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Dedication

The Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Program is deeply saddened to lose two beloved professors this year, and we dedicate this volume to them.

Dr. Oldstone-Moore, Professor of Religion, is retiring after 21 years at Wittenberg. She has inspired students to excel and has helped guide students to work to the best of their abilities. In reflecting on her time at Wittenberg, Dr. Oldstone-Moore offered the following:

I cherish many memories of perfect moments scattered across 21 years of teaching at Wittenberg, including pilgrimages to remote temples in Japan and treks through the deserts of western China.

My best moments, however, have been in classrooms in Hollenbeck Hall amidst paper clips, chalk dust, and tablet desks. I am grateful that our classrooms have been a place where we can meet with each other and engage the beautiful treasures of thought, culture, and history of East Asia. There have been many perfect moments where after working together over text, image, or idea, the meaning and significance from long ago and far away becomes crystalline, and we can see the significance for us all. I am a fortunate woman to have experienced 21 years of such classroom magic with Wittenberg students.

It is also with great sorrow that we say goodbye to Dr. Imai-Brandle, who leaves amidst the loss of Japanese language instruction at Wittenberg. Dr. Imai-Brandle's 18 years of teaching have had a lasting impact and provided students with many fond memories. She is known for her welcoming attitude and her encouragement to learn new and fascinating aspects of Japanese culture, language, and linguistics. Her excellent attention to detail, consistency, and devotion to the well-being of her students have raised the bar for Japanese instruction. Dr. Imai-Brandle has led numerous trips for students and faculty to Japan and watched many students depart for JET and other work opportunities in Japan. In reflection, Dr. Imai-Brandle wrote,

I just feel honored to have taught so many bright and enthusiastic students and worked with amazing colleagues in EAS in the past 18 years of my time at Wittenberg and want to express my sincerest gratitude to all.

The Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal staff would like to thank both these wonderful professors for their rigorous standards, which have made their classes so rewarding and the great impact they have made on the Wittenberg Community.

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UNESCO State of Conservation: Chinese World Heritage Sites

By Colin Blais

Colin Blais graduated from Syracuse University in Syracuse, NY, in the class of 2020, double majoring in International Relations and Geography with a minor in Chinese Studies. His studies involve understanding the science and implications of the climate crisis as well as Chinese culture and China's relationship with the United States. After graduating, Colin was hired as a legislative intern in Congressman McGovern's Washington D.C. office. Colin plans on furthering his studies of international relations and international development by pursuing a master's degree at the School of International Service at American University. His studies will continue to be centered around critiquing the status quo for international politics.

Introduction:

This research examines the ways the Chinese government works to conserve and protect its World Heritage Sites and the ecosystems in and around them. Through the usage of content analysis of primary sources, an inventory of the sites, and a survey of visitors, the project was able to conclude the Chinese government does not properly care for World Heritage Sites, and prioritization of profits is causing degradation of the sites and the ecosystems in which they exist.

The United Nations established UNESCO in 1945 as a successor to the League of Nations with a goal of advancing peace, sustainability, and human rights through collaboration and dialogue among nations. Between its creation in 1945 and the establishment of the World Heritage List in 1972, UNESCO focused its efforts towards ending racism, education missions, and assisting individual countries with preserving cultural relics and areas. The World Heritage List was started by the treaty drafted in 1972, which entered into force in December of 1975. The list was created as an account of properties throughout the world that are of outstanding value to humanity, with an overall purpose of having an international mechanism to assist countries in properly conserving and protecting these places. Specifically, these properties needed to have a unique landmark that is geographically and historically identifiable that

has special cultural or physical significance.¹ Designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site gives a property international recognition and therefore international attention, which has shown to cause a dramatic increase in tourist numbers and tourism development, especially in China.² China is currently tied for the world record number of World Heritage Sites within a single country at fifty-five properties. This mass increase in tourism and development brings conservation challenges. Mass tourism and the resulting congestion at World Heritage Sites is a major concern for UNESCO. Poorly managed sites may experience resource degradation, environmental impacts, safety hazards, and spillover into important adjacent resource areas.³

The Chinese tourism industry makes up around 11 percent of its GDP, and in 2018 the Chinese government pulled in a total revenue of just under \$890 billion for tourism alone.⁴ The recorded massive profits coupled with the potential harm associated with World Heritage tourism congestion begs the question whether China is taking proper care of the 55 World Heritage Sites currently operating within its borders.

Research Questions

What conservation impacts arise in Chinese World Heritage Sites after inscription? Does China properly conserve and protect its 55 World Heritage Sites and their surrounding ecosystems, or does prioritization of profits cause poor conservation tactics? These questions are designed to understand current Chinese conservation practices and problems at its World Heritage Sites. Through content analysis of the State of Conservation database, the UNESCO World Heritage List records, Global Heritage Fund revenue figures, and a survey of visitors to these properties, this research uncovers specific measurable figures that

¹ UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “World Heritage,” *UNESCO World Heritage Centre*, Accessed October 26, 2020. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/about/>.

² Ming Ming Su and Geoffrey Wall, “Chinese Research on World Heritage Tourism,” *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 16, no. 1. (2011): 75–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2011.539392>.

³ Jin-Hui Guo, et al., “Managing Congestion at Visitor Hotspots Using Park-Level Use Level Data: Case Study of a Chinese World Heritage Site.” (California: PLOS, 2019).

⁴ Trading Economics, “China Tourism Revenues | 2015-2018 Data | 2019-2020 Forecast | Historical | Chart,” *Trading Economics*, Accessed October 26, 2020. <https://tradingeconomics.com/china/tourism-revenues>.

identify conservation issues at World Heritage Sites in China. This research also reveals that the Chinese government has not taken action to mitigate these issues. This indicates Beijing prioritizes revenues over conservation.

Literature Review:

A number of scholars have studied the conservation problems associated with the properties on the Chinese World Heritage List. The preliminary work in this field took place in the 1990s and early 2000s. This body of research was mostly concerned with studies allowed by the Chinese government that proved the existence of environmental problems resulting from tourists at the sites as well as proposed systems of conservation management for said sites. This work was led by scholars such as Fei (1991), Jiang and Wang (1990), Pan (1992), and Peng (2000).⁵ These studies were also primarily written in Mandarin Chinese and inaccessible to non-Mandarin Chinese speakers. However, the studies are summarized in an article written in English by Yu-Fai Leung (2001), which contains a synthesis of studies regarding UNESCO World Heritage sites, environmental reports, conservation analyses, and management analyses.⁶

Since the environmental studies and the data being gathered in China are difficult to access, contemporary scholars have explored the relationships between the Chinese World Heritage sites, profits, tourism, and conservation by studying within China independently. Scholars Luca Zan and Wang Tao (2011) have updated information and analyses about the ways in which Chinese World Heritage Sites are managed and presented to UNESCO.⁷ These authors discuss the ways in which

⁵ Qing Fei, "The current status and management of environmental quality for tourism in Chengde City (in Chinese)," *Geography and Territorial Research* 7, no. 1 (1991): 35-39; Gaoming Jiang and Yingxiao Wang, "The effects of tourism and urbanization on soil and plants at the Summer Villa, Chengde City (In Chinese)," *Environmental Science* 11, no. 1 (1990): 35-39; Tiangsheng Pan, "The ecological environment of Mt. Huangshan scenic area and its protection strategy," *Industry and Environment* 15, no.3/4 (1992): 28-30; X. Peng, "The current situation, cause of formation and countermeasures of the environmental problems in Wulingyuan Scenic Spot (In Chinese)," *Tourism Tribune* (2000): 43-46.

⁶ Yu-Fai Leung, "Environmental Impacts of Tourism at China's World Heritage Sites: Huangshan and Chengde," *Tourism Recreation Research*. 26, no. 1 (2001): 117-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2001.11081186>.

⁷ Tao Wang and Luca Zan, "Management and Presentation of Chinese Sites for UNESCO World Heritage List (UWHL)," Edited by Ana Pereira Roders,

China's management of its World Heritage is inherently a complex situation. Zan and Tao introduce the concept that maintaining Heritage in China is both incredibly expensive and subject to overexploitation through tourism.

Ming Ming Su and Geoffrey Wall (2011) also conducted research on Chinese World Heritage, gathering over 60 articles from a Chinese database to understand the current body of research in China surrounding the conservation of Heritage.⁸ The authors find that China has a poorly organized management system for conservation of Heritage Sites, citing issues with the top-down multi-level style of management that could be simplified by centralizing all Heritage issues into one government department. Furthermore, the authors cite issues with Chinese efforts to produce funding for conservation of the sites. They suggest careful management between preservation and development, as well as implementing new fundraising strategies to increase revenue that goes back into the individual sites. Finally, the authors discuss negative impacts associated with tourist exploitation, going beyond Zan and Tao's work to advocate for better management plans in the form of zoning, less commercialization, and better understanding of carrying capacity for the properties.

Guo et al. (2019) discuss the ever-continuous issue of understanding how to mitigate negative environmental and conservational impacts associated with the overcrowding of tourists at Chinese World Heritage Sites.⁹ The researchers advocate for the usage of a camera-based tracking system as well as an overhaul of Chinese strategies currently in place to mitigate overcrowding issues on the properties. The scholars stated that determining carrying capacities and managing crowd flow should be a multi-level response based on the daily evolving visitor numbers, not just single figures from previously recorded statistics being applied to longer time periods.

My research affirms the research of the aforementioned authors by further identifying the existence of conservation issues at Chinese World Heritage Sites. It builds on the previous studies by looking at the

Facilities 29, no. 7/8 (2011): 313–25,
<https://doi.org/10.1108/02632771111130924>.

⁸ Ming Ming Su and Geoffrey Wall, "Chinese Research on World Heritage Tourism," 75–88.

⁹ Jin-Hui Guo, et al., "Managing Congestion at Visitor Hotspots Using Park-Level Use Level Data: Case Study of a Chinese World Heritage Site."

root cause of many of the issues the sites experience, which is government prioritization of revenue over conservation.

Hypothesis:

UNESCO affiliated researchers, as well as field researchers independent of the UNESCO mission system, have already documented environmental consequences associated with increased tourism at Chinese UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Many of China's UNESCO Sites are experiencing conservation issues that remain unresolved. I posit that economic concerns, particularly tourism revenue, supersede proper conservation and protection of Chinese World Heritage Sites. The independent variables for this research are tourism revenues and primary sources such as UNESCO reports, while the dependent variable is operationalized by the state of conservation of each individual property.

Methods:

The research performed for this paper was entirely qualitative. I first performed an inventory using the UNESCO "State of Conservation" database. With this database, I undertook a content analysis of report documents from UNESCO missions to each of the World Heritage Sites in order to identify some of the main conservation problems that each individual site suffers from and whether or not these issues have been resolved. This information, coupled with official conservation descriptions provided on the individual pages for each Heritage Site, identified whether each Heritage Site had conservation or environment related issues, how many times UNESCO reported on this issue, when the reports were made, what types of issues were occurring, and whether or not these issues were resolved by the Chinese government. In conducting the inventory, I discovered Chinese UNESCO site #55: The Migratory Bird Sanctuaries along the Coast of Yellow Sea-Bohai Gulf of China, is currently in its first phase of becoming a World Heritage Site and thus has not had enough time to create a conservation master plan to be approved by UNESCO. Therefore, this site was not included in the study. After compiling the previous data, I added in revenue data for 20 of the sites compiled and provided by the Global Heritage Foundation in the year 2010 for the year 2009. Much of the more recent revenue data for individual World Heritage Sites in China is not publicly available due to strict censorship laws in the country.

After compiling this data, I then gathered a convenience sample by sending a survey to around 100 individuals who visited the People's

Republic of China with a Syracuse University affiliated program. The individuals were part of a Syracuse Abroad database of names ranging from programs offered between 2014-2019. The response rate of the survey was about 25%. The survey asked a variety of questions about which World Heritage Sites the students visited. The questions covered site crowding, pollution, management, and the conditions surrounding each individual's site visit (length of visit, type of tour, weather). The survey was administered via Google Forms and was distributed by email to students by using a Syracuse University Abroad database of "SU Beijing Alumni" and was left open for one week. By virtue of the survey being a convenience sample, it naturally has some limitations. The opinions offered by the students primarily comes from a demographic representing American students who studied abroad in Beijing. As a result, there is an inevitable cultural disconnect between American outside opinions about conservation and Chinese insider opinions about conservation due to cultural bias. Therefore, the survey answers may not necessarily reflect the true state of conservation at the World Heritage Sites asked about in the survey.

Finally, I compiled all the data to perform a collective case study of some of the outlier sites to assess the relationship between conservation efforts, tourism revenues, issue types, and issue statuses at Chinese World Heritage Sites.

This type of research, being a content analysis and survey followed by a collective case study, is the most beneficial to understanding the relationship between the variables in my hypothesis. The pattern that emerged demonstrated that China's preference for profits over conservation comes from a direct relationship between sites that have a number of environmental and conservation issues and their massive, documented revenues. The survey provides confirmation of my case study via first-hand accounts.¹⁰

This paper supports previous scholarly research documenting conservation challenges at Chinese World Heritage Sites. Reviewing tourism revenue data, UNESCO reporting, Global Heritage Fund revenue figures, and a survey of visitors allowed me a unique glimpse into the way China sets its priorities. This is likely the root cause of the previously discussed management and financial issues that many of these sites deal with. My research offers similar methods to those in the same body of research but offers the uniqueness of a new set of sources and a

¹⁰ Howard Lune and Bruce Berg, "Chapter 10: Case Studies," In *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. 9th ed., (Malaysia: Pearson, 2017), 165.

survey of individuals who visited these sites, something that past researchers have not studied. My findings support the current body of research, as data demonstrates China has not adequately conserved its World Heritage Sites.

Theoretical Perspective:

For this research, I chose to look at the way China deals with conservation within a world capitalist system. The theories associated with Marxist thought reveal the logic behind prioritizing tourism revenues and profits over conservation of World Heritage Sites. Karl Marx, referring to capitalism, states, “At a certain stage of development, it brings forth the material agencies for its own dissolution.”¹¹ Modern scholars of Marxist thought have interpreted this statement and its description to infer that capitalism, as it exists, will naturally sow the seeds of its own destruction because it is driven by profit and not people’s well-being.

In later works, after Marx’s influential “*Das Kapital*” (1887) was published, Friedrich Engels wrote about overexploitation of the natural world or the environment.¹² Engels wrote, “As long as the individual manufacturer or merchant sells a manufactured or purchased commodity with the usual coveted profit, he is satisfied and does not concern himself with what afterwards becomes of the commodity and its purchasers.”¹³ He then demonstrates this by describing a situation in which Spanish colonizers burned down Cuban forests to gain expensive fertilizers to grow coffee trees without paying mind to the degradation the fires caused.

Contemporary Marxist thought combines the ideals expressed Marx and Engels to demonstrate a situation in which capitalists always prioritize the immediate gratification of profit from commodities over the long-term consequences associated with said profit. This is the exact

¹¹ Karl Marx, “Chapter 32: Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation,” In *Das Kapital*, translated by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, 541–42.

Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1887.

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Capital-Volume-I.pdf>.

¹² Karl Marx, “Chapter 32: Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation,” 541–42..

¹³ Friedrich Engels, “The Part Played by Labor in the Transition From Ape to Man,” *The Part Played by Labor in the Transition From Ape to Man* (Progress Publishers, 1934), <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1876/part-played-labour/>.

situation demonstrated in my research, where China prioritizing the revenue produced by individual World Heritage Sites has caused unresolved conservation issues leading to the degradation of the properties.

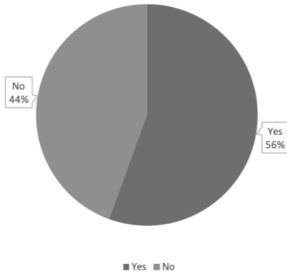
I chose not to study through the lenses of the traditional schools of thought because none of them truly applied to the individual situation. Liberalism and Realism would not fit in the context of this research because the focus is not of cooperation of states or of state security. In this case, prioritization of profit is the product of a global capitalist status quo. My research looks at the Chinese status quo when it comes to conservation and questions it. Institutionalism also does not fit into the context of my research because although I initially thought UNESCO was partially at fault for some of these management issues, my research revealed it is not. UNESCO has asked China for documents and management plans and encouraged the country to fix conservation issues, but China often falls short in meeting UNESCO's expectations. Constructivism would have made sense if I were looking at how Chinese social norms affect conservation strategy for UNESCO Sites, but this, again, is not how my research is structured. My research is about the Chinese government's failure to make proper management decisions regarding conservation, not about Chinese citizens social beliefs.

Findings:

My research indicated that Chinese World Heritage Sites, in general, are experiencing a growing number of environmental issues and concerns that are not being resolved by the Chinese government. Furthermore, I found the sites that have the largest numbers of unresolved environmental issues are also the sites that make China the most money in terms of tourism revenue. Below are a series of figures demonstrating environmental issues across the 54 Chinese World Heritage Sites I studied.

Conservation Problems:

Do Chinese World Heritage Sites Have any Documented Conservation Issues?

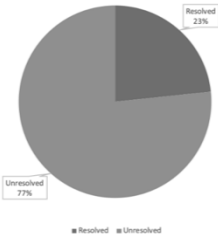


As the figure shows, 56% of China's World Heritage Sites have had reported conservation issues between 1994 and the present day. This percentage stands for 30 World Heritage Sites out of the 54 studied, meaning over half of them have reported conservation problems.

Figure 1 (UNESCO, 2020) (UNESCO SOC, 2020) 1994-2020

Figure 2 illustrates the percentage of the sites with reported conservation issues that have been resolved.¹⁴

Of the Sites That Have Environmental Issues, What Percentage are Resolved as of 2020?



This figure demonstrates that of the 30 sites that reported conservation issues between 1994 and 2020, only 23% of those sites have resolved the issues according to UNESCO. This means that 77% or 23/30 of these sites are still experiencing problems related to conservation issues

Figure 2 (UNESCO 2020) (UNESCO SOC 2020) 1994-2020

¹⁴ UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization 2012, "UNESCO in Brief - Mission and Mandate." "China, States Party Page." UNESCO. Accessed October 29, 2020a. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/cn.>; UNESCO, "UNESCO State of Conservation Information System (SOC)," UNESCO. Accessed October 29, 2020b. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/>.

that have not been resolved by the Chinese government. This is concerning, as the success rate for solving these issues is very low, indicating that many sites are still experiencing degradation today as a result of slow Chinese governmental responses or lack of responses altogether. The range of issues that these sites are suffering from are mainly a lack of management plans, tourism impacts, and pollution, as demonstrated below in Figure 3.¹⁵

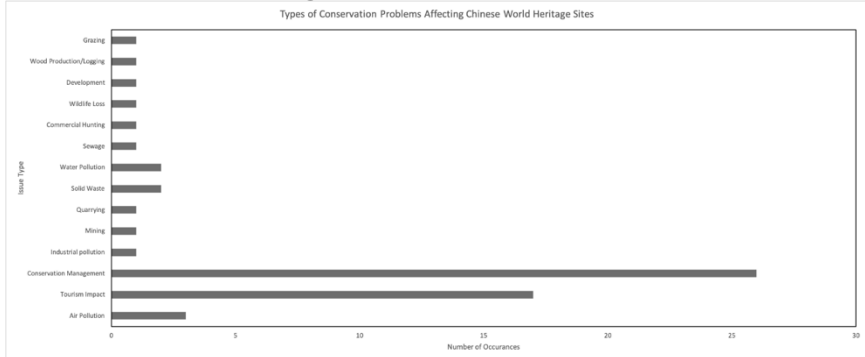


Figure 3 (UNESCO 2020) (UNESCO SOC 2020) 1994-2020

The majority of the sites that experience environmental problems are related to conservation management or tourism issues. The issues surrounding conservation management, according to my findings, are associated with a lack of response to UNESCO requests for master conservation plans. UNESCO submits a report after a field mission to a given UNESCO Site which requests a conservation masterplan or an improvement to an existing masterplan. When the Chinese government does not comply with the request, UNESCO keeps a list of problems in planning, management, or establishment of buffer zones on the individual site's World Heritage page. UNESCO missions consist of a group of researchers visiting a site and documenting any conservation issues it may be experiencing. Usually, the missions occur every two years and are repeated based on the state of conservation at an individual site. Sites with more problems have more missions sent to them by

¹⁵ UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization 2012, "UNESCO in Brief - Mission and Mandate," "China, States Party Page," *UNESCO*. Accessed October 29, 2020a.

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/cn/>; UNESCO, "UNESCO State of Conservation Information System (SOC)," *UNESCO*. Accessed October 29, 2020b. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/>.

UNESCO. After the mission, the researchers draft a document that describes the issues and submits it to UNESCO for China to view. On most occasions with documented problems in conservation management, there is no documentation of Chinese response in the form of updating or creating conservation masterplans. As a result, conservation management remains a listed issue on many Chinese World Heritage Sites. These issues with conservation management make up about 44% of all reported conservation issues in missions to sites in China.

As noted by Su and Wall (2011), China has had issues with governing World Heritage Sites and producing funding for the properties.¹⁶ Su and Wall, as well as Guo et al., document the issues associated with the massive increase of tourism.¹⁷ My data proves the points and hypotheses of all the others in this study, as the most common conservation problems at Chinese World Heritage Sites by a large margin are management issues and tourism impacts. Management issues are mostly centered around creation of buffer zones outside of properties to ensure development would not affect the sites or understanding of site carrying capacity and monitoring foot traffic. Tourism impacts are mostly associated with littering, how foot traffic and the presence of people affects the site, and its degradation over time; these problems make up around 29% of the reported conservation issues.

The third most common form of conservation problem at Chinese Sites is general pollution which is determined as an issue by the researchers in the missions to each site. I split up the different types of pollution in the graph because they are listed as such on the UNESCO State of Conservation Information System; however, when combined, they make up a total of 8 reported occurrences. This indicates that general pollution accounts for 14% of reported issues. The slightly larger reported occurrence of pollution across the range of World Heritage Sites could be attributed to the large number of tourists who visit the sites. Other factors such as large-scale development to accommodate tourists, poor management of trash disposal, and improper management of waste facilities could also contribute to this large percentage.

¹⁶ Ming Ming Su and Geoffrey Wall, "Chinese Research on World Heritage Tourism," 75–88.

¹⁷ Ming Ming Su and Geoffrey Wall, "Chinese Research on World Heritage Tourism," 75–88.; Jin-Hui Guo et al., *Managing Congestion at Visitor Hotspots Using Park-Level Use Level Data: Case Study of a Chinese World Heritage Site*, (California: PLOS, 2019)

Looking at the increase or decrease of resolved and unresolved reports over time revealed how well China is handling the conservation issues. I wanted to understand whether China's efforts to resolve conservation problems were increasing or decreasing by looking at mission reports from 1994-2019. This is demonstrated in Figures 4, 5, and 6 below.

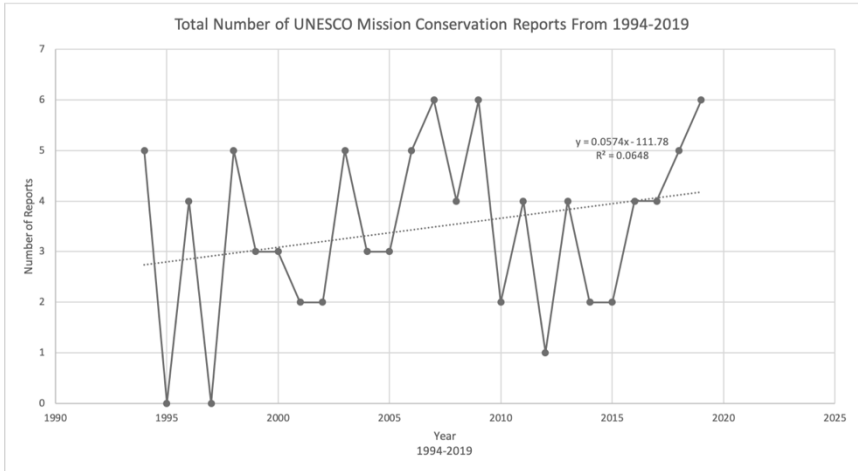


Figure 4 (UNESCO 2020) (UNESCO SOC 2020)

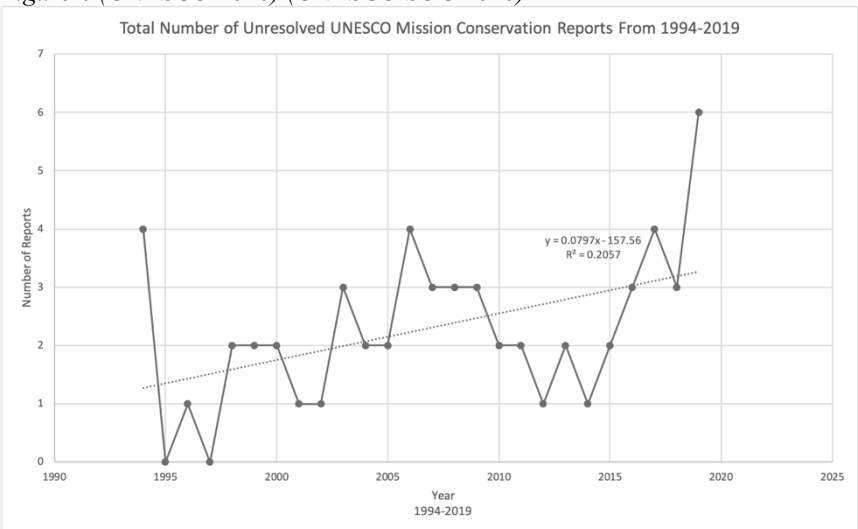


Figure 5 (UNESCO 2020) (UNESCO SOC 2020)

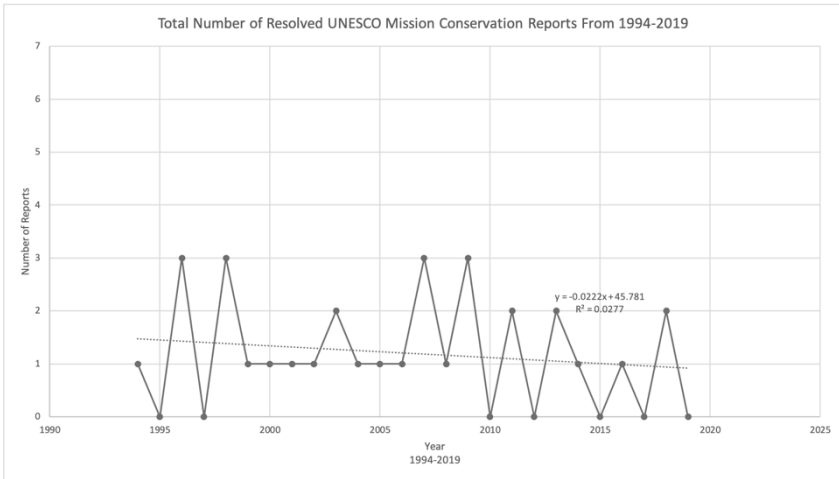


Figure 6 (UNESCO 2020) (UNESCO SOC 2020)

These three patterns further demonstrate the claims in my hypothesis. Since 1994, the total number of mission reports that detail conservation-related issues have been steadily increasing through 2019. Within these reports, the number of unresolved conservation-related issues has been slowly increasing, while the rate of resolved issues has been decreasing. Although correlation does not necessarily prove causation, this pattern reveals that the Chinese government is experiencing an increase in unresolved conservation problems and a decrease in its resolved counterparts.¹⁸

Tourism Revenue and Conservation:

The next part of my research concerned looking at revenue data for each individual UNESCO World Heritage Site located in China compared to the amount of conservation problems the site has experienced. My hypothesis predicted a correlation between high-earning sites and the number of conservation problems they experience, and this correlation is exactly what occurred. Chinese data is difficult to access, especially because I have little skill in Mandarin Chinese. The figures I

¹⁸ UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization 2012, “UNESCO in Brief - Mission and Mandate,” “China, States Party Page,” *UNESCO*, Accessed October 29, 2020a. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/cn>. UNESCO, “UNESCO State of Conservation Information System (SOC).” *UNESCO*. Accessed October 29, 2020b. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/>.

was able to locate are from UNESCO site nomination documents submitted by Beijing, and official World Heritage Fund estimates from the year 2009 for 20 of the 54 sites being studied. However, these figures reveal that 6 of these sites are among the top 50 highest earning World Heritage Sites in the world. Projections within the document, as well as projections from Trading Economics (2020), estimate that revenues for these sites have likely increased at a rate sufficient to keep them similarly ranked as they were in 2009.¹⁹ China's tourism industry is massive, and the country has continued to be a popular tourist location since the establishment of this revenue data in 2009. Furthermore, these Heritage Sites have operated without major interruption since 2009; thus, an interruption or drop in profits is highly unlikely. I reached out to both the Chinese Ministry of Tourism and the World Heritage Fund (WHF) in search of more recent figures, but I was met with a full inbox for the Ministry and no more recent data published by the WHF.

¹⁹ Trading Economics, "China Tourism Revenues | 2015-2018 Data | 2019-2020 Forecast | Historical | Chart," *Trading Economics*, Accessed October 26, 2020, <https://tradingeconomics.com/china/tourism-revenues>.

Site	Tourism Revenue in USD (2009)
Archaeological Ruins of Liangzhu City,	560,000
Peking Man Site at Zhoukoudian	2,600,000
Capital Cities and Tombs of the Ancient Koguryo Kingdom	5,600,000
Kaiping Diaolou and Villages,	7,200,000
Ancient Villages in Southern Anhui – Xidi and Hongcun	7,800,000
Yin Xu	13,200,000
Dazu Rock Carvings	18,600,000
Ancient Building Complex in the Wudang Mountains	43,000,000
Mount Emei Scenic Area, including Leshan Giant Buddha Scenic Area	56,000,000
Longmen Grottoes	56,000,000
Mount Qingcheng and the Dujiangyan Irrigation System	56,000,000
Historic Ensemble of the Potala Palace, Lhasa 8	57,617,720
Yungang Grottoes	60,000,000
Mountain Resort and its Outlying Temples, Chengde	74,000,000
Ancient City of Ping Yao	79,320,000
Mogao Caves	104,000,000
Fujian Tulou,	112,840,000
Old Town of Lijiang	160,000,000
Mount Wutai,	212,400,000
Imperial Palaces of the Ming and Qing Dynasties in Beijing and Shenyang	904,000,000
Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor	1,920,000,000
The Great Wall	2,888,000,000

Figure 7 (Global Heritage Fund, 2010)

After examining this data combined with my database of mission reports from UNESCO, I was able to determine a number of metrics about these Chinese World Heritage Sites. The average revenue of Chinese World Heritage Sites that still have unresolved conservation issues is \$741,780,000, whereas the average revenue of the sites that have resolved their conservation issues or have had none at all is \$64,606,980. This demonstrates a difference of just over \$677,000,000. These figures indicate that the Chinese World Heritage Sites that make

the highest amount in tourism revenue are also the sites experiencing the most conservation-related issues.

As Figure 3 shows, the number one conservation issue facing Chinese World Heritage Sites has to do with management planning and conservation strategies. For sites that have reported conservation management issues, the average revenue is \$570,350,702, whereas the average revenue for sites that have never had conservation management issues is \$51,352,727. These figures demonstrate a strong correlation between high revenues and places that have conservation management problems.

These data support my hypothesis that the Chinese government prioritizes the massive tourism revenue made by its World Heritage Sites over conserving these sites from degradation. With such differences in revenue demonstrated across the board, prioritization of profits stands out as a very clear pattern.

Case Study- Imperial Palaces of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Beijing

This individual property is noteworthy in the study because it has a high number of unresolved issues reported from UNESCO Missions to the site and a very high volume of tourists. The Imperial Palaces had a total of 7 UNESCO mission reports from 1994-2009 that diagnosed conservation-related problems on the property associated with air pollution (resulting from inadequate buffer zone between the Palaces and the surrounding city of Beijing), conservation management problems, and tourism impacts.²⁰ This site had some of the most total mission reports as well as ongoing unresolved conservation issues of any of the 54 properties and is the third largest earner of Chinese World Heritage Sites (\$904,000,000 in 2009), and its most recent report (2009) still remains unresolved.²¹ To gain more insight into how these issues are being dealt with more recently, I surveyed 94 Syracuse University students who have visited China since 2014.

Of the respondents who had visited the Imperial Palace, 7 of 20 (35%) said the property was crowded or very crowded, 5 of 20 (25%)

²⁰ UNESCO, "UNESCO State of Conservation Information System (SOC)," *UNESCO*, 2020, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/>.

²¹ UNESCO World Heritage Centre, "UNESCO World Heritage Centre - State of Conservation (SOC 2009) Imperial Palaces of the Ming and Qing Dynasties in Beijing and Shenyang (China)," UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Accessed March 31, 2021, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/3178/>.

said it was only slightly crowded or not crowded at all, and 9/20 (45%) fell in the middle, saying it was moderately crowded. This is not very conclusive, as this tourist site is one of the most popular in the country. 19 of 20 (95%) of the same respondents reported seeing some sort of crowd control mechanism in place at the property, such as ticket counters, turnstiles, or staff directing foot traffic. UNESCO still recommends for the site to restrict overcrowding to prevent further degradation. However, of the respondents, 17/20 (85%) said that The Imperial Palace was either moderately polluted or very polluted, while only around 3/20 (15%) said the property had little pollution or no pollution.

The results of this survey further complicate the case of the Imperial Palace because although the management plan that UNESCO advocates for China to keep strict and updated was perceived to be working relatively well by the survey respondents, the issue of pollution which UNESCO does not appear to consider a major problem anymore, may still be a problem at the site. This is a bit of an odd result, as data shows that air quality in Beijing has been gradually improving since 2012; however, there has been a slight increase in “unhealthy” days in air quality since 2014, which may account for the data from the respondents.²² More study and perhaps another field mission by UNESCO would be necessary to clarify these issues surrounding this case.

Case Study- Old Town of Lijiang, Lijiang

The Old Town of Lijiang has had five (5) UNESCO mission reports with issues stemming from tourism impacts and conservation management. The site, located in a less populated area of southwestern China, is a traditional-styled town filled with shops, bars, and clubs. The town contains a number of bridges and has small canals flowing through the streets, which only allow for foot traffic. UNESCO repeatedly urged Lijiang to fix the way it manages the property because over-commercialization was drastically increasing foot traffic from tourists, which was causing negative impacts on site conservation. Currently, Lijiang suffers from no conservation issues since its revision and resubmission of its conservation management plan in 2013. Furthermore, in 2009 Lijiang was one of the highest earning Chinese UNESCO Sites, as well as one of two top earning Chinese UNESCO Sites that have actually resolved all conservation- related issues.

²² IQ Air, “Beijing Air Quality Index (AQI) and China Air Pollution | AirVisual,” *IQ Air*, Accessed December 9, 2020, <https://www.iqair.com/ca/china/beijing>.

Lijiang is a unique case as an outlier when compared to the rest of the high earning Chinese World Heritage Sites because it has solved all its conservation issues. Lijiang was also the 5th highest earning site in China, but it does not fit my hypothesis. Of the 13 Syracuse Students surveyed who had been to the Old Town of Lijiang, 7 out of 13 (53%) of them reported it was not crowded or only slightly crowded, while only 5 of 13 (7%) reported it as crowded (0% said it was very crowded). The remaining 6 of the 13 (40%) reported the Old Town was moderately crowded. This may demonstrate a perceived successful effort to curb over-commercialization of the site, even though only 1 of 13 (7%) respondents reported seeing any methods of crowd control. Beyond this, 10 of the 13 (77%) respondents stated that the Old Town of Lijiang had little pollution or no pollution, with only 3 of the 13 (23%) reporting a moderate level of pollution.

The Old Town of Lijiang demonstrates a successful attempt by the Chinese government to curb site degradation as a result of better conservation management; thus, China should use this site as a model of success to better conserve and protect the other high-earning sites that experience major conservation issues because it stands as the sole positive outlier in my study.

Case Study- West Lake, Hangzhou

West Lake in Hangzhou is an example of a location that needs to be understood if the Chinese government wants to curb site degradation in the near future. Although the site only has one documented UNESCO mission report, the report details and warns of major complications as a result of over development, poor conservation management planning, and immense tourism impacts. West Lake, in the past decade, has become a very popular tourism site for Chinese individuals traveling during Golden Week, a Chinese national holiday week in which many Chinese citizens do not have work and travel the country.²³ Of the seven (7) students who visited West Lake that were surveyed, 5 of the 7 (71%) reported the site was crowded or very crowded, while only 1 of the 7 (14%) reported the property as not crowded. The other 1 remaining respondent of the 7 (7%) said West Lake was moderately crowded. This is concerning because, with the presence of a massive number of tourists

²³ Monica Buchanan Pitrelli, "More than 600 Million People Traveled in China during 'Golden Week.'" *CNBC*. October 9, 2020. <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/10/09/china-attractions-630-million-people-travel-during-golden-week.html>.

coupled with the development occurring around the Lake, pollution becomes a concern. In my survey, 5 of the 7 (71%) respondents reported that the property was very polluted or moderately polluted, 2 of the 7 (29%) said there was little pollution, and 0% said there was no pollution at all. This is a major concern as site pollution levels are likely going to increase if the property continues to gain popularity in the coming years. Even more concerning is that 5 of the 7 (71%) respondents reported seeing no attempt at controlling foot traffic or managing crowds. It appears that the concerns expressed by UNESCO after its mission to the property in 2019 were valid and certainly need to be taken into consideration in the coming years. West Lake has the potential to become dangerously degraded if proper conservation management strategies are not implemented.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Chinese government, with the exception of Lijiang, has shown an inability to balance profits from tourism and conservation at its World Heritage Sites. This is a worrying trend, as China is a massive country rich with natural and cultural heritage, and if these sites degrade, we risk losing the heritage of all mankind. The methods that I discussed are also the methods the Chinese government needs to adopt. Guo et al., in 2019, details the importance of understanding the carrying capacity of individual World Heritage Sites in China.²⁴ The authors advocate for a broader decision-making process, including multi-scale visitor monitoring, as their research demonstrated that at certain periods, the sites they studied exceeded preferred capacity levels. In the sites I studied, multi-scale visitor monitoring comes in the form of ticket purchases and turnstiles that count how many people enter and exit the site, cameras that count individuals who enter the site, or staff who control the movement of people through the property. It is incredibly important for the managers of these sites to better understand carrying capacity and how to properly maintain it.

Furthermore, Su and Wall (2011) found that many of the conservation issues that Chinese World Heritage Sites face stem from a lack of funding and poor and disorganized multi-level management of sites caused by competing opinions and requirements from local,

²⁴ Jin-Hui Guo, et al., “Managing Congestion at Visitor Hotspots Using Park-Level Use Level Data: Case Study of a Chinese World Heritage Site.” (California: PLOS, 2019).

provincial, and state leadership.²⁵ The management issue could be solved by consolidating the many departments involved with the management of the sites into one “Chinese World Heritage Site” management department that manages and advises local administrators for each individual site. This way, officials can more easily manage the sites without having to navigate the red-tape and bureaucracy associated with multi-level management. In terms of funding, the Chinese government could certainly do more to provide and raise more funding for the 55 World Heritage Sites if money is perceived to be an issue, as it is demonstrated by Su and Wall (2011).²⁶ Su and Wall advocate for putting some of the profits made from tourism revenue back into the site that earned them; however, whether or not Beijing puts money back into the sites currently is unclear, as this study is almost a decade old. Beyond this, the Chinese government can request money from UNESCO for conservation-related projects necessary to the preservation of the sites. Above all else, the Chinese government needs to better respond to UNESCO recommendations for improving conservation of their World Heritage and be more transparent with their studies and information.

In the future, more research needs to be conducted about the state of conservation at Chinese World Heritage Sites. This study was limited as a result of a language barrier. Researchers fluent in Mandarin and with the knowledge to navigate Chinese online sources and databases need to synthesize the available data to raise awareness for this issue. Furthermore, more research needs to be done on ways the Chinese government could limit overcrowding by improving management plans. The Guo et al. study allowed a glimpse into some methods that centered around camera monitoring and on the ground decision-making by site officials and managers. More research into how these management methods could be even further improved is needed, and UNESCO could play a role in further advising in implementing these methods.

Preserving heritage is an urgent matter in China, and UNESCO is doing its part to recommend solutions to these conservation issues in its missions to these individual properties. UNESCO is also able to provide money to the Chinese government to assist in conservation when necessary. China is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of heritage, and it is incredibly important for adequate measures to be taken to ensure that we do not lose such valuable assets to mankind.

²⁵ Ming Ming Su and Geoffrey Wall, “Chinese Research on World Heritage Tourism,” 75–88.

²⁶ Ibid.

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The Star-Spangled Taegukgi: Investigating the Use of the Flag of the United States within Citizen Demonstrations in South Korea

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In the midst of the alleged corruption scandal surrounding the recently appointed Minister of Justice of Korea Cho Kuk, the partisan and ideological rifts within the South Korean public have since been made explicit as protestors pile onto the streets of Seoul, firmly split between the liberal and conservative camps.¹ One who wades through each faction would likely find recurrent partisan-specific symbols toted by the demonstrators, of which are emblematic of the aesthetic culture in South Korean demonstrations. The symbols of the yellow ribbon and the lit candle have become synonymous with political dissent,² and the symbols of national flags, even ones not of the Korean state, have become typical of protest imagery on the side of the conservative.³ Amidst the flurry of placards and *Taegukgi*, the South Korean national flag, a rather curious sight is that of South Korean protestors waving the star-spangled banner. Flying the U.S. flag along with the South Korea flag within a demonstration regarding corruption allegations and prosecution reform presents an intriguing depiction of the meaning of the United States, its flag, and its significance to South Korean demonstrations. This paper will strive to investigate the use of the U.S. flag in South Korean citizen demonstrations and explore new paradigms of relevance and relation of the U.S. to South Korea.

¹ "Scandal over justice minister galvanises South Koreans at protests," 2019, accessed 19 October, 2019, <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/scandal-over-justice-minister-galvanises-south-koreans-at-protests>.

² Liora Sarfati and Bora Chung, "Affective Protest Symbols: Public Dissent in the Mass Commemoration of the Sewöl Ferry's Victims in Seoul," *Asian Studies Review* 42, no. 4 (2018): 578, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2018.1516732>.

³ "Why Is The American Flag Flying At Rallies For South Korea's Impeached President?," Daily Caller News Foundation, 2017, accessed 19 October, 2019, <https://dailycaller.com/2017/03/01/why-is-the-american-flag-flying-at-rallies-for-south-koreas-impeached-president/>.

South Korean Protest Symbolism and its Pertinence



Kim, Hyejin. "Photograph of the United States Flag at Protests against Cho Kuk." Seoul, South Korea. 2019.

It is firstly important to note the salience of partisan symbolism in South Korean demonstrations. Jang touches upon this by their exploration of how the *Taegukgi* has historically been exploited by the 1961-1979 Park Chung-hee administration to advance its rightist political stance.⁴ Progressive movements, in comparison, have been described to regularly use candlelight protests and commemorative yellow ribbons in their strikes.⁵ These iconographies have manifested and asserted themselves most prominently in the 2016 Park Geun-hye impeachment demonstrations, where pro-impeachment demonstrators historically gathered numbers of 17 million and took part in a candlelight demonstration in major cities of the country,⁶ and anti-impeachment demonstrators have famously become to be known as *Taegukgi* brigades (*Taegukgibudae*) for their donning of the South Korean national flag in their rallies. These partisan distinctions of protest iconography have maintained their salience even in the contemporary demonstrations regarding Cho Kuk, with advocates for prosecution reform partaking in candlelit protests and advocates

⁴As cited in Joonseong Lee and Katherine E. Brown, "'Make Korea with America Great Again': An Articulation and Assemblage of South Korean Extreme Right Practices," *Communication Culture & Critique* 11, no. 1 (2018): 57, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ccc/tcx004>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ W. Kang, "Determinants of Unaffiliated Citizen Protests: The Korean Candlelight Protests of 2016-2017," *KOREA JOURNAL* 59, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.25024/kj.2019.59.1.46>.

for the ouster of Cho Kuk and its implied rejection of the Moon administration partaking in protest that featured national flags of South Korea and the U.S.A.⁷

The South Korean Extreme Right and the American Influence

Lee and Brown look into the South Korean extreme right in seeking to answer the question of why demonstrators would wield the national flags of the U.S. alongside that of South Korea, exploring also the use of political figures such as Trump and Park Chung-hee within the narrative of the extreme right.⁸ They explore and posit a type of tripartite relation of conservatism, perceptions of the United States, and Park Chung-hee's calculated manipulation of state narratives; working together to create an image of the U.S., and by extension, its national flag, as a legitimizing icon for the South Korean extreme right.

Firstly, the contemporary conservative narrative appears to have been prescribed and cemented since the ceasefire of the Korean War in 1953. Consolidated military alliances and the ideological rift across the Korean peninsula had the image of the United States to the South largely come to signify staunch anti-communism and as 'saviours' liberating South Korea from the invasion of the communist North.⁹ Accordingly, the U.S. flag has been used by conservatives as a way of validating their movement, and "as a symbol of the longstanding anti-communist alliance."¹⁰ This is undoubtedly meaningful to the Korean extreme right, whose identity has been centred around being firmly against leftist ideology and policy by virtue of deliberate politics.

Park Chung-hee's regime was characterised by "a combination of ruthlessness and prudence" in strong state politics of a military dictatorship as the answer to development, but remained one that stood "in sharp relief against the uncompromisingly heavy-handed version in the North."¹¹ Park's politics emphasised modernisation defined solely as economic prosperity, which served as the hallmark of rightist ideology.¹² This was further accentuated with Park's utilisation of Cold War acrimonies and the communist threat of the North to justify his authoritarian regime.¹³ Park's politics fell perfectly within rightist ideologies, rendering his enduring cult of personality to the extreme right to this day perhaps unsurprising.

⁷ The Straits Times, "Scandal over justice minister galvanises South Koreans at protests."

⁸ Lee and Brown, "'Make Korea with America Great Again': An Articulation and Assemblage of South Korean Extreme Right Practices," 53-54.

⁹ Ibid., 58.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Stein Ringen, *The Korean state and social policy: how South Korea lifted itself from poverty and dictatorship to affluence and democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3.

¹² Ibid., 9.

¹³ Ibid.

Extreme right narratives have also been described to utilise a Korean brand of McCarthyism in the propagation of its dogma. Nationalism, to the extreme right, is considered and portrayed to be equivalent to anti-communism.¹⁴ This is most pertinently expressed by how right-wing parties try to deflect criticism by reducing critics to being “unpatriotic, ‘Reds,’ or North Korean spies.”¹⁵ As a result, the United States’ role as not only as an icon of anti-communism but one as a victor of the Cold War and a champion of neo-liberal capitalism once again becomes convenient and crucial to extreme right-wing messaging. The South Korean extreme right, in their reverence for American conservatism, have sought to emulate the American conservative’s language of being anti-establishment as well as its image of modernity to advance its political ends; and this remains evident in its adopted symbols within citizen protests.¹⁶

Beyond the facet of the military, the American alliance has influenced the ever-changing South Korean identity by means including the institutionalization of specific identities, the wilful suppression of perspectives and events that may be to antagonistic to the United States, and most importantly, the creation of the American image as benevolent liberator of South Korea.¹⁷ The deliberate manipulation of political outcomes in South Korea by the United States post-1945, beginning with military governance,¹⁸ set up the precedent for the deeply entrenched linkages between South Korea and the United States. Similarly to the mode of politics utilized in Vietnam, American powers sought to resist Soviet resistance by its deep involvement in South Korean politics. This included the formation of the Korean Democratic Party in 1945 and the sourcing of potential leaders, considered based on their expected loyalty and sympathy to the American capitalist ideology.¹⁹

Lee and Brown have provided a compelling analysis of the South Korean extreme right’s motivations for using the U.S. flag alongside their South Korea’s own national flag, that this is but part of the deliberate programme to regulate the narrative of patriotism to ultimately serve rightist politics. While these conditions provide a comprehensive look into the historical imperatives of South Korea and their interaction with politics, the conditions seem to lack a decisive force that explains the persistent relevance of anti-communist belief, especially in the modern context; where the threat of communism and the North appears to be very much diminished. In essence, it is questionable if Park

¹⁴ Lee and Brown, ““Make Korea with America Great Again”: An Articulation and Assemblage of South Korean Extreme Right Practices,” 63.

¹⁵ Ibid., 62.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ J. J. Suh, Peter J. Katzenstein, and Allen Carlson, *Rethinking security in East Asia: identity, power, and efficiency* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2004), 113-115.

¹⁸ Bruce Cumings, *Korea's place in the sun: a modern history*, Updat ed. (London;New York;: W. W. Norton, 2005), 185.

¹⁹ Ibid., 194-197.

Chung-hee's cult of personality should have as resounding an influence to the Korean right wing as it does today. In the inquiry into the relations between the South Korea and the United States, one less-considered area especially within the context of citizen demonstrations, is perhaps that of the role of religion and evangelism.

Religion and the Construction of Identities of the Extreme Right

The perennial and complex relation between the South Korea and the United States was not only guided by the political, military, and economic nexus but also that of religion.²⁰ In fact, the religious affiliation between South Korea and the United States seems to be a result of the setting and climate created by the political, military and economic foundations of the relation. The legacy of the Second World War has had South Korea and the United States be "enmeshed in a neo-colonial relationship," one that proved especially beckoning to the older Korean generation.²¹ By extension, older evangelicals admired the United States for their supposed role in building the Korean State, and in particular, aspired to the white American Protestant's evangelisms.²² The South Korean reverence for the United States, from the basis of religion, is the view of the United States as "the 'great nation,' the powerful 'modern Rome.'"²³

Lee evaluates the success of South Korean evangelism to have been attributed to the coalescence of religion with anti-communism and nationalism.²⁴ The unity of evangelism and nationalism was described to be particularly pertinent within the 1919 March 1st Independence Movement; Lee raises that almost half of the leaders of the movement were, in fact, evangelists and that the networks of the nation and that of the church played important roles in the effective communication both leading up to the movement as well as within the movement.²⁵ The 1950s and the advent of the Korean War solidified evangelism as being at odds with communism, despite ambiguous relations in the earlier decades.²⁶ Consistent with Marxist-Leninist communism, religion was reprehended by Korean communists. Evangelism was also conceived to both be politically conservative as well as a symbol of imperialism, due to the inextricable ties between the Korean and American evangelism.²⁷ At this point,

²⁰ Rebecca Y. Kim, "Korean Missionaries in America," (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 9.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

²² *Ibid.*, 7.

²³ *Ibid.*, 12.

²⁴ Timothy S. Lee, "A Crucial Factor in Evangelicalism's Success in (South) Korea: Coalescence with Nationalism and Anticommunism," *Religion Compass* 5, no. 11 (2011): 646, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8171.2011.00312.x>.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 650.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 651-652.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 652.

communism and evangelism solidified its adversarial relationship, and the ensuing violent ideological conflicts rendered this relationship irreparable.

The role of religion in the South Korean state did not restrict itself only to historical phenomena. Even after the South Korean independence, political actors often actively invoked religious discourse within the public sphere. This begun with Syngman Rhee's reign, which was described to have "institutionalised [Christianity], albeit unofficially, as a modern equivalent to the religion of the powerful."²⁸ Park Chung-hee's reign brought similar conceptions of Christianity to South Korea. His proclivity towards industrialization and economic development, as well as his criticisms of traditional religions, had the South Korean political culture equate secular successes to Christianity.²⁹ To Park, the traditional religions were thought to be "incompatible with a changing world."³⁰ Perhaps the most apparent expression of religious discourse within the public discourse was that of the Lee Myung-bak administration, where in his mayoral inauguration of 2004 had said 'I declare that the City of Seoul is a holy place governed by God; the citizens in Seoul are God's people,' and was accused of religious favouritism in the choosing of his cabinet as well as changing the maps of Seoul with the deliberate omission of Buddhist temples.³¹

Religion is also deeply implicated within partisan splits within South Korea. The Protestant church significantly leads rightist efforts in South Korea,³² cognising the fusion of Protestantism with party affiliations. Protestantism was described to have entered a "post-hypermasculine developmentalism" when faced with declining growth in the early 2000s, and it is at this point where the church has deliberately tried to access mainstream society by its organization into political and social agendas;³³ these included "biblical literalism, the verbal inspiration theory of the Bible, anti-communism, anti-North Korea-ism, and pro-Americanism."³⁴ The advent of modernity and increased political liberalism in South Korea also drove the older generation to consider Protestantism as "the last bastion of genuine Korean-ness."³⁵ The true power of the involvement of the church in politics is its equation of political,

²⁸ William Silcott and Jens Kreinath, "Transformations of a 'religious' nation in a global world: Politics, Protestantism and ethnic identity in South Korea," *Culture and Religion* 14, no. 2 (2013): 231, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14755610.2012.758645>.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Lee 2008, As cited in *ibid.*, 232.

³² Kang In-Cheol, "Protestant church and Wolnamin: An explanation of Protestant conservatism in South Korea," *Korea Journal* 44, no. 4 (2004).

³³ Nami Kim, *The Gendered Politics of the Korean Protestant Right: Hegemonic Masculinity* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 4.

³⁴ Kyuhoon Cho, "Another Christian right? The politicization of Korean Protestantism in contemporary global society," *Social Compass* 61, no. 3 (2014): 319, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0037768614535699>.

³⁵ Ibid.

ideological divergences into religious, moral disagreements.³⁶ Ideological beliefs within the religious-political agent then become an element that seems, in some way, coerced or at least obliged to be the ones corresponding to that of the churches.

The fundamental factor relates to the culmination of these variables, anti-communism, deliberate politics, conservatism and religion, into differentiated meanings of a South Korean identity. With the intricate tie of religion with politics in South Korea not only within civil society but also in the upper echelons of political power, it is an undeniable variable influencing the socialization of national identity. The Protestant church draws a new link between South Korea and the United States, and its close links with conservatism both in South Korea and the United States creates a new facet of the South Korean identity; that of the religious conservative South Korean with an adamant disdain for communism. The alleged representations of the individuals of the *Taegukgi* brigades seem to fit this profile; anti-impeachment protesters, mostly from the older generation, have likened impeachment to communism and have expressed a reminiscence of Park Chung-hee's time.³⁷ One of the alleged protestors, Mr. Yoon, was described to comment:

*The country has come down to this because our national identity is a mess. [...] It's a matter of supporting a liberal democracy or communism. There's no left or right. Just think of the leftists as people close to the North, and the rightists as people close to the U.S.*³⁸

Implicitly, the identity politics of South Korea indicate the understanding of ideological beliefs being associated to different regimes and different nations, particularly to the conservative right. Narratives of the South Korean extreme right asserts this dichotomy, associating all leftist discourse with North-sympathising discourse. This explains the impetus for the utilization of the imagery of the United States in lending legitimacy, particularly as a world superpower, to extreme right messaging. This is further compounded by religious discourse, which not only subtly directs political leanings but is embedded within the age-old involvement of the United States in South Korean state affairs.

The sensitivity around the Cho Kuk controversy in contemporary South Korean politics is, in a big part, due to his association with the incumbent left-leaning President, Moon Jae-in. Firstly, the appointment of Cho Kuk as the Justice Minister by Moon Jae-in to spearhead prosecution reform was met with vehement objections by the opposition.³⁹ Cho Kuk's appointment regardless,

³⁶ Kim, *The Gendered Politics of the Korean Protestant Right: Hegemonic Masculinity*, 7.

³⁷ "Impeach the Impeachment: Older Conservatives 'Defend Democracy'," 2017, accessed 3 November, 2019, <https://www.koreaexpose.com/taegukgiri-gally-conservatives-defend-democracy/>.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ "South Korean justice minister Cho Kuk resigns amid protests; President Moon Jae-in apologises," 2019, <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east->

became analogous to the Moon administration and came to represent the cogency of the left in directing South Korean politics. With the eruption of the controversy, the same sort of generalisation within the extreme right that has equated the South Korean right to the United States and the left to the North seemed to equate Cho Kuk to the left, and by extension, opponents of Cho Kuk to the right. The resurgence of the U.S. flag and related imagery, particularly on the protestors opposing Cho Kuk, represents the threatened worldview of the extreme right and their resentment of leftist politics in South Korea. The role of religion is the fortification of these pre-existing partisan rifts, providing the furtive impetus for the firm adherence to an ideological affiliation; one that is ultimately undoubtedly rooted in historical United States involvement. Hence, there is reason to be certain that the right's continued appeal to the U.S. flag would likely endure even when faced with the growing obsolescence of the communist or Northern threat.

In conclusion, the pertinence of identity in South Korean politics is rather unique. Attempts at understanding the use of the U.S. flag in protests by the South Korean extreme right will inevitably have to look into the construction of different identities in South Korea. The legacy of the United States enduring from the time of South Korean 'independence' manifests itself in various contexts, the political, ideological and religious, of South Korean modernity. Politically, the continued military alliance means that the United States will likely retain its significance within South Korea in practical terms. The future of the cultural legacy of the United States remains relatively more vague, but the factor of religion seems to produce an indelible linkage between the South Korean and American right. While the role of the church in the creation and influence of conservative discourse in South Korea is apparent, additional research would be required in ascertaining the prevalence and perhaps degree of devout religiosity within the South Korean extreme right to find a more direct connection between the religious right and general reverence for the United States. This would add clarity to this facet of understanding not only South Korean society but also provide clues to the true, composite effects of American influence, past or present.

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Deadly Obsessions: Cultural Influences Behind Karoshi

By Jesus Alberto Rios

Jesus Alberto Rios was born in Caracas, Venezuela, in 1996. At the age of 7, Jesus and his direct family moved to Panama City in the Republic of Panama due to growing concerns over the Bolivarian Revolution's rise to power. Having moved to a different country at such a young age, Jesus wanted to better understand other people. After graduating high school, Jesus enrolled at Florida State University through its campus in Panama, majoring in psychology with a minor in international affairs. He spent the first 2 years studying in Panama and the last two at the Tallahassee campus. Among the courses taken for his minor, some worth mentioning were "Japanese Ghosts and Monsters" and "Samurai and Japanese War" with Ph.D. Kristina Buhrman. This paper was originally written as an assignment for Ph.D. Tanu Kholi in the Global Citizenship Certificate program. Jesus graduated in Fall 2019 with Magna Cum Laude from Florida State University. After returning to Panama, his aim is to become a clinical psychologist, with the added understanding that cultural background is a decisive factor that mental health professionals must try to understand before one can begin treating a patient's mental condition.

Introduction

The term karoshi was coined by Tetsunojo Uehata back in 1978. It is the medico-social phenomenon observed in Japan that is comprised of people having intense health deterioration or dying due to overwork. It may come as either brain damage or cardiovascular complications. This phenomenon was first reported by Migawa Hosokawa in 1969 and has been acknowledged by the Japanese government over the years.¹ Listing its official kill count in the thousands by the early 2000s, this is a situation that defies logic in our modern world. Karojisatsu, a related phenomenon, is when one commits suicide due to overwork. These deaths are entirely preventable, as they do not come with any intrinsic risks from the jobs being conducted; one must wonder how it is that it is allowed to endure.

¹ Morioka, Koji. "Work till You Drop." *New Labor Forum* 13, no.1 (Spring 2004): 81

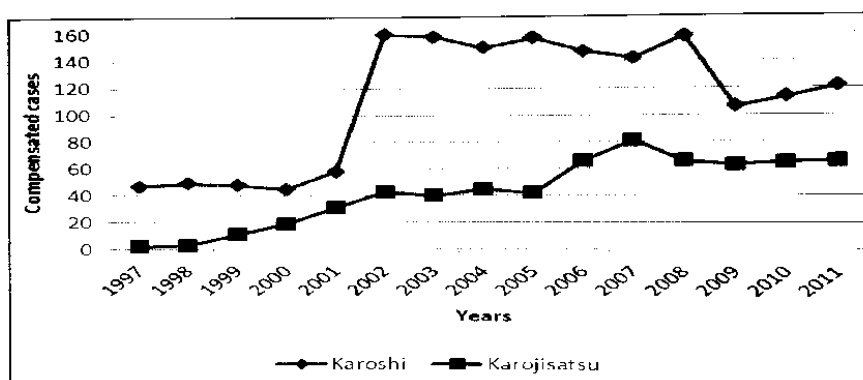


Figure 1. Number of compensated cases (Karoshi and Karojisatsu).

Source: Ministry of Labor <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/>

Figure 1 Government recognized cases of karoshi and karojisatsu (karoshi driven suicide) (Asgari, Pickar & Garay 2016) Oct 2nd 2019.

After WWII, the Japanese economy had to galvanize with the help of the United States in order to become a competitive player in the international trade arena. This effort did not come without a cost. In order to pull this off, lots of people had to work long hours in order to push the country forward. This track remained constant all the way up to the early 1990s when their economy took a blow. It is only after the 1990s that we begin to see a decline in the percentage of workers that have less than 60 hours/week schedules, yet the karoshi phenomenon remains.² While long workweeks may be a predicting factor for karoshi, it is an issue more complex than that. Figure 1 shows the trend of reported karoshi cases in the post-1990 era. In these cases, toxic business practices, idealization of self-sacrifice, and corporate pressure were only some of the factors driving this phenomenon,³ in spite of the government's efforts back in 2002 to reduce the number of overtime hours.⁴ Why is it that in spite of the acknowledgment and participation of the government the instances of karoshi continue to rise? The hypothesis that drives this study proposes that karoshi's prevalence must derive from the Japanese work ethics stemming from a socio-cultural system that glorifies self-sacrifice and loyalty at the expense of the individual's quality of life, thus making it at its root a cultural problem. Given that the phenomenon originated in Japan, I use secondary sources as I currently lack the means to evaluate the phenomenon in person. To better understand the issue, sources are broadly categorized into three groups: those

² K. Iwasaki, et al., "Health problems due to long working hours in Japan: working hours, workers' compensation (Karoshi), and preventive measures." *Industrial health*, 44, no. 4 (July 2006): 538.

³ Scott North, "Deadly virtues: Inner-worldly asceticism and karôshi in Japan." *Current Sociology*, 59, no.2 (2011): 149-151.

⁴ K. Iwasaki, et al., "Health problems due to long working hours in Japan," 539.

explaining the development of the phenomenon, those contrasting the phenomenon with other cultural contexts, and those explaining the human element of the phenomenon.

Relevance of research

The purpose behind this study is to further develop the search for the influencing factors in Japanese society that may result in *karoshi*. Many sources were looked at on the topic of *karoshi*, mostly from the early 2000s, but only two looked at *karoshi* as a socio-culturally generated problem. Most studies on this topic focus on either tracking the progression of the phenomenon or looking at its symptoms; however, there is a need to look for possible causes. This study aims to locate possible cultural elements intrinsic to Japan that fuels this type of destructive behavior, and in doing so, there are two possible benefits. The first one is the possible reduction of casualties in the future. By narrowing down the conditioned behaviors, Japanese society can adapt or replace those behaviors with healthier alternatives. The second benefit lies in increasing the body of knowledge around this issue by distinguishing it as only a Japanese phenomenon. Many studies looked at *karoshi* in terms of the total number of working hours per week being a deciding factor. On the other hand, a database by the OECD (2019) reveals a number of Latin-American countries that surpass Japan in terms of total work hours per year, yet it is not a region known for such behavior.⁵ Once the behavior is identified as being Japanese, we can see what makes them approach work ethics differently and possibly prevent such behavior from spreading to other cultures or finding what behaviors displayed in other countries can serve as potential solutions.

Data and Methods

The sources used in this study were selected from the Florida State University library database, Science Direct database, Google Scholar, YouTube, and Google (the Costa Rican newspaper and the OECD data). All of this data is secondary as none of it was acquired personally for this paper. The final pool of sources for this paper was chosen because together they provided a narrative of the *karoshi*/*karojisatsu* phenomenon in Japan from different perspectives. Together they allowed for the chronological observation of the phenomenon, its demographic distribution, its toll on the individual prior to death, its relation with Japanese work culture, and potential relationship outside the work environment. Given that this paper aimed to find whether *karoshi* was a Japanese cultural phenomenon or not, it needed to be compared with data from other regions of the world.

⁵ OECD data. "Hours worked." Accessed Oct. 26, 2019.
<https://data.oecd.org/emp/hours-worked.htm>.

Literature Review

Status report

K IWASAKI *et al.*

The first step needed for this study is to grasp the situation and how it has progressed over the years. Iwasaki, Takahashi, and Nakata (2006) conduct a meta-analysis on the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW) and the Japan

Statistics Bureau's data on the total number of workers on overtime and reports of karoshi incidents over the

years.⁶ They track the increase of average workweek from 1967 to 2004 as seen in Figure 2 and notice that, with the exception of the three years following the market crash of 1991, the number has been on a constant rise. They found that by 2004 European nations had less than 5% of their workers work over 50 hours a week, while Japan had 28% of its workforce putting in those hours.⁷ This

Fig. 2. Trend in the number of non-agricultural employees working 60 h or more per week in Japan (Japan Statistics Bureau, Annual Report on the Labour Force Survey 1967-2004).

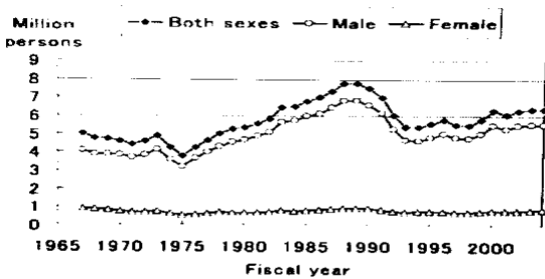


Fig. 2. Trend in the number of non-agricultural employees working 60 h or more per week in Japan (Japan Statistics Bureau, Annual Report on the Labour Force Survey 1967-2004).

Figure 2 Number of Japanese Workers with over 60-hour schedules over the years. (Iwasaki, Takahashi & Nakata 2006). Oct 2nd 2019.

study clarifies that while the government passed legislation in 1987 limiting the workweek to 40 hours, companies can exceed this limit if they make agreements with the worker unions, as shown in Table 1. This practice is common, and while the average overtime limit in those agreements is 15 hours extra per week, there is no cap for how many more hours can be added.⁸

Table 1. Standards for the limits on the overtime hours set in labour-management agreements

Unit period for overtime	Maximum overtime hours
1 wk	15 h
2 wk	27 h
4 wk	43 h
1 month	45 h
2 months	81 h
3 months	120 h
1 yr	360 h

Table 1 Extra hours agreed with labor unions per week. (Iwasaki, Takahashi & Nakata 2006). Oct 2nd 2019.

⁶ K. Iwasaki, et al., "Health problems due to long working hours in Japan," 537-540.

⁷ Ibid, 537.

⁸ Ibid, 538.

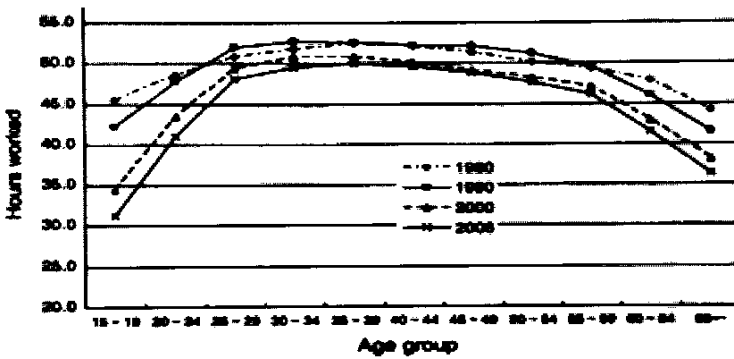


Figure 3. Average weekly hours worked for each age group: Male workers (Cabinet Office, 2002, 2007).

Figure 3 Average weekly work schedule per age group in 2002 (Kanai 2009). Oct 2nd 2019

The article is complemented by the meta-analysis conducted by Kanai as he too takes a look at the data from the MHLW and contrasts it with

"Karoshi (Work

TABLE I

Changes in the number of employees by weekly hours worked in 1995 and 2001 (Cabinet Office, 2003)
(unit: 10,000 person)

	Total employees	Regular employees	Non-regular employees
Total	Δ41	▼129	Δ170
<30 hours	Δ78	▼1	Δ80
30 to <40 hours	▼12	▼40	Δ28
40 to <50 hours	▼82	▼127	Δ45
50 to <60 hours	▼0	▼9	Δ9
60 hours and more	Δ56	Δ49	Δ7

Note. Δ: increased from 1995 to 2001, ▼: decreased from 1995 to 2001.

Table 2 Fluctuation in employment/unemployment of permanent and part-time workers per 10000 workers. (Kanai 2009). Oct 2nd 2019

demographic information from the Japanese Cabinet Office to focus not only on average workweek growth but rather which group of workers makes up this trend in terms of age groups and type of employment.⁹ Comparing their data on the MHLW, we see that during the years 2004 and 2005, the government recognized around 300 cases per year. However, there were almost 900 claims per category (cardiovascular damage and mental disability) submitted each year.¹⁰ Kanai then proceeds to look at the

⁹ Atsuko Kanai, "Karoshi (work to death) in Japan," *Journal of business ethics* 84 vol. 2 (2009), 209-216.

¹⁰ K. Iwasaki, et al., "Health problems due to long working hours in Japan," 539.

alleged decrease in total workweek claims by the MHLW in 2004 and reveals that when adjusting for age demographics, this claim is only true for workers younger than 25 or older than 40.¹¹ This distribution can be seen in Figure 3. Kanai proceeds to look at demographics based on employment type, dividing workers into permanent employees and part-time employees. The Cabinet data points to an overall increase in workers between the years 1995 and 2001. When dissected, this number in reality reflects a decrease in employment among permanent employees while revealing a drastic increase in part-time workers across all work schedules, as depicted in Table 2. The only exception to this rule is permanent workers working over 60 hours a week (490k/1.3M workers), suggesting a pressure to overwork or face unemployment. Kanai explains that being a part-time worker does not mean you have shorter schedules as part-time labor offers on average 50% less pay than the equivalent job under a contract, forcing workers to take longer shifts to make up for the lack of pay.¹²

Impact on the individual

So far, this paper has addressed the historical and demographic trends in employment over the turn of the century, but how does it translate into the issue of *karoshi* and *karojisatsu*? Given that this study seeks to find socio-cultural elements that drive this phenomenon beyond simply long work shifts, the next step is to see what those long hours must feel like for the Japanese people. The case study by Hino, Inoue, Mafune & Hiro looks at the psychological effects of long shifts on Japanese workers.¹³ The study looked to compare the yearly scores of a 922 workers sample on a psychological evaluation over a period of two years. The evaluation in question is called the Brief Job Stress Questionnaire, which is recognized by the Japanese government as a valid measuring tool for depressive symptoms. The questionnaire has a 3-12 grading score across three types of questions: job stressors, psychological/physical stress reactions, and buffering factors like coping mechanisms.¹⁴

The study looked at the group of workers between the years 2013 and 2014, dividing them into five categories: stable short (44 hours>workweek), stable medium (79h>workweek>44h), stable long (workweek>80h), decreasing (workers that either dropped from long to medium or medium to short), and increased (went from either short to medium or medium to long schedules). Throughout this study, the authors accounted for additional factors such as age group (compared scores among workers based on their decade 20s, 30s...50s),

¹¹ Atsuko Kanai, “*Karoshi* (work to death) in Japan,” 210.

¹² *Ibid.*, 211.

¹³ Ayako Hino, et al, “The effect of changes in overtime work hours on depressive symptoms among Japanese white-collar workers: A 2-year follow-up study,” *Journal of occupational health* (Fall 2018): 320-327.

¹⁴ Ayako Hino, et al, “The effect of changes in overtime work hours on depressive symptoms among Japanese white-collar workers,” 322.

gender, level of coworker support, supervisor assistance, and depressive scores at baseline. Their results revealed significant shifts in depressive scores among the workers in the decreasing group, achieving scores even lower than those from the stable short group. In contrast, the workers in the increased group showed the highest depression scores, more so than the permanent long group.¹⁵ The only relationships without a statistically significant result were those involving the stable long group. However, the authors hypothesize that it might be due to the small size of the stable long group (2% of the sample) not reaching a large enough size to be representative of said population. They theorize that the shifting groups showed changes in their scores, compared to the stable groups' scores, due to the newfound addition or subtraction to their leisure time. While the stable groups showed higher depression scores as their workweeks grew, workers try to adapt their lifestyle to make these shifts as manageable as possible, thus shifting their score only when that routine is changed.¹⁶

This case study helps solidify the link between depression and increasing one's workweek, but we are yet to see what those workweeks are comprised of. In another case study by North,¹⁷ the author breaks down the activities and expectations in the Japanese work environment that drive workers to death. This case study gives the first glimpse at what elements of Japanese culture promote this unhealthy behavior. It looks at the events surrounding the death of Shuji Kamei, a 26-year-old who died in October 1990 from a karoshi-induced heart attack. Based on the time period, this case arguably took place during the time period where karoshi was at an all-time high, but what is relevant about this case is that Mr. Kamei was his company's poster child for the ideal worker.¹⁸

The author uses an instructional manual published by the company Kamei worked at while he was alive. Named "One Day for Mr. Kamei," it laid out his work schedule, work habits, and practices with the hope to set him as a golden standard for his coworkers. The article revealed a work schedule of 6:50 a.m. to 10 p.m., contrary to the company's official statement of 8:40 a.m. to 5 p.m. The article also revealed that Kamei worked on Saturdays and Sundays. He spent his days calling and writing letters for his clients to keep them updated, to the point the article lists he often had to skip lunch due to lack of time.¹⁹ Looking at the company practices, the author finds they used a quota system in Kamei's sales department; should any member of the department fall short on their requirement, the rest would have to compensate for it. The company made workers compete for higher sales in exchange for bonuses, and this competition was not restricted within each office. Instead, each department competed with its counterpart in another city.²⁰

¹⁵ Ibid., 324.

¹⁶ Ibid., 324-325.

¹⁷ Scott North, "Deadly virtues."

¹⁸ Ibid, 148-150.

¹⁹ Ibid, 149.

²⁰ Ibid, 149.

The article reveals the company ranked its employees based on the hierarchy of sumo wrestling, which carries a deeply spiritual connotation in Japanese society as it stems from the Shinto religion. The author theorizes this served the purpose of both glorifying work and giving it a spiritual reward as strictly monetary motivations are viewed as vulgar.²¹ In Japanese business society, seniority carries more weight than efficiency or productivity. Kamei, as stated by his wife's testimony, expected a ten-year period of work (averaging quotas twice or sometimes even thrice that of his coworkers) before he could get to a position where he could take it easy.

After the Japanese economy crashed, Kamei had to take up even further responsibilities looking after 300 clients since many of his coworkers were laid off. He had to sustain a 75-hour workweek that included obligatory drinking at company meetings after work (nomikai, which is still commonly practiced), irregular meals, and lack of rest or exercise for months.²² The author concludes by listing historical and societal influences that worked to reinforce the behaviors that eventually killed Mr. Kamei. He lists two historic-cultural concepts fueling the worker's devotion: Ascetic Buddhism's teachings on self-sacrifice and its idealization, and the Feudal tradition of the code of the warrior (Bushido) that highlights loyalty to one's lord/clan above all else. As for social influences, he discusses three company practices that punish a lack of commitment: induced fear of disappointing one's superiors, the normalization of said judgment throughout companies, and lastly, the systematization of said judgment through ritualistic practices within companies that force workers to adapt to the company's one size fits all expectation.²³

Cultural influences on karoshi

This category looks at a single source; however, it is perhaps the most relevant as it is the closest in topic to this study. It is a meta-analysis of previous studies on the subject of Japanese work culture and work-shift statistical trends by Asgari, Pickar, & Garay.²⁴ The article's relevance stems from its complementary information on cultural and psychological forces influencing karoshi and karojisatsu and from its proposed solutions to the issue. The author reveals that the Japanese people adapted their preexisting concepts of loyalty to the country from the pre-WWII years into loyalty to one's organization. This second type of loyalty is measured by how much time is spent on one's desk. This fact translates into a "don't leave until the boss leaves" mentality that retains workers at work until 10 or 11 p.m. Inversely, leaving work early is seen as a lack of commitment and lowers one's credibility with their coworkers and supervisors. More often than not, overtime is seen as a requirement for

²¹ Ibid, 152-153.

²² Ibid, 151.

²³ Ibid, 153-154.

²⁴ B. Asgari, et al., "Karoshi and Karou-jisatsu in Japan," 49-72.

promotions along with extracurricular activities (entertaining clients, drinking with coworkers, playing golf with bosses, etc.).²⁵

The author concludes by listing two types of solutions: preventive and restorative. The former involved implementing a comprehensive industrial health service program designed by the president of the MHLW that involved tracking health deterioration along with long schedules and intervening before it reaches critical levels. The latter involved a number of activities that were meant to empower worker unions and hold them accountable for casualties to incentivize them not to make agreements with companies.²⁶

Country

The true extent of work

As seen in the previous section through North's case study, work is attributed a lot of weight by the Japanese among the different aspects of their lives.²⁷ It seems logical given the significant percentage of their time they spend working; however, as we have established, the total amount of work hours has declined since the time Mr. Kamei was around. In spite of this, the data as seen in Figures 1 and 2 shows the cases of *karoshi*/*karojisatsu* to be on the rise. If this phenomenon is truly cultural, then its influence could potentially be seen in other aspects of Japanese life. If we were to follow the presumption that the legal work schedule was reduced after that 1987 law, then it should follow that the Japanese should have more time to themselves (ignoring the deals made with the work unions). A study on Japanese leisure time length between 1976 and 2006 by Kuroda looks at how the work and rest portions of the average office worker in Japan has shifted.²⁸ To better understand the different operant definitions from the study, they were listed as follows: "market work" refers to the total number of hours dedicated to one's job, "total work" includes market work plus the time commuting to and from home plus housework (cleaning, looking after kids...). Leisure is subdivided into type A (relaxing activities in the home that provide entertainment), type B (type A plus sleep, eating, and other self-care activities at home), and type C (activities outside of the home).²⁹

The study shows an average increase in total daily work of 4.44 hours for male workers between 1976 and 1986 and has remained unchanged up to 2006. While the total work hasn't changed since the distribution between market and housework has seen a shift of 1 hour from house to market work. Female worker's total work schedules grew 2.38 hours between 1976 and 1986 but have

²⁵ Ibid, 49-52.

²⁶ Ibid, 66-70.

²⁷ Scott North, "Deadly virtues," 146-159.

²⁸ Sachiko Kuroda, "Do Japanese Work Shorter Hours than before?: Measuring Trends in Market Work and Leisure Using 1976-2006 Japanese Time-Use Survey," *Hitotsubashi University Repository* no. 419 (2009): 16-17.

²⁹ Sachiko Kuroda, "Do Japanese Work Shorter Hours than before?," 17-19.

decreased 3 hours by 2006. The study points out that this drop hasn't affected female market work.³⁰ As for leisure, the study shows that male worker leisure time hasn't grown since 1986 but has seen a shift in its distribution as leisure A has dropped 1.48 hours, leisure B by 1.83, and leisure C has grown by this same amount (xh+1.83h). Female workers have seen an increase in leisure A of 1.34, leisure B by 1.83, and leisure C by 3 hours. The study goes more in-depth on these shifting patterns in leisure times and found that over the last 30 years, both male and female workers have seen a decrease in sleep (4.14 hours for males and 2.86 for females). The reduction in male sleep mirrors the increase in total work and the redistribution of leisure patterns. However, the author fails to explain what may cause the reduction in female sleep given the increase in all types of leisure and reduced total work.³¹

Japanese workers' time off is not just being restricted in terms of time off the clock. A short broadcast by CNBC (2018) revealed Japanese workers have 20 legal full-pay vacation days per year; however, they tend to use 10 at most.³² While helpful, the coverage is too superficial. A Youtuber named "Kira Sensei" is a Spaniard who's lived in Osaka, Japan, for over a decade and provides Japanese cultural content with commentary from a European perspective. In one of his videos from 2017, he discusses different aspects of the Japanese work environment with a fellow Spaniard friend based on their experiential and anecdotal information.³³ They list three reasons why workers often do not take those days off. First, it begets discord among workers as it is socially reprehensible to be lazy, and to take time off (even if legally allowed to) is seen as slacking off since your coworkers are not taking time off. Second, all the work one should be addressing during their time off will not be taken care of by others, so when the worker comes back, they have to deal with accumulated work on top of their scheduled work. Lastly, while legally allowed to take days off, companies are still allowed to inquire about the nature of your leave and may deny it if it is not viewed as justified. Kira recounts that, as a foreigner, he and others have to resort to lying about traveling back home or having family visits to secure their vacations.³⁴ The Japanese work environment is one that fetishizes overwork and openly discourages time off work.

Work Culture in personal life

With such an overbearing presence in Japanese daily life, with such influence over people's priorities, would it be that weird to see that this work

³⁰ Ibid., 19-20.

³¹ Ibid., 19-20.

³² CNBC (producer). Uptin Saiidi, "Why does Japan work so hard?." March 8, 2018, YouTube video, 5:13 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Y-YJEtXHeo>.

³³ Kira Sensei, "Cómo es el ambiente laboral en la empresa japonesa." March 16, 2017. YouTube video, 25:46, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nlcH2iL6RRM&t=1s>.

³⁴ Kira Sensei, "Cómo es el ambiente laboral en la empresa japonesa."

mentality could also drive other aspects of Japanese life? In another of his videos, Kira Sensei (2019) lists the ten most desirable traits in Japanese women that aim to marry a Japanese man according to Japanese magazines.³⁵ These traits can be summarized in a traditionally sexist view that women should be modest, elegant, pure/innocent, and know how to clean and cook. Furthermore, they should avoid causing drama, discuss finances, tattoos or be overweight. Kira explains that men in that culture want a wife that will tend to their needs and not bring them additional concerns as they are exhausted from work. This view of an ideal “wife” can be perceived as a weird wife/mother ideal by modern western standards.³⁶ On the flip side, Kira asks his female friends to provide him with insight into the cultural image of Japanese husbands.³⁷ He lets us know that Japanese men tend not to show affection in public, place work above all else (including family at times), and understand showing kindness to their wives as financial support. The latter is partially motivated by their desire for their wives to stay at home rather than work. Lastly, he adds that men tend to explicitly formalize the relationship by some declaration or form of verbal contract; however, this is a female-driven phenomenon as they seem to expect such clarifications almost sounding like a contract.³⁸

Some cultural views from both sexes as described above are rather concerning in the context of *karoshi*, such as the male concept of kindness being tied to economic support or their expectation of a financially dependent wife rather than economically independent. For females, though understandable to some degree, the perceived need for a formalized relationship akin to a contract seems to also signal a potential economic reliance on men stemming from cultural induction. This relationship model seems to be at great risk of lacking kindness and empathy from a western perspective. Adding to this issue, the male’s lack of desire to establish a dialogue to solve issues as a team could potentially increase discord in the relationship. Kanai’s study also looks at some correlations among work behavior, work-family conflict, and family-related depression. He describes work-family conflict as that which stems from an imbalance between the expectations and duties of the individual as a worker and a family member.³⁹ He found that among male workers whose wives were full-time housewives, there was a weak but significant negative correlation between work business and family depression and a positive weak significant correlation between work-family conflict and family depression. The author clarifies that these correlations point towards a vicious cycle in which workload increases as

³⁵ Kira Sensei, “10 consejos prácticos para ser la mujer ideal de un hombre japonés.” Jan. 11, 2019. YouTube video, 20:02, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-e7TEajfx_0.

³⁶ Kira Sensei, “10 consejos prácticos para ser la mujer ideal de un hombre japonés.”

³⁷ Kira Sensei, “Cómo es el hombre japonés en la pareja.” Sept. 15, 2016, YouTube video, 18:39, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tsujrYFIQJ0>.

³⁸ Kira Sensei, “Cómo es el hombre japonés en la pareja.”

³⁹ Atsuko Kanai, “Karoshi (work to death) in Japan,” 213.

workers aim to provide for their families, but the added responsibilities put more strain on their family dynamics. In order to avoid family-related stress, men retreat further into their work while developing resentment towards their families. As the cycle continues, they begin to lose sight of why they started working in the first place.⁴⁰

This private life issue culminates by closing a cycle with Japan's demographic trends and already established work views. As noted by the CNBC report, Japan's population is poorly distributed as most of its population is getting old, and its birth rate is on a decline to the point that it is expected that in 50 years, its total population will be down 1/3 (2018).⁴¹ This fact can be due to a combination of factors, but cultural presence and intense work practices are bound to be among them. With relationship views as those established by Kira Sensei's videos and Kanai's findings, it is reasonable to argue that the idea of marriage as understood by traditional Japanese views is becoming unappealing for younger generations, contributing to the birth rate decline. As this disparity increases, it is very likely that the work culture as seen in North and Asgari, Pickar, & Garay may further intensify in an attempt to sustain the economy with a smaller working force until a solution can be found.

Karoshi without Japan?

So far, this study has looked at the historical trend of karoshi/karojisatsu, seen its cultural background, its tight relationship with Japan's work ethics, how those work practices affect the Japanese inside and outside the office, and even how they affect their relationships and demographics. A reasonable case has been made regarding the relationship between all these issues; however, if what this study claims to achieve is to point to karoshi's nature being intrinsically cultural, then it is necessary to pin it against other cultures and see if this is truly a Japan driven issue.

When looking for studies and recordings of karoshi outside Japan, there are two studies that were selected, one of which discusses the existence of the phenomenon in China, and the other claims evidence for its presence in the USA and U.K. The first paper collected records of Chinese doctor deaths across the cities of Beijing, Henan, Jiangsu, and Shanghai between the years 2013 and 2015 with cardiovascular diseases under circumstances akin to those correlated to karoshi.⁴² Their study found 46 cases, mostly ages 30-39, of which the majority came from Beijing, and the city with the least instances was Shanghai. They found half of these cases to have been working continuous shifts between

⁴⁰ Ibid., 213.

⁴¹ CNBC (producer). Uptin Saiidi, "Why does Japan work so hard?," March 8, 2018, YouTube video, 5:13 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Y-YJEtXHeo>.

⁴² H. P. Shan et al., "Overwork is a silent killer of Chinese doctors: a review of Karoshi in China 2013–2015," *Public Health*, 100, no. 147 (2017): 98-100.

8 to 12 hours, and one fourth worked over 24 hours straight.⁴³ They list other studies with larger sample sizes that reveal that from a 7700 doctors' sample, 49.5% worked at least 12 hours per day. They list a Japanese study by Uehata that claims there are five tell signs for karoshi-inducing environments: long working hours, continuous work with little breaks, high-pressure works, extremely physically taxing work, and constant pressure. This reality is worsened by the lack of physicians in the country compared to other developed nations, with a ratio of 1.2 docs/1000 citizens, while the developed nation average is 2.8/1000.⁴⁴

Kobayashi & Middlemiss's complementary paper (2009) focuses on the legal basis for work-related injuries, deaths, and disabilities that stem from overwork-related stress.⁴⁵ They claim that previous studies have found 1/5 American workers attend work despite illness, medical appointments, or fail to take their vacations. Data from the Bureau of Labor shows that in 2004 17% of managerial workers had 60 hours/week schedules. They found that in the U.K., the practice established in the E.U. by the Working Time Regulations that stipulates that workers shouldn't have shifts longer than 48 hours per week is often breached. Moreover, data from the British Trade Union Congress revealing that by 2003 roughly 100 people commit suicide due to work-related causes, and they are not reported as workplace-related deaths.⁴⁶

While clearly similar to the behaviors and circumstances related to karoshi in Japan, these studies reveal the presence of the phenomenon on a significantly smaller scale. These findings suggest that karoshi is not a phenomenon born exclusively from Japanese culture; all it takes are enough cases within each nation. At the same time, the disparity between reported cases presents Japanese culture as having a role in its prevalence amongst the working population and their unwillingness to reduce its impact. As a counter-argument to the hypothesis that karoshi may be a universal phenomenon, now these behaviors will be contrasted against a different culture: Latin American. The reason behind this selection is twofold. First, it aims to contest the belief that long working hours translates to karoshi. Secondly, to present a case in which cultural values may diminish the impact of karoshi risk factors. The standard of selection for the countries that will represent this cultural environment is based upon a list of average working hours per year by the OECD as shown in Table 3:

⁴³ H. P. Shan et al., "Overwork is a silent killer of Chinese doctors: a review of Karoshi in China 2013–2015."

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ T. Kobayashi and S. Middlemiss, "Employers' liability for occupational stress and death from overwork in the United States and the United Kingdom," *Common Law World Review*, 38, no.2 (2009): 137-169.

⁴⁶ T. Kobayashi and S. Middlemiss, "Employers' liability for occupational stress and death from overwork in the United States and the United Kingdom," 137-169.

Country	Work hours/year (2013)
Japan	1734
China	2408
USA	1781
U.K.	1541
Costa Rica	2141
Mexico	2136

Table 3: List of worked hours per year on average across countries based on OECD data (2019).

Mexico and Costa Rica were selected due to their similar work schedule to that of China to offer a closer comparison. Additionally, if we were to follow the assumption that longer work hours translate to *karoshi*, there should be more instances in the USA compared to Japan. Alternatively, assuming the trend continued and was not counted, the overwork 360 hours/year from Iwasaki, Takahashi, and Nakata would still place Japan within the same ballpark as the Latin countries. A statistical study on work safety conducted by the Costa Rican Ministry of Work and Social Safety (2016) reveals the most common causes of injury and death related to work in the country.⁴⁷ The list reveals that in 2015 there were no recorded deaths related to cardiovascular complications or work-related suicide. They list the most common causes for work-related deaths: vehicle accidents, violent crime, falls and natural accidents. While the study does match the target demographic (male workers ages 20 to 40), making up 60% of total work-related deaths, the study shows that 55% of deaths were machinery-related, 14% due to excessive physical labor, 3% due to disease or infection and 28% is left as unidentified.⁴⁸ Should *karoshi* take place, it would have to be a subset of that 28%, but no further clarification is given.

A newspaper article by the local newspaper “La Nacion” (2017) shows that the total number of cardiovascular and stroke-related deaths has been steadily declining, dropping 58% since the 1970s.⁴⁹ It is worth mentioning that the article recognizes that the demographic at the highest risk for cardiovascular disease and stroke are 25- to 44-year-old. The Costa Rican study also took a look at data from a 2011 survey that looked at what psychosocial factors weigh heavier over workers when it came to work-related stress.⁵⁰ They looked at

⁴⁷ Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, *Occupational Health Statistics, 2016*, Costa Rica. Oct. 26 2019.

https://www.cso.go.cr/documentos_relevantes/consultas/Estadisticas%20CSO%202016.pdf.

⁴⁸ Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social.

⁴⁹ Irene Rodriguez, “Stroke related mortality drops by half over the last 40 years,” *La Nacion*, March 2017. Web. Oct. 26 2019.

⁵⁰ Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social.

social expectations, perceived control over their work, and social support (family, friends, & loved ones). They found individual's social support to be the stronger factor of the three with an average value of 33% influence compared to the averaged 20% each of the other categories. These findings seem to suggest that Latin American culture's focus on family seems to outweigh the perceived relevance of social expectations related to work.

When looking at suicide rate in Mexico based on historical records dating from 1970 to 2007, it has seen a 275% increase rate in mortality.⁵¹ There was 4:1 male to female suicides back in 1970, and by 2007 it was close to 5:1. The largest increase was seen in the 15 to 34 age range; older groups show a homogenous rate. 14-19 y/o, make up 10.6% of total cases, 20-24 y/o are 15.4%, and 25-29 y/o are 13.7%. Though they overlap with Japan's *karojisatsu* demographic, the same study found in 2008 a shift in suicide patterns among three age groups (12 to 17), (18 to 29), and (30 to 65). The pattern reveals that idealization and probability of attempting suicide drop with age, meaning it is most prevalent in the younger groups. This same study found that among the suicide victims, 85.4% of teens showed mental disorders prior to death, as did 75.4% of adult victims (mostly substance abuse and anxiety disorders).⁵² This evidence suggests that while prevalent in Mexican society, suicide affects primarily younger individuals whose cognition has been altered prior to the time of death by reasons not necessarily work related. Contrasting this evidence, Asgari, Pickar, & Garay found work-related suicide made up 45% of the total suicide pool among males age 29 or younger in Japan during 2014.⁵³

Having established how these Latin-American countries resembled China and Japan in terms of work distribution, and we've seen how their side effects differ, yet the question of why remains. One possible explanation is that of indulgence as defined in Hofstede's dimensions. In it, a country's indulgence index expresses how likely it is for a population to control their impulses and desires. When the grade is high, as is the case in Mexico with 97 out of 100, that country's population is more likely to pursue their individual desires and leisure over other duties.⁵⁴ People in these societies tend to be more optimistic and frivolous with their spending, while in contrast, countries like Japan (42) and China (24) are labeled as restraint due to their low scores. People in these societies are more concerned with social norms and duties; they are also described to be more cynical and pessimistic.⁵⁵ The source did not possess Costa

⁵¹ G. Borges, et al., "Suicidio y conductas suicidas en México: retrospectiva y situación actual," *Salud pública de México* 52, no.4 (2010): 292-304.

⁵² G. Borges, et al., "Suicidio y conductas suicidas en México: retrospectiva y situación actual," 292-304.

⁵³ Asgari, B., Pickar, P., & Garay, V. "Karoshi and Karou-jisatsu in Japan: causes, statistics and prevention mechanisms." *Asia Pac Bus Econ Perspect*, 4 (Winter 2016): 52-53.

⁵⁴ Hofstede Insights, "Country comparison: China, Costa Rica, Japan, & Mexico." (2019). Web. Nov 22 2019.

⁵⁵ Hofstede Insights, "Country comparison."

Rica's score, but I anticipate it to be similar to Colombia's 83.⁵⁶ This estimation stems from being Panamanian (the Republic of Panama is located between both countries), having visiting both places in the past, and knowing people from both countries with similar work ethics. Countries that are overindulgent have their own set of issues, but they present a cultural context in which *karoshi* and *karojisatsu* are less likely to manifest since people would rather forego social duties than sacrifice their personal satisfaction.

Discussion

This study has looked at *karoshi* and *karojisatsu*'s definitions, their historical trends, target demographics, and their influence inside and outside the office. Thus, proving it is more than just long shifts; it could look differently based on personal lifestyle, and could manifest in places other than Japan. Even when accounting for the counter-argument sources, the hypothesis behind this paper seems supported to the extent that *karoshi* and *karojisatsu* are not as predominant in other nations when compared to Japan. This hints at a possible dependence on its cultural setting. One interesting aspect of this study is the dichotomy in *karoshi*/ *karojisatsu* manifestation between indulgent and restraint countries. While I cannot speak about China nor Japan, I have visited both Mexico and Costa Rica. My limited anecdotal experience places Panama between the two regarding indulgence. To provide some examples that may help define indulgence in a more operant context. In Panama, lack of punctuality is rather customary. Many types of scheduled appointments run on their own time. This practice ranges from social gatherings such as parties to medical appointments or legal meetings. In casual contexts, all parties are aware that while the event may start at a given time, it will not "actually" start for up to an hour later. In more formal circumstances, the party with less influence must be there on time, but the party in power often arrives late as though nothing happened. This sort of behavior, regardless of ethics, does make it harder for *Karoshi*-like incidents to happen since people are out for their own benefit and would rarely overexert themselves and risk their health for some "duty."

Overwork can happen anywhere, but how we as individuals and societies respond to it that can be dictated by our culture. My suggestions for future studies in this field would focus on collecting first-hand data from a number of Latin American countries and Japan regarding their social practices involving restraint vs. indulgence. Hopefully, case studies arrive at a solid middle ground in which workers will be protected without sacrificing work efficiency. Costa Rica is a promising case study despite the limited data. Once obtained, in order to integrate those practices into Japanese society, historical and cultural examples could be used for syncretic merging. Referring back to the Costa Rican study, these could be oriented towards social support like family dynamics, social expectations, and perceived control within the workforce. The latter could rely on any number of stories about *yokai* or *kami* causing mischief,

⁵⁶ Ibid.

emphasizing that at times work will not go according to plan due to external forces out of our control. The ultimate goal being to shift what is known in psychology as “internal locus of control” mindset, in which one attributes oneself as the source of either success or failure, into a more external locus of control where the result can be attributed to external sources to reduce anxiety.

Conclusion

Overwork is a universal phenomenon; any business can try to extend their workers’ shifts within legal limits to increase profit. To some degree, this opens the door to cases of *karoshi* and *karojisatsu*, but it is our cultural background that either fertilizes or scourges the soil upon which it will take root. This paper does not suggest that excessive indulgence shouldn’t be reprehended; rather, it seeks to point out that overzealous dedication to one’s livelihood is not a good alternative either. As in many other things in life, the key lies in moderation and a healthy lifestyle. Governments, their people, and businesses must all work together to balance out how much work should be encouraged or reprehended. If there is one thing we can take away from this research, it is that more hours in our punch cards do not translate to better business.

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The Deeper Beauty of the Tang Dynasty: A Socio-Political Examination of Zhou Fang's Ladies Wearing Flowers in their Hair

By Adrian Butler

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Introduction

Secluded away in his study, the artist Zhou Fang, carefully laying out silk across a felt pad, brush with ink stone and stick placed beside it, prepares to capture a moment from the ancient Chinese Tang imperial court. Using linear lines of ink and brilliant colors, the handscroll painting of *Ladies Wearing Flowers in their Hair* is brought to life in this likely setting. The painting depicts women in a garden, a snapshot-like image of their secular activities in court life. Considered to be a part of the “Beautiful Women” genre for which Zhou Fang is associated, the painting has a far deeper meaning than what meets the eye. *Ladies Wearing Flowers in Their Hair* not only exemplifies the pinnacle of the “Beautiful Women” genre of the Tang Dynasty, but also offers important ethnographic and cultural details relating to the status of women during the period in which it was produced. Furthermore, the painting may show influences from sculptural and Buddhist art in its fluid lines and voluptuous forms. To fully grasp the significance of the painting, a brief history and examination of the piece must be given.

Historical Context

Most scholars agree that the painting was produced around the late eighth to early ninth century CE and attribute its creation to Zhou Fang, although some have purported a later date of creation around the tenth century.¹ This was during the height of what is known as the Tang Dynasty in China (618-906 CE). Known as China's “golden age”, this period was one of unparalleled political stability and prosperity, with one scholar describing it as what “the Han was to the Warring States...as Rome was to ancient Greece: a time of

¹ Ellen J. Liang, “Notes on Women Wearing Flowers in their Hair,” *Orientations* 21, no. 2 (February 1990): 32.

consolidation, of practical achievement, of immense assurance.”² The Tang dynasty was also incredibly cosmopolitan, with extensive trade and foreign travelers coming into China from as far away as Arabia and Turkey.³ This sense of political balance mixed with lively cultural activity can be seen in the art of this era; the atmosphere produced a love for beauty and refinement in art as embodied in the female form and secular activities. Specifically, the “Beautiful Women” genre reached its height of expression during this time, and *Ladies Wearing Flowers in their Hair* epitomizes this style.

Formal Elements

The handscroll features five palace ladies and one maid-servant across its composition (Fig. 1). There is no ground line or horizon line and yet a sense of depth and believable space is achieved by placing the figures at slightly different levels to one another. The use of size to denote status is employed here, as seen with the maid-servant holding the fan for her mistress in the center foreground. However, size does not always indicate status in this painting; as the second women from the left illustrates. She is approximately the same size as the maid-servant, and yet her vibrant red clothing, elaborate hair piece, and general demeanor suggest a woman of higher status. In this way, the size of the figure could denote spatial separation into the background and thus imbues the scene with a sense of depth. Aside from the figures of the work, much of the



Figure 1 Attributed to Zhou Fang, *Ladies Wearing Flowers in their Hair*, late 8th, early 9th century C.E. Handscroll, ink and color on silk. Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang. <https://smarthistory.org/zhou-fang-flowers/> (accessed November 22, 2016).

composition is empty, or negative, space. At first glance this negative space could be seen to position the female figures as somewhat floating, scattered forms in a flat, two-dimensional world. As is common in many Chinese paintings, both figural and landscape, the negative space is employed here to persuade the viewer’s imagination to create a background for the scene; combined with the size and placement of the figures, the negative space allows for the illusion that there may be a world beyond the foreground of the painting. The general mood is one of playfulness and tranquility wrapped in a showcase

² Michael Sullivan, *Arts of China*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 131.

³ *Ibid.*, 133.

of elegant beauty (as seen in the female figures, flowers, and the small dogs and crane). The figures are both active and static; they are admiring the flowers and playing with their dogs but remain somewhat motionless and strategically posed. Zhou Fang came from an aristocratic family in Chang'an (modern day Xi'an) and was a famous painter in the imperial court.⁴ Having most likely witnessed such behavior from the women of the court, Zhou Fang nonetheless wanted to create a stylized interpretation of the women and their activities. This is seen in the way the women are depicted—none are individualized portraits but rather embodiments of the ideal feminine aesthetics of the time. They all share similar white-powdered faces, hairstyles, small noses/mouths, eyebrows shaped like butterfly wings, and heavier, curvaceous bodies, all of which were attributes of Tang beauty ideals.⁵ More minute detail was paid to the women's loose, diaphanous shawls, richly painted dresses, and hair accessories, as seen below in fig. 2. Each lady is distinct in her clothing and hair jewelry/flower, with reds, creams, golds, and tan being the predominant colors. Zhou Fang's brilliant use of linear ink lines, vibrant color, and detail (along with the focus on beautiful ladies' leisurely activities), has made this painting one of the finest examples in the "Beautiful Ladies" genre.



Figure 2 Attributed to Zhou Fang, (Detail) *Ladies Wearing Flowers in their Hair*, late 8th, early 9th century C.E. Handscroll, ink and color on silk. Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang. <https://smarthistory.org/zhou-fang-flowers/> (accessed November 22, 2016).

⁴ Nina W. Lai-na, "Attributed to Zhou Fang, Ladies Wearing Flowers in Their Hair," in *Smarthistory.org*, May 1, 2016, accessed October 24, 2016, <https://smarthistory.org/zhou-fang-flowers/>.

⁵ Ibid.

Stylistic Markers and Evolutions

The painting was identified as a piece from the Tang Dynasty through various comparisons to burial and religious art. A tomb in Hebei province dated to around 923 C.E.



Figure 3 *Musicians*, from the tomb of Wang Chuzhi (d. 923). Painted marble relief. 82 x 139 cm. Hebei. <http://media-cache-e00.pinimg.com/736x/fff/3/27/fff327f90afd15280877c16478d2f03b.jpg> (accessed November 22, 2016).

displays a relief panel depicting women musicians (Fig. 3).⁶ The women on the panel have similar graceful, voluptuous bodies and fluid clothing lines like the figures in *Ladies Wearing Flowers in their Hair*. Additionally, the *Musicians* have hairstyles and hair accessories that seem to mimic the ones on Zhou

Fang's painting, especially the figure second from right in Fig. 3. Another contemporary piece that shows similarities to Zhou Fang's work is a banner called *Guide of Souls* from Dunhuang (Fig. 4). The lady being escorted to the Western Paradise by a bodhisattva has a similar garment, heavy face, posture, and high hairstyle with flowers as the ladies in Zhou Fang's painting.⁷ What is fascinating about this painting/banner is its religious theme. Although *Ladies Wearing Flowers in their Hair* is a purely secular painting, it appears that its figural style may not only mirror the contemporary religious/ceremonial art of the Tang but may in fact have been an evolution from past sculptural and religious art traditions synthesized into the newer, secular "Beautiful Ladies" genre that rose to prominence during that time.



Figure 4 *Guide of Souls*, Dunhuang, late 9th century. Banner, ink and color on silk. Stein Collection, British Museum. http://idp.bl.uk/pages/collection_s_en.a4d (accessed November 22, 2016).

⁶ De-nin D Lee, "Fragments for Constructing a History of Southern Tang Painting," *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, no. 34 (2004):10. <http://0-www.jstor.org.skyline.ucdenver.edu/stable/23496260>.

⁷ Liang, "Notes on Women Wearing Flowers in their Hair," 34.

Culture and Ideologies

The painting's attributes above have led some scholars to conclude that the piece, and the genre as a whole is more of a superficial rendering of idealized women intended for the male gaze's enjoyment. In a sense, it objectifies women and enforces their submissive status in society. Mary Fong illustrates this point as she details the historical rise of the genre. Pinpointing Confucianism's influence on gender ideology during the Han Dynasty (filial piety, for example), Fong writes, "the female was represented not as a real person but as a product of male construction, depending on the gender ideology of the time, but rooted in the patriarchal ethos of the Confucian age."⁸ According to Fong, the first female representations can be categorized as the "Exemplary Women" genre, in which women enacted virtuous deeds based on Confucianism principles (a good example could be Gu Kaizhi's (ca. 344-406) didactic handscroll painting, *Admonitions of the Instructress to the Ladies of the Palace*).⁹ Painting styles changed along with the cultures of each dynasty, but according to Fong, the same pictorial principles she lists above for female images remained. Into the Tang Dynasty, the "Exemplary Women" genre was replaced with the "Beautiful Ladies/Beautiful Women" as tastes changed toward appreciating daily life, especially women's secular activities.¹⁰ Nonetheless, the "Palace Ladies" in this genre, including Zhou Fang's work, could still be seen as generalized and nonspecific, which symbolically reinforces masculine power and superiority.

At first glance, it is understandable to see Zhou Fang's painting within the objectifying lens Fong and other scholars have viewed it from. However, a deeper examination of the piece and its coded elements reveals a more complex cultural understanding of it. By only examining the formal elements of a piece, a person runs the risk of developing "westernized notions" on the genre of the beautiful women, and hence misunderstanding it because of the absence of culturally imbued meanings.¹¹ Instead of being merely a "secular pleasure" picture for the male elite, it actually shows women engaged in a long cherished cultural tradition. The scholar Ellen J. Laing succinctly sums up the common misconceptions of the work, stating, "Since many 'beautiful woman' pictures never had a concrete identity, they can readily be appreciated merely as a candid glimpse of an attractive woman... But there is often another, more sophisticated significance, one that must be decoded."¹² The event depicted is women participating in The Birthday of the Flowers or Flower Morning, a social

⁸ Mary H. Fong, "Images of Women in Traditional Chinese Painting," *Woman's Art Journal* 17, no. 1 (1996): 26. <http://0-www.jstor.org.skyline.ucdenver.edu/stable/1358525>.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹¹ Ellen Johnston Laing, "Chinese Palace-Style Poetry and the Depiction of a Palace Beauty," *The Art Bulletin* 72, no. 2 (1990): 284. doi:10.2307/3045734. <http://0-www.jstor.org.skyline.ucdenver.edu/stable/3045734>.

¹² *Ibid.*, 284.

event/festival celebrated during the second lunar month of the new year.¹³ The festival could include activities in which both sexes went out into nature to “tread the green” or simply observe the blooming flowers.¹⁴ However, festival activities were highly associated with fertility and women. Various clues help to identify this painting with the Flower Morning festival. In many “Beautiful Women” paintings, the hair accessories (jewelry and flowers) are, small, inconspicuous blossoms that conform to the smooth silhouette of the hair.¹⁵ In Zhou Fang’s work, the flowers and hair ornaments are ostentatiously clustered with red and white flowers, some speckled with gold (Fig. 1 and 2), suggesting a special occasion. The gold wash on the leaves and flowers on the left figure in Fig. 2 could also indicate the presence of fresh and artificial flowers, a common practice during the festival.¹⁶ However, the presence of the fan held by the maid-servant and the butterfly held by the woman on the far left next to the flowing magnolia bush (Fig. 1) are two features that cement the occasion of the festival. The fan has a peony painted on it, and from ancient Chinese palace poetry sources, during the festival the fan would attract the butterflies and women would perform a rite in which they try to hit them.¹⁷ The equation of beautiful women with flowers and the pursuit of the butterfly is obviously why the festival is associated with fertility. One ancient source, Wang Rengu, even reported that during the Tang Dynasty, Emperor Minghuang would release a butterfly during the springtime rite. Whichever woman, with flowers in her hair, the butterfly landed on had the honor of sharing his bed that evening (in this way, men symbolized the butterfly, women the flower).¹⁸

Ladies Wearing Flowers in their Hair does not only offer ethnographic detail in dress and beauty ideals in the Tang court, but it also documents a cultural event, one that positioned women in a prominent role. The evidence above suggests that this painting is not a generalized, nonspecific depiction of women intended to submit them to patriarchal authority/pleasure. Although the painting was meant to be enjoyed (likely by a mostly male audience) and evoke the beauty of women, the fact that women during the Tang dynasty experienced more freedom than other time periods seems to correlate with their greater presence in secular art and the popularity of the “Beautiful Women” genre. Many sources mention how women enjoyed more visibility at the imperial court and in society, that it was a more liberal and overall “better” time to be a woman. Sadly, most of these sources only give vague or cursory sentences relating to this topic. However, by looking at the influences of Empress Wu Zetian (624-705 C.E.), a greater understanding of women’s shifting social status can hopefully be attained. In relation to art, Wu may have paved the way for women

¹³ Liang, “Notes on Women Wearing Flowers in their Hair,” 35.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 37.

to have a greater social presence in court and thus indirectly influenced their pictorial representations, as seen in Zhou Fang's painting.

Cultural Shifts

Wu Zetian was the only female Emperor in Chinese history. Her role in the Tang palace was as a Cairen, a fifth ranked concubine, to the Emperor Taizong when she was just fourteen years old.¹⁹ After Taizong's death, his son, Emperor Gaozong, took Wu as his empress in 655 C.E. After Gaozong's death, and through deposing and manipulating multiple sons, Wu herself became Emperor of China in 690 C.E.²⁰ Although Wu Zetian, to put it mildly, is regarded as a negative figure in history, certain scholars consider her a proto-feminist, and much of her regime does illustrate positive shifts in status for women. During the era of Wu Zetian, the patriarchal society that surrounded her reigned supreme, with gender discrimination dominating every aspect of a women's life.²¹ However, society during the Tang Dynasty was more tolerant in regards to women than other periods. This open-mindedness manifested itself in women's ability to dress in a more sexually explicit manner and a Tang law that decreed women's rights to divorce—in fact, it was not uncommon for women to divorce and remarry.²² It was in this liberal society that a woman like Wu Zetian could insert her dominance, and in doing so, she also further effected women's status and rights both within the royal court and beyond.

Wu herself emulated her male predecessors in power and sexual relations; she had several male concubines and formed her own dynasty, Zhou.²³ Politically, she changed laws concerning women. In 674 C.E., she made it official that a deceased mother will be mourned for the same amount of time as a deceased father—she stated:

A mother is great because she contributes [to social life] by giving birth to and raising children. No mother, no children. If we do not treat mother the same as father, we are not good children, and are even worse than animals who know how to thank their mothers.²⁴

In addition, Wu Zetian employed female officials, encouraged women to enter into religious and political meetings, and converse with men in public, thus, in effect "Facilitating the ability of women to talk equally with men and to express their own opinions may, arguably have increased women's consciousness and

¹⁹ Niya Peng, Yu Tianyuan, and Albert Mills, "Feminist Thinking in Late Seventh-Century China," *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal* 34 (1) (2015): 75, <http://0-search.proquest.com.skyline.ucdenver.edu/docview/1650545414?accountid=14506>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 75-76.

²² Ibid., 76.

²³ Ibid., 75-76.

²⁴ Ibid., 74.

social status to some extent.”²⁵ Not everyone in the palace nor in society condoned Wu Zetian’s actions, and she garnered much criticism and hate. This negative image can still be seen today in most general descriptions of her in academic texts.²⁶ In 705 C.E., Wu was overthrown in a coup, and her third son, Zhongzong, returned as Emperor, although Wu held the title of “Emperor” until her death that same year.²⁷

A New Perspective

Wu Zetian’s contributions to the status of women would surely leave a lasting influence on the Tang Dynasty. Painted around a hundred years after Wu Zetian’s death, *Ladies Wearing Flowers in their Hair* may show her influence, even if it is in a subtle fashion. Because of Wu, women’s presence at the imperial court and in society was intensified. Because of Wu’s political changes, women enjoyed a greater level of social equality than at any time prior. These developments could have indirectly led to the “Beautiful Women” genre, and more importantly, the depiction of women in their secular activities as opposed to showcasing their “exemplary” deeds as dictated by a patriarchal society. Instead, they are shown enjoying their high status and public presence. This is particularly true for Zhou Fang’s painting, for the women are participating in a cultural event that men enjoyed as well, yet Zhou focuses on the women--their active engagement with society--and not as mere decorations for men behind closed doors.

Zhou Fang’s painting, *Ladies Wearing Flowers in their Hair* does indeed fill the requirements of the “Beautiful Women” genre; everything about it evokes an elegant and tranquil femininity, from the flowers, the clothing, the animals, and, of course, the women themselves. All of these elements are done through a master’s hand at the peak of his skills. Because of this façade of beauty, some have simply focused on the formal elements and deduced this work to be yet another representation of simple female submissiveness (albeit one in a very skillful manner). On a closer investigation of the painting, it reveals a deeper cultural significance. It offers a glimpse at the ethnographic detail of the Tang imperial court, a social festival that women played a large part in, and women’s more prominent role in society during that time. This work is a contribution to not only the history of Chinese figural painting, but an important visual representation of the evolving lives and circumstances of women in the ancient world.

²⁵ Ibid., 76.

²⁶ Sullivan, *Arts of China*, 133.

²⁷ Peng, Tianyuan, and Mills, “Feminist Thinking in Late Seventh-Century China,” 75.

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Tattoos in East Asia: Conforming to Individualism

By Morgan J. Macfarlane

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Traditional Japanese tattoo masters referred to their art as “a flower in the shade,” a hidden tattoo specially designed for the wearer whose beauty would only be revealed to those closest to them.¹ Traversing the streets of Shibuya in Japan, the busy plazas of Hongdae, or the nightclubs of Shanghai tells a new story of what tattoos have become in East Asia. Although Japan, South Korea, and China share a similar history of tattoo criminality spanning thousands of years, in current times they all hold different legal policies concerning the practice. South Korea has the strictest laws, requiring a medical doctorate to legally tattoo,² while Japan has only recently reaffirmed the legality of the practice outside of health professionals;³ China, on the other hand, has few restrictions on the practice.⁴ This variation has curious implications given their different levels of development and democracy - the two modern democracies have the most regulations on an art traditionally connected to counter-culture⁵ and criminality, while the authoritarian nation has but a few.

Although a strong social stigma towards the art remains salient in all three nations due to the historical connection to criminality as well as Confucian values, a new, younger generation with greater access to the internet and the outside world has been able to adopt a tattoo culture largely unrelated to previous trends. Tattoos in East Asia are becoming less about rebellious self-expression, which could be threatening to an authoritarian government, but are

¹ Mieko Yamada, “Westernization & Cultural Resistance In Tattooing Practices In Contemporary Japan,” (International Journal of Cultural Studies, 2009), 330.

² Constance Williams, “Legal Tattoos, Illegal Tattooists,” (Korea Biomedical Review, 2017).

³ Sayuri Umeda, “Japan: High Court Rules Tattooing Is Not a Medical Act,” (Library of Congress, 2018).

⁴ Casey Quackenbush, and Aria Hangyu Chen, “‘Tasteless, Vulgar and Obscene.’ China Just Banned Hip-Hop Culture and Tattoos From Television,” (Time, 2018).

⁵ Judy Park, “Signs of Social Change on the Bodies of Youth: Tattoos in Korea,” (Visual Communications, 2015), 73-74.

instead symbols of a modern society rising alongside a younger middle class, one unburdened by previous decades of poverty. The rising prevalence of a tattooed population may be less of an indicator of a strong counter-culture, but instead a notifier of a globalized, developed society.

This article argues that although tattoos are typically emblems of individuality, the body art's transition to a popular item in East Asian consumer markets are more about conforming to and supporting the ideas of modernity rather than truly a unique expression of self. This interesting phenomenon is presented by first exploring the historical context of tattoos in each country to establish a base for both the legal and social restrictions on tattoo culture that still remain present today. The next section presents the researcher's fieldwork abroad, including observational and interview-based material that will focus on current tattoo culture, especially in each nation's youth. Finally, the article concludes with an analysis of tattoo trends to present a possible new factor, body art culture, in determining a society's development and social liberalism.

A Criminal Past

Japan, South Korea, and China all share long histories of tattooing, with each nation using the practice to permanently mark and ostracize criminals. These similar histories have fostered a long-standing social stigma in all three countries towards body art, relating it with gangs, criminals, or social outcasts. The older generations who maintain more traditional beliefs⁶ continue to look down upon those with tattoos, especially young people.⁷

Japan - Japan has an extensive history with tattooing. Tracing as far back as 5,000 BCE the earliest written mention of the practice can be found in a third century Chinese chronical stating that, "men young and old [in Japan], all tattoo their faces and decorate their bodies with designs."⁸ However, by 720 CE⁹ tattoos were used as punishment for criminal activity rather than an art form, with Japan adopting similar attitudes to the Chinese seeing tattoos as barbaric.¹⁰ It wasn't until the Edo period (1603-1868) that the well-known 'full-body' pieces known as *irezumi* became popular with the greater society. These tattoos covered the entire body from head to toe except for a clean strip down one's chest so that a kimono could be worn, with designs inspired by popular wood-

⁶ Zhengxu Wang and Ern Se Tan, "The Conundrum of Authoritarian Resiliency: Hybrid and Nondemocratic Regimes," (Taiwan Journal of Democracy, 2013), 214.

⁷ Mi Sun. Interviewed by Morgan MacFarlane. Personal Interview. Seoul, South Korea, July 10, 2019.

⁸ Kelly Richman-Abdou, "Irezumi: Exploring the Ancient Techniques and Evolution of Traditional Japanese Tattoos," (My Modern Met, 2019).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Victoria Frecentese., "Tattooing Identity: An analysis of historical and contemporary tattooing practices among members of the military community," (Colorado College, 2013), 8-10.

blocking art or *ukiyoe*.¹¹ Traditionally, tattoos were done via hand-poking or *tebori*, “which required the tattooee to spend time and endure pain in order to complete the full-body tattoo,” proving one’s dedication to the permanent art.¹²

Other popular styles at the time included tattooing the name of a lover on one’s inner arm, typical of young lovers, geisha, or prostitutes.¹³ Working-class laborers would get designs tattooed that they believed would either aid or protect them during their jobs; firefighters opted for dragons due to the creature’s connection to water.¹⁴ During the socially oppressive feudal era, *iki* or stylishness developed as a form of rebellion against the upper classes, with tattoos being a popular symbol for laborers.¹⁵ The *yakuza*, a large crime syndicate in Japan, began adopting *irezumi* style tattoos in this same era. Members’ tattoos were not only signals of loyalty and commitment to the crime syndicate but could have also been tattoos previously received by the government to mark them as criminals. As Japan opened itself to the world during the Meiji Restoration, tattoo practices became seen as barbaric and made illegal until the end of the Second World War in 1945, which coincided with the rise in power and influence of the *yakuza*.

South Korea - Tattoos, or *munshin*, in Korea first appeared during the Samhan, or Three Kingdoms Age, from 57 BC to 668 CE. Like in Japan, *munshin* was used as a form of punishment starting during the Goryeo era (918 CE - 1392 CE) into the Joseon Dynasty (1392 CE - 1910 CE).¹⁶ Tattoos were also commonly used as a way for the wealthy nobles, or *yangban*, to permanently mark their servants so they could not run away.¹⁷ Unlike Japan’s history of tattoos, Korea does not have a specific traditional style that developed; however current artists draw from traditional Korean religious symbology¹⁸ or dress¹⁹ to create designs that harken back to Korean history. Fishermen and other laborers may have also used tattoos as good luck charms or symbols to ward off creatures while out at sea similar to their Japanese counterparts.²⁰

Under Japanese occupation, the social stigma towards tattoos in South Korea may have been reinforced due to the Japanese experience with *yakuza* in

¹¹ Yamada, “Westernization and Cultural Resistance,” 321.

¹² Yamada, “Westernization and Cultural Resistance,” 321.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 321.

¹⁴ Andreas Johansson, *Yakuza Tattoo*, (Dokument Press, 2019), 8.

¹⁵ Yamada, “Westernization and Cultural Resistance,” 322.

¹⁶ Park, “Signs of Social Change,” 74.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁸ Paulina Cachero, “The Outlaw Buddhist Art of a Korean Tattooist,” (Tricycle, 2018).

¹⁹ Ellen Freeman, “How Norigae Evolved From Fashion Accessory to Tattoo in South Korea,” (Inside Out, 2019).

²⁰ Kaitlin Brodsky, “Tattoo Subculture in Korea,” (BU Global Studies).

their own country.²¹ As South Korea began to rapidly modernize and develop, Korean gangs,²² referred to as *kkangpae*, took on similar characteristics to the Japanese *yakuza*, with tattoos developing into a sign of membership for gangsters or *geondal*.²³ The tattoos of these *kkangpae* typically “identify the pa, or individual group (analogous to a Mafia crime family), to which they belong.”²⁴ Large tattoos on one’s back and arms are typical and, up until recently, would strike fear in average Koreans just by the sight of them.²⁵ Tattoos were used to intimidate the populace and signify membership in the *kkangpae*, feeding a social stigma towards art similar to Japan’s.

China - Tattooing, although practiced for thousands of years in China, was uncommon and looked down upon as a practice of the barbaric tribes south of the Yangzi river.²⁶ The ethnic groups of the Dulong, the Dai, and the Li in China used tattooing to represent rites of passage, strength, and medicinal purposes.²⁷ Just as in Japan and Korea, indigenous groups also used tattoos to ward off harmful creatures like *jaio*, or dragons by disguising themselves. As scholar Carrie Reed emphasizes, Chinese people may have viewed these tattoos as animalistic at the time: “tattoo is in fact the epitome of uncivilized practice, since it patterns the human body like the skin of an animal or water creature.”²⁸

In the past, as with the other two countries of Japan and Korea, tattoos were used to mark criminals and symbolize the severity of the crime committed. There were thousands of recorded possible crimes punishable by tattoo in China with the use of it fluctuating in popularity over time, however the Song, Yuan, and Qing dynasties have many records of employing the punishment.²⁹ If banishment was paired with the tattoo, the permanent mark ensured that it would be virtually impossible for the criminal to return home as the community would easily be alerted by the tattoo - creating literal social outcasts.³⁰ Along with Japan and South Korea, slaves and concubines were tattooed either to ensure they would be unable to runaway or as punishment.³¹ Tattoos were even used in the Chinese military to identify with a specific unit to prevent desertion or

²¹ Sung. Interviewed by Morgan MacFarlane. Personal interview. Seoul, South Korea, July 12, 2019.

²² Seungmug Lee. “Organized Crime in South Korea.” (Trends in Organized Crime, 2006). 64.

²³ Park, “Signs of Social Change,” 74.

²⁴ Bill Kte’pi, “Gangs,” (Asian American Society: An Encyclopedia, 2014).

²⁵ Park, “Signs of Social Change,” 76.

²⁶ Carrie, E. Reed, “Tattoo in Early China,” (Journal of the American Oriental Society, 2000), 361.

²⁷ “A history of Chinese Tattoos and Chinese Tattooing Traditions,” China Culture. 2014.

²⁸ Reed, “Tattoo in Early China,” 362-363.

²⁹ Ibid., 365.

³⁰ Ibid., 365-366.

³¹ Ibid., 366-368.

voluntarily as a symbol of honor and commitment to one's nation.³² Chinese gangs such as the Triads have adopted similar practices as Korean and Japanese gangs, using them as tokens of the individual branches within the gang.³³ Therefore, Chinese people still associate tattoo culture with that of criminality, stemming from both past punishments and active Triad gangs.³⁴

Confucian culture has played a major part in the stigma against tattoo culture historically and currently, especially in South Korea³⁵ and China. In *Xiao jing*, Confucius contends "that filial piety is the thing most necessary for civilized society, and that the basis of filial piety lies in avoiding injury to the... body that is received from one's parents."³⁶ Tattoos then are seen as an offense to one's parents, who granted the child that body to preserve and protect, adding an even greater lasting element of strong social stigma. Older generations that still maintain more traditional Confucian beliefs,³⁷ therefore, look down on younger people for tattoos not only for the historical connection to criminality but also for shaming one's family.³⁸

Data & Research Methods

Both observational fieldwork and interviews were conducted in July 2019 for this research project. In collecting data for Japan, areas of Tokyo, including Shibuya and Shinjuku, were utilized for their high concentrations of young people as well as their notoriety for fashion and nightlife. Parts of Seoul were surveyed, such as Hongdae, known for the college youth life and fashion, Itaewon, which has heavy expatriate influences, and the wealthy business-oriented neighborhood of Gangnam. Finally, Shanghai and Beijing were chosen for China as both cities are large centers for foreigners and metropolitan Chinese as well as active nightlives. Observational fieldwork was utilized to get a sense of how prevalent tattoo culture was in a natural setting. At the same time, interviews were conducted to get a more in-depth understanding of tattoo culture and what drives those who participate in the art form in each country. The researcher received tattoos in each country in order to assess the locations of tattoo studios, interact with artists and other customers, and compare the shops' conditions.

³² Ibid., 369.

³³ Kte'pi, "Gangs."

³⁴ Interview with Duyi. Beijing, 2019.

³⁵ Premalatha Karupiah. "Modification of the body: a comparative analysis of the views of youths in Penang, Malaysia and Seoul, South Korea." (Journal of Youth Studies, 2013). 11-13.

³⁶ Reed, "Tattoo in Early China," 364.

³⁷ Wang & Tan, "The Conundrum of Authoritarian Resiliency," 214.

³⁸ Interview with Hui Ying, Duyi, Wenyan, and Xueyou. Beijing, 2019.

Field Research

Observational work was carried out in Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai, and Beijing. Data concerning who had tattoos, where the art was placed, and whether it was easily seen or concealed, the design and style, and how the person acted in their environment was recorded.

Japan - In Japan, although centers like Shibuya and Shinjuku are known for their population of young, fashionable city-dwellers, tattoos were not commonly seen on the streets; it was easier to spot foreigners with the body art. If tattoos were spotted while traversing the streets and shops, the subjects were typically young men with small to medium tattoos, usually on their arms or legs. Most recorded subjects sported perhaps one traditional Japanese style tattoo (if they had multiple), while the rest were either words, animals, or flowers in various styles. Word tattoos could be found in multiple different languages, with English being the most popular.

Large metropolitan areas like Shibuya or Harajuku had the most people, typically young men with the occasional woman, sporting tattoos, while in the more rural areas outside of the heart of Tokyo, tattoos, if present, were well hidden. Many more people could have tattoos; however, the ability and the desire to cover them or hide them was prevalent. One woman wearing a short-sleeved shirt was spotted with multiple tattoos on her arm obscured by a cloth sleeve reaching from her wrist almost to her armpit. At the tattoo studio the researcher visited, all of the artists had multiple tattoos; however, they were easily hidden. For example, one artist had tattoos only on their upper arms, which stopped abruptly a few inches above their elbows, allowing most shirts to cover the art. Fake, temporary tattoos or even henna were seen in Shibuya, typically placed in more obvious areas like the upper arm, cheeks, or collar bone. These types were seen on fashionable, young people, especially women, potentially due to their impermanence. Although Japan has a long, well-known history of the art of tattooing, Japanese people themselves are still wary of the art, which is evident on the streets of Tokyo.

South Korea - South Korea presents an entirely different tattoo culture than Japan, with seemingly well over half of the observed young adults in Hongdae displaying tattoos. Although there were people with full sleeves (typically men), the bigger trend appeared to be multiple small to medium-sized tattoos in almost arbitrary places around the body. Both men and women had tattoos, with the typical person on the streets on Hongdae having multiple black or greyscale tattoos on their arms, hands, legs, and even neck. Most tattoos appeared to have only black and grey or very light colors due to the delicate designs frequently seen. Women usually had the more subtle, smaller designs, while men had darker tattoos. Flowers, lettering, animals, and abstract designs were very popular for all people, with most sporting a mixture of those designs all over their bodies.

Hongdae, a hip neighborhood in Seoul where many college students and youth go, had people dressed very fashionably in streetwear with tattoos and jewelry as accessories to their style. Shop workers at clothing stores, servers at

restaurants, and bouncers at clubs all proudly showed their multiple tattoos, some sporting rather intimidating designs. For example, one male standing outside advertising for a nightclub had the Joker smile tattooed on his hand, dark roses covering his neck and chest, and multiple tear-drops under his eye. Additionally, a male server at a fried chicken restaurant had two crisscrossed daggers on the lower inside of his arm. People seemed unafraid and uninhibited in showing off their tattoos in Hongdae.

Other parts of Seoul had less of an obvious tattoo culture in comparison to Hongdae. Gangnam—being a well-known upscale business center—had fewer people showing off tattoos, especially since most people were dressed in formal business wear that would have covered any extant tattoos. Following this, Itaewon, although an area frequented by foreigners, had less people with tattoos than Hongdae but a new tattoo shop and school were found advertising in both English and Korean. Practicing tattooing is illegal in South Korea without a medical doctorate making the presence of walk-in tattoo studios, let alone a tattoo school, unusual. Instead, most well-known illegal Korean tattoo artists have built an international following via social media platforms like Instagram and utilize private studios to maintain their underground practice. Even with the underground nature of the practice, many young Koreans proudly show off their illegal body art on the streets, actively challenging the stigmas and prejudices of older generations, in contrast to Japan's well-hidden tattoo culture.

China - China appeared to have a growing mainstream tattoo culture in large cities such as Shanghai and Beijing. A cursory search of the internet for tattoo shops will show numerous new studios opening in the big cities, all walk-in oriented, unlike Japan and South Korea. China was the first country middle-aged people were seen with fading tattoos, mainly on their forearms, perhaps remnants of the punk rock scene a few decades ago. Young people sported all sorts of tattoo designs ranging from abstract or tribal designs to Japanese koi fish. The quality of tattoo work was different from Japan which had hundreds of years to define and perfect a style, or South Korea's popular fine line detailed work difficult to find in such quality and popularity elsewhere in the world. Instead, several tattoos spotted on China's streets had sections partially faded or bleeding out with no clear design. China's tattoo scene appears to be burgeoning alongside its development, while Japan and South Korea have had time to develop distinct tattoo cultures.

Although the tattoo culture in Shanghai and Beijing had fewer restrictions on the practice, studios were still difficult to find just walking down the streets. One tiny tattoo shop was found only after traversing the back alleys of a rich shopping district, tucked away with signs posted on the adjacent cement wall. Given the lack of regulations on tattooing and different health requirements, sanitary practices are a concern when getting tattooed in China, with the possibility of dirty needles, reuse of ink, and improper sterilization of tools. The tattoo studio the researcher went to was one open to foreigners and was well-known within the Chinese and international tattoo community; however, it was still rather hidden four floors up without any street signage. As China continues to develop and connect with the global world, tattoo culture

will continue to grow alongside it and may come in greater conflict with the Confucian ideologies of the general populace.

Interviews

Subjects in each country were chosen via a convenience sample, with the initial subjects being willing participants found in public spaces in each country. A snowball sampling method was used to gather further subjects via the initial participants. All of the interviewees have been assigned pseudonyms to protect their identities. Roughly six people in each country were interviewed, including both people with and without tattoos. For all of the interviews conducted, the subjects were in their 20s and 30s with at least a high-school level education or higher, meaning my conclusions are limited to this cohort. Most were students with a few subjects working either small jobs or were tattoo artists themselves. A translator was used in both Korea and China to help facilitate some of the interviews.

Japan - In Japan, every interviewee discussed the connection between Japanese tattoo culture and *yakuza* criminality, referring to it immediately when asked if they'd consider getting a tattoo. Akira, a mid-20s woman, showing us around Shinjuku, mentioned: "tattoo is a symbol of *yakuza*. So, here in Japan, if we see someone who [has] a tattoo, we automatically think that that person belongs to some *yakuza*. So we don't like tattoos." Interviewees mentioned that not only were tattoos associated with crime syndicates, but also "people partying and doing drugs."³⁹ Tattoos are still symbols of social deviance, especially in the youth, even as they adopt more Western-style tattoos that lack a direct connection to the *yakuza*. Those with tattoos now tend to be young, trendy Japanese who get small, fashion-oriented body art,⁴⁰ much different from the traditional *irezumi*.

Even with the prevailing social stigma, many subjects were open to the body art in general and did not mind it for others; however, they were less open to getting a tattoo themselves. As Ren, a young Japanese male who has spent time studying abroad in London, stated during our interview: "I think tattoos are cool, but just because I'm Japanese and I love being able to go to *onsen* and hot springs, I would rather not just because it makes my life a lot easier." Public baths and hot springs are popular locations for Japanese people; however, most do not allow those with ink to enter the bathhouses due to the connection with the infamous *yakuza*. Akira highlighted that some *onsen* allow people to cover their tattoos with a band-aid or water-proof sticker in order to enter the bathhouses; however, it may be difficult to cover large pieces.

With the influx of foreigners expected for the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo as well as the presence of a younger generation open to fashionable

³⁹ Haru. Interviewed by Morgan MacFarlane. Personal interview. Portland, Oregon, May 27, 2019.

⁴⁰ Ren. Interviewed by Morgan MacFarlane. Personal interview. Tokyo, Japan, July 6, 2019.

tattoos, *onsens* and older Japanese people may need to change their views of tattoos to accommodate. Makoto, a mid-20s male in Akihabara, felt strongly about this, stating:

[the] new generation [is] more like ‘who cares?’ Now, even the government is in discussion since we are getting to 2020 next year, now everyone is talking, expecting all these people with tattoos ... Like we have the rugby world cup coming up [in] September, and all of those players from New Zealand all have the tribal tattoos. And after they’re done playing games, of course, they have to take a bath.

The younger generation may be more open to tattoo culture as foreigners continue to visit the country and Japanese people become more accustomed to seeing body art.⁴¹ Yuu, a young male in his early 20s, going to medical school in Japan, added: “[W]e do have the yakuza so there is that kind of bad image, but I think that we should be more open about it, there should be more shops, we shouldn’t be hiding it.”

South Korea - Although nearly every one of the interviewees in South Korea had multiple tattoos, the specific art pieces did not typically have a special meaning to them. Instead, subjects usually referred to their body art as pretty⁴² or interesting, something they pursued because their friends had them as well - but not an impulsive or pointless choice. When asked what the reason was for her tattoo, Mi Sun, a young college student studying business had stated that it had aesthetic merit and went against Korean social norms. She continued to explain that, “basically, I want to express myself against this older generation’s conservative minds and prejudices against the young generation and tattoos.” Eun, another young female college student studying industrial design shared similar sentiments, stating that her tattoos did not have a specific meaning but instead combatted Korean stereotypes of women’s beauty.⁴³ Their tattoos weren’t about a rebellious underground counter-culture, but simply went against the older generation’s stigmas and ideas of beauty. Many interviewees mentioned that older people typically assumed tattoos were related to gangs or *kkangpae* though the subjects themselves were unsure of where this criminal activity even took place.⁴⁴

None of the interviewees had their tattoos done by medically licensed tattoo artists; however, the fact that they are walking around with illegally performed body art seems inconsequential to them. For example, Eun had multiple tattoos done by her friend, who sees the art as a mere hobby, unworried by the practice’s legality. However, for more popular career tattoo artists, the concern for fines and jail time is still prevalent; one artist interviewed stated that she was moving to London to freely expand her practice without legal restrictions. All of the interviewees said that artists in South Korea were easy to

⁴¹ “Tattooed foreigners are putting Japanese bath houses in a quandary,” (The Economist, 2018).

⁴² Interviews with Mi Sun and Eun. South Korea, 2019.

⁴³ Interview with Eun. Gangnam, 2019.

⁴⁴ Interviews with Mi Sun, Eun, and Hyukjin Ko. South Korea, 2019.

find because social media apps allowed them to find artists quickly; Eun finds artists via a tattoo sharing app. Most Korean tattoo artists found on Instagram, for example, all had at least five thousand followers, with the typical tattoo account hosting well over thirty thousand. Mi Sun felt the recent explosion in tattoo culture in South Korea could have to do with the growing prevalence of social network systems or SNS, and TV programs that constantly show not only Korean pop stars but Western celebrities and trends. Global style trends then heavily influence Korean tattoo culture as social media connects young Koreans to the entire world. Unlike the young Japanese interviewed, Korean youths were both willing and excited to participate in tattoo culture, seeing it as a way to participate in a broader international community of young, fashionable people.

China - Confucianism stood as a major factor in the interviews with young Chinese students about their decision not to get a tattoo. Here, there seemed to be the most resistance to the body art by average students, with only one of the four interviewed desiring a tattoo. In contrast, the others seemed apprehensive or against the art for themselves. Interestingly, the female student was the one most excited to get a small tattoo, either on her ankle or back, because she felt the body art was “beautiful and cool.” The male students, in contrast, were less sure of the art, as Wenyan, a mid 20s English student, stated: “For now, I don’t want a tattoo because I’m not quite used to it... maybe in the future [if] I become more liberal, progressive.” For the students interviewed, their apprehension came from the concern of their family. Each one referenced the Confucian ideal that one should not harm or mark their body as it was given to them by their parents and therefore should protect it.⁴⁵ They felt their elders would look down on them as well as view the tattoo as a symbol of social deviance or gang criminality.

For these students, public figures and entertainment idols do not flaunt tattoos like in Japan and South Korea or in more Westernized countries, and young people have less of an opportunity to see global trends due to the media restrictions in China. Recently, the Chinese government has banned rappers and entertainers from showing their tattoos on TV.⁴⁶ Duyi, a young English translation student, tried to explain: “if you’ve got tattoos when you are a singer or a dancer, you may have a bad influence on teenagers.” However, customers still use the internet to find tattoo artists, with studio websites easily accessible via Baidu or WeChat apps; the researcher’s artist in China taught himself how to tattoo in 2017 by watching videos online.⁴⁷

Even with the social stigma, tattoo culture is slowly growing alongside an internet-savvy young population accustomed to a more modern China with tattoo shops popping up in Shanghai, Beijing, and smaller cities like Fuzhou.⁴⁸ During interviews with two active tattoo artists in Shanghai, they mentioned the recent explosion of tattoo culture, calling right now a “good time” to have a

⁴⁵ Interviews with Hui Ying, Duyi, Wenyan, and Xueyou. Beijing, 2019.

⁴⁶ Quackenbush and Chen, “Tasteless, Vulgar and Obscene.”

⁴⁷ Interview with Zhang Wei. Shanghai, 2019.

⁴⁸ Caine, “老外看福州， 第三部”纹身文化.” QQ, 2018.

tattoo; in the past, people would assume you've been in jail or are part of a gang if you have body art. Chang, a young tattoo artist who acts as a translator for the studio, added that old people may still look down on people with tattoos but, "for young people, everybody, at least has one tattoo. Lots of people have tattoos in Shanghai. I don't know about Beijing, but in my home town, it's not really popular."

Although the tattoo culture in China has been more recently reinvigorated, people with body art share similar sentiments to those in South Korea, with their tattoos lacking a specific meaning but more a love for the art and design of the piece itself. Chang, who has tattoos covering her entire body, emphasizes that her tattoo means nothing: "for me, I like it ... Sometimes, someone will ask me 'what's this mean, what's that mean' and they have no meaning, just I like it. You don't have to do anything [as if] you need a reason to do it." However, it is clear that tattoo culture is growing at a steady pace in China, even given the remaining Confucian stigma, with studios and artists popping up every day to support the growing desire for body art.

Analysis

A strong social stigma surrounding tattoos remains in Japan, South Korea, and China. In Japan, the *yakuza* preserve an air of criminality surrounding body art while Confucian ideology advises young Chinese from changing the bodies their parents gave them. This social stigma has been fostered through the historical use of tattooing as punishment in each country, directly relating body art to a sign of criminality and social deviance.⁴⁹ The later adoption of tattoo art by gangs in each country has served to perpetuate the idea that tattoos are a sign of dangerous members of an active underground. Older generations who maintain more traditional values may continue to view tattoos as symbols of violence and disgrace. According to a 2008 study of tattoo perceptions in Korea, most young Koreans prefer the term "tattoo" rather than "*munshin*" as the latter holds negative connotations of violence and masculinity while tattoos are related with individuality, freedom, attractiveness, and fashion.⁵⁰ The younger generation then associates the art with self-expression rather than the traditional *munshin* with its history of criminal punishment.

The social perception of the art appears to hold greater weight than any legal restrictions and regulations a country may apply to the practice of tattooing. Although the art practice is technically legal in both Japan and China, the strong relationship to *yakuza* and Confucian ideology prevents people from seeking out the art. In Japan, most people, including young Japanese, saw the art as inhibitory - a symbol that would only harm them in society by preventing them from proper careers or even simple things like enjoying public baths.⁵¹ Japanese schools also regulate students' appearances in order to create a

⁴⁹ Interviews in Japan, South Korea, and China. 2019.

⁵⁰ Park, "Signs of Social Change," 74.

⁵¹ Interviews in Japan, 2019.

harmonized community, prohibiting dyed hair or other fashion statements.⁵² Young Chinese appear apprehensive to the art as strong Confucian values suggest getting a tattoo to be an offense to the harmony of one's family.⁵³ This reaction is in stark contrast to South Korea, where tattooing is illegal without a medical doctorate, yet with the younger generation's happy adoption of the body art as a symbol of globalized fashion rather than criminality, tattoos are actively desired.⁵⁴

As younger generations develop less traditional values alongside the country's growing development and access to globalized media,⁵⁵ so too does their desire to express their personal identity in new, more distinct ways such as tattoo art.⁵⁶ Younger generations in Japan see tattoos now as a "means to assert self-determination, self-expression, and identity... as a form of art, fashion, and lifestyle choice."⁵⁷ As Japan, South Korea, and China have developed and modernized, there has been a gradual emphasis on self-expressive and secular values, as Inglehart's World Values Survey has indicated, allowing forms of body art to become more popularized as traditional values lessen.⁵⁸

However, the younger generation in East Asia is redefining tattoo culture, adopting the art as a symbol of modernity and fashion rather than rebellion and criminality. As in the United States and Europe, tattoos in Japan, South Korea, and China are beginning to move from symbols of the underground to that of a globalized, cosmopolitan prosperity. Tattoos, sporting designs similar to traditional Japanese *irezumi*, became fashionable among the upper classes in Western countries towards the end of the 1880s, illustrating the wearer as an internationally traveled and well-cultured patrician.⁵⁹ For years before and following this short body art trend among the upper classes, lower class laborers and rebellious subcultures like hippies and punk rockers traditionally had tattoos, gaining the art a stigma of rebellion and social deviance in the U.S. and Europe.⁶⁰ However, in the 1960s, tattoos by younger university students became a "form of artistic expression and emphasized creativity and custom images for their clients."⁶¹ The art took on the presence of a fashionable accessory rather than one of a rebellious subculture. Tattoos in East Asia are

⁵² Jane. Interviewed by Morgan MacFarlane. Personal interview. Email, July 22, 2019.

⁵³ Interviews in China, 2019.

⁵⁴ Interviews in South Korea, 2019.

⁵⁵ Wang & Tan, "The Conundrum of Authoritarian Resiliency," 214.

⁵⁶ Ji Soo Ha and Judy Park, "Significance of Changing Korean Youth Subculture Styles" (International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities, 2011).

⁵⁷ Yamada, "Westernization and Cultural Resistance," 323.

⁵⁸ Ronald Inglehart and Chris Welzel. "The WVS Cultural Map of the World." (World Values Survey, waves 1981-2014).

⁵⁹ Jill A. Fisher, "Tattooing the Body, Marking Culture," (Body & Society, 2002). 94-95.

⁶⁰ Park, "Signs of Social Change," 74.

⁶¹ Ibid., 74.

experiencing a similar transition, from one of gang membership to an image of modernity and wealth.

Traditional Japanese *irezumi* artists emblemize this evolution of tattoo culture in East Asia being fueled by greater globalization. Contemporary Japanese tattoo art now includes Western-influenced one-point, or singular tattoos, rather than traditional full-body art, which fewer customers desire.⁶² Japanese artists who offer Western-style tattoos freely advertise for their studios on social media and the streets, while traditional *irezumi* masters allow a small clientele list and maintain the underground nature of the art.⁶³ In turn, this exclusivity has contributed to a greater popularity of less traditional tattoos in Japan which lack the same negative connotation that stemmed from gang activity.⁶⁴ As tattoos move from membership in a community like that of the *yakuza* and towards a statement of individualism, they become part of the global consumer market: “globalization had produced a melange of tattoos which are ironically self-referential and repetitive, and the very hybridity of tattoo genres playfully questions the authenticity of these commercial marks.”⁶⁵

However, although these tattoos have the appearance of individualism and pure self-expression, tattooed bodies still represent a meaning “tied to the expression of [one’s] relationship as selves to the social whole.”⁶⁶ Seen in the interviews with young people in South Korea, most of the tattoos lacked a deeper meaning typical of Western tattoos.⁶⁷ Beyond aesthetic merit and the desire to challenge older generations’ perceptions of young people, tattoos have become symbols of a fashionable young society with access to the internet and the means to follow the latest trends. Researcher Judy Park describes the phenomenon of “conforming to the individualization trend” in which young people look to pursue self-expression and individuality of Western populaces while also following the latest international trends.

South Korea serves as an example here, with the country recently experiencing rapid development and modernization. For decades, previous generations were accustomed to a closed society heavily influenced by Confucian values, however in the 1960s, under dictator Park Chung Hee, South Korea began to undergo massive economic development and modernization. This younger generation of Koreans is growing up in the fruits of this labor, which Judy Park comments on: “the desire to keep up with global trends is linked to the attitudes of Korean people about modernity. Being modern and up to date is important and a new virtue for the young.”⁶⁸ This desire may be why

⁶² Yamada, “Westernization and Cultural Resistance,” 323.

⁶³ Johansson, *Yakuza Tattoo*, 31.

⁶⁴ Yamada, “Westernization and Cultural Resistance,” 323-324.

⁶⁵ Bryan S. Turner, “The Possibility of Primitiveness: Towards a Sociology of Body Marks in Cool Societies,” (Body & Society, 1999). 40.

⁶⁶ Maurice Patterson & Jonathan Schroeder, “Borderlines: Skin, tattoos and consumer culture theory,” (Marketing Theory, 2010). 260.

⁶⁷ Park, “Signs of Social Change,” 72-74 & 88.

⁶⁸ Park, “Signs of Social Change,” 88.

tattoos have seen such an impressive explosion in South Korea compared to Japan, which experienced such rapid development earlier on and are therefore more willing to embrace aspects of historical Japanese traditions than Korea.⁶⁹ Although tattoos are typically emblems of individual spirit, as they have become popular items in the consumer market, East Asian tattoos are more about conforming to and supporting ideas of modernity. Rather than a truly unique expression of self, tattoos have actually become antithetical to rebellion against the popular trends of society.

The explosion of social media in Japan, South Korea, and China has contributed to the changing tattoo culture in each country. The use and greater access to the internet and international social media, which has grown alongside greater development,⁷⁰ has allowed the younger generations to see popular trends from Western nations. Tattooed entertainers and K-Pop idols can be seen all over social media, influencing the younger generations' perceptions of the 'cool' global trends.⁷¹ People even use social media like Instagram as a tool to find tattoo artists and designs, especially in South Korea, where advertising for one's practice could be dangerous if not properly licensed.⁷² In turn, social media has popularized Western-style one-point tattoos that lack the connection to criminal gangs and are instead symbols of a fashionable, modern youth participating in trends from the rest of the world.⁷³

China's emerging tattoo culture serves to show just how body art has become a consumer product rather than a symbol of criminality or rebellion as the art grows in popularity alongside the country's development. As tattoo artists mentioned in Shanghai,⁷⁴ there has been a recent explosion of tattoo studios and new artists all over modern metropolises where middle and upper class Chinese typically reside, while in more rural areas, tattoos are not as popular. Although China's middle class is relatively small and new⁷⁵ given the country's rapid development since Deng's Reform and Opening policies in the late 1970s, they have developed in a more globalized society. Middle class individuals have the means to actively support and conform to the latest fashion trends while also having access to phones, social media, and the internet, where popular media and entertainers provide inspiration. The younger generation making up the growing middle class also hold more liberal attitudes as they are far less attached to more traditional values like reverence to authority and filial piety.⁷⁶

⁶⁹ Ibid., 88.

⁷⁰ Carol Lancaster, "The New Face of Development," (Current History, 2008) 38.

⁷¹ Yamada, "Westernization and Cultural Resistance," 331. Park, "Signs of Social Change," 89.

⁷² Interviews in South Korea. 2019.

⁷³ Inglehart, "All Rounds," Wave 6: 2010-2014.

⁷⁴ Interviews with Zhang Wei and Chang. Shanghai, 2019.

⁷⁵ Andrew J. Nathan, "The Puzzle of the Chinese Middle Class," (Journal of Democracy, 2016).

⁷⁶ Wang and Tan, "The Conundrum of Authoritarian Resiliency," 214.

As the younger generations feel less connected to traditional beliefs, tattoos have become more a symbol of modern youth.

Over 800 million Chinese people use the internet, with 98% of which accessing it via their mobile phones.⁷⁷ Even with the infamous Golden Shield, or “Great Firewall,” which bans Western media, young Chinese can still find artists online via Chinese versions of these platforms such as Baidu, Weibo, and Douyin.⁷⁸ Young middle class Chinese have a way around these bans by using VPNs to access Western media sites. A predicted 14% of Chinese internet users utilize illegal VPNs if they can afford the service.⁷⁹ In years past, the strong social stigma against the body art kept tattoos underground. Now a new middle class with modern tastes has brought the art towards the mainstream forcing the government to start regulating the appearance of what they deem as *shehuiren* culture, or those who are poorly educated and unemployed.⁸⁰

If tattoos continue to shed their historical connection to criminal activity and become symbols of a modern society they are more likely to appear less threatening to the ruling authoritarian government of China. The small middle class in China has only just begun to grow and develop, making it unlikely they would take on a rebellious stance given the precarity of their newfound social status in China.⁸¹ If tattoos truly have undergone the transition from a counter-culture significance to one similar to South Korea, becoming just a globalized consumer product indicating wealth and global modernity, the middle class adoption of the art won’t be used to create a democratic transition in the country. Any form of rebellion would threaten the newly acquired wealth and security of many Chinese, meaning the explosion of the art is for aesthetic reasons rather than social dissidence. Instead, as the middle class grows and China continues to develop, tattoos will become more popular and as they become commodities of a modern middle class, exposed to global trends and wealth rather than counter-culture symbols of a criminal underground.

⁷⁷ Niall McCarthy, “China Now Boasts More Than 800 Million Internet Users And 98% Of Them Are Mobile,” (Forbes, 2018).

⁷⁸ Interview with Chang. Shanghai, 2019.

⁷⁹ Asha Barbaschow, “VPNs can still be used in China despite March 31 ban,” (ZDNet, 2018).

⁸⁰ Thuy Ong. “Peppa Pig blocked on popular Chinese video app for association with counterculture.” (The Verge, 2018).

⁸¹ Nathan, “The Puzzle,” 9.

Conclusion

From criminal punishment, to a marker of gang membership, to a symbol of modern, globalized youth, tattoos in East Asia have undergone a transition. As Japan, South Korea, and China have continued developing and participating in the world markets, their populations have adopted international fashion trends and styles, including body art. Rather than maintaining tattoos as a rebellious symbol, the younger generations have happily adopted the art as a way to participate in a globalized, developed world. Although each country regulates the practice differently, social stigma remains the strongest restriction on the art. However, younger generations have moved farther away from the traditional values that limited the art in decades past as they grow up in a more interconnected, technology-focused society. As we have seen, tattoos in East Asia have begun to undergo a transition from counter-culture statements of social outcasts that would typically threaten social norms and authoritarian governments to markers of development and globalization in a country. The prevalence and acceptance of body art can be used to help signal a country's modernization and economic growth. Tattoos help craft a picture of what the internal politics of the country look like: one of rebellious crimes in a traditional society, or that of a young middle class participating in a globalized community.

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Artworks

by Deanna Volz

Deanna Volz graduated Wittenberg University in 2018 with a major in Art and Japanese. Soon after she pursued a certificate in Children's book illustration from Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia. Following her dream to live and work in Japan, she now works as an Assistant Language Teacher in Fukui, Japan where she helps students learn English with art and conversation. The following illustrations were created for Deanna's Japanese thesis project.



Kyubi Kitsune (九尾の狐) – Nine-Tailed-Fox, Deanna Volz

This illustration is based on the Japanese monster encyclopedia that was used to complete this project. I wanted to help people visualize the creatures that were described in the encyclopedias. A nine-tail fox is a fierce monster that is often hard to identify.



***Futa Kuchi Onna (二口女) – Two Mouthed Woman,
Deanna Volz***

This is an illustration that I created for my Japanese Thesis project. It is based on the Japanese monster encyclopedia that I used to complete this project. I wanted to help people visualize the creatures that were described in the encyclopedias. The two-mouth woman is a sad creature who is always hungry despite the fact that her second mouth is always eating.

Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal

The purpose of the *Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal* is to encourage undergraduates, from both Wittenberg as well as other universities, 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.

The *Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal* was initiated by a group of students in 1975 and has been issued annually each spring since this time. From the 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.

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