuals.

However, there are some gaps in this argument, as China has signed on to other human rights resolutions that do not include LGBTQ+ individuals, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).<sup>55</sup> It can also be argued through the

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51 PAN, "Chinese Philosophy and International Law," 233–48.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

55 HRIC, "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)." Human Rights in China, July 20, 2020, 1–4.

analysis of Confucian teachings and traditional Chinese philosophy that there is a lack of policy because of social stigma around LGBTQ+ individuals. *Li* functions in society so individuals do not deviate from the norm for fear of shame, which could be applied to explain why LGBTQ+ individuals may not feel comfortable being publicly out to their families or at work, as seen in the UNDP *Being LGBTI in Asia: China Survey*.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Whether traditional societal standards or the connection between Confucian philosophy and international law is to blame, China's lack of involvement in the international SOGIE rights regime and nonexistent national policy regarding LGBTQ+ individuals leaves people incredibly vulnerable. LGBTQ+ individuals are subject to discrimination and left out of different aspects of society, such as marriage or equal access to healthcare. Through an analysis of UNGA Human Rights meetings, UNGD speeches, the UPR cycles, signatory status of existing LGBTQ+ rights resolutions, the UNDP *Being LGBTI in Asia: China Country Report*, and the UNDP *Being LGBTI in Asia: China Survey*, it is evident that China is a norm defender regarding heteronormativity. China has not mentioned SOGIE issues in any UN meeting or UPR cycle, has not signed on to most major resolutions regarding LGBTQ+ rights, and has no existing domestic policy regarding LGBTQ+ individuals.

In order for China to begin following international norms regarding LGBTQ+ rights, I would recommend that the Chinese government immediately sign onto the major SOGIE rights resolutions analyzed above. I would also recommend that China establish a domestic policy to protect LGBTQ+ individuals that is explicitly stated, instead of just implying that they are included in existing human rights policy. As China is currently a major participant in the international human rights regime, extending their support to the LGBTQ+ community would further solidify the country as a norm-entrepreneur of human rights overall. For future research, a critical feminist theory would be effective in explaining how gender roles and expectations may prevent China from furthering LGBTQ+ rights. I predict that China will eventually sign onto SOGIE rights resolutions because of their pattern of late ratification of the core human rights treaties. Participation in the SOGIE rights regime could improve the country's status as a growing world power, as China would even further surpass the United States as an entrepreneur of human rights. Because of the evidence that LGBTQ+ individuals feel

vulnerable to discrimination and their existence is stigmatized in China, I also recommend that China include LGBTQ+ issues in education and create laws preventing discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals in the workplace. I am hopeful for China's future in the SOGIE rights regime as citizens continue to support LGBTQ+ individuals and the government becomes more open to international SOGIE norms.

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# A Fantasy in Ink: How Japanese Export Art Reflects the West's Obsession with the Exotic

Benjamin Rothstein

*Benjamin Rothstein (he/they) is an East Asian Studies major and a scholar in the Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts at Connecticut College. They are guided by a passion for research that spans many disciplines, and aim to continue their study of art, culture, politics, money, and power in future projects. In their free time they like to cook, draw, and play board games.*

## Images:



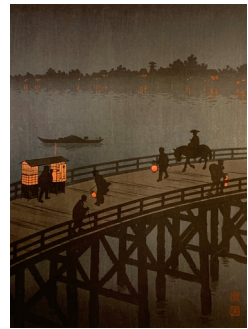
**Figure 1. Cockatoo and Pomegranate.**

Woodcut print by Ohara Koson, c. 1927. Caroline Black Collection of Japanese Woodcuts, Connecticut College, New London, CT.



**Figure 2. Sudden Shower over Shin-Ōhashi Bridge and Atake.**  
Woodcut print by Utagawa Hiroshige, 1857.

Shain Japanese Print Collection, Connecticut College, New London, CT.



**Figure 3. Ōhashi Bridge at Night.**  
Woodcut print by Shōda Kōhō, c. 1920s.

Shain Japanese Print Collection, Connecticut College, New London, CT.



**Figure 4. Evening at the Edge of Shinobazu Pond.**

Woodcut print by Kasamatsu Shirō, 1932. Caroline Black Collection of Japanese Woodcuts, Connecticut College, New London, CT.



**Figure 5. Cabinet of Twelve Inrō.**  
Lacquer cabinet by unknown artisan, c. 1875-1900.

Khalili Collections.



**Figure 6. Vase with Landscape.**  
Underglaze blue on porcelain by unknown artisan, c. 1900.

Khalili Collections.



**Figure 7. Cloisonné Vase with Flowers (one of a set of two).**  
Cloisonné enamel vase with gilt and silver wire by Namikawa Sōsuke, c. 1883.

Khalili Collections.



**Figure 8. Satsuma Vase.**  
Painted and gilded earthenware vase by Kinkōzan Sōbei VII, c. 1905.

Khalili Collections.



**Figure 9. Five White Egrets.**  
Woodcut print by Ohara Koson, 1927.  
Caroline Black Collection of Japanese Woodcuts, Connecticut College, New London, CT.

## Introduction

In one of Connecticut College's Japanese print collections there is a particular print that struck me when I first saw it. Designed by Ohara Koson (1877–1945), it depicts a white cockatoo on a pomegranate branch against a pitch-black background (Fig. 1). It is recognizable as *shin-hanga* (new print) by its use of Western chiaroscuro in the branches and leaves, but other features, including a debossed textural element to the feathers and that striking black ground, were unfamiliar to me, and not easily identifiable as either an import from Western art or an adaptation of traditional Japanese artistry. The subject matter is also unusual; the piece is obviously *kachō-e* (bird-and-flower picture), a genre in which Koson specialized, but a cockatoo and pomegranates are not typical subjects of this genre, which is based in a Chinese painting tradition and so often features either local species or those from China and its cultural sphere of influence. This combination of a Middle Eastern fruit and a bird from the Indo-Pacific seemed like more than simply a new take on an artistic tradition. Upon investigating I discovered that Koson often made prints that were primarily intended for export to the West (including this one), and from there I stumbled onto the topic of this paper: The influence of Western tastes that favored an idealized, exotic, Orientalist construction of Japan on Japanese artists' design and subject choices for Japanese export art during the Japonisme period (1853–1931).

## A Fantasy in Ink

When Commodore Matthew Perry (1794–1858) arrived in Japan in 1853, he took note of many of the art forms that, despite the isolation of the Edo period, had already found eager audiences in the West. His account relates:

The lacquered ware has all the lightness, neatness of cabinet-work structure, and exquisite polish, that seems possible in work of that description, and the porcelain is equal to the choicest specimens of similar Chinese work. The forms and ornamentation of the various articles, although frequently grotesque, showed much grace and skill, and proved great advancement in the application of the arts of design to manufacturing purposes.<sup>1</sup>

Perry's expedition marked one of the first times an American had ever visited Japan and left with his head.<sup>2</sup> Soon, Japan had been opened to trade with the West by force, and the same kinds of unequal treaties that had been imposed on China after the Opium Wars were in effect in Japan.<sup>3</sup> Unlike China, Japan in the early days of contact did not have many items to sell that Western companies were willing to buy; Japan's largely handmade manufactures were no match for the industrial might of the Western world.<sup>4</sup> However, Commodore Perry's early interest in Japanese crafts was indicative of a more widespread interest by Westerners in the mysterious, distant Japanese archipelago, and many Japanese artisans, recovering from the shocks of Japan's domestic instability following the arrival of Perry's black ships,<sup>5</sup> found a new niche selling luxury wares, decorative objects, and woodblock prints to fascinated audiences in Europe and America. Soon, the new Meiji government saw the potential to gain international legitimacy and economic power through a West-tailored art trade,<sup>6</sup> while potters, printers, and lacquer artists

1 Francis Hawks, *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, Performed in the Years 1852, 1853, and 1854, under the Command of Commodore M. C. Perry, United States Navy, by Order of the Government of the United States*, 1, Vol. 1, (Washington, DC: A. O. P. Nicholson, 1856), 458–9. 2 Dean Flower and Christopher Benfey, "That Double-Bolted Land Japan," *The Hudson Review* 57, no. 1 (2004): 168, <https://doi.org/10.2307/4151396>.

2 Dean Flower and Christopher Benfey, "That Double-Bolted Land Japan," *The Hudson Review* 57, no. 1 (2004): 168, <https://doi.org/10.2307/4151396>.

3 Contributors to Wikimedia. "Harris Treaty." Wikisource. Wikimedia Foundation, April 19, 2018. [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Harris\\_Treaty](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Harris_Treaty).

4 Sarah Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2022), "Design by Committee."

5 Clare Pollard, "Meiji Ceramics: The Art of Japanese Export Porcelain and Satsuma Ware 1868–1912," in *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 13, no. 1 (2005): 134, <https://doi.org/10.1086/studdecoarts.13.1.40663219>.

6 Nanami Kawade, "Japonisme in Japan: The Japanese Reaction to Japonisme as Manifested in the Art of Watanabe Seitei," *Aspectus: A Journal for Visual Culture*, 2020, <https://aspectus.york.ac.uk/Issues/2-2020/japonisme-in-japan>.

sought to absorb all they could learn about the West, with many adapting their wares to Western tastes.<sup>7</sup> Western audiences bought works by the thousands at exhibitions and curio-markets, but already on Perry's expedition, Japanese works were being identified with "the barbaric character of the past,"<sup>8</sup> grouped together with Chinese works, observed as indicative of the collective character "of this remarkable people,"<sup>9</sup> and measured against stereotypes of "the gaudy tendencies of oriental taste."<sup>10</sup> In other words, the discourses of Orientalism were already rushing forward to greet Japanese culture, and these discourses embedded themselves into what was said and thought about Japanese art, how it was received in the West, and the tastes of Western audiences for the various art objects flowing out of Japan. This paper will demonstrate that Japanese export artworks that used stereotypically Eastern motifs regardless of their local relevance and conformed to stereotypes of Japan as pure, serene, mysterious, and in harmony with nature were a direct result of Western influence and power over the global art market.

## The Appearance of the East

Among the first woodblock prints to arrive in the West were the landscapes and bird-and-flower prints of Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849) and Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858).<sup>11</sup> These prints were uniquely positioned to provide the first view into the character of Japan. Existing stereotypes about the natural purity and quaint barbarism<sup>12</sup> of the broader East were already well established in Western discourse, and the first trickle of Edo period prints that reached Western audiences confirmed through colorful depictions of plants, birds, and mountain landscapes that the Japanese had that same ancient Oriental character that had long been propped up as an "other" to the normalcy and modernity of Westernness.<sup>13</sup> It did not matter that the typical *ukiyo-e* (pictures of the floating world) of old, which had always been art for the lower classes, had mostly been book illustrations and portraits of *kabuki* actors

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7 Yoshie Itani, *Export Porcelain from Seto in the Meiji Era: The Development of Noritake Porcelain in the Context of the Japanese Ceramics of the Meiji Period*, (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2005), 3-4. 8 Hawks, *Narrative of the Expedition of... Commodore M. C. Perry*, 459.

8 Hawks, *Narrative of the Expedition of... Commodore M. C. Perry*, 459.

9 Ibid

10 Ibid

11 Julia Meech-Pekarik, "Early Collectors of Japanese Prints and the Metropolitan Museum of Art," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 17 (1982), 95. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1512790>.

12 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1978), 47.

13 Wester Wagenaar, "Wacky Japan: A New Face of Orientalism." *Asia in Focus* (July 2017), 46.

and prostitutes.<sup>14</sup> *Meisho-e* (literally “pictures of famous places”), for example, were a relatively recent innovation that responded to the regularity of travel by the *chōnin* (merchant and artisan classes, who were the target audience of prints) around Japan in the late Edo period.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, to ignorant early collectors in the West, these pictures of natural scenes were the essence of Japan’s Oriental character,<sup>16</sup> steeped in age-old tradition, and these pictures were arguably the ones that most captured Western imaginations.

Hiroshige’s *Sudden Shower* (Fig. 2) was one piece that clearly got widespread attention in the West, as Van Gogh painted a reproduction of it,<sup>17</sup> and Japanese-style arched bridges are a common theme in the works of other masters like Monet and Whistler. Hiroshige’s original depicts travelers shielding themselves from a downpour while they cross a bridge. In the typical style of the time, there are no shadows or reflections on the water, and there is a sense of flatness to the Western eye. The colors, including Hiroshige’s signature stripe on the bottom in deep blue (likely Prussian blue, which was an exciting new pigment imported from the West),<sup>18</sup> were bright at the time of printing, and the bridge is well-lit, as if there were no rain clouds at all. Most importantly, the print is about the people: ordinary travelers, traders, and pilgrims going about their business in an iconic area with much foot traffic, dealing with the major inconvenience of the day—the weather. This subject would have appealed to Hiroshige’s primary audience, the lower classes of Japan, many of whom could even have claimed to have been to the very site depicted, which was part of the novelty that would have helped prints in this series to sell.

Though the setting of Kōhō’s *Ōhashi Bridge at Night* (Fig. 3) is exactly the same, what differs greatly is the audience of this print, which was made around seventy years later, when most prints went straight to the export market.<sup>19</sup> The audience is likely the reason for the absence of any cartouches

14 Penelope E. Mason and Donald Dinwiddie, *History of Japanese Art*, 2nd ed. (London: Pearson Education, Inc., 2005), 278.

15 Mason and Dinwiddie, *History of Japanese Art*, 289.

16 Julia Sapin, “Merchandising Art and Identity in Meiji Japan: Kyoto Nihonga Artists’ Designs for Takashimaya Department Store, 1868-1912,” *Journal of Design History* 17, no. 4 (2004): 318, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jdh/17.4.317>.

17 Nina Siegal, “Van Gogh Never Visited Japan, but He Saw It Everywhere,” *The New York Times*, March 26, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/26/arts/design/vincent-van-gogh-japan.html#:~:text=The%20almond%20blossoms%2C%20gnarled%20trees,country%20he’d%20never%20visited.>

18 Guth, “Hokusai’s Great Waves in Nineteenth-Century Japanese Visual Culture,” 474-5.

19 Meech-Pekarik, “Early Collectors of Japanese Prints and the Metropolitan Museum of Art,” 97.

in the later work, since the primary consumers of this print would not have been able to read them anyway. The main visual difference is that the scene in this piece takes place at night, just like the other prints in its series, a choice that incorporates the features of the Orient of the Western imagination. If Hiroshige created multiple series about travel to appeal to the merchant class of Japan, then it is reasonable to expect that a whole series about Japan at night, made primarily for Western audiences, was designed to appeal to their tastes, and indeed this piece accommodates the desire for a mysterious, exotic Orient quite well. While no viewer who has seen Hiroshige's corresponding work of the same subject can deny that a sense of Japanese tradition is preserved in this newer work, the mysteries of the (literally) dark East are played up significantly by the night scene. Gone are the bright colors of Hiroshige's time, for the Orient of the Western imagination is obscured by darkness and lit only by the mystical glow of paper lanterns. Gone is the sudden rain, which would only serve to project the discomfort of reality when the fairy-land that is the Orient is meant to be tranquil. This piece is not about the people, for the people are mere silhouettes, providing a glimpse into the West's disdain for the Oriental<sup>20</sup> even as it extols the beauty and quaint virtue of the Orient. The lack of importance of the people of the East has long been a common feature of the visual Orient: "eastern figures as portrayed in western chinoiserie were often strangely androgynous, indicating a European apathy towards individual identities."<sup>21</sup> Casting the figures on the bridge in darkness is simply another way to remove their individuality and turn them into nameless Orientals. Depicting the bridge at night was a deliberate choice that allowed the undesirable parts of the East to be concealed while enhancing the sense of mystery. In the background can be seen the true subject of the piece, the Orient itself: a blur of houses and trees obscured by mist and reflected on water, showing those archetypal characteristics of the East: harmony with nature, mystery, and serenity. The ripples and reflections on the water, the use of areas of solid color to suggest form rather than outlines, and a few elements of Western linear perspective identify the style of the piece as *shin-hanga*, a visually realistic style of prints influenced by Western chiaroscuro and linear perspective.<sup>22</sup> Even as Japan was, in the words of Edward Said, being "submitted

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20 Said, *Orientalism*, 47.

21 Elizabeth H. Yusem Meyers, "Meiji Craft and Japonisme: The Japanese Exhibits at the Philadelphia and Chicago World's Fairs and the Structuring of American Taste," *Academia*, 2013, 12.

22 David Bell, "A New Vision: Modern Japanese Prints from the Heriot Collection," *Tuhinga: Records of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, no. 31 (2020), 92.

to being [-] made Oriental,”<sup>23</sup> by a West-dominated art market, Japanese artists made continuous efforts to adapt their work and modernize their techniques. That effort did not extend to the subject and motifs of the piece, however, because the innovation that was taking place within those aspects was the creation of a new Japan that was in line with the Orient. Western demand clearly favored what Europeans and Americans saw as the authentic East of ancient times, which is why the subject is the same seventy years later, and the details that have changed are mostly the auto-exoticist performance of an artist trying to sell his works to an ignorant audience.

## A Foreign Paradise

The Orient had (and still has) an important role in the Western imagination, especially as seen in Eastern art. Because the Orient was positioned as the West’s opposite, it could be made to be devoid of any corruption or insecurity that plagued the West. Marius Jansen points out that, to Westerners fed up with the depravity of industrial capitalism, choking on air thick with smog in the polluted cities of Western Europe in the mid-to-late 19th century,

Japan seemed a lotus land that should be preserved at all costs from the ravages of nineteenth-century mass production. Their sentiments were one facet of a broader nineteenth-century fascination with the Orient as primitive, exotic, and somehow ‘authentic,’ an idealization that led Delacroix to Morocco, Gauguin to the South Pacific, and Lafcadio Hearn to Matsue.<sup>24</sup>

As machines created ugliness all over the West, many Westerners went looking for a place full of natural beauty and what they saw as an inherent primitiveness that precluded its people from industrializing. They found an escape from the ills of their own civilization in the art of Japan, and insisted that Japan, which was rapidly industrializing in the hope of becoming a world power,<sup>25</sup> remain the same so that it might continue to serve as Europe’s daydream:

The reactions of dismayed Westerners had considerable impact. When so much of the effort was impelled by determination to create a state and culture that would be judged worthy of the West, the shocked

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23 Said, *Orientalism*, 14.

24 Marius B. Jansen, “Cultural Change in Nineteenth-Century Japan,” In *Challenging Past and Present: The Metamorphosis of Nineteenth-Century Japanese Art*, edited by Ellen P. Conant, (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006), 52.

25 Ian Buruma, *Inventing Japan 1853-1964*, (New York, NY: The Modern Library, 2004), 45-7.

remonstrances of Westerners that Japan was destroying its cultural heritage struck home.<sup>26</sup>

Of course, Japan's cultural heritage was not some unchanging thing like the West imagined in the Japan that existed before Perry's arrival. Still, many Western scholars, including those who had been hired by the Meiji government to help the country advance, in fact advocated for Japan not to advance significantly<sup>27</sup> because what they valued in Japan was its function for the West as an exotic escape and a backdrop to their own journey. Their advocacy had considerable impact on a country recently traumatized by a violation of its sovereignty and trying desperately to enter the West's good graces,<sup>28</sup> and Japan's art, which had always been the lens through which Europe saw Japan itself,<sup>29</sup> was especially affected.

Kasamatsu Shirō's (1898-1991) *Evening at Shinobazu Pond* (Fig. 4) presents exactly the "lotus land" Westerners wanted to see in Japan. Another shin-hanga piece, the blue outlines of the background give the impression that the scene is obscured by evening mists, heightening the sense of mystery and spirituality provided by the dim evening light. The willow branches in the front further obscure the scene, providing both a delicate natural element that feels traditionally feminine, a common trope in discourse about the East,<sup>30</sup> and also creating the final layer of this classic depiction of the Orient: a natural landscape hidden by darkness and fog, lit only by lanterns, reflected on water, and viewed from a distance through an obscuring haze of leaves. One can almost smell the incense and hear the poets scrambling to describe the jade-green of the foliage. The print depicts an exotic European fairytale as much as it does a real place in Tōkyō, purposely only showing the exact place from the exact angle that best hides the surrounding modernity, a common practice in Japanese commercial photography that was known to appeal specifically to a Western clientele.<sup>31</sup> The *torii* in the background brings a sense of spirituality to the scene, but the magnificent *tō* (pagoda) towering in the distance puts it to shame in that regard, and belies another Western conceit-turned-motif.

26 Jansen, "Cultural Change in Nineteenth-Century Japan," 32.

27 Schepers et al. "Exoticism in Early Twentieth-Century German Literature on Japan," 104.

28 Ellen P. Conant, "Japan 'Abroad' at the Chicago Exposition, 1893," in *Challenging Past and Present: The Metamorphosis of Nineteenth-Century Japanese Art*, (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 257.

29 Schepers et al. "Exoticism in Early Twentieth-Century German Literature on Japan," 105.

30 *Ibid.*, 107.

31 Schilcher, "Invented Tradition," 39.

Buddhism had fallen from grace in Meiji Japan.<sup>32</sup> It was viewed as an archaic frivolity, imported from a now humiliated China, and was cast out in favor of *Shintō*, the native religion that gave the newly-empowered Emperor the divine right to rule.<sup>33</sup> However, by the late Meiji and Taishō periods, it had made a comeback thanks in no small part to the urging of Westerners, who viewed it as an inseparable part of Japan's ancient cultural heritage that they were keen to preserve.<sup>34</sup> In fact, one particularly vocal and condescending<sup>35</sup> member of this camp, Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908), took such an avid interest in Buddhist art that he was even known to bully priests into revealing relics that had been locked away for centuries.<sup>36</sup> The presence of a Buddhist structure in this piece is no accident. Like the fog and the willow tree it represents Japan's imagined essence which Europeans and Americans sought as an escape and fought to preserve against the rising tide of modernity.

The cabinet of *inrō* (meaning "seal box") (Fig. 5) illustrates perfectly how feudal Japan had come to be romanticized in Europe and the United States. In the Edo Period, *inrō* were small boxes of lacquered wood that were fixed to the belt to serve as a pocket and accessory,<sup>37</sup> but they fell out of fashion in the early Meiji when social elites began adopting Western dress.<sup>38</sup> At the same time, in the West, *inrō* were coming into vogue as collectible trinkets, and makers of *inrō* wasted not a second in switching over to export-oriented production.<sup>39</sup> Because these exported *inrō* were collectibles and not functional, some came in large sets with their very own cabinet, like this one decorated with a model *inrō* in *kinji* (polished gold finish), so that they could be collected and stored in quantities that had never needed to be accommodated when they were sold to native audiences. Clearly *inrō* were seen in the West as something special, and with their long history as well as their tendency to use animal and plant motifs (like the image on this cabinet which has pine trees

32 Jansen, "Cultural Change in Nineteenth-Century Japan," 32.

33 Buruma, *Inventing Japan 1853-1964*, 35-56.

34 Jansen, "Cultural Change in Nineteenth-Century Japan," 32

35 Flower and Benfey, "That Double-Bolted Land Japan," 171.

36 *Ibid.*

37 Oliver Impey, "Japanese Export Art of the Edo Period and Its Influence on European Art," *Modern Asian Studies* 18, no. 4 (1984): 690, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0026749x00016383>.

38 O. Impey, M. Fairley, and J. Earle, "Japanese Art of the Meiji Period: Cabinet of Twelve Inro," Khalili Collections, Accessed July 18, 2022, <https://www.khalilicollections.org/collections/japanese-art-of-the-meiji-period/khalili-collections-japanese-art-of-the-meiji-period-cabinet-of-twelve-inro-l113/>.

39 Impey et al. "Japanese Art of the Meiji Period: Cabinet of Twelve Inro."

and a crane-shaped *netsuke*, or fastener, both symbolic in Japan of longevity),<sup>40</sup> they must have been seen in Europe and the United States as symbolic of the older, more innocent, feudal Japan that had captured many an imagination in the West.<sup>41</sup> The depiction of a *sanbasō* dancer on the front of the model *inrō*, which, like the *inrō* itself, is more symbolic of Japan's idealized feudal past than of the modernizing nation that was current to the work, fits in well with the imagined landscape. Though I could find no picture of the real *inrō* inside the cabinet, the description of the piece says they are each decorated with an animal of the Japanese zodiac, surrounded in most cases by natural scenery.<sup>42</sup> These designs are perfectly suited to the West's romantic fantasy of the Orient, as natural subjects fit into the characterization of the East as being attuned to nature, and the zodiac gives a Buddhist lotus-land-esque context to the pieces, since Buddhism is the religion with which it is associated. The Japan represented in this work is the spiritual, tranquil, and natural Japan of the samurai, not the modernizing and industrializing Japan that was actually current to the piece. Collecting such large quantities of *inrō*, then, was an attempt to preserve in Western collections the unique flavor of "old Japan" as it was imagined in (and as an alternative to) the West, even as many in Japan were donning suits and bowler hats.

It would be inaccurate to suggest that the fight over Japan's future and identity was binary: a Western desire to preserve vs. an Eastern desire to advance. By the 1880s a massive conservative movement among Japan's civilian population and government officials alike had risen up in opposition to the early Meiji's Westernize-at-all-costs attitude.<sup>43</sup> It would also be inaccurate to imply, however, that the exotic version of Japan sold to Western audiences was a result of a domestically-located desire to preserve tradition. First, the conservatism of the time was largely directed toward bringing back Confucian values, especially in education,<sup>44</sup> and had very little, if anything, to do with art. Second, no woodblock print would have been a part of domestic ambitions to preserve culture because, while they were adored in France as treasures of the far East, at home woodcuts were held in contempt as the mass-produced

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40 RISD Museum, *Nuance in Nature: Birds and Flowers in Japanese Textile Design*, (Providence, RI: RISD Museum, 2007), exhibition catalog, 2.

41 Schepers et al. "Exoticism in Early Twentieth-Century German Literature on Japan," 108.

42 Impey et al. "Japanese Art of the Meiji Period: Cabinet of Twelve Inro."

43 Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi and Kenneth B. Pyle, "Meiji Conservatism," in *Modern Japanese Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 104-6.

44 Wakabayashi and Pyle, "Meiji Conservatism," 105-8.

art of the unwashed masses.<sup>45</sup> Okakura Kakuzō (1863–1913), a prominent art historian and an influential figure in the push to preserve traditional art styles, even once said, “the history of Japanese art cannot be written through ukiyo-e.”<sup>46</sup> By the time *Evening* was produced, ukiyo-e was primarily sent abroad and would not have been given much consideration by the Japanese public. Third, depicting Japan in a supposedly traditional way likely did not matter much to Japanese artists, who generally cared much more about making a living and learning new Western techniques than preserving some intangible sense of Japan’s cultural heritage.<sup>47</sup> In initiatives to preserve Japan’s historic character in its art, Okakura often found himself aligned with a crowd of white Westerners,<sup>48</sup> being himself an Orientalist.<sup>49</sup> It is also telling that one of his greatest projects to preserve traditional Japanese art, the first official history of Japanese art compiled in Japan, was originally written in French for an exposition audience in Paris.<sup>50</sup> Western consumers of Japanese art jealously guarded their authority to determine what art was authentically Japanese,<sup>51</sup> and it seems that the purpose of the Meiji or Taishō artist, in order to compete with the antiques that were rapidly leaving Japan at the time,<sup>52</sup> was to create pieces that were convincing enough to fit into the generic and exoticized Western idea of “old Japan.” The push to show an older, serene, Buddhist Japan with prominent vegetation and a more tranquil, stereotypically Eastern spirit was primarily a Western one, based in Western conceit about the exotic East.

## The Institutionalization of the Orient

The Meiji government was another strong proponent of auto-exoticist art, and exhibitions curated by their representatives proved to be key points for exoticism to become incorporated into the works of Japanese artists. Observing the function of international exhibitions as vital public relations for

45 Christine M. Guth, “Hokusai’s Great Waves in Nineteenth-Century Japanese Visual Culture,” *The Art Bulletin* 93, no. 4 (December 2011): 468, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00043079.2011.10786019>.

46 Guth, “Hokusai’s Great Waves in Nineteenth-Century Japanese Visual Culture,” 468.

47 Carmen Vendelin, “20th Century Japanese Prints,” *La Salle University Art Museum Exhibition Catalogues*, no. 4 (2006), 7–8.

48 Manuel Schilcher, “Invented Tradition,” In *Appropriate Japan - How Western Art Prepared a Nation for War*, 13–75, (Linz: University of Art and Design Linz, 2019).

49 Kakuzō Okakura, *The Ideals of the East with Special Reference to the Art of Japan* (Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 2007) 11–12.

50 Schilcher, “Invented Tradition,” 74.

51 Pollard, “Meiji Ceramics: The Art of Japanese Export Porcelain and Satsuma Ware 1868–1912,” 140.

52 MFA Boston, “Art of Japan Collection and History of Cultural Exchange,” Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accessed June 10, 2022, <https://www.mfa.org/news/japan>.

world powers,<sup>53</sup> the new Imperial government saw them as a way to legitimize their rule in the eyes of Europe, even in the early days when the Tokugawa *bakufu* (the military dictatorship of feudal Japan) still claimed to rule Japan, and had its own exhibition booths.<sup>54</sup> In an early exhibition in 1867, the carefully curated Satsuma (a region in southern Japan that was among the first to rebel) booth won significantly more awards than that of the bakufu,<sup>55</sup> and that victory would inform decades of procedure for a country hoping to enrich and empower itself through the art trade.

The Meiji government would continue to carefully curate exhibition works to ensure they were in line with Western taste, hiring Western experts like Gottfried Wagener (1831-1892) to judge pieces that were submitted.<sup>56</sup> The committees that selected the final works to be shown tended to choose handmade luxury pieces for the Eastern curio craze that was emerging in Europe, rather than everyday manufactured goods that could not compete with the West's industrial prowess.<sup>57</sup> For Vienna:

Wagener stressed objects that were particularly large or small, required noticeable technical skill or employed techniques not available in Europe, marking a difference from the European crafts displayed while emphasizing the ingenuity and history of Japanese luxury manufacturing.<sup>58</sup>

The purpose of the exhibitions was never to construct a realistic display of what Japan had to offer, but rather to emphasize the bizarre, exotic curiosities that Europeans would flock to see. Pieces were favored that emphasized Japan's cultural distance from Europe, or could be seen as indicative of an idealized Japanese history rather than a Westernized Japanese present. The success of this method at the 1873 exhibition in Vienna was plain: nearly 200 prizes were given to various Japanese artists and artisans, and the Viennese joined the Japonisme craze in short order, flocking to buy up entire collections.<sup>59</sup> So far, success in exhibitions had not significantly changed the variety of pieces produced by Japanese artists, but the Meiji government saw those exhibitions as a matter of national importance, as it hoped to use the sales to amass foreign

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53 Conant, "Japan 'Abroad' at the Chicago Exposition, 1893," 255.

54 Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*, "Design by Committee."

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid.

currency and gain enough economic power and international respect to avoid the worst of the West's colonial ambitions for Asia.<sup>60</sup> To streamline production and selection, the government created the *onchi zuroku*, a catalog of sample works that served as a guide to help artists create pieces that would appeal to the West.<sup>61</sup> The catalog, named after an abbreviation of a proverb meaning, roughly, "to learn from the past to develop new ideas," promoted the kinds of imitations of historic styles<sup>62</sup> that Westerners had valued in past exhibitions as aesthetic symbols of an older, more innocent Japan. Now the selection process would be simpler as artists changed their styles in response to the catalog, and pieces flooded in that could grab the attention of Western audiences by appealing to their fantasy of the Orient.

At the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, the power of the Japanese government over Japanese exhibition works was revealed. Two aesthetics were represented among the Japanese artworks: a modern, Westernized style as seen in *yōga* (literally "Western image") paintings, and the blend of traditional styles and exotic subjects of the *onchi zuroku*. Both styles received mixed praise by officials, critics, and attendants,<sup>63</sup> but in the realm of fine art specifically, the Japanese painters who had studied Western technique and produced truly modern works received significantly more praise than their counterparts by American experts,<sup>64</sup> who by the 1890s were wising up to the pandering exoticism of many previous pieces. How unfortunate then that the Meiji government, one of the few governments at the exposition that asserted the sole authority to determine which of its country's works were to be displayed,<sup>65</sup> had, anticipating failure, cut down the number of *yōga* paintings with such extreme prejudice that many artists who worked in that style boycotted the exposition.<sup>66</sup> Such was the favoritism given to works and styles which had, for the last four decades, been extremely successful in the West (and would continue to be successful in genres that did not fit into the category of fine arts, like ceramics<sup>67</sup> and prints), and such was the pressure from above on artists in Japan.

60 Pollard, "Meiji Ceramics," 133.

61 Kawade, "Japonisme in Japan."

62 Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*, "Design by Committee."

63 Conant, "Japan 'Abroad' at the Chicago Exposition, 1893," 264.

64 *Ibid.*, 268.

65 *Ibid.*, 266.

66 *Ibid.*, 268-9.

67 H. D. "Arts and Crafts of Japan Shown," *The New York Times*, March 10, 1936.

The vase with a landscape by an unknown artist (Fig. 6) was shown at the Paris Exposition Universelle<sup>68</sup> in 1900, and exhibits the same dreamy landscape, this time in underglaze blue on porcelain, that the Meiji government proved so eager to promote abroad. What the audience in Paris would have seen in this vase, though, was not just the preservation of a traditional Japanese artistic style, but a recreation of the stereotypical blue-on-white chinoiserie Europeans had been collecting for centuries.<sup>69</sup> They would have seen not just the preservation of Japanese creative methods, but the preservation of the true nature of Japan, for a misty blue landscape painted onto a vase was the real Japan: the real Japan that Western customers were willing to buy, and the real Japan that the Meiji government was willing to sell. The gentle gradients of blue to white that fill in each of the features of the landscape contrast with the sharpness of some outlines to confusing effect. There is also a mix of both Western and Japanese conventions of perspective, with the enlarged foreground of Western compositions and the diagonal layering of planes typical of Japanese tradition. The scene is rounded, softened, tranquil, harmless, robbed of the true harshness of nature necessary to bend and twist the small tree in the forefront into such a wild shape. The landscape, while constructed in a mostly Japanese style, also contains elements of the sedated, silent East of Western discourse.

Namikawa Sōsuke's (1847–1910) pair of vases (Fig. 7) were sent to the Amsterdam Exhibition of 1883, where Sōsuke and his company won the first-class gold medal and Mr. Muramatsu, the company's president, was decorated by the King of Holland.<sup>70</sup> Decorated in multicolored enamel outlined with gilt and silver wire, the award-winning vases present a colorful scene of ornate flowers and insects. In this set old and new are juxtaposed. Cloisonné as made in Japan was a recent invention,<sup>71</sup> while the subject of flowers and insects against a solid-color background imitates *kachō-e*, a style of painting and printing that was already centuries old,<sup>72</sup> as many Western viewers would

68 J. Earle, "Japanese Art of the Meiji Period: Vase," Khalili Collections, Accessed July 14, 2022, <https://www.khalilicollections.org/collections/japanese-art-of-the-meiji-period/khalili-collection-japanese-art-of-the-meiji-period-vase-p77/>.

69 Impey, "Japanese Export Art of the Edo Period and Its Influence on European Art," 690.

70 J. Earle, "Japanese Art of the Meiji Period: Vase," Khalili Collections, Accessed July 14, 2022, <https://www.khalilicollections.org/collections/japanese-art-of-the-meiji-period/khalili-collection-japanese-art-of-the-meiji-period-vase-p77/>.

71 Earle, "Japanese Art of the Meiji Period: Pair of Vases."

72 William E. Harkins, "Shijō Bird, Animal and Flower Prints in the Meiji Period," *Impressions*, no. 12 (1986): 10.

have known, or at least guessed. That among the first works to influence European perceptions of the newly-opened Japan were prints of birds and flowers is likely why such a scene was on these vases, which were government approved and so highly praised in Europe. The close-up view of simple and elegant natural features, like flowers, insects, and grasses, that is characteristic of *kachōga* (bird and flower paintings) gives an impression of the Japanese reverence for nature that Europeans so sought as a contrast to their industrial world, and the empty or solid-color background that is another common feature of *kachō-e* provides a sense of etherealness and mystery that plays into Orientalist discourse. These vases represent Japan as its government wanted it to be seen: a mix of ancient tradition and modern innovation all bundled up in an intangible sense of the East that would win awards, international prestige, and money for Japan.

## Performance of the East

All of the pressure from across the world and from the government did not mean that Japanese artists were not themselves willing to pander. Many artists, who had lost their patrons when the feudal elite had been deposed, depended on exhibitions and export work for most of their income.<sup>73</sup> This, added with the fact that making art for export to enrich the country was seen by some as a patriotic duty,<sup>74</sup> and that art in Japan had traditionally been defined differently than in the West<sup>75</sup> and wasn't treated with the same reverence as "fine art," meant that many artists were happy to create whatever would sell. Their eagerness to please their new, foreign audience is most clear when examining Satsuma ceramics of the Meiji period.

The idea of Satsuma ware as it came to be known in exhibitions and export markets was somewhat of a Western invention. The Satsuma domain was home to a number of different styles, only one of which was the enameled *nishikide* (named after the ornate patterns of brocade) that became so popular in Paris.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, this relatively new style, less than a century old at the time, became known in the West only as "Satsuma,"<sup>77</sup> as if it were the

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73 Clare Pollard, "Gorgeous with Glitter and Gold: Miyagawa Kōzan and the Role of Satsuma Export Ware in the Early Meiji Ceramic Industry," In *Challenging Past and Present: The Metamorphosis of Nineteenth-Century Japanese Art* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 139.

74 Pollard, "Gorgeous with Glitter and Gold," 135

75 Itani, *Export Porcelain from Seto in the Meiji Era*, 36.

76 Pollard, "Gorgeous with Glitter and Gold," 138.

77 *Ibid.*, 138.

only style that mattered in the centuries-old history of Satsuma earthenware. The pieces were prized among exhibition-goers for their ivory glaze, floral patterns, and gold highlights,<sup>78</sup> and potters around Japan looking to sell to foreigners began recreating those elements to create imitation Satsuma wares from Kyōto, Kōbe, and Yokohama, as well as traditional ceramic manufacturing centers like Seto.<sup>79</sup> These new studios, like the Kinkōzan studio in Awata, could mass produce these wares at significantly higher volumes than the original studios in Satsuma, so much so that in England, for example, as many as ninety-nine percent of Satsuma-style pieces had come from Awata.<sup>80</sup> In truth, these works were an entirely separate style that could be easily differentiated from ko-nishikide by anyone familiar with both styles, but the public was so enamored with the exotic luxury of new Satsuma, and so easily fooled by roughness, archaic designs, and floral patterns that the new pieces sold easily, and when they were found out they were decried as counterfeit.<sup>81</sup> An entirely new variety of ceramic had been produced for the express purpose of performing exoticism to the West, and it flew off the shelves.

It wasn't just the pottery itself that performed to the West, however. The presentation of the works to Western audiences on the retail end was deliberately embellished in order to make them seem like a part of old Japan rather than a modern innovation of style. At exhibitions, organizers frequently made use of ornate displays based on traditional Japanese religious structures to house the works,<sup>82</sup> even hiring geisha to serve drinks at one exhibition.<sup>83</sup> Some artists would sell their Satsuma pieces to domestic curio shops in treaty ports like Yokohama, rather than exporting them, for tourists who were more likely to trust in the age and value of a piece if they had to hunt for it<sup>84</sup> among mountains of exotic bric-a-brac. These sellers often intentionally dirtied and stained their wares in order to make them seem like antiques,<sup>85</sup> in a manner reminiscent of the tactics used by Hayashi Tadamasu (1853-1906) at his print shop in Paris, which sold prints that had been purposely faded, for Westerners

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78 Ibid., 139.

79 Ibid., 139.

80 Ibid.

81 Ibid., 140-1.

82 Manuel Schilcher, "Japan Debuts in the West: Historic World Fairs on Display," in *Appropriate Japan: How Western Art Prepared a Nation for War* (Linz: University of Art and Design Linz, 2020), 5.

83 Schilcher, "Invented Tradition," 31.

84 Pollard, "Gorgeous with Glitter and Gold," 140.

85 Ibid.

suspicious of fresh color, in a shop that deliberately treated customers with an air of mystery, and gave the impression of a quiet, empty curio shop from the far East.<sup>86</sup> The implication is clear: to the average Western tourist, the “true” Japan is something ancient, elusive, and slightly tea-stained that can only be found when sifting through junk in a dimly-lit, dusty shop in the middle of a tourist town. The sellers of the works were happy to provide the dusty shops and the tea stains, knowing they would increase the prices they could charge. Artists and merchants alike carefully curated an exotic aesthetic in order to attract Western audiences to their products, and at the center of that aesthetic was the new Satsuma style.

The vase made by Kinkōzan Sōbei VII (1867-1927) (Fig. 8) is characteristic of the new Satsuma style as realized by one of its most successful producers. It has the classic components: ivory-colored glaze, a liberal application of gold, and abundant floral motifs: what appear to be plum blossoms and chrysanthemums (a herald of spring and a symbol of Imperial power, respectively)<sup>87</sup> in this case. All of these components, to a Western eye, heighten the sense of luxury that had come to be associated with the art of Japan because of the pieces historically selected for exhibitions. As always, there is a natural spirit to the florals and the wooded landscape, made ethereal by the empty background, either solid-color ivory or gold, or literally intangible given the holes between the plum blossoms that allow a view of the interior of the vase, cast in shadow and obscured by vegetation, just like the scene in the Kasamatsu print. Also obscured by vegetation is the central landscape, showing a *daimyō* (a sort of hereditary governor) and his procession of courtiers and attendants,<sup>88</sup> an irrelevant subject to domestic audiences since Japan’s feudal domains had already been abolished.<sup>89</sup> It is doubly anachronistic next to the chrysanthemums; a symbol of the obsolete bakufu is out of place next to a symbol of the emperor. This scene is just another case of the romanticization of Japan’s past by a Japanese studio for its Western customers. The smaller landscape above, a Shintō shrine, makes more sense, though it certainly still would have fit within Western stereotypes of Japan as spiritual and mystical. In this new style can be seen the taste of Western audiences for

86 Meech-Pekarik, “Early Collectors of Japanese Prints and the Metropolitan Museum of Art,” 96-7

87 RISD Museum, *Nuance in Nature*, 6.

88 J. Earle, “Japanese Art of the Meiji Period: Vase,” Khalili Collections, Accessed July 16, 2022, <https://www.khalilicollections.org/collections/japanese-art-of-the-meiji-period/khalili-collection-japanese-art-of-the-meiji-period-vase-s159/>.

89 Pollard, “Gorgeous with Glitter and Gold,” 134.

the exotic Orient, carefully catered to by studios that had mastered the exact right combination of old and new.

## Defining Japan

The East as it was presented to Western collectors and tourists in Japanese export art was not wholly irrelevant to Japan. While the stereotypes of femininity, barbarism, tranquility, mystery, spirituality, and instinctual harmony with nature often attached themselves to the depictions of flowers, animals, and landscapes so common in pandering export art of the Japonisme period, those subjects had a history that began long before they had been co-opted into Western imaginations. As Japan was trying to create an identity for itself that would meet the approval of the Western powers, it often looked to the same things that Europe did. Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901), an ardent modernist, once proclaimed that “If we compare the knowledge of the Japanese and Westerners, in letters, in techniques, in commerce, or in industry... there is not one thing in which we excel... All that Japan has to be proud of... is its scenery.”<sup>90</sup> While this was no doubt meant as a rejection of Japanese tradition, designed to spur change in a Western direction, in the rampant conservatism of the decades following the initial rapid Westernization of the Meiji period, many hoping to bring back Japan’s supposed “unique essence” agreed, after a fashion. At a time when Japan’s international reputation was being built on art that emphasized nature, so was its domestic sense of self:

These designs played to both foreign and domestic audiences. Designs destined for the foreign market emphasized Japan's spiritual singularity and responded to foreign market demands for themes that emphasized nature. Landscape painting and bird-and-flower painting (*kachoga*) were the most common genres sent abroad; they complemented foreign perceptions of an intuitive Japanese grasp of nature. Domestically, the same designs became symbols of Japan's revolutionary political and artistic focuses, such as the ascendancy of imperial authority after hundreds of years of samurai rule.<sup>91</sup>

The stereotypically pan-Asian, spiritual and nature-loving Japan that could be seen in international exhibitions in the floral patterns, animals, and landscapes that appealed to the Western eye was the same Japan presented at home as Okakura Kakuzō and his influential network organized domestic exhibitions, collected works for a national museum, founded new art institutions, and

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<sup>90</sup> Wakabayashi and Pyle, “Meiji Conservatism,” 101.

<sup>91</sup> Sabin, “Merchandising Art and Identity in Meiji Japan,” 318.

wrote extensively on the history of Asian and Japanese art.<sup>92</sup> It is hard to deny that Okakura's pan-Asianism and pro-tradition stances had an impact on narratives of Japan's history and culture, as Japanese audiences were shown the same pseudo-historic art that had been sent to Paris,<sup>93</sup> while already-impooverished Buddhist temples had their relics systematically confiscated so that Japan's art history canon (and nationalist narrative) could include them.<sup>94</sup> As the new imperial incarnation of the Japanese nation was still solidifying, it created a national identity for itself based on its already-formed identity abroad and its long and varied artistic tradition (including recent works), which had long been seen both domestically and abroad as an indication of Japan's civilized nature.<sup>95</sup>

Ohara Koson's *kachō-e* stemmed from a tradition hundreds of years old, and one that indeed had become symbolic of Japan's history.<sup>96</sup> Yet his works, though they did preserve some elements of the dying *Shijō* school, like an often whimsical treatment of animal subjects, were far from traditional. In his *Five White Egrets* (Fig. 9) can be seen a number of ways in which he departed from convention. The forms of his egrets are almost realistic, and with sharp outlines that contrast with the traditional impressionistic style. He uses debossing to add texture without interrupting the brilliant white of the egrets' coats, which especially stands out against the dark background, a feature he often used that departs from the *Shijō* convention of leaving the ground fully or mostly blank, in the style of Chinese ink painting. The darkness and texture are both rather reminiscent of lacquer, which had in the past been used as a medium for bird-and-flower motifs, and was likely a deliberate way to connote a broad sense of Eastern luxury to the same Western audiences that eagerly collected *inrō*. Perhaps most daring of all, there is not a single flower or plant to be seen, meaning that this work technically cannot even be considered *kachō-e*, which literally means "flower-bird picture," and typically requires both animals and plants. Though more recent artists had often prioritized animal subjects over plants, they always included some type of vegetation.<sup>97</sup> While Koson certainly had every right to adapt his work to modernity and his own tastes, it should be noted that his primary audience was made up of

92 Schilcher, "Japan Debuts in the West," 10-12.

93 Ibid., 11.

94 Schilcher, "Invented Tradition," 46-8.

95 Buruma, *Inventing Japan 1853-1964*, 12-13.

96 Harkins, "Shijō Bird, Animal and Flower Prints in the Meiji Period," 10-11.

97 Harkins, "Shijō Bird, Animal and Flower Prints in the Meiji Period," 11.

Western importers, who loved prints of animals mostly because they satisfied a common stereotype, while critics have called Koson's style a Westernized bastardization of traditional *kachō-e*.<sup>98</sup> The problem with catering to Western exoticism is not that it makes the artwork “un-Japanese” or invalid in any way, but rather that it promotes the view implied by exoticism that the West is central and all other civilizations and cultures are peripheral, strange, and dependent on their orbit about the West. The West's power to define and narrate grows, while Japan's art history canon becomes a stereotyped version of itself. Indeed, Koson's art, stereotypes and all, became a part of the “unified Japanese style”<sup>99</sup> that was used to build Japan's national reputation and narrative. It surely did not help that many of his subjects, including egrets,<sup>100</sup> as well as the subjects depicted in the works above, had a not insignificant history of inclusion in *kachō-e*, and had symbolic meaning locally even as they meant something quite different to their primary audience abroad. The fact that the piece could be construed to be relevant to Japanese audiences was a bonus, but not the goal, as the greatest concern of the artist was to create a work that would sell, but that bonus would certainly have served to make the stereotyped narrative more convincing. Perceptions of Japan as it was becoming a modern nation-state, not only in the West, but also within Japan itself, were in large part based on self-stereotyping works of art that were designed to fit the Western taste for the exotic. What the West decided was validly Japanese became the essence of Japan's supposed character.

## The Essence of the East

Koson's *Cockatoo and Pomegranate* (Fig. 1) has many of the features common to West-oriented export art of the Japonisme period. The focus is on a natural subject, both animal and botanical. The ground is solid-color, giving a sense of etherealness and mystery to the piece, while the black hints at the luxury of lacquer. Most of the color is muted where there is any, except for the exotic, Eastern fruit that stands out in bright crimson. The bird is also meant to be exotic, since like the pomegranate it is no more from Japan than it is from Europe, but represents a sort of pan-Asian aesthetic that was more real in Western discourse than the real Japan. These are the components, among others, that came together not only to shape generations of Japanese

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> MFA Boston, “White Heron and Iris,” Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Accessed July 26, 2022, <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/235524>.

art, but also to construct a narrative about Japan as the harmonious, tranquil, spiritual, archaic, and nature-friendly alternative to the West's greed, violence, progressiveness, and industrial ugliness that many in Gilded-age Europe and America were desperate to escape by any means. That narrative, conceived as Japan was first being forcefully opened to the world, became the narrative that defined Japan as a state and a people. A combination of political, economic, and personal factors led to a widespread incorporation of the West's exoticizing gaze into the subjects, techniques, and motifs of decades of Japanese artistic production, reinforcing that narrative and creating a national character for Japan that was based in Western imagination. The West's hegemony over the global market for Japanese art became a hegemony over the privilege to define what Japan is, and the definitions that came rushing out of Vienna, Paris, Chicago, and Boston confirmed already-old narratives about the East, which were then reflected in the art sold in those same cities. It was Western audiences' power to define Japan that led to Japan's self-reconstruction in its 19th and 20th-century art, and it was Westerners' tastes for the exotic and surreal that turned Japan, through its art, into a distant and mysterious fairy-land full of flowers, birds, mountains, and evening fog. The authority of the West to validate and critique Japanese culture was such that craftspeople and political institutions alike tripped over themselves to meet the standards placed on them, a religion was raised from the grave, and a new national identity was created that matched the mythologized Japan of export art. Japan became nothing more than the mist that mingles with the willow leaves and the paper lanterns that light up the night: in other words, a fantasy rendered in ink.

## Glossary

- Bakufu (幕府) - “tent government” - the military government of feudal Japan
- Chōnin (町人) - “town people” - the lower merchant and artisan classes of feudal Japan
- Daimyō (大名) - “great name” - the ruling elite/aristocracy of feudal Japan
- Inrō (印籠) - “seal box” - small boxes of lacquered wood worn on the belt as a pocket
- Kabuki (歌舞伎) - “song dance technique” - a traditional style of theater popular with the lower classes of the Edo period
- Kachō-e (花鳥絵) - “flower bird picture” - a style of ukiyo-e that featured natural subjects up close, based on a Chinese style of painting
- Kachōga (花鳥画) - “flower bird painting” - the style of painting on which kachō-e is based, practiced in both China and Japan
- Kinji (金地) - “gold ground” - in this usage, a style of lacquer decoration where gold dust is applied to wet lacquer, coated with a layer of clear lacquer, and polished
- Meisho-e (名所絵) - “famous place picture” - a style of ukiyo-e that depicted iconic landscapes from around Japan
- Netsuke (根付) - “root attached” - a fastener, often intricately carved, that attached an inrō to one’s belt
- Nishikide (錦手) - “brocade hand” - a style of pottery native to the Satsuma domain in western Japan, characterized by liberal gilding, ivory glaze, and brocade-like patterns
- Onchi zuroku - abbreviation of “onko chishin zuroku” (温故知新図録) - “consider old idea new illustrated record” - a catalog of sample works provided by the Meiji government to help artists adapt their styles to Western preferences
- Samurai (侍) - “warrior” - the elite class of warriors that served the bakufu
- Sanbasō (三番叟) - “third gentleman” - a dance traditionally done to mark the opening of a kabuki season
- Shijō (四条) - “four division” - a school of kachōga named after the street in Kyōto where it was headquartered
- Shin Hanga (新版画) - “new woodblock print” - a style of printing that incorporated Western concepts of shading and linear perspective
- Shintō (神道) - “god path” - a polytheistic religion native to Japan
- Tō (塔) - “tower” - in this usage, a pagoda, or multi-tiered religious structure important to Buddhism
- Torii (鳥居) - “bird seat” - a gateway that marks the entrance to a Shintō shrine
- Ukiyo-e (浮世絵) - “floating world pictures” - a genre of woodcut prints and other reproducible media traditionally characterized by depictions of the “floating world,” the Buddhist term for the illusory pleasures of kabuki theater and brothels
- Yōga (洋画) - “Western painting” - a style of painting that became popular in the Meiji period for its adoption of Western styles and themes

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# Japanese Imperial Education in Korea and Taiwan and the lens of Reciprocal Assimilation

Devin Sanders

*Devin Sanders is a 2023 graduate from Brigham Young University with a major in History (East Asia emphasis). Having been born in Kobe, Japan and lived in the United Arab Emirates for 15 years, he has been exposed to a variety of cultures throughout his life. Focusing on modern-era history, he primarily studies Chinese, Korean, and especially Japanese history with a special interest in the history of education. He will be working as an ALT in the Japanese English Teaching (JET) program in August and will be returning to the US to attend Columbia University where he will work towards a Masters of Asian Studies in September of 2024.*

## Introduction

During the 19th century, the nation of Japan underwent a variety of political, social, and economic changes, including but not limited to events such as the Meiji Restoration in 1868 and the first Sino-Japanese War in 1894–1895. This paradigmatic shift sought to usher in a new era of Japanese dominance on both regional and international scales. Japanese dominance and international relevance, as indicated by Meiji-era domestic and foreign policy, was to be realized through adopting demonstratively successful policies, technologies, ideals, governments, militaries, economic approaches, and even the appearances of Western powers.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, influential Japanese leaders such as Fukuzawa Yukichi believed that “the levels of intelligence of Japanese and Westerners, in literature, the arts, commerce, or industry, from the biggest things to the least, in a thousand cases or in one, there is not a single area in which the other side is not superior to us,” conceding that the West was vastly superior in its technology and perceived ‘intelligence,’ and that Japan should learn from these differences to become a civilized country.<sup>2</sup>

Becoming a modernized and Westernized nation during the 19th century was particularly defined by a nation's ability to acquire colonial territory and towards the ultimate goal of building a powerful empire. The

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1 Meiji era political structures, policies, and logistics often either mirrored or were entirely modeled after their Western counterparts. One key example of this includes the Meiji constitution which acted as the foundation for the era's socio-political activity. Promulgated in 1889, the Meiji constitution saw to the creation of a national Diet and emphasized Western ideals of equality while also maintaining a national identity grounded in revering a central emperor; The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, “Meiji Restoration: Japanese history,” *Britannica*, accessed on March 3, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Meiji-Restoration>.

2 Fukuzawa Yukichi, “An Outline of a Theory of Civilization,” in *Volume Two Sources of Japanese Tradition 1600 to 2000 Part Two: 1868 to 2000*, trans. Dilworth and Hurst (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 41.

importance of imperial power as a measure of international influence and modernity was especially emphasized by both a continually growing United States and Britain: the two most powerful Western powers during the 19th century. Japan, therefore, sought to incorporate an imperial system into their government as a means of Westernizing, modernizing, and further centralizing their political system, placing the Meiji Emperor at the top of the social hierarchy. Policies and documents demonstrating an emphasis on gaining colonies and building a powerful empire in Japan during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are especially visible in the Meiji Constitution of 1889, the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890, and the Treaty of Portsmouth of 1905. As political and international focus shifted towards national and Imperial Japanese interests, the development of a powerful and centralized metropole, and the acquisition of colonial territory, the rhetoric that surrounded its foreign and domestic policy evolved simultaneously.

The systematic evolution of Japan's government and military structures during the 19th century ultimately led towards Meiji era armament, war, and the procurement of colonial territories in the form of Taiwan and Korea after the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) in 1910, respectively. These rapid changes all contributed to Japan becoming an imperial power, allowing it to procure land, gain access to key resources such as iron, coal, gold, arable land, and in gaining access to populations of millions of their East Asian 'brethren' that they would eventually seek to mold into proper subjects through assimilatory methods.<sup>3</sup> Methods of attempted assimilation most notably included education—either generalized or geared directly towards the national language or *kokugo* (国語), Japanese. Imperial education was crafted to not only be administered and organized in a systematic manner (ultimately allowing for Japanese assimilation to cast a wide net), but also targeted key colonial demographics such as children and young adults that would eventually take account for the future success of the colony. Education, therefore, grew to be a key aspect of Japanese rule over its colonies, first in Taiwan in 1895 and later in Korea by 1910. Historian Patricia Tsurumi particularly emphasizes this as she states that in Taiwan “education was an instrument for the attainment [of assimilation]” that consisted of “Japanese language and arithmetic, some basic sciences, a considerable amount of classical Chinese to attract gentry

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3 A. J. Grajdanzev, “Formosa (Taiwan) Under Japanese Rule” *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Sep. 1942): 320, 323; Catherine Porter, “Korea and Formosa as Colonies of Japan” *Far Eastern Survey*, 1936, Vol. 5, No. 9 (Apr. 22, 1936): 83-84.

parents, and singing and physical educational exercises to win the children.”<sup>4</sup> The Japanese colonial government played to a variety of audiences to achieve this goal, thereby enforcing a rigid education system based on the overarching objective of assimilation. Some of the most important of these measures were first enacted in Taiwan, in which students were funneled from preexisting traditional schools into newly created Japanese schools (often at the primary level), information was censored and/or streamlined in approved textbooks and standardized curriculums, the adoption of Japanese surnames were made mandatory, and traditional cultural practices were replaced by Japanese cultural practices both in private and public spheres where compliance could be closely monitored.<sup>5</sup> Similar educational policies would be repeated in Korea a little over a decade later, all working towards the same ultimate goal: assimilation into the Japanese metropole. Reiterated by historian Ronald Toby, the “purpose of education in the ‘peninsula’ as Japanese officialdom called Korea, was clearly defined at the outset as the ‘development of loyal subjects in accordance with the intent of the rescript [on education].’”<sup>6</sup> Education as a key of assimilation was therefore implemented throughout Japan’s colonies in varying institutions with the goal of developing these loyal subjects in mind; including elementary schools, high schools, universities, and government programs.

While the Japanese Empire's colonial relationship with Taiwan and Korea was undoubtedly unequal—the Japanese Empire exerting its power and influence even to a coercive extent in Korea when it brutally suppressed peaceful protest during the May 1<sup>st</sup> movement—there were also attempts by the Japanese colonial governments and Japanese citizens (both in the metropole and abroad) to establish and maintain a symbiotic relationship and (at least to some extent) learn about the culture, language, and experience of the colonies that the Japanese Empire held. This is especially relevant to

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4 Patricia Tsurumi, “Education and Assimilation in Taiwan under Japanese Rule, 1895–1945,” *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 13 No. 4 (1979): 619.

5 Among these practices including adopting Japanese names in replacement of one’s original Korean family name and observing traditional Japanese Shinto religious practices (such as worshipping at Shinto temples on a regular basis). These assimilatory practices were especially relevant in schools as teachers (often either being ethnically Japanese or approved by the Japanese colonial government) were the medium through which Korean and Taiwanese children would have these rules introduced to them and promptly enforced; Hildi Kang, *Under the Black Umbrella: Voices from Colonial Korea, 1910–1945* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), 111–122.

6 The Imperial Rescript on Education was first created in 1890 by the Meiji government, however the rescript was once again extended towards Korea in 1911 after it had been annexed as a Japanese colony. This was done in order to both establish a sense of commonality with ethnic Koreans and to imbue a sense of greater national belonging in the Korean population; Ronald Toby, “Education in Korea under the Japanese: Attitudes and Manifestations” Occasional Papers on Korea, No. 1 (1974): 58.

education as ethnic Japanese both living in colonies abroad and the metropole would either experience firsthand or learn secondhand about the colonies that the Empire had subjugated. The assimilatory policies employed in Korea and Taiwan worked to integrate these colonies and their inhabitants into the Japanese Empire. As ethnic Koreans and Taiwanese began to enter the metropole, they also exposed ethnic Japanese in educational hubs such as Tokyo to the lives of colonized subjects in a more personal manner. Reciprocal assimilation therefore took place as Taiwan and Korea were respectively inducted into the wider Japanese empire because, at the same time that the Japanese Empire sought to assimilate its colonial subjects, Japan too became a part of a wide-reaching colonial family. This would ultimately garner a variety of reactions from its ethnic inhabitants: negative, positive, and even indifferent in nature. Indeed, ethnic Japanese were not monolithic in their opinions of either imperialism or colonial assimilation. Perspectives and experiences gained by Japanese people regarding ethnic Korean and Taiwanese individuals, now brought into a cohesive empire, invariably brought ethnic Japanese closer to the territories that their nation sought to subjugate. Historical analysis of this time period, therefore, benefits from recognizing the reciprocal qualities of Japanese colonial assimilation as it further contributes to evaluations of the Japanese total empire: Japanese citizens sent out from the metropole were indeed assimilatory factors themselves that also experienced a degree of reciprocal assimilation. Ethnic Japanese were especially impacted by newly gained ethnic Taiwanese and Korean brethren attending university in the metropole as illustrated through stories of Pak Sunch'on, Hong Ulsu, Mr. Cho, and in other situations such as Chou Wan-yao's story. The growing exposure through education emphasized the enrichment of both Japanese and colonial culture, language, and identity as this newfound 'imperial family' changed in relation to one another. As ethnic Korean and Taiwanese were pulled by assimilation towards the metropole for education, ethnic Japanese became more than just Japanese, instead becoming members of a wider Japanese Empire in tandem with their newly-gained colonial brethren.

## Replacing Local Legacy Educational Institutions

Prior to Japan's annexation of both Korea and Taiwan in 1910 and 1895 respectively, both territories had thousands of schools ranging from informal to formal, elementary to university, and religiously sponsored (such as Buddhist and Confucian schools) to secular. The most popular of these schools included the *mdang*, western, and provisional schools in Korea and traditional Chinese schools in Taiwan. The *seodang*, or village school, were

traditional establishments for the education of boys ages 6–17 in Chinese calligraphy, Chinese poetry, the Confucian classics, and teachings on self-cultivation.<sup>7</sup> Though some girls would be admitted into these traditional village schools by 1900, *seodang* schools primarily consisted of male pupils and were also exclusively taught by male teachers.<sup>8</sup> Western schools in Korea were comparatively few—though they began rapidly expanding until the Japanese annexed the peninsula—and would also be pressured and (although rarely) closed under the Japanese government-general throughout the colonial occupation (1910–1945). The education that existed prior to Japanese colonization was not centralized and could therefore be controlled (explicitly by controlling teaching materials, strictly monitoring the actions and statements of teachers, and requiring certain classes to be taught in Japanese), or inhibited once the Japanese government-general had been established by 1910. There were, however, some aspects of choice despite Japanese control of education as *seodang* “continued to be the most common schools” as they, according to Hildi Kang “posed no threat to the new rulers, for in them students learned only time-honored Chinese classics and Confucian ideals of hierarchy and loyalty” that coincided with the Japanese Empire’s goals of assimilation through education and establishing cultural and ideological commonalities.<sup>9</sup> Schools such as the *seodang* that could work to the Japanese Empire’s advantage would thereby either be incorporated into the Japanese assimilatory process or tolerated as “by 1910 Koreans could choose among modern schools built by Koreans, by newly arrived missionaries, or by the Japanese.”<sup>10</sup>

Taiwanese traditional schools were similar in their scope, purpose, and in their reception by the Japanese colonial government during the island’s occupation. Indeed, Chinese traditional schools in Taiwan also focused on the Confucian classics—specifically the *Analects*—and were primarily comprised of young and young-adult boys. Both traditional education systems were not only similar to one another but also similar, and therefore compatible, to Japanese education as establishments grounded in Confucian principles that used (although to varying degrees), the same writing script. Public discourse during the 1920s regarding Japanese colonial assimilation illustrated in accounts such

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7 Matthew Burt, “Education Inequality in the Republic of Korea: Measurement and Causes,” *BYU Sigma: Journal of Political and International Studies*, Vol. 24 (January 2006): 3.

8 Burt, “Education Inequality in the Republic of Korea,” 3; Yi Myonggu and William A. Douglas, “Korean Confucianism Today,” *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 40 (April 1967): 55.

9 Hildi Kang, *Under the Black Umbrella*, 37.

10 Kang, *Under the Black Umbrella*, 37.

as *Taiwan dōkasaku ron* (On the assimilative policy in Taiwan 台湾同化策論) by Shibata Sunao particularly emphasize the importance of focusing on these principles held in common. As summarized by historian Fong Shiaw-Chian, Sunao states that “the ideals of Confucianism had been incorporated into the Japanese ‘national essence’ (*kokutai* 國體) and that their promotion would contribute to assimilation,” reiterating the importance of “the government-general to coordinate the efforts of several civilian associations to change old customs” and even promoting “the learning of the Japanese language” as a key means of assimilation.<sup>11</sup> This contemporary discourse illustrates that there was significant involvement of ethnic Japanese in the conversation of their nation’s imperial aspirations while also demonstrating the unifying nature of assimilation built on a foundation of a cohesive, Confucian international identity. Though the traditional content of these schools were similar, there were far fewer schools available in Taiwan in its early colonization as compared to Korea. This likely benefited the goal of the Japanese Empire to assimilate its ethnic Taiwanese subjects as it allowed the colonial government to present Japanese education in a positive, benevolent light. As stated by historical writers Gary Davison and Barbra Reed, “Taiwanese were severely restricted in pursuit of higher education on [sic] Taiwan, and the most important positions in government went to the Japanese. The Japanese did, however, introduce universal education; as the Japanese era unfolded, a majority of the people on Taiwan gained at least a primary school level, rudimentary formal Japanese education in the Japanese language.”<sup>12</sup> Providing basic education during the formative years of ethnic Taiwanese lives—when Japanese officials believed was most essential for the ‘development of loyal subjects’ and their assimilation—would ultimately allow the Japanese Empire to improve Taiwanese lives while inwardly pushing those seeking higher education outwards towards the metropole. This gravitation towards the mainland illustrates further reciprocal assimilation as Taiwanese—as well as Koreans—lived in Japan in search of higher education, job opportunities, and new lives which invariably impacted ethnic Japanese living in the metropole. Korean individuals such as Mr. Yun, for example, recall the starkly different experience of being educated in Japan, stating that while in high school “the Japanese did not discriminate against us [ethnic Koreans],” he experienced a greater sense of isolation in Japan

11 Fong Shiaw-Chian. “Hegemony and identity in the colonial experience of Taiwan, 1895–1945.” In *Taiwan Under Japanese Colonial Rule 1895–1945: History, Culture, Memory*, Liao Ping-Hui and David Der-Wei Wang eds., (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 168.

12 Gary Marvin Davison and Barbara E. Reed, *Culture and Customs of Taiwan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press 1998), 19.

while studying at Tokyo Imperial University as “everyone was for themselves, they didn’t make friends or go to play or mix—even the Japanese students separated.”<sup>13</sup> Other colonial subjects such as Mr. Cho recalled experiencing discrimination in their metropole education from their imperial brethren, as they stated that “Japanese intentionally prevented Koreans from becoming college professors” at Keijo Imperial University.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, Japanese reactions to incoming ethnic Korean and Taiwanese students varied from welcoming, to indifference, to outright discrimination. Although opportunities for higher education were limited to a small number of ethnic Korean and Taiwanese students (primarily men) because of economic and bureaucratic constraints—these being made up of “ambitious members of favored [Taiwanese] gentry families,” and “a few sons [Korean youth] of wealthy families”—this population invariably exposed ethnic Japanese in the metropole to the shifting reality of their nation.<sup>15</sup>

As Japanese governments—general in both Taiwan and Korea were established in their respective time frames, pressures exerted on these traditional schools by Japanese officials in combination with the development of a new status quo that hinged on the accessibility of Japanese schools saw to the significant decline of traditional/alternative schooling as Japanese colonial schools continually grew. According to historian Patricia Tsurumi, Taiwan’s pupil population in traditional Chinese schools dropped from 30,000 in 1899 to 20,000 by 1907, a staggering trend that would continue into the 1910s and 1920s as Japanese schooling pivoted more fully from utilizing commonalities to embracing assimilation. This phasing out of traditional schooling in favor of novel Japanese schools created for assimilation was realized as, “throughout the 1910s the common schools put less and less emphasis upon Chinese lessons, making Chinese an optional subject in 1922”.<sup>16</sup> This allowed the Japanese education system to gradually fade out of traditional Chinese schooling and studies in lieu of studying the Japanese language, the importance of which being backed by economic and social consequences as even traditional Taiwanese parents “felt that their children needed Japanese language and modern subjects to win a comfortable and honored life in the new society.”<sup>17</sup>

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13 Vacante, “Japanese colonial education in Korea,” 155.

14 *Ibid.*, 207.

15 Davison and Reed, *Culture and Customs of Taiwan*, 19; Vacante, “Japanese colonial education in Korea,” 132.

16 Tsurumi, “Education and Assimilation in Taiwan under Japanese Rule, 1895–1945,” 619–621.

17 Patricia Tsurumi, “Chapter 7. Colonial Education in Korea and Taiwan,” *In The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945* eds. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, 275–311 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

The socioeconomic repercussions of opposing Japanese colonial policy and resisting assimilation were therefore a direct deterrent for many ethnic Taiwanese, ultimately contributing to increases in enrollments in Japanese schools that would grant some sense of stability for Taiwanese that now faced the reality of their nation becoming part of the larger Japanese Empire. Following a similar trend, Tsurumi points out that the number of institutions also rapidly declined stating that “the traditional Chinese schools which at the turn of the century had been strong competitors of the first Japanese educational efforts had largely faded from the scene: by 1922 they were down to ninety-four establishments with 3,664 pupils.”<sup>18</sup> As these schools declined and conformed to Japanese imperial education standards, reactions to Taiwanese assimilation from ethnic Japanese—living both in the metropole and in colonies abroad—would become increasingly complicated by the reality that Japanese people were now part of a wider imperial family. Indeed, reactions and policy changes from influential Japanese figures such as government-general Den Kenjirō (1855-1930) who actively integrated Taiwanese students with Japanese language proficiency with Japanese students, not only reinforcing a sense of positive assimilation, but also facilitated further reciprocal assimilation in educational spaces illustrate the various reactions to Japanese colonialism and imperial education both by ethnic Japanese and their newly gained imperial brethren.<sup>19</sup>

By comparison Korean traditional schools actually experienced an increase—though these schools were still under the same pressure and standardization as enforced by the Japanese Government-General. The number of primary education schools in Korea for example, including *seodang* schools, increased from 343 in 1912 to 3,263 in 1942 with both private and public primary schools showing rapid growth.<sup>20</sup> Such an increase in traditional schools illustrates how Korean assimilation was unique. Indeed, a stronger sense of a Korean national identity among ethnic Korean colonial subjects aided in the preventing traditional *seodang* schools from declining in Korea, combined with a demand for educational growth facilitated by the Government-General that provided widespread education regardless of socio-economic background facilitated the increase of traditional education under Japanese

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18 Tsurumi, “Education and Assimilation in Taiwan under Japanese Rule, 1895-1945,” 621.

19 Ibid., 623.

20 Oh and Kim, “The Increase of Educational Opportunity in Korea under the Japanese Occupation: For Whom the Bell Told?,” *The Seoul National University Journal of Education Research*, Vol. 8 (1997): 86.

occupation.<sup>21</sup> Growing opportunities and facilities for education for Korean subjects, however, were not left alone by the Japanese government. Indeed, control over public and private schools regardless of their nature—whether they were of Korean, Western/missionary, or Japanese origin or sponsorship—was experienced in Korea in a similar fashion to Taiwan. Korean schools were directly monitored and controlled as the “Japanese Government-General rapidly centralized the administration of public education...The school curriculum also became standardized and made consistent with new textbooks compiled by the Government-Gen [*sic*].”<sup>22</sup> These policies not only saw to the creation of a controlled environment through which ethnic Koreans could be assimilated by the Japanese government, but also would prompt reactions from ethnic Japanese as families living both in the metropole and in colonies abroad continued to learn about, interact with, and react to their ethnic Korean and Taiwanese imperial brethren. Ethnic Japanese were now part of a greater imperial “family” that sought to grow closer together through assimilatory education. Developments of Taiwanese and Korean education, therefore, had a deep impact on both ethnic Taiwanese and Korean subjects and on ethnic Japanese as they grew accustomed to the imperial developments of their nation and reacted to the influx of their new brethren to the metropole. From developing rigidly standardized primary education to the maintenance of similar Confucian bases in colonial schools, and to the mobilization of ethnic Taiwanese and Koreans to the metropole due to a lack of higher education in their respective colonies, Japanese colonial policies on education in both Korea and Taiwan invariably linked ethnic Taiwanese, Korean, and Japanese subjects together under an imperial family that impacted all involved both through assimilation and reciprocal assimilation.

## Oral Histories

The ethnic Taiwanese and Korean experience can be extrapolated through a variety of mediums such as diaries, textbooks, government reports, and even pictures. Interviews of individuals who experienced imperial schooling in compilations of oral histories, however, provide unique perspectives that not only unearth key memories attributed to Japanese imperial education, but also illustrate an invaluable aspect of hindsight, memory, and modern-day clarity that ground information in both the legacy

21 Oh and Kim, “The Increase of Educational Opportunity in Korea,” 91–92.

22 Yunshik Chang, “Growth of Education in Korea 1910–1945,” *Bulletin of the Population and Development Studies Center*, Vol. 4 (November 1975): 41.

and implications of Japanese imperialism. Oral histories provide especially valuable insights into the process and impact of assimilation in Korea and Taiwan, as well as how education and language played a significant role in the colonial nation at the individual level. Furthermore, oral histories provide glimpses of how ethnic Japanese reacted to their newly gained Taiwanese and Korean brethren and how they grappled with becoming part of a larger Japanese Empire in a process of reciprocal assimilation.

## Korean Oral Histories

Oral histories of ethnic Koreans that experienced Japanese colonialism from 1910–1945 are a particularly helpful source for understanding both the logistics of and deeper experiences associated with the Japanese colonial government (or Chōsen government) in its dealings with education. These oral histories also provide insights into Japanese reaction to Korean and Taiwanese colonization, their entering the metropole for higher education, and the enrichment of the Japanese Empire through further exposure. Influential compilations of oral histories such as Hildi Kang’s *Under the Black Umbrella* and Russel Anthony Vacante’s “Japanese colonial education in Korea, 1910–1945” provide an exceptional case study for understanding assimilatory practices in Chōsen Korea and for gleaning insights on how reciprocal assimilation occurred during Japanese occupation. A variety of Kang’s interviews with individuals such as Pak Songp’il, Hong Ulsu, and Yang Songdok illustrate the extent to which Japanese colonial education and pressures for assimilation not only impacted them and their families, but also influenced ethnic Japanese around them to draw closer to Korean culture and life in a reciprocal—albeit unequal—fashion. Pak Songp’il, for example, tells the story of his aunt Pak Sunch’on, an ethnic Korean teacher in the seaport town of Masan. Pak was arrested and fired from her position as a teacher for participating in a demonstration against Japanese colonialism, forcing her to have to change her name to “Pak Myongyol” and “escape to Tokyo.”<sup>23</sup> This story, however, in addition to illustrating the high degree to which Japanese colonial governments rigidly controlled its teachers and their actions, harshly suppressing demonstrations and open speech, also illustrates the gravitational pull that brought ethnic Koreans to the metropole as another policy of assimilation, as Pak Sunch’on “actually went there [to Tokyo] for two reasons: first to hide, and second, to get higher education.”<sup>24</sup> Her movement to Japan

<sup>23</sup> Kang, *Under the Black Umbrella*, 21–22.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 21–22.

depicts a specific, personal instance in which even an ethnic Korean woman during the 1920s sought a higher form of education in the Japanese metropole while also portraying the brutality of Japanese Imperialism and the prospects of assimilation. Pak Sunch'on would have invariably met with and impacted a variety of ethnic Japanese lives during her short time at college in Tokyo (she was caught after only 6 months), and though Pak Songp'il does not detail these interactions, Japanese reactions to her ethnicity, experiences, and identity were by no means monolithic in nature.

Hong Ulsu shares a particularly impactful story regarding Korean assimilation and Japanese imperial education, reiterating his father's lamentations about him attending a Japanese school as he remembered that traditional Korean parents believed that "children would turn into Japanese if they went to Japanese-built schools" and that Japanese went so far as having "dragged all of us [seodang students]—literally by our long braids—to the township office courtyard. They had the hair clippers ready and proceeded to cut our hair right there."<sup>25</sup> Not only were ethnic Koreans perceived by their parents as being in danger of 'becoming Japanese' through Japanese education, but they were also brutalized and forced to comply with assimilatory practices conducted by Japanese officials. Just as Pak Sunch'on had done, Hong also traveled to Japan in search of higher education. His story further reflects reciprocal assimilation on an individual level as he describes his life selling natto and eventually working for a *yakuza* boss to get by and support himself in Tokyo as he not only enters the society but also the workforce of the metropole, directly integrating himself as a member of the empire. His relationships in Japan further reinforce a degree of reciprocal assimilation as students a part of a communist study group, all of which being "all Japanese [except him]" sympathized with his experience and reassured him that they would "all work together to drive the Japanese out of your country."<sup>26</sup> This experience reinforces the opposite reaction that assimilatory education policies being implemented in both colonial and metropole settings have an impact on both sides as ethnic Japanese understand their place in a wider empire and are exposed to the stories, experiences, and cultures of their ethnic brethren. Indeed, the Japanese had a variety of reactions to Japanese Imperialism and the plight of their gained brethren as some sympathized with Korean struggles and even organized against the Japanese government. Yang Songdok's story further reinforces this as he recalls that in

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 31.

his integrated Korea-Japanese primary school there were no “conflicts among groups in the classroom along national lines” and that it was only later in high school that exclusionary groups formed.<sup>27</sup> This learned exclusion on national and ethnic lines came after primary school—primary school being the main and for many, the highest level of education the colonies received as a result of financial or geographical constraints, as early education was the most effective area for Japanese assimilation as the colonial government was concerned—emphasizes the assimilative properties of these primary schools as children interacted with one another on equal and undivided grounds.

Russel Anthony Vacante’s oral history on ethnic Koreans and their experiences with education during the Japanese occupational period (1910–1945) tell of similar experiences that further corroborate the stories and feelings of those interviewed by Hildi Kang. Grim stories about the extent of harsh Japanese control over Korean institutions such as Mr. Lim’s emphasize the extreme nature of the shift towards Japanese colonial education around 1930, as he states that his classmates had been “forced out of privately operated Korean schools and into government controlled institutions” and that their “Korean parents were forced to enroll their children into colonial educational institutions” in order to create the organized universal education that the Japanese colonial government strove for.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, both Mr. Lim and his father knew that in order to succeed in colonial Korea that they had to “live like the Japanese people.”<sup>29</sup> The assimilation came at a deep cultural, monetary, and social cost—ultimately changing the lives of both the oppressed ethnic Koreans and the Japanese oppressors as a whole. Mr. Cho, also interviewed by Vacante, describes the rigidity of Japanese primary school curriculums as he stated that “all of his middle school teachers, with the exception of one, were Japanese” and that “middle school officials allotted very few hours for the study of the Korean language,” as compared to Japanese language and subject learning.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, Japanese occupation had a direct impact on him as assimilatory policies impacted his everyday life. Mr. Cho’s memory also gleans insights from reciprocal assimilation as he describes having relationships and ideological alignments both with “students who were pro-Japanese and those students who actively engaged in political resistance,” illustrating the degree

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27 *Ibid.*, 45

28 Russel Anthony Vacante, “Japanese colonial education in Korea, 1910–1945: An oral history” Ph.D. dissertation (Buffalo: State University of New York at Buffalo, 1987), 250–251.

29 Vacante, “Japanese colonial education in Korea,” 252.

30 *Ibid.*, 203–204.

to which interactions in Keijo University—being made up overwhelmingly of Japanese students—further diffused political and social ideals within the wider Japanese imperial family.<sup>31</sup> Other Korean stories, such as those of Mr. Lim, illustrate the negative reactions that came about as a result of ethnic Japanese becoming part of a wider empire through reciprocal assimilation. Lim states that throughout his days in a Seoul commercial high school “all the Japanese students blamed” him for various issues because he was “Korean and looked down at me.”<sup>32</sup> Japanese imperial education in Korea as illustrated by these oral histories was not only rigid and brutal in its attempts to assimilate Korean subjects as citizens of the wider Japanese Empire, but also brought forth an opposite (yet, of course, disproportionate), reciprocal reaction as ethnic Japanese both in colonies abroad and in the metropole reacted to (both negatively and positively), learned about, and changed with regards to the Korean colonial experience, coming to understand their newfound place within a wider Japanese Empire as a part of an imperial family.

## Taiwanese Oral Histories

Though translated oral histories of ethnic Taiwanese experiences have not been collected to the same extent as translated oral histories of Korean experiences—there being comparatively fewer works published or compilations of oral histories—Taiwanese oral history sources tell very similar stories to those described in Kang and Vacante’s work on Korean experiences: pressure towards assimilation, and a sense that one must adhere to assimilation and the gravitate towards the metropole itself in order to prosper (such as through learning Japanese, complying with colonial forces, etc.). Indeed, the degree of opposition in Taiwan seems comparatively lesser than opposition and tenacity exercised in Korea against Japanese colonial forces. This is further reinforced by academic Leo T. S. Ching, who recognizes the general consensus as being that “If the Koreans speak of oppression and resistance [in regards to Japanese colonial rule], the Taiwanese speak of modernization and development.”<sup>33</sup> Though he states that this generalized and reductive statement should instead be attributed to Korea and Taiwan’s “precolonial and postcolonial histories than Japanese rule per se,” the consequent lack of any organized opposition to Japanese colonial forces in Taiwan lends itself to

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31 Ibid., 212.

32 Vacante, “Japanese colonial education in Korea,” 260

33 Leo T. S. Ching, *Becoming Japanese: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 8.

what seems to be a lower degree of animosity present in Taiwan as compared to Korea—holding this consensus as not incorrect, but only unrefined.<sup>34</sup> Sentiments of alternative Taiwanese views towards Japanese colonialism as compared to aforementioned Korean views seem present in the glimpses of oral histories that are available. Historian Chou Wan-yao’s recounting of the story of a Taiwanese-born former Japanese soldier, for example, depicts the emotions held by many ethnic Taiwanese that grew up exposed to Japanese colonial rule and education, as the soldier said that “My father has always told me since I was a child that we came from Mainland China and that we are not Japanese,” but also that “in that period [of fighting for Japan] we were Japanese, and would naturally show our loyalty to our country.”<sup>35</sup> Chou emphasizes that these statements are not contradictory, but rather that in respect to one’s country, “Taiwanese people were Japanese. But with respect to ethnicity, Taiwanese people were not Japanese.”<sup>36</sup> It was this complicated identity that arose from assimilation enforced by the Japanese colonial government through mediums such as education that blurred the lines between ethnicity and nationality, especially as one was concerned with the larger imperial system that they belonged to. Chou further analyzes this distinction and how Japan sought to close the rift between nationality and ethnicity with “slogans like ‘Japan and Taiwan are one’” that were delivered through Japanese education.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, though the attitudes towards policies of Japanese assimilation and colonial education varied between Korea and Taiwan, the same means of assimilation were employed in both colonies, ultimately resulting in the creation of a sort of “Japanified” (being assimilated to different degrees, Taiwan being more deeply changed as compared to Korea), nation that would seek to regain its national identity after the fall of the Japanese Empire in 1945.

## The Japanese Perspective

While its colonies were being assimilated through education, the education system in mainland Japan (the metropole) changed its content and language to include, accept, and justify the annexation of colonial territories such as Korea and Taiwan. Such language not only helped construct a greater sense of kinship and national pride in ethnic Japanese youth, but also

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34 Ching, *Becoming Japanese*, 8.

35 Wan-yao Chou, *A New Illustrated History of Taiwan*, trans. Carole Plackitt and Tim Casey (Taipei, Taiwan: SMC Publishing Inc., 2020), 302.

36 Chou, *A New Illustrated History of Taiwan*, 302.

37 Ibid.

experienced reciprocal assimilation as they were exposed to and learned more about Korean and Taiwanese culture, language, and daily life—both from secondhand sources such as textbooks and from these individuals moving to the metropole. Language imbued in Japanese education regarding Korean assimilation, for example, included statements that the annexation of Korea “will ensure forever the peace of East Asia,” stating that the annexation was in the interest of “solidifying the foundation of peace.”<sup>38</sup> The actions of the Japanese Empire were therefore presented to Japanese youth as benevolent. Indeed, there were pushes for ethnic Japanese to understand and even learn the Korean language and culture to become closer knit with their colonial brothers. Schools created for the instruction of the Korean language known as *kōshūkai* (class or short course) such as Kikukawa Keiun emphasized the importance of reciprocal assimilation in early 1910 in Tokyo, stating that “regarding 15,000,000 new brothers [i.e. Koreans], we cannot expect to guide them, become close to them and assimilate them as a new ‘Yamato Race (Japanese)’ without understanding the [Korean] language.”<sup>39</sup> Such sentiments illustrate the degree to which some Japanese understood—at least to some extent—the harrowing aspects of colonial assimilation and sought to learn about their ‘brethren’ in return. Though the colonization of Korea and Taiwan (to a lesser extent) by Japan was, of course, brutal, coercive, and destructive to Korean lives and culture, aspects of reciprocal assimilation towards Japan displays how total empire also included and emphasized the prospect of Japanese assimilating (though to a lesser extent), to its colonial territories in order to create a cohesive, well-functioning imperial system.

The presence of information about Korean and Taiwanese annexation and assimilation in Japanese textbooks—or subsequent lack thereof—provides further context for the presence of reciprocal assimilation in (though it was not close to the same systematic scale as present in Korea and Taiwan), the metropole itself. The Japanese history textbook for an all-girls school in Ichikawa (市川), for example, includes the Taiwanese subjugation in relation to the development of Ryukyu and Sakhalin and even discusses the potential subjugation of Korea through prominent figures in the Iwakura mission

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38 Yu-han Ma, “A Reactive Engineer: Japanese History Textbooks and the Construction of National Identity (1900–1926),” *UC Berkeley Undergraduate Journal* vol. 28 (2015): 72.

39 Kiyoe Minami, “Forgotten Reciprocity of Languages of the Colonizer and the Colonized: Korean Language Study of Japanese Colonial Agents,” BA thesis (Tokyo: International Christian University of Japan, 1996), 88–89.

such as Ito Hirobumi.<sup>40</sup> The presence of Taiwan and Korea-related content, however, was seemingly rare in available elementary and middle school history textbooks, as textbooks such as the Aomori (青森) published as late as 1935 included neither content on the colonial aspects of Japanese imperialism nor any mention of Taiwan or Korea, instead featuring information on early Japanese history, the emperor, and the Meiji Restoration.<sup>41</sup> The absence of this content in some textbooks further reinforces that while reciprocal assimilation did play a role in the lives of ethnic Japanese both in Japanese colonies and in the metropole, it was not nearly as widespread or systematic in nature as the assimilatory policies implemented in Taiwan and Korea by the Japanese Empire. Indeed, aspects of reciprocal assimilation such as reactions of everyday ethnic Japanese workers and students were limited to personal interactions and—as Japanese education was concerned during the Japanese Imperial era—were not widely analyzed in Japanese mainland educational spaces. The influence that ethnic Korean and Taiwanese subjects had on ethnic Japanese and their varied reactions and interactions with one another, however, shaped and continues to impact relations between Taiwan, Korea, and Japan today.

## Conclusion and Implications

The colonization of East Asian territories by the Japanese Empire such as Korea and Taiwan had a profound impact on the development of their respective cultures, languages, and political affairs (both domestic and international) that still impacts them today in 2022. The Japanese Empire's subjugation of these colonial territories took on a systematic approach—focusing particularly on assimilating colonial populations in order to create a larger, cohesive imperial sphere of influence that would supplement its economic, political, and military power. The education of these colonies, especially of younger generations through universal Japanese-sponsored or controlled primary schools, was one of if not the primary medium through which Japan sought to accomplish this assimilation. Implementing rigid curriculums grounded in the education of colonial subjects in Japanese, what was now their “national language” or *kokugo* (国語), Korean and Taiwanese children and young adults were expected to essentially become Japanese. Japanese Imperialism and its assimilatory policies also invariably impacted ethnic Japanese and elicited more than just support, but also a variety of

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40 Ichikawa Genzō and Tonegawa Yosaku, *Kokushi kyōkasho, Koutō onna gakkō yō, shita* (Tokyo: kokkō-sha, 1903), 115.

41 Aomori ken kyōikukai hen, *Aomori ken seinen gakkō kyōkasho kan ichi* (Tokyo: Tonbunkan, 1935), 98–120.

reactions including opposition, sympathy towards the colonized, and protest. Indeed, examples of reciprocal assimilation through education such as by ethnic Korean and Taiwanese individuals flocking to the metropole for higher education elicited these various reactions from ethnic Japanese as they too grappled with becoming part of a wider Japanese Empire. The enrichment of Japanese language, culture, and education that came as a result of Japanese colonization (either indirectly from Japanese sources or directly from ethnic Koreans or Taiwanese) therefore had a simultaneous impact on ethnic Japanese, bringing about (albeit unequal) points of reciprocal assimilation as ethnic Japanese continually learned about, sympathized with, and even lived among those their country had colonized. The reactions of ethnic Japanese to their nation's policies and the culture, experiences, and lives of their imperial brethren are also telling as they illustrate the contrary impacts of imperialism and reiterate that Japanese were neither monolithic nor homogenous. Indeed, colonization has an adverse impact on the citizens of the colonizers not in agreement with their national and international policies.

The process of colonization in Taiwan and Korea was undoubtedly painful—so too was the process of decolonization after the fall of the Japanese Empire in 1945. Indeed, wounds caused by decades of oppression and intense pressure to assimilate ran deep, as older generations in Korea and even Taiwan today harbor resentment and animosity towards Japan. Such issues still echo in current international affairs as Korea–Japan relations remain tense over trade tariffs and rejected imports, forced labor of Korean citizens in Japan, and a growing diplomatic rift grounded in centuries of conflict.<sup>42</sup> Issues over education in regards to assimilation and indoctrination also continue to exist to some extent, evidenced by the approval of the controversial *Fusosha* textbook by the Japanese Ministry of Education in 2005, as it contained militarist, revisionist, and reductive content that justified Japanese brutality and colonialism with the modernity it brought to the areas it colonized.<sup>43</sup> Though the textbook was never adopted by a school due to the general controversy and protests against *Fusosha*, the presence of militarist ideals in combination with the Japanese Ministry of Education approving the textbook brings to question the current state of Japanese memory and politics as it relates to

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42 Editors of the BBC, “South Korea and Japan's feud explained,” *BBC*, last modified on December 2, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-49330531>.

43 *Fusosha*, Atarashii Rekishi Kyokasho (Tokyo: Fusosha, 2005) 24–25, 31; Ako Inuzuka, “Remembering Japanese Militarism Through the *Fusosha* Textbook: The Collective Memory of the Asian-Pacific War in Japan,” *Communication Quarterly* vol. 61 (April 2013).

its colonial past. For many in Taiwan, Korea, and even Japan, the history of assimilation is not a part of the distant past. It is because of this that ordinary people, not just historians, must be aware of all aspects of their history. This includes not only the grimmer aspects of colonialism, assimilation, and war, but also the history of positive Japanese reception to their colonial brethren, the enrichment of Japanese culture, and the results of reciprocal assimilation as a whole.

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## Artworks

Yasmine Matar

*Yasmine Matar (She/They) is a Japanese major at Portland State University and will be graduating of spring 2024. After graduation Yasmine plans to move to Japan in hopes to attend language school or work for an international events organization to be able to connect with people around the world who enjoy Japanese media.*



### **Untitled**

This is a watercolor piece of Honebami Toshiro standing in the battlefield from a popular Japanese mobile game, Touken Ranbu.



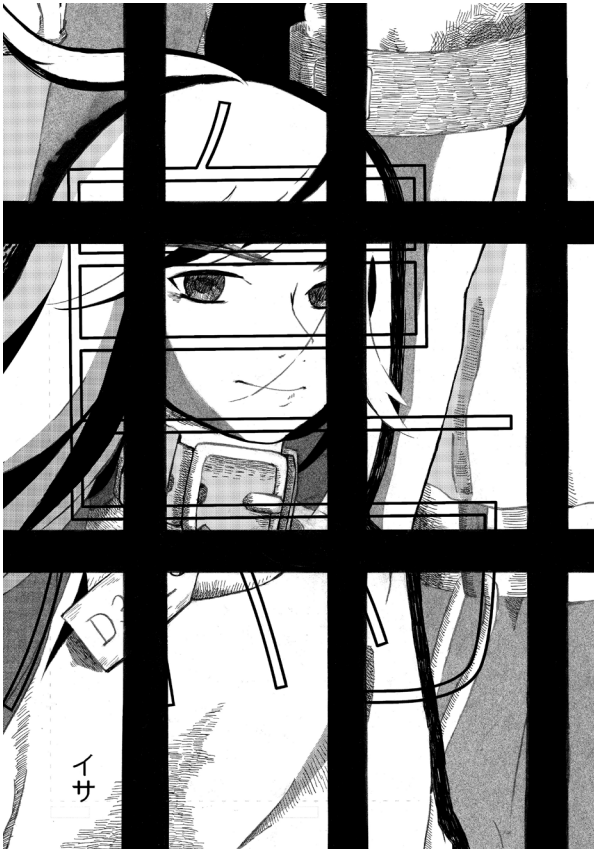
**Untitled**

This is an illustrated still life acrylic piece of a statue of a squid, watering can, and a small plush of a Sanrio character, Gudetama, dressed as another Sanrio character, Hangyodon.

## 鳥 (Tori)

Isabella Tan

Isabella Tan is an undergraduate at the University of North Texas, double majoring in Studio Art with a Concentration in Drawing and Painting and in Japanese with a minor in Chinese. She has explored different approaches, such as painting, drawing, and printmaking in illustrative works. Her work has been exhibited at Cora Stafford Gallery, College of Visual Arts & Design, and Greater Denton Arts Council's Patterson-Appleton Arts Center in Denton, Texas. Her work 鳥 (Tori) was published in a collection of comics 燃え尽き症候群 Burnout Syndrome, in 2022 by Kansai Gaidai University.



鳥 (Tori), inspired by Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* and Taizan 5's *Takopi's Original Sin*, portrays a dystopian system through a child's perspective. Its title comes from the association of the protagonist's relationship with the environment she lives in. The purpose of this work is to question the value of life through the protagonist's letter to her mother. This 8-page manga consists of manga drawing elements, such as *kake* (shadow), *koma* (panel), character art, etc., with traditional manga drawing materials, such as G-pen, Maru-pen, and *amiten* (screen tone).

# Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal

The purpose of the *Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal* is to encourage undergraduates to pursue scholarly inquiry into East Asian topics, ranging from political analyses to calligraphy samples. One of only a few journals in the United States devoted to undergraduates, the *Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal* seeks to recognize works of high academic quality which are read by the local and international community alike. The Journal seeks not only to draw attention to the Wittenberg University East Asian Studies program, but also to maintain its integral role in the program itself, seeking to broaden scholarly and popular perspectives on East Asia. It is read by the local and international community.

The *Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal* was initiated by a group of students in 1975 and is issued annually. From its beginning, students have directed all creative and managerial processes related to publication. Funded by Wittenberg University Student Senate, the Journal is an entirely student-initiated and student-directed endeavor, the major goal of which is to afford students the opportunity to participate in the rich scholarly dialogue of those interested in East Asia. As such, all decisions regarding the Journal, including the use of its name, will be made by the student editors in conjunction with the support provided by Student Senate and current advisor.

Please submit all work to our online system at:  
<http://wittprojects.net/ojs/index.php/wueasj/index>

All correspondence can be sent to:  
Dr. Nona Moskowitz  
*Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal* Adviser  
[nmoskowitz@wittenberg.edu](mailto:nmoskowitz@wittenberg.edu)