

Race and Racism in Modern East Asia

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Race and Racism in Modern East Asia

Vol. II: Interactions, Nationalism, Gender and Lineage

Edited by

Rotem Kowner and Walter Demel



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The peoples of Asia in Meyer (1885), detail. Courtesy of the Austrian National Library, Vienna

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*To our children,
Jasmine, Emmanuelle, Narkisse and Amos
Cornelia and Michael
—for a peaceful, sustainable and better future*



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Preface

This volume represents the end result of a prolonged project that involved two symposiums, numerous meetings, and the formation of an extensive network of scholars interested in the topics of race and racism in and with regard to modern East Asia. It is the second volume stemming from this project and a sequel to *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions*, which was published in 2013. The idea for the present volume evolved during our work on its predecessor. Despite its considerable breadth, we gradually came to realize that a number of important topics were inevitably left in a fragmentary form or not dealt with at all. Notably absent were more detailed accounts of the interplay between Western and East Asian constructions of race, the interaction between nationalism and race in East Asia, and the links race has had with gender and lineage in the region. In geographical, regional and national terms, we felt an acute need to further explore the development of the concept of race in modern Korea and its reverberations in present-day North Korea.

Following another call for papers, this time with a specific focus, we were able to select a fine assortment of preliminary papers out of the nearly seventy proposals we received. Eventually, we invited those selected to present their papers and met for intensive discussions and an exchange of ideas in a three-day conference held in Munich. The event turned into an excellent opportunity for reflecting on the topics we aspired to investigate by using diverse case studies relating to specific nations and disciplines while simultaneously exploring the bigger picture of modern East Asia and its relations with the world and the West in particular. As one might expect, not all the papers presented in the conference materialized into chapters, leading us to approach a number of additional scholars with a request to fill in the remaining gaps. As such, this volume is the outcome of a genuine effort towards providing a broad, fresh and complementary perspective on the issues of race and racism in and with regard to modern East Asia with a special focus on the last century.

We could not have developed this joint research project, nor completed the preparation of this specific volume without the generous support and cordial assistance of several organizations and numerous individuals. We are particularly grateful to the German-Israeli Foundation (GIF) for supporting this project since its inception and for facilitating our own research in a number of domestic and overseas libraries and archives. In addition, the Foundation provided funds for two symposiums: the initial three-day workshop and the final three-day conference. The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG; German

Research Foundation) was instrumental in augmenting the budget for the final conference and we are thankful for this help. By the same token, we would also like to thank the University of the Armed Forces (Bundeswehr) Munich for hosting the symposiums, as well as for supporting this study in many unforeseen ways.

As far as individual contributions are concerned, we are indebted to a large number of individuals who were willing to review and comment on the manuscripts presented here. These include Prof. Hans van Ess, Dr. Susanne Friedrich, Prof. Eckhart Hellmuth, Prof. Peter Poertner, Prof. Roderich Ptak, Dr. Anna Stecher, and Daniel Barth, all from the Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich; Dr. Christine Hikel and Dr. Anke Fischer-Kattner, both of the University of the Armed Forces (Bundeswehr) Munich; Dr. Nimrod Baranovitch of the University of Haifa; Prof. Sven Saaler of Sophia University in Tokyo, as well as two anonymous reviewers who read the entire text. The advice of Prof. Ruediger Frank of the University of Vienna also was helpful during the editing stage. In the same vein, we would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to two research assistants. Dr. Anke Fischer-Kattner at the University of the Armed Forces (Bundeswehr) Munich, helped us conduct the symposiums impeccably, whereas Nimrod Chiat and Igor Dyachkovskiy at the University of Haifa were highly instrumental in making this volume more legible and preparing the index, respectively, during the final stages of editing. It goes without saying that we are also grateful to our contributors. We were fortunate enough to collaborate with scholars who were not only extremely erudite but also highly cooperative and responsive to our suggestions and guidelines. Their intellectual engagement, scholarly novelty and continuous support made the editing of this volume a lighter task than we had expected.

Lastly, we wish to pay tribute to our families. First and foremost, we are grateful to our wives, Fabienne and Jutta, respectively, for continuing to support this collaboration, as they have done from its inception and for any of our scientific endeavors before (and hopefully also after!). To our children, to whom this book is dedicated, we wish a bright and better future, a time in which books on such topics will become no more than a curious part of the history of ideas.

Rotem Kowner and Walter Demel

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Conventions

In accordance with commonly accepted practices in academic writing, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean names are given in the East Asian order, namely surnames first. Exceptions are made for Americans of East Asian ancestry and for East Asian authors who publish in English and give their surname last. Chinese names and terms are written according to the *pinyin* transliteration system; Japanese names and terms are written according to the revised Hepburn transliteration system, the *Kodansha Encyclopedia* (Itakasa, 1983), and the 4th edition of *Kenkyusha's New Japanese-English Dictionary* (Masuda, 1991), whereas romanization of given names follows the *Nihonshi jinmei yomikata jiten* (Nichigai Asoshiëtsu, 2002); Korean names and terms are transliterated according to the McCune–Reischauer romanization system. The macrons above some of the Japanese names and terms indicate a long vowel (e.g., *Chūō Kōron*), except for commonly used terms or those adopted into the English lexicon (e.g., shogun).

Place names are spelled in the way most familiar to English-speaking readers, provided an English version exists and its pronunciation approximates their name in the original language (e.g., Osaka). In the same fashion, the names of places of current importance are written according to present-day usage (e.g., Seoul and Beijing). For unfamiliar place names we have used the modern spelling employed in the countries concerned in the most commonly used transliteration. We use the term ‘Americans’ in its narrow sense, that is in reference to the United States and its citizens unless otherwise stated.

A number of terms and languages often mentioned in the text are abbreviated or referred to by acronyms, as follows:

Chi.	Chinese (in pinyin transliteration)
Dut.	Dutch
Eng.	English
Fre.	French
Ger.	German
Ita.	Italian
Jpn.	Japanese (in revised Hepburn transliteration)
Kor.	Korean (in McCune-Reischauer transliteration)
Lat.	Latin
r.	reigned
Rus.	Russian
Swe.	Swedish

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Introduction: The Synthesis of Foreign and Indigenous Constructions of Race in Modern East Asia and Its Actual Operation

Rotem Kowner and Walter Demel

There is a wide consensus that the modern concept of race originated in Europe, and, by the same token, that in modern times this continent and its overseas offshoots had seen more than their fair share of extreme forms of racism. It is no wonder, then, that Western scholarship has focused on the racial attitudes towards and the impact of these attitudes on groups residing within these geographical domains. Notable among these are Black Africans in North America and Jews in Europe, and, to a lesser extent, also Amerindians and gypsies in these two continents, respectively. And yet, what is often forgotten is that in many cases European race theories targeted humanity in general, and that this broad scope also includes other groups, many of whom are virtually missing from the scholarship on race. Moreover, despite their cardinal role in this regard, Europeans have not been the sole producers of racial theories or the sole promulgators of racist agendas in modern times, and certainly not since the latter half of the nineteenth century.

East Asia, as we have demonstrated in our earlier volume, *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions* (2013), is a pertinent and timely case study for a broader analysis of the way in which the concept of race has developed and expanded and of the way in which the mechanism of racism operates. More specifically, we assert that a careful study of the Western (European and North American) racial views of East Asians alongside the racial theories that emerged in modern East Asia are of exceptional scholarly interest. Such a study is likely to shed light not only on the rise of the concept of race and on the spread of racism in modern times, but also on the turbulent inter-regional relations between the West and East Asia during the last two centuries as well as on the recent tensions and internal relations between China, Japan, and the two Koreas. In our previous volume, we did this by juxtaposing the constructions of race in these two regions. This structure helped us to present the origins, continuity and developmental similarities within and between the West and East Asia. In the present volume, we seek to go one step further by focusing on topics we dealt with sketchily in the

earlier volume and by filling in a number of lacunas that were not covered at all. These topics are located in several domains: The exact place of East Asians in the initial European constructions of race in modern times; the interplay between Western and indigenous constructions of race in East Asia; the interaction between nationalism and race; and the links between race, gender and lineage in the region.

These domains and issues are obviously not unique to East Asia. Nevertheless, we believe that their examination in this specific regional context could broaden existing knowledge about the way they operate in general and in non-Western environments in particular. To facilitate generalizations and inferences from the case studies presented in this book to a general model, we shall proceed to offer several premises about the mechanisms race and racism employ to operate in and with regard to modern East Asia. Theory is a tool for further research although it may at times constrain our peripheral vision. When initiating this project, we refrained from offering any theoretical guidelines or preliminary assumptions for the construction of race and racism in East Asia, mostly because the bulk of the evidence needed to be established first and partly due to the divergent background and distinctive response each of the main nations displayed. However, based on the material gathered, we are able now to propose a number of theoretical observations. These, in turn, will allow us to reflect upon the actual operation of race and racism in this region and the reasons for their specific manifestation in the concluding chapter. The ensuing 21 chapters thus seek to elaborate upon and validate the following premises:

1. East Asians played a significant role in the European construction of the idea of race since the late Enlightenment and throughout modern times.
2. The modern constructions of race in East Asia and in the West (with regard to East Asians) have been the outcome of both ongoing interactions and the exchange of knowledge between the two regions. This process, in turn, resulted in hybrid constructions of self and Other, somewhat inconsistent at times but steadily changing and adaptive.
3. Nationalism is associated with both racism and racial constructions in the sense that both strengthen each other and lead to a further distinction of self from Other and the elevation of the former. This is because both nationalism and racism tend to facilitate the mobilization of ingroup members in the pursuit of political self-determination for that group.
4. Ethnic nationalism thrives in nations in which the local population is relatively homogeneous, enjoying a long-lasting common heritage and a tradition of popular mobilization against external groups alongside a

limited democratic tradition in modern times. These conditions are found throughout modern East Asia.

5. Racism is associated with gender and especially with gender-based discrimination since it has traditionally been focused on masculine power, and uses gender symbolism to elevate the self and derogate the Other. East Asians were victims of this association but also exploited it against minority groups.
6. Societies in which lineage plays a significant role experience the impact of race and racism upon the inclusion and exclusion of ingroup and outgroup members more acutely. This is because the ideology of lineage emphasizes the purity of ancestral “blood,” meaning that the fear of its “contamination” tends to lead to a greater exclusion of outgroup members. This phenomenon is easily observed throughout modern East Asia.

Before we move to explore these topics, a word of caution. “Race” and “racism” are not straightforward concepts, and there is no consensus on their exact definition. Nonetheless, we have striven towards a specific rather than an extended meaning of “race” and “racism” in this volume, as we had done in Volume 1, and have therefore avoided such phrases as “proto-racial thinking” or “racism without races.”¹ This notwithstanding, we certainly do acknowledge that there are forms of discrimination, degradation, and social exclusion based on such constructs as “culture,” “way of life,” “religion,” “language,” or “purity,” which have been used as functional equivalents to “race” from antiquity (e.g., the denigration of barbarians by Greeks and Romans) to the present day (e.g., the use of such concepts as “neo-racism,” “cultural racism,” or “culturalism”).

It is for this reason that we will argue hereafter that the line between racism and culturalism is frequently ambiguous. This, of course, does not prescribe our definitions and linguistic usages to our contributors, although we have tried, as editors, to ensure that every chapter elucidates, at least from its context, what its authors mean when they use this basic term. The outcome, however, is inevitably heterogeneous, especially where nomenclature is concerned. This may seem incoherent at times, since many chapters do not relate to each other. Nonetheless, questions regarding “Race and racism in Modern East Asia” are a rather new domain of inquiry in which some research has apparently been done in the past. And yet, nobody has thus far made a comprehensive attempt to sketch out the entire range of the topics involved. As one peer-reviewer aptly puts it, we tried “to put the various currents of the development of racial discourses in East Asia and Europe since the eighteenth century in one place”

1 For definitions of “race” and “racism,” see Kowner & Demel, 2013b: 5–8.

in a hope “that the reader who is particularly interested in some of the chapters will also find the rest of the book relevant.”

In the following part, we shall discuss the four main issues under examination in this volume and elaborate on the way each of the 21 thematic chapters attempts to broaden our understanding in this respect.

1 **Antecedents: A Detailed Examination of Early Western Racial Constructions of East Asians**

The first section of this book is devoted to a detailed examination of the rise and formation of European views of East Asians. The four chapters in this section seek to demonstrate that the peoples of East Asia played an important and at times even crucial role in the way in which the leading European theorists construed race during the critical periods of the late Enlightenment and the nineteenth century. This section also describes the genealogy of racial theories with regard to the place and status of East Asians and with regard to the way in which these theories spread geographically both within and outside Europe and permeated through new media such as encyclopedias and newspapers.

For those familiar with early modern constructions of race in Europe, it may not be surprising that the first chapter deals specifically with Carl Linnaeus, the notable Swedish naturalist, taxonomist and racial theorist. First published in 1735, Linnaeus's rudimentary taxonomy of humankind in his *Systema naturae*, heralded the rise of modern racial thought. Within this context, Rotem Kowner and Christina Skott's chapter examines the descriptions and status of Asians (*Homo Asiaticus*) in Linnaeus's taxonomy and their transformation during his lifetime. The Linnaean description of Asians, the authors argue, marks a watershed in the way in which they were viewed by Europeans. This was not only the first time in which Asians were clustered together and depicted as having common physical and mental traits within a larger natural system, but also one of the first times in which they were explicitly and immutably relegated into a secondary position in a fledgling hierarchy of humankind. Still more, the chapter has specific relevance to East Asians. Linnaeus's use of the broad term “Asians” notwithstanding, the authors argue that his detailed description of this “variety” was based on Swedish reports and notions of East Asians, and particularly of the Chinese of Canton, rather than of the people of the entire continent as known to Europeans at the time. In order to demonstrate this, the chapter explores the sources of the Linnaean racial worldview and the impact it exerted on subsequent racial theorists and their view of East Asians.

Linnaeus's taxonomic eminence notwithstanding, he was still far from single-handedly shaping the European idea of race during the following decades. Walter Demel's chapter offers an examination of the network of leading racial theorists in eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Europe. His chapter seeks to demonstrate that the constructions of racial theories in general and theories on East Asians in particular were not the outcome of a few "isolated" thinkers but rather of a web of numerous scholars, mostly naturalists, physicians and philosophers. These were invariably interconnected by an international network of scientific academies which extended throughout Enlightenment Europe and shared common terms and similar sources. This interconnectivity does not mean that the resulting theories were identical or that they functioned within a uniform pattern. In point of fact, the "founding fathers" of modern racial theories—notably Linnaeus, le Comte de Buffon, Immanuel Kant and Petrus Camper—developed rather divergent ideas with regard to racial taxonomies in general and with regard to the place (East) Asians were allocated within these taxonomies in particular.

The subsequent generation of theorists diverged even further, using some of the founding fathers' ideas but mostly developing their own concepts in different directions. Significant figures in the field were also extensively linked to a scholarly network and, it goes without saying, stood on the shoulders of their predecessors: Charles White, for example, popularized and coarsened Camper's ideas, Bernard Germain de Lacépède and Julien-Joseph Virey followed Buffon, and Bory de Saint-Vincent was an adherent of Linnaeus. Moreover, while Johann Friedrich Blumenbach and James Cowles Prichard could be described as "mild" racists at best, many others held a more critical view of East Asian cultures and shared polygenist inclinations.

Alongside the analysis of the canon of race writings in this period, there are also other ways to explore the spread of racial discourse on East Asians. Since their emergence in early-eighteenth-century Europe, modern encyclopedias became one of the most important sources of knowledge on ethnography and geography, as well as on the emerging concept of race. Georg Lehner's chapter examines the entries on the East Asian "race," or rather "races," in nineteenth-century works of general reference and the manner in which they reflect a broad variety of strands of discourse. These entries show a vast number of different classifications of "races" developed by European scholars, the prevalence of many of the most influential theories, and the place given to the peoples of East Asia in each of the systems. Furthermore, by presenting information on race, these encyclopedias relied on a broad range of sources, such as travelogues and works by ethnographers and anthropologists.

By offering detailed accounts of East Asian countries, works of general knowledge utilized descriptions of East Asian peoples with inevitable racial inputs. At times, these works merely referred to anthropological issues, but—more often than not—they merely repeated widespread prejudices and well-established stereotypes concerning a supposed “national character” and enumerated the alleged traits of the Chinese and Japanese. Aiming to enhance their information on the concept of race in general, European and North American encyclopedias not only presented tables and ethnographic maps but also included plates showing “typical” members of the different peoples of Asia. These stereotyped illustrations played a significant role in allowing the Western public to visualize “East Asians” for the first time.

Another early source of racial constructions of modern East Asia was the newspapers and magazines which were founded by Westerners in several major port cities in the region from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. These provided a stream of stereotyped information on the locals that helped to shape the opinions of short-term visitors and sojourners alike. Olavi Fält’s chapter examines how these newspapers and magazines reflected the racial image of the Japanese during the crucial period of the first two decades since the emergence of Western journalism in Japan in 1861 and during the interlude between the feudal era and the onset of modernization. While the chapter identifies a slow deterioration in the way in which these sources described the Japanese “race,” it also demonstrates that throughout this period neither the journalists nor their editors relinquished the conviction that their own culture and race were greatly superior.

2 **Interactions: The Fusion of European and East Asian Constructions of Race**

The detailed mechanisms involved in the emergence of East Asian constructions of race and in the circumstances in which they mutated, interacted with, or occasionally even shaped foreign constructions are the core issue explored in this volume. The second section presents eight chapters and case studies that focus on this topic. They invariably examine the interactions and causal relations between international, regional, and domestic constructions of race and their impact on repeated reconstructions of this concept and the resulting race-related policies. Needless to say, every single interplay described in this section is not unique to one region or nation or even one specific period; it is found both in the West (e.g., early twentieth-century Britain’s perspective on

East Asian immigration, and Nazi Germany's view of Japan) and in East Asia (e.g., mid-nineteenth century China's adoption of the concept of race, imperial Japan's constructions of the Southern Chinese and postwar South Korean views of self and the American Other).

Daniel Barth's chapter, the first in this section, is a fine example of an early fusion of foreign and domestic constructions of race in modern China. It compares and analyzes several texts about racial theories that were written and published by European missionaries stationed in China since the middle of the nineteenth century and examines their domestic acceptance. These texts represent the earliest documents espousing European racial taxonomies in Chinese script and pre-date the more elaborate publications which appeared around the turn of the century when Chinese intellectuals began to weigh in on the issue. In most cases, the emergence of these racial taxonomies was an appendix to an exposition of geographical or medical knowledge, two areas of great interest to Qing scholars. Since they were mere byproducts of larger fields of scientific knowledge, there was no organized effort underlying their propagation. Some of them, however, did exert a substantial impact in local scholarly circles. A case in point is the earliest publication of this sort, a book written by a Portuguese scholar and adapted to Chinese shortly after the First Opium War. This and similar early race-related texts, this chapter suggests, mirror the political and intellectual development of the period and reflect an increased domestic interest in Western knowledge and learning. They do so by integrating Western worldviews into the cosmological perspective and by providing an alarmist vision of racial demise if no suitable reforms are implemented in response. This is the juncture at which the first modern Chinese intellectuals took over and utilized this negative and critical view of Chineseness to alarm their fellow countrymen. As such, these texts reveal a slow and deliberate process of assimilating foreign ideas and creating modern, nationalistic sentiments in late imperial China.

By the late nineteenth century, and certainly after its colonization of Taiwan in 1895, Japan witnessed what is arguably the region's most dynamic and heated debate about race. Huei-Ying Kuo's chapter examines the emergence of Japanese discourses on the Southern Chinese—including those residing in China's Fujian and Guangdong provinces, as well as their overseas counterparts in Taiwan and the "South Seas" (*nan'yō*; present-day Southwest Pacific area)—and their further development until the eve of the Pacific War. Like slightly earlier European typologies of racial groups within Japan and the region as a whole, Japanese colonizers regarded the differences among the mutually unintelligible southern Chinese speech-groups as proving the existence

of irreconcilable racial groups. It should not be surprising, then, that these views challenged various endeavors seeking to offer racial constructions of other Asians since they undermined the Chinese nationalists' efforts to create an all-encompassing Han identity.

In this vein, it is tempting to frame the motivations involved in constructing the racial discourses in terms of Japan's disparagement against its "Oriental others," a post-Meiji era mentality that was modeled after Western imperialism. In retrospect, however, the discourses on the Southern Chinese reveal a more complex and nuanced reality. That is, Japan's racial constructions of these groups reflected its own colonial experiences in Taiwan and its reactions to a surging Chinese anti-Japanese nationalism in the South Seas to a considerable extent. All in all, this chapter points out the dearth of consistent views about the racial status ascribed to southern Chinese "races" in the Japanese-led pan-Asian order. This appears to be the outcome of vacillation between Western racism and Pan-Asianism, and between an emulation of Western colonial experience and the generation of indigenous knowledge within the colonial administration overseas and among members of the intelligentsia at home.

The need to negotiate one's own theories of race and adapt them to a shifting power balance and *Realpolitik* was not the lot of East Asians alone. While focusing on East Asia, Antony Best's chapter illustrates the interplay between strategic needs, *Realpolitik*, and racist motivations in pre-World War I Britain. Recent research on the clashes over immigration between Japan and the white settler communities in the Pacific Rim during the early years of the twentieth century shows the development of a 'white' coalition that united the British Dominions and the United States in opposition to any influx of Asian laborers. However, this view has largely ignored the British response to the immigration controversy. Accordingly, Best's chapter looks at the reverberations of the anti-Japanese riot that took place in Vancouver in September 1907 in Britain. While acknowledging that certain members of the British elite were prone to racial fears, it demonstrates that the British government under the leadership of the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, sought to contain the crisis and to ward off the efforts by the American President, Theodore Roosevelt, to create an international front opposed to Japanese immigration. Moreover, Grey refused to countenance proposals from within the Empire that an international conference should be convened to seek an amicable solution to the problem. To Grey, any attempt to address immigration threatened to erode the foundations of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which he saw as a vital

element in British imperial defense and in the containment of the German naval threat.

The body, and the way it functions in sport, has been another domain in which Westerners and East Asians have negotiated their respective constructions of race.² The recent Beijing Olympic Games of 2008 seem to provide an ample amount of fresh insights on this topic, but the buds of negotiations in this domain actually emerged much earlier. Stefan Hübner's chapter focuses on the racial elements associated with the transfer of sporting values by the American branch of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) to East Asia about a century ago. Amateur sports values such as team spirit, fair play, self-control, respect for duly-constituted authority, competition, and personal effort were regarded during the turn of the century as the implementation of white American Protestant values in the realm of physical education. Sportive Christian citizenship training was thus meant to serve as a tool for making "backward" and "barbaric" Asians ready for self-government. Following positive experiences in the Philippines, where the YMCA was supported by the American colonial administration, the Far Eastern Championship Games (1913–1934) were founded as a means of popularizing muscular Christianity among a transnational Asian audience. The responses in the region varied substantially. Chinese sportspersons, for instance, eagerly promoted the Games in order to shatter the "Orientalist" discourse of physical weakness and "degeneration." The Japanese, however, who already perceived themselves as sufficiently "modern," initially refused to be involved in such an American-led "civilizing" attempt. Altogether, the Games can be viewed as an important step towards illustrating, but also challenging negative perceptions of "inferior" Asians. Nonetheless, they also show the reluctance of East Asians to accept the visible racial hierarchies of white "teachers" and Asian "pupils."

Another case of the tacit negotiation of racial constructions is presented in Gerhard Krebs's chapter on the racial views on and racist policies against East Asians in Nazi Germany (1933–1945). Japanese residing in Germany tended to perceive the Nazi discrimination of the offspring of German-Japanese couples and propaganda in this regard as particularly insulting inasmuch as the government in Tokyo issued several official protests. As a result of this

2 There is an extensive literature on the association between race and the body. For recent studies, see Toulalan & Fisher, 2013; Teslow, 2014; and Nash, 2014. Sport too is a well-documented domain in which race is manifested and negotiated. See, for example, Brownell, 2008; Hylton, 2009; Carrington, 2010; Adair, 2011; Dunkel, 2013; and Smith, 2014.

pressure, the 1935 Nuremberg race laws defined only Jews as non-Aryans, and the publication of “Yellow Peril” literature was suppressed. Furthermore, when Germany’s political and military ties with Japan became closer, Nazi propagandists sought to demonstrate that the Japanese were no ordinary colored race, but must have had, at least partially, an Aryan heritage. Ironically, it was the oppressed and discriminated Ainu, the aboriginal inhabitants of Japan’s northern island of Hokkaido who offered some Nazi theorists the key to the superior endowment of the Japanese. These theorists did not hesitate to consider the Ainu a European race. Other proofs for the superior origins and makeup of the Japanese were found in their heroism and *bushidō*, which could have allegedly only originated from Aryan, Indo-German or Nordic peoples. Still, these explanations did little to mitigate the Nazi dualism towards the Japanese before and after the outbreak of the war. Following their overwhelming victories in the early stages of the Pacific War (1941–1945), the Japanese also won the admiration of the German public. At the same time, however, fears of the “Yellow Peril” rose again and had to be suppressed by the authorities who had received repeated complaints to this effect from the Japanese embassy.

Although a relative newcomer to the modern racial discourse, Korea was another vibrant site of negotiation between European, Japanese, and indigenous constructions of race. Vladimir Tikhonov’s chapter deals with the discourses of race in the Korean Peninsula from the late nineteenth century to the end of the Japanese colonial rule in 1945. It emphasizes the presence of racial and racist thinking in Korea even before its annexation by Japan in 1910. Overlapping with the Confucian belief in the importance of lineage and blood ties, the local discourse of race first popularized a variety of pan-Asian discourses concerning the “Yellow race alliance,” and then played an important role in representing Japanese as “our racial brethren” rather than invaders from a country Koreans tended to traditionally dismiss as much less Confucianized than Korea. Nevertheless, under Japanese rule the idea of “racial unity” with the colonizer was, naturally enough, largely stripped of its nationalist credentials. It was resurrected in the late 1930s and early 1940s, but in the form of a new wartime orthodoxy: Now, the Japanese and Koreans were supposed to fight for the “liberation of the non-White races.” The extent to which this orthodoxy was believed outside the circle of the more or less assimilated educated and propertied classes remains in doubt. This was even more so upon Japan’s defeat, when Koreans were left to define themselves as a nation rather than as members of a “Yellow race.”

That said, the liberation of the Korean Peninsula did not obliterate the colonial era’s racial discourse but merely altered its content. Based on interviews,

ethnographic observations and analyses of documentary films, Nadia Y. Kim's chapter examines the system of racialization and racism in postwar South Korea, one that interrelates with the dominant American military presence in the country. In charting the specifics of what Kim calls this post-World War II "imperialist racial formation," the chapter shows that Korean informants drew on largely Euro-American, Japanese and internal post-1945 ideologies to conceive themselves as existing "in-between" Whites and Blacks in the United States as well as across the globe. The chapter suggests, however, that many South Koreans have been critical of Black Americans' significant power over their own people as either agents of the American occupational forces or as part of a Euro-American White-Black order that renders South Korea less visible in the global order. A major dimension of this racialization relies on the Korean awe of the American militarist and cultural imperialist agenda and the assimilation of remapped racial stratification and ideology-construction. Nonetheless, together with these reactionary views, certain elements of South Korean society reject White superiority and Black inferiority and thereby feel an increased identification with American Blacks and other marginalized peoples.

The final chapter in this section deals with the northern periphery of East Asia, namely contemporary Siberia under Russian control. This area has never stood at the core of the racial discourse on the region but this did not prevent stereotypes and prejudices from taking their toll. David Lewis's chapter reveals how Western views of East Asians, and those of Chinese and Japanese in particular, were partially adopted in Russia and applied to the indigenous peoples of Siberia. Based on interviews with indigenous Siberians, Lewis describes several cases of contemporary racism in the area. He finds that contemporary racist attitudes in Siberia are associated with or compounded by economic and social problems such as unemployment or alcoholism, but that there are also cultural factors such as variant attitudes towards time and work schedules. In addition, the chapter also identifies deeper roots to the current negative attitudes towards this group, including early European constructions of race and the intellectual consequences of the Marxist philosophy of history. Admittedly, the Soviet regime attempted to build a more ethnically harmonious society, and this was often achieved by the use of force in the suppression of latent ethnic conflicts which re-emerged when Soviet power declined. It is not surprising, then, that today's post-Soviet Russia, these conflicts have resurfaced, although there are a few grass-roots attempts to promote forgiveness and reconciliation among ethnic groups and notably between the Russians and some of the indigenous peoples of Siberia.

3 Nationalism: Interactions between Race and Ethnic Nationalism in East Asia

The concepts of race and racism are related to nationalism in many ways, although these relations are neither universal nor self-evident. Nationalism is an extremely comprehensive and flexible, not to say fluid, concept which has been associated with a wide variety of political and cultural notions. In its barest manifestation, it may be defined as “either a form of political mobilization that is directed at rectifying a perceived absence of fit between the boundaries of the nation and the boundaries of the state; or the ideology that justifies this.”³ Nationalism derives from nation, at least etymologically, although the relations between the two concepts are complex. In fact, a number of scholars have argued that the origins of modern nations and even the very idea of a ‘nation’ are the outcome of nationalist sentiments constructed in large part by young intellectual elites and later on spread to the “masses.”

However unclear, the relations between nationalism and nation beg us to define the latter. In the context of nationalism, at least, nation could be defined as “an ethnic group whose members are mobilized in the pursuit of political self-determination for that group.”⁴ Still, in the past, and especially before the term obtained its modern meaning, “nation” often denoted a group of people within designated borders, a state, as well as a subgroup of race.⁵ The theorization of “race” and “nation” took place at about the same time and place, since both crystalized in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Western Europe. They also shared a similar context for their emergence, that is “internal European political and economic reorganization and external European expansion, in the course of which the range of human cultural and physiological variation became more widely known to a larger number of people.”⁶ Moreover, both concepts are tightly associated with the issue of inclusion and exclusion and thus form clear boundaries that separate ingroups from outgroups.

3 Coakley, 2012: 12.

4 Coakley, 2012: 12.

5 In the past, “nation” had other meanings too. For example, in the late Middle Ages “student nations” were groups of students subsumed on the basis of coming from a certain number of countries located in a specific direction from a University (In Orléans, for example, there were 10 such nations: France, Normandie, Picardie, Bourgogne, Aquitaine, Champagne, Lorraine, Touraine, Ecosse and a “nation germanique” made up of students from the Holy Roman Empire, but also from Poland, Denmark, Italy, Dalmatia, and even England). A similar case is the four, then five “council nations.” In a political sense, ‘nation’ was a term for the noble elite which could participate in the governance of a country or an empire. See Schulze, 2004: 117–119.

6 Miles, 1987: 29.

“Nation,” “race” and their derivatives are all socially constructed. In this sense, one may regard them, as Robert Miles has suggested, as “imagined communities” of shared characteristics and a supposed sense of comradeship. This is because they do not have genuine biological foundations and since members of those “communities” do not know each other.⁷ No wonder then that “race” and “nation” were often used (or misused) associatively until the end of World War II and even later. The confusion between the two concepts is well demonstrated in an observation made by the British public intellectual Gilbert Murray. In reviewing the world’s state of affairs at the turn of the twentieth century, he stated: “There is in the world a hierarchy of *races* . . . those *nations* which eat more, claim more, and get higher wages, will direct and rule the others . . .”⁸

This close association between race and nation notwithstanding, modern theorists of the rise of nations and nationalism have tended to consider race and ethnicity as mere background factors rather than dominant elements in the rise of nationalism. Whereas race denotes a group distinguished by hereditary transmitted phenotypical characteristics or at least one sharing a common history and geographical distribution, nation, they postulated, implies an “aspiration to achieve political sovereignty or statehood.”⁹ Some theorists have even regarded nationalism as opposing if not replacing the notion of race and ethnicity.¹⁰ In contrast, a more recent approach tends to regard nations “as a specialized development of ethnic ties and ethnicity, and as a result it claims that we cannot hope to comprehend the powerful appeal of the nation without addressing its relationship with ethnic ties and sentiments.”¹¹ The outcome of this approach, among other things, is the distinction between a pure form of nationalism and ethnic nationalism.

Ethnic nationalism, occasionally also referred to as ethnonationalism or even racial nationalism, figures prominently in this section not just because it spans the concepts of race/ethnicity and nationalism, but also because it seems to be particularly prominent in East Asia.¹² The focus of this strain of nationalism is the ethnic group, whose members share a long heritage, often including ancestry, language, faith, and tradition. This group is arguably not

7 Miles, 1987: 26–27.

8 Quoted in Banton, 1977: 96.

9 Spickard, 2004: 10.

10 See Coakley, 2012: 39–40.

11 Smith, 2006: 169.

12 For recent studies of ethnic and cultural nationalism in East Asia, see, for example, Robinson, 1988; Yoshino, 1992; Befu, 1993b; Gladney, 1998a; Guo, 2004; Starrs, 2004; Zhao, 2004; Shin, 2006; Surak, 2013.

only identifiable but traditionally seen as entitled to self-determination. Some theorists, notably Anthony D. Smith, have viewed ethnic nationalism as nothing but a non-Western version of nationalism.¹³ It stands in opposition to the Western notion of civic nationalism, where the willingness to observe given laws and in turn receive legal privileges replaces traditional criteria of belongingness, such as ethnicity, language and religion. This may sound like an outright generalization but it is nonetheless one that may be relevant to East Asia.

Culture is an important aspect of the shared heritage of any national groups and so ethnic nationalism often overlaps with cultural nationalism inasmuch as some use these two concepts almost interchangeably.¹⁴ Evidently, as this case suggests, the line between race and ethnicity, race and culture, and even racism and culturalism is frequently ambiguous. This vagueness of “race” is not unique to East Asia, where the above notions have been used more or less indiscriminately. More than twenty years ago, the Franco-Bulgarian philosopher Tzvetan Todorov predicted that the term race would be “replaced by the much more appropriate term ‘culture’; declarations of superiority and inferiority, the residue of an attachment to the universalist framework, will be set aside in favor of a glorification of difference . . . What will remain unchanged, on the other hand, is the rigidity of determinism (cultural rather than physical now) and the discontinuity of humanity, compartmentalized into cultures that cannot and must not communicate with one another effectively.”¹⁵ The growing awareness of the theme of cultural nationalism not only within East Asian studies in the last two decades suggests that Todorov’s prediction was quite to the point.¹⁶

The relations between nationalism and racism seem at first very obvious, but the two concepts do not necessarily stem from the same origins. To some, racism is seen as an extreme form of nationalism or an alternative form of expression.¹⁷ In this sense, the two concepts overlap occasionally, since certain forms of nationalism contain an unmistakable racial substance and discrimination.¹⁸ To others, racism and nationalism are not competing or complementary concepts despite certain similarities in form and attitude. Benedict Anderson, for example, emphasized the differences between the two.

13 Smith, 1983, 2010.

14 For various definitions of cultural nationalism and its sources, see Hutchinson, 2013.

15 Todorov, 1993: 156–157.

16 E.g., Befu, 1993b; Desai, 2004; Hein, 2008; Hsiau, 2000; Ni, 2011; Starrs, 2010; Tsukada, 2012, and Wang, 2012.

17 See Wimmer, 2002: 12–13.

18 Gellner, 1983; Mosse, 1995: 163.

Nationalism, he argued, “thinks in terms of historical destinies, while racism dreams of eternal contaminations, transmitted from the origins of time through an endless sequence of loathsome copulations.”¹⁹ In other words, nationalism manifests itself across national borders, whereas racism manifests itself within.

With this theoretical complexity in mind, we shall turn to modern East Asia. To explore the above issues and their interactions, the third section presents five chapters. The first, Lü Xun’s chapter, employs the Korean War as a case study for examining how racial factors interacted with nationalism in both the United States and the People’s Republic of China. Wars and conflicts are not only fertile grounds for ultra-nationalist sentiments but also for racial pride and prejudice. The interplay between race and nationalism is particularly conspicuous in this conflict due to the divergent ideological backgrounds of the Chinese and American belligerents and since the conflict was essentially a foreign war to both. More specifically, this chapter examines the sources for the mutual racial hatred, its unique manifestations, and its subsequent consequences. It shows that the escalating ideological and military confrontation on both sides strengthened racial hostility not just between the two countries, but also towards individuals within them. Whereas Chinese residents in the United States were the target of a “yellow peril” scare due to their ethnic origin, American citizens residing in China were condemned as “devils,” not so much for their deeds as for their physical appearance. Thus, the public in each nation fostered a sense of racial superiority towards the other, which was supported by, and at times also originated from, a growing sense of patriotism and nationalist propaganda.

Popular culture is another arena for the interaction between racism and nationalism. Yinghong Cheng’s chapter introduces the creation and popularization of *gangtai* (the abbreviated term for Hong Kong and Taiwan in Chinese) patriotic songs as a political genre of pop music in China since the early 1980s and explores their relationship with the politics of nationalism. It argues that the lyrics of these *gangtai* patriotic songs have constructed an explicitly racialized discourse of Chinese identity and history. More specifically, the chapter reveals how such a discourse has been incorporated into contemporary Chinese nationalism at the state level through a tacit collaboration between capitalist *gangtai* cultural producers and the party-state, and at the popular level through interactions between the performers and the audience within China’s pop music market.

Focusing on the politics of the two Japanese concepts of race, *jinshu* and *minzoku*, Yuko Kawai’s chapter addresses the depoliticization of Japaneseness

19 Anderson, 1983: 136.

and its implications for Japanese views toward racism. It argues that the Western idea of race has influenced the Japanese ontological understanding of Self and Others since the emergence of Japan as a modern nation-state in the late nineteenth century. Moreover, Japanese government officials, academics, and politicians have appropriated Western theories of race and used them in order to construct their own versions of racial thought. One of the outcomes of their efforts was the emergence of a new vocabulary concerning race and nation, and most notably the terms *jinshu* and *minzoku*. Popularized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, respectively, they defined what it meant to be Japanese before the end of World War II. Today, however, the two terms are no longer used for denoting the Japanese in everyday discourse. Kawai's chapter discusses how *jinshu* and *minzoku* were conceptualized and transformed by borrowing from the West and challenging its notions of race, *Volk*, and ethnicity. Based on an analysis of focus group interviews, the chapter also suggests that the present-day meaning of Japaneseness is still shaped by the concepts of *jinshu* and *minzoku* even though the words are absent from Japan's current discourse of identity.

Kowner and Befu's chapter deals specifically with the ongoing discourse of identity in Japan and examines its current racial tenets. Known as *Nihonjinron*, this discourse serves as a societal force shaping the way in which the Japanese regard themselves. Its influence has become so significant, that with time it has turned into a hegemonic ideology and an 'industry' whose main producers are intellectuals and whose consumers are the masses. Although *Nihonjinron* literature may have leveled off a bit in recent years, it still seems to be extremely popular and its tenets can be easily traced in a broad range of other public discourses. Prominent among these are the discourses on Japan's place in the world, its modern history and the problems caused by its relations with foreign countries and non-Japanese peoples. While *Nihonjinron* is primarily concerned with questions of local identity and nationalism (often defined as cultural nationalism), this chapter reveals that it also contains an unmistakably racial, and at times even racist, common denominator that pervades its premises.

The closing chapter in this section is devoted to North Korea, a state that does not receive an extensive degree of attention in the field of race studies and which appears in our project for the first time.²⁰ Tatiana Gabroussenko's chapter is an attempt to deconstruct a fundamental, albeit paradoxical, dichotomy between ethno-nationalism and internationalism in the North Korean attitude towards foreigners. Based on an investigation of official North Korean

20 But see Myers, 2010.

media, state-sponsored art and literature, as well as interviews with North Korean refugees and with people who have extensive experience of living in this secluded country, the author analyses North Korean ideological practices as they pertain to the nation as well as to a wide range of 'foreigners'. These practices are also compared to those forming part of the Soviet perspective of the foreign world with all its conditionality and inconsistencies.

4 Gender and Lineage: The Impact of Domestic and Foreign Racial Constructions

Race and racism are also linked to gender. Although simplistically defined as "the social meaning of sex," the latter concept encapsulates a variety of meanings and theories ranging from the expression of traditional social roles ascribed to men and women via their psychological orientation and objective experience as a sexed embodiment towards a more symbolic entity of sexuality.²¹ A broad interpretation of the term racism may incorporate gender, since it concerns sexual inequality and a consciousness of oppression and self-perception, notably among women, as being racially grounded. This association is even more pronounced in the case of groups subjected to racial discrimination and stereotyping. In this case, the women of that group may experience a double-edged discrimination, first for their race or ethnicity and second for their gender.²² Nineteenth-century racism in Europe, as George Mosse has observed, had adopted a neo-classical male aesthetic. National stereotypes have also focused upon the male body, thereby honing a gender-based difference.²³ In a similar fashion, racist ideologies have frequently used gender symbolism to valorize the self (usually described as masculine) and demean the Other (usually described as feminine).²⁴ In the case of East Asia, Europeans have applied stereotypes of femininity to the local population, and the Chinese in particular, from the Age of Exploration to this very day.²⁵

21 See Haslanger, 2000: 37.

22 See, for example, MacKinnon, 1987: 32–45; Haslanger, 2000. For a recent empirical study of the dual real-life impact of race and gender, see Galinsky et al., 2014.

23 Mosse, 1995: 166–167.

24 A quintessential example is Weininger, 1906. This is said, certain representative figures of the European nations were more often feminine than masculine (i.e., Anglia, Germania, Francia, and also Marianne), whereas the "Deutsche Michel" is rather a ridiculous figure.

25 For gender-based stereotypes of East Asians, see Kowner, 2004, 2008, 2014: 123, 279.

The link between race and lineage is more straightforward, since race was traditionally associated with “blood” and with the hereditary endowment of physical characteristics. In the same vein, the more recent concept of ethnic nationalism, too, emphasizes the common ancestry and descent of members of a group, and in this case a nation. The link to lineage enhances the ingrained tendency of race and racism towards inclusion and exclusion, since the “contamination” of ancestral “blood” leads to exclusion. This is the reason proponents of racial thought have been greatly concerned about miscegenation (e.g., the hypodescent “one-drop rule” in North America) to the extent of implementing various measures against it including anti-miscegenation laws.

In this section we first set forth two chapters examining the link between race and gender, one concerning women and the other men. Bang-Soon Yoon’s chapter focuses on the victimization of Korean “comfort women” by the imperial Japanese military during World War II. It analyzes the intersections of race, sex, gender and nationalism by bringing forth three arguments. First, that it was institutionalized racism which enabled the Korean “comfort women’s” victimization en masse. In other words, the sexual enslavement of these women was not possible without state involvement, whether directly or indirectly. Second, that Japan’s colonial rule in the Korean peninsula made it possible for a large number of young Korean females to be systematically trafficked into Japan’s “comfort women” system. The Japanese colonial government’s national mobilization and cultural integration policies were thus important tools in the recruitment and subsequent transfers of these women to war zones. And third, that since Japan’s colonialism set the stage for the Korean “comfort women’s” victimization, nationalism has constituted a core component of the “comfort women” issue in South Korea during the postwar era and at present in particular. The gender-neutral nationalist approach, Yoon argues, has contributed to the silencing of the women-specific aspects of the “comfort women” issue for decades. Silence-breaking campaigns led by Korean feminist NGOs since the early 1990s have been significant in engendering this issue by providing the surviving victims with material benefits and facilitating public education on the issue. More often, however, it was South Korean national pride that occasionally superseded the individual victims’ personal interest.

In another chapter related to gender, Kai-man Chang investigates the intertwined identity formations of race, gender and nationality in Hong Kong’s martial arts cinema. As one of Hong Kong’s most important cultural assets, martial arts cinema is not only extremely popular among Chinese audiences, but is also a site in which images and ideas of Chineseness come into being. Considering films as a meaning-power-money-laden communication process,

this chapter looks into the recent success of Wilson Yip's *Ip Man* (2008) and *Ip Man 2* (2010) in order to examine the ever-shifting narratives of Chinese nationalism, anti-Japanese sentiment and gender politics in Hong Kong. Focusing on the transnational production and consumption of heroic masculinity as exemplified by several martial arts cinema actors, (e.g., Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, Jet Li and Donnie Yen), this chapter argues that the complexity of racialized, gendered and nationalist personas embodied by these martial artists is not merely rooted in Hong Kong's unique postcolonial condition and transnational cultural lineage, but also in the Chinese audience's collective memories and desires.

As for the link between race and lineage, this section presents two case studies. Although both focus on mixed-race offspring of East Asians and Westerners, one deals with their experience in Europe whereas the other deals with their experience in East Asia. Aya Ezawa's chapter examines the role of racism in the identity formation of Indisch-Japanese children conceived by Indisch (Dutch colonial-Indonesian) mothers and Japanese fathers during the Japanese occupation of the Netherlands East Indies (1942–1945) and currently living in the Netherlands. Raised in communities and families heavily affected by the wartime internment of the Dutch population, and often without any knowledge about their fathers, the Japaneseness of these Indisch-Japanese descendants is not a matter of ethnic or cultural heritage, but rather a product of the wartime memories of their families and communities. Challenged by racist slurs and averse reactions to their Japanese features, many internalized the assumption that their Japanese heritage made them essentially as cruel as the wartime Japanese experienced by their communities, and guilty of a war they had never experienced. Their ongoing struggle to come to terms with their identity, therefore, takes place on a discursive level. "Being Japanese," in this case, is not about finding one's roots, but rather about negotiating the way in which their Japanese origins can be thought of and talked about in the context of the history and memory of World War II.

Another discourse on "mixed-race" offspring has taken place in South Korea. Taejin Hwang's chapter examines the intersection of discourses and policies relating to the transpacific migration of mixed-race "Amerasians"—most often the children of American military personnel and Korean women—from Korea to the United States during the cold war. Focusing on the passage of the Amerasian Immigration Act of 1982 in the United States, this study explores the two nations' respective representations of Amerasians and the ways in which each nation grappled with the question of responsibility. For the United States, facilitating Amerasian immigration was constructed within

the nexus of American “responsibility” for its military policies and framed as a “rescue” of Asia’s “outcasts.” Presented as an act of both patriotism and humanity, the opening of its immigration gates for “GI babies” also offered an opportunity to reassert America’s self-image as an exceptionally multicultural nation. To South Korea, however, the existence of “mixed blood child(ren)” (Kor. *honhyeola*), as they have been commonly referred to, had challenged the identity of a nation-state that had defined itself as racially homogeneous and served as an unwanted reminder of the national subordination of women’s bodies for state building. Hence, for decades during the cold war, the South Korean state and society considered the out-migration of the mixed-race population to the United States, through both inter-country adoptions and adult Amerasian emigrations, as the only viable solution to the problem.

PART 1

Antecedents



East Asians in the Linnaean Taxonomy: Sources and Implications of a Racial Image

Rotem Kowner and Christina Skott

Scholars of intellectual history tend to see their subject matters as products of long and gradual processes. The idea of race is certainly no different, given that it is possible to track its antecedents to well before modern times. And yet, these slow intellectual evolutions are liable to be interrupted by sporadic revolutions, which in turn shift their course completely or at least accelerate their pace dramatically. Around the mid eighteenth century the idea of race faced such a revolution, spearheaded by the Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus (1707–1778; ennobled Carl von Linné in 1761). From 1735 onwards, Linnaeus worked on refining a new taxonomic system which initially focused on plants, but came to include animals and eventually humans too. His classification of human diversity marks a watershed in the development of modern racial thought. In a period of rapid European colonial and commercial expansion, it had tremendous implications for the way in which Europeans viewed and subsequently treated Asians in general and East Asians in particular. This was not only the first time in which these peoples were clustered together and depicted as having common traits, but also the first time in which they were relegated to a secondary position in a fledgling hierarchically-organized system of human varieties. In this chapter, we argue that Linnaeus's view of his "Asian variety" was based on European reports and notions of East Asians. To demonstrate this, we explore the sources of his racial worldview and the impact it exerted on subsequent racial theorists in Europe and on their view of East Asians.

The Linnaean Revolution and View of Humankind

Linnaeus's early background offers little promise for those interested in comprehending his later achievements and the scientific revolution he brought about. This most celebrated naturalist of the Enlightenment was born in a village in the southern Swedish region of Småland to a Lutheran minister. Although he was groomed from childhood to follow his father's footsteps and become a clergyman, it gradually became obvious that he did not fit his

father's professional scheme. Instead, the young Linnaeus took a keen interest in botany, and then chose to study natural history and medicine, receiving his higher education at the Universities of Lund and Uppsala. During this period he was awarded a grant and undertook a journey to Lapland, where he collected and recorded the local flora and fauna. He was also able to observe the local people, and in due course developed an interest in ethnography which would feature prominently in his later domestic journeys and publications describing other parts of Sweden.¹ Linnaeus's foreign experience, however, was relatively limited. His travels abroad were restricted to a three-year sojourn of studying and working in the Netherlands and some concurrent visits to its neighboring countries.²

Arriving in the Netherlands in 1735, the 28-year-old Linnaeus first obtained a doctorate in medicine at the relatively obscure University of Harderwijk and then settled in Leiden. It was in this university town that he forged close links with celebrated scientists of the day and gained access to Asian natural history collections accumulated in the course of the Dutch commercial activities in Asia. It was here, shortly after his arrival, that he also published the first edition of the then slim volume *Systema naturae* (The System of Nature; 1735). Printed in a mere 29 copies, this 14-folio-page Latin publication proposed a very general and rudimentary taxonomy of natural phenomena, but nevertheless attracted the attention of European scientists. It was the beginning of a lifelong endeavor, which was gradually recognized by Europe's scientific community. Upon his return to Sweden in 1738, Linnaeus found employment, first as a physician in Stockholm, and, in 1741, as a professor of medicine at the University of Uppsala. Here he became rector twelve years later and devoted the rest of his life to consolidating his taxonomy (see Fig. 2.1).

European visitors who made the pilgrimage to Uppsala in order to meet the famous scholar were taken aback at the sight of an unshaven provincial man who was unable to converse in a European language other than his mother tongue, and whose Latin was less than perfect. And yet "this slovenly, argumentative little man . . . chiefly a floral classifier," as one of his recent biogra-

1 *Flora Lapponica* (Linnaeus, 1737a), the flora of Lapland, was the first major application of Linnaeus's taxonomic system, while *Iter Lapponicum*, or a journey to Lapland, was the first in a series of Swedish travel journals published by him.

2 The literature on Linnaeus's life and impact is vast. See, for example, Morris and Berwick, 2008; Fara, 2004; Broberg, 2006; Blunt, 2001; Farber, 2000; Koerner, 1999; Frängsmyr, 1983; Broberg, 1980; Goerke, 1973; Dickinson, 1967; and Stoeber, 1974.



FIGURE 2.1 *Carl Linnaeus: A portrait of a young scholar, botanist and racial theorist.*
COURTESY OF THE RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

phers has portrayed him, was a powerful scientific and political figure who promoted botanical exploration on an unprecedented scale along with an ardent utilitarian concern for the economic expansion of his country.³ His fame rests on a stream of publications, such as *Species plantarum* (1753), which described more than 5,900 plants using his innovative binominal nomenclature systematically for the first time. *Systema naturae*, however, remained his magnum opus. From its modest beginnings, it would be issued in eleven additional “official” editions, with the last one under Linnaeus’s personal supervision containing some 2,300 pages in three volumes. Altogether, the Linnaean project of mapping and classifying all living organisms was a gigantic project, an attempt to create a succinct taxonomy of all of Earth’s plants according to the characteristics of their reproductive organs.⁴

The new taxonomic system did not evolve in a void, but represented the culmination of an intellectual endeavor that began more a century earlier and which was shared by numerous naturalists. As a young man, Linnaeus himself had implemented a system devised by the French botanist Joseph Pitton de Tournefort (1656–1708). Since other scholars had invented many of its components, the emerging system can be regarded as an additional step in the evolution of natural taxonomies. However, its systematic nature and simplicity were nothing less than revolutionary. It was Linnaeus’s energy and gift for integration that allowed the arrangement of a growing number of specimens according to an increasingly unmasked natural order instead of the human partiality that had characterized earlier taxonomies. Moreover, Linnaeus’s treatise was the first genuine endeavor to systematically classify living organisms by using conventions for their naming. It offered a binominal nomenclature used for classifying all organisms while applying Linnaeus’s realization that all forms of life conform to not just one but several stages of fundamental commonality. In this manner, two sets of organisms would not only share certain specific structures, but also the more basic structures, which would be shared by an even larger set of other organisms.⁵ In a broader perspective, however, the Linnaean system offered a far greater scheme. It implied that nature is governed by natural laws whose structure humans could fully understand by prudent inquiry and induction.⁶

3 Koerner, 1996, 145.

4 Linnaeus arranged plants within a hierarchical and practical system, dividing them into 24 classes according to the number and position of their male fertilizing organs (stamens) and further into 65 orders according to the number and position of their female organs (pistils).

5 For this nomenclature, see, for example, Ogilvie, 2006: 218.

6 For Linnaeus’s taxonomic contributions and his impact on European racial thought, see Goerke, 1973; Broberg, 1980; Frängsmyr, 1983. See also Foucault, 1970.

Despite his botanical focus, Linnaeus did not shun the taxonomy of humankind. Since he aimed to create a nomenclature in which all living organisms could be slotted into a binominal system, it is hardly surprising that he eventually turned to examining the human species. Since its first edition, *Systema naturae* had described humankind within the order *Quadrupedia* as part of the animal kingdom, something which was quite controversial at the time.⁷ Humans were assigned to their own genus, *Homo*, which was further divided loosely into four “varieties” or races, differing in their geographical habitat and in their indication of skin color. The varieties were described as follows: *Homo Europaeus albescens* (whitish European), *Homo Americanus rubescens* (reddish American), *Homo Asiaticus fuscus* (dark colored Asian), and *Homo Africanus niger* (black African). This division was far less elaborate than Linnaeus’s botanic taxonomy, but it provided the foundation for further elaborations, first by Linnaeus himself and then by others (see Fig. 2.2).

Akin to the constant additions and amendments of flora and fauna he introduced to his taxonomic system, Linnaeus eventually also refined his preliminary sketch of human taxonomy. Published 23 years after the first edition, the two-volume tenth edition of the *Systema naturae* (1758–59) was groundbreaking on several fronts. Linnaeus now introduced the term *mammalia* (mammals), and, more importantly, applied the binominal nomenclature to humans for the first time: humankind was described as *Homo sapiens* (Lat. wise man).

C A R O L			
I. QUADRUPEDIA.			
<i>Corpus hirsutum. Pedes quatuor. Femine viviparæ, lactifera.</i>			
ANTHROPO- MORPHA. Dentes primores 4. n- triduales: vel nulli.	Homo.	Noſce te ipſum.	H $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Europæus albefe.} \\ \text{Americanus rubefe.} \\ \text{Aſiaticus fuscus.} \\ \text{Africanus nigr.} \end{array} \right.$
	Simia.	ANTERIORES. POSTERIORES. Digni 5. 5. Poſteriores anterioribus ſimiles.	Simia cauda carens. Papio. Satyrus. Cercopithecus. Cynocephalus.
	Bradypus.	Digni 3. vel 2. . . . 3.	Ai. Ignavi. Tardigradus.

FIGURE 2.2 Linnaeus’s early classification of the geographical varieties of humankind in the first edition of *Systema Naturae* (1735) and in eight subsequent editions.⁸

COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN.

7 Broberg, 1975: 153–178.

8 Linnaeus, 1735, n.p.

While keeping the four varieties, he now offered a substantial elaboration compared to his early designations. The varieties still matched four distinct geographical regions and colors of skin, but were now also characterized by additional physical details along with a brief description of their temperament and moral characteristics, one that would remain without changes in subsequent editions of the *Systema*.

Even more important was the implicit hierarchical order that was ascribed to the four varieties in the tenth edition. This was not only implied by the fact that the entire Linnaean system was a rank-based classification, but also because the races were described in a way that set them apart. Two varieties were described in a largely positive or negative manner while the other two varieties were described in a rather neutral manner. The position of *Homo Europaeus* at the apex of humanity seemed unquestionable. This variety was not only depicted as what contemporary Europeans considered physically attractive (white, ruddy, muscular) but also as highly acute, inventive, covered with tight vestments and governed by laws. At the bottom and in the inverse position is *Homo Africanus*, who was described as cunning, passive, inattentive, relaxed, crafty, indolent and negligent; as anointing himself with grease and being ruled by impulse. In between, Linnaeus placed the *Homo Americanus*, described as having copper skin, black hair and a sparse beard, being stubborn, erect, prone to anger, free, and governed by customs, and the somewhat superior *Homo Asiaticus*. Since the description of this variety is of greater importance to the present discussion, we shall quote it verbatim: “sallow, melancholic, stiff; hair black, dark eyes; severe, haughty, avaricious, covered with loose garments; governed by opinions” (see Fig. 2.3).

Apart from the elaboration on appearance and character, the tenth edition also presented a slight but curious revision concerning the color of the *Homo Asiaticus* variety. Rather than *fuscus*, as this variety was depicted in the first nine editions, it was now and hereafter referred to as *luridus*, a sallow, sickly yellow.⁹ With this revision, Linnaeus's four varieties could be arranged hierarchically based on their color (from light to dark), behavior (from cultivated to wild) and corresponding level of civilization (from refined to primitive). They were now also in line with the four classical humors as described by Hippocrates, Aristotle, and Galen. As *luridus*, *Homo Asiaticus* matched yellow bile, while *Homo Africanus*, *Homo Americanus* and *Homo Europaeus* matched black bile, blood, and phlegm respectively.¹⁰

9 Linnaeus, 1758–59, 21. For later editions, see, e.g., Linnaeus, 1767–70, 1: 21.

10 Meijer, 1999: 43. The novelty of the tenth edition of the *Systema* did not end here, as Linnaeus also used it to controversially suggest that *Homo sapiens* was not in fact the only species of humans. What Linnaeus named *Homo troglodytes* (also called *Homo noc-*

MAMMALIA. PRIMATES. Homo.

29

- Americana*. α . rufus, cholericus, rectus.
nus. *Pilis* nigris, rectis, crassis; *Naribus* patulis; *Facies*
 ephelctica; *Mento* subimberbi.
Perinax, contentus, liber.
Pingit se lineis dædabeis rubris.
Regitur Conſuetudine.
- Europæus*. β . albus, ſanguineus, toroſus.
Pilis flaveſcentibus prolixis. *Oculis* cæruleis.
Levis, argutus, inventor.
Tegitur Veſtimentis arctis.
Regitur Ritibus.
- Aſiaticus*. γ . luridus, melancholicus, rigidus.
Pilis nigricantibus. *Oculis* fulcis.
Severus, ſaſtuoſus, avarus.
Tegitur Indumentis laxis.
Regitur Opinionibus.
- Aſer*. δ . niger, phlegmaticus, laxus.
Pilis atris, contortuplicatis. *Cute* holofericea, *Naſo*
 ſimo. *Labiis* tumidis. *Feminiſ* ſinus pudoris; *Mani-*
mæ lactantes prolixæ.
Vaſer, ſegnſ, negligens.
Ungit ſe pingui.
Regitur Arbitrio.

FIGURE 2.3 Linnaeus's eventual classification of the geographical varieties of humankind in the 10th edition of *Systema Naturae* (1758–59) and subsequent editions.¹¹

COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN.

Although Linnaeus clustered Asians as a single variety, it remains unclear to whom he was actually referring in coining it. Asians were not a clear ethnic category for either Linnaeus or other European scholars of the time. By the early eighteenth century, the borders of Asia, and even those of Europe itself, were still not fully defined and thus *Homo Asiaticus* does not necessarily correspond

turus, 'night man') and *Homo caudatus*, or 'tailed man,' were only 'cousins of man,' differing from *Homo sapiens* in physiology as well as behavior, and found exclusively in the East Indies. These suggested new species of humans proved controversial and a source of ridicule, leading to their abandonment in subsequent editions of the *Systema*. See Broberg, 1975: 186–204; and Skott, 2014b.

11 Linnaeus, 1767–70, 1: 29. This so-called 13th edition was in fact a page-for-page reprint of the twelfth edition published in Stockholm in 1766–68. For its translation into English, see Linnaeus, 1806.

to the current peoples of Asia.¹² In fact, when one examines the traits Linnaeus attributed to *Homo Asiaticus* carefully, it seems that he was referring mainly, if not exclusively to East Asians. The physical depiction he used may serve here as a case in point. Physically, Linnaeus was not far off the mark in depicting Asians as having black hair and eyes, but referring invariably to all Asians as sallow (*luridus*) was a generalization and a definite departure from previous views, and those of East Asians in particular. Still, using this skin designation as well as black hair and dark eyes excludes many of the seemingly darker inhabitants of South Asia or the lighter inhabitants of Western Asia. But physical descriptions can be misleading, especially since it is unlikely that Linnaeus had ever come across the latter two types. Not only had he never moved beyond the realms of Western Europe but it is also true that very few East Asians traveled to Europe and by all likelihood none of these were Japanese or Korean. Other Swedes, however, did venture to East Asia and became increasingly more familiar with its peoples and cultures.

Sources of Linnaeus's Racial Perspective on East Asians

Linnaeus's acquaintance with East Asia was initially a matter of serendipity. For a young botanist interested in a universal system of classification, the establishment of the Swedish East India Company (*Svenska Ostindiska Companiet* or SOIC) shortly before his departure to the Netherlands and his long sojourn in Leiden, where he came across a wealth of East Asian botanical specimens, was nothing less than providential. In subsequent years, however, Linnaeus's interest in the region grew stronger. Since 1735, he had actively pursued information about East Asia, due in part to his fascination with a particular plant originating in East Asia—the tea plant (*Camellia sinensis*). His access to information on East Asia via contacts in Leiden and the SOIC, and possibly also his growing interest in the cultivation of tea, not only enabled Linnaeus to gain a fairly elaborate perspective on the region and its population but also shaped his designation of *Homo Asiaticus*.

The history of Linnaeus's interest in East Asia begins shortly before the publication of his taxonomic treatise. Unknowingly to the 24-year-old botanist, the prospects of obtaining information on East Asia changed dramatically in 1731 with the establishment of the SOIC. In subsequent years, company ships carried tea from Canton (present day Guangzhou) to the port of Gothenburg (Swe.

12 As late as 1759, Voltaire was still hesitant to consider Sweden, Baltic Germany, and Russia fully European. See Wolff, 1995: 155, 194–234; and Seegel, 2012.

Göteborg) and then re-exported it to other major northern European markets.¹³ Certain quantities of tea, however, were distributed locally inasmuch as this product occupied a major place among the beverages consumed by the upper classes.¹⁴ The Swedes were not alone in their thirst for the new drink. English imports of tea, for example, rose from about 100 kilograms in 1669 to no less than 28,000 tons in 1760.¹⁵ Together with the recently introduced coffee, tea was by far the most profitable commodity Europeans consumed in the early eighteenth century. Certainly, this thirst for tea did not emerge instantly. European visitors to East Asia had mentioned this drink as early as the sixteenth century, but it took them much longer to realize its commercial value.¹⁶ Once they did, however, no other commodity had “such a sudden impact,” as Leonard Blussé has noted, “both direct and indirect, on global trade in terms of consumption patterns, transport routes, and even politics.”¹⁷

Needless to say, it was apparent to any enterprise dealing in tea that the first European nation to grow this plant on its own soil could capitalize on this lucrative trade. However, despite their efforts, European botanists failed to domesticate it outside Asia. Linnaeus believed he could overcome this hurdle.¹⁸ Aware of the rising fortunes spent on the importation of this plant (usually paid in silver bullion), Linnaeus wanted to utilize tea to assist his poor and sparsely populated country.¹⁹ This plant, he wrote in 1741, “should be able to grow in Europe and in Scania (Swe. Skåne) just as well as in China and Japan, there is no longer any doubt . . . If the seed could be gotten over Russia from China to Sweden it will grow without fail.”²⁰

13 The best overviews of the Canton trade during the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century, from both foreign and local perspectives, are Van Dyke, 2005, 2001, respectively.

14 Heckscher, 1963: 196.

15 Chaudhuri, 1978: 539; and Hobhouse, 1985: 114, 106. For the initial role of physicians in promoting these commodities, see Menninger, 2004.

16 The Jesuit missionary Luís d'Almeida was the first to refer to the curious Japanese custom, especially among the noble classes, of drinking tea (Jpn. *cha*) and treating it with great respect. See *Cartas*, 1598 [1990–1996]: I, 163^r.

17 Blussé, 2008: 53.

18 It was Linnaeus himself who named the tea plant in honor of the Jesuit missionary and botanist Georg Joseph Kamel (1661–1706) whose work on oriental plants (but not on the tea plant) was published as an appendix to Ray's *Historia plantarum* (Ray, 1686).

19 Beginning in 1735 and within a mere 25 years, tea's share of the total import value of the British East India Company, for example, grew from 4.3 percent to 39.5 percent. See Table C.19 in Chaudhuri, 1978: 538–539.

20 Quoted in Koerner, 1996: 133.

The new tea aficionados could not ignore the role China had played in spreading the drinking of this popular beverage in Europe, and particularly in making it more affordable. By the late seventeenth century, tea and China were virtually synonymous. It was only in 1718, however, when the Chinese refused the low prices dictated by the Dutch East India Company (VOC), that the market began to open to additional trading companies, notably the Austrian/Flemish Imperial Ostend Company (Dut. Keizerlijke Oostendse Compagnie) of the southern Netherlands and its Danish and Swedish successors.²¹ Linnaeus was obviously not the first botanist to realize the economic importance of tea. One earlier figure was the German physician and botanist Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716), who spent two years at the Dutch factory in Dejima, Japan. In 1694, half a year after his return from Asia, this retired VOC employee arrived in Leiden carrying along a short dissertation based on ten botanical observations he had assembled that were mostly related to Japan and tea.²² Presenting it to the local university, he was at last conferred the degree of Doctor of Medicine. Arriving in Leiden 41 years later, Linnaeus soon became familiar with Kaempfer's work and read his observations on the history and making of tea. Some years later, the Swedish botanist even named one genus (*Kaempferia*) after him.²³

Linnaeus's interest in tea was apparently born and certainly cultivated in the Netherlands, a nation that at the time led not only botanical research but also the exploitation of edible plants and their commercial introduction in Europe. The university town of Leiden, where he spent three memorable years, played a special role in the Dutch fascination with plants and taxonomy. It also emerged as a center of knowledge on Asia, chiefly due to the information provided by VOC personnel. For all these reasons, Leiden and its university became particularly attractive to Linnaeus, as they had been to Kaempfer some four decades earlier. It was here that he established contacts with a number of scientific luminaries, such as Herman Boerhaave (1668–1738) and Jan

21 Ormrod, 2003: 197.

22 For the thesis, see Kaempfer, 1694.

23 In a letter the Swiss naturalist and anatomist Albrecht von Haller (1708–1777) sent Linnaeus in 1747, he mentioned "our Kaempfer" in the context of plant classification. Like Linnaeus, Haller too was also a student of Boerhaave in Leiden. See Smith, 1821, 11: 420. Six years later, in his seminal book *Species plantarum* (1753), Linnaeus referred to Kaempfer as his exclusive source of information on five plants, and as his partial source on an additional 10 plants. See Muntzschick, 1995: 85, 86; and Stearn, 1988: 780. Linnaeus was especially attracted to Kaempfer's *Flora Japonica* and the observations he made on the history and making of Japanese tea. See Kaempfer, 1712.

Frederik Gronovius (1686–1762), who both utilized the botanical knowledge accumulated by VOC officials.²⁴

Leiden was also the place in which Linnaeus's acquaintance with Asia grew dramatically. Here, he not only had access to collections of natural history, but also to Dutch libraries and book collections. In addition, he met with European traders and officials of the VOC, the company with a monopoly on Dutch trade with Southeast Asia, Japan, and China.²⁵ At least as important, during much of his stay in the Netherlands, Linnaeus worked as the curator of the botanical garden and hothouses owned by George Clifford, a wealthy Anglo-Dutch banker and director of the VOC.²⁶ Having access to the botanical and ethnographic material accumulated by his company, Clifford provided his Swedish employee with much needed resources, especially with regard to tropical plants. He also sponsored Linnaeus's visit to England and financed the publication of his *Hortus Cliffortianus* (1738). Moreover, during the very time in which the two collaborated, Clifford's gardeners succeeded in bringing the first indoor banana tree to flower in Europe, thereby inspiring Linnaeus to believe that other non-European plants, such as tea, could be cultivated away from their natural habitats.

Linnaeus's acquaintance with East Asia grew further when he returned to Sweden. There, the acquisition of knowledge about the region had a long tradition too. During the seventeenth century it was possible to find more than a few impressive collections of books on European voyages of exploration in Sweden's universities and private collections. In the late 1640s, Queen Kristina (Eng. Christina, 1626–1689) of Sweden became the focal point of intellectual activity. The establishment of an academy at her Stockholm court attracted notable foreign scholars, among them René Descartes (1595–1650). An avid collector of books, the queen contracted an agent in Amsterdam to buy books for her, especially those offered by the publisher Elzevier. Greatly impressed by the 23-year old monarch's passion for learning and generosity, the German geographer Bernhard Varenius dedicated his second work on Japan, *Tractatus*

24 For Boerhaave's life and scientific achievements, see Knoeff, 2002. For his involvement in Linnaeus's trip to London and his acquaintance with Sir Hans Sloane, the owner of Kaempfer's manuscript on Japan, see Raven, 1942: 64; Brooks, 1954: 41–52; and Massarella, 1995: 107–117.

25 See, for example, Linné, 1955: 10.

26 See Farber, 2000: 8; Blunt, 2001: 99–106.

in quo agitur de Japoniorum religione (1649), to the Swedish Queen, expecting to win her patronage.²⁷

The close economic relationship between Sweden and the Netherlands throughout the seventeenth century also meant that thousands of Swedes obtained firsthand experience of East Asia. Most of these were employed by the VOC, and a few of them even published travel books on the region in their native tongue.²⁸ The most popular was a volume containing Nils Matson Köping's *Een kort beskrifning uppå trenne resor och peregrinationer* [A short description of three travels and peregrinations] as well as a treatise entitled *Berättelse om Kongariket Japan* [A description of the kingdom of Japan] written by Olof Eriksson Willman, another VOC employee. First published in 1667 but going through several editions in the eighteenth century, these accounts were eagerly read by the young Linnaeus.²⁹ The success and timing of these publications was hardly fortuitous. They were published on the initiative of the powerful Lord High Steward of Sweden, Per Brahe the Younger (1602–1680), who used them to strengthen his country's prestige in the international arena. By then, Sweden was becoming one of Europe's more assertive powers, leading to a period of territorial expansion around the Baltic Sea. Known in Sweden as the Age of Greatness (Swe. *Storhetstiden*), this period was also characterized by its tendency towards absolute monarchy and by the emergence of a sound bureaucracy alongside strong military ambitions.³⁰ Relative to its population, and even in absolute terms, Sweden ran one of Europe's largest navies—a feat only a heavily centralized power structure could accomplish.³¹

This early promise notwithstanding, the position of eighteenth-century Sweden as a strong trading partner with East Asia is far from obvious. Sweden was not only sparsely populated (about 1.5 million people), but also economically poor and politically and academically peripheral. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Age of Greatness had come to an abrupt end. A series of disastrous military defeats during the Great Northern War (1700–1721) against

27 Lindberg, 1966: 206. For the queen's fascination with Chinese things and tea in particular in later years, see Foss, 1990: 133. For Varenius's dedication, see Schuchard, 2007: 95.

28 Steenstrup, 1982; Arne, 1956.

29 For the original publications, see Köping, 1667; and Willman, 1667, respectively. For recent editions in Swedish and English, see Willman, 1992, 2014. Also see Blomberg, 1998. For these two travel accounts and the Swedish perspective on the Dutch East India Company, see Behschnitt, 2009.

30 According to A.F. Upton, it was during this period that Sweden became "probably the most efficient military-bureaucratic machine in Europe." See Upton, 1990: 99.

31 Glete, 2010: 668.

Russia and its allies ended in the Peace of Nystad in 1721, whereby Sweden lost its territories in the eastern parts of the Baltic, viz. Estonia, Livonia and Ingria, as well as much of Karelia (Eastern Finland). However, the peace that ensued signaled a new era for Sweden, which would gradually bring economic prosperity coupled with a scientific upswing, with Linnaeus as the shining star. Known as the Age of Liberty (Swe. *Frihetstiden*; lit. The Liberty of the Estates), this period heralded the abolition of absolutism and a drastic cut in the King's powers. Political power now was in the hands of the *Riksdagen*, the Swedish national legislative assembly, and under the domination of two political parties: the "Caps" and the "Hats."³² When the latter came to power in 1738 it was to control the government for the next 27 years.³³ A dynamic and strongly mercantilist party, the Hats' initial goal was military revenge against Russia, but its campaign to regain economic prosperity soon came to dominate its policies.³⁴

Linnaeus himself was heavily influenced by Hat ideologies.³⁵ The promotion of Swedish manufacturing, exports and domestic agriculture with a view to making Sweden a self-sufficient nation was paramount, and the idea of utility also colored Linnaeus's intense interest in foreign crops and useful plants. Mercantilist views also secured their position in the Swedish academic world. In 1741, for example, the University of Uppsala established one of the first European chairs in economics. In addition, Linnaeus's endeavor to classify humankind also coincided with the new contacts with China that arose as a result of SOIC activities. It is no wonder, then, that the interest Linnaeus showed in East Asia was complex and focused on both its human nature and on its economic potential. Due to its economic importance, China became the focal point for a systematic gathering of "useful" knowledge, and this was made possible through the combined efforts of the SOIC and the Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, both a product of a new sense of optimism and enterprise characteristic of the Age of Liberty.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences was founded in 1739, eight years after the establishment of the SOIC, with Linnaeus as one of the founding members. Although it was modeled after similar institutions in Paris and London, the Stockholm academy adopted an ambitious program of promoting

32 The term 'Caps' was used since these politicians were accused by their opponents of being asleep, i.e. wearing night caps. For an overview of this period, see Roberts, 1986.

33 Heckscher, 1963: 130–132.

34 In Carlsson, 1975: 20; and Heckscher, 1963: 201–202.

35 For Linnaeus's view of natural history as a safeguard against foreign dominance and his 1750s endeavors to offer scientific solutions for trade deficits, see Koerner, 1996, 1999.

the so-called 'useful sciences' from its very outset.³⁶ Leading Hat politicians were elected as members of the academy, which meant that reports sent to the academy and the proceedings it published dealt not only with purely scientific subjects, but also transmitted knowledge about peoples, economies, agriculture and manufacturing so Sweden could learn and benefit from other countries. Nonetheless, the main vehicle for knowledge about Asia during the Age of Liberty was still the SOIC.³⁷ Due to the long tradition of shipbuilding, oceangoing merchantmen were built in Sweden itself. Having set up its headquarters in Gothenburg, the Company was initially dominated by foreign rather than Swedish expertise, since many of its major shareholders were non-Swedish merchants (Scots in particular), who had recently been involved in the Imperial Ostend Company. As the latter was dissolved by Emperor Charles VI due to English and Dutch pressure, the SOIC could at least partly be seen as its successor. Unsurprisingly, the new company's rivals, the English, Dutch and French East India Companies, remained suspicious from the outset, leading the SOIC to conduct its activities under great secrecy.³⁸

East Asia was not the only destination for the Swedish ships. At least initially, the SOIC sent its ships also to the Indian subcontinent, but the Swedes were soon driven out by their British competitors. Trade with China was less violent and thus SOIC ships called almost exclusively at Canton during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Altogether, until its dissolution in 1813 the company sent out no less than 132 expeditions to Canton using 37 different ships. The main commodities carried were porcelain and tea, most of which was re-sold to Europe and Britain in particular. The company's second charter (*Octroi*; Swe. *oktroj*), issued for the period of 1746–66, was destined to be the most prosperous in its history. This was a period in which the propagation of knowledge about China reached its zenith and during which Linnaeus formed the bulk of his racial taxonomy. It was also a time when Swedes had unprecedented access to all things Chinese. Upper-class households were filled with commissioned and personalized porcelain and Chinese furniture, tea became the social beverage of the day, and the elegant wives of wealthy merchants and company directors wore dresses made of Chinese silk. The ultimate symbol of Swedish interest in China, however, belonged to the Swedish royal family.

36 Lindroth, 1967; and Frängsmyr, 1989.

37 For histories of the SOIC, see Kjellberg, 1973–1975; Frängsmyr, 1976; Söderpalm, 2000; and Koninckx, 1980. See also Hermansson, 2004.

38 For this reason, accounts of the voyages to China were usually destroyed after each expedition, a fact that has prevented historians from gaining a full picture of the Company's financial dealings.

Taking a special interest in Chinese architecture, the family constructed a splendid pavilion named “Kina slott” (Chinese castle). Built in the Gardens of the Royal Castle at Drottningholm outside Stockholm, the pavilion was inaugurated by the young Crown Prince dressed as a Chinese mandarin.

Linnaeus was eager to obtain actual specimens of plants and animals from East Asia but gradually also developed an interest in the peoples of the region.³⁹ This was deeply rooted in his own Swedish travel experiences. In his inaugural address at Uppsala in 1741 he spoke of the scientist’s need to see for himself, to witness, observe and describe, rather than rely on traditional knowledge. In the mid 1740s, Linnaeus approached the SOIC directors and asked them to appoint men trained in his own new nomenclature as chaplains on board the SOIC ships, and charge them with the task of reporting and acquiring botanical and zoological collections in addition to other forms of useful knowledge. He did not face great obstacles, as several of these directors were also keen amateur naturalists who had encouraged captains, supercargoes and even common sailors to submit reports of their observations to the company. Linnaeus himself was in constant correspondence with company employees, directors, captains and supercargoes. Furthermore, reports sent to the Company were also copied and distributed to Linnaeus in Uppsala and to the Academy of Sciences in Stockholm.⁴⁰

The Essence of Asia: Swedish Views of China

The fresh firsthand reports arriving from East Asia, and especially from China, could not but shape Linnaeus’s view of this continent as a whole. Critically, they exerted a considerable impact, we argue, on his detailed account of the “races” of mankind in general, and that of *Homo Asiaticus* in particular, as presented in the tenth edition of *Systema naturae*. The Middle Kingdom was the main destination for SOIC ships and the nucleus of Swedish interest in Asia. At a time of growing European ambivalence towards China, the Swedish Academy, at least, still regarded it highly, and the proceedings of the academy contain appreciative treatises on a variety of Chinese subjects, mostly economic and agricultural.⁴¹ In addition, the academy also hosted presentations and lectures on Chinese topics, while local universities published dissertations

39 Sörlin, 1989; and Hodacs & Nyberg, 2007. See also Walter Demel’s chapter in this volume.

40 Skott, 2013: 243–245.

41 For a brief overview of the rise and decline of Sinophilism in Enlightenment thought, see Adas, 1989: 79–95; and Demel, 1991.

on China. The first of these seems to be a treatise on the Chinese economy presented at the University of Åbo (Turku, in present-day Finland) by Israel Reinius (1727–1797), who had sailed to Canton in the mid 1740s.⁴² Linnaeus was not oblivious to the inflow of Chinese commodities and came to rely heavily on Swedish firsthand reports of East Asia and China in particular. Patriotism was one of the hallmarks of the political climate in contemporary Sweden, and as a child of this era, Linnaeus regarded the information provided by his compatriots as particularly reliable.⁴³

The most trusted of Linnaeus's observers were his own students, the men he referred to as his "apostles."⁴⁴ During his lifetime, he was able to send out more than twenty of them to remote locations around the globe. Their mission was to map the global natural world according to their master's new taxonomic system and bring back as many specimens as possible. Several of these apostles were beset by misfortunes and illness, some of their collections were lost or eaten by insects, and some of them died before reaching their destination.⁴⁵ This, for example, was the fate of Christopher Tärnström, the first student sent out to China. He died off the coast of Vietnam during his journey and never saw the shores of the Middle Kingdom.⁴⁶ However, given China's prominence, Linnaeus did not give up easily and subsequent students were more fortunate. The most important of these was Pehr Osbeck (1723–1805), one of the master's favorite students, who was appointed chaplain on the SOIC ship *Prins Carl* in 1750.

Osbeck reported back to Linnaeus throughout his journey and on his return was able to present his mentor with a large collection of Chinese plants, which the latter examined, described and classified. A zealous and passionate collector of Chinese natural history, Osbeck was one of the keenest eighteenth-century observers of the Chinese people and society. His 1758 inaugural speech at the Swedish Academy was entitled *Anledningur Til Nyttig Upmärksamhet Under Chinesiska Resor* ["Reasons for useful attention during journeys to China"], in which he urged visitors to China to observe and record the conduct of local society, as well as its manufacturing techniques and industries, and to collect useful plants and interesting animals. During his stay in Canton, Osbeck produced a systematic and detailed journal in which he described the

42 Reinius, 1749, 1939.

43 An example of Linnaeus's heavy reliance on reports by his own countrymen is his creation of the *Homo troglodytes*, a separate species of humans (note 11). See Skott, 2014b.

44 For a list of Linnaeus's disciples, see Koerner, 1996: 145–146 (n. 70); and Stoeber, 1794: 171–188.

45 Sörlin & Fagerstedt, 2004.

46 See Tärnström, 2005.

city, its environs and inhabitants, as well as the plants and animals he encountered. Entitled *Dagbok öfwer en ostindisk resa* ["Journal of an East-Indian journey"], the journal was published in Swedish in 1757, a mere year before Linnaeus published his significantly revised tenth edition of *Systema naturae*. The master was impressed by his disciple's work. Apart from having a copy in his personal library, he wrote to Osbeck "I seem myself to have travelled with you, and to have examined every object you saw with my own eyes."⁴⁷ As a token of its importance, the journal was translated into German and English within 14 years.⁴⁸

Although Linnaeus relied heavily on Osbeck's journal, he also made use of other sources in revising his views of Asians. Appended to Osbeck's published journal was a report sent to Linnaeus by another student, Olof Torén (1718–1753). Having twice sailed to Canton as a ship's chaplain in the early 1750s, Torén too was a perceptive observer of Chinese society and culture.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the English translation of Osbeck's journal contains another Swedish treatise on China written by Carl Gustaf Ekeberg (1716–1784) and entitled *Kort berättelse om den Chinesiska Landt-Hushåldningen* ["A Short Treatise on Chinese Husbandry"]. Although he was not one of Linnaeus's students, Ekeberg did more than anyone else to promote knowledge of China in Sweden. A relentless correspondent to the Academy during his long career as a captain of Swedish ships, Ekeberg completed no less than ten voyages to Canton. In this capacity, he supplied Linnaeus and other Swedish collectors of East Asian natural history with many indigenous plants and animals.⁵⁰ Similarly significant was the publication of another East Asian journal written by Johan Brelin (1734–1782) a year after the publication of Osbeck's journal. Entitled *Beskrifning öfver en äfventyrlig resa til och ifrån Ost-Indien* ("Description of an adventurous journey to and from the East Indies"), it offered a vivid and at times humorous account of Brelin's stay in Canton a few years earlier.⁵¹

Altogether, an unprecedented flurry of reports on China and its people reached Sweden, the SOIC headquarters, the Academy in Stockholm, the general public, and certainly Linnaeus himself during the decade preceding the publication of the tenth edition of *Systema naturae*. The growing number

47 Osbeck, 1757; Linnaeus, 1771. See also Fox Maule and Hansen, 1978.

48 Osbeck, 1771. The English translation contains an appendix with a comprehensive list of Chinese plants and animals.

49 Toreen, 1771; Torén, 1757.

50 Ekeberg, 1757; Ekeberg, 1773; Ekeberg, 1773; and Forsstrand, 1928.

51 Brelin, 1758. The popularity of this account paved the way for the most popular journal among all those written by SOIC employees, Jacob Wallenberg's hilarious *Min son på galejan* (1786). A new translation of this work is Wallenberg, 1994.

of Chinese plants described in Linnaeus's own publications bears additional testimony to the close contacts between the two countries. In his *Species plantarum* (1753), Linnaeus described and classified nearly one hundred Chinese plants. In 1762, nineteen new Asian plants were described in the *Mantissa plantarum*, an appendix to the *Systema naturae*. This meant that China, its people and its natural world were better known in this northern country than anywhere else in Europe at the time, except perhaps for France. With these sources in mind, what were the images of China and its people transmitted by these Swedish observers? Earlier studies of Swedish knowledge of China and its people in the eighteenth century provide a complex but contradictory picture.⁵²

Swedish traders in Canton were often anxious and dismissive in their dealings with the local authorities, but also expressed a genuine admiration of Chinese industry, technical knowledge and agriculture. Many of them were well read and some of the Swedish ships kept substantial libraries of travel literature on board.⁵³ Swedish reports often contained references to earlier European commentators, notably the Jesuit historian Jean-Baptiste du Halde's (1674–1743) influential *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, et physique de l'Empire de la Chine* (1735). These references did not preclude attempts to challenge earlier views and even openly criticize Jesuit views of China. A case in point is that of company director Johan Abraham Grill, who, in true 'Hat' spirit, lamented that Europe could have learnt a great deal more about Chinese science and economics had Jesuit writings not focused entirely on conversion and religion. However, like many of his compatriots, Grill was equally critical of fellow European traders, and especially the English, whose 'cruelty' in Asia, he feared, could only lead to Chinese suspicion that would eventually damage trade for all Europeans.⁵⁴

Swedish attempts to challenge old knowledge and literary conventions were at least partly inspired by the Linnaean methodology of natural history, and particularly by the idea that personal experience is necessary for passing judgment. Careful observation and examination, Linnaeus insisted, were crucial for those wishing to report with scientific detail and accuracy. Another source of influence was the political and economic thinking in Sweden at the time, which inspired an intense interest in Chinese agriculture and its success for the purposes of maintaining collective prosperity. Swedish commentators often discussed China's huge population and wondered on its capacity to sustain it.

52 Nyberg 2001, ch. 3–5; Sirén, 1948–1949; and Holmberg, 1988.

53 See, for example, Frängsmyr, 1976: 112–113.

54 Grill, 1773: 8–9.

Many paid extensive attention to crops and climate and marveled at the local rice fields, regarding well-organized husbandry as the result of Chinese industriousness and hard work.⁵⁵ Holding Chinese agriculture as a model for Sweden, returning SOIC employees introduced models and drawings of Chinese threshing machines and tools, and Academy proceedings also included treatises on such topics as Chinese egg-hatching and farming techniques.⁵⁶

SOIC observers tended to regard the Chinese as a homogenous group with certain common characteristics.⁵⁷ Some of them pointed out that it was not possible to draw conclusions about the entire vast kingdom based on limited observations made in and around Canton, but they remained a minority.⁵⁸ By and large, Swedish writers referred to the Chinese as a 'nation' (Swe. *nation*) set apart from other Asian nations such as the Japanese. This term was neither discriminatory nor specific to Asians, as it was also used for other European trading nations (Swe. *Europeiska nationer*) active in Canton, of whom the Swedes were often highly critical. By the same token, it is difficult to identify an explicit hierarchical order or division between Europeans and Asians in Swedish writings. This is because every "nation," whether Asian or European, was associated with particular characteristics, both positive and negative, not unlike the convention elsewhere in contemporary European writings. Among positive comments on the Chinese character, the local population of Canton was described as jolly, polite and hardworking, and a number of observers also pointed out that Sweden had a great deal to learn from local skills in handi-crafts and manufacturing.

Much in line with the contemporary European ethnography of this era, the common characteristics used for describing the Chinese nation were still cultural rather than physical. The Chinese skin color, for example, did not gain a prominent place in Swedish writings. Osbeck, for one, referred to the Chinese in general as "completely white" (Swe. *helt hwita*), but, like earlier European observers, noted that the inhabitants of southern China are "very brown" (*mycket bruna*).⁵⁹ Torén, who visited China during the same time, mentioned the skin color of the entire Chinese population but stressed gender and class

55 Ekeberg 1757: 16–21; Reinius, 1939: 23. See also Brelin, 1758: 62–63.

56 See *Minutes of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences* (KVA) 3.3.1750; and Lindroth, 1967: 632–648.

57 Nyberg, 2001: 66.

58 See, for example, Osbeck, 1757, foreword.

59 Osbeck, 1757: 168. The English translation reads: "The inhabitants of this country, who we call *Chinese*, are quite white, excepting those who are tanned by the sun." In Osbeck, 1771, 1: 266. See also Brelin, 1758: 44.

rather than geographical differences. As far as Chinese men were concerned, he seems to have chosen a middle way between the lighter north Chinese and the darker South Chinese, depicting them as “yellowish” (*gulblek*). In describing Chinese women, Torén depicted lower-class women as “sunburned” (*solbrända*) and upper-class women as “fair” (*blonda*).⁶⁰ Curiously, some observers commented on how cultural practices affected physical appearance. For instance, several writers described how the local women’s feet were deformed by foot binding.⁶¹ Osbeck, for example, referred to the Chinese ‘flat nose,’ suggesting that this was a result of babies being carried with their faces pressed against their mothers’ backs, while Torén evoked the same custom in explaining Chinese “swollen” eyes.⁶² In contrast, little was said about the impact of the Chinese climate, possibly due to its great variation throughout this vast country. However, the observers did note that Canton had a tropical climate but that northern China could be extremely cold in the winter.

Critically, the Swedish observers did not hesitate to also express negative views of the Chinese. This downside of their observations was mostly expressed as severe criticisms of the local society and mentality. By the mid eighteenth century, this view was becoming common in European reports on China. By then, the Jesuit praise for the country was waning and gradually replaced by a more self-congratulatory Eurocentric perspective. Unlike other European writings, Swedish reports seem to offer this kind of observation in a trading context, mainly by criticizing the unpleasant experience of negotiating with Chinese merchants, moneychangers and officials. Torén’s travel journal in particular was particularly negative, viewing the Chinese as thieves prone to lying and stealing, and as treacherous and extremely lazy unless personal gain was in sight.⁶³ Brelin emphasized local jealousy and envy, while several other observers stressed their Chinese counterparts’ selfishness and extreme materialism and contended that they were unable to engage in or were uninterested in ‘deeper thinking’ and had no curiosity about the outside world.⁶⁴ Swedish observers also pointed out the lack of moral values and feeling for the common good which afflicted Chinese society. Osbeck, for instance, described how unwanted baby girls were abandoned to float on the river until they were picked up by strangers.⁶⁵ Others regarded Chinese society as a deeply

60 Torén, 1757: 358. The English translation reads: “The men have a yellowish skin; the ladies are fair, but the common women are tawny.” In Toren, 1771, II: 233. See also Demel, 1992a.

61 Osbeck, 1771, II: 270–1.

62 Osbeck, 1757: 171.

63 Torén, 1757: 363.

64 Torén, 1757: 363; and Osbeck, 1757: 172.

65 Osbeck, 1757: 172.

hierarchical system with an unhealthy and unnatural reverence for authority, and pointed out that the Chinese had no respect for power other than their immediate superiors'.⁶⁶

Swedish Reports and Linnaeus's Revision of His Human Taxonomy

Overall, the Swedish reports on China offered an up-to-date and human-oriented supplement to the earlier knowledge of Asia which Linnaeus had obtained during his time in the Netherlands, and based on his readings and familiarity with the knowledge generated by the VOC. Together, these resources provided him with ample materials for his detailed description of *Homo Asiaticus*. However, before we analyze this description, it is important to note that the implicit hierarchical scheme presented in the 1758–59 edition of *Systema naturae* was based on a growing conviction that Europeans represented a superior variety of human beings. Such a conviction can be easily inferred from Linnaeus's view of those he considered savage or semi-primitive peoples, namely *Homo Africanus* and *Homo Americanus*. It can nonetheless also be detected with respect to civilized peoples included under the designation *Homo Asiaticus*.

Tacit antecedents of this hierarchical view can be traced to the cover of Linnaeus's book *Hortus Cliffortianus* twenty-one years earlier. The image on the cover shows a figure of a woman, representing Europe, who is surrounded by servile subordinate figures representing the three other main varieties and continents (see Fig. 2.4). Linnaeus did not necessarily choose this image, and at any rate was not alone in using it, nor was the image exceptional for the time. This development in European thought and imagery was not unforeseen. After all, at the time it was Europe that had been approaching Asian ports for more than two centuries rather than the other way round. Moreover, it was during this very period—at the zenith of the Enlightenment and in the midst of a scientific revolution—that Europe was producing systematic knowledge at an unprecedented rate and providing innovative views of nature in general and humankind in particular. Within this context, this Swedish botanist paid close attention to the negative traits of non-Europeans, including the Chinese, but ignored any information that could potentially challenge his world order. This specific focus, in turn, facilitated the relegation of (East) Asians into a secondary position under Europeans but still above other varieties.

66 Ekeberg, 1773: 118, 121; and Torén, 1757: 368.



FIGURE 2.4 *Suggestions of a racial hierarchy in Linnaeus's Hortus Cliffortianus (1737): Europe surrounded by its sister continents.*⁶⁷

COURTESY OF THE RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

Within the Linnaean system, the physical features of *Homo Asiaticus* are of special importance and are thus presented first. These features seem to mostly reflect the available reports on China and its East Asian periphery. The black hair, black, dark eyes, and “loose garments” can easily be traced to Swedish reports and drawings of Chinese, with Carl Johan Gethe’s (1728–1765) illustrated travel journal presented to the Academy of Sciences in 1747 being the most splendid example (see Fig. 2.5).⁶⁸ While similar descriptions of the East

67 Linnaeus, 1737b.

68 See Gethe, 1975; Brelin, 1758: 50–51; Torén, 1757: 359; and Osbeck 1771, II: 267–8.



FIGURE 2.5 *Scene from a Chinese temple in Canton. A drawing from Carl Johan Gethe's manuscript journal Dagbok hållen på resan till Ostindien (Journal from a Journey to the East-Indies), 1746–1749.*⁶⁹
COURTESY OF THE ROYAL LIBRARY, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN
(PHOTO: JESSICA LUND).

Asians' appearance can be found in Kaempfer's book on Japan, a copy of which was owned by Linnaeus, and even in earlier Dutch depictions of Japanese and Chinese, they are also found in the contemporary reports provided by Osbeck and Torén.⁷⁰

69 Gethe, 1975: Tab. XI, n.p.

70 The catalogue of the Linnean Society library in London indicates which of its books were originally owned by Linnaeus. For contemporary Swedish reports on Chinese clothing, see Osbeck, 1771, I: 267; and Toreen, 1771, II: 236.

A prominent change in the presentation of Asians in the tenth edition was the shift in the description of Asian skin color from the dark *fuscus* to the yellow or sallow *luridus*. This intriguing revision seems to mostly reflect Linnaeus's desire to establish some explicit gradation that would correspond to his racial hierarchy, and that would define Asians as darker and less civilized than Europeans, yet lighter and more civilized than the two other varieties of humankind. At the same time, this yellow color designation also reflected Linnaeus's growing reliance on recent firsthand reports of China provided by his compatriots in general and by his students in particular.⁷¹ A brown or dark skin color reflected contemporary European reports on South and Southeast Asia but did not offer a clear gradation in relation to the reddish *Homo Americanus*. What is certain, however, is that Linnaeus did not invent a new color category, as *luridus* fit or averaged not only the Swedish reports sent since the early 1750s, most notably Torén's and Osbeck's, but also some earlier depictions of the people of China, India, and other Asian locations.⁷² Nevertheless, prior to Linnaeus, no one had referred to Asians in general, or to East Asians in particular, as being a yellow-skinned people.⁷³ As such, the shift to yellow (*luridus*) in the tenth edition of *Systema naturae* indicates a greater desire for a distinct color to characterize the people of Asia, and East Asia in particular, based on recent Swedish reports on China.

In a similar fashion, the mental traits attributed to *Homo Asiaticus* were also based on reports from China and (to a lesser extent) on earlier VOC reports

71 Walter Demel has speculated that in using this color designation Linnaeus had relied on Buffon's 1749 thesis. See Demel, 1992a: 645–646. And indeed, in explaining the impact climate and civilization exert on skin color, Buffon had argued that the Chinese and the Japanese, who live in a similar latitude, would be more yellow or more brown, respectively, than those who lived in a more southern climate. See Buffon, 1749–1804, I: 379–385. Supplementing this view, Michael Keevak suggested that Linnaeus's choice of *luridus*, rather than *flavus*, the more common word for yellow, is not simply an indication for an “intermediate” shade, but a term that was “specifically able to suggest a color of ill health or disease.” See Keevak, 2011: 52. In essence, both views are correct, since Buffon associated a yellow skin color with a sort of a permanent mild jaundice.

72 During the seventeenth century, several European writers used yellow as one of the shades describing the people living in China and Taiwan. These writers were mostly Dutch, and their observations were characterized by a lack of ethnographic coherence. See Kowner, 2014: 251–282.

73 Often referred to as the person who introduced the yellow skin-color into human taxonomies, the French physician and traveler François Bernier (1620–1688) only associated this color with the inhabitants of eastern India, who he considered members of the same race as Europeans. See Bernier, 1688: 6.

of Japan. Haughtiness, for example, was a trait that European visitors often attributed to the Chinese. This was associated with the importance these people reportedly attached to their own kingdom and with their reluctance to acknowledge Europe's growing technological superiority. As early as the fourteenth century, European travelers to Asia began spreading the notion that the Chinese say "they [themselves] have two eyes, the Franks one, and that the Moors are blind, so they have an advantage over every other nation in the world," without raising any evident objections. Their spectacular maritime expansion notwithstanding, sixteenth-century European writers did not abandon this Sinocentric "three eye" outlook, and even incorporated it in their assessment of the Japanese.⁷⁴ When describing local self-confidence, visitors occasionally resorted to negative terms such as arrogance and haughtiness. Cultural rigidity was also an increasingly common image of China, which in the mid-eighteenth century had turned into a symbol of civilizational stagnation, while severity was associated with both the Mongols and the 'despotic' Chinese.⁷⁵ By then, the Middle Kingdom was rapidly losing the last remnants of goodwill among the Jesuits, some of whom, and especially Joachim Bouvet (1656–1730) and Du Halde, were among China's leading advocates in Europe. In 1724 the Chinese government forbade conversion to Christianity and during the 1740s it initiated a brutal persecution of local converts. In this atmosphere very few missionaries remained in China.

Avarice was also a recurrent trait Europeans associated with the Chinese and the peoples on their periphery. As early as 1300, Marco Polo described Emperor Kublai Khan as consumed by avarice when learning of the wealth of the kingdom of Champa in central Vietnam. More than two centuries later, the Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier was probably the first to have used this adjective in referring to Japan. He mentions the avaricious Buddhist monks in this country in a letter sent from Kagoshima in 1549. Avarice, however, was mostly used in the context of trade, and VOC representatives used it in their references to almost any group in the region.⁷⁶ Finally, the idea of Asians being governed by "opinion," rather than laws, seems to have also risen from

74 Rubiés, 2009: 37–55.

75 Consider, for example, Montesquieu's 1748 statement suggesting that "the Tartars who destroyed the Grecian Empire established slavery and despotic power in the conquered countries." In Montesquieu, 1991: 268–280. For European views on China's stagnation, see Pagden, 2007.

76 Polo, 2001: 224–225; Xavier, 1944–45, II: 186 (letter 90). For the frequent use of 'avarice' in Dutch descriptions of the Thai court of Ayutthaya and 'greed' in general descriptions of the local population, see Ruangsilp, 2007: 9, 86, 223.

a general deterioration of European views of the Chinese system alongside a need to place Asians in a secondary position to the rational Europeans rather than as the result of Swedish reports.⁷⁷ This view represented a radical departure from the past. Two centuries earlier, both Xavier and the Dutch merchant Jan Huyghen van Linschoten noted that the Chinese were governed by laws rather than opinions, and that China was considered a model for strict rules and rational laws throughout the seventeenth century.⁷⁸

Overall, the 1758 profile of *Homo Asiaticus* suggests that Linnaeus relied heavily on contemporary reports and digests of secondary literature on China and its periphery provided by his compatriots. These sources served as the basis for his revision of the racial paradigm in the tenth edition of *Systema naturae*. As such, they indicate that this human variety was closer to the non-existent *Homo Asiaticus Orientalis* (i.e. East Asians) than to an all-encompassing ethnographic designation matching the borders of Asia as we know it today. By then, Asia was certainly far from an oblivious concept. While ancient Greek geographers used to refer to Tanais (the River Don) as the border between Asia and Europe, without knowing its exact course, it was shortly before Linnaeus wrote his first edition of the *Systema* that his compatriot, geographer Philip Johan von Strahlenberg, (1676–1747), had proposed the Ural mountain range as the actual borderline.⁷⁹ However attractive, this designation was not accepted immediately in either Russia or Western Europe.⁸⁰

Linnaeus's Legacy and the Unfolding Racial View of East Asians

Linnaeus did not alter his division of humankind after this major revision of *Systema naturae* in 1758. Inflicted by both ill health and depression, he focused on expanding and elaborating other aspects of his system. However fulfilling this task might have been, obtaining and cultivating tea remained a source of disappointment for the Swedish master. Despite his efforts, it was not

77 Osbeck, for example, noted that the Chinese “laws are considered as excellent maxims of life.” See Osbeck, 1771, 1: 277.

78 In a letter from Cochin written in 1552, Xavier described the Middle Kingdom by using three features: “great, peaceful, and governed by great laws.” Reprinted in Cartas, 1598 [1990–1996], 1: 238. Several decades later, Linschoten restated this observation, arguing that the Chinese were “fond of the laws and political science, and in this respect they are like the ancient Greeks and Romans.” In Boogaart, 2003: 58.

79 Strahlenberg, 1730: 106.

80 For the controversy regarding the originality of this border designation and the continuous obscurity throughout the eighteenth century, see Wolff, 1995: 153–155.

before 1761 that Linnaeus received his first tea plant seeds, and even then none sprouted.⁸¹ Still, the by now elderly scholar did not give up and urged one of his last disciples to set out on another journey to East Asia in 1771. This time the destination was Japan, a country of tea as well as of indigenous flora and fauna yet to be added to the Linnaean system.

The disciple in question was Carl Peter Thunberg (1743–1828), a naturalist and physician who had obtained his medical degree under Linnaeus. Due to the strict policy of maritime restrictions (Jpn. *kaikin*) imposed by the local authorities, Thunberg's journey to Japan had to be painstakingly planned. Based on his long-standing acquaintance with the VOC, Linnaeus was aware that the only means for a European to visit the closed country was as a company employee, and thus Thunberg was to assume the same position Kaempfer had held more than eighty years earlier. While serving in the capacity of a factory physician (Dut. *oppermeester*) in the Japanese archipelago in 1775–76, this "apostle" used his limited time carefully. Returning to Sweden a year after his mentor's death, Thunberg was ready to provide Europe with the most important account of the archipelago and its people to be published in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

While they had no effect on the division of humankind, the reports Thunberg published after his return from Japan reflected the characteristics his master had ascribed to (East) Asians. In this sense, he was one of the first to apply his master's taxonomic paradigm to both botanical classification and ethnographic observations.⁸² While there is little doubt that Thunberg's priority was given to plants in both research and publication, the chapters he devoted to Japan also reveal the unprecedented attention he paid to the local population's appearance, and especially the eyes. As far as skin color was concerned, his depictions of the Japanese were similar to those in earlier Swedish reports on China, but also adhered to the taxonomic guidelines dictated by Linnaeus himself. Not unlike Torén, he described upper-class Japanese women as "completely white" (Swe. *fulkomligen hvita*), and lower-class people as "sunburnt and consequently brown." Nonetheless, insofar as the entire Japanese population was concerned, Thunberg offered an intermediate or average color like Torén had done with regard to Chinese men, and as his mentor subsequently did with regard to Asians in general. He referred to this intermediate color as yellowish (*gulagtig*), that is to say, a "yellowish color overall, sometimes bordering

81 For efforts at importing tea plants to Sweden, see Koerner, 1996: 134–136.

82 For overviews of Thunberg's life and contribution to the research on Japan, see Screech, 2005: 1–65, as well as Jung, 2002, and Bowers, 1970: 59–90.

on brown, and sometimes on white.”⁸³ Thunberg’s ethnographic observations gained a broad readership among educated readers in Europe. Apart from English, his journals were also translated into German and French (in these, the color was translated as *gelblich* in German and *jaunâtre* in French), and the new color designation of the Japanese was hereafter established throughout the continent.⁸⁴

Still, Linnaeus’s impact on European racial thought extended far beyond Thunberg’s observations on Japanese skin color, or the Swedish image of East Asia. During the last three decades of the eighteenth century, the Linnaean human taxonomy was developed further by a large group of European thinkers who shared the master’s limited reliance on religious dicta in the spirit of the Enlightenment. Linnaeus established a common language and a theoretical structure in which his followers could organize their observations on nature in general, and on human variety in particular. Although each of these had his own ethnographic predilections, they all provided a broad view of humankind based on established taxonomies and on the data accumulated during recent voyages of exploration. Their scientific progress was particularly evident within the theoretical sphere, where several scholars challenged or extended Linnaeus’s classification with some relevance to East Asians. It is no wonder, then, that the last years of Linnaeus’s life were especially conspicuous for the crystallization of an anthropological discourse—mostly in Britain, Germany and France—in which race was a major topic.⁸⁵ For sure, none of its participants used Linnaeus’s vague category of “Asian variety” or *Homo Asiaticus*, but all understood that he referred essentially to East Asians. Instead, they tended to refer to East Asians using such designations as “Mongols” or “Tartars.”⁸⁶

One of the early champions of the new outlook on nature was the Anglo-Irish physician and writer Oliver Goldsmith (1730–1774). In *A[n] History of the Earth* (1774) published in the year of his untimely death, Goldsmith referred to the “tincture of skin” as the “chief difference in man,” one that was even more important than the “variety of his figure.”⁸⁷ Acknowledging that the differences between the varieties of humankind are the smallest “of all animals,” he divided humankind into six “distinct varieties in the human species,” among

83 Thunberg, 1788–1793: III: 279; 1793–1795, III: 251–252.

84 Thunberg, 1792–1794: II: 154; 1794: 411.

85 Zammito (2002: 3–4) identifies 1772 as the year in which the German anthropological discourse crystallized and as the moment in which anthropology “calved” away from philosophy.

86 For the rise of the ‘Mongoloid race’ in this period, see Demel, 2013.

87 Goldsmith, 1795, I: 364.

which he named the “Tartar race” as “the second great variety.”⁸⁸ The Tartar country, he elaborated, is a general name given to a number of Asian nations, “of various forms and complexion.” Their inhabitants, however, “all agree in being very unlike the people of any other country whatsoever.”⁸⁹ Goldsmith was not as staunch a believer in biological differences as many thinkers of the late-nineteenth-century, and yet his view involved a distinctive racial hierarchy based on differences, albeit temporary, in culture, environment and nutrition. East Asians were not exempted. “All those changes which the African,” he wrote, “the Asiatic, or the American undergo, are but accidental deformities, which a kinder climate, better nourishment, or more civilized manners, would, in a course of centuries, very probably remove.”⁹⁰

A year after the publication of Goldsmith’s book, the German naturalist and anatomist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752–1840) submitted his highly influential dissertation, entitled *De Generis Humani Varietate Nativa* (1775), offering a four-race system. His racial classification was based on geography and morphology and did not differ very much from Linnaeus’s. Both postulated that distinctive traits characterized the people of each continent. In 1779, this “father of physical anthropology,” as he is commonly referred to, updated his thesis. Following some recent discoveries in the Pacific Ocean, he now added a fifth “variety” or race inhabiting Southeast Asia, Australia and Polynesia, and thus separated the inhabitants of these regions from the supposedly more developed East Asians.⁹¹ Increasingly convinced that the Linnaean taxonomy of humankind was outdated, Blumenbach suggested complex corporeal and cranial criteria for his races in the third and final edition of his thesis, published in 1795. At this stage, he labeled his five races the Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, Malay, and American in accordance with their supposed place of origin rather than their eventual geographical habitat as suggested by Linnaeus.⁹²

The importance of Blumenbach’s taxonomy lies in his horizontal rather than hierarchical view of the races. As an intermediate form, the Caucasian

88 Goldsmith, 1795, I: 368.

89 Goldsmith, 1795, I: 368.

90 Goldsmith, 1795, I: 371.

91 Blumenbach, 1779–80, I: 63. For this five-race classification, also see Blumenbach, 1795: 275. Intriguingly the United States Census Bureau used very similar categories in its 2000 census. These included White, Black, Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, Other, and Multiracial. See King, 2005, I: 299–303.

92 Blumenbach’s thesis was published in three very different editions in 1775, 1781, and 1795. It was only in the third edition that he named the five varieties for the first time and suggested the term ‘Caucasian’ for the Europeans and peoples of West Asia and North Africa. For the emergence of the ‘Malay’ race, see Skott, 2014a: 133–4.

race did not stand at the top but in the center, and could thus be considered the primordial norm from which other races had degenerated, or, more simply, deviated from the original stock. Anticipating a certain strain of late twentieth-century sociobiological views, he proposed that the two extremes of the human spectrum which the Caucasian race deviated into were the “Ethiopian” and the “Mongolian.” In between each of these two races and the Caucasian stood two additional transitional races, the “American” and the “Malay,” respectively.⁹³ Still, neither Blumenbach nor any other contemporary thinker focused on East Asians in particular, and most knew less about them than Linnaeus.⁹⁴ However, all were motivated by a genuine curiosity about human cultural and physical diversity, and most were concerned with the burning issue of the Atlantic slave trade.

But more than creating a mere hierarchically arranged taxonomy, the new generation of enlightened thinkers was eager to examine the reasons that made humans differ physically and culturally and to explore the implications of these differences. The slowly growing emphasis on polygenism, and notably the tendency to separate Europeans and Africans into two distinct species rather than varieties was one of the first consequences of the Linnaean racial taxonomy. The Scottish philosopher Henry Home (Lord Kames) (1696–1782) was one of the first writers to stress the great divide between human races, and those of Europe and Africa in particular, on physical, intellectual, cultural and moral grounds to the extent of suggesting that they belonged to different species.⁹⁵ The notion of a racial hierarchy, and notably of the superiority of the white race, seems to have been a second and inevitable outcome of the taxonomic outlook. Such a hierarchy was not a merely academic issue, but first and foremost an everyday reality in almost any European colony for more than a century. A testimony to the careful color gradation in the colonies can be found in Brazil, where the Portuguese viceroy ordered the degradation of an Amerindian chief in 1771, claiming that in “disregarding the signal honors which he had received from the Crown, [he] had sunk so low as to marry a Negress, staining his blood with this alliance.”⁹⁶

The differences perceived so acutely in the colonies required a better paradigm than lingering biblical explanations or more recent physiological theories of skin color. A year after the publication of Goldsmith’s book, and at the same time as Blumenbach’s publication of his first treatise the noted

93 Blumenbach, 1865: 211.

94 See, however, Kant, 1802: 196.

95 See Kames, 1774.

96 Cited in Boxer, 1963: 121.

philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) joined the racial debate and imbued it with greater theoretical rigor.⁹⁷ His treatise *Von den verschiedenen Racen der Menschen* (1775) defined the concept of race more clearly than Blumenbach, albeit with a less elaborate taxonomic system.⁹⁸ Kant was the first to establish the term “race” as a permanent and irreversible form of common stock in the same way it would be used in the late nineteenth century. He assumed the existence of four races: the race of Whites, the Negro race, the Hindu race and the Hunnic (Mongolian or Kalmuck) race. The Chinese were considered a “half-race,” a mixture between the Hunnic and the Hindu races.⁹⁹ The Linnaean emphasis on the distinct color of each race nonetheless attracted many followers, among which Kant is one stellar example. Fascinated by the discipline of physical geography, he considered skin color the most reliable and permanent racial characteristic once innate and acquired colors are distinguished.¹⁰⁰ Like other natural dispositions, Kant viewed it as indicating the limitation which changes in civilization may bring. Thus, neither climatic degeneration—a concept developed earlier by the French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon (1707–1788) with regard to domestic animals—nor improvement through the cultural acquisition of traits could alter the durability of race.¹⁰¹ For this reason, Kant conceded that Africans, Native Americans, and subcontinental Indians could be cultivated, but would never reach the European level of civilization and would at best remain imitators.¹⁰²

The racial theorization in this period was nonetheless still mild in comparison to the much harsher racist outlook that was to follow a century later. In the immediate aftermath of Linnaeus's death, very few scholars purported to offer polygenic views and none of these argued that East Asians were a separate

97 For Kant's racial outlook, see Lagier, 2004: 105–193; Eze, 1997; Bernasconi, 2002: 158; Bindman, 2002: 70–78, 155–160; and Shell, 2006.

98 For the questionable possibility that Kant and Blumenbach read or were influenced by each other's work (both books were published in 1775), see Zammito, 2002: 304.

99 Kant's exact definition of the East Asian race is “die hunnische (mongolische oder kalmükische) Race.” In Kant, 1873–1922, VIII: 91.

100 For Kant's reconsideration of the importance of skin color see Immanuel Kant, *Bestimmung des Begriffs einer Menschenrace*, first published in the *Berliner Monatsschrift* in November 1785 and reprinted in Kant, 1873–1922: 126–127.

101 For Buffon's view of degeneration and its association with slavery among domestic animals, see Buffon, 1749–1804, I: 317.

102 Kant, 1802: 192–193. This article may not reflect Kant's later views. In fact, it is difficult to tell exactly on which version of the lecture (which Kant delivered from 1755 to 1796 with many alterations) the publication of 1802 is based. Cf. Stark, 2006 and *Vorlesungen über Physische Geographie*, 2014.

species. Similarly, most of them assumed that corporeal differences between the “races” stemmed from environmental factors and from divergent cultural attainments resulting from institutional constraints.¹⁰³ Nonetheless, most of those who classified humankind also believed in the intrinsically paramount position of the white people based on either physiological or mental foundations. Even Blumenbach, a strong proponent of the equality of human varieties, argued that “The Caucasian must, on every physiological principle, be considered as the primary or intermediate of those five principle races.”¹⁰⁴ This view, akin to that held by many other contemporary thinkers, shows that the Linnaean taxonomy was instrumental in raising a European racial awareness and a sense of superiority. Despite linking specific moral dispositions, behaviors, and phenotypic features, it also endorsed popular convictions concerning the existence of a racial hierarchy in which positive traits were assigned to Europeans and negative traits were assigned to non-Europeans.¹⁰⁵

In conclusion, therefore, the elaborate view of Linnaeus’s human taxonomy as proposed in the tenth edition of *Systema naturae* marks a turning point in the European view of the Other and of East Asians in particular. Whereas his system provided naturalists with an unmatched tool for observation and a comparative view of nature, the Linnaean varieties of *Homo sapiens* offered an integration of a number of ethnological genres, most notably religious and socio-historical, prevalent among earlier European writers. Moreover, while creating a discourse based on coherent and systematic investigation and on being open to updates by a ceaseless stream of new information, Linnaeus also promoted a fixed and immutable idea of nature in general and humankind in particular. Linnaeus’s view of *Homo Asiaticus* was no less influential. Reflecting contemporary European perspectives, and notably Swedish images of China (and to a lesser extent also Japan), it was to serve as the basis for later designations of East Asians as a distinct race. In this unfolding racial worldview, Europeans began to regard themselves as an explicitly superior race *not* by virtue of their recent achievements or superior religion but rather due to an immutable natural order.

103 Adas, 1989: 121.

104 Blumenbach, 1825a: 37.

105 For an overview of the Linnaean legacy and European racial views after Blumenbach, see Keevak, 2011: 71–144; and Kowner, 2013.

Constructing Racial Theories on East Asians as a Transnational “Western” Enterprise, 1750–1850

Walter Demel

“On that same latitude where I had found the beautiful Whites of England, France, Sweden, Germany, I meet dark men in Tartary.”¹ These lines appeared in a French book entitled *Traité de la couleur de la peau humaine* [*Treatise on the color of the human skin*], which was published in Amsterdam in 1765. The author, Claude-Nicolas Le Cat, was a well-known medical doctor, the chief surgeon of a hospital in Rouen and a full or corresponding member of the scientific academies of Paris, London, Madrid, Porto, Berlin, Lyon, Halle, Bologna, St. Petersburg and, of course, Rouen, where he acted as perpetual secretary.² I do not intend to follow Le Cat’s partly absurd argumentation in the present discussion, but am rather using this example to show that the debate on “racial” questions, and those concerning East Asians in particular, was led by scholars who were linked by a scientific network from the very beginning. This network extended from Portugal to Russia and from Italy to Sweden. When academicians elected a new member, they did not just want to pay homage to him. They expected him to send them manuscripts or at least newly-printed publications. This was thus one of the ways in which scientific knowledge was disseminated all over Europe.³

Nevertheless, it is hardly surprising that Le Cat only counts the English, French, Swedes and Germans among the “beautiful Whites” to whom he later adds the Flemings—for he considered such peoples as the inhabitants of Spain, Portugal and even French Provence as having dark skin,⁴ somewhat similar to the Tartars’. It seems reasonable, therefore, to limit the scope of our enquiry into the transnational debate on race in general and the so-called Yellow Race in particular to just a few European countries—at least between 1750 and 1850:

1 Le Cat, 1765: 3.

2 Le Cat, 1765: Title page.

3 For European academies cf. Grau, 1988, who remarks on p. 175 that this sort of correspondence declined in the nineteenth century. For more about their role as the “motors” of scientific research in the eighteenth century see Voss, 1980.

4 Le Cat, 1765: 13.

France, Great Britain, Germany, and the Netherlands, which could collectively be called the core countries of the European Enlightenment, to which we may add such countries as Sweden, Switzerland and the British colonies in North America, the future United States, as peripherals. To the best of my knowledge, no scholar from any other country belonging to the so-called “West” has made a major contribution to this debate.⁵

In my view, two generations can be distinguished at this time. The first consists of the “founding fathers” of racial theories. These were the naturalists Linnaeus, Buffon, and Camper, to whom I would add the philosopher Kant, who also was born in the first quarter of the eighteenth century and who offered the first precise definition of “race” in 1775. The other generation was formed by men born after 1750 who built their conceptions on the theories developed by their predecessors, adopting, modifying and partly rejecting them. Based on this distinction, I will attempt to sketch an answer to the following questions: First, which racial ideas concerning East Asians were developed and disseminated by the “founding fathers”? and second, what was the (changing) place East Asians occupied in the taxonomies constructed by the main (or at least some of the main) contributors to the debate on race of the following generation?

The Founding Fathers of Racial Theories: Linnaeus, Buffon, Kant and Camper

It is generally accepted that the Swedish naturalist Linnaeus can be seen as the founding father of a taxonomy including the idea of human races. To Linnaeus, all morphologically determined species were fixed,⁶ and so was man. But Linnaeus also subdivided the species “man” according to the continents people lived in. In later editions of his *Systema Naturae*—more than a dozen appeared in his lifetime alone, not to mention translations⁷—he characterized the Asian as “yellow, melancholic, rigid, with blackish hair, dark eyes,

5 It is telling that an author such as the Spaniard Caro Baroja starts his book on the foundations of modern anthropological thinking with an analysis of the works of German thinkers like Kant and does not even mention Spanish authors: Caro Baroja, 1991. The fact that the very term “the West” (which did not enter regular use before the second half of the nineteenth century) implied a differentiation between “core” and “peripheral countries,” is demonstrated by Demel, 2010: 2.

6 Knight, 1981: 69.

7 Cf. A Catalogue, 1957: 5–14.

severe, haughty, avaricious, covered with loose clothes and ruled by opinions.”⁸ In other words, Linnaeus combined physical features like the colors of the skin, hair, and eyes with cultural attributes (clothing, bodily painting), character traits (like avarice) and elements of the old doctrines of temperaments or humors (“melancholic”). As racial theories began to differentiate, all four criteria were to play a role. But while the gradually fading doctrine of the four temperaments could hardly be used as a basis for racist attitudes (for any excess or lack of each of the humors was considered obnoxious), the other criteria could be used for praising the “European race” and denigrating the others. The Swedish naturalist himself obviously tended to regard the European as superior to the rest of humankind.

Linnaeus, who became the first president of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences in 1739, had travelled to England, Germany, and France and had stayed for almost three years in the Netherlands. It was from these countries that he was awarded many memberships in academies of science⁹ and where his main correspondents lived. Among the latter were the Englishman Joseph Banks, the German travellers Johann Reinhold Forster and Johann Georg Gmelin, and the French botanist Bernard de Jussieu, whose lectures were attended not only by Linnaeus but also by Buffon.¹⁰ Linnaeus himself never went to Asia, but his “apostles” Olof Torén, Pehr Osbeck and Carl Peter Thunberg did. All of them wrote travelogues of China and Japan, which were translated in several editions into German, English, and, in Thunberg’s case, also French, within

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- 8 Linné, 1766: 29: “luridus, melancholicus, rigidus. *Pilis nigricantibus. Oculis fuscis. Severus, fastuosus, avarus. Tegitur Indumentis laxis. Regitur Opinionibus.*”
- 9 Goerke, 1989: 64, notes that Linnaeus became a member of the Imperial Academy of Naturalists Leopoldina-Carolina as early as 1736, of the Montpellier Academy of Sciences in 1743, and secretary of the Uppsala academy one year later. Hoquet, 2007: 25, mentions that Linnaeus was at the end of his life “un des huit associés étrangers de L’Académie des sciences de Paris, également associé à la Société de Londres, à l’Académie de Berlin, de Pétersburg, de Stockholm, de Bologne, d’Édimbourg, de Philadelphie. . . .” Lindroth, 1994: 53, even assures that “there was hardly a learned society in Europe of which Linnaeus was not a member.”
- 10 A concise biography is provided by T. Frängsmyr’s “Editor’s introduction.” In idem 1994: vii–xiv. Cf. Broberg, 1983; http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_von_Linné and http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bernard_de_Jussieu [Accessed on 10 July 2012]. Koerner (1999: 25) suggests that Linnaeus’s conception of the natural order was inspired by his Lutheran and Swedish Gothicist inheritance. In his anthropology, however, Linnaeus had trouble distinguishing men and apes (ibid.: 87–89).

ten years. These travel reports also dealt with the inhabitants of the visited regions.¹¹

Buffon—who, like Linnaeus, was also born in 1707—was in a certain sense the great rival of the Swedish naturalist with a different,¹² less rigid concept of the species and varieties in nature in general and in humankind in particular (see Fig. 3.1). Influenced by the old idea of the “chain of being,” he believed in a quasi-evolutionary development of different varieties within a species of creatures depending for the most part on the climate they lived in, but also on food, customs and manners.¹³ He did, however, discover many similarities in the outer appearance of North and East Asians. He thus tended to doubt whether the Chinese (and also the Japanese, whom he described as living more to the south and therefore being a little yellower or browner than the Chinese) were a variety distinct from the coarse “Tartar race.” Nothing but the total difference in character, manners and customs served, according to Buffon, as evidence in favor of this thesis.¹⁴

While there is no evidence of Buffon ever travelling to England, he was obviously rather fluent in English and had translated at least one English work into French.¹⁵ As a member of the Paris Academy of Sciences since the age

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- 11 Cf. Demel, 1992b: 31–32, *passim*; Jung 2002; Osbeck, 1765 (translated by J.G. Georgi); Osbeck 1771; Thunberg 1792; Thunberg 1794; Thunberg, IV [1796]; Thunberg, 1795–1796. According to Goerke 1989: 182–183, Thunberg was appointed to the chair of his late mentor in Uppsala in 1784. He and other Linnaeans chose China and Japan as their favorite examples of existent ideal cameralist states. Koerner, 1999: 98–101.
- 12 Hoquet, 2007 elaborates the fundamental differences, but also some parallels between the two.
- 13 Unlike Linnaeus, Buffon defined species “in terms of interfertility rather than of morphology.” Knight, 1981: 79.
- 14 Buffon, “Variétés dans l’espèce humaine.” In *idem*, 1749–1788, vol. III (1750): 371–530, 384–85: “. . . il n’est pas même sûr qu’ils [les Chinois] soient d’une autre race; la seule chose qui pourroit le faire croire, c’est la différence totale du naturel, des mœurs & des coutumes”; p. 389: “Les Japonnois sont assez semblables aux Chinois pour qu’on puisse les regarder comme ne faisant qu’une seule & même race d’hommes, ils sont seulement plus jaunes ou plus bruns, parce qu’ils habitent un climat plus méridionale . . .” In 1749, the (aesthetically judged) outer appearance of humans seemed to Buffon to precede social or cultural characteristics. Nevertheless, in his view, individual differences obliterated racial ones and physical traits were of only relative value, not least as a result of racial “mixtures” (Roger, 1989: 236–247). Hoquet, 2007: 99–100, therefore maintains that Buffon defined humans by social criteria and had not even tried to differentiate biologically fixed races.
- 15 Roger, 1989: 48–51; Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1837, IV: xviii–xix, cf. viii, where it is said that Buffon had always been a follower of Linnaeus though he considered his own concepts more “scientific.”

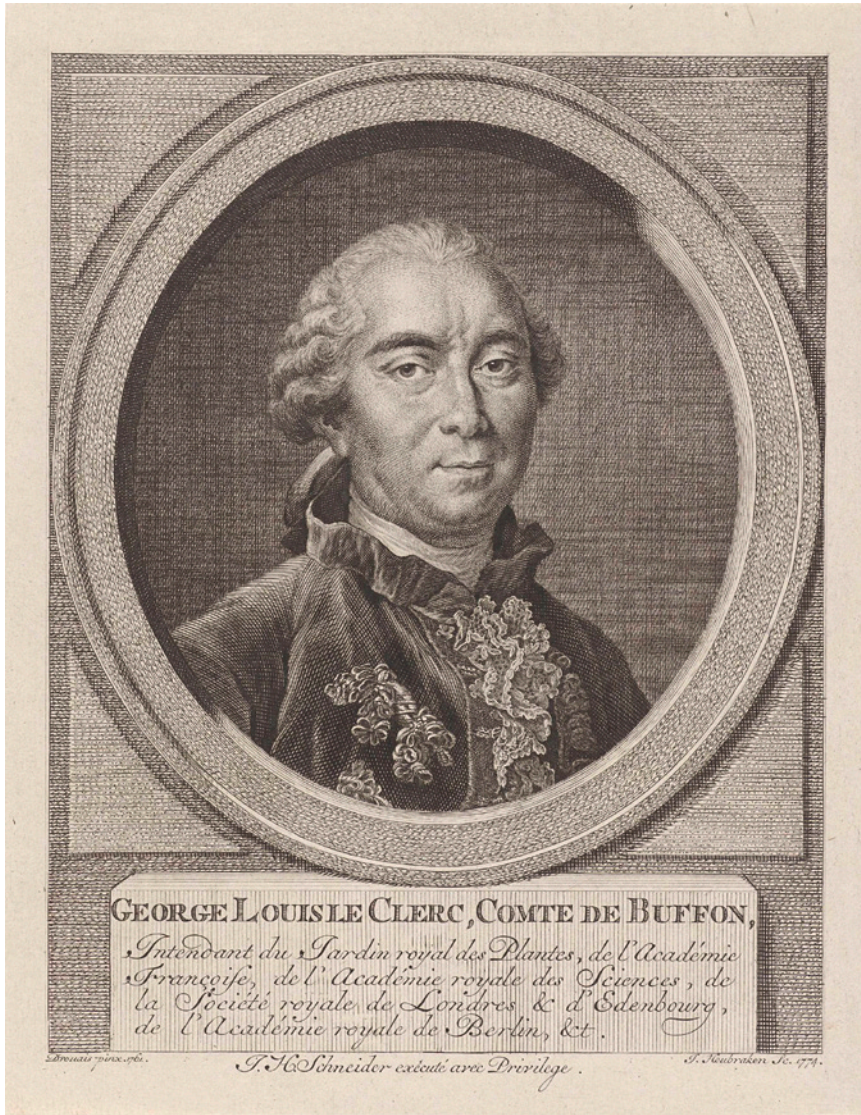


FIGURE 3.1 The French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707–1788).
 COURTESY OF THE RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

of 27,¹⁶ he could be seen as the inspirer of several later French naturalists such as Lacépède, Virey, and even Lamarck.¹⁷ Many of his countrymen considered him *the* paragon of natural sciences although there were “Linnaean societies” in France too since 1787.¹⁸ But Buffon was also admired abroad, even though he was neither a great traveller nor an ardent correspondent.¹⁹ However, his (and Daubenton’s) *Histoire naturelle*, which contained an article on the “Varieties within the Human Species” in volume III, was translated, whether as a whole or in an abridged form, into many European languages.²⁰ Moreover, French was, alongside Latin, the *lingua franca* of European scientists, which every naturalist had to be able to read if not to speak well into the nineteenth century.²¹ Thus, the *Histoire naturelle* was often read in the French original. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Buffon was a member of several European academies—not just the Académie française (his literary qualities have always been praised), but also the scientific academies of Paris, London, Edinburgh, Berlin and some others too.²²

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- 16 Roger, 1989: 35–36, remarks that it was not extraordinary to enter the Academy at such an age as an “adjoint,” for at that time this institution was not yet the “conservatoire” of national scientific glories. Moreover, one has to consider that from 1699 to 1786 there were always 20 “young members” among the 70 members of the Academy (Voss, 1980: 57, 60). In any case patronage obviously played an important role when a new member was being co-opted (Knight, 1981: 73–74).
- 17 Cf. Corsi, 1988: 1–46, who shows that Lamarck defended Buffon although he disagreed with many of his patron’s theories (pp. 42, 46).
- 18 For the swayings of Buffon’s and Linnaeus’s fame, see Lepenies, 1988: 61–89; Koerner, 1999: 164–177. Linnaean societies were founded, for example, in Paris (1787), London (1788), Leipzig (1789), Philadelphia (1806), Uppsala (1807), Boston (1813), Bordeaux (1818), Paris (1821), Lyon (1822) and Caen (1823) (Duris, 1993: 165).
- 19 Buffon, 1971, I: 451–459; II: 425–431, 433–435, shows that Buffon’s correspondence was relatively limited (639 letters from 1729 to 1789—though some letters, of course, may have been lost) and that it was virtually limited to French correspondents. Nevertheless, Hoquet, 2007: 31, maintains that Buffon had a large network of correspondents—some of whom were not European!
- 20 For pre-1800 translations into German, English, and Italian, and into Polish and Spanish shortly after that time see *Karlsruher Virtueller Katalog* (online), hereafter *KVK*.
- 21 Linnaeus, who only read and wrote Swedish and Latin, was an exception (Lepenies, 1988: 26). For Buffon’s *Histoire naturelle* as a tremendous success see *ibid.*: 63–64. In the Berlin Academy (originally: Society of sciences), founded in 1700, the common language was Latin until the 1740s followed by French (Voss, 1980: 57–58).
- 22 Cf. [Buffon] 1791: title portrait. Cf. Lepenies, 1988: 65, Duris, 1993: 37 and Hoquet, 2007: 17, mention, for example, that Buffon was also a member of the Société royale d’Agriculture

Immanuel Kant, born in 1724, is nowadays at least as famous as Buffon who was 16 years his senior. Among contemporaries, however, Buffon was obviously far more venerated in the field of anthropology, to which Kant delivered only two innovative, but relatively short, contributions in 1775 and in 1785 respectively. These are important in our context for using a notion similar to “Mongolian race” for the first time (“Mungalische Rasse”).²³ While the Königsberg philosopher, who never left East Prussia himself, but who had a wide network of students, admirers, visitors and correspondents,²⁴ became famous with his three “Critiques” in the 1780s, his influence on racial theories should not be neglected. This argument rings even truer when we consider that his 1785 article “Bestimmung des Begriffs einer Menschenrace” [“Definition of the term ‘Human race’”] caused a controversy with Johann Reinhold Forster’s son Georg in the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, the main communicative medium of the Prussian Enlightenment.²⁵ On the other hand, however, Kant’s influence in anthropology seems to have declined in subsequent decades. The advance of specialization meant that “pure” philosophy (which did not take such facts as new anatomical insights into account) was regarded, especially in Western Europe, as a kind of theoretical scholarship, while anthropology, as a science, had to be based on an empirical methodology.²⁶

de Paris and the Academy of Dijon but, according to Hoquet, 2007: 25, Buffon—unlike Linnaeus—did not list all of his memberships on the front-pages of his books.

- 23 Demel, 2013: 62–63. Other contributions by Kant are full of traditional stereotypes (which he largely gave up later) or consist of a defence of his arguments from 1785 (Kühn, 2004: 172–173, 342–343, 397–398). Moreover, such paragraphs as “Der Charakter der Rasse” in Kant’s *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* (1798) contain little more than a reference to Girtanner, 1796 (Kant, 1900–1983, VII: 320–321); his *Physische Geographie* (1802) was not considered important by contemporaries (Kühn, 2004: 472). For remarks on the Chinese people in his later works cf. Kant, 1900–1983, IX: 319–320.
- 24 According to Kühn, 2004: 120, 368, 496, 497, 529, n. 161, 592, n. 26, Kant stayed in his region all of his life and was not a great correspondent. Nevertheless, he was, since the mid-1780s, a famous man, who became a corresponding member of the academies of Berlin (1786) and St. Petersburg (1794). Cf. Höffe, 2000: 20, 281–284, who mentions that the reception of Kant’s ideas in Western Europe only began around 1795, and in such places as Italy even much later (ibid. 290–292).
- 25 As Klatt 2010 has shown, Georg Forster’s attack, though nameless, was directed at least as much at his uncle Blumenbach as at Kant in order to defend his friend Soemmerring against Blumenbach’s critique.
- 26 This had already been the background of the public dispute between Forster and Kant. Cf. Lepenies, 1988: 142. Mühlmann, 1984: 67–68, 76, states that the German idealistic philosophy was unproductive on anthropology and that F.W.J. Schelling’s, L. Oken’s and C.G. Carus’s symbolic racial theories were the results of a romantic philosophy of nature

Such an empiricist was Petrus Camper, who was born in 1722 and died in 1789, outliving Buffon by a single year. This Dutchman had an “Asiatic” background, being the son of a Protestant minister who had made his fortune in the East Indies and his wife, who was even born there. He had studied medicine and surgery in Leiden and London, had intensively read Linnaeus’s *System* (he later decried the author’s anatomical ignorance) and had travelled to Paris in 1749 in order to become acquainted with Buffon. Between 1751 and 1773 he served as a professor in Franeker, Amsterdam, and Groningen respectively. The most important among these was his Amsterdam professorship, where he had the chance to study and draw foreigners. In his *Dissertation physique*, Camper described how he developed his famous idea of a “facial angle” (see Fig. 3.2). When he had obtained the skulls of a “Negro” and a Kalmyk, he hurried to compare them with the skulls of a European and an ape. This led him to discover “facial lines,” with a facial angle descending from the head of an antique statue (at least 95°) to a European (80°), a Chinese (75°), a Kalmyk and a “Negro” (both 70°), to such animals such as apes (58°), dogs and snipes (even less).²⁷

While it is true that Camper’s *Dissertation physique* only appeared posthumously, his concepts were already well known among naturalists and artists during his lifetime. Camper mentioned them, for example, in a 1776 letter directed to and published by Johann Caspar Lavater, the Swiss pastor and “father of physiognomy.” Similarly, the German anatomist Samuel Thomas von Soemmerring, who had visited Camper in the Netherlands in 1778 alluded to it in a book published six years later. Camper had many personal contacts since he spoke English, French, German and Latin fluently and liked to travel within the core countries of enlightened Europe. In England he socialized, among others, with Banks and the famous London anatomist John Hunter, while in France he gained the acquaintance of Daubenton, Vic-d’Azyr, and Lacépède. In Germany, which he visited five times, he was accompanied by Soemmerring to Göttingen in 1779. It was there that he delivered a lecture that was attended by Lichtenberg, Soemmerring and Blumenbach.²⁸ In subsequent years, Camper

and led into a blind alley, while the fundamental biological and scientific questions of anthropology were at the same time considered successful in other countries, especially in France.

27 Camper, 1791: 8–9, 39, 40, 41, 49. Cf. Meijer, 1999: 7–8, 18.

28 A.G. Camper, “Notice de la vie et des écrits de Pierre Camper.” In P. Camper, an xi-1803 (pp. vii–lx): xvii, xx, xxi, xxiii, xlv, liii, lvi; F. Vicq-d’Azir, “Éloge de Pierre Camper par—.” Ibid. (pp. lxi–xci): lxi. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petrus_Camper [Accessed on 11 July 2012]; Meijer, 1999: 20, 22, 118, 167, 180–81.

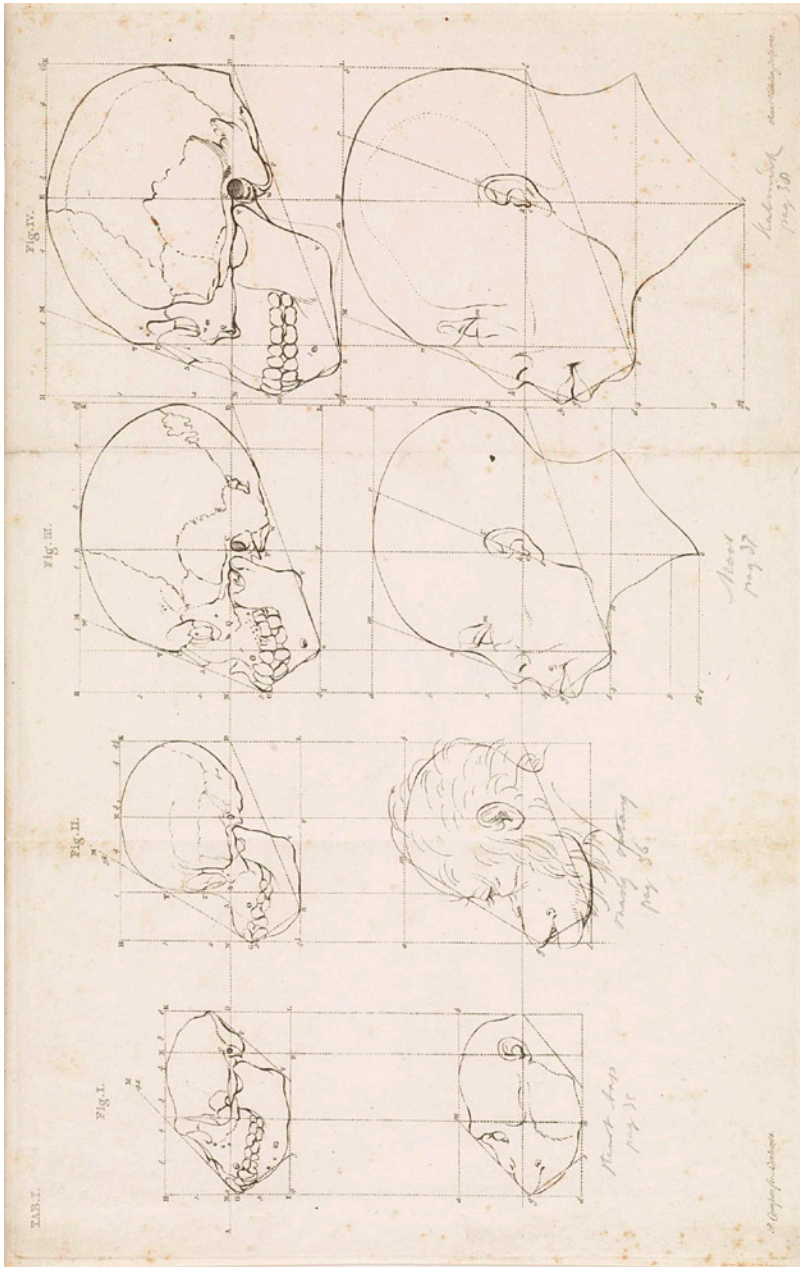


FIGURE 3.2 A detail from Petrus Camper's study of the facial angle of the various races: The "Negro" and the "Kalmuck" are on the right. COURTESY OF THE RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

corresponded several times with the latter.²⁹ It is still a matter of some debate whether Camper developed his “facial angle” for merely artistic reasons and whether he—inadvertently—facilitated racist attitudes by doing so. There is no doubt, however, that he was a celebrity in academic circles, being a member of, among others, the Paris and London academies of science.³⁰

The Second Generation: Multiple Directions

It was a demonstration by John Hunter meant to illustrate Camper’s ideas which led his old friend, the well-known Manchester surgeon Charles White, to measure numerous skulls himself and publish *An Account of the Regular Gradation in Man* in 1799. This book, which popularized and coarsened Camper’s ideas in a polygenist and openly racist way, was full of denigrating remarks about—among others—Asians like the Kalmyks whose “forehead has a resemblance to that of the monkey.” White did, however, argue against the “climate theory” by asserting, for example, that (even) the southern Chinese were white, “though in the neighborhood of the torrid zone.”³¹ This was one of the points which triggered a controversy with the first American racial theorist, Stanhope Smith, a Virginia minister who had tried to prove that climate and civilization (the “state of society”) were the only causes of all human varieties. Smith considered the Chinese an “unmixed” nation, who therefore showed a “regular and perfect gradation of colour . . . from the fair natives of Peking, to Canton, whose

29 In 1781, for example, the young Göttingen professor expressed his gratitude for Camper’s research having helped him to sensibly improve the second edition of his dissertation. Blumenbach’s letter to Camper, Göttingen, 22 May 1781, in Dougherty, 2006–12: vol. 1, letter 153, pp. 244–45. In footnote 1 on p. 245, it is said that the preface to the second edition of Blumenbach’s *De generis humani varietate nativa* was dated on that very day and that Camper had published an article in Dutch on the color of the Blacks as early as 1772. For other letters cf. e.g., vol. 11, letters 238, 258, 304, 306, 307.

30 According to Meijer, 1999, Camper intended his facial angle “to provide a sound criterion to differentiate between human races” (p. 1). But he could not be considered a racist—an impression which was only revised in 1985 (p. 2)—since he “was trying to prove empirically that all the races were equal” (p. 3, cf. 84, 139, 153). However: “Three of the first to associate skull shape or size with racial intelligence by using Camper’s findings were Soemmerring in Germany, White in England and Cuvier in France” (p. 173)—in Meijer’s view, a “contortion” of Camper’s ideas (pp. 176–77). Cf. Camper’s influence on Virey in Kowner, 2013: 107.

31 White, Charles, “An Account of the Regular Gradation in Man . . .” In Bernasconi, 2001, VIII: v, 1, 48 (quotation), 50–51, 106–7, 113 (quotation).

inhabitants are of the darkest copper”³²—an assertion that White obviously wanted to correct. The fact that he was a popularizer of Soemmerring’s ideas in the English-speaking world did not spare White from Blumenbach’s criticism suggesting that he had ignored relevant evidence. Although Blumenbach and Camper had a good personal relationship with Soemmerring, they were not willing to accept the latter’s belief in an anatomically caused inferiority of black people and his tendency towards polygenism.³³

White also referred to Lavater’s *Physiognomische Fragmente*, which revived the ancient Greek tradition of identifying (physically) “beautiful” and (morally) “good.” (see Fig. 3.3.). He also seems to have shared Winckelmann’s view, which considered the oblique eyes and flat noses of East Asians as an “aberration” and the latter even “the greatest deformation of the face.”³⁴ This was a “scientific” reflection of all the travel accounts that had described East Asian men and older women—but not younger women—as being unsightly.³⁵ Lavater’s concept was highly criticized, not least by Blumenbach’s friend Lichtenberg, who was a sharp-witted hunchback. Nevertheless, Lavater’s—and Camper’s—introduction of aesthetic criteria into the discussion on “races” was not without effect.³⁶ This can even be seen with Blumenbach, who venerated Camper as a “masterly painter” although he criticized Camper’s facial line as well as “Lavater’s animality angle.”³⁷

32 Smith, S.S., “An essay on the causes of the variety of complexion and figure in the human species” [1788]. In Bernasconi, 2001, vol. 6, pp. 11, 44 (quotation). On the other hand, Smith was sure that the offspring of Chinese who migrated to the North, “had become perfect Tartars in their figure and aspects,” which meant that they developed “coarse and deformed features” (p. 66).

33 Bernasconi, Robert, “Editor’s note.” In idem, 2001, vol. 8: v–vii. Cf. Demel, 2013: 79; Meijer, 1999: 1, 52–53 n. 67, pp. 55, 82, 168, 173, 181.

34 Winckelmann, 2002: 247, 45: “die größte Verunstaltung des Gesichts.” Cf. Bindman, 2002: 81–91, esp. 89.

35 According to the European view, East Asians had excessively flat faces, small, oblique eyes, and, as men, not enough beard. Cf. sources as early as González de Mendoza, 1585/1944: 1, 37; Trigautius [Trigault], 1615: 86.

36 Bindman, 2002: 92–123; cf. Meijer, 1999: 121, 159–60; Demel, 1992a: 654. One can recognize the renewal of an extremely high esteem for Antiquity, whether in the arts (J.J. Winckelmann) or in literature (neo-humanism), in the background.

37 Cf. Blumenbach, 1824: 12 (“meisterhafter Zeichner”), 20–21 with n. 2. Cf. Demel, 2013: 66, 79–81; Meijer, 1999: 120, 170–71. SUB = Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen, Cod. Ms. Blumenbach 11, contains the author’s copy of this edition, enriched with many notes glued in by Blumenbach himself. After p. 20, such a note says, for example, “. . . how endlessly the nose varies with prudent and stupid people! See the flat nose of [the English historian] Gibbon, [the Dutch painter] Lairese, [Emperor] Paul . . . the

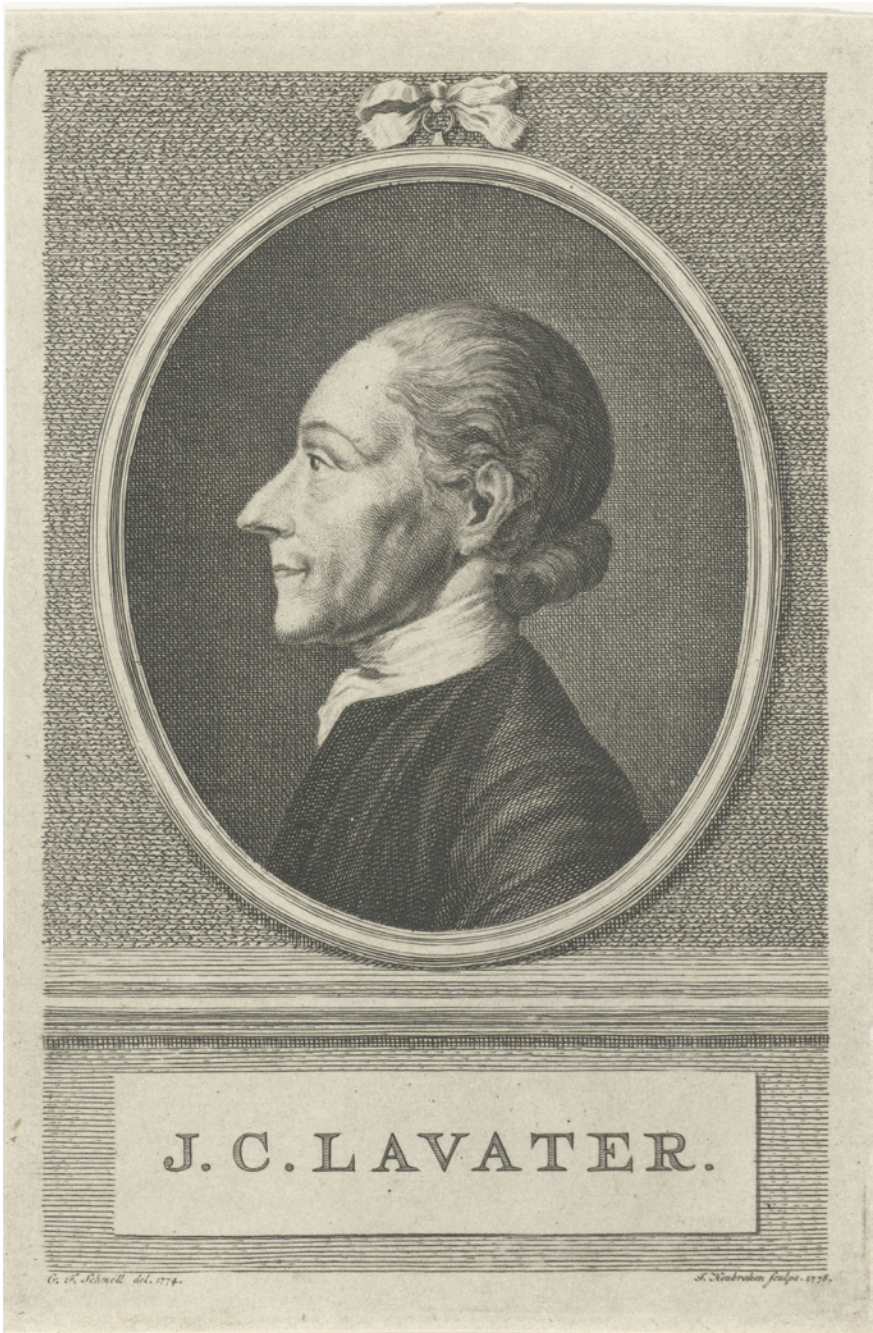


FIGURE 3.3 *The Swiss physiognomist Johann Caspar Lavater (1741–1801).*
COURTESY OF THE RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

Like Camper, Blumenbach knew about the cultural relativity of human beauty. He therefore emphasized the “very arbitrary borderlines” between “races” and wrote that the “Caucasian race” had “the most exemplary shape of the skull and the face, *according to European notions of beauty*.”³⁸ Nevertheless, it was precisely this criterion of beauty, and particularly “the ravishingly beautifully proportioned skull of a female Georgian,” which eventually provided him with the most important reason for considering all Europeans (except the Finns and the Lapps) members of a “Caucasian” race, from which as a “stem or central race” the Mongolian race had allegedly “degenerated” to the extreme.³⁹

Blumenbach, who was born in 1752, was to a certain degree the leading figure of the second generation of racial scientists. It was mainly the third greatly enlarged and revised 1795 edition of his *De generis humani varietate nativa* which brought him universal fame. It was only this edition that was translated into German, Dutch and French within a decade. A problematic, and still frequently-used English translation by British and American scholars only appeared in 1865.⁴⁰ Similarly, Blumenbach’s *Handbuch der Naturgeschichte*, which went through at least a dozen German editions during his lifetime and is therefore also available in many French or British libraries was translated into French in 1803 and twice into English, as well as into Italian, in the 1820s.⁴¹ Moreover, Blumenbach communicated with his many correspondents in German, Latin, English or French and travelled not only to Switzerland, but also to London (twice), where he got to know Joseph Banks and John Hunter, whom he later called, side by side with Camper, his friends among contemporary anatomists. At the end of his life, he was a member of the Science

hawk nose of Machiavelli, Kaestner [probably the Göttingen professor Abraham Gotthelf Kaestner] ... Chr[istian] of Denmark” (“wie endlos variiert die Nase bei Klugen und Dummen! v[id]e Stumpfnase v. Gibbon, Lairese, K[aiser] Paul ... Habichtsnase v. Machiavelli, Kaestner ... Chr v. Dänemark”).

38 Blumenbach, 1825b: 56: “sehr willkührliche Gränzen”; “der nach den europäischen Begriffen von Schönheit musterhaftesten Schedel- und Gesichtsform.” For a similar sense see a source as early as, for example, Blumenbach, 1795: 284–89. The italics are mine.

39 Demel, 2013: 67–68; SUB, Cod. Ms. Blumenbach 1 1: “Der bildschön proportionierte Schedel einer Georgierin.”

40 According to KVK search results. The renowned French comparative anatomist Vicq d’Azyr, who died in 1794, used the term “race,” but not for humans. Neither does he seem to have mentioned Blumenbach—as opposed to Daubenton, “notre maître et modèle,” Camper and the Londoner John Hunter. Cf. Vicq d’Azir, 1786: 110–111; Vicq-Dazir, s.a.: 66, 103, n. 2, 158.

41 Cf. KVK.

Academies of Göttingen, London, Halle, Stockholm, and, although elected only at the age of almost 80, Paris too.⁴²

The French translation of *De Varietate* with the telling title *De l'Unité du Genre humain, et de ses variétés* was made by a French physician and went through three editions within four years. It also contained a letter by Blumenbach to Joseph Banks, the president of the Royal Society from 1778 to his death in 1820, in which Blumenbach described Linnaeus's system as having become inadequate by that time.⁴³ It is noteworthy to mention at this point that Blumenbach's work was generally received positively by French naturalists. He and Georges Cuvier, who was raised bilingually in French and German and who, as the successor of Daubenton, was to become increasingly influential in the scientific world until shortly before his death in 1832,⁴⁴ respected each other as excellent anatomists.⁴⁵ Finally, the French naturalist accepted Blumenbach's division of humankind, mainly with respect to the three "main races," namely "Caucasian," "Mongolian" (as an "intermediate") and "Negro."⁴⁶

42 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Friedrich_Blumenbach; Blumenbach, 1824: 12. Dougherty, 2006, 12: I, 401–410; II, 373–382; III, 409–439; IV, 549–577, show that, for example, Blumenbach, Soemmerring and Camper corresponded with each other, although not as intensively as Blumenbach and Banks. Among Blumenbach's occasional correspondents were also such figures as the Forsters, Goethe, A. v. Humboldt, Girtanner and Kant. Dougherty's four volumes only contain published letters sent or received until 1795 (Blumenbach died in 1840!), but IV, 512 mentions a letter to Cuvier from 1799.

43 Blumenbach, 1804: 29.

44 As Cuvier, 1834: title page shows, Cuvier did become a member of the Académie française and the science academies of Paris (where he had acted as perpetual secretary since 1803), London, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Stockholm, Turin, Edinburgh, Copenhagen, Göttingen, Munich, Modena, Amsterdam and Calcutta. As a faithful Lutheran, Cuvier was a monogenist. But he believed that a major catastrophe had already separated the in all respects superior white race from the others 5000 years ago. Cf. Ferrière, 2009: 155, and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georges_Cuvier [Accessed on 24 July 2012]. The fact that the young Antoine Desmoulins who had criticized him (id., 1826: ix) could never advance in his career can partly be traced to Cuvier's influence. Cf. the critical anonymous review of Daubenton's work in Augstein, 1996: 127–140.

45 Cf. Blumenbach, 1805: x–xi; Cuvier, 1805, I: xviii, III: xvi.

46 Cuvier, 1835–46, II: 181: "... trois d'entre elles [i.e. des races] surtout sont éminemment distinctes, la blanche ou caucasique . . . , la jaune ou mongolique, et la nègre ou éthiopique." Cuvier states here that as far as the form of the skull is concerned, Caucasians and Mongolians (as opposed to Blacks) show few differences. But it is the pigmentation of the skin that underlies the distinction between the Whites and the "coloured human races" (III: 582–583, quoted on p. 582: "races humaines colorées"). Cf. Kowner, 2013: 87–88.

But he and his colleagues never regarded Blumenbach as their principal authority.⁴⁷

This is confirmed in Lacépède's *Histoire naturelle*. The French count had, according to Cuvier, regarded Buffon as his “master and model.”⁴⁸ Camper’s “facial angle” seemed to him to offer evidence in favor of a superior European intelligence, whereas “the Mongol race presents a flat face . . . a facial angle less overt . . .” However, he differentiated between the Mongol peoples and seems to have preferred the Chinese due to their ancient culture.⁴⁹ At any rate, Lacépède began the last era of his *Les Âges de la Nature et histoire de l'espèce humaine* (*Ages of Nature and History of Humanity*), a combination of history and anthropology, in a similar manner to Voltaire’s *Sinophile Essai sur les mœurs* with a chapter on the Chinese. There he states that the Han dynasty was so famous in some parts of the East that the Chinese were named “Han-jin, men of Han.” But when he speaks of a “race of Han” a little later, he obviously just means the reigning dynasty in the same way as he had mentioned the Merovingians as the “race of Clovis” right before.⁵⁰

A step away from the anatomist Blumenbach, and approaching the attitude of the latter’s Göttingen colleague, the philosopher Christoph Meiners,⁵¹ we find Julien Joseph Virey with his *Histoire naturelle du genre humain*. In the 1800–01 first published edition dedicated to Buffon, he called Blumenbach’s division of humankind into five races or varieties “the most reasonable” among the existing taxonomies. Consequently, he knew of a “Mongolian Race,” of which allegedly “all individuals are meagre and dark brown, even in cold and temperate countries.”⁵² In the second, enlarged 1824 edition, however, Virey frankly

47 The Paris professor of anatomy and physiology Pierre Paul Broc (1782–1848), for example, displayed a synopsis of nine different taxonomies of human races. Seven of them were developed by French naturalists, while the other two were those of Linnaeus and Blumenbach. The latter, however, was always written “Blummenbach”—which raises doubts as to whether Broc had ever read any of his books. Moreover, when comparing his own “seconde sous-genre—[les] variétés jaunes ou olivâtres” with the “races” of other authors, he limited himself to French colleagues (Cuvier, Virey, Bory de Saint-Vincent and others). Broc, 1836: 23, 38, 53.

48 Cuvier, Baron G[eorges], “Éloge historique.” In Lacépède, 1827: i.

49 Lacépède, 1821: 185–86: “La race mongole présente un visage plat, . . . un angle facial moins ouvert . . .”; cf. p. 190.

50 Lacépède, 1830: 1–35, quotation p. 8: “Han-jin, hommes de Han,” p. 11: “race de Han,” “race de Clovis.”

51 For Meiners, see Vetter, 1997; Demel, 2013: 75–78, 82–85.

52 Virey, 1800–1801: 131–134, quotation: title page: “premier de ses maîtres”; p. 153, footnote: “la plus raisonnable”; p. 131: “tous les individus sont maigres et fort bruns même dans

followed Meiners, White and Soemmerring in their polygenetic inclinations.⁵³ For one, he now divided humankind into two species, one with a facial angle of 85° and another with an angle of 75–80°. He then subdivided the first of these into a white, a yellow, a copper-colored (American) and a dark-brown race (Malay or Polynesian), and the other into a black (African) and a blackish race (Hottentots, Papuans). The best and most beautiful for him was, of course, the white race, followed by the yellow or olive-tinged one.

Among the three “main tribes” of the yellow race—Asians surrounding the North Pole, nomadic Kalmyk-Mongols and East Asians living beyond the Ganges River—the latter also including Tibetans, Mughals and continental South-East Asians but not including the Malays, were said to lack “all the rudeness of the Kalmyks.” They were “all polygamous, soft, timid, but extremely knavish, deceitful and without faith.” The Chinese and Japanese were the “most polished nations in this part of Asia, and the most anciently civilized; yet we see them,” Virey adds, “remaining stationary in a state of imperfectness, which they do not try to leave at all.”⁵⁴ From an anthropological perspective, therefore, Virey stresses a theory that would then be adopted by philosophers like Hegel and historians like Leopold von Ranke, namely that East Asian peoples

les pays froids et tempérés.” In the first branch, Virey includes the Eskimos, Samojesdes, Lapps, the inhabitants of Kamchatka (and, tentatively, the North American Indians)—referring, in this context, to Blumenbach’s *Decas . . . cranium diversarum gentium*. The second branch, described as generally very ugly, consists of the (also) nomadic Kalmyks, Buriats, Tunguses etc., who were said to live in hordes of destructive bandits. Only the third branch, among which Virey even counted the Ainus, should have “shapes more softened by the climate and the fixed abodes” (p. 134: “formes plus adoucies par le climat et des demeures fixes”).

53 On Virey: Bénichou and Blanckaert, 1992, esp. the bibliography (pp. 259–273, here pp. 261, 265) and the editors’ “Avant-propos: Une ‘gloire paisible’” (ibid., pp. 7–16), where Virey is described as speculative, moralizing and increasingly under the influence of the Romantic German “Philosophy of Nature.” Blanckaert, C., “J.-J. Virey, observateur de l’homme (1800–1825).” Ibid., pp. 97–182, calls Virey a “minimal polygenist,” who nevertheless paved the way to more radical views (cf. pp. 104, 106, 110–11, 115 (Virey’s encounter with a young Chinese), 122: “polygénisme minimal,” 148). Cf. Corsi, 1988: 146.

54 Virey, 1824: 429–514, esp. the scheme on p. 438; quotations, p. 460: “leurs traits n’ont pas toute la rudesse des Kalmouks”; p. 462: “tous polygames, doux, timides, mais extrêmement fourbes, trempés et sans foi”; pp. 463–64: “les nations les plus policées de cette partie de l’Asie, et les plus anciennement civilisées; cependant nous les voyons demeurer stationnaires dans un état d’imperfection dont elles ne cherchent point à sortir . . .” Virey was an adherent of the theory of “Oriental despotism” (cf. p. 392). Virey, 1817, can be regarded an important step towards the final views he published in 1824 (cf. pp. 52–81).

were now in a state of “eternal standstill.”⁵⁵ No less important was that Virey’s *Histoire naturelle* seems to have been one of the first scientific works to contain figures of different “types” such as a female Arab and a male Hindu.⁵⁶ This practice became popular not only among anthropologists but even among the authors of children’s books.⁵⁷

By the 1820s, Virey, who could apparently read German quite well and who had not only become a member of French academies and learned societies but also of German ones (and even an American society)⁵⁸ had widened his anthropological scope by publishing a second successful work (also translated into German), entitled *De la femme* (On the woman), dealing with the women of his different races. On the women of the Mongolian race, for example, he writes that they all had “a constantly olive-tinged complexion, black hair . . . , a flat bosom by nature with black nipples, and finally an earlier puberty . . . than the white race . . .”⁵⁹ Nonetheless, differences within them were still claimed to exist. Whereas Chinese women were always reputed to be chaste, their Finnish counterparts had, according to Virey, almost no idea of the value of virginity,

55 Schulin, 1958.

56 Cf. Virey, an 1X-1800/1: illustrations after p. 140. There were, however, precursors for such illustrations in travel writing undertaken with scientific ambitions.

57 Starting in 1790, the Weimar editor Friedrich Justin Bertuch published a picture book for children written in German and French, which was a tremendous success. “By 1830 twelve volumes were published with a total of 1,185 copper-plate engravings . . . the editions were extraordinary large” (Schmidt, 1977: 47). Even the first volume, republished, presumably, in 1795, presents and illustrates some “Asians,” with each illustration showing a man and a woman in their traditional costumes, namely “East Indians,” Siberians, Kalmyks (described as a nomadic Mongolian people with white skin, black hair and a slightly broad face), and Arabs. [Bertuch, F.J.] 1977: 77. In around 1812, Bertuch listed among suitable “sources for engravings” the “customs and costumes of the Chinese, depicted in colorful paintings by the painter Du-Gua-in, Canton. Leipzig, Industrie-Comptoir” (Schmidt 1977: 50: “Gebräuche und Kleidungen der Chinesen, dargestellt in bunten Gemälden von dem Maler Du-Gua-in, Kanton. Leipzig, Industrie-Comptoir”). This means that Bertuch himself had edited an illustrated book on Chinese manners and clothes which he wanted to use for his “Children’s Picture Book.” But the illustrations obviously also provided an impression of the physical appearance of these peoples.

58 Cf. Virey, 1835: title page and 96, n. 1.

59 Virey, 1825: 41: “un teint toujours olivâtre et des cheveux noirs . . . un sein naturellement flasque avec des mamelons noirs, enfin une puberté précoce . . . que dans la race blanche . . .” Cf. kvk.

and in Japan prostitution was allegedly so ordinary “that it seemed to be the first need of the nation.”⁶⁰

The description of the Chinese provided by the next scholar we shall discuss, Jean-Baptiste Bory de Saint-Vincent (1778–1846), was very similar to Virey’s characterization. Bory de Saint-Vincent was a military officer and an explorer, but also, as a naturalist, a member of the Paris Academy of Science, the French Royal Institute and other learned societies. He edited the *Dictionnaire classique d’histoire naturelle* (DCHN; 1822–1831), a rival to Cuvier’s *Dictionnaire des sciences naturelles* (1819–1830), in which Cuvier and Buffon’s adherents, and especially Virey, were often criticized, especially by Étienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire whose 1830 clash with Cuvier within the Paris Academy became the focus of international attention.⁶¹ Like Meiners, the “Linnaean” Bory de Saint-Vincent first differentiated humankind into just two “stems”—one being the “Negroes,” whom he called “Ulotriques” (“Curly-haired”) and the other being “Leiotriques” (“Straight-haired”). This latter category was subdivided into eleven “species” (“espèces”), among which the “Sinic species” was said to live from Honshu and Taiwan to the Himalayas and from Northern China to continental Southeast Asia.

The change from “race” to “species” was made intentionally. Bory de Saint-Vincent believed in different centers and phases of the divine creation of humankind (“genre humain”). Unlike Buffon, he denied that interfertility between, say, Whites and Blacks was proof for their membership in a common species. He maintained that the “Sinic species” originally came from Tibet and had been separated by vast deserts from the Mongols, whom he called the “Scythian species.” He further maintained that the Sinics had descended from their mountainous region of origin and followed the big rivers eastwards and southwards. Only then were the Chinese, as the prototype of this species, forced by conquest and violence to mix with Scythians, “but that purely accidental mélange had scarcely influenced the species . . .” This was why differences remained between the Sinics and the Mongols in both physical (e.g.,

60 Virey, 1825: 41–42, 46, quotation from pp. 43–44: “La prostitution est si vulgaire au Japon, qu’elle semble former le premier besoin de la nation.” Since the most beautiful women could always be found in temperate zones, Virey found them in the Mongolian race in the province of Nanjing and in a certain region of Japan.

61 Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1836: front page: “De l’Académie des Sciences, de l’Institut royal de France, et autres Corps savans . . .” This edition was translated into German under the title: id., *Der Mensch (Homo). Ein zoologischer Versuch über die Menschengattung*. Weimar (Verlag des Landes=Industrie=Comptoires) 1837. Cf. http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Baptiste_Bory_de_Saint-Vincent [Accessed on 30 November 2012]. Ferrière, 2009: 118–123, 132.

height) and cultural aspects. The Sinics were essentially rice-eaters, but never strong drinkers. Their extremely old civilization was, according to Bory de Saint-Vincent, stationary and deeply corrupt. But since the Sinic religions were free from all superstition, pure deism served as the sublime basis of their government.⁶² This last statement may have been adopted from Voltaire.⁶³

A much more neutral view was held by the English adherent, admirer and eventually friend of Blumenbach, James Cowles Prichard.⁶⁴ Although he became a fellow of the Royal Society as well as a corresponding member of the National Institute of France and the French Academy of Medicine, he felt that his doctrines were best received in Germany.⁶⁵ Prichard has been called the founding father of ethnology, since he combined his medical interest in biological anthropology with a stupendous proficiency in languages.⁶⁶ This and an additional distinction relating to the form of the skulls led him to heavily subdivide Blumenbach's races according to linguistic and other physical and non-physical differences.⁶⁷

62 Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1836: 249–262, quotation, p. 249: “Espèce Sinique”; p. 236: “Espèce Scythique”; p. 256: “mais ce mélange purement accidentiel n’a guère influé sur l’espèce . . .”; Ferrière, 2009: 139, 146, 150–63, 195, who stresses the dependency of Bory de Saint-Vincent’s article “Homme” in the *DCHN* on the works of Virey and Desmoulins as well as Bory de Saint-Vincent’s terminological confusion between this article (which appeared in 1825) and its later editions as small books (of which the third edition was identical with the second one published in 1827). This unsteadiness seems to be a result of the partly biological, partly cultural characteristics upon which Bory de Saint-Vincent based his “species.”

63 Cf. Pinot 1932; Guy, 1963.

64 Besides Blumenbach, Prichard’s first relevant book mentions Buffon as a leading naturalist who had studied the nature and causes of physical diversities in humankind. Prichard, 1813: 1.

65 Shortly before his death, Prichard wrote about the Prussian envoy to London, the chevalier Bunsen, to whom he had dedicated the second edition of his *Natural History of Man* in 1842: “. . . one of the chief ornaments of the most learned nation of Europe—a nation among whom my researches have ever been more favourably estimated than among my own utilitarian countrymen. Since my venerable friend Blumenbach (whose views it was my first object to illustrate and extend) finished his earthly career, there is no one to whom I could so rightly as to yourself dedicate the results of studies which you have promoted . . .” Prichard, 1848: v–vi.; *idem.*, 1836–47: here vol. 1, Dedication “To the venerable and universally celebrated Professor Blumenbach . . . by his obliged friend and faithful servant, the Author.”

66 For Prichard, see the seminal work by Augstein, 1999: here p. 4. Prichard not only learned Latin, Greek, French, and German, but also Sanskrit, Hebrew, Arabic, and Celtic languages.

67 Cf. Prichard, 1848: vii: “It is the design of the following work, to furnish for the use of the general readers, a brief and popular view of all the physical characteristics, or variet-

Therefore, in the first edition of his famous *Researches into the Physical History of Man*, Prichard conceded that the Chinese resembled the Manchus, the Tibetans and others physically (see Fig. 3.4). But in spite of the “general characters of these races” Prichard believed that the “more civilized people have a larger stature, a better form and a lighter complexion.” Consequently, the Chinese were said to share “the Mongole [sic] as the common type” to a lesser extent than the Mongols themselves. The outer appearance, however, was not just dependent on adherence to a “race” or a “nation”—Prichard’s terminology varies in this respect. Among the Manchus, and “also among the Japanese [sic], the common people are ugly and ill formed, but the higher rank in Nipon have a fine shape and countenance with European features.”⁶⁸ Prichard, like all the authors we have looked at so far, obviously adhered to the European ideal of beauty even though he, at least, found beautiful women in many parts of the world.⁶⁹

At any rate, Prichard seems to have eventually differentiated between “stock” as a physical category and “race” or “nation” as a cultural category by using an older terminology, viz. a moral one. In the last edition of *Researches* published during his lifetime (1844), he said: “We can hardly venture to describe the Chinese, the Koreans and the Japanese people as belonging to one race or family, because their languages are not known to be referrible [sic] to one original. Yet they are, if we regard their physical characters, one sort or stock of people. No human races bear a stronger resemblance. . . . They all have the same physical type.”⁷⁰ Four years later, and just before his death, he stated in a new edition of his *Natural History of Man* that the Chinese, as “the most numerous and

ies in color, figure, body structure, and likewise of the moral and intellectual peculiarities which distinguish from each other the different races of men.” For further reading, the author refers to “his former extensive researches,” i.e. mainly his *Researches into the Physical History of Man*, the third edition of which was published in five volumes from 1836 to 1847 (ibid.: viii). Idem [1847]: 5–7, where it is said that Blumenbach had overlooked the “form of the bases of the skulls” (p. 6).

68 Prichard, 1813: 536–546, quotations on pp. 545, 544, 546.

69 Demel, 2014: 286–287.

70 Prichard, 1836–47: 518. Cf. Kowner, 2013: 88, who quotes the fourth edition. As early as 1813, Prichard had claimed that the East Asians belonged to “the same type of the human species as the nations of High Asia; but it seems among them to have become softened and mitigated, and to display frequent deviation from the character which, if we believe some travellers, is almost uniform among the Mongoles” (id. 1813: 230). Among these travellers, Prichard mentions Peter Simon Pallas (1741–1811) who had been a member of the Royal Society, alongside Johann Georg Gmelin (1709–1755)—a member of the St. Petersburg Academy. Cf. Müller-Dietz, 1995: 12–22.



FIGURE 3.4 *The races of Asia in Prichard's ethnological map of the continent (1861).*⁷¹

powerful of these [East Asian] nations” appeared “to be one race . . . They speak at least one language, though in a variety of dialects.”⁷² In its profile, “a Chinese skull appears to differ very little from the European type.” In frontal view, the differences seemed to be more marked, but Prichard maintained that none of these outward characteristics were specific: The skulls of a Chinese, a native American and a South African that were “supposed to belong to those varieties of humankind which recede most widely from each other” had “an extraordinary resemblance.”⁷³ Nevertheless, he added, albeit rather cautiously, that all the races living from the mouth of the Ganges to the mouth of the Amur, “give rise to a suspicion that they all belong to one stock.” One reason for Prichard’s terminological and categorical wavering might have been due to the fact that he obviously could not decide which was more telling in cognation: a common language or common features.⁷⁴

71 Prichard, 1861: n.p.

72 Prichard, 1848: 228–229.

73 Prichard, 1848: 235.

74 Prichard, 1848: 228. Prichard apparently looked for examples where both categories led to the same result, for he continues: “. . . these nations appear . . . to have come down, at

While Prichard's position has been described by Hannah Augstein as a mild form of racism,⁷⁵ the age of the Opium Wars and the forced "opening-up" of Japan brought about blatantly radical views about East Asians.⁷⁶ Hereafter, the American physician Samuel George Morton and the Scottish anatomist Robert Knox, as representatives of the so-called "scientific racism," shared the negative opinion of East Asians held by the diplomat and literary figure Arthur (de) Gobineau. Moreover, the image of East Asians became increasingly darkened by more and more negative judgments offered by travellers and missionaries,⁷⁷ and by a new fear of the "yellow peril."⁷⁸ It can thus be said that various directions had been pursued in the "second generation" of modern racial theory-building. In the long run, however, this network of Western naturalists had developed a rather critical image of East Asians, regardless of whether it concerned their outer appearance or their "internal values." This became important in an era in which, as the Scottish anatomist Robert Knox declared in his *Races of Men*, first published in 1850: "... in human history race is everything."⁷⁹

various periods, from the south-eastern border of the Great Plateau; in different parts of which tribes are still recognised who resemble them in features *and* language [my italics]."

- 75 This is, of course, a question of definition. Cf. Kowner & Demel, 2013b: 7; cf. Demel, 2014: 287. Augstein, 1999, stresses that for Prichard, in line with his family tradition as a Quaker, outward peculiarities played a secondary role and that the color of the skin did not eventually serve him as a characteristic trait for racial classification (p. 5). Moreover, "since all human varieties were, as Prichard put it, shading into each other, it was wrong to assert the existence of distinct human races" (p. 138, cf. pp. 70–71, 76, 82, 119, 141–144). Nevertheless, Prichard acknowledged seven "relatively permanent, distinguishable human varieties" (p. 138)—one of which included "Kalmuks, Mongols, and Chinese" (p. 139).
- 76 One of the consequences of these actions was Westerners being assassinated by traditionally-minded samurai. See Schwentker, 2004: 102.
- 77 For German travelogues about China, see Jacobs, 1995: 196.
- 78 Gollwitzer, 1962: 25–26, 38, shows that this fear was originally prevalent among Californian and Australian workers.
- 79 Knox, 1850: 2. According to Osterhammel, 2009: 119–120, several universal racial theories were published after the 1848–9 revolution, among which Knox's and Gobineau's were the most influential.

The ‘Races’ of East Asia in Nineteenth-Century European Encyclopedias

Georg Lehner

Nineteenth-century Europe’s vivid discussions on the classification and thus construction of “races” was not limited to the scientific community but also took place in broader circles. A century earlier, Europe saw the emergence of a wide range of subject dictionaries and encyclopedias. The effects of the Enlightenment led publishers to engage in the preparation and distribution of encyclopedias in order to meet an ever-growing demand for knowledge by an increasing number of educated people.¹ In presenting what they regarded as “useful” knowledge and “reliable” information for an ever-broadening range of users, European encyclopedias also included remarks on the inhabitants of East Asia. Apart from placing East Asians within the racial classifications established by European scholars, encyclopedias also attempted to provide information on the so-called “physical and moral characteristics” of these peoples.² In retrospect, these encyclopedias offer a wealth of information about the European educated public’s knowledge of East Asians and the ways in which the concept of race was promulgated. Moreover, subsequent editions of some encyclopedias as well as an ever-increasing range of general reference works allow us to currently show the degree of persistent change in the information on this subject over the course of the nineteenth century.

This chapter aims to explore the rather neglected field of encyclopedias as a venue for racial constructions. Alongside an overview of the classification of East Asian peoples presented in nineteenth-century general encyclopedias (mostly in the entries on “Asia” as well as those on the various countries of East Asia), the chapter also examines the main sources used by the encyclopedias’ contributors and/or editors in order to provide racial information relating to the various East Asian peoples. Its second part deals with particular classifications and descriptions of the Chinese, Japanese and Koreans in

1 For the history of works of general knowledge in early nineteenth-century Europe, see Lehner, 2011: 60–65.

2 For the history of European classification of East Asian peoples, see Kowner & Demel, 2013b; Demel and Kowner, 2013; Demel, 2013; and Kowner, 2013.

geographical and anthropological sources as well as in travelogues and general encyclopedias which aimed to present information concerning the alleged “national characters” of these peoples. Finally, the chapter surveys the efforts made by various encyclopedias to visualize information on “race” by including plates showing the different “types” of people as well as ethnographic maps.

Classifying the Peoples of Asia

The authors of nineteenth-century encyclopedias were aware that classification was a central aspect of racial constructions, although they did not necessarily refer to mainstream classifications, nor did they agree on the number of races in the world and Asia in particular. In the entry “Asia,” for example, written for the *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste* (General Encyclopedia of Arts and Sciences) published in 1821, Samuel Friedrich Günther Wahl (1760–1834), a professor of Oriental languages at the University of Halle (Prussia), referred to considerable differences between the multitude of peoples located in Asia. He distinguished between indigenous and migrant peoples as well as between nomads and “civilized” peoples (Ger. *Culturvölker*).³ About two decades later, Meyer’s *Großes Conversations-Lexicon* (Great Encyclopedia) introduced three varieties of Asian people, combining the classification (Caucasian, Mongolian, and Malay) suggested by Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752–1840) and the respective ‘sensory hierarchy’ of the natural historian Lorenz Oken (1779–1851), who listed eye-men (i.e. Caucasian); ear-men (i.e. Mongolian); and tongue-men (i.e. Malay).⁴ With regard to languages, this article distinguished between the “artificially structured” languages of Southwest Asia, the polysyllabic languages of Northeast Asia and the monosyllabic languages of Southeast Asia (the latter implicitly but obviously referring to the Chinese language).⁵

Other encyclopedias offered different classifications. The second edition of Pierer’s encyclopedia, for example, provided a classification of most Asian peoples under the headword “Mongols.” It referred to them as “one of the main races of mankind,” mentioned Oken’s classification of the Mongolians

3 *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste* (sect. 1), 1821, VI: 91 (s.v. “Asien”). For a similar division see *Edinburgh Encyclopaedia* (First American ed.), 1832, II: 513 (s.v. “Asia”): “Asia has been divided, with respect to the progress of civilization, into two regions, the civilized, and the barbarous.”

4 On Oken’s theory, see Howes, 2012.

5 Meyer, 1843, IV, 1: 835 f. (s.v. “Asien”).

as “ear-men,” and provided a list of peoples classified as “Mongols” by Western observers, indicating the regions where these peoples lived, but not providing any classification.⁶ In its fourth edition, Pierer reflected the gradual changes that took place with regard to the classification of the peoples of Asia. It mentioned that “quite recently” the Mongols (also named Turanians) had been classified into five major groups.⁷ The tenth (1851) and eleventh (1864) edition of the Brockhaus lexicon, as well as Herder’s *Conversations-Lexikon* (1854–57) provided a division of the peoples of Asia into eight groups—four of which included inhabitants of Northeast, East, and Southeast Asia. According to the Brockhaus, this rather simple scheme was more useful than providing details for all the ethnic groups of Asia. Herder’s *Conversations-Lexikon* noted that this classification could be used according to “recent geographers.”⁸ Larousse’s *Grand Dictionnaire Universel* mentioned four branches of the Mongolian race: the Manchu branch, the Sinic branch (*rameau sinique*, consisting of the Chinese, the Japanese and the Koreans), the Hyperborean branch (peoples living near the Polar regions), and the Caroline branch (*rameau carolin*, including Western Pacific groups).⁹

Spamer’s *Illustrirtes Konversations-Lexikon* (Illustrated encyclopedia) presented another classification in its entry on ethnography. According to “currently predominant ethnological criteria” it grouped all humankind into seven different groups. Three of these groups (v–vii) referred to the peoples of Southeast, East, and Northeast Asia. The Boreal group (v) contained Eskimos, Aleutians, Chukchi people, Ainu etc., while the Turanian group (vi) contained (A) Mongolian people (Tunguses, Tartars and Tibetans) and (B) Turkic people. Finally, the Indo-Chinese group (vii) included (A) Chinese, (B) Annamese as well as Tonkinese, Cochin-Chinese, Cambodians, Miao, (C) Siamese as well as Laotians, Burmese, Peguanese etc., (D) Koreans, and (E) Japanese.¹⁰ Towards the end of the century the classification became more sophisticated. In 1885, the fourth edition of Meyer’s *Konversations-Lexikon* provided two schemes for classifying the peoples of Asia based on linguistic and ethnic criteria. In

6 Pierer, 1843, XIX: 425 f. (s.v. “Mongolen”). For lists of other Asian peoples, see Pierer, 1843, XVIII: 333 (s.v. “Malaïen”).

7 Pierer, 1860, XI: 389 (s.v. “Mongolen”). For lists of other Asian peoples, see Pierer, 1859, x: 770 f. (s.v. “Malaische Völker”).

8 Brockhaus 1851, I: 729 (s.v. “Asien”), id., 1864, II: 220 f. (s.v. “Asien”). Herders *Conversations-Lexikon*, 1854, I: 288 f. (s.v. “Asien”). Earlier, the ninth edition of the Brockhaus 1843, I: 554 f. (s.v. “Asien”) distinguished between only five different groups.

9 Larousse, 1874, XI: 440 (s.v. “Mongol, -e, race”).

10 Spamer, 1874: III: col. 1497 f. (s.v. “Ethnographie”).

an overview of the languages of Asia following the scheme established by the Austrian linguist Friedrich Müller (1834–1898), it distinguished between four main groups. These were North Asians, South Asians, Central or High Asians, and Caucasians, each containing further sub-divisions. As far as ethnic criteria were concerned, the fourth edition of Meyer suggested that the entire population of Asia could be grouped into Caucasians (10 percent), Mongols (North and Central Asians; 70 percent), and Malays (South Asians; 20 percent). Following this general classification, the entry provided short remarks on a wide range of Asian peoples.¹¹

The 1901 edition of *Chambers's Encyclopaedia* also offered a subdivision of the “Mongolian race (Yellow type)” into four “great branches,” each consisting of a great variety of stems (some very numerous, others consisting solely of rapidly disappearing tribes).¹² The above editions of both encyclopedias, Meyer’s *Konversations-Lexikon* and *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, provided linguistic subdivisions based largely on Müller’s scheme and only showing differences in the group of supposedly “monosyllabic languages” (see Table 4.1):

TABLE 4.1 *The languages of Central and East Asia*

Meyer ¹³ (1886)	Chambers ¹⁴ (1901)
[...]	[...]
C. Central or High Asians (“ <i>Mittel- oder Hochasiaten</i> ”)	“Mongolian race (Yellow type)”
I. Ural-Altaiic languages	I. Ural-Altaians, or Finno-Tartars
II. Japanese	II. Japanese
III. Korean	III. Koreans
IV. Monosyllabic languages	IV. Nations speaking monosyllabic languages
(a) Tibetan	(a) Chinese
(b) Languages of the Himalaya region (<i>Himalajasystem</i>)	(b) Tibetans
(c) Burmese	(c) “The Himalayan tribes”
(d) Siamese (Thai)	(d) Burmese

11 Meyer, 1885: I: 925 (s.v. “Asien”).

12 *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, 1901: I: 492 f. (s.v. “Asia”).

13 Meyer 1885, I: 925 (s.v. “Asien”).

14 *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, 1901, I: 492 f. (s.v. “Asia”).

Meyer ¹³ (1886)	Chambers ¹⁴ (1901)
(e) Annamese	(e) Siamese
(f) Languages of the Sifan, Miaotse, Lolo and of other tribes of South China	(f) Annamese
(g) Chinese: 1) Kuanhoa ([guanhua], dialect of Peking and Nanking), 2) Fukien [Fujian], 3) Kuangtung [Guangdong]	(g) “Sifars [<i>sic</i> , should be “Sifan”], Miautse, and several others”

Nineteenth-century encyclopedias tended to place the information on East Asian people under the headwords related to the various countries of that region. The *Grande Encyclopédie*, for example, published in Paris between 1885 and 1902, placed its information on East Asian people under the headword ‘Race’. To facilitate the overview, the author of this entry arranged the information on the peoples of Asia geographically (North Asia, Central Asia, East Asia, Indochina, India, and Western Asia). In his introductory remarks on East Asia, he pointed out that the region is inhabited by Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese—“three nations of mixed origin.”¹⁵

In other encyclopedias, however, a certain degree of information on the various “races of man” located in East Asia could be found in the ‘Geography and Ethnography’ section of the Asia entry. One such example is an entry found in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Its author, Sir Thomas Hungerford Holdich (1843–1929), had served as Superintendent of Frontier Surveys in British India and had published various books on India and Central Asia. In describing the peoples of Asia he wrote as follows:

By far the largest area is occupied by the Mongolian group. These have yellow-brown skins, black eyes and hair, flat noses and oblique eyes. They are short in stature, with little hair on the body and face. In general terms they extend, with modifications of character probably due to admixture with other types and to varying conditions of life, over the whole of northern Asia as far south as the plains bordering the Caspian Sea,

15 *La Grande Encyclopédie*, 1900, XXVIII: 26 (s.v. “Race”).

including Tibet and China, and also over the Indo-Malayan peninsula and Archipelago, excepting Papua and some of the more eastern islands.¹⁶

The Encyclopedias' Main Sources for Remarks on the "Races" of East Asia

Despite their somewhat idiosyncratic and perhaps non-conservative classifications, nineteenth-century encyclopedias tended to rely on information written by leading luminaries of the period. Krünitz's encyclopedia, for example, noted that the races of man follow the classification suggested by Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752–1840), referring by and large to the German translation (published in 1798) of the third edition (1795) of his *De generis humani varietate nativa* (1795).¹⁷ Moreover, following Blumenbach's descriptions, this entry lists a number of classifications that had been developed by the end of the eighteenth century.¹⁸ Although an English edition of *De generis humani varietate nativa* was only published in 1865,¹⁹ Blumenbach's work also served as the source for Rees's *Cyclopaedia*: Thus, the information on Blumenbach's classification may be seen as an example of the transnational dissemination of general knowledge. Under the headword 'Man,' Rees's *Cyclopaedia* presents the details of the five "principal classes" described by Blumenbach, including "2. Yellow or olive (*gilvus seu buxeus*, a middle tint between that of wheat and the boiled quince or dried lemon peel) which characterizes the Mongolian tribes, usually called, together with the inhabitants of great part of Asia, Tartars."²⁰ Relying on Blumenbach, Rees's *Cyclopaedia* presented the following summary of the "Mongolian Variety":

Olive colour, black, straight, strong, and thin hair, scarcely ever curled; head of a square form; broad and flattened face, with the features running together; the glabella (interval between the eye-brows) flat and very broad; nose small and flat; rounded cheeks projecting externally; narrow and linear aperture of the eye-lids; eyes placed very obliquely; slight pro-

16 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., vol. 2, p. 748 (s.v. "Asia," T.H.H.).

17 See the reference in Krünitz 1802, LXXXVIII: 426 (s.v. "Mensch") and the presentation of Blumenbach's classification in *ibid.*, 535–547.

18 *Ibid.*, 547–551 (s.v. "Mensch").

19 Kroke 2010: 22.

20 Rees: *Cyclopaedia*, 1802–20, XXI: [fol. Uu3v] (s.v. "Man").

jection of the chin; large ears, thick lips. The stature, particularly in the countries near the North pole, is below that of the Europeans.²¹

Blumenbach remained a primary source for encyclopedias long after his death. As late as the 1860s, when the eleventh edition of Brockhaus was published, Blumenbach's classification was still an important source of information on the subject. Classifications of skull forms are mentioned as a new "scientific principle" introduced by Anders Adolf Retzius (1796–1860) and further developed by other scholars.²² In the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor (1832–1917) pointed out that "Blumenbach's division, though published nearly a century ago (1781), has had the greatest influence."²³ The differences in classification between Blumenbach and Georges Cuvier (1769–1832) respectively are dealt with in the *Iconographic Encyclopaedia* as follows: "The five races of Blumenbach are termed by him: Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, Malay, and American. Cuvier refers the Malay race to the Ethiopian, and the American to the Mongolian, leaving only the Caucasian, Mongolian, and Ethiopian."²⁴

After these enumerations the author not only presents eleven races—a classification (with the four main groups: White, Brown, Blackish-brown, Black) taken from Charles Pickering's (1805–1878) work *The Races of Man*, but also refers to Robert Gordon Latham's *Natural History of the Varieties of Man* (1850).²⁵ As proof that neither the number of 'races' nor their classification seem to be fixed, Meyer's *Conversations-Lexicon* outlined the classification given by Jean Baptiste Bory de Saint Vincent (1780–1846). After a short presentation of Bory's "Homo scythicus" (including Turcomans, Kirgiz, Aleutians, Tartars, Calmucks, Mongols, and Manchu), it referred to the "Homo sinicus" (including the inhabitants of Korea, Japan, China, Tonkin, Cochinchina, Siam and Burma). It points out that the latter group ("Homo sinicus") had often been confused with the former one.²⁶

The persistence of certain classifications notwithstanding, some encyclopedias did refer to recent developments. A case in point is the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* which referred to an article written by Thomas

21 Rees: *Cyclopaedia*, vol. 22 [fol. Zz3v] (s.v. "Man").

22 Brockhaus, 1868, x: 105 (s.v. "Mensch (naturgeschichtlich)").

23 *Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1875–1901, II: 113 (s.v. "Anthropology. III. Races of Mankind").

24 *Iconographic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 2 (1851) 708.

25 *Iconographic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 2 (1851) 708.

26 Meyer, 1850, xv: 1163 (s.v. "Homo").

Henry Huxley (1825–1895) and published in the *Journal of the Ethnological Society* in 1870.²⁷ Huxley's article, the *Britannica* entry ("Anthropology") noted,

probably approaches more nearly than any other to such a tentative classification as may be accepted in definition of the principal varieties of mankind, regarded from a zoological point of view, though anthropologists may be disposed to erect into separate races several of his widely-differing sub-races. He distinguished four principal types of mankind, the Australoid, Negroid, Mongoloid, and Xanthochroic, adding a fifth variety, the Melanochroic.²⁸

Encyclopedias also enumerated the criteria upon which the main attempts to classify the varieties of man were based. If we compare the entries in Larousse's *Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIX^e siècle*,²⁹ the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*,³⁰ the second edition of the *Iconographic Encyclopaedia*, and the 1901 edition of *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, it becomes possible to group these criteria, which Tylor (in the *Britannica*) referred to as "the best-marked race-characters" (see Table 4.2):

TABLE 4.2 *The main criteria used for classifying the varieties of man*

<i>Encyclopaedia Britannica</i> (9th ed.) ([1875–1889] 1901)	<i>Grand Dictionnaire Universel</i> (1875)	<i>Iconographic Encyclopaedia</i> (1885)	<i>Chambers's Encyclopaedia</i> (1901)
–	–	Location (1)	–
Color of the skin (1)	Skin color (4)	Skin (2)	Color and character of skin (1)
Hair (2)	Hair (5)	Hair (3)	Hair and beard (2)
Skull (4)	Form of the skull (1)	Skull (4)	Skull and face (3)
Language (6)	Language (6)	Language (5)	Language (6)
–	–	Social organization (6)	–
Physical capabilities (5)	Muscularity (3)	–	–

27 See Huxley, 1870.

28 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1875–1901, II: 113 (s.v. "Anthropology").

29 *Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIX^e siècle*, 1875, XIII: 597 f. (s.v. "Race").

30 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1875–1901, II: 113 (s.v. "Anthropology").

<i>Encyclopaedia Britannica</i> (9th ed.) ([1875–1889] 1901)	<i>Grand Dictionnaire Universel</i> (1875)	<i>Iconographic Encyclopaedia</i> (1885)	<i>Chambers's Encyclopaedia</i> (1901)
Stature (3)	Skeleton and stature (2)	–	Stature (4)
–	–	–	Temperament (5)
–	–	–	Religion (7)

In 1908, the unsigned entry *Menschenrassen* (races of man) published in the sixth edition of Meyer's *Konversations-Lexikon* relied heavily on the system of classification established by the French anthropologist Joseph Deniker (1852–1918).³¹ In an explanatory overview, the encyclopedia reproduces Deniker's division of Asians. He distinguished between Northern and Southern Mongolians, with the former including Manchu, Tungus, and Japanese, and the latter comprising Chinese, Tibetans, Burmese, and Siamese. For each of the two groups, the entry presents its supposed physical characteristics (stature, skin color, skull, and face).³² Certain encyclopedias seem to have preferred field anthropologists as a source rather than “armchair” theoreticians. For instance, the article on Japan included in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* refers to the work of Erwin Baelz (1849–1913), “emeritus professor of medicine at the Imperial University of Tōkyō” as the “most exhaustive anthropological study of the Japanese.” The article then presents his classification of the “sub-divisions of the race inhabiting the Japanese islands.”³³ Baelz' works on the Japanese also had been used by the authors of the *Grande Encyclopédie* for the entry on “race.”³⁴ Apart from Baelz, the “anthropology and ethnography” section of the *Grande Encyclopédie's* entry on Japan also mentions the work of “modern authors.” It also refers to publications by Friedrich Karl Wilhelm Doenitz (1838–1912, who taught anatomy in Japan between 1873–1876), Otto Gottlieb Mohnike (1814–1887, who resided in Dejima between 1848 and 1851), Philipp

31 English edition: Deniker 1900. For East Asia see *ibid.*, 384–391. Deniker also wrote the entry “Ethnographie, Ethnologie” [i.e. ethnography, ethnology] for *La Grande Encyclopédie*, 1892, XVI; 647–649.

32 Meyer, 1908, XIII: table “Übersicht der Menschenrassen und Völkerschaften.” See Deniker: *Races*, 293.

33 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1910/11, XV: 165 (s.v. “Japan”).

34 *La Grande Encyclopédie*, 1899, XXVIII: 24 (s.v. “Race”).

Franz von Siebold, Léon Metchnikoff (1838–1888) (the author of *L'Empire japonais*, 1881), and a certain Magé.³⁵

This pattern of relying on a larger number of sources, and notably the field reports of anthropologists, is found in other encyclopedias published during the *fin de siècle*. In his presentation of the ethnography of Korea prepared for the *Grande Encyclopédie*, Sigismond Zaborowski (1851–1928) relied on Louis Léon de Rosny's (1837–1914) *Les Coréens, aperçu ethnographique et historique* (1886).³⁶ In the ethnography section of its article on "China," the *Grande Encyclopédie* mainly presents information on the non-Han peoples of China after providing a cross reference to the article on "Asia" (written by Joseph Deniker) for information on the anthropology of China and the Chinese.³⁷ Of the six works mentioned by Deniker in the bibliography for this section, three were published in the first half of the nineteenth century (Julius Klaproth's (1783–1835) *Asia polyglotta* (1823) and his *Tableaux historiques de l'Asie* (1826), as well as the volumes on Asia in the second edition of Carl Ritter's (1779–1859) *Erdkunde* (1830s). Three others appeared in the latter half of the century: Émile Cartailhac's (1845–1921) *L'Age de la pierre en Asie* (1878), Julien Girard de Rialle's (1841–1904) *Les peuples de l'Asie et de l'Europe* (1885) as well as an ethnographic map of Asia published by the Austrian cartographer Vinzenz von Haardt (1843–1914) in 1887.³⁸

Chinese, Japanese and Koreans: Descriptions of East Asian Peoples

Detailed descriptions of East Asians are usually found in entries on the individual countries. Although the entry on China was traditionally the longest and most detailed, nineteenth-century encyclopedias also devoted increasingly longer entries to Japan and Korea. The following section examines descriptions of the peoples of East Asia in their respective entries.

Chinese

In 1854, the Geography section of the *English Cyclopaedia* presented the following description of the Chinese:

35 *La Grande Encyclopédie*, 1895, XXI: 22 (s.v. "Japon"). For the representation of Japan in France between the years 1868 to 1940 see Yamasaki 2011.

36 *La Grande Encyclopédie*, 1891, XII: 961 (s.v. "Corée").

37 *La Grande Encyclopédie*, 1890, XI: 89 (s.v. "Chine").

38 *La Grande Encyclopédie*, 1887, IV: 118 f. (s.v. "Asie. V. Anthropologie et Ethnographie"), for China see *ibid.*, 122. For the bibliography see *ibid.*, p. 136.

Though the Chinese are allied to the Mongols in the general cast of their features, the harsher points of the Mongols are in the Chinese softened down considerably: in the thickness of the lips, the Chinese in some degrees approaches, but by no means equals, the Negro, nor is that feature at all so prominent; the nose is flattened, and the nostril expanded in the Chinese, but not to the same extent as in the African: there is the same lank, black, and shining hair in the case of the Chinese as in that of the North American Indians; the same obliquity of the eyes and eyebrows, turned upwards at the outer extremities, and a corresponding thinness and tufty growth of beard.³⁹

The above description is typical of encyclopedias in the first half of the nineteenth century. In the latter half, entries tended to be more elaborate. Perhaps the most extensive section on the “races of China” that can be found in nineteenth-century European encyclopedias is the one in Balfour’s *Cyclopaedia of India and of Eastern and Southern Asia* (1885). This section starts with remarks on three “great races in the empire” (Chinese, Mongols, Manchu) and points out that these “nations” would “differ very considerably in their physical character, although much mixture has taken place.” In the north it is possible to find “a fundamental tendency to an Iranian modification of the Turanian type.” In this article, the Northern Chinese are compared to inhabitants of other regions: “The dominant or northern Chinese race is much less Mongolian than the S. Chinese, the Malay, and most of the intermediate ultra-Indian races.”⁴⁰ The fourth edition of Meyer’s *Konversations-Lexikon* (1885) refers to the great differences between the Chinese: according to their physical structure, the Northern Chinese would be the strongest, the inhabitants of Central China would be the most skilled, and the Southern Chinese would be the crudest.⁴¹

We find various notes and divergent views concerning the Chinese complexion as late as the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Balfour’s *Cyclopaedia* states that the “predominating colour of the skin of the Chinese is yellow; but yellow, brown, and sometimes a maroon tint occur.”⁴² The 1901 edition of *Chambers’s Encyclopaedia* contained a note stating that the “complexion of the Chinese inclines to yellow—is, as they say themselves, of ‘the colour of the olive.’”⁴³ Under the headword ‘Race,’ the *Grande Encyclopédie* (1900) dealt with

39 *English Cyclopaedia*, section “Geography,” vol. 2 (1854) col. 474 f. (s.v. “China”).

40 Balfour, 1885, I: 685 (s.v. “China”).

41 Meyer, 1885, I: 926 (s.v. “Asien”).

42 Balfour, 1885, I: 686: (s.v. “China”).

43 *Chambers’s Encyclopaedia*, 1901, III: 189 (s.v. “China”).

the probable origin of the Chinese and pointed out some distinct diversities between the inhabitants of Northern and Southern China.⁴⁴ In its eleventh edition, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* contained the following description:

Ethnologically the Chinese are classed among the Mongolian races (in which division the Manchus are also included), although they present many marked contrasts to the Mongols. The Tatars, Tibetans, Burmese, Shans, Manchu and other races—including the Arab and Japanese—have mingled with the indigenous population to form the Chinese type, while aboriginal tribes still resist the pressure of absorption by the dominant race. [...] The Chinese are in fact ethnically a very mixed people, and the pure Mongol type is uncommon among them. Moreover, natives of different provinces still present striking contrasts one to another, and their common culture is probably the strongest national link.⁴⁵

Japanese

In 1850, Meyer's *Conversations-Lexicon* pointed out that according to their "physical characteristics," the Japanese are similar to the Chinese.⁴⁶ The article on Japan in the tenth edition of the Brockhaus encyclopedia was published in 1853—the same year in which Commodore Perry went to the Japanese islands for the first time. Concerning the population of Japan, it related that apart from a few Ainu and Manchu, both living in the northern islands, it consists of Japanese which would have descended from crossings of the Ainu and the Mongolian race.⁴⁷ In later editions of the Brockhaus, the information on the ethnic situation of Japan increases considerably. In the fourteenth edition, we read that apart from Hokkaido, the Kuril Islands, and the Ryukyu Islands, the indigenous population of Japan "consists of one of the most homogeneous and least-mixed peoples on earth." The Japanese formed part of the Turanian or Mongolian group of peoples and were very likely to have migrated to the Japanese islands in prehistoric times.⁴⁸

In 1910, the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* reflected the changes in the descriptions of non-European people that had mainly taken place during the second half of the nineteenth century. Relatively detailed presentations of physical characteristics illustrate the main features supposedly peculiar to the Japanese:

44 *La Grande Encyclopédie*, 1900, XXVIII: 24 (s.v. "Race").

45 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., vol. 6, p. 174 (s.v. "China").

46 Meyer, 1850, XVI: 1171 (s.v. "Japan").

47 Brockhaus, 1853, VIII: 418 f. (s.v. "Japan"); Pierer, 1859, VIII: 743 (s.v. "Japan").

48 Brockhaus, 14th ed., vol. 9, p. 857 (s.v. "Japan").

The best authorities are agreed that the Japanese people do not differ physically from their Korean and Chinese neighbours as much as the inhabitants of northern Europe differ from those of southern Europe. It is true that the Japanese are shorter in stature than either the Chinese or the Koreans. [...] Yet in other physical characteristics the Japanese, the Koreans and the Chinese resemble each other so closely that, under similar conditions as to costume and coiffure, no appreciable difference is apparent.⁴⁹

Koreans

European encyclopedias were the least familiar with the Koreans. In the 1830s, the *Penny Cyclopaedia* mentioned the inhabitants of the Korean Peninsula at least twice: While the entry "Asia" refers to them as "a separate nation, which many centuries ago inhabited the mountain-range which forms the northern boundary of the peninsula, and then were called Siänpi [Xianbei]," the entry "Corea" points out that the Koreans "are of the Mongol race, resemble the Chinese and Japanese, but they are taller and stouter. Among them are some whose appearance seems to indicate a different origin."⁵⁰ By 1850, general encyclopedias added information on the geography and ethnography of Korea but also on its supposed national character. In Meyer's *Conversations-Lexikon*, for example, we read: "Concerning their character, Koreans are judged quite differently, partly slavish, treacherous, and licentious, partly just distrustful, but honest and modest. The courteousness, observed by Hall on his encounter with a nobleman, had not been reported by Egor Fedorovich Timkovskii (1790–1875). The latter refers to the Koreans as simple in communication. Moreover, exhilaration and loyalty are seen as pre-eminent traits of their character."⁵¹ This short description, published in 1851 in Meyer's *Conversations-Lexikon*, is based on the two most important early-nineteenth century Western sources on Korea: an *Account of a voyage of discovery to the Western coast of Corea and the Great Loochoo Island* (1818) published by Basil Hall (1788–1844) of the British Royal Navy and Timkovskii's observations of his stay at Beijing in 1820–21. In the *Grande Encyclopédie* we read that the Koreans probably descend from a "mixture" (*mélange*) of Tungusic, Indonesian, and Japanese elements.⁵²

In the 1880s, one of the last published volumes of the huge but incomplete *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste* (General Encyclopedia of Arts and Sciences) presented the Koreans in a different manner: "Like the

49 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., vol. 15 (1910) 164 f. (s.v. "Japan").

50 *Penny Cyclopaedia*, 1834, II: 475 (s.v. "Asia") and *ibid.*, vol. 8 (1837) 8 (s.v. "Corea").

51 Meyer, 1851, XVIII: 1149 (s.v. "Korea").

52 *La Grande Encyclopédie*, 1900, XXVIII: 24 (s.v. "Race").

Japanese and the Chinese, the Koreans belong to the Mongolian race, according to physiology and language more related to the Japanese." Concerning the Korean language, the entry refers to William Dwight Whitney's (1827–1894) *Language and Study of Language* (1867), where the Japanese are said to have most likely emigrated from Korea. After information on the Korean language we read that the Koreans have a "light yellow complexion" (*Hautfarbe von lichtem Gelb*) and that there is "a great variety of forms of skulls and facial features of the Mongolian type but approaching the Caucasian type: almost European physiognomy with light brown hair and blue eyes."⁵³ The eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* offered another view of the ethnography of Korea:

The origin of the Korean people is unknown. They are of the Mongol family; their language belongs to the so-called Turanian group, is polysyllabic [...]. The Koreans are distinct from both Chinese and Japanese in physiognomy, though dark straight hair, dark oblique eyes, and a tinge of bronze in the skin are always present. The cheek-bones are high; the nose inclined to flatness; the mouth thin-lipped and refined among patricians, and wide and full-lipped among plebeians; the ears are small, and the brow fairly well developed. The expression indicates quick intelligence rather than force and mental calibre.⁵⁴

Stereotypes of East Asians in General Knowledge

In the wake of the Chinese fiasco in the Opium Wars and with the concurrent crystallization of scientific racism, European encyclopedias echoed, if not helped to shape, a rapid deterioration in the images of East Asians. In the early- and mid-nineteenth century German encyclopedias we find enumerations of stereotypes concerning the national character of East Asian people. During the 1830s and 1840s, English, French, and German encyclopedias presented lists of the alleged positive and negative features of the Chinese national character. The seventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* listed the following advantageous features of the supposed national character of the Chinese: honoring one's parents, sober and industrious. Moreover, the entry stressed their "exactness and punctuality," their "mild and affable manner," and that a

53 *Allgemeine Encyklopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*, 1886 II/XXXIX: 56 (s.v. "Korea," E. Kaufmann). See Whitney 1867: 328 f.

54 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., vol. 15 (1910) 909 (s.v. "Korea").

Chinese is “obeying the commands of his superior.” On the other hand, the Chinese were also described as cold, cunning, distrustful, covetous, deceitful, dastardly, quarrelsome, vindictive, and timid.⁵⁵ In the second half of the nineteenth century, encyclopedias were still presenting enumerations of supposed attributes, occasionally accompanied by remarks on regional or social differences (see Table 4.3).⁵⁶

TABLE 4.3 *Attributes related to the supposed national character of the Chinese*

Herder (1857)	Spamer (1874)	Meyer (1888)	Brockhaus (1894)	Chambers's Encyclopaedia (1901)
–	smart	–	–	–
earns and saves with virtuosity	bright	–	–	–
–	cautious	–	–	–
–	–	modest	–	temperate
industrious	–	industrious	industriousness	industrious
–	–	–	–	cheerful
–	–	–	frugality	easily contented
–	–	indifference	–	–
–	–	oriented to the purpose	–	–
–	–	national consciousness	–	–
–	passion for gambling	–	–	addicted to gambling
–	–	–	–	mendacity
–	–	–	–	larceny
cowardly	cowardly	–	–	–
–	deceitful	–	–	–
dishonest	intriguing	–	–	–
persevering	–	–	–	–

55 See the table in Lehner 2011: 138.

56 The data in Table 4.3 are based on Herder, vol. 2, p. 88, Spamer, vol. 3, col. 288 (s.v. “China”), Meyer, 4th ed. (1885–1892) vol. 4, p. 6 (s.v. “China”), Brockhaus, 14th ed., vol. 4, p. 194 (s.v. “China”), *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, (1901), vol. 3, p. 189.

TABLE 4.3 *Attributes related to the supposed national character of the Chinese (cont.)*

Herder (1857)	Spamer (1874)	Meyer (1888)	Brockhaus (1894)	Chambers's Encyclopaedia (1901)
unusual	–	–	–	–
mechanical skill				
whimsical	–	–	–	–
cruel	–	–	–	–
voluptuous	–	–	–	–

In *Chambers's Cyclopaedia* (1901 edition), the famous translator of the Confucian classics, James Legge (1815–1897), who had spent three decades in China, mostly in Hong Kong, offered his insights on the “Chinese character”: “Many of them are so; and where is the country where there are not many such? The longer one lives among them, however, the better he likes them, and the better he thinks of them.”⁵⁷ A few encyclopedias even offered some regional characterization. In the fourth edition of Meyer's encyclopedia (1886), for example, the following regional differences in the supposed character of the Chinese are pointed out:

Throughout the eastern provinces and in Central China a refined etiquette can be found. The inhabitants of South China show intrusiveness and unkindliness, those of Western China are said to be on a low intellectual level and to have bad manners. These differences also may be seen in the treatment of Europeans, which is sometimes good, sometimes bad. The educated are ill-disposed against Europeans. Disloyalty and roguishness are common to all Chinese dealing with Europeans.⁵⁸

The encyclopedias established a similar list of typical traits for the Japanese (see Table 4.4). Some encyclopedias did not hesitate to compare the Japanese to the Chinese, something Jesuit writers had already done as early as the sixteenth century. The *Penny Cyclopaedia* (1839), for example, compared the two peoples as follows:

⁵⁷ *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, 1901, III: 189 (s.v. “China,” J. Legge).

⁵⁸ Meyer, 1886, IV: 6 (s.v. “China”).

All travellers who have been acquainted with both nations prefer the Japanese to the Chinese. They find them less cowardly, proud, cunning, and deceitful, and of a more manly and open character. In cleanliness and industry both nations are equal. The Japanese show a great desire of knowledge, and their institutions for instructing the lower classes seem not to be inferior to any of the globe."⁵⁹

The second edition of the *Iconographic Encyclopaedia* adds the following to its enumeration of characteristic traits of the Japanese: "Their speech also is a varied one, owing to the different modes of address used to equals or to inferiors and among the different classes."⁶⁰

In the third edition of his *Cyclopaedia of India and of Eastern and Southern Asia* (1885), Edward Balfour also included a description of the physical and moral character of the Japanese: "The race are gentle, kind to one another and to animals, but insincere, and personal gain overrides all other thoughts. [. . .] Their greatest failings are licentiousness and untruthfulness."⁶¹ The fourth edition of Meyer's *Konversations-Lexikon* states that in moral characteristics, the Japanese would differ considerably from all other East Asian peoples.⁶² The fourteenth edition of the Brockhaus points out that the Japanese are—unlike the Chinese—extremely capable of adopting foreign learning.⁶³ In the 1901 edition of *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, a "Professor Dixon"—i.e. James Main Dixon (1856–1933)—from Tokyo presents some alleged traits of the Japanese national character and adds that: "It is only when matters have become intolerable that discipline is enforced by the use of Draconian measures. An utter lack of chivalry towards women is an unpleasing feature of the national life. Civic courage has also to be developed."⁶⁴ As far as the alleged "national character" of the Koreans is concerned, the encyclopedias provided no lists as they did for the Chinese and the Japanese. Most encyclopedias contain only short remarks. The fourteenth edition of the Brockhaus, for example, refers to a "certain energy and intelligence, likely to be a consequence of the admixture of various tribes."⁶⁵

59 *Penny Cyclopaedia*, 1839, XIII: 93 (s.v. "Japan").

60 *Iconographic Encyclopaedia*, 1886, I: 265.

61 Balfour, 1885, II: 417 (s.v. "Japan").

62 Meyer, 1887, IX: 159 (s.v. "Japan").

63 Brockhaus, 1894, IX: 858 (s.v. "Japan").

64 *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, 1901, VI: 285 (s.v. "Japan," Dixon).

65 Brockhaus, 1894, X: 629 (s.v. "Korea").

TABLE 4.4 *Attributes related to the national character of the Japanese*⁶⁶

Pierer 1843 and 1859	Larousse: <i>Grand Dictionnaire Universel</i> (1873)	<i>Iconographic Encyclopaedia</i> (1886)	Meyer (1887 and 1905)	<i>Chambers's Encyclopaedia</i> (1901)
friendly	–	pleasant to deal with	friendly	kindly
civilized	–	–	human conduct	courteous
perhaps the most educated people of East Asia	intelligence	capabilities are excellent	well-developed strive for education	good manners and artistic culture widespread
industrious	–	active and industrious	–	–
polite	exquisite politeness	–	polite	–
honest	–	not dishonorable	–	law-abiding
temperate	gentleness	–	–	frugal
proud	–	–	–	a high sense of personal honor
impassionate	–	–	–	–
men highly voluptuous	–	–	–	utter lack of chivalry towards women
cruel against enemies	–	–	–	–
distrustful	–	–	–	–
very superstitious	–	–	–	–
reserved against foreigners	–	–	patriotism	ardent patriotic spirit

66 Data in Table 4.4 are based on Pierer, 1843 (2nd ed.), xv: 46 (s.v. "Japan"), id. 1859 (4th ed.), viii: 743 (s.v. "Japan"), Larousse: *Grand Dictionnaire Universel*, ix: 898 (s.v. "Japon"), *Iconographic Encyclopaedia*, 1886, i: 265, Meyer, 1887, ix: 159 (s.v. "Japan") and id. 1905 (6th ed.), x: 178 (s.v. "Japan"), *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, 1901, vi: 285 (s.v. "Japan").

Pierer 1843 and 1859	Larousse: <i>Grand Dictionnaire Universel</i> (1873)	<i>Iconographic Encyclopaedia</i> (1886)	Meyer (1887 and 1905)	<i>Chambers's Encyclopaedia</i> (1901)
–	joyful humor with a tendency towards amusement	merry and open-hearted	–	–
–	–	brave and noble	–	–
–	–	–	cleanliness and decency	cleanly in their habits
–	–	–	–	frugal
–	–	–	tendency towards superficiality	deficient in moral earnestness and courage, which leads to corruption in social life
–	–	–	cheerful family life	–
–	–	–	regard for the beautiful nature	–
–	–	–	lack of endurance	–

Visual Representations of Race in Works of General Knowledge

Visual depictions of people played a major role in shaping racial images during the nineteenth century. Encyclopedias were a leading vehicle for the dissemination of these images as they increasingly used illustrations, often in color, or even photographs to illustrate ethnographic entries. In its introductory section on the peoples of modern Asia (*“Peuples actuels de l’Asie”*) the *Grande Encyclopédie*, for example, presented two tables showing the way in which “the groups of peoples may be arranged”: a linguistic classification as well as a classification based on physical characteristics (hair).⁶⁷ Under the headword

67 *La Grande Encyclopédie*, 1887, IV: 119 (s.v. “Asie. VI. Anthropologie et Ethnographie”).

'Ethnology,' *Chambers's Encyclopaedia* provides a "Table of the chief characteristics of the Three Fundamental Human Types" following "a grouping again adopted by Professor [William Henry] Flower [(1831–1899)]" in 1885. Augustus Henry Keane (1833–1912), the author of the entry, had been very conscious of the difficulties involved in placing the whole range of ethnic groups into three groups: "The ideal homo Aethiopicus, Mongolicus, and Caucasicus must therefore be constructed, so to say, by a sort of eclectic process, by selecting and grouping together the more salient features assumed to be characteristic of each." In his table, Keane grouped the alleged "characteristics" into seven categories:

Colour and character of skin: Yellowish, passing into olive, and almost every shade of brown; rough in texture; often with a faded, washed out look.

Hair and beard: Dull black, coarse, lank, lusterless, sometimes (in America) very long; round in section; moustache developed; beard scant or absent.

Skull and face: Skull mainly brachycephalic (round, but never quite circular); mesognathous jaw; large cheek-bone; narrow, almond-shaped, black eye, slightly oblique; very small concave nose; features generally broad and flat, something hatchet-shaped.

Stature: Generally short, rather below the average, 5 feet to 4 feet 6 or 7 inches; but American branch often very tall; heavy, squat, angular frame, especially on the uplands (Tibet, Bolivia).

Temperament: Sluggish, somewhat morose and taciturn; hence passive, with little initiative, but with great power of endurance, and subject at times to vehement outbursts; science slightly, art and letters moderately developed.

Language. Some isolating and uninflected, with tendency to monosyllabism and tone; some agglutinating, mostly with postfixes and vowel harmony; some polysynthetic; abstract terms numerous.

Religion. Polytheistic; spirit-worship (Animism); belief in dreams and visions (Shamanism); also Buddhism."⁶⁸

Spamer's *Illustrirtes Konversations-Lexikon* displays its illustrations within the text but also on separate plates. These illustrations—which also convey attitudes towards non-European people—are provided in the entries on China (four plates and nine illustrations) and Japan (two plates and several illustra-

68 *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, 1901, IV: 442 (s. v. 'Ethnology').

tions) but not for Korea.⁶⁹ The headword 'Asia' provides further visual representations of Asian peoples (plates XIX–XXII and illustrations no. 871–897).⁷⁰ Apart from a Caucasian, a girl from Kashmir and an "indigenous" Indian we find a picture of a Chinese as representing the "Mongol type."⁷¹

The Anthropology and Ethnology volume of the second edition of the *Iconographic Encyclopaedia* has a frontispiece showing five men representing the five "sub-species of mankind": African, Mongolian, Oceanic, American, and—at the center of the plate—Indo-European.⁷² As the title of this encyclopedia suggests, the volume presents a huge number of plates in order to illustrate its anthropological and ethnographical descriptions. As far as East Asia is concerned, Plate 1 ("Anthropology") shows the eyes of a Japanese (no. 1), a Korean (no. 2) and a Chinese (no. 3), as well as the "foot of a Chinese woman" (no. 5). Plate 2 ("Crania") shows a Tartar skull (no. 10). Twenty-seven additional plates present visual information on Mongolians (pl. 54–80), a group further divided into Indo-Chinese (pl. 54–61), Ural-Japanese (pl. 62–67), Ural-Altaiacs (pl. 68–74) and Isolated North Asiatics (pl. 75–80).⁷³

The fourth edition of the Meyer and the fourteenth edition of the Brockhaus illustrate information on anthropology and ethnology by providing plates showing the various peoples who inhabit the globe. The plate in Meyer presents thirty-three portraits ("*Asiatische Völker*"), among them an Ainu (no. 3), a Tatar (no. 7), a Tungus (no. 11), a Japanese man (no. 13) and a Japanese woman (no. 14), a Korean (no. 15), and a Chinese (no. 17).⁷⁴ The plate in the fourteenth edition of the Brockhaus presents twenty-five portraits ("*Asiatische Völkertypen*"), among which are a Mongol (no. 3), a Tungus (Chapogir) woman (no. 6), a Tibetan (no. 8), a Chinese woman (no. 9) and a Chinese man (no. 10), a Japanese man (no. 21) and a Japanese woman (no. 22), as well as a man from the Ryukyu islands (no. 23), a Korean (no. 24), and an Ainu (no. 25).⁷⁵ Both illustrations were the work of Gustav Mützel (1839–1893), who had been illustrating the most renowned German-language encyclopedias since the 1870s and is

69 Spamer, 1874, III: col. 283–299 (s.v. "China" and plates XL–XLIII), *ibid.*, 1876, v: col. 247–256 (s.v. "Japan" and plates LXIX–LXX) and *ibid.*, col. 922–924 (s.v. "Korea").

70 Spamer, 1870, I: col. 1085–1111 (s.v. "Asien").

71 *Ibid.*, col. 1103–1104 (s.v. "Asien"): "Nr. 884. Typus der Mongolen (Chinese)."

72 *Iconographic Encyclopaedia*, 1886, I.—"Oceanic" has been used to refer to the Malay peoples at least as early as the mid-nineteenth century, see e.g., Pierer, 4th ed., vol. 10 (1859), 770 (s.v. "Malaische Völker").

73 *Iconographic Encyclopaedia*, 1886, I: 403–405.

74 Meyer, 1885, I: plate "Asiatische Völker" [i.e. peoples of Asia].

75 Brockhaus, 1892, I: between 984 and 985 ("Asiatische Völkertypen").



FIGURE 4.1 *The peoples of Asia in Brockhaus (1892).*

COURTESY OF THE AUSTRIAN NATIONAL LIBRARY, VIENNA.⁷⁶

best known for his illustrations in *Brehms Thierleben* (English title: *Brehm's Life of Animals*)—an outstanding encyclopedia of zoology.

The first half of the nineteenth-century also saw the emergence of ethnographic maps. Such maps showing the main ethnic groups of Asia first were first produced during the 1840s. Very early specimens of this type of map were prepared by James Cowles Prichard (1786–1848)⁷⁷ and Heinrich Berghaus (1797–1884)⁷⁸ respectively. Both works used a variety of color shades, showing the Chinese, for example, in greyish-blue (Prichard, 1861 edition) and light

76 Brockhaus, 1892, I: plate “Asiatische Völkertypen.” ÖNB Vienna 60407-C.1.

77 Six ethnographical maps: illustrating “The natural history of man,” and “Researches into the physical history of mankind.” First edition in 1843. (digitized: <http://dhayton.haverford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/prichardasia.jpg> (2012/7/19). For a digitized edition of the second edition (1861) of these maps see <http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/9880vq97z> (2012/7/19).

78 Berghaus, 1848. For a digital copy of the second (and improved) edition of Berghaus's *Physikalischer Atlas* (1852) see <http://pds.lib.harvard.edu/pds/view/8071752> (2012/7/20), sequence 457: “Die Völker Asien's und Eüropa's [sic].” For Berghaus and his maps see Petermann, 2004: 422 f.



FIGURE 4.2 *The peoples of Asia in Meyer (1885).*

COURTESY OF THE AUSTRIAN NATIONAL LIBRARY, VIENNA.⁷⁹

green (Berghaus, 1852 edition). In the fourth edition of Meyer's *Konversations-Lexikon*, an ethnographic map shows the distribution of the human races. The map presents three main groups as follows: blue shades represent the "Caucasian race," yellow and red shades the "Mongolian race," and brown and brown-black shades the "Negroid race." In its visualization of the "Mongolian race," the map used four different shades of yellow in order to distinguish between Northern Mongols, Chinese and Indo-Chinese; Japanese and Koreans and Tibetans (with the latter three also referred to as Southern Mongols), and six different shades of red for Malays, Polynesians, Māori, Micronesians, Inuit ('Eskimo'), and Americans.⁸⁰

Alongside its entry on human races (*Menschenrassen*), the fourteenth edition of the Brockhaus also presents a map showing the "distribution of human races" according to the systems established by the aforementioned linguist and

79 Meyer, 1885 [1889], I: plate "Asiatische Völker." ÖNB Vienna 94285-C.1.

80 Meyer, 1888, XI: map between pp. 476 and 477. Also reproduced in id., 1908, XIII.



FIGURE 4.3 *Ethnographic map of the world in Meyer (1888).*

COURTESY OF THE AUSTRIAN NATIONAL LIBRARY, VIENNA.⁸¹

ethnologist Friedrich Müller (1834–1898) and the German geographer Oscar Peschel (1826–1875). This map shows East Asia at the center and presents Müller’s Mongolian race in yellow (Müller distinguished between Mongolians, Malays, Americans and Hyperboreans, while Peschel classified all four groups as Mongolians).⁸² While it presented maps illustrating the political division, physical geography, and ethnography of Africa (“*Völkerkarte*”), the fourteenth edition of the Brockhaus did not contain an ethnographic map of Asia.⁸³ The Italian *Lexicon Vallardi* also presents an ethnographic map of Asia. This black-

81 Meyer, 1888, XI: plate “Ethnographische Karte.” ÖNB Vienna 60407-C.11.

82 Map “Die Verbreitung der Menschenrassen nach F. Müller und O. Peschel.” In: Brockhaus, 14th ed., vol. 11, between pp. 776 and 777 (s.v. “Menschenrassen”). See Müller 1873: 335–409 (“Mongolen” [i.e. Mongols]) and Peschel 1874: 369–482 (“Mongolenähnliche Völker,” i.e. on “Mongol-like peoples”). For differences between Müller and Peschel in classifying East Asian peoples see also Meyer, 1888, XI: 748 (s.v. “Mongolen”).

83 See the index to the first volume of the fourteenth edition of Brockhaus.

and-white map distinguishes between ten different groups of peoples including "Japanese and Coreans" (no. 4) and Chinese (no. 8).⁸⁴

Concluding Remarks

In accordance with their aim of presenting reliable information in a comprehensive but condensed manner, nineteenth-century general encyclopedias made use of the then prevailing schemes established for classifying the supposed races of humankind. In their entries on Asia, some encyclopedias presented lengthy enumerations of the peoples of Asia and their supposed relationships. This information reflected the developments in the classifications of peoples and languages and the dissemination of certain scholarly publications used as sources in works of general knowledge. It was in this manner that encyclopedias played a crucial role in summarizing and disseminating information on racial theories and in popularizing knowledge on East Asian peoples throughout the nineteenth century.

No less important was the role encyclopedias played in disseminating visual representations of Asians. To visualize information, nineteenth-century encyclopedias increasingly made use of plates, tables and illustrations. Among these, the tables compared the supposed characteristics of different races and the plates displayed portraits of various Asian peoples, the material culture of East Asia and ethnographic maps of Asia. These methods were also used in order to place East Asians within the various classifications of races circulating around nineteenth-century Europe. The encyclopedias were also used to inform their readers about (supposed) physical and moral characteristics of East Asians. In providing this information, encyclopedias also indicated the prevalence of certain stereotypes relating to the supposed good and bad traits prevalent among Westerners with regard to the supposed national character of the Chinese and Japanese. Altogether, encyclopedias combined the information found in travelogues with the data from the emerging disciplines of anthropology and ethnology. This combination and condensation of different approaches in works of general knowledge reveals not only the multitude of nineteenth-century anthropological classifications of humankind but also the diffusion of stereotypes and prejudices based on a wide range of European eyewitness accounts.

84 *Lexicon Vallardi*, 1887–1901, I: 998, Fig. 1011 (s.v. "Asia").

The Racial Image of the Japanese in the Western Press Published in Japan, 1861–1881

Olavi K. Fält

The early part of the Meiji period is looked upon as a time when Japan, for reasons of its own security, attempted to adopt the fruits of Western culture in as short a time as possible. An advanced East Asian culture was borrowing from a Western culture that was itself far more confident than at any time before of its own superiority over all others. The group of Westerners who probably felt the impact of this collision and interaction most intimately, especially since it impinged on their own interests, was the Western community actually living in Japan. Their views were best represented by the newspapers and magazines published by them and for them. This chapter examines the racial image of the Japanese as reflected by these newspapers and magazines. The scope of the investigation is restricted to the crucial period of the initial encounter ranging from the publication of the first Western newspaper in Japan in 1861 to 1881. These two decades can be regarded as marking the culmination of the early reform period, embodied in the Imperial Rescript of autumn 1881, in which the country was promised its own constitution.¹

Background

The emergence in Asia of a Western press, and above all an English-language press, may be seen as one aspect of the British imperial expansion and of the

1 The research is based on the following newspapers and magazines: the *Japan Herald*, 1861; the *Japan Daily Herald*, 1874–1881 (Yokohama); the *Japan Times*, 1865–1866 (Yokohama), the *Japan Gazette*, 1874–1881 (Yokohama); the *Japan Weekly Mail*, 1872–1881 (Yokohama); the *Far East*, 1870–1877 (Yokohama); the *Tokei Journal*, 1874–1875 (Tokyo); and the *Tokyo Times* 1877–1880 (Tokyo). Hachirō Ebihara (1934: 279–281) notes that 34 foreign journals of greater or lesser duration were published during the period 1861–1881, of which 31 could perhaps be counted as newspapers or magazines of one kind or another. For further elaboration on these newspapers and their general image of contemporary Japan, see Fält, 1990.

practice of Christian missionary work.² It was nevertheless the opinion of Harry Wildes that the early foreign press in Japan set out above all to satisfy the tremendous thirst for information on this exotic country and its fascinating people.³ The *Japan Herald* defined its aims in 1861 as being to meet the rapidly increasing demand for knowledge about Japan in England and other parts of the world.⁴ The English-language press in East Asia played a significant role in the shaping of international perceptions of Japan and East Asia.⁵ The present-day English-language press in Japan is regarded as providing one of the best sources of material for studying the country. It has been referred to as a mirror of society, which reflects with greater or lesser accuracy the various aspects of Japanese life, society, culture, economics, politics and so on. Above all, the large foreign readership means that it is more inclined to discuss relations between Japan and the outside world than newspapers intended entirely for domestic consumption.⁶ At the same time, however, the English-language press has been regarded as a significant factor in the creation and maintenance of Japan's external image.⁷ With certain reservations, this state of affairs can also be said to have occurred with regard to the papers established between 1861 and 1881 by the Westerners living in Japan.

The pioneer of the Western press in Japan was an Englishman named Albert W. Hansard, who had been a businessman in New Zealand and may well have gained his experience in the newspaper world there. He began to publish a twice-weekly newspaper in Nagasaki on 22 June 1861 under the title *The Nagasaki Shipping List and Advertiser*. This publication was relatively short-lived, however, due to its small readership. Hansard moved to Yokohama, where he published the first issue of a new paper, the *Japan Herald*, on 23 November 1861.⁸ Two other significant contributors to the early history of Western journalism in Japan were the Scot John Reddie Black and the British-Australian journalist John Henry Brooke. Black had come to Japan at the end of 1863 from Australia, to which he had emigrated in 1854, and Brooke arrived in 1867, also from Australia. At first Black was involved in the operation of the *Herald*, but

2 Lee, 1971: 13. For the emergence of Christian missions in late-nineteenth-century Japan, see Ion, 2009. For a recent overview of the early years of the periodical press in treaty-port Japan, see Munson, 2013.

3 Wildes, 1927: 260.

4 *The Japan Herald*, 23 November 1861.

5 O'Connor, 2010: 1.

6 Hasekawa, 1977.

7 May, 1982: 4.

8 Fox, 1969: 416–418; Fält, 1990: 14; Hoare, 1994: 142.

in 1867 he founded a new paper, the *Japan Gazette*. At the same time Brooke gained possession of the *Herald*, which under his watch (until 1902) was usually quite critical of the Japanese government. Black left the *Gazette* in 1870 or 1874, leaving its operation to be continued by James Raymond Anglin and William Henry Talbot. The *Gazette's* policy has been described as initially constructively critical, but from 1877 onwards its critical attitude towards the Japanese government could be even be compared to that of the *Herald*.⁹

From 1865 to 1869 Anglin and Talbot had been involved in the publication of the *Japan Times*, which was considered an opponent of the Tokugawa regime. The paper's most significant backer had been Charles D. Rickerby. The paper began to appear in 1870 as the *Japan Mail*. After some changes in ownership, the paper was managed until 1877 by W.G. Howell, perhaps the most significant person of his time in the history of East Asian journalism. Howell published a great deal of material produced for the readership by the Japanese government, while reserving the freedom to express his own opinions. After Howell the paper underwent several changes in ownership and policy, but from 1881 onwards it was owned by Francis Brinkley, under whom the paper expressed quite a positive attitude towards the policies of the Japanese government. In all, at the time the *Mail* was Japan's best known Western newspaper.¹⁰

In 1870, Black founded the *Far East Magazine*, which was known for its literary style, elegant appearance and abundant photos. The magazine appeared regularly until 1875. From 1874 to 1875, Black also published Tokyo's first English-language newspaper, the *Tokei Journal*. The short life of the paper may have been due to the fact that Black took a job with the Japanese government. American journalist Edward H. House also published the *Tokyo Times* in Tokyo from 1877 to 1880. House was an experienced journalist, considered by Brinkley the sharpest representative of East Asian journalism. House was also thought to have received financial support from the Japanese government. The paper's policy was to promote Japan's development and understand its culture.¹¹

The Oldest People on Earth

The general image of Japan that prevailed in the mid-nineteenth century West, when relations began, was a highly exotic one. Japan was admired, for example, in artistic circles and elsewhere as a land of exquisite beauty as far as both

9 Fox, 1969: 418–429; Fält, 1990: 15–17; Hoare, 1994: 150–151.

10 Fox, 1969: 422–433; Fält, 1990: 17–20; Hoare, 1994: 151–158.

11 Fox, 1969: 434–436; Fält, 1990: 21–23; Huffman, 2003: 117–151; Hoare, 1994: 160, 162–163.

its natural scenery and its man-made landscape were concerned.¹² The image of the Japanese in Western papers published in Japan in the middle of the 1860s was, however, somewhat equivocal. They were referred to at one point as “this primitive yet highly civilized people”¹³ and, though the country was even referred to at times as “the Paradise of the Pacific,” this did not mean it was above criticism. From the commercial point of view it was foreseen that she could become the Venice of the Pacific, a mediator between Europe and China, even though at that stage the country was regarded as backward¹⁴ and the Japanese themselves as rather primitive people.¹⁵

The projected image of Japan arose very largely out of its creators' self-interest and outlook on the world. The *Japan Times* did not make any attempt to deny that it had a clear viewpoint of its own, but even emphasized the fact and stressed its Englishness: “We write in general—in an English newspaper, necessarily from an English point of view.”¹⁶ Still, this did not prevent the paper from praising the Japanese people, their friendliness to foreigners and their desire to learn as much from them as they were able to teach, particularly when compared with the Chinese, whose hostility was looked on as senseless and whose resistance to reform was viewed as complacent stupidity. This was an opinion which fostered the interest of the Western residents of Yokohama, since, alongside the enthusiasm shown by the Japanese, it also emphasized the frenzied activity going on in the young settlement itself.¹⁷ This does not mean that there was nothing about the Japanese to complain about.

The inefficiency and untrustworthiness of Japanese servants was a particular source of dissatisfaction and, although Westerners had come up against similar problems everywhere in the East, they seemed to be particularly accentuated here. The blame was not placed on the Japanese, however, whose own families were harmonious and homes clean and tidy, but on the Westerners themselves, who, the *Japan Times* argued, should pay more attention to their servants' interests and to their comfort and well-being, an attitude which would pay dividends, since the Japanese were not an ungrateful race like the Chinese.¹⁸ Thus the “golden land of Japan” tradition of Marco Polo lived on

12 Lehmann, 1978: 68–96; Fält 1997: 68–69.

13 *The Japan Times*, 20 October 1865.

14 *The Japan Times*, 12 December 1866.

15 *The Japan Times*, 26 January 1866.

16 *The Japan Times*, 5 January 1866.

17 *The Japan Times*, 5 January 1866.

18 *The Japan Times*, 9 March 1866.

in the Yokohama press, which still insisted that Japan was in some way better than other non-Western countries.¹⁹ From the paper's point of view, and that of the Westerners in general, Japan took a new step forward in May 1866, when the shogunate issued a decree permitting Japanese citizens to travel abroad. This was taken as an important sign of a liberal, pragmatic policy on the part of the government, and the *Japan Times* believed that it would improve the reputation of the Japanese government in the civilized world and show that the country was moving forward in the march of nations.²⁰

This decision inspired the paper to see in the Japanese many "characteristics of the sovereign Aryan race," and also raised the status of the shogunate in the paper's estimation.²¹ Praise for Japan continued to pour from its pages. The Japanese were exalted as one of the oldest peoples on earth: "The Japanese nation, in fact, has probably a better claim than any other race, save the Arab and the Jew, to call itself autochthonous,"²² and their development was regarded as having been spontaneous and original: "... that the development of its character, the creation of its civilization and the organization of its polity have been all innate, spontaneous and original, without help from without in the form of either education, suggestion or comparison."²³ Referring to the astounding effects which the freedom to travel would have in Japan, the paper emphasized that the Japanese race should be valued very highly in ethnological terms: "... the necessity of giving to the Japanese race its proper—and, as we think, an exceedingly high—ethnological position. The nations of the old world, more particularly the irresistible Anglo-Saxon-Scandinavian race, are too prone to underestimate orientals."²⁴

The Japanese were described as a noble race, which had created a civilization for itself, so that there was no cause for looking down on them. If the British treated them wrongly, they would be forsaking a unique opportunity to spread the principles of religious, political and commercial freedom of which they were so proud and the dissemination of which they regarded as their particular task. Linked with this hope was the expectation that one day Japan would become one of the major naval powers in the world, so it was desirable that Britain should help to build up its fleet and then enter into a pact with it

19 Fält, 1997: 68.

20 *The Japan Times*, 30 May 1866, 2nd Edition.

21 *The Japan Times*, 2 June 1866.

22 *The Japan Times*, 16 June 1866.

23 *The Japan Times*, 16 June 1866.

24 *The Japan Times*, 16 June 1866.

in the face of the Russian threat in the Pacific. The paper saw the opening up of Japan as one of the major achievements of the century, on account of which the promotion of its development should be a matter of duty and honor for all other civilized societies.²⁵

The Shining Japanese Race

In 1868, after the Meiji Restoration, the *Far East* may be counted among the publications that looked favorably upon Japan and the Japanese. Particularly insofar as its comparisons of the Japanese and their desire to adopt Western civilization²⁶ with the attitudes of other Asians, and notably the Chinese was concerned, its praise for them was unceasing.²⁷ They were described as quick, high-spirited and chivalrous, and although they were said to have their faults, they were the first nation of East Asia to attempt to achieve equality with Western countries. The tone adopted by this magazine may be explained in part by its avowed aim to convey a favorable impression of the country in order to foster goodwill and brotherhood between the outside world and the subjects of this, "the oldest imperial dynasty" in the world. How it went about this may be appreciated from the following eulogistic quotation from May 1870:

Of the nobles, the instincts are noble. The gentlemen are courteous, but independent. The common people, down to the mere laborers, are strong, cheerful and open-hearted. As to the softer sex, they compare favorably with their sisters in other lands. In no class do we see the rough and savage nature as it is too frequently exhibited by some of our own countrymen.²⁸

In spite of all its praise, the *Japan Weekly Mail* saw in 1873 much in the Japanese character that it did not rate very highly:

The lightness of character, the want of fixity of purpose, the devotion to the pleasure of the moment, the fickleness, the absence of a serious conception of life and its duties, of the relations of government to those

25 *The Japan Times*, 16 June 1866.

26 *The Far East*, 17 October 1870: 1–3.

27 *The Far East*, 16 December 1870: 2.

28 *The Far East*, 30 May 1870: 1–2.

whom they guide and control—qualities which are painfully observable in the Japanese character.²⁹

There is a religious motive behind this comment, since the paper maintained that Japanese Christians do not possess these undesirable qualities. The article called for a “moral reformation in Japan,”³⁰ evidently on the principles of Christian morality. In another comparison, of Japanese and Western students, the paper’s outlook was not dominated by a Christian viewpoint but probably by a general assessment of the Japanese character. They were praised for their enthusiasm, sharpness of mind, politeness and sincerity, and were regarded as being ahead of their European counterparts in the respect they showed for their superiors and their obedience, courtesy and self-control. On the other hand, they were no match for the Europeans in matters of passion, vitality and manly independence. The paper regarded them as the equals of Westerners in intellectual skills and general capability.³¹ The *Japan Weekly Mail* came to a similar conclusion when considering the position of Japanese women in relation to their counterparts in other countries. The status of women in Japanese society was regarded as good compared with their status among other Asian peoples. Japanese women were better educated and were allowed more freedom, and this meant they had greater self-confidence and dignity. The paper regarded them as being on par with their sisters in the West in matters of bearing and etiquette and quite unrivalled in their awareness of the duties and decorum appropriate to their sex and in the care and devotion which they lavished on their children. Particular attention was drawn to the obedience they showed to their parents, husbands and elder sons. In these things the Japanese women could be set up as an ideal:

If unvarying obedience, acquiescence, submission, the utter absorption of her personality into that of her husband, constitute the ideal of the perfect, then the Japanese married woman approaches so near that ideal as to be practically perfect, and in this respect is, as foreign women will cheerfully grant, unquestionably superior to the women of Western nations.³²

29 “Notes of the week.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 20 September 1873.

30 “Notes of the week.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 20 September 1873.

31 “Education in Japan III.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 13 December 1873.

32 “Education in Japan IV. Female education.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 7 February 1874.

Western women were considered supreme in intelligence, while on the moral level there was little to choose between them.³³ Although the education received by women was admittedly very much better in Japan than in other Asian countries, the *Japan Weekly Mail* still hoped for an improvement in this respect. It was of the opinion that the new civilization would never truly take root until it had been planted and nurtured in people's homes, which required advances in the education of women of the same kind as were being planned for men.³⁴

Although much was said in praise of Japanese women in this article, it did not set out to describe an ideal, as was so often the case at that time.³⁵ Emphasis was placed on their obedience, but it was not seen as an inevitably good point. It is worth noting that "foreign women will cheerfully grant" implies that the obedience of Japanese women was superior.³⁶ In general, the image created by the *Japan Weekly Mail* was a shining one, an image of a country that was regarded as being infinitely superior to any other Eastern nation and even comparable with some of those in Europe:

We can only say that the Japanese have, up to the present time, shown a marvelous aptitude, as compared with other oriental nations, for adapting themselves to European civilization; they may so far compare very favorably in this respect—due regard to their circumstances being shown—even with more than one people in Europe.³⁷

Weak and Inferior Race

As we have seen, the newspapers of the beginning of the decade created a highly favorable impression of Japan, and the picture they conveyed of its people and the Japanese race was very much in accordance with this. In addition, the *Japan Gazette*, owning itself to be an admirer of Japan at the end of 1875, referred to the Japanese in glowing terms as "kind, hospitable, generous, apt, industrious, intelligent, pliable, courteous, good humored,"³⁸ although the same paper had been more critical some time earlier when talking about

33 "Education in Japan iv. Female education." *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 7 February 1874.

34 "Education in Japan iv. Female education." *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 7 February 1874.

35 Lehmann, 1978: 87; Yokoyama, 1982: 47–48.

36 Yokoyama, 1982: 47–48.

37 "1873." *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 23 January 1874.

38 *The Japan Gazette*, 18 December 1875.

their predilections for bribery³⁹ and plagiarism.⁴⁰ The worst fault of all, naturally, when looked upon from a Western point of view, was nevertheless their ungratefulness, particularly towards foreigners. The newspaper pointed out that Japan's future development and affluence depended on dealings with Europeans, as the Japanese themselves recognized, although they were still not prepared to acknowledge their indebtedness to the Westerners.⁴¹ However, returning to the question of Japanese character in April 1877, the paper does not view them in such an exceptionally favorable light as it did previously. It rejected Japanese claims that foreigners were brutal and wild and that the English were impolite by comparison with the Japanese, poorer in terms of mental qualities and lacking in respect for their elders.⁴² Apart from the need to defend its own culture, the newspaper's opinion also shows that life in Japan was gradually becoming more humdrum in the eyes of the foreigners who had settled there. Some of the early admiration for the exotic had begun to fade.

In 1874, the *Japan Daily Herald* went against the Japanese, criticizing them for their fickleness,⁴³ cowardice, cruelty⁴⁴ and ingratitude. At the same time it lashed out against what it saw as superficial and ignorant foreign writers whose words of praise had enabled the Japanese to gain many advantages from a good international reputation, and expected to see changes for the worst in the existing friendly attitude towards Japan in the world at large as time went on,⁴⁵ although without explaining in so many words why this should be. Quite typical of the confidence which the paper placed in the Japanese is the comment: "Our belief is greater in the protection of the Snider rifle and the British bayonet than in Japanese honor, respect of treaty rights, or Japanese forbearance."⁴⁶ Its opinion was that the Japanese authorities from the highest rank to the very lowest were incapable of carrying out the work expected of them and simply crumbled when faced with it.⁴⁷ Thus, when it became known at the beginning of 1875 that the last foreign troops to be stationed in Yokohama were to depart, the paper hoped that a voluntary militia could be set up in their place. It regarded the idea of stationing Japanese troops in the vicinity to guarantee

39 *The Japan Gazette*, 26 August 1874.

40 *The Japan Gazette*, 7 May 1874.

41 *The Japan Gazette*, 18 December 1875.

42 "The Kai Sei Gakko." *The Japan Gazette*, 3 April 1877.

43 "The Expedition to Formosa." *The Japan Daily Herald*, 11 April 1874.

44 "The police outrages at the British legation in Tokyo." *The Japan Daily Herald*, 9 May 1874.

45 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 21 May 1874.

46 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 20 July 1874.

47 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 29 July 1874.

the security of the Western community as quite impossible, partly because it looked on the local military as inclined towards “drunkenness, insubordination and insolence.”⁴⁸

The *Japan Daily Herald* regarded the reforms that had been undertaken from 1870 onwards as “ill-considered, violent and premature,”⁴⁹ and went on in the same vein to regret that the Japanese had forsaken everything that was typical of their own culture in order to adopt that of the West.⁵⁰ It referred to the people who believed in this path for Japanese civilization as ill-informed” and “sanguine.”⁵¹ In view of the newspaper’s critical tone, it is quite understandable that it could not accept in any shape or form the views expressed in an article by a Mr. Fredric Marshall, who objected to Britain’s policy towards weaker nations. The *Japan Daily Herald* saw no reason for complaining that Japan had been forced against its own will to sign the agreements that had brought it into the family of nations, and in spite of this membership in the family of nations, the paper could not agree with Mr. Marshall that Japan had any right to a position of equality with the more powerful and more civilized peoples of the world. It could merely promise that “Should this country ever reach the elevation attained by the West, she will not then be affronted by any denial of her claims.”⁵²

The paper went on to emphasize strongly the need for hard work, patience and less haste in the Japanese reform effort. Rome was not built in a day, and neither Japan nor any other nation could be allowed to progress in one leap from “semi-barbarism” to “the height of civilization.” It called on the country’s leaders to curb their impatience and moderate their ambitious aims.⁵³ The *Japan Weekly Mail* also blamed certain Western contributors for pursuing their own ends when referring to the Japanese as the noblest and most intelligent race on earth, one superior to the monarchists of Europe and the republicans of the New World, and for claiming that the Westerners were trying to destroy the Japanese and their moral code because they could not achieve equality with them.⁵⁴ On another occasion, however, the paper was prepared to admit that the fault lay in the general Western attitude towards the Japanese and

48 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 26 January 1875.

49 “Wanted, patriotic and able statesmen for Japan.” *The Japan Daily Herald*, 27 April 1874.

50 “Mossman’s New Japan.” *The Japan Daily Herald*, 29 April 1874.

51 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 4 August 1874.

52 “A Fortnightly Reviewer Reviewed.” *The Japan Daily Herald*, 5 September 1874.

53 “A Fortnightly Reviewer Reviewed.” *The Japan Daily Herald*, 5 September 1874.

54 “Bunkum.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 22 August 1874.

to observe that it was the condescending approach of the foreigners to their efforts to adopt Western influences that had aroused enmity in them.⁵⁵

The *Tokei Journal*, published for the first time in May 1874, as if attempting to take a conciliatory view of the whole matter, regarded the cultural differences as so great that it was impossible to make an honest comparison between the Europeans and Japanese. It would be better to compare the Japanese with other Asians—the Chinese, for example. The paper looked upon Japan as the most progressive nation in the East and noted that the Japanese were not as bad by comparison with Westerners as the latter were wont to claim. In order to promote intercourse between Westerners and Japanese, it recommended that both should try to learn more about the other, about their good points, their language, their entertainments, their literature, etc.⁵⁶

The *Japan Weekly Mail* continued its criticism by criticizing the Japanese authorities for going against the suggestions of their foreign advisers: “The moral we have always preached in connection with other works in this country, where the money spent has been out of all proportion to the results produced, . . . the Japanese are too prone to get an adviser, ask his advice, and refuse to take it.”⁵⁷ However, the newspaper regarded the Japanese postal system as so efficient by August 1875 that the government could well begin to discuss postal agreements with European countries, which had up to that time organized their mail services to Japan via the French and British post offices.⁵⁸ It was prepared to make this proposal in spite of its opinion that “the oriental mind moves in a plane different from and lower than that of the Christian nations. Its sense of public duty is not the same.”⁵⁹

Although the paper reckoned that Japan was capable of running its own post office, it did not blame either France or Britain for failing to hand over postal responsibility to the Japanese. The cautious approach of the British was, it believed, a manifestation of their country’s special status in general and its particular task in the Far East: “It is England for the most part which has to do the unpleasant and invidious task in the East of paring down oriental illusions to Western common sense and practical everyday working bearings . . .”⁶⁰ The *Japan Weekly Mail* expressed surprise at the slowness of the Japanese in

55 “The assassination of Mr. Haber.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 29 August 1874.

56 “Are the Japanese companionable?” *The Tokei Journal*, 16 May 1874.

57 “The *Kaitakusi*.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 27 February 1875.

58 “Notes of the week.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 14 August 1875; “Postal treaties.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 21 August 1875.

59 “Notes of the week.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 28 August 1875.

60 “Fourth report of the postmaster general.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 22 January 1876.

carrying out the construction of railway lines, since a densely populated country should in principle be excellently placed to maintain a railway system. It was inclined to compare Japan with more sparsely populated lands such as New Zealand, Australia and Southern Africa (the Cape), where everything possible was being done to extend the railway network. Again the paper revealed its Europe-centered view of the world very clearly: "It is true that they are peopled by a more enterprising, vigorous, industrious and commercial race."⁶¹

Westernization was the most important thing of all, and at that stage, in October 1875, the *Japan Weekly Mail* laid little store upon Japanism and Japanese culture. It regarded the concept of *Le Japonisme* that had grown up in France, and within which Japanese culture was admired as "delicious" and "singular," as something of an aberration, and tried to counter this with the claim that there was nothing unique about the culture. Its poetry did not contain a single refined thought, its theatrical performances were so "obscene" and "disgusting" that it was better not to mention them at all, Japanese pictures were thoroughly lacking in precision when it came to portraying the human figure, they had scarcely any school of sculpture to speak of, and it was idle to make out that they had reached anything like the height of perfection in their porcelain or metal work. All in all, the paper looked upon the praise expressed for things Japanese as a mere travesty of the significance and value of words.⁶² According to the *Japan Weekly Mail*, a further danger lay in the entertaining of expectations and aims which were impossible and unrealistic for a weak and inferior race:

The Japanese have not the vital force, the muscle, bone, sinew, fire, energy and manly independence of the Anglo-Saxon, and they cannot compete successfully with nations endowed with the superior stamina which is due to long, continued progress as well as to race. How can they imagine for a moment that in the course of a few years they have reached the elevation which other countries have attained only after centuries of toil?⁶³

The paper reckoned that Japan could aspire to European standards in only about four to five generations' time, the duration being dependent precisely on the acquisition of the spirit of this civilization. The material, external aspects, even those produced by a genetically higher race, could be assimilated by any

61 "Railways." *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 25 November 1876.

62 "Notes of the week." *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 2 October 1875.

63 "Progress in Japan." *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 5 August 1876.

other race within a relatively short period of time.⁶⁴ Arguing from the point of view of the genetically higher race and an exponent of the British-centered outlook on the world, the newspaper deemed the notion of Japan as the Britain of the Far East to be unrealistic. While Great Britain was the center of the civilized part of the universe, Japan occupied a more or less isolated position on the periphery, which meant that it could scarcely ever hope to carry much weight with the ruling countries of the world. Its future was to be seen in agriculture. In other words, “we do not regard this country as possessing the elements of either great wealth or great power.”⁶⁵ The *Tokyo Times*, which began publication in 1877 and remained in the memory of subsequent generations as a friend and defender of Japan, took a sympathetic view of the Japanese and their culture in its articles. It criticized Westerners for making sweeping generalizations in their writings about Asians, and resented the use of the term ‘Asiatic’ as a generalized pejorative epithet for the peoples of Asia, who after all accounted numerically for about two-thirds of the world’s population.⁶⁶

Where the *Japan Daily Herald* and the *Japan Weekly Mail* criticized foreigners for their praise of Japan based on superficial evidence, the *Tokyo Times* criticized local unfavorable opinions. It regarded the foreign criticism voiced in Japan as inherently hostile in character and that voiced from outside Japan as friendly. It praised the American press in particular on this score, but also mentioned that the British press was beginning to treat Japan with increasing politeness and respect. In contrast, it could see the Western papers within Japan itself as unconsciously stirring up an atmosphere of suspicion and defiance between that country and Britain.⁶⁷ A good example of the approach taken by the *Tokyo Times* was an article dealing with the excellence of Japanese children, which emphasized the encouraging atmosphere created in Japanese homes and the trust which grew up between the older and younger generations as decisive factors in promoting positive growth and good behavior.⁶⁸

Praising the Endeavors of a Poor Race

At the end of the 1870s and the beginning of the 1880s the *Japan Daily Herald*, in its references to Japanese culture and civilization, was apt to lay stress on the

64 “The future of Japan.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 4 August 1877.

65 “The future of Japan.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 4 August 1877.

66 “Unmeaning generalization.” *The Tokyo Times*, 28 April 1877.

67 “Here and There.” *The Tokyo Times*, 4 August 1877.

68 “The Youth of Japan.” *The Tokyo Times*, 6 October 1877.

value of the country's traditional arts,⁶⁹ the perhaps excessive diligence of its students⁷⁰ and the high standard of the teaching given,⁷¹ even if the latter was regarded as particularly demanding and severe.⁷² The Japanese were regarded as an advanced people in this respect by comparison with the Chinese and Koreans.⁷³ These favorable aspects were then balanced against certain less desirable features to which the paper drew attention, such as the survival of the tradition of avenging murder with murder,⁷⁴ and above all the high mortality and morbidity figures, for which it blamed the inefficient drainage system, inadequate ventilation, unsuitable food, general disregard for sanitary precautions and ignorance in the use of medicines.⁷⁵ In spite of these drawbacks, the *Japan Daily Herald* evidently felt Japan was an exceedingly interesting country, and one about which, as it noted, more had been written in the West over the last fifteen years or so than about any other country in the world.⁷⁶ The *Japan Gazette* was also critical of health conditions in Japan,⁷⁷ but praised the government's attempts at developing schools, reminding it at the same time of the importance of physical education, exercise and games as a counterbalance to intellectual work.⁷⁸ The country was an example to others as far as the cheapness and superb quality of its education was concerned.⁷⁹ This meant, in effect, that Japan had, in Western opinion, progressed so far in one of the fields looked upon as being of prime importance in terms of modernization that it could be considered exemplary, which was in turn a tribute to its zeal and alacrity. Taken as a whole, the newspaper's comments tended to look favorably upon the country's endeavors in this sphere.

The *Japan Weekly Mail* claimed, based on the amount of attention paid to hygiene and health care, that in this physical respect the Japanese were a "poor race," largely due to the unsuitability of their food, including raw or semi-raw fish and vegetables rendered hard and indigestible by salting. Their cleanliness was also a dubious matter, and their standards of hygiene in general left much

69 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 12 November 1878.

70 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 29 March 1879.

71 "The Agricultural College, Komaba, Tokyo." *The Japan Daily Herald*, 5 April 1879.

72 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 15 January 1881.

73 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 11 August 1880.

74 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 18 December 1880.

75 *The Japan Daily Herald*, 19 June 1880; *The Japan Daily Herald*, 18 February 1881.

76 "A progressive Japan. A Review." *The Japan Daily Herald*, 3 December 1878.

77 "Sanitation." *The Japan Gazette*, 14 August 1879.

78 "Education in Japan." *The Japan Gazette*, 20 February 1878.

79 "Tokyo Daigaku." *The Japan Gazette*, 2 July 1881.

to be desired, e.g., the lack of ventilation in their houses, especially at night, the meager protection against cold and draughts, their use of coal for heating and the lamentable condition of their drains and sewers.⁸⁰ In contrast, and to some extent at odds with the above, the paper praised the care of the sick in Japan, which had a total of 159 hospitals in 1877:⁸¹ “In no country in the world today are more stringent measures adopted than those which are enforced at least in this part of Japan.”⁸² One fact which testifies to the respect in which the paper held Japanese hospitals was its hope that advances could be made in diet, furnishing and staffing to the extent that foreigners could avail themselves of the high quality treatment provided in them.⁸³ At the end of the 1870s and the beginning of the 1880s the dominant feature in Japanese internal affairs was the campaign by the opposition for the creation of a National Assembly. All the newspapers studied here were in favor of this in principle, with differences emerging largely on account of the fact that not all of them regarded the country and the people as being mature enough for such a step.

The *Japan Daily Herald*, for example, was apt to look at the matter from a conservative rather than a strictly liberal political viewpoint. It believed that the electors and the representatives chosen by them were not ready for a fully progressive system, and thus recommended a model in which the administration and members elected by it should be guaranteed a majority. This would grant the government a certain amount of constitutional protection against any semi-revolutionary aggression on the part of a “purely popular assembly.” Although the newspaper looked upon a progressive assembly as a means by which the demands of the masses could be made known, discussions could be held on the actions of the government and the country could gradually move from despotism to freedom, it stated in a rather exaggerated Western fashion that it did not consider such an institution entirely feasible in the East:

... or at least such a matter of the latter [freedom] as an Oriental race may ultimately attain, for the philosophic observer may question whether an institution which is peculiarly the outgrowth of the frank, blunt, and outspoken nations of northern Europe can ever be more than an exotic in the East.⁸⁴

80 “Hygiene in Japan.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 30 November 1878.

81 “The work of central sanitary board.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 13 March 1880.

82 “Vaccination in Japan.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 31 May 1879.

83 “A Japanese general hospital.” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, 20 March 1880.

84 “A nascent parliament.” *The Japan Daily Herald*, 19 March 1880.

Admittedly the *Japan Daily Herald* did consider the Japanese, with their excellent capacity for mimicry, as being quite capable of attaining the outward forms of a progressive institution even if they could not capture the spirit to breathe life into it.⁸⁵ The sometimes very sharp criticism of conditions in Japan voiced by the *Japan Gazette*, especially at the end of the 1870s, did not pass unnoticed in the Japanese vernacular press. Early in 1879 it was obliged to answer accusations that the foreigners were insulting Japan and her people by presenting the development it had achieved in a distorted light. In accordance with its outspoken style, the paper considered its critics to be “wrapped up in conceit and ignorance” and “seeking to injure men whom they know to be their superiors in every quality that makes mankind respected.”⁸⁶

Conclusion

As we have seen above, the Japanese were exalted as one of the oldest people on earth in the 1860s, and their development was regarded as having been spontaneous and original. Western newspapers and magazines in Japan emphasized that the local race should be valued very highly in ethnological terms. They described the Japanese as a noble race which had created a civilization for itself so that there was no cause for looking down on them. In the beginning of the 1870s, newspapers generally created a highly favorable impression of Japan and the Japanese race. However, towards the end of the decade the racial image changed because the Westerners increasingly viewed their own present and future prospects in Japan in light of the varying fortunes of their commercial endeavors. Gone was Marco Polo's vision of an Eldorado with riches that would offer foreigners the opportunity to create a comfortable fortune. Instead, the atmosphere was one of disappointment, perhaps even a shade of bitterness. The exotic racial image of Japan had given way to a run-of-the-mill world of unfulfilled dreams.

All in all, the newspapers and magazines discussed Japan and the Japanese race from a Western point of view, in which their own culture and race were regarded as greatly superior to the local culture and race. The situation would seem to be fairly straightforward insofar as the confrontation of the two cultures is concerned. The value of local culture and race was sometimes acknowledged insofar as traditional customs were concerned, but denied when it came to direct questions affecting Western interests. Although everyday practical life

85 “A nascent parliament.” *The Japan Daily Herald*, 19 March 1880.

86 “The Japanese press.” *The Japan Gazette*, 18 January 1879.

did not always bear out the tenet of the exemplary nature of Western culture, it was never denied or even questioned in an abstract sense. Development in Japanese culture could be achieved only by modernizing it in accordance with Western examples.

Although the papers commented on Japanese events in great detail, they did not have as much impact on the more general Western image of Japan. This can be attributed to a number of causes. Firstly, the papers' circulation was quite small, being less than 500 at best.⁸⁷ Secondly, they were not cited significantly in Great Britain's local media after the early 1870s.⁸⁸ This is actually amazing, since a majority of English-language newspapers were British, and they sought to strongly promote the interests of Great Britain and the British merchant class in Japan.⁸⁹ The most frequently cited papers were the *Japan Herald* and the *Japan Mail*.⁹⁰ During these decades, the British media generally conveyed an image of Japan as being a strange and even mysterious country. They emphasized the country's paradisiacal, romanticism, abstract utopianism and peculiar borrowing of all kinds of foreign models. The images also strongly reflected Britons' critical opinions about their own country.⁹¹ The descriptions of Japan that appeared in the United States also conveyed the same romanticism and uniqueness. They were reflected by both Japanese art and the country's industrial products. They were further reinforced by Japanese stands at various international exhibitions. The country was even called one of the golden regions of the world.⁹²

Although the Anglo-Saxon media published in Japan did not have much influence on the general Western image of Japan, the papers did, however, possess a major local significance right from the start. Being the first newspapers to appear in Japan, they served as models for the Japanese who were interested in Western journalism. In the 1860s they were an important window to international and to some degree also domestic events for the Tokugawa regime.⁹³ The fact that the new Meiji government was attempting to create the image of a civilized nation in Western eyes in the 1870s in order to justify the suspension of the extraterritorial rights may also lead us to conclude that the comments put forward by these local Western sources must have had some effect on

87 Hoare, 1994: 142.

88 Yokoyama, 1982: 192.

89 Fält, 1990: 374.

90 Yokoyama, 1982: 192–193.

91 Yokoyama, 1982: i–viii.

92 Ashmead, 1987: 559–562.

93 Huffman, 1997: 29.

government policy. The papers themselves had made a conscious attempt to influence the course of events. On the other hand, their sharply worded criticism undoubtedly aroused a response in terms of nationalist feelings and contributed to the wave of anti-Westernism that rose to the surface in the 1880s.⁹⁴ Considering this, perhaps a more constructive approach would have increased their possibilities of being influential.

94 Fält, 1990: 373.

PART 2

Interactions



The Propagation of Racial Thought in Nineteenth-Century China

Daniel Barth

Various forms of discrimination were as common in Imperial China as they were in many other places throughout the course of history. The concept of race, however, was introduced by European missionaries during the nineteenth century when Western thought began to seep into China. Much has been written about the impact of Western philosophy and sciences on the scholarly and intellectual circles of late Imperial China, and yet the influx of racial theories has only received moderate attention.¹

This chapter seeks to examine the propagation of Western racial theories in nineteenth-century China and the way they were received by Chinese intellectuals. The period ranging from 1846 to 1892 is the focal point of this chapter and can be considered the first period in the creation of modern Chinese nationalist thought. During this time various strands of Western thought were disseminated among scholarly circles in China. The repeated failures of the Qing dynasty in keeping the foreigners from encroaching upon its territory brought more and more Chinese scholars into contact with Western learning. The idea was to strengthen the Chinese empire by adapting Western sciences to Chinese purposes. At the same time, the old Chinese perception of foreign countries being “lesser” cultures on the fringe of the civilized world began to erode. The concept of tributary relations gave way to modern international relations.² In 1861, the Qing government established the “Bureau for the general affairs of the various nations” (Chi. *Zongli geguo shiwu yamen*, shortened to *zongli yamen*) responsible for foreign affairs. In relating to these affairs, the old term *yi* (夷),

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- 1 Among the few to research this topic extensively is Dikötter (1992), following up with a series of articles. Other publications such as Pusey (1983) deal with racial theories as part of their main focus. As far as more recent works go, the edited volume by Kownner & Demel (2013a) includes several articles specifically concerned with the development of racial theories in China.
 - 2 For a detailed description of the perceptions of China and the “Other” during imperial times, see Bauer, 1980.

usually denoting culturally inferior barbarian people, was replaced by *yang* (洋), literally meaning ocean.³

In 1875, China began sending diplomats to other countries and a modern idea of diplomatic relations began to unfold. And yet, at that time, the new concept of an ethnic nationalism had not yet fully appeared. During this rather long period Chinese intellectuals employed the concepts of “race” (*zhongzu*) and “yellow race” (*huangzhong*) as part of the emerging idea of a Chinese nation and nationality. This was how the slogans of “protecting the country” (*baoguo*), “protecting the race” (*baozhong*), and “protecting the teachings [of Confucius]” (*baojiao*) gradually came into being.⁴ The men behind this dissemination of Western thought were mainly missionaries. Their mission was to spread the faith. But since the Christian religion was met with lukewarm responses at best, they used geographical, technical and medical knowledge to get the attention of Chinese scholars. The first among these were traditional scholars like Wei Yuan and Xu Jiyu; later came officials like Li Hongzhang and Zeng Guofan, who realized that the foundation for military power was productive capacity. These were the carriers of the “self-strengthening movement” aimed at re-establishing imperial power and prosperity.⁵

Studying racial theories poses a few problems. As we shall see, the dissemination of these theories did not follow any form of structured plan. It was rather a by-product of individual attempts at spreading Western knowledge. Especially in the beginning, most of the missionaries’ publications had no measurable impact whatsoever. Chinese readers for the first books and magazines were few, and printing runs were low. Last but not least, we have the problem of translation. The new ideas had to be translated into Chinese script and language before they could be absorbed by a Chinese audience, and here the boundaries between different concepts may not have been as clear as they were in Europe, or new boundaries may have appeared based on more traditional, indigenous notions. A prime example of this is the fact that several overlapping terms exist for the concept of “race.” The characters *zhong*, *zu*, and *lei* are variously translated as “race” or “species” and carry different historical meanings.⁶ The

3 Various denigrating terms containing either character were in use during the nineteenth century. See Dikötter, 1990: 422.

4 These topics featured prominently in Chinese scientific discourse. See Gao, 2007: 56–72; and Shan, 2006: 35–39.

5 Tanner, 2010: 87–89.

6 The character *lei* (类) usually means “type” or “category” and can therefore refer to “types of humans” or “humankind” (*renlei*). The character *zu* (族) refers to family relations, mostly in the form of lineages (expanded family-systems in imperial China). The character

focus of this chapter is on the first few publications expounding racial theories. Other researchers have usually begun their discussion of these by pointing to an 1892 article in the *Chinese Scientific and Industrial Magazine* (*Gezhi huibian*) called “Theory of dividing men into five types.” While it clearly presented racial theories in a detailed manner, this article was not the first of its kind, as Fudan University Researcher Zhang Xiaochuan has already pointed out.⁷ Earlier texts will thus be analyzed in detail, beginning with an 1846 publication and ending with the 1892 magazine article. In order to provide some form of comparative reference, I will review a short section of an indigenous Chinese description of foreign people before presenting the publications about European racial theories.

The Background: Imperial China and the “Other”

Racial taxonomies were not indigenous to China. However, a consideration of the “Other” and the discrimination of people based on various grounds like language, script or culture had been common throughout Chinese history. And yet the signifiers were not as clear-cut, there was no standard taxonomy and the judgment of other people was usually less harsh than in comparable European texts, where an unforgiving hierarchy emerged during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While occasionally characterizing their people in terms more biological than cultural, descriptions of foreign lands lacked the scientific ideas of biology and zoology that featured prominently in Western perceptions of humans. A glimpse of a very traditional description of foreign people can be found in a book compiled in 1761 and published as part of the famous Qianlong-era (1736–1795) collection *Complete Library of the Four Treasuries* (*Siku quanshu*). The book, entitled *Outline of the tributary states of the Imperial Family* (*Huangchao zhigong tu*) contains pictures and

zhong (种) means “seed” as well as “species” in its botanical and zoological definition, coming relatively close to the Western term of “race.” The problem is made more complicated by the use of compounds of two or more characters in modern Chinese. The compound *minzu* (民族) probably ranks among the most controversial terms, since it is officially translated as “nation,” as in “nationalism” (*minzu zhuyi*), and also has ethnical and racial implications. See also Dikötter, 1997: 3. Dikötter also argues that the concept of “lineage” was a traditional view rather close to modern racist thinking, thereby paving the way for European ideas of race. See Dikötter, 1997: 15; 2013: 353–357.

7 As examples, Zhang quotes another Chinese researcher, Zhang Shouqi, whose article was in turn used by Gregory Guldin as a reference, as well as by Frank Dikötter and the Japanese Researcher Ishikawa Yoshihiro. See Zhang (2010).

accompanying texts displaying and introducing people from various places in contact with the Qing Dynasty. In this text, people are differentiated by emphasizing the country or area of their origin, their historical and cultural aspects, including customs, clothes and hair style, but little or no emphasis is placed on skin color or head shape, which were the characteristic elements of racial division in the Western discourses. The description of (non-Asian) foreigners in the book illustrates this:

The Dutch, or red-haired barbarians, come from a place close to the French.⁸ During the reign of Wanli of the Ming Dynasty, they often came with large ships and anchored at Macau, unsuccessfully demanding to begin tributary trade relations. As a result, they entered Fujian, seized the Penghu (Pescadores) Islands and invaded Taiwan. Beginning in the tenth year of the reign of Shunzhi of the ruling dynasty, tributary relations were established through Canton. At the beginning of the reign of Kangxi, [the Dutch] supported the [Qing-]armies during their successful expedition [to recapture] Taiwan, after which the tributary trade relations never ceased. (...) The [Dutch] barbarians wear black felt-caps. When meeting a stranger, they consider taking off the cap as proper etiquette. (...) [Dutch] barbarian women wear green kerchiefs on their heads and carry beads and pearls around their necks. They have scarves draping over their shoulders and open clothing revealing their breasts. They wear long skirts and use red leather for their shoes.⁹

The text then continues with the description of other peoples. This late eighteenth-century treatise is an illustration of a traditional concept of the world outside of China, one as of yet not influenced by theories from Europe. Even though the Dutch conquest of Taiwan is mentioned, the depiction of foreigners is benign. It may be judged as somewhat emasculating due to its focus on their adorable clothes and customs. Yet it is a far cry from the harsh, “evolutionary” classification of races found in European writings. The only trait that could be called a signifier is hair color. The Dutch with their bright hair colors must have seemed very exotic to the Chinese, but they were not the only

8 The term *folangji* (佛郎机) employed here can mean the Spanish, Portuguese or French, depending on the time and place of usage. The ambiguity of the term clearly shows the lack of knowledge about (and possibly genuine interest in) the detailed geography of Europe. In this instance, the translation “French” was chosen due to geographical proximity. See also Wei, 1998: 22, note 1.

9 *Outline of the tributary states*: book 594: 433.

people whose hair color was mentioned.¹⁰ This is in line with later developments, when the growth and color of hair, both on the top of the head as well as on the face, featured prominently in descriptions and comparisons between the Chinese (and Japanese) and the Europeans. This shows the cultural subjectivity of discriminatory signifiers. Asians eventually adopted skin color and head shape as signifiers, but were never as committed to these as the Europeans. Hair color and beard growth, on the other hand, seemed much more relevant to people like the Chinese, who possessed relatively uniform dark hair.

Stage I (1846–1851): Marques and Wei Yuan

Once the Protestant missionaries started coming to China in the early nineteenth century, the situation began to change. Just as the early development of racial theory in Europe was closely related to the development of travelogues, Western racial ideas entered China largely through translations of texts about geography. The men translating and publishing these texts were pioneers like Robert Morrison (1782–1834),¹¹ Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff (1803–1851; Chinese name Guo Shili)¹² and Richard Quanterman Way (1819–1895; Chinese name Wei Lizhe). These men began their proselytization by publishing books and magazines with only modest success. The Chinese readership of the time was tiny compared to the number of people in China who would have been able to read these books. Yet the geographical knowledge brought by Western missionaries had a certain bearing in tradition, since the Jesuits at the Ming court had introduced contemporary European maps and other forms of

10 The book includes, among others, descriptions of the English, French, and Russians, as well as of “black slaves” and other peoples far removed from the Chinese regions. While the dark skin color of some people was obviously worth mentioning, it is not noted with regard to Europeans.

11 The Englishman Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to arrive in China (together with three assistants) was sent to Canton by the London Protestant Mission in 1807. Since the spread of heterodox religions was prohibited in China at that time, he could not openly reveal his identity. With the help of his assistant William Milne (1785–1822) he opened the Anglo-Chinese College (which included a book printing shop) in Malacca in 1815. In August 1815 they published the first modern magazine in Chinese language, the *Complete Monthly Records of Observing the World*. Their book printing shop also printed the first Chinese texts used for missionary work. See Gu, 2005: 1–9; Zou, 2000: 64, 70.

12 Gu, 2005: 44–54.

knowledge like astronomy. The military conflicts with the Colonialist powers from the First Opium War onwards were also a contributory factor in arousing a thirst for knowledge about Europe.

The first author to propagate racial theories in China was not a missionary, but a Portuguese native of Macau named José Martinho Marques (1810–67; Chinese name Ma Jishi). Marques's father had come from Lisbon to Macau and his son was born and raised there and became a translator to the Chinese. Unlike many of the missionaries, he had had the opportunity to learn Chinese from a very young age. His book, entitled *New Explanations of the Study of Geography* (*Xinshi dili beikao*) was probably written no later than 1847, and maybe one or two years earlier. What is certain is that it was included in a compilation prepared by the Cantonese merchant Pan Shicheng in 1851 and called the *Literary Collection from the Abode of the Immortal of the Mountains and Seas*.¹³ It was cited in several later publications and thus left a traceable influence on the intellectual circles of late imperial China. Marques's skill in writing Chinese script suggests that he might have written the book by himself. His *New Explanations* consists of ten chapters. Chapters 4 through 10 form a section entitled "General Introduction to the World" as well as descriptions of the continents. In chapter 4 Marques describes the theory of dividing human-kind into five races according to their skin color:

The myriads of people can be divided into five kinds. The division is [made] according to the five colors white, purple, yellow, dark green, and black. As for the white [kind], they are the people of the continent of Europe, Eastern and Western Asia, Northern and Eastern Africa, and Northern America. Their countenance is pure white, their faces egg-shaped and elegant, their hair is not only straight and smooth but also soft, which also describes their manners. The purple [kind] is from Northern Africa and Southern Asia. (...) Their skin color is ink-purple, they have a flat nose and a large mouth, their hair is black and curled, which also describes their manners. The yellow [kind] consists of the people of the country of India, Southern Asia and Southern America. Their skin is of light yellow color, their noses flat and their eyes protrud-

13 It is not entirely clear when Marques's text became a part of the collection since the date of its writing is also in dispute. It might have existed as a single publication before Pan Shicheng noticed it. What is known is that the text was added to the collection between 1846 and 1851. See Zhang, 2010, footnote 10.

For more detailed information regarding Marques and his biographical background, see Zhao & Wu, 2006: 131–133.

ing, their hair is black and hard, which also describes their manners. The dark green [kind] is made up of most of the people in America, their skin has a dark green color, and their face and hair is almost the same as that of the yellow [kind]. The black [kind] consists of the various peoples of Africa. Their skin is of pitch-black color, their trunk protruding with high cheek-bones, their mouth is big and their lips thick. The hair is black and curled, much like a writing brush made out of goat's hair, their noses are flat and large, similar to a lion, which also describes their manners.¹⁴

Marques not only separates humankind according to skin color but also connects the different races with the various continents. The racial taxonomy established here is not out of the ordinary. Five races, connected to different world regions (albeit not exactly corresponding to the continents) and classified based on skin color had become rather common in Europe at the time.¹⁵ What is interesting to note is that Marques followed a traditional conception of the Asian race by excluding the Chinese. According to him, “the yellow [kind] consists of the people of the country of India, Southern Asia and Southern America,” while the white race is made up of “the people of the continent of Europe, Eastern and Western Asia (...).” The racial make-up of the Chinese had been a highly debated issue in Europe. The earliest accounts described the Chinese as having the same skin color as Europeans, and a few scholars have indeed identified the yellow race with the Indians, not the Chinese. Some, like Kant, argued that the Chinese were a mixture of the Indians and a tentatively established “Hunnic race.” The Chinese only became the epitome of the “Mongolian” or “Yellow race,” however, in the nineteenth century.¹⁶

Another aspect worth considering is the characters chosen in the text. “Race” was translated by Marques as *zhong*, which later became the official term. The colors in the Chinese text, however, differ significantly from later taxonomies, in that “purple” (*zi* 紫) and the hard to translate “dark green” (*qing* 青) were included. Since the “dark green kind” refers to the Natives of America, it might have stood for an olive color. “Purple” seems to have taken the place of brown, since it referred to North Africans and South Asians. It is difficult to say why these characters were chosen, because we only know retrospectively that other characters became the norm. Marques, whose European sources

14 Marques 1965, III: 2–3.

15 For an in-depth discussion of this topic see Kowner & Demel, 2013b. Compare Dikötter, 2011: 22 for references regarding the modern day discussion of the taxonomy's credibility.

16 Many researchers touch upon these issues. For example, Dikötter, 1992: 55; Keevak, 2011: 46–47; Demel, 1993: 5–7, 21–26; Hund, 2006: 25; and Brace, 2007: 18–20.

are completely obscure, might have attempted to connect his treatise to older Chinese works which had established certain philosophical ideas based on color. This, however, would merit further research in its own right.

Besides these general descriptions of the division of humankind, Marques also presented a three-fold division into inferior and superior stages of civilization.¹⁷ The stages are closely linked to levels of learnedness, lawfulness and distinguished arts and culture. As Sofia Lai points out, this concept “strikes a chord with the Three Ages theory envisioned by the Gongyang school of thought.”¹⁸ The idea in Marques’s text was, of course, to include the Western countries in the third and highest grade of civilization, even though mentioning the “Six Arts” gives the description a strong Confucian touch.¹⁹ In his preface, Marques also argues for the acknowledgment of foreign styles of etiquette, trying to dissolve the perception of Europeans as “barbarians.” The cultural hierarchy presented in his three-fold division, however, is not directly connected to his racial categories. Compared to contemporary European and American thinkers, therefore, Marques shows a much less ethnocentric view of the world.²⁰

Marques’s book had a measurable impact on Chinese scholars. China had just suffered defeat during the First Opium War and the Chinese began to show increased interest in the barbarians’ places of origin. The first to research these were a few pioneering scholars like Gong Zizhen, Lin Zexu, Wei Yuan and Xu Jiyu. The Chinese concept of world geography was still part of the imperial vision of “all under heaven.” Through contacts with foreign people, and especially foreign literature about geography, these Chinese scholars could expand their knowledge about the world. They all subsequently published books attempting to paint a picture of the world beyond the Chinese borders, with the most influential being Xu Jiyu’s *A Short Account of the Maritime Circuit* (*Yinghuan zhilüe*)²¹ and Wei Yuan’s *Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime*

17 Dikötter, 1992: 55; Keevak, 2011: 46–47; Demel, 1993: 5–7, 21–26; Hund, 2006: 25; and Brace, 2007: 18–20.

18 Lai, 2013: 338, 343–344.

19 The six Confucian arts, based on the cultural norms of the Zhou dynasty, were the rites, music, archery, charioteering, calligraphy and mathematics.

20 One might argue that the description of the races’ manners implies a certain grading of value. The notion that the manners of the “white race” are “soft,” while those of the “black race” are “curled” and those of the “yellow race” “hard” may only be a neutral categorization, but it does hint at a certain amount of judgment. At any rate, it is far more subtle than the racial evaluations of contemporary thinkers in Europe.

21 *A Short Account of the Maritime Circuit* was written with the help of the American missionary David Abeel and the Englishmen C.T. Lay and Rutherford Alcock. It was originally printed in 1848 on the recommendation of the Qing court and reprinted various times

Kingdoms (Haiguo tuzhi).²² Marques's *New Explanations* was one of the works used for reference by these Chinese pioneers of modern geographical studies. Wei Yuan used the information from Marques's book by directly citing several parts of his work. Through the books by Chinese scholars like Wei Yuan and Xu Jiyu, this new information from the Western countries began spreading all over China. Although Marques's account did not establish any ranking of the various races, some of the Chinese texts were clearly biased. Xu's denigrating description of Africa and its inhabitants leaves no doubt of that.²³

That the appeal of Marques's text was heightened by its publication not long after the First Opium War is not mere conjecture; the Chinese scholars themselves openly stated the ends to which they urged their fellow Chinese to study Western geography. The preface of an *Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime Kingdoms* contains a sentence that exemplifies the Chinese view of how to deal with foreigners: "Study the skills of the barbarians in order to subdue them."²⁴ In 1847, Wei Yuan expanded his *Illustrated Treatise* to 60 chapters for the first time. In 1852, he increased it again to 100 chapters. Since he died in 1857, this was the last time he edited his work. Among the materials added were parts of Marques's book.²⁵ In total, these parts accounted for around 60 percent of the material added by Wei Yuan.²⁶ In chapter 76, Wei included the section "General Introduction to the World" as well as the systematic classifications of skin color and human races. Apart from changing a few characters, he left the contents largely unaltered.²⁷ In the postscript to his *Illustrated Treatise* Wei Yuan highly

until 1898. The book consists of 10 chapters and systematically describes the geography, history, economy, culture and people of 84 different countries. It was reprinted in 1866 through the Zongli Yamen and was made mandatory reading material for the students of the Beijing language school. It was also brought to Japan in 1861, where its impact was no less great. See Xu, 2001: 1–3; Gu, 2005: 61–62; and Zou, 2000: 346.

22 Like Xu Jiyu's book, the *Illustrated Treatise* was printed and reprinted a large number of times between 1842 and 1902. It was through these repeated print runs that Western racial theories began to circulate in China. The book was also translated into Japanese in 1843 and again (after its two expansions) retranslated in 1850 and in 1853. In both occasions, however, the Japanese government prohibited its circulation, since the Tokugawa regime was strictly controlling foreign influence and knowledge at the time. In 1854, the ban on foreign literature was lifted and the *Illustrated Treatise* was translated no less than 15 times. Between 1854 and 1858, more than 20 translations of Wei's book were in circulation, influencing the Meiji-Restoration that was about to take place. See Zou, 2000: 345–346.

23 Dikötter, 1990: 422–423.

24 Wei, 1999: 67.

25 Ibid.: 23.

26 Zhao & Wu, 2006: 135.

27 Wei, 1998: 1888–1891.

values Marques's contribution: "I recently got the book *New Explanations of the Study of Geography*, written by the Portuguese Marques [...]. The two parts of its 'General Record of Europe' are particularly magnificent. [Through it] we can expand our eternal knowledge."²⁸

Stage II (1851–1855): Hobson and Muirhead

Pan Shicheng's collection included 55 more books in addition to Marques's. One of these books was also written by a European, the English doctor Benjamin Hobson (1816–1873, Chi. *He Xin*), who was an associate of the London Missionary Society (LMS).²⁹ He was the first of a number of missionaries who wrote about race. The main focus of his book, however, was neither racial theory nor geography. With the help of the Chinese Chen Xiutang, he distilled his medical knowledge into his *New Theory of the Human Body*, published in 1851. This was then included in an expanded version of Pan Shicheng's collection. In chapter ten the book states that "the world is divided into four continents while humankind is separated into five grades." The "grades" are connected to the continents except for the Malay people. What is noteworthy is that no translation of the term "race" can be found in the text. Hobson did mention the skin color of the five different peoples, with the Asians having "red" (*chi* 赤) skin. He did not specify whether he subsumed the Chinese under this category, but he probably did. The Native Americans are depicted as "copper red" people, using the characters that later became the common term.³⁰ Apart from these differences, and the fact that his description of the five races is considerably shorter than Marques's, the book's content is similar, but closer to

28 Wei, 1999: 70. Wei Yuan's evident admiration for Marques's book aside, the *New Explanations* was not the only Western treatise on geography he cited. Gützlaff's *Universal Geography* (*Wanguo dili quanji*), which was based on articles from his magazine, as well as the above-mentioned text by Richard Quanterman Way were also quoted several times (Zou, 2000: 79, 86).

29 Benjamin Hobson was born in London, received his medical degree at the University College of London and became a member of the British Imperial Association of Surgeons. In 1839 he came to China and served as a doctor in Macau, Hong Kong, Canton and Shanghai. He returned to the United Kingdom in 1859 and passed away in 1873. His *New Theory of the Human Body* became one of the foundations for the modern Chinese theories of anatomy and physiology. He, 2006: 81, 241–248.

30 Hobson, 1965, II: chapter 10, p. 15.

Blumenbach's "classical" racial division.³¹ Moreover, a Blumenbach-style innovation can be found in hand-drawn skull sketches attached to the first chapter of "New Theory of the Human Body," which are described in the following way: "Skull of a Chinese, skull of a Westerner, skull of a Malay, skull of a native American, and skull of an African."³²

Using these sketches Hobson propagated the concept of phrenology, i.e. the idea of measuring the skull to determine mental capabilities. He described the anthropological point of view suggesting that intelligence or a lack thereof was mainly related to the weight and size of one's brain in great detail. The differences in brain volume due to age and gender aside, contemporary thought suggested that one could gather information about size and weight of a brain by measuring the shape and volume of the skull.³³ Although it is currently discredited as completely without scientific merit, phrenology was in vogue in Europe and North America for several decades since the end of the eighteenth century as a method for evaluating a person's strengths and weaknesses.³⁴ Although Hobson included this aspect of contemporary anthropology in his book, meaning that it was theoretically available to a Chinese readership, there are no materials suggesting that it had any serious impact on Chinese intellectual circles.

Nevertheless, Hobson's book was obviously of interest to Chinese scholars. Otherwise it would not have been included in the compilation. It cannot, however, be compared to Marques's work. Marques's treatise even became a valuable source of information among the missionaries. The most important reason for this was probably the fact that he had already gone through the pain of presenting this information in classical Chinese script. It was another member of the London Missionary Society, the Scotsman William Muirhead (1822–1900; Chi. Mu Weilian), who followed in Marques' footsteps and published another book about geography including a description of the races of humankind. Muirhead was born in Edinburgh, and since his family was poor

31 Zhang Xiaochuan asks whether these small deviations might not also have been due to the influence of co-author Chen Xiutang rather than Hobson himself (Zhang, 2010).

32 Hobson, 1965, II: chapter 2, p. 16. For an illustration of Blumenbach's pioneering contribution to phrenology, see Demel, 2013: 67.

33 Hobson, 1965, I: chapter 3, pp. 1–7. This is thus far the only nineteenth century Chinese text to present the method of phrenology.

34 Besides Blumenbach's involvement, the American natural scientist Samuel George Morton (1799–1851) must also be mentioned given his considerable influence on the development of cranial measurement. He was a supporter of polygenism and used his research to support the view that the various races were different species rather than just variations of one single race. See Dain, 2002: 197–204.

and his father had passed away before William was even born, his mother had to work hard to raise him. He successfully studied law but eventually turned to religion and was sent to Shanghai in 1847 as a Protestant missionary of the London Missionary Society. He spent 53 years in China, became fluent in Chinese and published a total of 40 works of literature.³⁵

The book which included racial descriptions was his *Complete Record of Geography (Dili quanzhi)*, published between 1853 and 1854 in two volumes containing 15 chapters. The first volume's five chapters cover the five regions of Asia, Europe, Africa, America and the Pacific Islands, while the second volume's ten chapters contain theoretical discussions of such topics as geology, climate, vegetation and others and includes an introduction to the different human races in chapter 8. The colors he chose for the five races are white, yellow, black, brown and red, using the characters that were later adopted as "standard" translation. As for his translation of the term "race," he chose the unusual *pin* (品), meaning "grade" or "class." Unlike the other authors, he specified the sources he used. According to his own account, he had not only consulted the Chinese works on geography by Marques and Xu Jiyu mentioned above, but also Thomas Milner's *A Universal Geography, in four parts. Historical, Mathematical, Physical and Political*, Mary Somerville's *Physical Geography* and Hugo Reid's *Outlines of Geology and Astronomy*. Muirhead deviated from Marques, however, by grouping the Chinese with the Turkish and including them in the "yellow race."³⁶

Muirhead's treatise is interesting because of its connection to Marques, but it apparently left few imprints on scholarly circles in Qing China. It was not included in collections like the other two books, nor was it used as a reference in Chinese publications. The most likely explanation for this is that Chinese scholars did not find anything new in Muirhead's *Complete Record*; it was just another book about geography, with too many similarities to Marques's *New Explanations* and not enough new information.

Stage III (1855–1872): The Self-Strengthening Movement

From 1855 onwards, the missionaries continued their publication work, but shifted their emphasis from books to articles in the propagation of racial theory. The first of a number of magazine articles dealing with the concept of race in more detail was published in the same year as Muirhead's book. Considering

35 Tiedemann, 2010: 154; and Wylie, 1967: 168–172.

36 Muirhead, 1902: 3.

the topics covered by the magazines as a whole, racial theory still played a relatively minor part. But it is worth noting that the missionaries obviously considered it valuable enough to be included in the first place.

The magazines hosting these articles were completely new to China. The idea behind them was imported by the missionaries who also ran the magazines as editors-in-chief. The impact of the early ones is very difficult to quantify, but was certainly not very impressive. The numbers of copies were low and they seldom spread beyond the few port cities and foreign colonies where foreigners were allowed to dwell. And yet, with time, these magazines became an important source of knowledge for the first generation of late nineteenth century Chinese intellectuals.³⁷

In mid-century, the London Missionary Society was still in its heyday. As part of its mission, the society established the Anglo-Chinese College (later to become the Ying Wa College) in Hong Kong. In 1853, it started publishing a monthly magazine called *Chinese Serial* (*Xia'er guanzhen*; literally “A string of treasures from far and near”). The magazine’s third issue appeared in March 1855 and contained an article entitled “The five principal varieties of humankind” (*Renlei wuzhong xiaolun*). The article was unsigned, so the author remains unknown.³⁸

The article divided humankind into five races bearing the colors white, yellow, black, brown,³⁹ and copper. As with Marques, the term ‘race’ is translated by the character *zhong*. The article also makes a clear connection between the “yellow race” and the Chinese, as “the Asian continent is inhabited by people belonging to this race, such as the kind [living in] China and Mongolia.” In addition, it features a considerably more elaborate racial hierarchy than those of the earlier texts. The “white race” is clearly at the top, since “the tips of their noses are exceedingly high and the teeth of the upper and lower [jaws] match perfectly,” while members of the “yellow race” have “eyes, noses and mouths that are not as distinguished and fair as those of the people of the white race.” Furthermore, it states that as far as the “whites” are concerned, “there is none

37 *The Globe Magazine*, for example, reached a circulation of around four thousand copies in the 1890s (Fairbank and Liu, 1980: 279). Chinese intellectuals began founding the first influential Chinese newspapers and magazines a few years later (Liu, 1980: 297).

38 Zhang Xiaochuan suggests that the author might have had some connection to the Mohai Publishing Company in Shanghai due to the style in which the continents were transcribed and other style and content similarities with other publications by the company (Zhang, 2009).

39 The character in used in the text is actually *xuan* (玄), which usually means dark or black, with a touch of red. From the descriptions, however, one can gather that it denotes a color closer to brown as it is described as being yellow-black or black-brown.

among them who is idle and without aim.”⁴⁰ This matches the then current Western perception that, aesthetic prejudices notwithstanding, the “non-white races” were incapable of the same level of organization and productivity as the members of the “white race.”⁴¹ On the other hand, the order in which the races are presented here harmonizes with the notion that the “yellows,” while being no match for the “whites,” were still of some racial worth compared to the other races.⁴²

While this early article introduced some new ideas to the Chinese audience, it is impossible to establish the kind of impact it had. Other articles followed without adding any new material and were probably even less influential. The *Chinese Serial* itself featured a number of articles on geography and racial theory (see Figs. 6.1–6.2). Most of them were based on Hobson’s *New Theory of the Human Body*, while others only mentioned the concept of races briefly.⁴³

The missionaries were not discouraged by the difficulties of reaching out to Chinese scholarly circles. The aforementioned William Muirhead continued writing and publishing at this time, and among his writing was an article about racial theory. This article appeared in 1858 and was published in the second chapter of the second issue of the first Chinese periodical in Shanghai, the *Shanghai Serial* (*Liuhe congtan*). The magazine itself was established by the Mohai bookstore on 26 January 1857. Its editor-in-chief was another English missionary sent by the LMS, Alexander Wylie (1815–1887). Muirhead’s article was entitled “The dividing line between animals and plants” (*Dongzhi er wu fenjie*) and contained the following remarks about human races:

Modern western anthropologists divide mankind into five major types. The first is the Caucasian type. In Asia, [the people of] Turkey, Arabia, Persia, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and India; in Africa [the people of] Egypt [and] Abyssinia; and [the people of] the entire continent of

40 Matsuura et al., 2005: 558–559.

41 The fact that the Europeans of the time already knew about civilizations established by other “races” was not easy to accommodate for some thinkers, but was generally disregarded if necessary. One common way to do this was to portray ancient civilizations as earlier phases of development which did not develop further (Hund, 2006: 23–24).

42 For an example, see Kant, 1802: 316. Unlike the article’s author, however, he did not include the Chinese in his idea of an Asian race.

43 One of these appeared in 1855 in the ninth issue of the magazine’s third volume. It mentioned five races, using the colors white (*bai*), yellow (*huang*), black (*hei*), brown (*xuan*) and red/copper (*tong*), as well as a geographic distribution similar to the one cited above. It further estimated the world’s population to be approximately 1.1 billion people (Matsuura et al., 2005: 482).

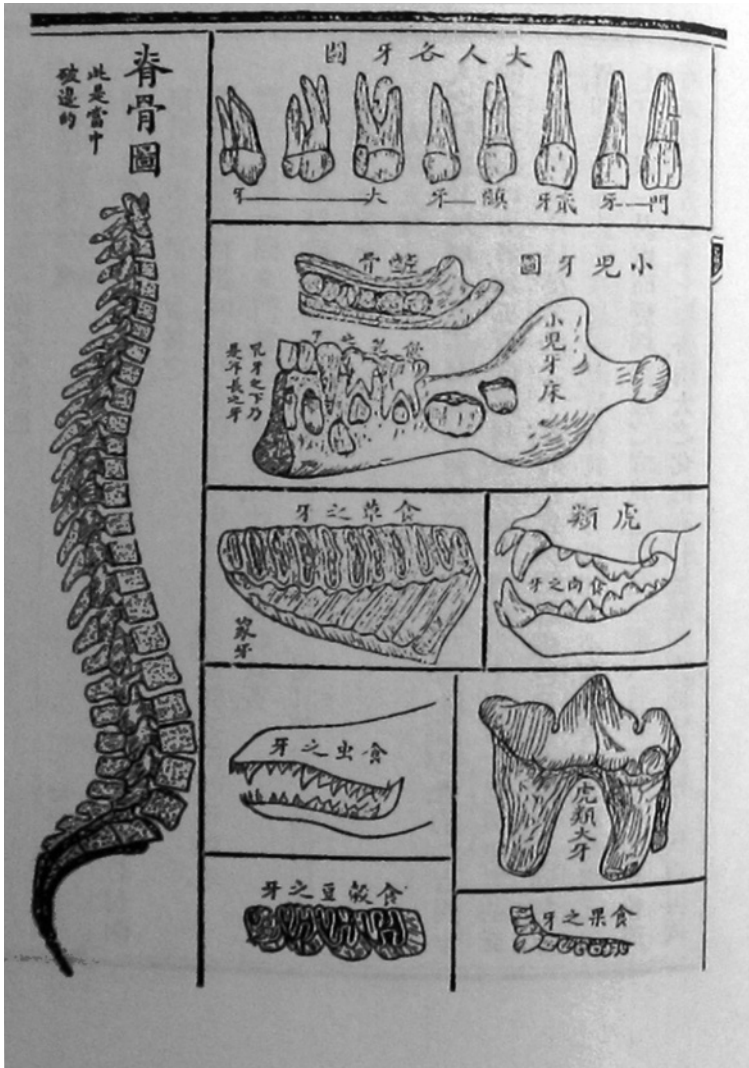


FIGURE 6.1 Visual information on evolution in the Chinese Serial.⁴⁴

Europe, are all [of this type]. The second is the Mongolian type. They live scattered over Central Asia, China, Japan, Burma, Annam, Siam, Vietnam; some say the Eskimos are also of the Mongolian type. The third is the American type. [It includes] the entirety of [the] native people[s] of North and South America. The fourth is the Cush type. [The people living

44 Matsuura et al., 2005: 560.

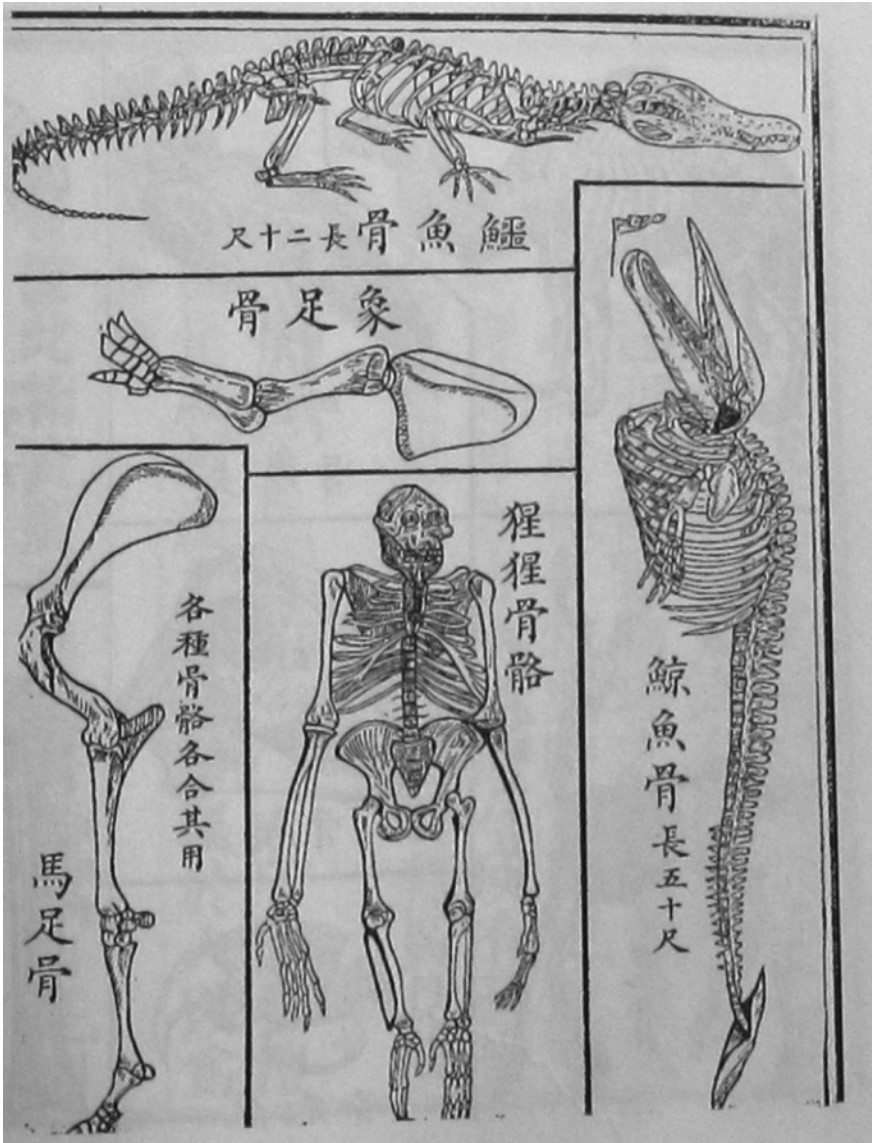


FIGURE 6.2 Depiction of humankind within the natural system in the Chinese Serial.⁴⁵

45 Ibid., 561.

in] Africa, except Egypt, Abyssinia and the small countries of Northern Africa all [belong to it]. The fifth is the Malaccan type. [It includes the people of] the Malaccan region and the Pacific Islands.⁴⁶

This text is the first Chinese source to utilize the terms “Caucasian” and “Mongolian,” used by Blumenbach to describe the European and the Asian races respectively. The new terms are not used in addition to a skin color classification but instead of it, since skin color is not even mentioned. If this description is compared to the book’s it is possible to see that Muirhead introduced major differences. The translation of “race” changed, too; Muirhead’s article uses the term *lei*. Also striking is the usage of the term “Cush race” for the African race. This was probably used to refer to Nubia/Sudan, and served to symbolize all of black Africa. Thus, this article not only introduces the Latin terms for the white and yellow races, but also applies a term found in none of the other Chinese texts. This particularity aside, however, it shows how the racial descriptions have clearly moved away from Marques’s more schematic ones.

Stage IV (1872–1892): John Fryer and the Chinese Scientific and Industrial Magazine

In the meantime, the rate of exchange and conflict between the Qing Empire and the West was gradually accelerating. The Second Opium War (1856–1860) brought new treaties with the foreign empires and heightened the unease experienced by modern-minded Chinese scholars. While the First Opium War could be cast aside as a small conflict with barbarians of no further effects, it was becoming more and more difficult not to be alerted by the Second. The Taiping rebellion (1851–1864) devastated large parts of China, and while it was mostly an inner conflict, it clearly demonstrated the superiority of Western military technology.⁴⁷ It is no surprise, then, that the Chinese interest in Western learning was boosted even further during the 1860s and 1870s. Missionaries were once again charged with paving the way for the dissemination of Western knowledge in China. While the first wave of Protestant missionary efforts was led by the LMS, its preeminent position waned, paving the way for other

46 Muirhead 2006: 755.

47 The officials ordered to defeat the Taiping made use of Western guns and military training, which led them to an even further appreciation of foreign technology and knowledge (Tanner, 2010: 88).

organizations and groups. Among these were more than a few missionaries from North America who took over the lead in the proselytizing effort.

One of the most influential missionaries of the latter half of the nineteenth century, John Fryer, also played an important role in the dissemination of Western philosophy and science. In 1872 he began editing and publishing a magazine entitled *Record of the Knowledge of China and the West* (*Zhongxi wenjian lu*), which became the forerunner to the famous periodical *Chinese Scientific and Industrial Magazine* (*Gezhi huibian*). The *Record of Knowledge's* third issue, published in October 1872, contained an article entitled “[A] Brief Sketch of Geography, chapter 3: Discussing the races of the continents and oceans,” based on the third chapter of John Shaw Burdon’s (1826–1907) *Brief Sketch of Geography* (*Dixue zhilüe*) (see Fig. 6.3).⁴⁸ The racial theories described therein only presented three main races:

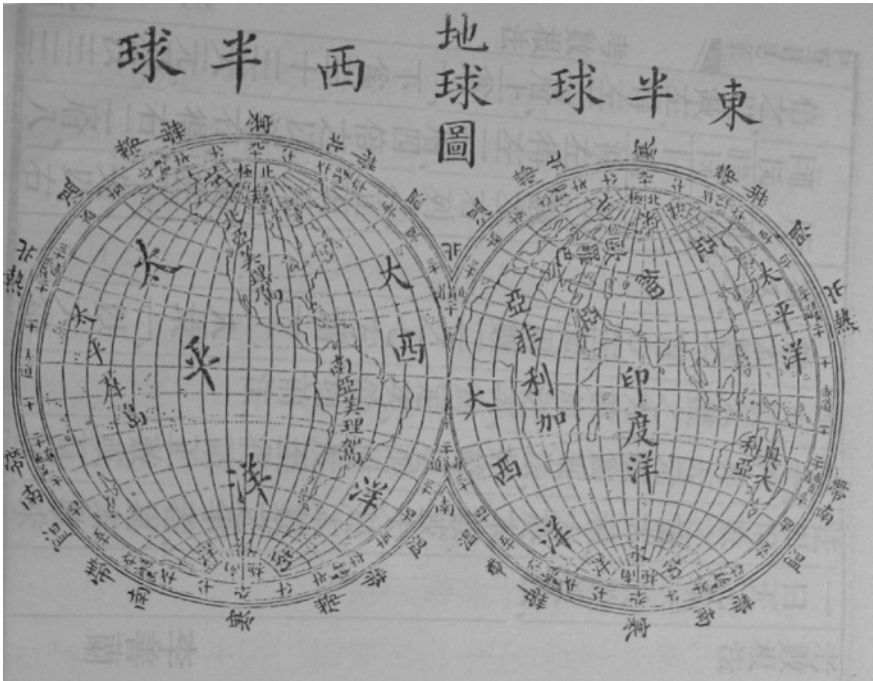


FIGURE 6.3 Modern cartographic depiction of Earth in Fryer’s magazine: In the 1870s the nascent racial discourse in China still focused on geographical knowledge.⁴⁹

48 Burdon’s book was translated into Chinese in 1862 by the *Jingshi tongwenguan*, which was also responsible for the translations of many scientific and technical works by foreign authors. See also Wu, 2005: 18.

49 Fryer, 1872: 159.

The first one is called the race with white faces and full beards. They are the people of current Europe, Western and Southern Asia, Northern Africa, as well as those Europeans living abroad, like the people of the United States of America. The second is called the race with yellow faces and little beard growth. They are the people living in East Asia today. The third is called the race with black faces, thick lips and curled hair like sheep's wool. They are the people living in Africa south of the northern ecliptic longitude. Besides these three big races, there are various smaller races. Basically, they likewise all stem from these three races.⁵⁰

The text also includes the number of people belonging to each race: The white race has 400 million people, the yellow race 470 million, the black 80 million, the Malay 40 million, and the Native Americans around 10 million. The article clearly shows that thus far there was no system and no continuity of style and terminology in the propagation of racial theories. The division into three big races was not featured in any of the other articles, and the terms for the various races in this article are also different.⁵¹ In addition, it uses the term *zu* instead of *lei* or *zhong* commonly found in the Chinese texts. The differences can be explained by remembering that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries brought forth a multitude of different racial categories and “reasoning” for racial division, making the confusion present in the Chinese texts more the result of a “spill-over” from Europe and North America than anything else. This is readily obvious in this text since it was directly based on a Western publication rather than drawn up by a missionary or Chinese scholar. The explicit mention of the differences in beard growth is interesting, since it was this phenotypical characteristic that was of greater interest to Asian scholars than to Europeans. Elevating it to a primary signifier might have been Burdon's attempt to make his description more accessible to a Chinese audience or a reflection of his Chinese assistants' influence.

Four years later, Fryer's magazine published another article about racial division entitled “Discussing the Disposition and Origin of Humankind.” It appeared as a chapter in the serialized article “[A] Short discussion of natural science” (*Gezhi lüelun*) published in the December 1876 edition of the *Chinese Scientific and Industrial Magazine*. Its description of human races was as follows:

50 Fryer, 1872: 156.

51 The idea of there being three “main races” in the world might be traced back to the French anatomist Cuvier. See Walter Demel's chapter in the present volume.

52 Fryer, 1872: 159.

The people of the various countries [all] have their differences. Spoken briefly and generally, [one] can divide [them] into five types: The first is the Caucasian type (...) The people [of this type] have white skin and a handsome physique, their facial hair is abundant and their knowledge extensive, their body is robust and their disposition is one of diligence and hard work. They live in Europe and in the western part of Asia, as well as in the northern frontier regions of Africa and America and Melbourne [in Australia]. The second is the Mongolian type (...) The people [of this type] have reddish brown skin, black hair and their facial hair is sparse and scattered. Their knowledge, disposition and physical sturdiness can be considered slightly inferior to those of the Caucasian type. They live in China, Mongolia, Tibet, Korea, and Japan. The third is the Malay type (...) The people [of this type] have brown skin, their hair is black and thick, and their knowledge, disposition and physical sturdiness can be [once again] considered inferior to the first two types'. They live in Malaysia and Vietnam, Siam and [on] the Galapagos [Islands]. The fourth is the black barbarian⁵³ type (...) The people [of this type] have black skin, their facial features are coarse and black and their knowledge is extremely shallow. Their hair is black and short and curled, like [the hair on] lambskin. Most of them live in Africa, but there are many who were brought to America by the Western people[s]. The fifth is the red barbarian type (...) They are [namely] the natives of America. [These peoples'] skin color is like copper, they do not live in fixed spots and take hunting as their means of livelihood. Culture and religion are not part of their customs. Their type was unknown to the ancient people, and [it was only] about 400 years ago, after the discovery of America, that we first learned that this type of people existed. Most of them have [recently] been driven into the outlands because of their savagery, while those who stayed behind are also wild and foolishly hinder [their] cultural development, making [their education] impossible. These five types are only a general description of [mankind]; if a more detailed division [is required], [it would include] many [additional types].⁵⁴

53 Both the black and the Native American types include the character *fan* (番). This term was commonly used to describe natives, and while its official translation in modern dictionaries is limited to "foreign/foreigner," it usually bore a derogatory meaning, as in "raw barbarians" (*shengfan*), describing those impervious to assimilation, and "cooked barbarian" (*shufan*), denoting those natives who had already adopted certain elements of Chinese culture. See Dikötter, 1992: 8–10.

54 Fryer, 1876: 275–276.

The description of the five races in this text (with 'race' being translated as *lei*) clearly shows a ranking with the Caucasian race at the top and the Native Americans at the bottom (see Fig. 6.4). The "yellow race(s)" second place in this ranking is now absolutely clear. The reference to knowledge is most likely a hint at the technological and organizational superiority of the western nation-states and represents another form of the belief suggesting that "non-whites" are culturally inferior. Many of the other characterizations, including the disposition, are obviously taken as biologically determined. This article thus represents the most clear-cut and comprehensive attempt of its time (in China) at dividing humankind according to allegedly superior and inferior or good and bad traits.

Despite the chaotic nature of both the development of racial ideas in the Western world and their dissemination in China, there was a certain kind of

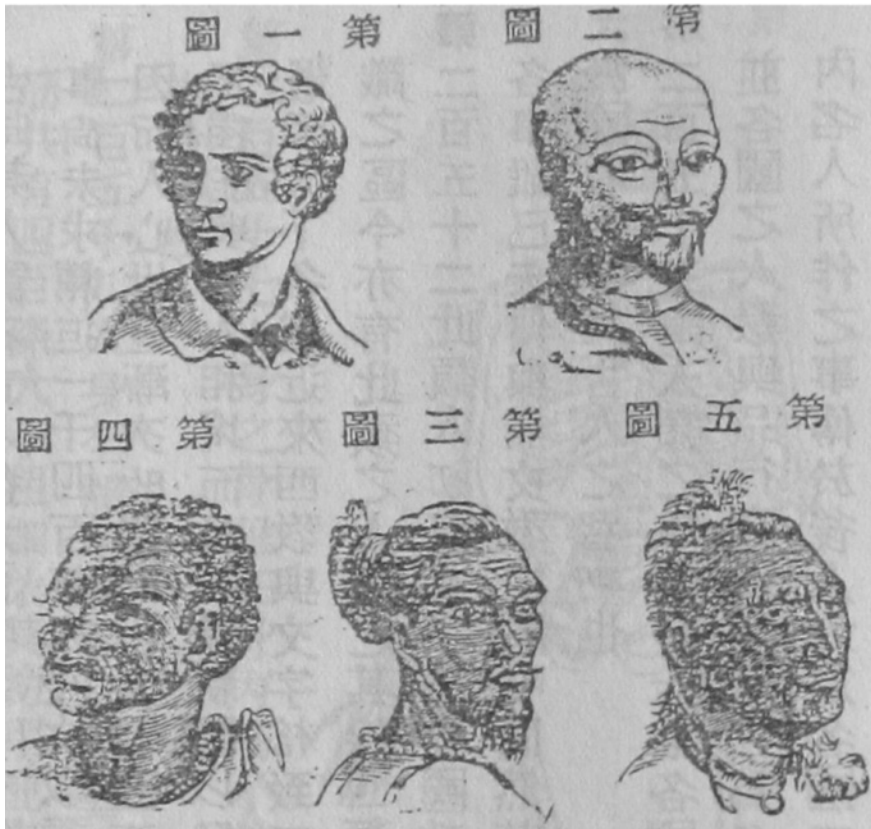


FIGURE 6.4 Representation of "typical" men of the five races in Fryer's magazine.⁵⁵

developmental progress in the Western countries from the earlier attempts to categorize humankind by skin color and place of living to the rise of anthropology in the eighteenth century. The influx of Western racial thought into China did not exactly correspond to this Western development, but in considering theoretical changes as they appeared in Chinese texts, it becomes possible to at least glimpse at this development. While the first texts are highly schematic, later ones add more and more detail (albeit contradictory at times) and include stricter hierarchies.

The last text to be considered in this section is the aforementioned 1892 article in the *Chinese Scientific and Industrial Magazine*, which is often cited as China's first presentation of Western racial theories. While we have seen that it was clearly only one article among many, it does differ from earlier examples. It not only represents a more systematic way of propagating racial thought, but also adds considerably more detail and a more thorough evaluation of the various races. The basic classification is the common five-part division, as already used in other Chinese texts. In fact, it actually used both the skin color classification (yellow, white, black, brown and red) as well as the Latin terms. It is also clearly stated that this was a concept developed in the Western countries and made necessary by the physical and mental differences between the various peoples of the world. The subsequent description of the five races starts, however, not with the Caucasian but with the Mongolian race:

The Mongolian or yellow people (...) often have skin of [a] slightly yellow color. Their black hair is long and straight, not curled. Their moustaches are small and their beards short, their eyes are black and not sunken in, their nose is flat and rather short. Their cheek-bones are broad and protruding, their head is round and long and a bit flat on the sides, giving it a square-like appearance. Their forehead is low and steep at the top, the top of their head is round and quite pointy. Their temperament is calm and serene and they are quick and perceptive in their wisdom and skill. Their learned culture reaches back into antiquity, they customarily value civilization, and they are fond of upholding established practices. They unswervingly stick to the knowledge of the past, [but] are not very good at innovation, establishing extraordinary things or shedding old patterns [of behavior]. Due to their predisposition they are only quick at simple learning. When being exposed to an advantageous new method [developed] by someone else, they mechanically copy it each and every time. That's why every kind of extremely simple literature is, among this people, exquisite in its style [but not in content]. Not minding hardship,

their culture and education have reached the highest levels of acuteness and sensitivity since ancient times on. The ethics of the Three Cardinal Guides and Five Constant Virtues are also the best among all the countries. Regarding the [question of] the nature of good and evil and the differentiation between right and wrong, [the people of the Mongolian race] have yet to be absolutely clear and vigilant. Removing the obstacles of effeminate behavior and inveterate habits has not yet progressed very far. [The people] of China, Japan, Vietnam, Korea, Manchuria, Mongolia and Tibet all [belong to] this type. Considering the number of people, they are numerous and [their places of living are] crowded, by far surpassing the other races.⁵⁶

The text then proceeds to provide some basic historical information about the “Mongolian race” before turning to the next section about the “Caucasians.” Of all texts analyzed in the present chapter, this is the first to begin the racial descriptions with the “Mongolian” or “yellow race.” Also noteworthy is its ambiguous evaluation of this race’s culture and history. While learnedness and civilized standards are praised, the most negative aspect is the race’s inability to innovate. Those familiar with the self-assessments of Modern Chinese will recognize a striking similarity here. China’s current self-presentation is usually based on the assumption that while China (and its people) has had a long and glorious history, it fell behind technologically (compared to the Western powers) because of its stubborn focus on old thinking and culture. Even the problem of overpopulation is already mentioned in the article to complete the picture. Compare this with the description of the Caucasian race:

The Caucasian or white people (...) have mostly white or slightly red or brown skin. Their hair can be quite black but those with brown, yellow or white hair are in the majority. [The hair] is silk-soft and curled, their moustaches and beards long and abundant and in form and color the same as their hair. Their face is either oval or egg-shaped, their skull round and large, their forehead [is] high and broad, their nose narrow, long and high. They have a small mouth and large, deeply sunk-in eyes of grey, blue, brown or sometimes black [color]. The top of their head is round and their cheek-bones high, their body is tall and robust, their legs and arms are diligent and agile. They have a lively temperament and are meticulous thinkers. [In their societies] good and bad are separated

56 Ibid.: 228.

clearly, [and] right and wrong are resolutely decided upon. They are fond of invention and like outstanding things, and from time to time they long for originating ideas. They compete [with each other] for the unusual and fight for the ingenious, [since] they are not willing to simply take over the old ideas of others. They excel at working out new ideas and are proficient in the manufacture of machines. (...) This type [of people] [lives] scattered all over Europe and in India, Persia [and] Arabia, as well as in Africa, in Egypt and Abyssinia.⁵⁷

As in the first description, this one also adds a few historical explanations. This makes the two descriptions basically similar. But while the “Mongolian” race is first praised for its standard of civilization, it is also criticized for its inability to move forward. The “Caucasian race,” on the other hand, is extolled for its levels of technological progress and not criticized for other traits. Although the “white race” is the second to be introduced in this text, it is basically presented as flawless. Thus, the different order of descriptions notwithstanding, the basic hierarchy of races remains unchanged.

The descriptions of the African, American and Malay races are comparatively short and derogatory, with regard to both their physical appearance as well as their mental and cultural capabilities. The Africans, with their “coarse and crude faces” and their “lower jaws stretching outwards” are characterized by a “disposition of stupidity and confusion” and by “superficial knowledge.” The Americans are “very robust and wild,” as well as “very martial and strong,” but in terms of “culture and religion, they are most difficult to educate.” In addition, they are “fond of roaming the land and hunting for their livelihood” and they “do not settle down in one place.” Last, but not least, the Malay peoples’ “upper jaw is stretching outward,” their “teeth are large and showing” and, in striking contrast to the Caucasian race, “[the difference between] vice and virtue is not well understood and good and bad [behavior] is managed dishonestly.”⁵⁸ This last part clearly demonstrates that this racial hierarchy suggests that only the yellow and white races should be valued, since the Malay people (and, implicitly, the other races too) are incapable of structuring their society by ethical standards. What follows these descriptions is also noteworthy compared to earlier texts, since it includes other theories with varying numbers of races:

57 “Theory of dividing men into five types,” 1892: 228.

58 *Ibid.*: 229.

The sketch of these five races should [encompass] the various countries in the world. Yet there are also natural scientists dividing the people of the whole world into three types, perceiving the American natives, the Malay people and the Mongolians as one type. Then there are other scientists who [describe] various sub-races within each of these types.⁵⁹

The article also includes additional and more scientific materials in addition to these racial aspects. Humanity is depicted as a part of the biological world and the influences of climate, terrain, and available food, as well as cultural factors like language and religion on human development and change are recognized. Thus, it is possible to see a certain truth in Guldin's claim suggesting that this article is the "first explicitly anthropological publication".⁶⁰

The detail and extent of this treatise clearly surpasses that of the earlier texts, especially because it depicts Western racial thought as a number of theories rather than an arbitrary choice and description of one theory among many. The critique unleashed on the Mongolian race due to their technological backwardness does show a mind-set both appreciative and critical of traditional Chinese culture. Given the heavy emphasis on the Western countries' technological level, one is inclined to see a certain amount of "Self-Strengthening" thought with its call for technological advance without changing the old socio-political order. Still, by addressing ethical norms and ingrained behavior, the criticism reaches deeper than *tiyong* alone.⁶¹ This begs the question of just who was actually responsible for writing the article in the first place. No author is specified for this particular article, but since the *Chinese Scientific and Industrial Magazine* was edited by John Fryer, it is safe to assume that he at least controlled or even wrote its contents. The issue, however, goes far beyond Fryer and his personal involvement in the creation of this kind of articles. As Adrian A. Bennett points out, writing articles in classical Chinese was usually a combined effort by missionaries and (western-trained) Chinese scholars. He describes the process at the Jiangnan arsenal as follows: a raw version of the text is dictated by the foreigner in charge and transcribed by the Chinese assistant. Problems with the article are then discussed and resolved so the Chinese could turn the raw version into a properly written and edited text. The text

59 Ibid.

60 Tanner, 2010: 87–89.

61 This concept called for the protection of "Chinese knowledge as essence and Western knowledge for application" (*Zhongxue wei ti, xixue wei yong* 中学为体西学为用). The idea was to learn about Western (military) technology in order to repel the invaders, but without changing the late empire's political system.

might then undergo further corrections under the foreigner's supervision.⁶² This method was not new, and was based on the process Jesuit missionaries used in earlier times. It shows the problematic nature of discerning how much the final text actually expressed the missionary's thoughts rather than ideas that were already present in the rich realm of Chinese literature and philosophy. An exception to this seems to have been Marques, who had learned Chinese from an early age and mastered it to such a degree that he was even praised by native Chinese scholars.⁶³

The description of the Mongolian race does indeed sound like an ambivalent evaluation of Chinese culture typical of both nineteenth century Europeans and early twentieth century Chinese reformers. Admiration for traditional Chinese culture had faced a downturn beginning in the late eighteenth century, but had never completely disappeared, certainly not among those staying and working in China.⁶⁴ On the other hand, the perception that the "Asiatics" were lagging behind technologically and politically due to some inherent cultural or, implicitly, racial deficiency was also widespread in the Western World until far into the twentieth century (and may be still alive today). The technological inferiority was readily apparent during the latter half of the nineteenth century, but the notion of political, cultural, and perhaps even racial inferiority would establish itself in the minds and hearts of the next generation of Chinese intellectuals.

Conclusion: Chinese Intellectuals, Social Darwinism and Race

This chapter provides an approximate description of the propagation of Western racial theories in China from the beginning of the nineteenth century, analyzing the period from 1847 to 1892 in greater detail. The process was initiated by geographical and medical texts written by missionaries. As can be gathered from the texts reviewed, it is obvious that Western racial theories were introduced in piece-meal fashion during this time rather than in any complete and systematic way. More importantly, the various Western researchers and their different perceptions of the subject were not taken into account. The process of dissemination was unstructured, with every text giving very simple descriptions of racial ideas without even mentioning the names of their respective Western originators (if one can actually link the Chinese texts to specific Western theories). It certainly took some more time for complete introduc-

62 Bennett 1967: 29.

63 Zhao and Wu, 2006: 132.

64 Tanner, 2010: 73–74.

tions to Western thinkers to be published.⁶⁵ Given that the men behind the process were mostly missionaries, the unsystematic manner of dissemination and the discrepancy between the (original) Western theories and those in the Chinese texts are not surprising. The missionaries were not experts in racial theory; they should rather be viewed as consumers of the European discourse, reading, quoting and translating whichever text they thought was helpful.

As a result, no discussion of racial ideas took place in China at the time. Neither the missionaries transmitting the theories nor their intended audience—the Chinese scholars—were experts in racial theory or anthropology, so there was no one involved who had a deep insight into the subject. For the reformers and revolutionaries in China the relevant aspect of Western racial theory was the notion of Western superiority. This was the source of their awareness of a “racial crisis” (*zhongzu weiji*), which they attempted to use to “awaken” (*huanxing*) Chinese nationalism in order to protect (or create) the integrity of the nation-state. The earliest texts about racial division established the idea of a “yellow race,” which was narrowed down to a conception of a specifically “Chinese race” by late-imperial scholars. Considering the pressure the foreign imperialist powers exerted on contemporary China, it comes as no surprise that the next step was to fear for the survival of this alleged race, especially after reading about the imminent extinction of the “red race,” i.e. the American natives.

Yan Fu, one of the most important translators of Western socio-political theory, is a case in point. He translated several influential works, including Thomas Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* and Herbert Spencer's *Study of Sociology*. In his translations, he also mentioned the theories of Charles Darwin and others and formulated his own worldview by extracting what he deemed useful. The result was a form of what is commonly called Social Darwinism: a grim prospect of a world based on the struggle between races, nations or other groups of people for survival. Yan Fu argued that “the strength of a race determines the standing of its group [in the world].” He made the connection between biology and sociology explicit: “A country is like an organism. The size and strength of a group depends on its ability to work together. If everyone only fights for his

65 In 1908, Zhang Xiangwen published a book entitled *New Composition of Physical Geography* (*Xinzhuan diwenxue*). It included an introduction to Immanuel Kant and his theories about the Chinese. He divided the book into five sections, with the last targeting biology, including the evolution of humankind and racial ideas (Zhang 1908: 2).

Another Chinese intellectual named Ding Qian introduced the theories of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach to a Chinese audience in a book entitled *Geographical verification of the records of the various foreign countries from the 'History of the Han-Dynasty'* (*Hanshu ge waiguo chuan dili kaozheng*) (Ding, 1915: 25).

own interests, the group's coherence will be lax. If such a group meets with a people that love their country and protect their race, it will be at best humiliated and at worst obliterated."⁶⁶

Notions of race and biological determinism still feature prominently in Chinese social and political discourse. One conflict-ridden part of this is the prominent yet ambiguous role of Overseas Chinese in the construction of the idea of a (Greater) Chinese nation, where economic, political and ideological goals meet and converge.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, the term for "race" (*zhongzu*) was replaced by the term for "nation" (*minzu*) as the main term of self-identification in the early twentieth century. This meaning-laden term is a common sight in Chinese texts of a political, scientific and popular nature and has become the focus of much research, especially in China.⁶⁸ The other tradition that "grew" out of the fledgling racial consciousness was the anthropological. With the rising interest in Western learning, the various forms of anthropology were also introduced to China. In this respect, the 1892 article in the *Chinese Scientific and Industrial Magazine* led the way by introducing the biological and anthropological views then in use in the Western world. The article also shows, however, that pseudo-scientific racism was an integral part of anthropology at the time. This problem, however, was not created in China, but only transplanted from Western scientific circles. In fact, some consider it an issue in today's anthropology too.⁶⁹

66 Yan, 1959: 17–20.

67 Overseas Chinese are *not* included in contemporary Chinese nation(-state) and official policies have made this categorically evident. This position was most clearly evident in the Chinese government's dealing with 1998's Indonesian anti-Chinese riot. Nonetheless, Overseas Chinese played an important role in the development of the People's Republic of China (PRC) for various reasons. After the economic reforms of the late 1970s and early 1980s, the PRC government tried to attract overseas Chinese for economic reasons by offering them such privileges as university quotas and special investment opportunities. On the political level, overseas Chinese were considered to be a friendly force within foreign countries, especially since many of them were PRC nationals who left the mainland for studies and/or work in developed countries. Ultimately, these developments led to the establishment of a flexible form of citizenship for ethnic Chinese with the goal of increasing their emotional attachment to the PRC regardless of whether or not these Chinese reside in the PRC. Barabantseva (2005: 17) even states that "it seems that reaching out to trans-nationals as a way to extend and expand the Chinese presence in the world under the leadership of the Central authorities has become an essential part of China's contemporary modernity project."

68 References can be found in many of the articles included in Kowner & Demel, 2013a.

69 C. Loring Brace is one them (Brace, 2005).

Learning from the South: Japan's Racial Construction of Southern Chinese, 1895–1941

Huei-Ying Kuo

The Fujianese people, as well as the Chinese sojourners who originated from this province, are not the same as the Han Chinese... Although Fujian is known as an important destination for several waves of southward migration by Han Chinese from the Yellow River basin from the fourth century onward, long-term intermarriages between the northern Han immigrants and indigenous people in Fujian has formed a unique ethnic group (Jpn. *minzoku*).¹

In 1938, and in the midst of the Second Sino-Japanese War (July 1937–September 1945), the Japanese official Ide Kiwata pointed out the importance of distinguishing between the Fujian Chinese and the generic Han Chinese group. A long-term colonial bureaucrat, who served at the Governor General's Office in Taiwan for twenty years, Ide considered the southern Chinese a different entity from the Han.² Ironically, the roots of this distinction date back to a period in which Japan was still unknown in China.

* Author note: A crucial part of the research involved in the preparation of this chapter was conducted between July and August 2012 during my affiliation with the Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, and under the financial support of the Postdoctoral Fellowship for Transregional Research: Inter-Asian Contexts and Connections provided Social Science Research Council. Conversations with Ka Chih-ming and Lian Pei-te helped me clarify some initial thoughts. Feedback from Walter Demel, Rotem Kowner, and Mariko Tamanoi about the first draft of the paper has been precious. The assistance provided by the librarians at the archives of the Institute of Taiwanese History, Academia Sinica, was essential to the research. I finalized the paper while affiliating with the Asia Research Institute of National University of Singapore in 2014.

1 Ide, 1938a: 25–36.

2 Ide Kiwata graduated from Tokyo Imperial University in 1910 with a degree in Political Science. Between 1916 and 1935, he served in various roles at the Office of the Governor-General, Taiwan: the Bureau of Finance, the Maritime Customs office, the Secretariat Office and the Police Department. After 1935, he worked for various committees of the Tropical

The term 'Han Chinese,' literally referring to the descendants of the Chinese Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), has long been the label that most southern Chinese employed in order to claim their association with the northern Han civilization. The nomadic invasions of Northern Chinese from the fourth century onwards precipitated successive waves of southward migration. By the beginning of the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE), the Chinese population had flourished in Fujian and Guangdong.³ With the expansion of the southern Chinese population, new migrants from the north and indigenous southern people resided side by side, leading, among other things, to the development of a spate of mutually unintelligible languages. During the Ming dynasty (1368–1644 CE), prominent lineages of these southern speech-groups invariably compiled clan genealogies that traced their Han Chinese roots from North China while downplaying, if not omitting, their connections with the southern indigenous peoples.⁴ The speech-group identity remained a dominant principle in the organization of social, economic and cultural activities, as can be seen in the long-distance trade networks and migrations both inside China proper and across its maritime border to Taiwan, the South Seas (the region surrounding the present-day South China Sea), or other Pacific Ocean shores.⁵ During the period of high Chinese nationalism between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the southern Chinese and their overseas counterparts subsumed their diverse speech-group identities to the generic claim of Han race-lineage (Chi. *hanzu*).⁶ As far as Japanese colonial bureaucrats like Ide were concerned, and as can be seen in the excerpt above, emphasizing the salience of Chinese speech-group identity meant undermining the validity of the Chinese nationalist claim for a homogenous Chinese racial origin.

The Japanese views of the differences between the southern Chinese speech-groups constitute the main focus of this chapter. Among other things, I seek to examine how these views were related to the construction of racial discourses in Meiji and post-Meiji Japan. By the same token, I attempt to examine how these views were related to the expansion of the Japanese Empire from the 1895 colonization of Taiwan to taking on the Western imperialists in the South Seas by the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941. Many studies concerned with the construction of racial discourses in Meiji and post-Meiji

Industry Research Society (Jpn. *Nettai Sangyō Chōsakai*) concerned with Japan's large-scale colonial projects in the South Seas. See Kaneko, 1980: 67–85.

3 So, 2000: 131–185.

4 Xie, 2002: 261–284.

5 Leong S., 1997; Sinn 2013.

6 Chow, 1997.

Japan emphasize what Japan learnt from the West. Japan applied a scientific taxonomy, as well as various tenets from British anthropology, American zoology, German eugenic politics and social Darwinism, among others, in order to perceive its Asian neighbors as inferior peoples compared to the West. During this process, Japan referred to China as *shina*, rather than its traditional designation, *chūgoku* (Middle Kingdom), blaming the Sino-centric East Asian order for the penetration of Western imperialist powers to Asia after the nineteenth century.⁷ At the same time, Japan considered itself, and to some extent its neighbors Korea and China, as semi-civilized countries compared to the enlightened and modernized West.⁸ The Japanese also viewed the Ainu, the aboriginal Malay Polynesians in Taiwan and the Micronesians of southern Pacific Islands as primitive and uncivilized.⁹ It is thus clear that Japan adopted a hierarchical view in perceiving the relationship between the Western and Eastern civilizations. But what about the Japanese discourses on the various racial groups in Asia? Did Japan's racial taxonomy of the Asian peoples indicate Meiji Japan's adoption of a Western-style racial hierarchy?

Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein have attributed the origin of Western racial discourses to the spread of European capitalism from the sixteenth century onwards. While expanding commercially and territorially to the rest of the world, the European colonizers also imposed hierarchical racial discourses that framed the peoples of the conquered zones as incompetent and inferior races. These discourses were then used to justify Western colonial exploitation and domination.¹⁰ This thesis is helpful in explaining the high esteem in which East Asia was held in western racial theories prior to the mid-nineteenth century and its subsequent degeneration.¹¹ Accordingly, before East Asia was incorporated into the Western-led capitalist world economy, the region existed outside the western racial hierarchy. After incorporation, East Asian peoples were placed in an inferior place under white supremacy. But was a justification for the unequal division of labor in the capitalist world-economy the sole motive for the construction of racial theories? Kowner and Demel would argue otherwise. They suggest that “the East Asian standing [before the mid-nineteenth century] demonstrates that racist theories were not only the theory of conquest, colonization, and exploitation . . . of the Other, but also

7 Tanaka S., 1993; Weiner 1997.

8 Craig, 2009: 33–54.

9 Sakano, 2005a: 356–357.

10 Balibar & Wallerstein, 1991.

11 For an elaboration of the changing views of East Asia in western racial theories, see Kowner & Demel, 2013a.

the outcome of contacts with civilizations considered equal and in certain respects even superior.”¹² Could we likewise understand the Japanese racial theories of Chinese speech-groups in the South Seas, at least those proposed before the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941 as “contacts among civilizations considered equal”?

Sociologist Oguma Eiji, who studies the intellectual discourses in Japan on the mixed origins of the Japanese race before the end of the Pacific War, points out the Japanese emphasis on shared linguistic ties with the Ural-Altaic peoples including the Turks, the Mongols, and the Koreans, as well as on the ancestral origins of the Melanesian people.¹³ As Japan became the first and only non-white imperialist power after colonizing Taiwan war in 1895, it considered itself the rescuer of the rest of Asia. The colonial enterprise was to be Japan’s “yellow man’s burden.”¹⁴ One Japanese term for its self-proclaimed mission to civilize Asia was *takushoku*, whose literal meaning is to colonize and to open up undeveloped land.¹⁵ This interventionist idea was to a large extent associated with Meiji Japan’s emulation of the Western model of industrialization and imperialist expansion. But soon Japan was confronted with the notion of white supremacy, and the outcome of the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) proved its success. Cultivating ties with the South Seas Chinese became crucial to Japan’s interventions due to the Chinese cooperation with western colonial powers in the region.

This chapter further examines what Japan had learned from interacting with the various mutually unintelligible Chinese speech groups in the South Seas. These included the Hokkien in Fujian’s southeastern coast, the Cantonese in the Pearl River Delta of central Guangdong, the Teochew in eastern Guangdong, and the Hakka in the mountainous hinterland adjacent to these areas. The Japanese intelligence and commercial reports refer to these groups by two names: racial groups (Jpn. *shuzoku*) and ethnic groups (Jpn. *minzoku*), which are used interchangeably. By delineating the connection between Japan’s views of the Chinese in the South Seas and Japan’s economic expansion in the region during the early twentieth century, this chapter will point out the imperative for Japan to construct a racial thesis about southern Chinese speech groups in Japan’s agenda of southern advancement. I argue that the construction of Japan’s racial discourses was more complicated than mere learning from the West. While Western racial theories were influential,

12 Kowner & Demel, 2013b: 12.

13 Oguma, 2002a.

14 Tanaka, 1993.

15 Asami, 1928: Ch. 2.

the Japanese encounters with the rest of Asia were as important as, if not more crucial to, Japan's racial taxonomy of the Asian peoples in the early twentieth century.

It is worth noting that the Chinese mercantile communities in Nagasaki, which were established before the Tokugawa shogunate's seclusion policy, had clearly taught the Japanese about the importance of southern Chinese speech-group ties in business networking.¹⁶ What was new for Japanese scholarship on the southern Chinese in the early twentieth century was the various speech-groups' divergent responses to the Western colonial status quo, to Japanese expansion, and to the overseas mobilization of Chinese nationalism. These provided Japan with crucial data it could use for formulating and adjusting the tactics of its southern policies.

Finally, and in the remainder of the chapter, I will periodize the development of Japan's views of the Chinese in the South Seas into four stages: 1895–1914; 1914–1928; 1928–1936; and 1936–1941. This periodization is consistent with Nakamura Takashi's analysis of Taiwan's role in Japan's southward advances.¹⁷ But while Nakamura focuses on the directions of Japan's policies, I will delineate the changes in Japan's racial discourses on the southern Chinese and interrogate the background against which these discourses were adjusted. In my conclusion, I will compare the Japanese racial taxonomy of the Chinese with the Western imperialist racial hierarchy. Like its Western imperialist counterparts, Japan's racial theories on the South Seas Chinese were economic expansion tactics. Unlike the Western imperialism that set up an absolute racial hierarchy with white supremacy, Japanese colonial officers in the South Seas recognized the strength and occasional superiority of overseas Chinese in the region. Japan's appreciation of overseas Chinese entrepreneurship at the dawn of the Pacific War points to the continuity of earlier pan-Asian thoughts that recognized the different-but-equal relationship among the different racial groups in Asia.

The South Seas as Japan's Backyard, 1895–1914

Japan began its systematic expansion to the South Seas when the northern affairs with Russia and Korea were about to settle. The first organization charged with handling Japan's developmental and colonial missions to the

16 The Chinese merchants in Nagasaki came from the lower Yangzi, northern and southern Fujian, as well as Guangdong. Jansen 1992: 10–13.

17 Nakamura T. 1988.

South Seas was the East Seas Association (*Tōyō Kyōkai*), which branched off from the Taiwan Association (*Taiwan Kyōkai*; est. 1898) in 1907.¹⁸ The association's change from a consultant on Taiwanese and Korean affairs to one also concerned with the South Seas indicated the importance of Japanese colonial experiences to forming the early strategies of Japan's advance to the South Seas. In a 1913 official newsletter of the East Seas Association, *Tōyō*, Uchida Kakichi (1866–1933) advocated the importance of recruiting Japanese officers or merchants with experience in colonial Taiwan to manage Japan's southward expansion:

Our honorable readers may have been informed about Singapore's current rubber boom. Those people who had accumulated experiences in Taiwan are now the most qualified and influential people to engage in the trade. Taiwan is closely connected with the South Seas. Those with experience in Taiwan could mobilize its wealth to overcome the problems in the south. The South Seas region is currently managed by the Europeans or Americans. Taiwan is our mother country's stepping stone to the South Seas. Our primary task is to recruit [people with] experience or capital to manage the South Seas. This is an indispensable direction for the development of our mother country.¹⁹

Uchida was then the Chief of Civil Affairs at the Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan. In 1912, the Japanese chartered Bank of Taiwan opened its first South Seas office in Singapore. During the same year, the Japanese government sponsored the establishment of the South Seas Mail Steamship Company. Shortly later, and beginning in April 1916, the Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan sponsored ocean liners and tramp ships in order to connect the waterway between Jilong and Singapore via Java.²⁰

By engaging Japanese with Taiwanese connections in the southern economic advance, Japan applied its understanding about of the Chinese in Taiwan, most of whom were Hokkien speakers, to dealing with the Chinese in the South Seas. At the time, Japan assumed that the customs and racial endowments of the Taiwanese Hokkien were transplanted from Fujian. A 1904 survey states that “most Taiwanese are Chinese immigrants from the Hokkien area in south-eastern Fujian, meaning we can use the Hokkien customs as a means to under-

18 Asami, 1928: Ch. 2.

19 *Tōyō*, May 1913; cited from Kawarabayashi, 2007: 10.

20 Unekawa, 1927: 386; 647–649.

stand the customs in Taiwan.”²¹ Insofar as the non-Japanese residents in Taiwan were concerned, Japanese colonial officers followed the Qing demographic taxonomy, that classified people based on their level of Confucian learning: the Han Chinese, the most Confucian, who were ‘civilized’, the aborigines who were ‘cooked,’ and the aborigines who were ‘raw’. Japanese censuses, however, adopted the term ‘racial group’ in order to break the category of Han Chinese down into two speech groups. The first was the “Min” or “Fukken [Hokkien] racial group,” referring to those who migrated from Fujian province, while the second was the “Yue,” or “Kanton [Canton] racial group” from Guangdong province.²² Within each racial group, the Chinese were further distinguished by the *fu* or *zhou* administrative units of their original South China villages. These included the Quanzhou fu, Zhangzhou fu, Dingzhou fu, Longyan fu, Fuzhou fu, Xinghua fu and Yongchun zhou for the Min racial group, and Chaozhou fu, Jiaying zhou, and Huizhou fu for the Yue racial group in Taiwan.²³ It is worth noting the Yue people in Taiwan were mostly Hakka, but not Cantonese, speakers.

The emphasis on the native-place origins of the overseas Chinese in Fujian and Guangdong was not a Japanese invention. Between 1881 and 1921, the British decennial censuses of the Straits Settlements classified the Chinese by their birthplaces as Straits-born (i.e., born in the Straits Settlements) and China-born. The latter category was further broken down into different speech-groups: Hokkien, Cantonese, Teochew and Hakka, as well as Hainanese from Hainan Island.²⁴ The Superintendent of the Malaya Census, J.E. Nathan, summed up this approach succinctly: “With the diversity in languages among the Chinese comes a diversity of characteristics and customs, and the proper division of the Chinese population into tribes is therefore of paramount importance.”²⁵ Nonetheless, unlike the British indirect rule that allowed the Chinese communal leaders from each “tribe” to manage their own affairs, Japan’s developmental and colonial mission focused on tactics for intervening

21 Taiwan Sōtokufu, 1904: 59.

22 Although the Mandarin pronunciation of the Hokkien speech-group’s name is the same as Fujian province’s, the home counties of the Hokkien in Fujian were concentrated along the province’s southeastern coast. The “Yue race” in Taiwan was not an appropriate category, given that Yue or Cantonese speakers are based in the Pearl River Delta of central and southern Guangdong, while the Guangdongese migrants in Taiwan actually came from the province’s eastern Hakka [Ch. *kejia*] speaking zone.

23 This was the standard format of “racial classification” in the censuses of colonial Japanese Taiwan. Taiwan Sōtokufu Kanbō Chosa-ka, 1928.

24 Kuo, 2014, table 1–2.

25 Nathan, 1922: 78.

in Chinese overseas communities in both Taiwan and the South Seas from its very outset.

Japan's first attempts at a racial classification of the southern Chinese began early. In 1913, for example, Tanaka Zenryū, a newly elected member of the House of Representatives, outlined his experiences of working for the Higashi Honganji (a Japanese Buddhist sect of Shinshū Ōtani-ha) in Quanzhou.²⁶ His book, entitled *Taiwan to minami Shina* (Taiwan and South China), offered a division of the Han Chinese into three geographical groups: northern, central and southern.²⁷ Coming from three different zones, each presented different levels of civilizational development: compared to the central and northern Chinese, the southern Chinese were at the lowest level of civilizational development. This "infant stage" of civilizational development, with plenty of uncultivated land and barbarian people, however, allowed the southern Chinese to possess the greatest future potential. The southern zone included Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan and Guizhou, among others.²⁸ Nonetheless, Tanaka also stated that the differences between the southern, central and northern Chinese should not be over-emphasized. He believed that the northern, southern and central groups of Chinese were all part and parcel of the Han Chinese family: "the differences between the people of South and North China are like the differences between the Cantonese and the Fujianese as well as the Hunanese [from Central China]. They all belong to the Han Chinese. Their differences are no greater than their differences from the Manchus, Mongols or Tibetans."²⁹

In his comments on the dominance of southern Chinese in Chinese emigration, Tanaka argued that southern Chinese were strong and would never be diminished. This underpinned his confidence about China when it was in the middle of post-revolutionary turmoil. "China may fall but not the Chinese. . . . Just like the Jews who were discriminated by the Europeans, the expansion of the Chinese in South Seas suggests that they shared materialistic ideas with the Jews."³⁰ At this stage, Japan perceived these "materialist ideas" in a favorable light, as some high-profile Japanese investors had par-

26 Shinshū Ōtani-ha had been active in preaching Buddhism in China from the 1870s. By the 1890s, most of its activities concentrated on Shanghai and Beijing. After Taiwan was colonized, their missionary work began to spread to Fujian and especially to its coastal cities, including Quanzhou, Amoy (Xiamen) and Fuzhou. The Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan sponsored the temples in Fujian, where such leaders as Tanaka Zenryū would report to Taiwan on the local situation. See Liu, 2000.

27 Nakauchi, 1942: 22–28.

28 Tanaka, 1913: 193.

29 Tanaka, 1913: 214–215.

30 Tanaka, 1913: 216–217.

ticipated in the southern trade. These included Aikuzawa Naoya and Inoue Masaji (1877–1947; see Fig. 7.1). Aikuzawa's San Go Company began to invest in Malay rubber plantations in 1905, followed by Inoue's Nan-A Company in 1911. Both received generous financial support from other Japanese enterprises: The Mitsubishi company in Aikuzawa's case, and the tableware manufacturer Morimura Ichizaemon in Inoue's case.³¹



FIGURE 7.1 *Inoue Masaji posing with a thirty-year-old rubber tree in Johor.*³²

COURTESY OF THE ARCHIVAL OFFICE OF THE INSTITUTE OF TAIWAN HISTORY, ACADEMIA SINICA, TAIWAN.

31 Irie, 1942: 137–142.

32 Inoue, 1941: 149.

But Aikuzawa and Inoue were also more than profit-driven entrepreneurs. As a graduate of Tokyo Imperial University, Aikuzawa had close connections with Kodama Gentarō, the Governor-General of Taiwan, as well as with the senior colonial officer Gotō Shimpei. Aikuzawa was able to use these connections to monopolize the sale of camphor in Fujian between 1902 and 1909, as well as to engage in mining and railroad construction in Fujian and Guangdong.³³ Inoue was a protégé of the Japanese pan-Asianist and intelligence officer, Arai Sei (1859–1896). In 1898, Inoue assisted in the establishment of the China office of the East Asian Common Culture Association (Jpn. *Tōa dōbunkai*). Before his Malayan rubber ventures, Inoue was also sent to work in Korea between 1904 and 1905. Being an advocate of Pan-Asianism, he also formed close associations with Chinese anti-Manchu revolutionaries including Tang Caichang and Dr. Sun Yat-sen. In his graduate thesis, submitted to the *Tōkyō senmon gakkō*, the precursor of Waseda University in 1899, he argued that the “three million southern Han Chinese overseas” constituted the key to China’s revival. By this, he specifically referred to the anti-Manchu republican revolution supported by Han Chinese from six southern provinces: Guangdong, Guangxi, Hunan, Hubei, Zhejiang and Fujian.³⁴ In other words, these two pioneering Japanese entrepreneurs in the South Seas were related to Japan’s colonial expansion in Korea and Taiwan as well as to Japan’s pan-Asian agenda of changing China.

Japan’s Expansion into the Southern Chinese Networks, 1914–1928

The second stage of Japan’s economic expansion began during World War I, when the European powers in the South Seas were preoccupied with the warfare in other theaters. Though Japan’s primary interest in the southward advance was economic, it accidentally gained some territories in the region after the war broke out. In August 1914, and under the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the British supported Japan in occupying pre-war German concessions in the Southern Pacific (the Marshall Islands, the Mariana Islands, and the Caroline Islands). After the war ended, the League of Nations granted Japan the right to administer these islands. The area was thus called the Southern Pacific

33 Nakamura T. 1998: 11; Takushoku Tsūshinsha, 1927: 15–18.

34 The thesis was later published in two other versions: one was issued by Fujita Gōmei Kaisha in Keijō in 1906 under the pseudonym Nihon Dairagenkun. The other version was published by the Tōa Dōbunkai in Tokyo in 1930. See Inoue, 1930: 122–128.

Mandate and known by the Japanese as the Inner South Seas (*uchi nan'yō*). The rest of the South Seas region—including the Dutch East Indies, British Malaya, the American Philippines, the French Indo-China and Siam—came to be known as Outer South Seas (*soto nan'yō*). Unlike the Inner South Seas, Japan did not directly colonize the Outer South Seas. But by the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, the Outer South Seas attracted more Japanese attention for reasons of trade and investment.³⁵

In the process of its economic expansion to the Outer South Seas, Japan learned two things: first, the economic strength of the overseas Chinese in the South Seas, and second, the importance of employing the Taiwanese elites in order to bridge Japan's connection with the overseas Chinese elites in the region. Yagyū Kazuyoshi, the Chairman of the Bank of Taiwan, was instrumental in setting up the Japanese policy of working with overseas Chinese in the South Seas. After opening the Singapore branch of the Bank of Taiwan in 1912, he pushed forward a series of survey tours aimed at investigating the trade and financial system in the region. These surveys demonstrated the supremacy of the Chinese's far-flung wholesaling and retailing networks in the Dutch East Indies, the American Philippines, French Indo-China, Siam as well as British Malaya. These investigations also revealed the importance of Western banks in Singapore to Chinese remittances from the South Seas. Apart from the Japanese Bank of Taiwan and the local Chinese/Teochew's Sze Hai Tong Bank, the ten most popular Singaporean banks used for Chinese remittances were run with British, German, Dutch or French capital. The British Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation was the most popular among these because of its good connections with remittance houses in Hong Kong, the other British colony in Asia.³⁶ In other words, the Taiwan-based Japanese bank learned that the overseas Chinese in the South Seas (Jpn. *nan'yō kakyō*) were neither inferior *shina* people nor were they all exploited subjects in the Western colonies. Rather, the Chinese merchants in the region were taking advantage of the prosperous intra-Asian trade under the auspices of the Western colonial status quo (see Figs. 7.2 and 7.3).

35 Nan'yō Dantai Rengōkai, 1943.

36 Taiwan ginkō, 1914: 117.

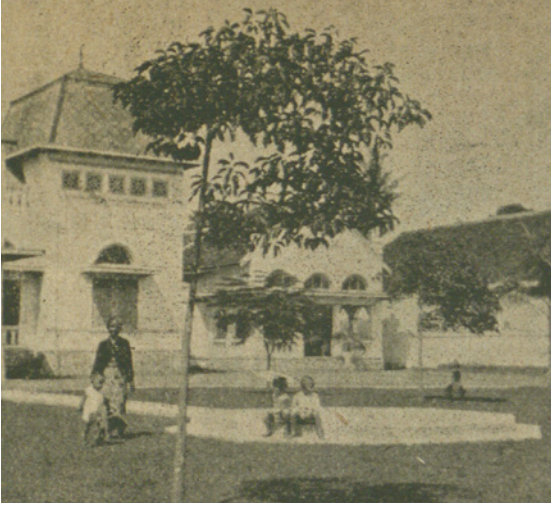


FIGURE 7.2 *Japanese images of Chinese prosperity: A residential house in Java.*³⁷
COURTESY OF THE ARCHIVAL OFFICE OF THE INSTITUTE OF TAIWAN HISTORY, ACADEMIA SINICA, TAIWAN.



FIGURE 7.3 *Japanese images of Chinese prosperity: A commercial center in Saigon.*³⁸
COURTESY OF THE ARCHIVAL OFFICE OF THE INSTITUTE OF TAIWAN HISTORY, ACADEMIA SINICA, TAIWAN.

37 Miyoshi, 1942: 440.

38 Miyoshi, 1942: 449.

In January 1915, Uchida Kakichi, together with the Diet member Den Kenjirō, launched the ad hoc association for Japan's southward economic advance, the South Sea Association (the officially registered English name for the Japanese *Nan'yō Kyōkai*). The head office was set up in Tokyo. Unlike the broad geographical concern of the East Seas Association, the South Sea Association focused specifically on Japan's southern economic interests. The association's founding statement read as follows:

In the huge South Sea island areas, including Java, Sumatra, Borneo, the Celebes, the Malay Peninsula and the Philippines, an area of more one million square miles, rich treasures await exploration by the world's peoples. We Japanese in particular would be able to utilize our close geographical and historical connections with the region for its economic development. The current investment of massive amounts of capital and labor in this area will be beneficial to our future. . . . This association aims to understand South Seas affairs in order to develop them. This development will improve the goodwill of our people as well as contribute to the world's civilizations. Bear in mind that the people of the South Seas Islands have poor knowledge and ideas of our citizens and know more about the Europeans and Americans who came from afar. The people in the South Seas ought to know our country [to the same extent as they know about the Europeans and Americans'] . . .³⁹

It was clear that Japan considered the South Seas as the backyard of the Japanese empire, and a zone that Japan, but not the Western powers, should obliged to develop. In order to dispatch more Japanese to developmental and colonial ventures in the South Seas, the South Sea Association's newsletter, *Nan'yō Kyōkai Zasshi*, provided a rich collection of commercial reports about the region. By the end of World War I, the association set up two branches in Taipei (1915) and Singapore (1916). During the 1920s, six more offices were opened in Surabaya (1921), Palau (1923), Manila (1925), Davao (1929), Sumatra (1930) and Bangkok (1936). Between 1922 and 1936, the Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan supported nearly half of the Association's budget and quite a few Taiwanese elites became directors in its Taiwan branch.⁴⁰ In 1918, the Department of Commerce and Industry in Tokyo financed the establishment of the Singapore Commercial Showcase, which was affiliated with the South Sea Association's Singapore office. The Singapore Commercial Showcase had

39 *Nan'yō Kyōkai*, 1917: 1.

40 *Nan'yō Kyōkai Zasshi*: various issues.

an exhibition room meant for the display of Japanese commodities. It also offered apprenticeships for Japanese students wishing to learn the Malay and Dutch languages as well as the customs and cultures of the South Seas. Kimura Masutarō, a graduate of Kyoto University's Department of Economics, became its first director. Kimura's Taiwan connection is also worth noting: he took part in the Old Customs Survey in 1909. In 1912, he began working for the Department of Commerce and Industry at the Developmental and Colonial Bureau of the Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan before assuming his mission in Singapore.⁴¹

The Japanese advocates of the southward advance pointed out the importance of working with overseas Chinese in the region. Inoue Masaji, for example, became a founding member of the South Sea Association. He pinpointed that “[b]ecause the *shina* people [sic] had long since migrated to the South Seas, the region's business power was in their hands.”⁴² The issue thus became the ways in which the Japanese could seek economic opportunities against the background of the Chinese domination of South Seas trade. Kwik Djoen Eng (Guo Chunyang), one of the Association's directors and a Hokkien merchant active in the sugar trade between Java and Hong Kong, as well as the tea trade between Java and Taiwan, suggested that Japanese officials “take care of the moral dimension in order to cultivate the emotional bondage.” For him, this was the surest way in which the overseas Chinese would be willing to cooperate with the Japanese.⁴³

Kwik further proposed that among all the overseas Chinese in the South Seas, Japan should specifically work with the Fujianese, not just because “most wealthy merchants in the South Seas came from Fujian,” but also because they “had the most special feeling toward the Japanese.”⁴⁴ By Fujian, Kwik was referring to the Hokkien speech-group originating from Fujian's southeastern coast (and to which he himself belonged). Hokkien, the major speech-group of the Chinese in Taiwan as well as that of those involved in the South Seas trade, thus became a special kind of Chinese in the agenda of Japan's southward advance during the late 1910s. In 1919, Koku Ryōgo, who had directed the missionary work of the Higashi Honganji in Amoy and Zhangzhou, Fujian, conducted another survey under the supervision of the Secretariat of the Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan.⁴⁵ Koku Ryōgo's work attributed the success

41 Chung, 2012.

42 Inoue, 1917: 200.

43 Guo, 1919: 42–43. For Kwik's business and political connections, see also Lin 2001.

44 Guo, 1919: 43.

45 For Koku Ryōgo's work at Higashi Honganji in Fujian, see Kan, 2011: 116–118.

of the Hokkien, and especially those originating from the Quanzhou area, in South Seas trade to the distinct Hokkien racial and cultural traits: the mixture between southward Han migrants and indigenous non-Han people in the region.⁴⁶ He argued that “the enterprising spirit became prevalent here due to the barren land. Both men and women worked enduringly and diligently. They were thus more successful in overseas emigration.”⁴⁷ It is worth noting that both of the two properties that define the unique traits of the Quanzhou Hokkien—the mixture of Han and non-Han racial stocks as well as the active engagement in South Seas trade and migration—had also been documented in the survey of the Cantonese in Guangdong and Guangxi compiled by the Bank of Taiwan in 1923.⁴⁸

In May 1919, when Sino-Japanese diplomatic clashes at the Paris Peace Conference triggered a surge in Chinese anti-Japanese feelings, Kimura Masutarō advised the Japanese southern expansionists about the challenges that Japan was facing: in order to secure the newly gained economic interests in the South Seas, Japan should be ready to compete with the returning European powers as well as to deal with the long-established Chinese business networks. Because the Chinese merchants had aligned themselves with the European powers, the two challenges to Japanese influence in the South Seas were two sides of the same coin.⁴⁹ During the following year, in a lecture he delivered at the Taiwan Branch of the South Sea Association, Kimura stressed the importance for Japanese to plug into Chinese retailing networks. Given the political chaos in China, overseas Chinese merchants in the region did not receive any support from their home country. Kimura therefore concluded that Japan needed to cooperate with the Chinese in the South Seas so that their joint efforts could stand a chance of challenging Western interests in the region.⁵⁰

These arguments were brought forth in order to support the Japan-China goodwill and friendship (Jpn. *nisshi shinzen*) agenda. In addition to the list of South Sea Association offices stated above, three more branches of the Bank of Taiwan were opened in the Dutch East Indies by 1920: Surabaya (1915), Semarang (1917), and Batavia (1918). All three were important port-cities

46 He estimated that “40 percent of the local population were Han Chinese, while the rest were descendants of the ancient Min people. However, through 2,000 years of assimilation, the mixture with Han racial blood became universal.” Koku, 1919: 45.

47 Koku, 1919: 45.

48 Taiwan Ginkō chōsa-ka, 1923: 2.

49 Kimura, 1919: 32–40.

50 Kimura, 1920: 9–21.

where the Hokkien dominated intra-Asian trade and finance. The Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan also sponsored the establishment of the Kanan Ginkō (established 1919) as well as the Southern Godown House (est. 1920). The former was to provide loans to middle and small scale Chinese businesses as well as to Japanese enterprises in south China and the South Seas, while the latter aimed to deepen Japanese economic contacts with Chinese long-distance merchants. Taiwanese elites from the 'big five families' were invited to invest in and to manage these companies.⁵¹

Apparently, Japan was playing the "Hokkien card." Japan's idea was to dispatch the Taiwanese elites to connect with influential Hokkien merchants in the South Seas so the latter could support Japan. In September 1923, the Singaporean Hokkien elite under the leadership of the notable rubber tycoon Tan Kah Kee organized a fundraising campaign to support the victims of the Tokyo Earthquake.⁵² Tan, a Chinese-born Hokkien and a naturalized British subject based in Singapore, was among the most influential Hokkiens in the region. In January 1926, the Japanese intelligence organ's newsletter *Takushoku tsūshinsha* described Tan's charities in detail. Above all, the report praised Tan's establishment of Jimei School and Amoy University in Fujian, China. In the Amoy University case in particular, the Japanese report credited the president Lim Boon Keng, whom Tan entrusted. Japan appreciated Lim for his "understanding of Japan's position" and his fine leadership that prevented the university from being involved in the turmoil of the anti-Japanese movement that had erupted in the city on and on and off basis in the course of the past decade.⁵³

Chinese Anti-Japanese Nationalism and Japanese Discourses on South Seas Chinese, 1928–1936

Tan Kah Kee became the most influential Chinese anti-Japanese nationalist leader in the South Seas after 1928. In May of that year, the Chinese Nationalist Government in Nanjing dispatched troops to fight against warlords in North China. While marching to Jinan, Shandong, the troops clashed with the Japanese Kwantung Army. The clash in Shandong alerted the Chinese about Japan's anti-unification agenda against China. Consequently, and in the follow-

51 Kuo, 2011: 117–118.

52 Kuo, 2014: 97–98.

53 Takushoku Tsūshinsha, 1926: 18–19.

ing months, waves of anti-Japanese boycotts were organized by the Chinese in major South Seas cities.

If Tan Kah Kee's mid-1920s support of Japan indicated the success its tactic of using Taiwan to connect with the overseas Hokkiens' business circles in the South Seas, Tan's turn to Chinese nationalism after May 1928 reminded Japan how precarious speech-group identity had become in the age of high Chinese nationalism. In the wave of anti-Japanese movements in 1928, Chinese communities in Singapore boycotted all Japanese interests including the Taiwanese. Referring to Japanese products as "inferior goods" (Ch. *liehuo*), Chinese nationalists avoided them altogether. The timing of the large-scale anti-Japanese movements in Singapore in spring 1928 corresponded with a slump in rubber prices on the global market, leading to a high rate of unemployment and an economic decline in the colony. From 1928 and throughout the 1930s, the decrease in the export of Japanese rubber goods, and especially rubber-soled canvas shoes as well as Japanese textiles, hit Chinese shoe manufacturers and dealers of British textiles particularly hard. It should therefore hardly be surprising that the most outspoken leaders of the nationalist movements in this period were either rubber tycoons, most of them Hokkien, or dealers in British textiles, most of them Teochew.⁵⁴ At the same time, those who continued to import Japanese goods to local Singaporean markets were Cantonese merchants. These operated their trade directly between Japan (especially Kobe and Osaka) and the South Seas (especially along the Kobe/Osaka-Singapore circuit), competing with the interests of the Japanese *zaibatsu*. At the same time, however, the Chinese nationalists perceived Cantonese trade as a betrayal of the Chinese national interest. The Cantonese thus also became the target of anti-Japanese nationalist movements.⁵⁵

The crystallization of anti-Japanese movements led by the overseas Chinese bourgeoisie took place after the Japanese bombing of Shanghai in 1932, and even more so after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War five years later. The economic effectiveness of the anti-Japanese boycotts in Singapore in 1928 and 1937 is evident (see Fig. 7.4). The slump in exports from Japan interrupted the expansion of Japanese goods in Singapore's markets between 1929 and 1932 as well as between 1938 and 1939. The exports of Japanese goods to Singapore continued during the Chinese anti-Japanese movement in 1932 because the depreciation of the Japanese *yen* made cheap Japanese goods a popular choice among the local Chinese population who had been suffering from the economic downturn.

54 Kuo, 2006: 107–113.

55 Kuo, 2011: 124–127.

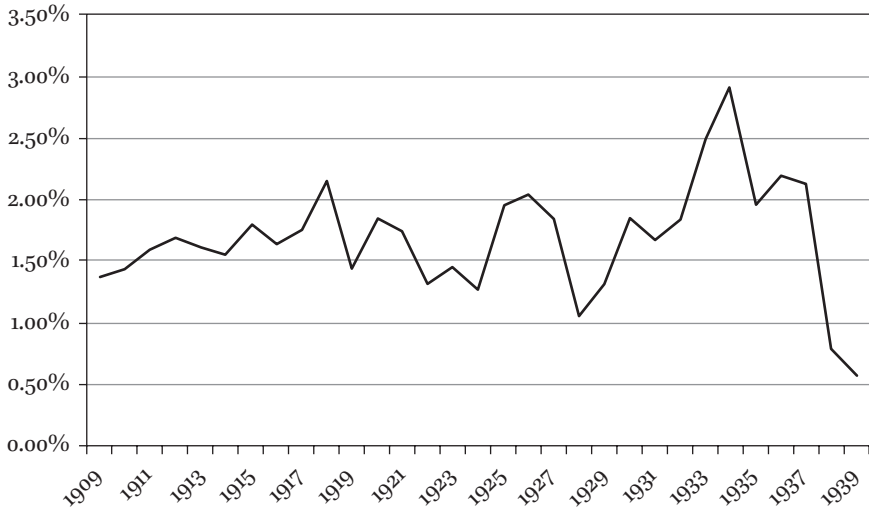


FIGURE 7.4 *Japan's share of exports to the Straits Settlements, 1909–1939.*⁵⁶

After 1928, the exclusion of Japanese South Seas interests in general, and Japanese Singaporean interests in particular, affected the Japanese categorization of the South Seas Chinese. From that point onwards, the construction of Japanese racial discourses about the overseas Chinese in the region began to emphasize their different political dispositions. In a report published in the *Nan'yō Kyōkai Zasshi* in 1929, Murakami Hiro argued that the anti-Japanese boycotts served to remind Japan that the organized power of the South Seas Chinese could be not only economically competitive but also politically threatening. The recognition of overseas Chinese political strength resonated with the main argument of Inoue Masaji's 1899 thesis *shina-ron*, which was reprinted in 1930. However, and unlike Inoue's positive assessment of the overseas Chinese's contribution to China's anti-dynastic revolution, Murakami believed that the ongoing anti-Japanese political activities would only marginalize the status of the overseas Chinese in the South Seas and would jeopardize the formation of pan-Asian solidarity. He argued that the anti-Japanese Chinese nationalists did not represent the interests of the majority of Malayan Chinese. The majority, in his words, "have a gracious manner and are diligent and frugal."

Murakami used the term "ethnic characters" to highlight how these apolitical attitudes were inherently Chinese.⁵⁷ Analyzing the changes in Chinese

⁵⁶ *Nihon teikoku tōkei nenkan*, 33–58, covering the years 1909–1939.

⁵⁷ Murakami, 1929: 33–36.

politics from an international perspective, Japanese pan-Asianist intellectuals in the homeland believed that the consolidation of Chinese politics under the Chinese Nationalist Government would strengthen the Western imperialist ambition to subjugate Japan. For example, the outspoken pan-Asianist intellectual Ōkawa Shūmei argued that while Turkey, India and other old Asian empires were successful in restoring their national spirits from the distortion of western ideas, the post-1928 Chinese Nationalist Government imported Euro-American thoughts without any critical reservations.⁵⁸ Mitsukawa Kametarō argued that the Euro-American powers were trying to suffocate Japan's development in two ways: the state of British power after the end of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1923 had curtailed the development of the Japanese navy, and the US Immigration Act of 1924 added Japan, along with China and Korea, to the "Asiatic barred zone." According to the latter policy, residents from this zone were prohibited from applying for immigration.⁵⁹

From 1928 and throughout the 1930s, the political influence of China on the South Seas became imminent. In 1930, Kimura Masutarō defined the South Seas Chinese as sojourners who had left the sovereignty of the Republic of China. The emphasis on their Chinese statehood marked a departure from the previous focus on their economic function and racial/ethnic dissemination from south China.⁶⁰ At this point, a report published by the Japanese bank Kanan Ginkō showed a loss of half of the Chinese shareholders from the board of directors in 1919 (the year the bank was founded). While the collapse of Suzuki Shōten (a *zaibatsu* engaged in trading Taiwanese rice, camphor and sugar) in 1927 and the Malayan rubber export crisis during in the Great Depression of the 1930s might be more immediate reasons for the loss, Kimura suggested that the surging Chinese anti-Japanese movements directly discouraged Chinese merchants from investing in Japanese companies. In writing on Japan-China goodwill and friendship, Kimura did not use the conventional word *shi* as in the derogatory *shina* for China. He used *ka* as the respectful *chuka* (Ch. *Zhonghua*) for China.⁶¹

58 Ōkawa, 1927: 2–6.

59 Mitsukawa, 1927: 9–17.

60 Kimura, 1930, 19–32.

61 Between 1919 and 1930, the bank was cooperatively managed by both Chinese and Japanese. In 1919, Chinese shareholders controlled 48,800 of a total of 100,000 shares, or 48.8 percent of all shares, with the remaining 51.2 percent in the hands of Japanese shareholders (Kanan Ginkō, 1930: 16). In 1930, the amount of Chinese shares declined to 12,503 of a total of 50,000 shares, or 25 percent of the total shares, leaving the Japanese with the other 75 percent. When the bank was established in January 1919, ten out of 22 board members were Chinese, but only 5 out of 14 were Chinese in 1930 (Kanan Ginkō, 1930: 17).

In the early 1930s, a change in Japan's assessments of the overseas Chinese's economic strength became apparent. Japan argued that the success of Chinese merchants in the South Seas came at the expense of the natives' livelihood. Taking the Malaya marine goods trade as an example, the Japanese saw that Chinese merchants controlled the loans and grocery supplies of entire fishermen's villages. Local fishermen, therefore, had no alternative but to sell their products to the Chinese regardless of the prices.⁶²

Against this backdrop, Kobayashi Shinsaku's 1931 monograph on the South Seas Chinese, published in Tokyo, created a new way of thinking. He emphasized the biological changes undergone by the Chinese after settling in the South Seas: new migrants from China, or the China-born migrants (Jpn. *shinkyaku*; literally 'new guests'), were more diligent than the Malay-born creolized Baba Chinese who had settled in the South Seas and assimilated within the Malays for generations. He offered a two-fold explanation: first, a stronger motivation for new Chinese migrants to work harder because most of them were "penniless workers;" and second, the fact that "the biological characteristics [of new migrants from China] had not yet been tamed by the tropical hot summer."⁶³ The emphasis on the differences between the Chinese-born and Malay-born Chinese resonated with the political challenge Japan had to face: the majority of Chinese nationalists active in the anti-Japanese boycotts were China-born Chinese, the first generation of migrants from China.⁶⁴ For these his, article provided a list of stereotypical character sketches, like the "entrepreneurial," "endurable," and "mercantile" Hokkien;⁶⁵ the "most diligent" and "bellicose" Teochew;⁶⁶ and the "quick and smart," "adroit" as well as "better educated" Cantonese.⁶⁷

Southern Chinese as Non-Han Races, 1936–1941

By the mid-1930s, Japan had adjusted its strategy towards deepening its control of the South Seas. Continuing what Kobayashi Shinsaku emphasized about the exploitative nature of overseas Chinese businesses towards the South Sea natives, Japan sought to establish alternative economic partnerships with non-

62 Kanan Ginkō, 1932: 3–11. See also Masubuchi, 1930: 32–33; Watanabe, 1934.

63 Kobayashi, 1931: 88–89; 94–95.

64 Kobayashi, 1931: 92; 97; 320.

65 Kobayashi, 1931: 90–91.

66 Kobayashi, 1931: 91.

67 Kobayashi, 1931: 92.

Chinese groups—including the Arabian, Indian and Javanese merchants—in the region.⁶⁸ Alongside the aggressive Japanese military expansion in coastal China including Fujian and Guangdong after 1938, more and more studies on the South Seas Chinese focused on the tactics that Japan could apply to control the region. Postwar scholars have suggested that the announcement of an uncompromising military preparedness, “Standards of National Policy,” during Hirota Kōki’s Five Minister Conference on 7 August 1936 can be seen as the end of Japan’s earlier, economically-based, developmental and colonial mission in the South Seas.⁶⁹ In this phase of southward expansion, orders from Tokyo took the lead. In January 1939, the South Sea Association became a legally incorporated foundation under the direct supervision of Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as its Ministry of Colonial Affairs.⁷⁰ Nonetheless, Japanese bureaucrats who had earlier promoted a developmental and colonial agenda, alongside those with a working experience in Taiwan, remained a crucial source of information on overseas Chinese in the South Seas. In this regard, such figures as Tanaka Zenryū, Ide Kiwata and Inoue Masaji can be seen as representative.

Tanaka, who published *Taiwan to minami shina* in 1913, became the vice-chairperson of the Tokyo-based Southern Industry Research Society (Jpn. *Nanpō Sangyō Chōsakai*) in 1941 and its chairperson in 1942. This association was established in 1936. In its founding year, a statement in *Nanshin*, an official organ of the Southern Industry Research Society, claimed that “Japan’s southern policies were not precursors of Japan’s southern aggression.”⁷¹ However, by the time Tanaka came to chair the association, Japan had already confronted with these Western powers in the South Seas by military means. In light of the new political reality, Tanaka emphasized the economic role of the South Seas Chinese and argued that they should view themselves as economic fighters.⁷² The inconsistency between the military expansion and Tanaka’s ideas points to a disparity between the empire’s overall plan and the southern colonialists’ view of the issue. Apparently, the latter could do nothing to stop the military aggressions.

Ide Kiwata, whose ideas have been summarized at the beginning of the present chapter, was an expert on Chinese economy, language and philosophy. At around the time he was working on the monograph *Taiwan chiseki-shi* (Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan), which was published in 1937, he had also

68 Kuo, 2006: 114–115. See also Post & Touwen-Bousam, 1997.

69 See, for example, Yano, 1975; Hotta, 2007.

70 Kawarabayashi, 2007: 121.

71 *Nanshin henshū i'inkai*, 1936: 2.

72 Tanaka, 1943: 41–42.

been writing a series of articles and books on the southern Chinese and their overseas counterparts in the South Seas. In these writings, Ide used the terms 'racial group' and 'ethnic group' interchangeably. He argued that the southern Chinese ethnicity (Jpn. *minami shina minzoku*) was a distinct non-Han group with a certain amount of Han racial stock. His thesis on north-south assimilation thus appears to be consistent with earlier Japanese writers on China. But while the earlier works, including Tanaka Zenryū's, emphasized the eventual Han dominance in the south, Ide highlighted the continued influence of non-Han endowments in the making of southern Chinese ethnicity. He argued that the majority of the Hokkien who settled in the South Seas were not really Han Chinese, since the Hokkien people worshipped dogs, given that they believed that their ancestors were dog-headed men. Long term intermarriages between this indigenous non-Han race and those Han Chinese who settled in the south made the former the dominant among the two. Similarly, his comments on the Cantonese pointed out that the origin of the Cantonese racial group remained an unsettled issue.⁷³ In short, he argued that under the category of southern Chinese, the Hokkien ethnic group (Jpn. *Fukken minzoku*) and Cantonese ethnic group (*Kantōn minzoku*) were two distinct non-Han races. The categorization of a spate of different non-Han Chinese races in South China and the South Seas had obvious political implications for Ide. Since a singular Han-Chinese race did not really exist, the Chinese nationalist demand for building a Chinese nation-state was rendered invalid. Ide thus proposed that Japan should administer Fujian and Guangdong separately.

Ide did not look at the southern ethnic groups as less civilized than the Han Chinese based in the north. One of the important sources that he cited was a monograph by Hakka anthropologist Xu Songshi, entitled *History of the People of the Yue River Basin* (Ch. *Yuejiang liuyu renmin shi*). Xu argued that the Chinese racial disparagement against non-Han people was a result of "four thousand years of northern hegemony."⁷⁴ Xu's confidence might be related to his own family's overseas achievements: his father financed the anti-dynastic revolution through fortunes accumulated from investing in mining and rubber industries in Singapore.⁷⁵ Ide later translated Xu Songshi's work and published it under the title *Minami Shina minzoku-shi* (history of Southern Chinese people) in 1941. The publication of the Japanese translation of Xu's work took place

73 See, for example, Ide, 1938a: 25–36; Ide, 1938b: 34–44; Ide, 1940: 34–40; Ide, 1941: 36–43; and Ide, 1942a.

74 Xu, 1939: 27.

75 Yang & Xie, 2006: 13–15.

on the eve of Japan's conquest of British Hong Kong and Singapore as well as other Western colonies in the South Seas.

Throughout the Pacific War, Ide called for the Japanese empire to continue working with the overseas Chinese in the South Seas trade. "The fundamental strategy for dealing with the overseas Chinese in the South Seas was to recruit them in the development of the East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere under our guidance and control... [We have] to protect their existing economic interests, issue permissions for them to engage in various investments, encourage migration and regulate labor relations..."⁷⁶ He thus criticized the policies that "called them [overseas Chinese] bloodsuckers to emphasize the dimensions of their exploitative nature, especially in terms of their competition with those Japanese merchants trading in the south... This goes against the principle of achieving great harmony and solidarity among the East Asian Peoples."⁷⁷

This was certainly an original Japanese view. While Ide's racial categorization of the southern Chinese was in line with Western works, such as the theories proposed by German sinologist Otto Franke and the studies made by American eugenicist Ellsworth Huntington, his concern about the expansion of southern Chinese—from Fujian and Guangdong in South China to Taiwan and the South Seas—was to a large extent based on Japan's developmental and colonial experiences over the course of its Meiji era expansion. The emphasis on the southern non-Han origins of the Chinese in the South Seas manifested the teleology of incorporating these Chinese into the Japan-led East Asian New Order in a manner unlike what Japan was doing in the rest of China. Moreover, the way Japan had transformed the Taiwanese as members of the Japanese empire encapsulated the future for the other southern Chinese groups in the South Seas. Alongside the Japanese takeover of coastal cities in South China, Ide also provided some insights Japan could use in formulating the tactics of governing Chinese belonging to different speech-group backgrounds.

Ide's perspective reflected the Japanese interest in explaining cultural and political differences in racial terms, as well as the Japanese agenda of ruling different races under different administrative units. This was not the only place in which it was applied, however. A 1938 report of the Taiwanese Greater Asiatic Association (Jpn. *Taiwan Dai-Ajia Kyōkai*) pointed out that the Hokkien in Fujian and the Cantonese in Guangdong belonged to very different ethnicities. It claimed that "[Their distinctions] were like the differences between dogs and monkeys. They do not like each other."⁷⁸ Although the rhetoric of such

76 Ide, 1942b: 176–184.

77 Ide, 1943: 386.

78 Taiwan Dai-Ajia Kyōkai, 1938: 27.

comparisons was hard to understand in literal terms, its policy implications were clear: Japan's governance in South China should separate Fujian province from the Southern Chinese Government. The latter should administer the four provinces of Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan and Guizhou, with Guangdong as the center, while Fujian should be an independent administrative unit.⁷⁹ This should be done in order to accommodate the Hokkien's special ethnic characteristics, as well as to take advantage of "the geographical adjacency and shared racial and ethnic ties between people of Fujian and Taiwan."⁸⁰

At this stage, the southern Chinese's non-Han endowments became a catchword in discussions of Japan's new role in the South Seas (see Fig. 7.5). The long term pan-Asian activist Inoue Masaji laid out the importance of studying the non-Han dynasties in China, as well as the contribution of East-West exchanges to the rise of the overseas Chinese. When he established his Inoue Research Institute for Ethnic Policy (Jpn. *Inoue minzoku seisaku kenkyūjo*) in 1940, he stated that the purpose of examining world history should be to "assess the merits and flaws of the expansion of the Han and Tang Dynasties, the governances of the Liao, Jin, Yuan and Qing in China and the motivations for overseas Chinese advancement. Moreover, it should also evaluate the approach of

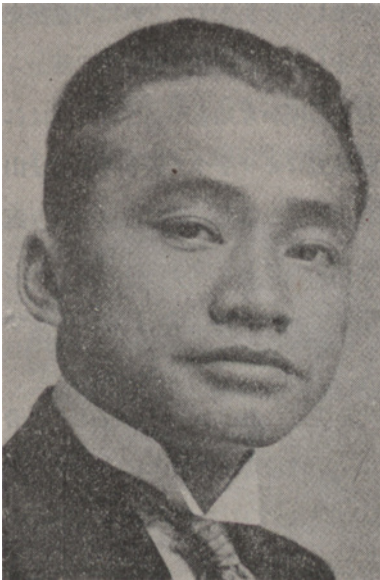


FIGURE 7.5 *The essence of racial typology: A Japanese sample photo of a Southern Chinese male.*⁸¹

COURTESY OF THE ARCHIVAL OFFICE OF THE INSTITUTE OF TAIWAN HISTORY, ACADEMIA SINICA, TAIWAN.

79 Taiwan Dai-Ajia Kyōkai, 1938: 26.

80 Taiwan Dai-Ajia Kyōkai, 1938: 27.

81 Kanaseki, 1938: 51.

Western power to the East, the white men's control of the world, the surrender of China and Japan to Great Britain, as well as the reasons for the latter's current decline. . . ."⁸² Like other Japanese wartime writings, Inoue also explicitly expressed his admiration for the ethnic policies (Jpn. *minzoku seisaku*) of Nazi Germany: "We are currently witnessing the rise of Germany by way of an ethnic policy that dominated world history" and "by the proclaimed pursuit of the pure blood of a people for national improvement under Hitler's leadership. Is this not what we should adopt as a model with our full hearts and minds?"⁸³ Despite the aforementioned comment, the majority of his discussion about "prospering Asia" focuses solely on trade, and specifically on the experiences of Japan's overseas investments in Asia and on strategies of how to engage in entrepreneurial activities on a worldwide scale.⁸⁴ The issues of ethnic transformation and racial purity are almost completely ignored.

Conclusions

Most of the studies that examined Meiji and post-Meiji Japan's racial discourses seem to focus on intellectual movements. This chapter, however, emphasizes the insights on the southern Chinese "races" provided by promoters of Japan's developmental and colonial policies. Based on their experiences of interacting with the Chinese in Taiwan and the South Seas, these promoters offered proposals for the formulation of Japan's tactics during different stages of the empire's expansion to the South Seas. Between 1895 and 1914, the Office of the Governor General of Taiwan played a critical role in shaping the agenda of Japan's economic expansion to the region. As Japan applied its knowledge of South China in order to establish its colonial policies in Taiwan, its view of the South Seas Chinese thus entailed the assumption of a continuous South China-Taiwan-South Seas space in which the Hokkien speech-group constituted the core network. Between 1914 and 1928, Japan employed key Taiwanese elites, all belonging to the Hokkien speech-group, in order to plug into the Hokkien merchant networks in the South Seas. The understanding of Chinese entrepreneurship in the region helped Japan modify its derogatory view of the Chinese.

During that stage, Japan nonetheless believed the existence of an all-encompassing Han Chinese racial category, of which the Hokkien and other

82 Inoue, 1943: 433.

83 Inoue, 1943: 434.

84 Inoue, 1940; 1943: 1–384.

southern speech-groups formed but a part. However, this tenet changed in the third stage of Japanese expansion, viz. between 1928 and 1936. In the midst of the post-1928 surging Chinese anti-Japanese boycotts, the South Seas Hokkien stopped considering the Taiwanese as fellow Hokkien speakers but as collaborators with Japanese interests. The Cantonese continued to sell Japanese goods but did so in a way that competed with the Japanese *zaibatsu*. It was in dealing with the rise of Chinese anti-Japanese nationalism that Japan learned about the different political dispositions among the southern Chinese speech-groups. The racial discourses developed in this stage thus stressed that the southern Chinese races were not part of a generic Han Chinese ethnicity. Finally, during the fourth stage, between 1936 and 1941, when Japan appeared to be a military expansionist, its racial discourses presented the southern Chinese as a collection of incongruous tribes organized primarily along speech-group lines. They were also viewed as being unlike the rest of the Chinese. At this stage, the Japanese goal was to nullify the Chinese nationalists' advocacy for a singular Han Chinese race-lineage.

At first glance, Japan presented itself as a follower of Western imperialist powers in its adoption of race for classifying the Other. Throughout the Meiji, Taishō and early Shōwa eras, the majority of Japanese writings called the Chinese by the demeaning term *shina-jin*, and treated the South Seas region as an underdeveloped zone awaiting its mission of civilization. However, a closer examination of Japan's changing classifications of the overseas Chinese races in the South Seas suggests that Japan's use of racial theories was not necessarily aimed at proving the essential superiority of the Yamato state, nor was it simply a tool for justifying the empire's expansion. Unlike the West, Japan's racial classification aimed to forge an Asian solidarity and to erode the Western imperialist influences in the region. From Japan's perspective, the rise of Chinese anti-Japanese movements in the region after 1928 would reinforce the domination of Western powers in Asia given the connections between the Chinese Nationalist Government and the Anglo-American powers. Along these lines, the replacement of a speech-group identity by the supposed generic Han identity advocated by the Chinese nationalist movements would generate obstacles for Japan's work with each individual speech-group. Overseas Chinese nationalism was thus an impediment to the establishment of an 'Asian Asia'.

It was against this backdrop that Ide Kiwata, Tanaka Zenryū, Inoue Masaji and their ilk emphasized the racial differences among southern Chinese speech-groups. These colonial bureaucrats could obviously not sustain a peaceful trading environment between South China and the South Seas due to the growing conflicts which occurred between 1928 and 1941. And yet, this

failure should not erode the distinct Japanese observations of South China, Taiwan and the South Seas, where the differences among the diverse southern Chinese speech-groups, as well as the latter's relationship with the Japanese, could be considered in racial, but not hierarchal terms. Japan's appreciation of southern Chinese entrepreneurship and its reverence of Chinese culture at the dawn of the Pacific War points to the continuity of Japan's earlier pan-Asian thought—The latter's emphasis on a common ground between the Japanese and Chinese reflected a distinct tactic that Japan, as a latecomer to global capitalism, as well as a late expansionist in colonial Asia, had adopted to catch up and to compete with the West.

“The Great Question of the World Today”: Britain, the Dominions, East Asian Immigration and the Threat of Race War, 1905–1911

Antony Best

Over the past decade the discipline of international history has become more conscious of the need to address the significance of race as a factor in the shaping of world affairs. In regard to the study of East Asia, this has manifested itself in two ways; first, in the growth of interest in Pan-Asianism, and, second, in the study of the transnational consequences of the concept of ‘whiteness’, in other words the degree to which the ‘white’ nations on the fringes of the Pacific began to evolve a common sense of community and purpose in response to a perceived Asian threat to their identity.¹ For a field in which historians, bar the work of Akira Iriye, have often neglected the importance of racial difference, except during wartime, this has been an important and welcome development.² It has meant that a crucial dynamic has been added to our understanding of the West’s interaction with the region, which for too long was dominated simply by a focus on power-political considerations.

In particular, this has been the case in regard to the period immediately prior to the outbreak of World War I. As with other dramatic turning points in history, this war is such a vast event that it has tended to obscure our ability to comprehend what the world was like before the conflict broke out; such events by their very nature force us to think in a teleological fashion, in other words “all roads lead to Sarajevo.” Accordingly, it is not easy to appreciate the issues, other than tensions with Germany, that dogged Western diplomats and statesmen at the time. The work on ‘whiteness’ has, however, helped us to understand that in the decade before Europe descended into its blood-letting, one of the issues that dominated political discourse in the United States, Canada and

1 The main studies of pan-Asianism in English are Li & Cribb, 2003; Esenbel, 2004; Aydin, 2007; Saaler & Koschmann 2007; Hotta, 2007; and Matsuura, 2010. For ‘whiteness’ as a transnational concept, see Lake and Reynolds, 2008; and also the pioneering work by Brawley, 1995.

2 For Iriye’s writings and influence, see Iriye, 1967, 1975. Christopher Thorne and John Dower have also dealt with the significance of race, but their focus is on wartime, when propaganda naturally stresses racial antagonism, see Thorne, 1980; and Dower, 1986.

Australia was that of East Asian immigration and the fear of race war, and that this, in turn, led to tensions with Japan. Moreover, if one puts this new interpretation of the pre-1914 period alongside another recent book, Erez Manela's *The Wilsonian Moment*, which deals with unrest in Asia and Africa in 1919, one can then see the First World War as both an interregnum and a multiplying factor in the developing competition between the ‘white’ and non-white worlds.³ What, though, is lacking in the picture that has been developed thus far is how ‘the great immigration crisis’ of the late 1900s affected the state with the most to lose from this development; in other words the power that was caught between the Scylla of the demands of its white kith and kin in the Dominions and the United States, and the Charybdis of the need to appease its strategically vital Japanese ally—Great Britain.

Immigration and “the Awakening of Asia”

In 1905, during the negotiations for the new Anglo-Japanese alliance, the British prime minister, Arthur Balfour, noted to his Cabinet colleagues, in regard to the issue of immigration, the absurdity of “allowing Australia and other Colonies to treat our Japanese allies as belonging to an inferior race.”⁴ He thus asked, rhetorically, whether it was worth pressing the Dominions on this issue, but concluded that it was probably best to ignore it in “the hope that, during the currency of the Treaty, it may not arise in an acute form.”⁵ This hope that the problem could simply be brushed under the carpet was, however, to prove unduly optimistic. In the years following the Russo-Japanese War, the question of East Asian immigration which had, up until then, been a minor irritation grew into a troubling and threatening conundrum which led to anti-Japanese violence and agitation on the west coast of the United States and Canada and rumblings of discontent in Australia and New Zealand. Of all the events that provoked concern, undoubtedly it was the anti-Japanese rioting that took place in Vancouver in British Columbia in September 1907 that most concentrated British minds, with the result that its fallout widely pervaded political debate in the press, parliament and behind closed doors in Whitehall down to the Imperial Conference of 1911.

The rise of this controversy over Japanese immigration was troubling in and of itself, because it necessarily cast a shadow on British relations with Japan.

3 Manela, 2007.

4 The National Archives (TNA), Kew, CAB1/5/27 Balfour note 31 May 1905.

5 The National Archives (TNA), Kew, CAB1/5/27 Balfour note 31 May 1905.

However, in order to understand its full implications it is necessary to look at the wider context in which it developed. First of all, it must be recognized that it was just one manifestation of a larger contemporary problem, namely how Britain should manage Asian immigration to the Dominions from both outside and within the British Empire. This issue had first come to prominence between 1903 and 1906 with the ill-tempered debate in British politics about the importing of indentured Chinese labor into South Africa. It had then escalated when it became apparent that the Dominions were increasingly opposed to Indian immigration, which flew in the face of the *civis romanus sum* principles of the British Empire.⁶ Indeed, the troubles in British Columbia in 1907 coincided with the start of Transvaal's heavy-handed efforts to prohibit an influx of migrants from India.

However, it is apparent that of all of the waves of Asian immigration it was that coming from Japan which caused the greatest concern in the Dominions. The reasons for this were threefold.⁷ First, the Japanese were perceived as more effective competitors than the Chinese for white skilled jobs in sectors of the economy such as fishing, farming and canning. In addition, they were a more potent challenge because, unlike the Chinese, they tended to immigrate with the intention of settling in their new home rather than staying temporarily in order merely to remit money back to their family. The second problem was that Japan, as a new Great Power, was perceived as clearly having the ability to react with force against any ill-treatment of its emigrants. Third, while the Chinese government had done relatively little to protect its overseas nationals, there was a fear that Japan, a country that was very sensitive about its international status, would be more assertive. Moreover, the very patriotism that had helped to fuel Japan's rise meant that Japanese immigrants tended to be seen as unable to express loyalty to their new home and to be a potential fifth column. In this sense they appeared to be a possible threat to national security in a way that Chinese and Indian immigrants were not and thus came to personify the 'yellow peril'. The existence, for the first time, of significant numbers of Japanese immigrants in North America therefore dramatically altered Dominion sentiment and led to pressure on Whitehall to negate the supposed threat.

In addition, this peak in Japanese immigration came at an inopportune moment because it coincided with a shift in racial thinking within Britain. As T.G. Otte has noted in his essay in the preceding volume in this series, in the late nineteenth century the concept of race had been used in British discourse in a very loose manner and the chief way of constructing a hierarchy of peoples

6 See Huttenback, 1976: 1–148.

7 This paragraph draws on Roy, 1989, Ward, 2002; and Daniels, 1962.

had been through a consideration of their civilizational achievements rather than their physiology.⁸ However, from the 1890s, under the influence of racial science, with the rise of Europe to an unforeseen and apparently unshakable dominance over the globe, and with a new interest developing in Anglo-Saxonism, a more overt focus on race as a means of differentiation between peoples had come to the fore.⁹ This, in turn, had led to division within Britain about how to view the Japanese. To some, such as the editorial staff of *The Times*, their achievements suggested that they were a non-white people who had, by and large, mastered modernity and progress and, as therefore exceptions to the racial rules, were progressive enough to be considered as British allies. A noisy minority, however, which included the editor of the *Spectator*, John St Loe Strachey (1860–1927), had deprecated the alliance in 1902 on the grounds that, behind their modern façade, the Japanese remained intrinsically Asian in character and thus constituted a ‘yellow peril’ that could not be trusted.¹⁰ The immigration scare thus played into the hands of those who were already disposed to treat the Japanese with suspicion as it appeared to demonstrate that their fears had not been misplaced.

Even this, however, was not the highest level of analysis, because the general issue of immigration was, in turn, just one aspect of a yet broader phenomenon—‘the awakening of Asia’. In this regard, it is important to see that British observers of Asian politics believed that Japan’s victory over Russia had exercised a catalytic effect on the continent as a whole. This was seen in the pressure for reform in the few remaining independent states and the rise of indigenous nationalism within the European colonies. One expression of the former came in China, where, in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War, the Chinese government appeared in the diplomatic field to be more intractable than before. For example, in 1905 nationalists and businessmen organized a boycott of American goods in retaliation for the latest immigration law passed by Congress, and this was quickly followed by protests about the governance of the International Settlement at Shanghai.¹¹

The most vital area of concern, however, was India where the latter half of the 1900s saw a new wave of violent agitation against British rule. In large part, this was a natural response to the recent program of ill-conceived reforms introduced by the viceroy, Lord Curzon, the most prominent being the partition of Bengal into two separate administrative areas. Some British observers

8 Otte, 2013.

9 Anderson, 1981.

10 Best, 2006.

11 Wang, 2001.

of the scene did not, though, see the development of this new militancy as simply a phenomenon created by bureaucratic ineptitude, but also pointed to the inspiration that Japan had provided to Asia. For example, in a House of Commons debate on Bengal in February 1906 T. Hart-Davies MP (Liberal, Hackney North) noted that “we were now living in the beginning of a great world-crisis” and that the new assertive spirit in the East that was epitomized by Japan would make the governance of India “a very anxious matter for many years to come.”¹² Two years later, during the debate on the address in January 1908, the Liberal MP for Stirlingshire and former Indian official, Donald Smeaton, while in part blaming Curzon for India’s instability, concurred with Hart-Davies’s sentiments, observing that the Indian crisis was also the result of “the entry of the Japanese nation into the sacred circle of Great Powers.”¹³

Some politicians were moved to put the problem in even more grandiose terms by bringing in references to unrest and the rise of nationalism in other Asian states, such as Persia and the Ottoman Empire, and even to extend the phenomenon to Egypt. In a House of Lords debate on India in June 1908 Curzon himself expressed the view that the Russo-Japanese War had galvanized the whole of Asia because this was:

... the first occasion for centuries in which in an open contest between East and West, between Europe and Asia, Asia has triumphed. The reverberations of that victory have echoed like a thunderclap through the whispering galleries of the East. They have produced the progressive movement in China; the constitutional movement in Persia . . . , and almost the whole of the activity that has been manifested in different parts of Central Asia. In India, I can certify, . . . that they gave an immense impetus to the racial feeling in that country.¹⁴

Meanwhile Lord Cromer, drawing on his experience as the pro-consul of Egypt between 1883 and 1907, presented the Lords with the image of Asia as a continent in turmoil where the progressive ideas of the West were clashing with the ingrained conservatism of Oriental societies and where no-one could predict the outcome of the attempt to fuse “conflicting elements” together. He too affirmed that one cause of this wave of unrest was the “recent Japanese war.”¹⁵ More broadly still, *The Times* pointed in January 1908 to the growth of a new

12 *Hansard*, 1906a.

13 *Hansard*, 1908a.

14 *Hansard*, 1908d.

15 *Hansard*, 1908b.

pan-Islamist movement, which it saw as drawing inspiration from "the rise of a great Asiatic Power in Japan," and in an Empire Day supplement in May 1909 devoted much of an essay on 'The Principles of Foreign Policy' to discussing the "awakening of Asia."¹⁶

The Prophets of Race War

Against this background, and in line with the argument made by Lake and Reynolds about 'whiteness', the rise of American-Japanese tensions over immigration from 1906 onwards, and then the outbreak of rioting in Vancouver, led some in Britain to preach of the need for the self-preservation of the 'white' race. Thus, as early as July 1907 Strachey commented in an editorial that he believed that "our duty in the last resort is to our own flesh and blood. We stand by our own people, and by the communities which form part of our Empire."¹⁷ Meanwhile, an anonymous writer in the *Fortnightly Review* in October 1907 reacted to news of the Vancouver riot, by warning that, "We touch here what may prove . . . the most sinister and colossal problem of twentieth century politics," and argued that "an unrestricted Asian invasion' that would lead to "the rapid submerging of white labour" had to be resisted.¹⁸ Similarly in the House of Commons in July 1908 the Canadian-born Liberal MP, Hamar Greenwood, argued that the British government should back the Dominions, as Oriental immigration threatened, "to swarm on the Pacific edge of both Americas, from Alaska to Patagonia."¹⁹

It is important, of course, to look at why this sense of solidarity with the Dominions existed. In part, one can obviously attribute it, in conformity with the then increasing sensitivity to racial difference, to what were termed at the time 'blood ties'. In addition, though, and perhaps of equal significance was the belief within Britain and the Dominions themselves that these new white settler communities around the Pacific were engaged in a noble campaign to construct new fair and democratic societies and that this mission would be compromised by a substantial non-European presence. In other words, as Moloughney and Stenhouse have shown, it is important to understand that the Dominions were perceived as experiments in progressive government and social reform and to recognize that this significantly contributed to the impulse

16 *The Times*, 1908c; and *The Times*, 1909a.

17 *The Spectator*, 1907.

18 *Fortnightly Review*, 1907.

19 *Hansard*, 1908e.

to exclude those who were seen as culturally different, poor and unlikely to assimilate.²⁰

In this context, it is worth noting that Strachey stressed that, aside from the Japanese, Asians “only understand one form of government, and that is despotism tempered by anarchy and rebellion.”²¹ This sense that Asian immigration would compromise the political evolution of the Dominions is also evident in a letter that the British geographer Halford John Mackinder sent to *The Times* in September 1908, following a visit to Canada, in which he stated “If there is one object of policy in which thinking Canadians are firmly united, it is that of a white Canada. Mixture of races must result either in intermarriage, with physical and moral consequences which, to say the least, are deeply uncertain, or in a caste system fatal to democratic ideals.”²² Moreover, even *The Times*, which generally had little patience with the Dominions’ complaints about immigrants, could understand this argument. For example, in an editorial in December 1907 it acknowledged that “prejudice against Orientals” could be “more than trade jealousy . . . it is essentially an instinct of self-preservation on the part of one ideal of civilization faced by another very different ideal.”²³ For those who thought in this fashion, the idea of restrictions on immigration, if not outright exclusion, seemed eminently sensible and realistic.

At the same time those of a more pessimistic or sensationalist nature lent towards an apocalyptic interpretation of events, avowing that the new conditions in Asia and the Pacific presented the world with the potential for a race war. Moreover, this was not an entirely abstract concern. Some publicists even approached the topic with a kind of racist relish and argued that Britain had to make practical preparations for the coming apocalypse and that the time had come to reject the ‘unnatural’ alliance with Japan and instead to build a strong Anglo-Saxon camp in league with the United States. One such figure was the *Daily Telegraph* journalist, B.L. Putnam Weale, who contended in his 1910 book, *The Conflict of Colour*, that the European and Asian races were bound to clash.²⁴ It is easy to get excited about the existence of such books and cite them as evidence of a deep-rooted racial fear, but at the same time it is interesting to note that Cromer told the poet Edmund Gosse that Putnam Weale’s volume was not worth reading.²⁵

20 Moloughney & Stenhouse, 1999.

21 *The Spectator*, 1907.

22 *The Times*, 1908j.

23 *The Times*, 1907c.

24 Putnam Weale, 1910. See also Lawton, 1912: 396–421.

25 Gosse to Cromer, 13 December 1910, Cromer Mss., TNA, FO633/19.

Fear of racial war was not, though, confined to sensationalists seeking an audience. It is evident from private papers that these concerns were also expressed behind closed doors among the political elite. One interesting indication of the degree to which the potential for conflict over the racial divide had entered British consciousness comes in the travel diary of the young Canadian official, William Mackenzie King, who stayed in London between March and April 1908 and passed through Britain again briefly in December of that year. As one of the coming men of Canadian politics, King met with many of the most senior figures in British politics and duly recorded their views.²⁶ King was, of course, not a neutral observer and probably tried actively to solicit the views that he recorded. One cannot therefore necessarily conclude from his diary that the issue of Asian immigration dominated British political discourse, but the opinions vouched to him were nonetheless revealing. Almost to a man, and indeed a woman in the shape of the always interesting social reformer, Violet Markham, his interlocutors confided their concerns to him, and especially their opinions on what Britain might do should an American-Japanese war break out. The majority seem to have felt, as Lord Cromer put it, that, "Should there ever be differences between the Orientals and the white races, even in the United States, Great Britain would certainly stand behind the white peoples."²⁷ For some Liberals, such as Markham and the MP David Erskine, this feeling arose from a long-standing dislike of Japan. Indeed, no less than the Liberal parliamentary under-secretary of state for colonial affairs, Winston Churchill, revealed that he believed that, in the case of an American-Japanese conflict, Britain "would let the alliance go to the winds. He hated the Japanese, had never liked them, thought they were designing and crafty. He could not bear them."²⁸ What, however, was perhaps more disturbing was that even Conservative supporters of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, such as Alfred Lyttleton, Henry Arnold-Forster, and Leo Maxse, agreed that should war break out, "England would stand by the North American continent."²⁹

Aside from the specific question of what Britain would do when faced with an American-Japanese conflict, Mackenzie King also noted the British elite's

26 For Mackenzie King's mission to Washington and London, see Niergarth, 2010.

27 Diary entry 18 March 1908, Mackenzie King Mss., Library/Archives Canada (LAC), Ottawa, MG26-J13 microfiche M.98.

28 For Churchill's comment, see diary entry 28 March 1908, Mackenzie King Mss., LAC, MG26-J13 microfiche M.100. For the comments by Erskine & Markham, see diary entries 29 March and 9 April 1908 M.100 and M.101 respectively.

29 Diary entries for 24 March and 27 March, Mackenzie King Mss., LAC, MG26-J13 microfiche M.99 1908 respectively. The quotation is from the conversation with Maxse.

broader ruminations on the immigration issue and the prospect of race war. In regard to the former, a number of senior Conservatives, such as Arthur Lee, Austen Chamberlain and Balfour, stated that they agreed with the Dominions regarding the latter's desire to exclude Asian immigrants, while one Colonial Office official, "admitted frankly that . . . it was the largest question which has yet loomed on the horizon."³⁰ Meanwhile, in regard to race war, the former governor of Madras, Lord Amphill, affirmed that the "Yellow Peril" was a genuine thing,' and that the prospect of a united Asia posed a genuine threat to the West.³¹

Critics of White Solidarity

It would be wrong, though, to assume that every British commentator, politician or official put 'whiteness' above all other considerations. A few Britons whose opinions appeared in the media went as far as disclaiming the importance of race altogether. For example, the colonial administrator, Basil Thomson, argued in a letter to *The Times* that racial hatred was only a recent phenomenon born out of the slave trade and that as the non-white races enriched themselves such sentiments would disappear.³² Indeed, he even contended that inter-marriage did not represent a problem, which was a view that was echoed, in another letter, by the Bishop of South Tokyo, William Awdry.³³ In addition, the well-connected commentator on world politics, Emile Dillon, observed in his regular column on foreign affairs for the *Contemporary Review* that he had little respect for racial arguments. He was, though, concerned that such sentiments were being expressed for, if the outlook that was developing on the Pacific Rim was to become the orthodoxy, "it is evident that a racial war is but a question of time, a racial war the like of which is unknown to history."³⁴

Other commentators took a different tack and questioned whether genuine racial prejudice was, in fact, responsible for the outbreaks of violence, postulating instead that the phenomenon was really economic in its origins and that its roots lay in another elite obsession of the period, namely the rising

30 For the quotation see diary entry 13 April 1908, Mackenzie King Mss., LAC, MG26-J13 microfiche M.101. For Conservative views see diary entries 30 March, 5 April and 7 April 1908, M.100 and M.101 respectively.

31 Diary entry 31 March 1908, Mackenzie King Mss., LAC, MG26-J13 microfiche M.100. See also the conversation with Markham in diary entry 9 April 1908, M101.

32 *The Times*, 1908i.

33 *The Times*, 1908g. See also *The Times*, 1908f.

34 Dillon, 1907.

power of labour unions. Thus, the noted Japanophile, Alfred Stead, argued in an article entitled "Racial Prejudice against Japan" that it was the white labor unions in California and British Columbia who were behind the outbreaks of violence and asserted that the agitation was premeditated and thus could not be the result of genuine hatred.³⁵ In the editorial columns of *The Times*, its foreign editor, Valentine Chirol, took a similar stance. He noted, for example, on 11 September 1907 that the unrest in Vancouver was "due quite as much to conscious self-interest as to ignorant detestation of alien people," and then observed on 30 November that some employers in British Columbia were opposed to the unrest precisely because they wanted to make use of the good, hard-working, cheap labor available through Asian immigration.³⁶

Another criticism of the protests was that the Dominions, by adopting an exclusionist stance, were putting their own interests before those of the empire as a whole. Here too, Chirol was at the forefront of the debate. In two editorials on either side of New Year's Day 1908, *The Times* argued that, even if one accepted that there was a cultural as well as economic element in the demands for exclusion, the simple fact was that Asian immigration could not be dammed back forever and that therefore it was necessary to consider a more flexible policy.³⁷ A further twist to this argument was the assertion that making the defense of 'whiteness' into a rallying cry for the empire was contrary to that entity's very nature. If the empire were to survive and flourish, it was clear to many imperial ideologues that one had to acknowledge its multi-racial character and that any assumption of white superiority in both practice and principle would be fatal. Curzon, for one, was utterly opposed to such a definition. Thus, in his rector's address to the University of Glasgow in January 1911 he stated, in regard to the growth of racial discrimination, that "The British, with their liberal and humanitarian ideas, should be the leaders in the struggle against any such development, if for no other reason because the Empire contains more men of coloured skins than any other dominion . . . [bar China] . . . in the world."³⁸ This, not surprisingly, was a line that *The Times* was happy to endorse.³⁹

35 Stead, 1907.

36 *The Times*, 1907a; and *The Times*, 1907b.

37 *The Times*, 1907c; and *The Times*, 1908a.

38 *The Times*, 1911a. It is interesting to note that the Curzon Mss. contain a copy of Gustav Spiller's 1912 essay 'Science and Race Prejudice' from the *Sociological Review*, which argued that there was no scientific evidence that racial differences mattered, see Curzon Mss., IOL, BL, London, Eur.Mss.F112/84.

39 *The Times*, 1911a.

In addition, there was a more immediate and hard-headed reason for rejecting the idea that the world was beginning to divide along racial lines, for in terms of imperial defense by the late 1900s Britain could ill-afford the undermining of its alliance with Japan. The simple fact of the matter was that Japan's ability to guarantee the security of British interests in the Pacific was vital for the Royal Navy, for it allowed the latter to concentrate in the North Sea against the threat from Imperial Germany; in other words, from a strategic perspective, a focus on 'whiteness' alone made no sense. Moreover, as H.A. Gwynne, the conservative editor of *The Standard*, observed, the worst case scenario that might arise from any British attempt to distance itself from Japan was that it might drive the latter not towards Asia but rather into the hands of Germany.⁴⁰

The problem, however, with abstract arguments about the illogicality of racial prejudice and even the assertion that Japan was a vital ally, was the simple fact that such declarations could not make the immigration issue go away. The reality was that the Dominions did not want East Asian immigration and any practical policy had to take that as a given. It is worth in this context looking at the influential article 'Asia Contra Mundum', which was published in the *Fortnightly Review* in February 1908 by an anonymous writer calling himself 'Viator'. In their book, Lake and Reynolds cite this essay with approval, because it predicted that damming back East Asian immigration might only have the result of widening the racial divide.⁴¹ However, what they do not acknowledge is that 'Viator' did not condemn exclusion. Indeed, he recognized that competition from Asian labour could have a disastrous effect on the white working class and that it was futile "to tell the working-classes in the Colonies that the laws of political economy ordain that existence shall be indefinitely debased rather than that cheaper production shall be prevented."⁴²

The real question then, as 'Viator' and many other commentators recognized, was how the issue of "Oriental immigration" could be finessed and a solution found that would be acceptable both to the Dominions and to the Asian countries; or, as Mackinder put it, to use foresight so that, "the impending great conflict of race may be prevented."⁴³ The first necessity for many commentators was that the issue of Asian immigration should be discussed at the imperial level so that a common policy might be framed or adopted. This was, for example, the line taken by Lord Amphilhill, both in the House of Lords

40 Gwynne to Fisher 8 June 1910, Atlee Hunt Mss., National Library of Australia (NLA), Canberra, MS52, Box 7, no.52/2210.

41 Lake and Reynolds, 2008: 188–9.

42 'Viator', 1908: 192.

43 *The Times*, 1908j.

and in his comments on a lecture at the Royal Society of Arts, and by five leading Liberals who wrote to *The Times* in April 1908.⁴⁴ Indeed, it was contended by *The Times* that this was exactly the sort of issue that the newly established Imperial Secretariat, which had been proposed at the 1907 Colonial Prime Ministers conference, should investigate.⁴⁵

When it came to specific policies that might provide a solution to the problem, two paths, which were not necessarily mutually exclusive, suggested themselves. The first was that the Dominions should be persuaded to take the line that Canada had adopted after the Vancouver riot, which was to send representatives to Tokyo to negotiate a bilateral agreement under which Japan would voluntarily, under a gentlemen’s agreement, restrict the emigration of its nationals to Canadian soil. This was, in particular, a solution that recommended itself to Chirol, who in January 1908 contrasted it with the confrontational stance which the Transvaal had taken towards Indian immigration.⁴⁶ The other recommendation was the far-reaching idea that the world, or the empire, might be partitioned into areas suitable for white and Asian immigration.⁴⁷

These ideas did not just emanate from the political elite within Britain, for they also came from the Dominions through private, unofficial channels. One such proposal arrived from the governor-general of Canada, the fourth Earl Grey, who was keen to see the immigration issue resolved once and for all.⁴⁸ Thus, when King visited London in December 1908, Grey gave him the task of sounding out various interested Cabinet ministers about the idea that an international conference should be convened in order to divide the world into zones within which the free movement of laborers would be limited to specific races.⁴⁹ The intention, as later set out for Grey in a memorandum by one of the relatively moderate young politicians from British Columbia, T.R.E. McInnes, was to recognize “the equality of the educated classes of the Asiatics” while “confining the coolies, petty traders and artisans of China and Japan to their own countries, or to territories climatically unfitted for white labourers.”⁵⁰

44 Hansard, 1908c, *The Times*, 1908e; and *The Times*, 1908f.

45 *The Times*, 1907c.

46 *The Times*, 1908b.

47 *The Times*, 1908c.

48 Lord Grey to Lemieux, 23 October 1907, Lemieux Mss., LAC, MG27 II D10, vol.3, f.139.

49 Lord Grey to Mackenzie King, 15 December 1908, and Lord Grey to Sir Edward Grey, 15 December 1908, 4th Earl Grey Mss., Durham University Library (hereafter Grey Mss., DUL), GRE/B/210/8. Neither this proposal nor that of Deakin (set out below) are mentioned in Huttenback, 1975 or Lake and Reynolds, 2008.

50 ‘Memorandum in Connection with Proposed Pacific-Asiatic Conference’ McInnes memorandum 4 February 1909, Grey Mss., DUL, GRE/B/172/10. A later draft of this paper can

Grey felt that convening such a conference was a matter of great urgency, for, as he saw it, "The situation on the Pacific slope is certain . . . under present conditions to drift us into eventual war with the Orient."⁵¹ The Australian prime minister, Alfred Deakin, also had his own thoughts on how to proceed. In September 1909 he wrote privately to the colonial secretary, Lord Crewe, suggesting that Britain, Holland, France, China and the United States should come together to guarantee the current territorial status quo in the Pacific, or as he put it, to extend the Monroe Doctrine to the Pacific.⁵²

Finessing the Racial Divide

How then did the national debate about East Asian immigration, and the proposals made both in public and private, influence the government? Within the upper reaches of Whitehall the general consensus was that the entire issue had to be treated with great circumspection. For the foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, the priority was to place the immigration issue in context and to free it from emotive rhetoric. For him, quite naturally, the context was that Japan was a vital and trustworthy ally and that the real strategic threat to British interests was the one provided by the German naval race. The escalation of tensions over East Asian immigration was therefore no more than an unwelcome distraction from Britain's primary strategic considerations.

Grey's first exposure to the atmosphere of hysteria came in early 1908 when the American president, Theodore Roosevelt, used the supposed threat posed by Japanese immigrants to the stability of the 'Pacific slope' to contend to Lord Bryce, the British ambassador to Washington, and Mackenzie King, that Britain and America ought to take a common line on the immigration issue in case Japan reneged on its recent commitments.⁵³ For Grey, this was a most unwelcome suggestion. For one thing, any such action would obviously threaten the alliance with Japan, and second, he was, in any case, opposed to

be found in 'Proposed Pacific-Asiatic Conference' McInnes memorandum 4 April 1909 ff.17101-19, Borden Mss., LAC, MG26-H c.4231 vol.39.

51 Lord Grey to Crewe, 11 March 1909, Grey Mss., DUL, GRE/B/180/2. Crewe promised to write about Grey's proposals, but in the end failed to do so, see Crewe to Lord Grey 25 March 1909, Grey Mss., DUL, GRE/B/253/14.

52 Deakin to Crewe, 27 September 1909, Crewe Mss., Cambridge University Library (CUL), C/13. See also Meaney, 1976: 192.

53 Bryce to Sir Edward Grey, 2 February 1908 tel.12, TNA, FO371/473 3830/3506/23; and Bryce to Sir Edward Grey 14 February 1908 no.53, 7193/3506/23.

any blanket ban on Japanese immigration to white countries, as he felt that the challenge posed by immigrants was, in fact, a good stimulus for progress and development.⁵⁴ Roosevelt's proposal, though, clearly put him in a difficult position, for it was apparent, when Mackenzie King visited London in March 1908, that the latter had been deeply impressed by the strength of Roosevelt's concern. Grey therefore had no choice but to assure Mackenzie King that, if Japan infringed the gentlemen's agreement, Britain would press the Japanese to end all emigration to Canada.⁵⁵ At the same time, having no wish to become embroiled in American-Japanese tensions or to take any action that might undermine the alliance, he rejected outright Roosevelt's idea of establishing a common front with the United States over the immigration issue.⁵⁶ Moreover, when pressed by Mackenzie King to say what Britain might do in the last resort if the United States became the victim of Japanese aggression, while admitting that Britain would probably assist the former, he repeatedly stated that he did not believe that such a conflict was likely as Japan had no desire for war.⁵⁷ Indeed, he suggested that the only real 'yellow peril' was the far-off prospect of Chinese industrialization.⁵⁸

Nor was this the only occasion when Grey refused the chance to cooperate with Washington. In December 1909 he received an approach from the American ambassador in London asking what attitude Britain would take towards immigration after the forthcoming termination of its commercial treaty with Japan and whether the United States and Canada might come together to present a united front.⁵⁹ After consultation with the Colonial Office, it was decided to provide an anodyne response, stating that immigration was Canada's own responsibility and that the Lemieux agreement was working well; thus gently rejecting the Taft administration's kind overture.⁶⁰

More broadly Grey's policy was to try to ease the immigration issue where possible, but not to become obsessive about its complete resolution. His preference therefore was to back the idea of bilateral negotiations taking place

54 Sir Edward Grey to Strachey, 9 October 1907, Strachey Mss., Parliamentary Archives, London, STR/7/8/4. For the Foreign Secretary's view of Japan, see Sir Edward Grey to Roosevelt, 4 December 1906, Grey Mss., TNA, FO800/110.

55 Foreign Office minute March 1908, TNA, FO371/471 4810/29/23.

56 Sir Edward Grey to Bryce, 5 February 1908 tel.12, TNA, FO371/473 3830/3506/23.

57 Diary entries 18 March, 26 March and 9 April 1908, Mackenzie King Mss., LAC, MG26-J13 microfiche M.98, M.99 and M.101 respectively.

58 Diary entry 28 December 1908, Mackenzie King Mss., LAC, MG26-J13 microfiche M.106.

59 Whitelaw Read (US ambassador) to Sir Edward Grey, 30 December 1909, TNA, FO371/864 47240/123/23.

60 Sir Edward Grey to Bryce, 7 February 1910 no.64, TNA FO371/921 4810/2983/23.

between the Dominions and the Asian states in the hope that limited, voluntary restrictions might be introduced following the Canadian-Japanese example.⁶¹ Moreover, he saw Britain's obvious inability to satisfy Japan entirely in this area as another incentive for the British to be tolerant about the expansion of Japanese influence "in Manchuria and other regions in which she is naturally interested."⁶² In this relatively relaxed view of the issue, Grey was joined by a number of Conservative commentators. For example, Balfour in February 1910 noted that, while he felt Britain would have to back the United States in any war with Japan, he did not believe that this was a likely scenario as long as Japan had sufficient 'space for emigration in Asia'.⁶³

Not everyone was as calm as Grey. For example, Lord Morley, the secretary of state for India, observed in a long conversation with Mackenzie King on Christmas Day 1908, that for him the issue of Japan, China and the Pacific slope was "*the* great question of the world today." Moreover, he noted that he saw Japan as the greatest source of trouble due to its desire for "mastery of the Pacific."⁶⁴ His evident concern about Japanese ambitions did not, however, lead him to accept the logic of a world divided on racial lines. Instead, he, like the foreign secretary, was keen to ameliorate the prospect of such a stark gulf developing between East and West by sponsoring a series of bilateral negotiations, such as the talks that Mackenzie King was about to undertake with India and then China.

This desire to follow a low-key incremental policy naturally meant that the ideas espoused in the British press and by the Dominions for either a special imperial conference or an international gathering on immigration which would partition the world into white and non-white enclaves did not recommend themselves. In Mackenzie King's diary entry of 28 December 1908 in which he recorded his discussion with Sir Edward Grey about Lord Grey's plans for the partition of the world into zones, the Canadian noted that the foreign secretary had been very skeptical. He believed a lot of groundwork would have to be done before any such meeting convened and feared that it would only reveal the depth of Dominion hostility towards Indian immigrants.⁶⁵ Morley was of much the same view, but also added that he did not think that Japan would

61 Diary entry 23 December 1908, Mackenzie King Mss., LAC, MG26-J13 microfiche M.105.

62 Sir Edward Grey to Lord Grey, 27 January 1911, Grey Mss., TNA, FO800/107.

63 Balfour to Esher, 4 February 1910 f.134, Balfour Mss., British Library Manuscripts Room (BLMR), Add.Ms.49719.

64 Diary entry 25 December 1908, Mackenzie King Mss., LAC, MG26-J13 microfiche M.106. See also Mackenzie King to Lord Grey 1 January 1909, Grey Mss., DUL, GRE/B/179/6.

65 Diary entry 28 December 1908, Mackenzie King Mss., LAC, MG26-J13 microfiche M.106.

be prepared to accept any such agreement.⁶⁶ As might be accepted, Crewe, Grey and their respective officials saw Deakin's proposal for an extension of the Monroe Doctrine as even less attractive, for it was clearly intended to block all future Japanese expansion. Indeed, Crewe's initial response was to write that "I rather dread a concrete discussion between Australia and ourselves on these subjects," while Colonel Seely, the parliamentary under-secretary at the Colonial Office described the scheme as "fraught with danger, premature and useless."⁶⁷ Fortunately, however, the Foreign Office was able to concoct an anodyne response that buried the proposal under polite galeses.⁶⁸

The low-key approach adopted by the Foreign Office and Colonial Office continued to be evident in 1911 at the imperial conference held in London. In the months before the conference convened, the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office consulted about whether a formal British resolution to debate Asian immigration within and to the empire should be discussed at one of the formal prime ministerial sessions. This option was, however, rejected in favor of a confidential meeting with the Dominions.⁶⁹ Then when New Zealand proposed a discussion of how the empire could move towards greater uniformity on immigration legislation, the Home Office drew up a memorandum outlining the potential difficulties in achieving alignment.⁷⁰

During the conference, a special meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence with the Dominion prime ministers in attendance was held to discuss the prolonging of the Anglo-Japanese alliance for a further ten years. Grey used the occasion to argue to the Australian delegation that the alliance, as it presently existed, actually helped to protect the Dominions against Japanese immigration. In this, he had the support of Laurier, who asserted that the Canadian 'gentlemen's agreement' with Japan could not have been negotiated without the alliance's existence. The Australian delegation, led by the new Labour prime minister, Andrew Fisher, was not so easily persuaded, because Australia, unlike Canada, did not have the luxury of having the United States next door as a deterrent to Japanese expansion, but in the end it did not press its objection to the alliance.⁷¹ At the conference itself, Crewe, who was by then the secretary

66 Mackenzie King to Lord Grey 1 Jan. 1909, Grey Mss., DUL, GRE/B/179/6.

67 Crewe to Sir Edward Grey 3 November 1909, Grey Mss., TNA, FO800/91, and Seely minute 1 November 1909, Crewe Mss., CUL, C/13.

68 Crewe to Deakin, 15 December 1909, Deakin Mss., NLA, MS1540 Box 44 f.1540/15/2271.

69 HL minute 27 January 1911, TNA, CO532/28.

70 'Uniformity of Laws as to the Exclusion of Aliens' HO memorandum, 2 March 1911, TNA, FO369/432 8255/8255/250.

71 CID 111th meeting 26 May 1911, TNA, CAB2/2. See also Lowe, 1969: 272-6.

of state for India, introduced the New Zealand proposal for greater uniformity in legislation with a long peroration on the iniquities of racial prejudice. He was not, however, able to persuade the Dominions to compromise and New Zealand's resolution was adopted. Crewe was, though, able to blunt its impact by proposing the immortal Whitehall delaying tactic of referring the matter to a royal commission.⁷² His successor at the Colonial Office, Lord Harcourt, subsequently assured Lord Grey that the latter would take a long time to report.⁷³

Following the imperial conference the controversy over East Asian immigration subsided. In part this is a testament to the foreign secretary's skillful handling of the issue and his clear-sighted recognition that attempting an ambitious multilateral solution to the problem was not only doomed to failure but might simply exacerbate it. Occasional rumblings about the inevitability of race war were still occasionally aired in the media in the years between 1912 and 1914 and some concern was evinced about the crisis that arose in California in 1913 over Japanese land rights.⁷⁴ However, there was no return to the febrile atmosphere of 1907–9 or renewed pressure on the government to act.

Conclusions

What is evident from the government response to the pressure over East Asian immigration from the press and the Dominions between 1907 and 1911 is its marked reluctance to allow the world to be divided along racial lines. While 'whiteness' may have mobilized opinion in intellectual circles, it was not a vision of the world that appealed to the policy-makers at the center of Britain's multi-racial empire. The Cabinet ministers concerned did not, though, entirely fail to engage with 'whiteness'. They recognized the depth of the self-preservation instinct that existed in the Dominions, in much the same way as Chirol did in *The Times*, and acted accordingly to try to ameliorate the most obvious difficulties through the promotion of bilateral gentlemen's agreements. By failing to panic and acting in this pragmatic manner, they ensured that the crisis did not escalate. In this, they were aided by the Canadian government, which was prepared to enter into its own talks with Japan, China and India, and which also acted to uphold its independence from the United States, thus ignoring the latter's blandishments. Moreover, they were, as a number of historians have pointed out, assisted by the Japanese government itself, which was loath to

72 Imperial Conference 11th day 19 June 1911, TNA, CAB18/13A.

73 Harcourt to Lord Grey, 17 September 1911, Grey Mss., DUL, GRE/B/253/32.

74 Hurd, 1913; Murray, 1914; and Whelpley, 1914.

let the immigration issue undermine the security that it received under the alliance's auspices. The Japanese thus proved ready partners in the negotiation of gentlemen's agreements.⁷⁵

What this tells us is that there are dangers in focusing too much on 'whiteness' as an explanatory force for this period and to imagine that racial identity necessarily trumped strategic considerations. It is undoubtedly true that the idea of Anglo-Saxon identity appealed to many commentators within Britain and the empire at large and that the issue of East Asian immigration became a persistent irritant. At the same time, though, it is evident that ministers and civil servants in Whitehall were not prepared to allow the issue to override what they saw as Britain's national priorities. It was therefore not treated in a way that could endanger the existence of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. It is also important to question its significance as a force in British politics, which had many other issues before it in the late 1900s and early 1910s, such as the naval race with Germany, the future of Ireland and the position of the House of Lords within the constitution. Even in regard to relations with Japan, it can be argued that the main issue that exercised British public and parliamentary opinion was not immigration but the new Japanese tariff scheme of 1910 which threatened to introduce severe restrictions on British trade.

In other words, while an appreciation of the significance of racial sentiment undoubtedly enriches our understanding of this period, it would be a mistake to believe that its influence supplanted strategic and commercial considerations. What it constituted, at least in Britain, was often no more than an uncomfortable foreboding about the future potential for race war. This would periodically push itself into the public consciousness, as it did in 1907–8 and would do again in 1913–14, but it was not a constant worry or arguably even a strong influence on policy. Some commentators did argue for grand gestures to avert the danger of future conflict, but in the recognition that such action would only worsen rather than solve the problem, policy-makers opted for quiet bilateral diplomacy. Instead, the primary focus of Britain's concern was in the end on deterring its national enemies and not on slaying a vague, insubstantial transnational demon. The proof of that was to follow shortly after as the world descended into an appalling war of nations rather than one of color.

75 Iida, 1983–4; and Sawada, 1991.

“Uplifting the Weak and Degenerated Races of East Asia”: American and Indigenous Views of Sport and Body in Early Twentieth-Century East Asia

Stefan Hübner

In his annual report for 1910–11, James M. Groves, the foreign secretary of the Manila Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) discussed (and promoted) the activities of his new colleague Elwood S. Brown (1883–1924) and the YMCA in general.¹ Two sentences from this report may serve to provide an insight on the image Groves and many of his American YMCA colleagues had of themselves and of the Filipino Others:

Under Mr. Brown’s vigorous leadership, our physical department activities have gone far toward the realization of the ideal, “the Association for the men and boys not only of its membership, but of the community,” and that community is fast widening to the remotest islands of the archipelago. Of far greater importance even than keeping the foreign men out of dissipation and physical degeneracy and up to their best, is the privilege of upbuilding a whole race, teaching them to play the games for which they are hungry, and substituting for the false Latin ideal of a gentleman as a perfumed dandy, afraid of soiling his fingers—an ideal grafted on an Oriental stock naturally inert and ignorant of the joy of the athletic life—the healthier ideal of physical strength and skill exerted in honest labor and clean sport.²

In an epic endeavor of social engineering and mass education, which, in this case would be accomplished through amateur sporting values, benevolent (and paternalist) Americans were to turn Filipinos into what they perceived to be productive and civilized citizens. The report suggested that these people were not only backward due to their different, “Oriental” race, but also because they had been corrupted by their former Catholic-Spanish colonial masters.

1 For a very short biography of Elwood S. Brown, see Buchanan, 1998. For a longer essay on Brown’s global sportive “civilizing” scheme in the 1910s and 1920s, see Hübner, 2014.

2 Groves, Annual Report, 1 October 1910–30 September 1911: 6.

The report suggested that Oriental laziness and Spanish dandyism would be substituted by ideals of “honest labor and clean sports,” such as always giving one’s best, fair competition, obedience to rules, team spirit and health as well as physical strength. Groves even explicitly states that the Filipinos would be “hungry” for this kind of sportive citizenship training. It may be argued that the report further suggests that when coupled with other educational programs, amateur sports would eventually make the native population the equals of their former teachers and thus ready for self-government.

Elwood Brown began to collaborate with Governor-General W. Cameron Forbes and the Bureau of Education shortly after arriving in the American colony as the YMCA’s new physical director for Manila in early 1910. He developed programs for Filipino clerks, constabulary soldiers and school children, set up supervised playgrounds, organized athletic competitions to be held during the annual Manila Carnival and was the major figure in the founding of the Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation (PAAF) in 1911. Two years later he founded the Far Eastern Championship Games (FECG) as a tool for promoting sportive Christian citizenship training in China, Japan and, less successfully, in other Asian countries so that they may overcome their perceived social deficits. Thus, and for a total of ten occasions until the growing tensions between Japan and China prevented further competitions after 1934, Asian sportspersons came together to compete in team sports and athletics.³

The main justification for the American decision to conquer the Philippines following the defeat of Spain in the Spanish-American War (1898) had been the Filipinos’ alleged backwardness. Congressional debates, but also public discourse as reflected by newspapers, presented racial images of Filipinos as child-minded savages, American Natives or “Negroes,” alongside Christian rhetoric. Uncle Sam was often displayed as a fatherly figure or as a teacher charged with finding a way in which to deal with the small Filipinos. The pro-imperialists suggested it was a duty to elevate the Filipinos to superior white Protestant American standards and save them from Spanish oppression or from the outbreak of chaos due to their inability for self-government. Based on ideas like American Exceptionalism, Manifest Destiny and the frontier, which may collectively be seen as the American version of social Darwinism, the United States would have to accept the “White Man’s Burden” of “benevolent imperialism.”⁴ Moreover, as Theodore Roosevelt argued in his “Strenuous Life”

3 For short overviews of the Games, see Abe, 2007; Hong, 2007.

4 The poem “The White Man’s Burden” was written by British poet Rudyard Kipling and published in 1899 in order to support the pro-imperialist faction during the American debate concerning the annexation.

speech in April 1899, the “young and virile” United States would have to accept its new role in international affairs. Isolationism would mean a slow decay, with the United States eventually becoming a “China of the Western hemisphere.” American anti-imperialists rejected the idea of annexing the Philippines as contradicting the founding principles of the United States, but even their image of the Filipinos did not significantly differ from the pro-imperialists.⁵

Early American colonial administrations used a similar vocabulary. Historian Paul Kramer has recently noted that they systematically used keywords like progress, development, capacity and possibility in order to create a discourse of racial inclusiveness about the Filipinos. Given the popularity of the “Nigger theory,” especially in the southern states of the United States which combined the supposed inferiority of non-white races with the impossibility of “uplifting” them, it would have been impracticable to encourage Filipino elites to collaborate. The Filipinos were further described as being able to learn self-government, but currently existing away from it, creating a justification for colonialist “training.” The images evoked during the American debate on annexation were supplemented by additional perceptions such as Christian Filipino elites being dishonest and immoral. The centuries-old “Black Legend” of corrupt Spanish colonial practices promoting exploitation and feudalism experienced a revival—with Grove’s quotation offering a noteworthy example—and was presented alongside the Filipinos’ supposed racial deficits as having had a disastrous influence on Christian Filipino elites. The broad masses, on the other hand, would remain ignorant, passive, superstitious and lazy. Most of the non-Christians would still be savages and in need of even more American guidance.⁶ One of the most signal images was that of an Igorot headhunter, who, according to Dean C. Worcester, an American zoologist and Secretary of the Interior for the Philippine Commission until 1913, could have been turned into a “civilized”-looking constabulary sergeant within two years (1901–1903) (see Fig. 9.1).

The FECC established by the American YMCA in Manila (with the first event lasting from 31 January until 8 February 1913) could be considered a “laboratory of modernity.” During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, modern sports, which can be characterized by secularism, equality, bureaucratization, specialization, rationalization, quantification and an obsession

5 The literature on the debate about war and annexation and about early American images of Filipinos is extensive. For recent works, see Brody, 2010, especially chapters 3 and 6; Halili, 2006; Harris, 2011; Hoganson, 1998 and Kramer, 2006.

6 Kramer, 2006: 192–199, 209, 308, 312–314.



FIGURE 9.1 *An Igorot headhunter turned into a constabulary sergeant (Washington Post): Dean C. Worcester often used such images to promote American colonialism as a “Civilizing Mission.”⁷*

with records, began to spread into Asia.⁸ As hinted by Groves in the opening quotation, modern sports were part of the “Western Civilizing Mission,” which justified colonialism as necessary to bringing local populations up to Western standards.⁹ While the International Olympic Committee (IOC) had almost exclusively targeted Western countries before the First World War (Japan and Egypt being two noteworthy exceptions), religious reformers, many of whom were affiliated with the American YMCA, spread amateur sports as muscular Christianity in supposedly backward world areas.¹⁰ Within the United States, the so-called progressive social reformers had begun using sports and playgrounds in order to “civilize” lower class Americans and so-called semi-White immigrants originating from such places as Ireland and South and Eastern Europe since the 1880s. By being taught norms and values such as fair play, competition, a belief in personal effort instead of luck or fate, equality of opportunity, team spirit, obedience to duly-constituted authority and especially self-control as democratic and socially responsible capitalist citizenship training, these lower classes were to be assimilated into white Protestant American society.¹¹

7 Worcester, 1908.

8 For the definition of modern sports, see Guttmann and Thompson, 2001: 3–4.

9 For the “Civilizing Mission” see, e.g., Gong, 1984; Osterhammel, 2005. For the theme of sports and imperialism, see Guttmann, 1994; Pope, 2010.

10 For the integration of the “Third World” into the Olympic Movement and the role of the YMCA in this transition, see Liu, 1998, chapter 2.

11 For the playground movement, see Cavallo, 1981, especially chapters 1, 3 and 4. For the idea of muscular Christianity in the United States see Putney, 2001. For sociological and

The origin of the FECCs was thus directly linked with Western and especially American ideas of racial and civilizational hierarchies. These placed white Protestant Americans at the top and Filipinos and other Asians at significantly lower levels. At the same time, the spread of sports illustrated that racial discourses were in the process of changing. Classical racism such as the “Nigger theory,” which construed the “inferior races” as immutable biological units (or at least as units requiring centuries to change), was substituted by ideas suggesting that given proper guidance and tutelage these races could be uplifted within decades. The spread of sports in East Asia was thus a deliberate attempt to civilize such races, first the Filipinos and later the Chinese and Japanese too. It was meant to overcome their image as savages and harbingers of “yellow peril,” or at least politico-culturally “backward peoples.” As such, sports could provide them with the norms and values necessary for American style democratic self-government as the proclaimed high point of white Protestant civilization.

Several studies on individual East Asian nations have already touched upon these points, but have remained isolated from the broader context of shifting racial and civilizational perceptions.¹² This chapter therefore provides a transnational analysis of this value transfer and of the mutual images Americans and East Asians had of each other. It more precisely concerns the following questions: Which social competences did East Asians lack in the view of Americans? How did Americans intend to use sports in order to prepare them for self-government, and how did their East Asian contact persons or YMCA colleagues react to this civilizing and modernizing scheme?

Sportive Citizenship Training in the Philippines

In 1914, Ossie Garfield Jones published an article explaining how sports had been used as a tool for training Filipinos for self-government. It was written

philosophical approaches on sports as a tool for “civilizing” people, see Elias, 1993a; Elias 1993b; Wachter, 2001.

- 12 In his transnational organizational history of the Games, Takashima mentions general American racial and civilizational ideas several times, but is less focused on Asian ones. See Takashima, 2007. For China, covering American and Chinese racial and civilizational ideas, see Kolatch, 1972, part 1; Morris, 2004. Xu is less focused on the Games, but deals with racial and civilizational ideas in Chinese sport: Xu, 2008, chapters 1–3. For Japan, indigenization, pan-Asianism and the Eighth FECC, but without much coverage of the founding of the Games, see Date, 2000. Gems used race as a category in his broad analysis of the American spread of sports, but focused less on civilization and self-government: Gems, 2006, chapters 2 to 4. The latter source contains references to his other works.

shortly before the outbreak of the Great War in Europe, four years after Elwood Brown had arrived in the Philippines and began to collaborate with the Bureau of Education, and one year after Woodrow Wilson had become President (1913–1921). Initially a member of the Bureau of Education during William Howard Taft’s presidency (1909–1913), Jones eventually opted for an academic career and in 1915 agreed to give some anti-Wilson interviews after returning to the United States.¹³ In 1919 he completed his Ph.D. thesis (“The Development of Self-Government in the Philippine Islands since the American Occupation”) at Berkeley and subsequently became a professor of political science and the athletic director of the University of Toledo in Ohio.¹⁴

Aware that sport was not the single most important factor for successful self-government, Jones’s article focused on four fundamental aspects of how sports could elevate the Filipinos: individual self-control, fair play, respect for duly-constituted authority and a society based upon a municipal (or community), as opposed to a relationship (or kinship), basis.¹⁵ The role model used was the United States, whose presumed superiority and exceptionalism was inherent in Jones’s writing, even though Britain was also given some credit. The anti-thesis he used was civil war plagued revolutionary Mexico. Like the Philippines, Mexico was seen as suffering from its Spanish cultural and political heritage. Unlike Mexico, however, the Philippines would undergo a peaceful modernization process similar to that of the United States, but during a significantly shorter period of time thanks to American tutelage. Jones thus made it plain that a mass approach was necessary and that youths had to be the main target, underlining the importance of the public schools falling under the Bureau of Education’s area of responsibility. In this respect, Jones’s article may be seen as a more sophisticated re-statement of the earlier thoughts and activities of Elwood Brown and his associates like Governor-General Forbes, Major-turned-lawyer William Tutherly, and subsequent Directors of the Bureau of Education (and thus Jones’s bosses), Frank R. White and Frank L. Crone.¹⁶

13 For example, a booklet published by Jones with an introduction written by Taft heavily criticized the Democrats’ Filipinization policy, which it argues would have led to a chaotic situation, including Filipino nepotism and mass unemployment among former American officials. See Jones, 1915.

14 For his dissertation, see <http://dpg.lib.berkeley.edu/webdb/seasia/search?degree=&page=3&itemno> [Accessed on 22 May 2012]. For his later career, see <https://www.utfoundation.org/foundation/home/pdfs/endowmentreport2009.pdf> (p. 4) 20 February 2015. A scholarship is named after him.

15 Jones, 1914: 592.

16 For their collaboration, see, for example: Meeting of the War Historical Bureau of the Young Men’s Christian Association. 5 January, 1920, New York; Tutherly, *The World at Play*: part 1.

These people considered the civilizing of the Filipinos necessary, given that they believed that the Philippines would not otherwise be able to survive in the international system. West Point graduate and Spanish-American War veteran Tutherly, for example, made it plain in 1915 that in his opinion the Filipinos' inability for self-government and lack of national unity meant that the question was not if, but rather which great power would dominate the Philippines. Japan would certainly be interested. He believed that American colonial rule would definitely be better for the Filipinos, especially when compared to Spanish rule. On the other hand, he perceived the islands as a liability for the United States, being very difficult to defend in a war if not used for further expansion.¹⁷

In order to illustrate the first aspect of sportive citizenship training, individual self-control, Jones provided several examples of inter-municipal games descending out of control. Among them, he noted,

At Pagsanjan, near Manila, a game between Pagsanjan and Santa Cruz ended in a free-for-all fight, and the two Americans in charge of the Santa Cruz team were knocked about quite a bit before they succeeded in getting their boys safely out of town. When the boys got back to Santa Cruz and told of their troubles, the two Americans had another fight on their hands to keep the men of Santa Cruz from going back to Pagsanjan in a body to clean out that town.¹⁸

The game itself was certainly not the problem for Jones. The Filipinos would have overreacted in a similar way at other events. Sociologically speaking, the main reason for their behavior was perceived to be their family and clan based social system, which would have limited competition and responsibility to a small elite of family heads. The dependent masses would have never been forced to develop out of a childish mental state by becoming responsible for themselves and thus could hardly become individuals. By applying parts of Woodrow Wilson's essay "The Character of Democracy in the United States" (1889) to the Philippine case,¹⁹ Jones came to the conclusion that "the future of democracy in the Philippine Islands does not depend upon the cleverness of the aristocratic class of Filipinos so much as upon the kind of every-day training in individual self-control that the mass of the people receive."²⁰ An

17 Tutherly, 1915. For Tutherly's military career, see "N.A.A.F. Picks Tutherly."

18 Jones, 1914: 586.

19 Wilson, 1889.

20 Jones, 1914: 586.

American style democracy would necessarily require Filipino citizens who were able to control their emotions and refrain from violent outbursts. This, however, could not be taught from books, but would have to be practiced under stress. Sporting contests would provide a suitable platform for this, providing maximum stress while limiting the potential for disaster. Unlike older Filipinos, the younger Filipinos practicing sports would therefore be able to more suitably accept defeats—not just in games, but also in other situations, including political contests.²¹

In this regard, one of the signs of “civilizational progress” often mentioned by Forbes, Crone, Groves and others would be the successful evolution of head hunters into athletes. Members of this group had often served as the most negative example of Filipino “savages,” but due to athletic practice, their feuds would now no longer be solved by murder, but through the significantly less violent sporting contests.²² According to Jones, the direct political outcome of the second aspect, fair play, would be more difficult to judge. Fair play would not be compatible with favoritism, perceived as the source of graft and inefficiency. Jones declared that Filipinos of both sexes would now be taught fair play at school. This meant that women, too, would become better citizens and thus pass the idea of fair play on to their children, further accelerating its positive effects. Therefore, corrupt Spanish-Mexican practices such as the *Ley de Fuga* (“law of fugitives”) would not be accepted by people who grew up with the idea of fair play.²³ Moreover, the spirit of fair play would have solved the problem experienced by the English Puritans in 1653 when trying to set up a republic; namely, the lack of an “educated and trained self-conscious body politic.”²⁴ The English pioneers took until the nineteenth century to produce such a body politic, but the Filipinos would need significantly less time. In

21 Jones, 1914: 588.

22 See, for example, Crone, 1915: 988–989; Forbes, Speech Delivered by W. Cameron Forbes at a dinner Given in his Honor at the Harvard Club, Friday, January 9, 1914; Groves, Annual Report, 1 October 1910–30 September 1911: 1. The topic was still mentioned as late as 1927, when a former Acting Secretary of the Interior in the Philippines, C.C. Batchelder, noted that “Head Hunters Drop that Pastime for Football Games.”

23 This “Law of Fugitives” or “Law of Flight” was the permission given to guards to shoot escaping prisoners, and was often misused for execution purposes. During the February 1913 coup d’état, for example, Mexican President Francisco I. Madero and Vice President José María Pino Suárez had been murdered while being transported from the National Palace to the prison.

24 Jones, 1914: 588–589 (the quotation is from p. 589). The quotation was made by a certain Professor Macy (very likely Jesse Macy), whose works were also used and discussed by Jones.

this respect, Jones remarked that this would partially happen due to “modern” American pedagogic approaches, as opposed to the more “conservative” British approaches.²⁵

One of the practical experiences of fair play mentioned by Brown and which he considered to be a change of “backward” social customs, is quite well suited to this ideal of a “self-conscious body politic”:

Dr. Rogers [of the Presbyterian Mission in the Philippine Islands] was speaking of the effect of play on the Filipinos. He stated that a fundamental weakness of character in the Filipinos was a tendency to tell untruths. Lying is expected and condoned and for generations had been recognized as a legitimate means of avoiding an issue; but he went on to say, that, as a result of the wide-spread participating in play and athletic sports, this condition was rapidly being corrected as the ideas of fair play and honor necessary to the enjoyment of the games become fixed.²⁶

The third of Jones’s aspects, respect for duly-constituted authority, was rather self-explanatory for him: “Dictatorship in a country is an open confession that the people of that country respect nothing but military force.”²⁷ Mexico was once again used as a negative example. Jones nonetheless confessed that in the United States, too, and only a decade before the article was written, an umpire would have required certain fighting skills, suggesting that the American civilizational margin in this respect was not that large, but still superior nonetheless. At the same time, however, he also criticized American boys as having become “over-individualistic,” which according to Jones was caused by *laissez-faire* and declining parental authority. One answer to such problems would be umpires and coaches teaching discipline to young athletes, a system which could also be implemented in the Philippines.²⁸

Another of Brown’s practical experiences following the introduction of his physical education scheme at the public schools had been exactly that, i.e. the change in behavior of the Filipino pupils. Physical education would have had a very positive influence on their discipline and would have reduced willful mischief.²⁹

25 Jones, 1914: 589–590.

26 Brown, Annual Report for the Year Ending 30 September 1915: 9.

27 Jones, 1914: 590.

28 Jones, 1914: 590.

29 Brown, Significance of Physical Education in South America Today: 3.

The last of Jones's aspects, a society based upon a municipal, as opposed to a relationship basis, was meant to deal with the perceived shortcomings of Filipino social organization already touched upon when discussing individual self-control:

Aristotle said, “The state is prior to the individual.” That is, society is originally made up of clans, or families, and the self-conscious, self-willing individual does not emerge until political and economic interests arise that split up these compact groups and cause new alignments in the form of political parties, craft guilds, and religious sects that cut across the original blood relationships and emancipate the individual.³⁰

According to Jones, sports would be a useful means of changing the form of social control. Practical efficiency, which he perceived to be an important element of Western civilization, and a merit system would be encouraged. Competitions between towns would make it necessary to recruit the most competent local players into the team instead of relatives and friends. Familiarism would be reduced and the individual emancipated, but the lack of control would immediately substituted with ties of shared interest in order to prevent the outbreak of anarchy. In the United States, for example, baseball would be in the shared interest of immigrants from various countries, bringing them together and serving to overcome social barriers and integrating them into society. In the Philippines, different “races” like Spaniards, Chinese, Malays and Negritos, as well as factions like *ilustrados* (Jones referred to them as “aristocrats”) and *taos* (commoners) would have to be brought together. Once again quoting from Wilson’s essay on democracy, he described the necessity of a strongly democratic municipal self-consciousness as the foundation for the next step in the Philippines, successful American style nation building: “Long and slowly widening experience in local self-direction must have prepared them for national self-direction.”³¹ The FECC and earlier matches against teams from other countries were the example for reaching this next level. The democratic communities created by increasing the sportive rivalry between them would be integrated into the nation by repeating the same procedure on an international level.³²

30 Jones, 1914: 586.

31 Jones, 1914: 586, 590–591 (quotation: 590).

32 Jones, 1914: 591.

Brown and Crone had expressed this idea when they implemented inter-municipal and especially inter-school athletic contests on a communal level.³³ According to Brown, however, his main reason for the founding of the FECCG was changing the image foreigners had of Filipinos, not the image Filipinos had of themselves as a nation. Sports initially served to improve the American perception of Filipinos by letting both groups compete against each other, and using competitive victories to demonstrate that well-trained Filipinos were not physically inferior to Americans. The same idea was then applied on an inter-Asian level by forcing Japanese and Chinese athletes into acknowledging that Filipinos were not inferior to them.³⁴ Nevertheless, Jones's explanations were inherent in Brown's thinking. Like inter-municipal matches, the best Filipino athletes had to be chosen in order to defeat the Japanese and Chinese teams, regardless of any kinship or family ties. All in all, the American aim was to set a sportive "modernization" process in motion, one which would shape Filipinos into "civilized citizens" acting in accordance with white Protestant American norms and values.

Chinese Cooperation and Acceptance of American-Style Modernization

It did not take long for other East Asian peoples such as the Chinese and the Japanese, to be added to the target group. These in particular belonged to those nations Brown and his colleagues perceived as needing American guidance due to their lack of Western civilization. In order to keep transportation costs low, but to still bring people of different nations together, the FECCGs were founded as a regional East Asian event. The IOC provided some initial approval and, after the interruption of the Olympic Games due to the First World War, officially recognized the Games in 1920.³⁵ On the second day of the First FECCG, the *Philippines Free Press*, written in both English and Spanish, and thus addressing both the American and Filipino elites, published an image of "The New Olympian." Looking very similar to a white American athlete apart from the shape of his eyes, this image symbolized the celebrated American ideal of strong, proud and totally Americanized Filipinos, Japanese and Chinese (see Fig. 9.2).

33 Crone, 1915: 985–986.

34 Meeting of the War Historical Bureau of the Young Men's Christian Association. Monday, January 5, 1920, at 124 East 28th Street, New York City: 11.

35 For the IOC session, see Procès-verbaux des séances du Comité International Olympique à Anvers (Hôtel de Ville), Août 1920: 8–9.



FIGURE 9.2 *The “New Olympian,” an East Asian athlete personifying the FECCG and being celebrated by the public (Philippines Free Press): The cartoon communicates support for the American “Civilizing Mission” and local capacity to be “uplifted” through amateur sports.*³⁶

36 “The New Olympian. Los Nuevos Juegos Olímpicos,” 1923.

Another cartoon published by the *Philippines Free Press* upon the opening of the Fourth FECC held in Manila in 1919 depicted the means necessary for realizing this ideal. A large, grown-up Uncle Sam (supported by Filipinas as an Asian substitute allegory for Columbia) was depicted as teaching sports values to a Filipino, Japanese and Chinese athlete, all of which were depicted as children. Although many athletes really were school boys or young students, the civilizational and power asymmetry displayed in the cartoon is obvious (see Fig. 9.3).

To guarantee the participation of a Chinese team in the First Games, Elwood Brown relied on his YMCA colleagues in China, who in turn received support from many of the Western educated or even baptized Chinese politicians who had gained power after the Chinese Revolution. While American YMCA officials were in charge of the Chinese teams sent to the Games until their exclusion after the Sixth Games (Osaka 1923), leading Chinese politicians served as the official representatives of China. The first Chinese representative, Wu Tingfang (1842–1922), who had studied in Hong Kong and England and later held several positions including a period as the Chinese Minister to the United States, had gained a basic idea of Western amateur sports values, but did not possess any social engineering ideas comparable to Jones's. In a book entitled *America through the Spectacles of an Oriental Diplomat* (1914), published one year after



FIGURE 9.3 *Uncle Sam “civilizes” Japan, China, and the Philippines through amateur sports (Philippines Free Press): The cartoon depicts East Asians as “young pupils” in need of training to become good citizens in the American mold.*³⁷

37 “The ‘Olympiad’. La ‘Olimpiada,’” 1919.

the First FECC, Wu expressed some doubts concerning modern sports and the effects successful sportive nation building could have on the Chinese masses.³⁸

First, he had certain reservations regarding sportive competition. Competition should be a means to an end, but not the end itself. If it was only about competition, he argued, the aim should be the exhibition of health and a perfect body, not the exertion of effort to the point of total exhaustion. Second, he did not think that modern sports would fit into Chinese culture, which valued scholarship much more than it valued physical activity: “They [sports] are too violent, and, from the Oriental standpoint, lacking in dignity.”³⁹ Third, he did not expect much Chinese interest and could not imagine Chinese people watching other people play games or buying a newspaper in order to read the sports section. Fourth, by only discussing male athletes, it becomes obvious that he did not expect Chinese women to engage in sports. Despite this, he was ready to assist in a transfer of modern sports from the United States to China: “They [sports] certainly increase the physical and mental faculties, and for this reason, if for no other, deserve to be warmly supported.”⁴⁰ He later states that modern sports could inculcate Chinese boys and young men with very important values: “China suffers because her youths have never been trained to team-work. We should be a more united people if as boys and young men we learned to take part in games which took the form of a contest, in which, while each contestant does his best for his own side, the winning or losing of the game is not considered so important as the pleasure of the exercise.”⁴¹ In Jones’s terms, this would be a change in social control, moving from family ties to community and nation ties. Wu further conceded a need for fair play as well as the ability to publicly accept defeats, which can be subsumed under individual self-control.⁴²

Wu’s opinion of modern sports became more positive after the Second FECC, hosted in Shanghai in May 1915. The Japanese so-called Twenty-One Demands, partially accepted by President Yuan Shikai only days before the Games had begun, had made it obvious for many Chinese that China’s decline had hardly been stopped. For Wu the successful hosting of the Games became a tool for beginning to remedy this situation by accepting what he considered to be American cultural superiority and trying to modernize China in American ways. According to Brown, Wu would have described the Games as “a great

38 See Wu, 1914.

39 Wu, 1914: 24, 90 (quotation).

40 Wu, 1914: 90.

41 Wu, 1914: 90.

42 Wu, 1914: 90.

moral force destined to awaken the Orient” and as “the greatest practical contribution that have [sic] yet been made to the modernization and civilization of the Orient, with all the possibilities for the future.” He even (unsuccessfully) challenged other people 70 years or older to a half mile race.⁴³

Another early Chinese supporter of the YMCA was Wang Zhengting [Chengting Thomas Wang] (1882–1961), who would later represent China at the FECCG. Wang was the son of a Chinese pastor and had been a chartered member of the Tianjin YMCA during his studies at the newly founded Peiyang University (now Tianjin University). Before beginning his studies in the United States, he also spent two years working as a YMCA secretary in Japan. After returning to China he served as the associate general secretary and general secretary of the national committee of the Chinese YMCA during the 1910s. Later on, the rising politician became one of China’s delegates to the Versailles Peace Conference, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the first Chinese member of the IOC. In his memoirs, Wang explained that his education by Americans at Peiyang University had had a strong impact on his opinion of modern sports. The over-emphasis on scholarly activity and the negative perception of physical strength in China would have led to a situation in which muscular people felt ashamed. Many American missionaries held the opinion that the supposed physical degeneration of many Chinese would be a very important reason for China’s international weakness.⁴⁴ Wang shared their perceptions and thus considered the education he had received, which included physical education and military training, as decisive for both himself and for the regeneration of China:

This innovation of an age-long ideal of “a sound mind in a sound body” has brought about revolutionary changes in the life of our students. Those who have been benefited by open-air exercises found themselves in the best of health. I was one of these. Being sickly in my life up to the time I went to Tientsin [Tianjin], I was a frail boy, short in stature and poor in health. On my second visit home, that is, two years after I was in the “new” school [Peiyang University], I grew so much and so strong as to astonish my mother, who had to make new clothes for me not only longer but broader. As I look back in my life I consider that to have good health is

43 Brown to E.C. Jenkins (17 January 1920): 3 (quotations). See also Tutherly, *The World at Play*: part 1, chapter 3; “Eastern Champions.”

44 Wang, 2008: 4–5, 18. For the ‘Western’ perception see, for example, the writings of Charles H. McCloy, one of the most important American missionaries and physical educators in China during the first half of the twentieth century: McCloy, 1923: 1–2.

the greatest blessing of a mortal being. Because of this conviction I have thrown myself whole-heartedly to the promotion of athletics.⁴⁵

The Second FECC also seemed to have had a strong impact on Wang. In an article explaining his observations, he provided his own summary of seven ways in which sports could support Chinese modernization and help China become ready for successful self-government in a social Darwinist world order. Although less systematic than Jones's, Wang's ideas came very close to the American ones. Wang considered competition to be the foundation of progress. Moreover, the Games would have made the whole nation join forces, uniting China's north and south into one team. The Games, and especially a Chinese victory, would also catch the world's attention, making people aware of China regaining its strength. Furthermore, Wang perceived teamwork as a way of overcoming the lack of cooperation between various members of society. In addition, sports would teach the persistence necessary for achieving great things and enhance the physical strength of the Chinese race. Without such a recovery, a weak nation like China would be conquered and vanish. Wang thus perceived physical education for all Chinese, both men and women, as important. He concluded that sports would promise a bright future, while a lack of sports would lead to decay. China's aim should therefore be to rise to a level at which its athletes would be capable of defeating Westerners living in the East.⁴⁶

Wu and (even more strongly) Wang saw the spread of modern sports in China as one of the ways of stopping China's international decline and preventing its total elimination. Lacking Chinese experts in physical education, they had to welcome the activities of American YMCA physical directors. Unlike the Philippines before Wilson's and Harrison's Filipinization program, however, total American dominance, meaning the lack of local representatives in the Games was unimaginable to them. This would have meant visually acknowledging a colonial situation comparable to that of the Philippines, a scenario the Chinese actually wanted to prevent through the spread of sports. The American YMCA, aware that it could gain influence over China's national physical education system more easily through its Chinese sympathizers and members, also accepted the pro forma leadership of Wu and Wang while remaining in control of the Games and the Chinese team as a matter of fact. It was not until the early 1920s, when Chinese nationalism had been further fueled and American trained Chinese sports officials had officially reached a

45 Wang, 2008: 18–19.

46 Wang, 1915.

level of competence that made them feel ready to host the FECCG on their own, would the American YMCA's role in the Games come to be openly questioned.⁴⁷

Japanese Resistance and its Defeat by American Style Modernization

Japan was a somewhat different case than China and, needless to say, the Philippines. Not only was this country a fully sovereign state, but it was also in a more advanced stage of social and technological modernization and had had a resurgent tradition of martial arts. In 1909, the IOC had elected Kanō Jigorō (1860–1938) in absentia as its member for Japan. Kanō, the first Asian ever co-opted, had not been chosen because he had shown serious interest in the Olympic Games or in the Western amateur sports ideology. After returning from the first Olympic games that he and a two-man Japanese team had attended in 1912, Kanō is alleged to have said that “[a]lthough I had carefully observed the qualities of occidental culture prior to my present visit to the Olympic Games, I had never before studied occidental sportsmanship.”⁴⁸ Kanō had been elected to the IOC because the Japanese Foreign Ministry had recommended him. He was the founder of modern judo and president of Tokyo Higher Normal School (Tōkyō Kōtō Shihan Gakkō) and thus had close relations to the Ministry of Education and influence on physical education programs in Japan. Moreover, even after becoming an IOC member, Kanō had never lost trust in his bushido (Jpn. *bushidō*; lit. way of the warrior) based martial arts ideology.⁴⁹ Witnessing the Meiji Restoration and the subsequent modernization process and the resulting military victories over China and Russia, he had no fear of an imminent national decline comparable to those of Wu or Wang.

Still a very elitist constitutional monarchy with a limited degree of democratization, Japan had not yet experienced the debate regarding further democratization that the defeat of the Central Powers in the First World War and the changing international situation would bring about in the 1920s. Hence, Kanō had initially no reason to accept the American YMCA's perception of his

47 Morris, 2004: 77–78.

48 Noguchi, 1931: 449. It does not really matter here whether the wording is correct or not. The Japanese knowledge of the Olympic Games at the time was all in all very limited. See Wada, 2007.

49 Kanō, 1992: 406–407. For the Japanese bushido sports and physical education ideology also see Abe, 2008: 30–32; Blackwood, 2008. For Kanō's election, see Niehaus, 2010: 130–134.

physical education ideology as inferior in “civilization” and of the Japanese as lacking certain social skills such as democratic team spirit which could allegedly only be overcome through American tutelage. For him, judo was the noblest form of physical education, since it would not only have moral and educational benefits, but also would teach people how to successfully defend themselves. Other physical training methods acceptable to Kanō included long distance running and swimming. Physical education in Japanese schools did not differ much, concentrating mostly on gymnastics and military drills. All these disciplines were linked with the idea of maximizing individual training for efficient soldiers/warriors or citizens. Team sports were therefore deemed useless for training purposes.⁵⁰

The intention of making Japanese people regularly engage in some sort of physical education was shared by both Kanō and the American YMCA. In 1915, Franklin Brown, Elwood Brown’s YMCA colleague in Tokyo, began to mention that many Japanese perceived young Japanese as physically “degenerated” and that—here the perceptions begin to differ—Western amateur sports could help to overcome this.⁵¹ For Elwood Brown, who began negotiating Japan’s official participation in the FECS with Kanō in 1912, the latter’s unwillingness to perceive his non-Christian physical education ideology as less “civilized” than the YMCA’s caused serious problems. In Elwood Brown’s view, Kanō’s bushido ideology was completely lacking in the democratic element necessary for successful self-government and was based on the “backward” militarist ideas of duels:

Dr. Kano, who was the head of the school of Judo, had a philosophy that the only physical training worth while was man to man, which evolved out of the old system of offense and defense and he said anything that requires team work develops the wrong idea, that you ought to be able to do everything in an athletic way by you[r]self and he didn’t grasp the team cooperative idea and thought it was a weakening thing and he opposed anything of a team game nature, and he managed to keep out of Japan all the great games which employed team-work, and anything like

50 Kanō, 1992: 407. For Japanese school curricula and a detailed analysis of Kanō’s physical education ideas, which nevertheless hardly deals with his change of mind in the 1910s due to the FECS, see the relevant parts in Niehaus, 2010.

51 See Brown, 1915: 4–5. It was certainly linked to the First World War and the translation of Max Nordau’s well-known book *Entartung* (“Degeneration”; first published in 1892), dealing with the supposed degeneration of the modern body into Japanese in 1914. For the Japanese translation of this book, see Norudō, 1914.

a relay race was a wrong philosophy, he said. He missed the whole idea of team effort.⁵²

The inferiority of Kanō's interpretation of bushido here seems inherent.⁵³ Kanō thus had no intention of engaging in an event serving to propagate muscular Christianity and including team spirit and sportsmanship as the incorporation of democracy and Western medieval chivalry. Furthermore, Kanō considered the social skills Wu had explicitly described as missing in Chinese society as neither appropriate nor necessary for Japan. As a consequence, American assistance to remedy what the YMCA regarded as a defect was not seen to be at all necessary. Moreover, and in addition to the FECCG disciplines, Kanō had also criticized the Games' constitution, which only Americans and their supporters could influence. Feelings of superiority over the Philippines and China due to Japan's participation in the Olympic Games as well as a lack of money for travel costs certainly contributed to his anti FECCG resistance. It took until the Third FECCG, scheduled to take place in Tokyo in 1917 for Kanō's Great-Japan Amateur Athletic Association (Dai Nippon Taiiku Kyōkai) to participate. Small independent groups of Japanese athletes had participated in earlier games, but were limited to track and field and baseball events.⁵⁴

In order to pressure Kanō into allowing the hosting of the 1917 Games, the YMCA first aroused public interest in Japan (especially in the Kansai region) and then promised Kanō to renegotiate the disciplines after the event, to provide a capable organizer and to formally accept Japanese leadership.⁵⁵ After the Tokyo Games had been declared a great success and, in Brown's words, "the philosophy he [Kanō] had built up in physical education [had] crumble[d]," Kanō began to accept competitive team sports. He nevertheless made it plain that this was the result of a change in Japanese public opinion and the arrival of modern ideas of play which he accepted in order to prevent Japan from falling behind internationally despite his divergent opinions on the matter.⁵⁶

52 Meeting of the War Historical Bureau of the Young Men's Christian Association. Monday, 5 January 1920, at 124 East 28th Street, New York City: 18.

53 Kanō's interpretation of bushido as a physical education ideology was not the only one in existence at the time. For more internationalist interpretations such as the one offered by Japanese Christian socialist Abe Isoo, see Blackwood, 2008.

54 Kanō, 1992: 404–405. See also Suzuki, 1934: 120.

55 Suzuki, 1934: 121–122; and Brown, 1917: 7.

56 Brown, 1922 (22 March 1922, quotation); Meeting of the War Historical Bureau of the Young Men's Christian Association. Monday, January 5, 1920, at 124 East 28th Street, New York City: 19.

Kanō's physical education ideology thus began to undergo a hybridization process which culminated in his attempts to bring bushido, judo and modern sports together.

Conclusion

The promotion of the FECCG in the Philippines, China and Japan was the outcome of negative American racial and civilizational perceptions of the societies in these three countries. In the Philippines, the colonial power asymmetries meant that the creation of the Games was totally based on American social engineering and that an official representation of the Filipinos initially did not matter. “Benevolent” tutelage by Americans was intended to educate and “elevate” Filipinos, most of whom were perceived as still remaining in the mental state of children or being savages. Sportive competition and amateur values were to teach them individual self-control, fair play and respect for duly-constituted authority and change their society from a relational to a community based one. Such American style modernization was to simultaneously serve to make Filipinos ready for self-government and prevent chaos and a dictatorship like revolutionary Mexico's, which was also plagued by its allegedly negative Spanish heritage.

The deterioration of China's position in the international system since the nineteenth century had led to serious considerations regarding the necessity of a modernization process. Following the Chinese Revolution, politicians like Wu and Wang, who had received Western education during their youth, considered the lack of physical education in China as one of the main reasons for China's decline. They therefore accepted the American YMCA's image of the Chinese as a race which would, like the Filipinos, require American tutelage in order to become ready for successful self-government in the modern world. The Chinese interest in modern sports as a tool for nation building increased even further after the Second FECCG, held in Shanghai in 1915 and shortly after the acceptance of the Twenty-one Demands had made another impression of Chinese decay on many Chinese.

In Japan, the modernization process of the late nineteenth century had led to impressive results. The victories against China and Russia had brought Japan the status of a regional great power and underlined the impression that the Japanese state would be ready to defend and even improve its international status. The American YMCA nonetheless perceived Japan as an elitist constitutional monarchy with limited democratization, and thus still “backward,”

inferior in terms of civilization and in need of American assistance. This view was not at all accepted by Kanō, who had already developed his own bushido based physical education ideology focusing on national strength and efficiency. However, after the American YMCA overcame his resistance during the Third FECCG (Tokyo 1917), Kanō was forced to partially acknowledge its perception of the Japanese as still being a “backward” race requiring “uplifting” to white Protestant American standards.

Racism under Negotiation: The Japanese Race in the Nazi-German Perspective

Gerhard Krebs

As a blatant racist, Hitler disliked all non-European peoples. However, he made a slight exception insofar as the Japanese were concerned. He admired their military spirit, their victory over “Slavic” Russia in 1905 and their alleged racial purity.¹ In his view they were unique by virtue of their supposed complete ethnic homogeneity in comparison with the peoples of Europe, America and the rest of Asia, who were “bastardized” and for the most part polluted by Jewish blood.² In *Mein Kampf* he acknowledged that although the Japanese as a race had neither created a culture (Ger. *kulturbegründend*) like the Aryans, nor destroyed other cultures (*kulturzerstörend*) like the Jews, they had nevertheless “adopted and made use of cultures created by others” (*kulturtragend*).³ He repeated that view even after coming to power in January 1933.⁴

The Japanese, however, did not consider it a compliment to be placed somewhere between the Aryans on the one hand and the Jews and “Negroes” on

* Unpublished Documents include: AAPA = Auswärtiges Amt, Politisches Archiv: R 29452: Aufzeichnungen Staatssekretär von Bülow über Diplomatenbesuche A-K 1.4.32–31.10.33; R 85849: Abt. Pol. IV 707/3 Politische Beziehungen Deutschlands zu Japan, Vol. 5, 1.1.1933–31.3.1934; R 85941: Abt. Pol. IV 725/4 Ostasien, Akten betreffend Pressewesen in Japan, Vol. 3, January 1932–December 1934; Ser. No 82/60665–1071, Büro des Staatssekretärs, Akten betreffend Japan, Vol. 5; R 99182: Inland I-Partei; D 0002–1: Botschaft Tokyo, Zu- und Abgänge 1936–1939; D 0002–2: Botschaft Tokyo, Zu- und Abgänge 1940–45.

BA = Bundesarchiv Berlin: R 64, IV, Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft (DJG), Vol. 31; R 4311/720a, Reichskanzlei, Vol. 3; R 4311/1456a, Reichskanzlei, Vol. 2.

NARA = National Archives and Record Administration, Washington, D.C.: Interrogations of Matsuoka Yosuke (March 1946) = IPS Document Nos. 4191, 4192.

1 Hitler, 1932: 173.

2 Hitler, 1932: 723–724.

3 Hitler, 1934a: 318–319.

4 Hitler, 1934b: T5.

the other hand in Hitler's racial ranking.⁵ This explains why this passage was omitted from the first Japanese language editions of his book.⁶ Unsurprisingly, the Japanese grew increasingly irritated about being so obviously classified among the colored and non-Aryan peoples whom the Nazis held in contempt in their declarations and regulations. On 11 October 1933, the Japanese Ambassador to Berlin, Nagai Matsuzō, visited State Secretary of the Foreign Ministry (deputy minister), Bernhard Wilhelm von Bülow, demanding clarification and stressing that the Japanese public could become hostile to Germany judging from their bad experience with racism in America. von Bülow tried to explain that the German prejudice was only directed towards the mixing of races, since mixed races were considered to be of lower value. His government, however, would be especially careful in avoiding any misunderstandings concerning the expressions criticized by Nagai.⁷ About ten days later, the Japanese Ambassador held an interview with Foreign Minister Konstantin von Neurath, once again asking if the term "colored" applied to the Japanese too and if it prohibited Japanese-German marriages. According to foreign sources, von Neurath answered that the term "colored" did not apply to the Japanese.⁸

Several days after Nagai's interviews in the Foreign Ministry, a Japanese girl, the Sumitomo combine representative's daughter, was mistreated and referred to as "colored" by German youngsters. The subsequent outcry in the Japanese press led to a great deal of embarrassment and resulted in a protest filed by Ambassador Nagai and a subsequent apology from Foreign Minister Konstantin von Neurath.⁹ The same interpretation given to Ambassador Nagai by the Foreign Ministry and suggesting that Germany held no prejudices against other races but merely opposed the mixing of races, was repeatedly used and mentioned in publications and statements made in subsequent years. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler expressed the conviction that the mixing of races would result in the depreciation of racial value, since the "lower" race would devalue the "superior" race and, unlike "pure" races, weaken the offspring and

5 Bella Fromm, a German journalist who sought asylum in the USA as a Jew in 1938, observed that Japanese Ambassador Ōshima repeatedly stressed the similarity between Japan's national ideology and Nazi Germany's, and commented that the Nazis were doing their best to make the yellow men forget that Hitler's racial theories classed them with the Jews and Negroes (Fromm 1943: 147–148).

6 For the different Japanese language editions of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, see Matsushita, 1989: 78–83; Iwamura 2005: 141–167.

7 Bülow's memo, 11 October 1933, AAPA, R 29452.

8 Furuya, 1995: 27–28.

9 Furuya, 1995: 30–31; Conversation between Japanese Embassy Counsellor Fujii and the DJG (Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft), 21 November 1933 (BA, R 64, IV, Vol. 31); Ambassador Voretzsch' tel. 6 October, 1933 (AAPA, R 85849). Draft of a report prepared for President von Hindenburg, 12 December 1933, ADAP C II, 1, no. 123.

possibly lead to a degenerate breed (*Mißgeburten*), between humans and apes. Bastards were weaker and more vulnerable to diseases and extinction. To this end, Hitler maintained that all the great cultures of the past had perished due to such “blood-poisoning.”¹⁰ In a speech held in Nuremberg in November 1928, he characterized the results of race mixing as follows: Mental disruption, imbalance of body and soul, inner discord, unsteadiness as well as permanent pain, inner sorrow and discontent.¹¹ These opinions were repeated in many Nazi publications and declarations over the years.¹²

Early Nazi Views on the Japanese Racial Position

In 1933, Herman Gauch, a race theorist and one of the leaders of the Nazi Agrarian Organization under Minister Walther Darré, referred to all non-Nordic peoples as “Under-men” or “Neanderthal men” occupying a position between Nordic men and animals, and closer to anthropoid apes than to the former. He was convinced that racial mixture would lead to diseases and degeneration.¹³ Gauch did not deal with the Japanese in detail but with people of the “dark yellow skin color” in general, which, according to him, was by popular belief attributed to a gall bladder disturbance resulting from envy, vile-ness, and falseness.¹⁴ The Japanese are only mentioned in the summary, where Gauch demands that the Nordic people stand united against the Mongol threat represented by the Japanese advance to the west.¹⁵ Gauch’s publication led to protests in Germany as well as in several countries, such as the United States, France and Spain, to the extent that the Ministry of the Interior eventually forbade its further distribution and disassociated itself from it.¹⁶

The Japanese were not placated by German assurances such as those received from the Foreign Ministry. Their irritation continued because the term *non-Aryan* did not distinguish between different races and peoples. Matters were further complicated by the fact that Germany had no clear policy towards Japan at the time and many books, magazines and newspapers still emphasized the existence of the yellow peril. This resulted in a show of strong disapproval by the Japanese Foreign Ministry, and on 1 November 1933 the German Ministry of Propaganda forbade the press from using the expression

10 Hitler, 1932: 316, 324, 442–443, 445.

11 Geißel, 1940: 49.

12 Hildebrandt, 1935: 39; Clauß 1936: 234.

13 Gauch, 1933: 9, 48–51, 54, 74, 77–79.

14 Gauch, 1933: 70.

15 Gauch, 1933: 175.

16 Lehmann, 1934: 63–64, 88; Essner, 2002: 66.

yellow peril and the word *yellow* in relation to the Japanese in general.¹⁷ At the time, however, the censorship was not as strict as it would later become and the publication of anti-Japanese articles and books continued until the conclusion of the German-Japanese Anti-Komintern Pact in 1936. Well into 1935, the German Embassy in Tokyo had to specifically ask the German media to no longer use the expression *yellow peril*,¹⁸ although some hostile publications did occasionally escape the censors even later, when the censorship became far stricter.¹⁹

Protests from foreign countries, including Japan, resulted in a clarification of German race by Hitler on 30 January, 1934 and by Minister of the Interior Wilhelm Frick on 15 February, 1934. In a long speech on the occasion of the first anniversary of his assumption of power, the Führer declared, among other things, that the Nazi idea of race would not lead to the disregard and contempt of other peoples but would rather recognize each race's duties with respect to the survival of its own people. Thereby, it would necessarily lead to a natural respect for the lives and characters of other peoples. The result would be the pacification of the whole world, since no nation would rule over other peoples or annex their territories such that the system of victorious and vanquished peoples would find its end.²⁰

About two weeks later, in a reception hosted by the Nazi Party's "Foreign Policy Office" for the diplomatic corps and foreign press representatives, Minister of the Interior Frick stressed that Nazi legislation did not in any way rate the quality and value of other peoples and races, but rather advocated racial purity and warned against mixing. This interpretation was repeatedly expressed in declarations and explanations aimed at foreigners in the years ahead. The minister also added that the exquisite and proud noble class of the Japanese samurai as well as Chinese ancestor worship could serve as a model for the Germans who required the recent race legislation in order to remember their greatest good.²¹

Nevertheless, some opposition obviously existed against the Nuremberg laws' compromising definition promulgated later, in 1935, within the Ministry of the Interior. At that time the possession of an Aryan certificate (*Ariernachweis*) documented by an ancestor's passport (*Ahnenpass*) was not absolutely necessary but was required in order to get into public office or receive permission for marriage. In the guidelines for application the aim of Nazi policy was defined as keeping the German blood pure and eradicating

17 Bohrmann & Toepser-Ziegert, 1984: I: 200.

18 Bohrmann & Toepser-Ziegert, 1987: III: 311. See also ADAP C, IV, No. 69; C II, no. 48.

19 Wolf, 1938: 342–46.

20 Hitler, 1934a: 16.

21 Frick, 1934: 15.

foreign blood portions which have intruded into the people's body. "Foreign" would primarily mean Jewish, Gypsy, Asian and African blood as well as that of Australian aborigines and American Indians.²² These guidelines remained unchanged in subsequent years. A high-ranking official of the Ministry commented that it was not only prohibitions that existed as formulated in the laws but also rules (*Gebote*) for protecting the pureness of German blood which every citizen had to observe when choosing a spouse.²³ An even higher ranking Ministry official, Arthur Gütt, Director of the Office for the People's Health (*Amt für Volksgesundheit*), formulated the *Ten Commandments for Choosing a Spouse* (*Zehn Gebote für die Gattenwahl*) in 1937. Commandment No. 5 stated that a German was only allowed to choose a spouse among his own or Nordic race and never among non-Europeans.²⁴ The question of Japanese-German marriages therefore remained unclear, meaning that further problems were to be expected (see Figs. 10.1 and 10.2).²⁵

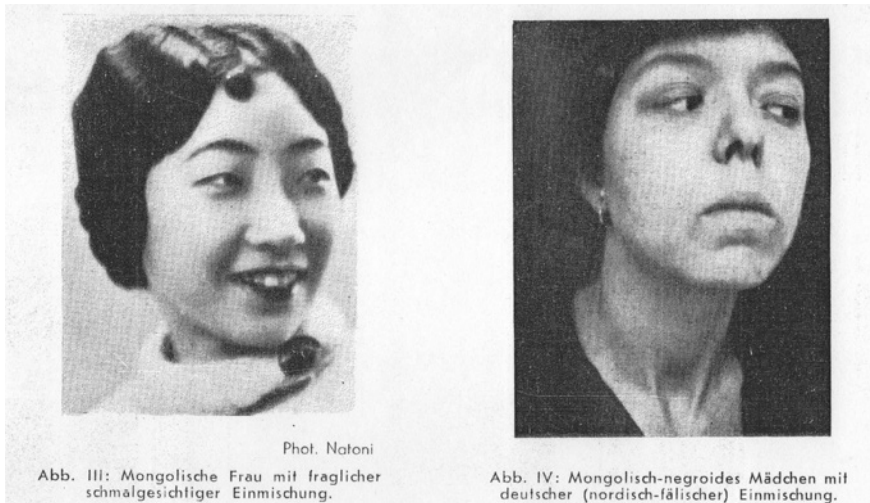


FIGURE 10.1 *"Degenerate breeds"* (1935): "Mongolian woman with uncertain intermix of thin face" (on the left) and "Mongolian-Negroid girl with German (Nordic-Fälisch) intermix" (on the right).²⁶

22 Reichsbund der Standesbeamten Deutschlands, 1935: 3.
 23 Erdmannsdorff's report, German Embassy Tokyo, 21 July 1933, AAPA, R 85941; Linden, 1938: 22–23.
 24 Gütt, 1936: 13. The German word *Gebot* has a double meaning: a rule (in a legal sense) as well as a commandment (in the religious sense).
 25 Kortzen and Steubing, 1937: 70; Gütt, 1936: 13.
 26 Hildebrandt, 1935. Fälisch was considered one of the six basic races of the Germans, see endnote 91 below.



Abb. XVIII a: Japanisch-fälischer Knabe mit seiner japanischen Mutter und nordischen Tante väterlicherseits.



Abb. XVIII b: Eltern des Knaben.

FIGURE 10.2 *“Devaluing” a “superior race” (1935): “Japanese-Faelisch boy with his Japanese mother and Nordic aunt, his father’s side” (on the left) and “The boy’s parents” (on the right).*²⁷

Others were prevented from operating a farm. More than any others, this affected Aoki Shüzō’s daughter (Hana) and her children.²⁸ A famous diplomat and politician of the Meiji period, Aoki had married a noble German woman, Elisabeth von Rhade, and had in his day been the main architect of Japanese-German friendship. Half-Japanese Hana’s husband was a German nobleman, Alexander Graf von Hatzfeldt. Their daughter Hissa married another count, Erwin Graf von Neipperg, and they had four children. As members of the landowner class they held several estates in Silesia. The women of the family encountered problems during the Nazi period even when they tried to join

²⁷ Hildebrandt, 1935.

²⁸ Denkschrift der Deutsch-Japanischen Gesellschaft zur Frage der Anwendung der Rassengesetzgebung auf die Abkömmlinge aus deutsch-japanischen Mischehen (25 October 1934) (BA, R 64, IV, Vol. 31). The complete text of this memorandum is also included in Friese, 1980 (pp. 39–46), but the author has replaced personal names with mere initials, such as H.-N.-A., instead of Hatzfeldt-Neipperg-Aoki in this case.

charity organizations. Hana therefore contacted the German-Japanese Society (Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft = DJG) to confirm the accuracy of a piece of information she had obtained. It had come to her knowledge that there was an official regulation stating that the Japanese and their offspring were to be treated as *honorary Aryans* rather than non-Aryans, and that consequently *none* of the laws which discriminated against non-Aryans could be applied against the Japanese.²⁹ The DJG's answer was that to the best of their knowledge, a decision on such a principle had not been made by the government but that the society would contact the Foreign Ministry for clarification.³⁰

This was only one of many cases in which the Japanese-German Society (DJG) attempted to provide a solution to such acts of discrimination. Its correspondence fills a voluminous file which can currently be consulted at the German Federal Archives (Bundesarchiv) in Berlin.³¹ As a result of the discrimination against German-Japanese persons of mixed blood, the DJG and some of its members, like the physician Fritz Härtel, delivered lectures attempting to popularize the idea that the Japanese were a race of "high value." Others tried to prove that the Japanese could, as a matter of fact, claim the status of Aryans because of their early historical connections, as maintained by Otto Kümmel, the director of the Museum of East Asian Art in Berlin.³² The DJG took over the role of mediator between the discriminated persons and the Japanese Embassy on the one hand and the German authorities on the other hand. The starting point for this role seems to have been a conversation between Counselor Fujii of the Japanese Embassy and the society on 21 November 1933, in which Fujii complained about the discrimination against Japanese and half-Japanese who were declared non-Aryans and who had lost their positions in several cases as a result. He also criticized the racist agitation in speeches like Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg's proclaiming the fight between the white and colored races. Fujii finally stressed embarrassment in the Japanese press and the threat to friendly Japanese-German relations.³³

The DJG's role did not end here. Almost one year later, it sent—with or without the knowledge of the Japanese Embassy (it remains unclear)—a

29 Hana Hatzfeld-Aoki to DJG, 20 April 1934 (BA, R 64, IV, Vol. 31). Underlining in the original.

30 DJG to Hana Hatzfeld-Aoki, 21 April 1934 (BA, R 64, IV, Vol. 31).

31 BA, R 64, IV, Vol. 31. See also Erdmannsdorff's (Foreign Ministry) memo 9 August, 1934, ADAP C III, I, no. 182, as well as the pioneering studies made by Furuya, 1995 and Haasch, 1996 with regard to the discrimination against the Japanese in Nazi Germany.

32 Haasch 1996: 215.

33 Conversation between Councillor Fujii and the DJG 21 November, 1933 (BA, R 64, IV, Vol. 31).

“memorandum on the application of the race laws to the offspring of Japanese-German mixed marriages”³⁴ to several ministries and party organizations under the name of the society’s president, inactive Admiral Paul Behncke. The author, not mentioned in the text, was Johann von Leers, who was an active Nazi propagandist and would later become a university professor. He was an ardent antisemite but was free from prejudice against other races and even admired the Japanese.³⁵ In the memorandum, he stressed that the cases of discrimination had already led to protests by the Japanese Embassy in Berlin as well as to agitations in the Japanese press and public that could endanger Japanese-German bilateral relations along with the traditional friendship between the two nations and their common political interests.

The memorandum later stressed that the German view on the possibility of mutual respect between the races despite the ban on intermarriage was not understood in Japan. After experiencing discrimination in many countries, it stated, the Japanese were extremely sensitive if counted among the colored races. While agreeing with the German policy preventing ‘blood mixing’ with Jews and “extremely strange races” (which did not include East Asians), the author stressed that Hungarians, Turks, Estonians and Finns were treated as Aryans despite their foreign origins. He thus recommended the application of the same policy towards the Japanese, who belonged to the same ethnic group of Asians as the abovementioned group, and suggested that the intermarriage ban, which only affected very few people to start with, should be lifted. He estimated the number of children born to Japanese-German couples—a group frequently discriminated against—to be less than fifty. He further stressed that many Japanese had a lighter skin color than many of the Mediterranean peoples which were counted among the Aryans. He was convinced that the Japanese race showed some Nordic characteristics—traces of blond hair, for instance—and had other striking similarities with the Aryans, such as the traditional law of succession, and heraldic symbols including the swastika, to name but a few. The memorandum thus called for clear definitions in German race laws lest they insult the Japanese. According to the author, the laws should apply exclusively to “Jews and primitive races.”³⁶

The Nazi party’s reply—provided by Walter Gross, head of the Racial Policy Office (Rassenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP) under Hitler’s deputy Rudolf Heß—

34 Dated 25 October 1934, BA, R 64, IV, Vol. 31. Also Friese, 1980: 39–46.

35 After World War II Johann von Leers lived in Argentina for several years and in Egypt from 1955 to his death in 1965. During this time, he converted to Islam and worked for President Gamal Abdel Nasser’s propaganda service, agitating against Jews and Israel.

36 Memorandum, 25 October 1934, BA, R 64, IV, Vol. 31.

was disappointing, at least from a Japanese viewpoint. Even if there were a certain percentage of Nordic blood in the Japanese, Gross argued, the quantity would be far too low and insignificant for them to bestow the attribute *Aryans* upon the Japanese. No mixture of races was desired in Germany regardless of their individual value. He expressed that the prohibition of intermarriage did in no way mean that foreigners could not hold each other in high esteem, and that it could in fact even be translated into deep respect towards each other's pure race.³⁷ Despite this discouraging answer, a compromise had already been found. An inter-ministerial conference in preparation since August 1934 between the Foreign, Interior, Propaganda, Culture and Labour Ministries alongside Nazi Party representatives was planned, as part of which the Foreign Ministry intended to propose that race laws should be directed against Jews alone instead of the vaguely defined "non-Aryans."³⁸ As a result of the consultations held on 15 November 1934,³⁹ Hitler's deputy Rudolf Heß announced that one should actively avoid applying the law against non-Aryans if this posed a threat to Germany's relations with the person in question's country of origin. It goes without saying that this concession did not apply to Jews, whose racial status was totally non-negotiable.⁴⁰

However, the Japanese were still wary of new German race laws at their expense and were resolute in preempting them. Just like Nagai Matsuzō before him, new ambassador Mushakōji Kintomo warned Foreign Minister von Neurath in May 1935 that the Japanese public was very sensitive to discrimination and that no legal provisions expressing racial disregard would remain without repercussions on German-Japanese relations.⁴¹ The efforts were fruitful. In fact, the November 1934 decision cleared the way to an unmistakable definition in the Nuremberg race laws announced at the party convention in September 1935: Non-Aryans were explicitly and exclusively equated with Jews alone. Germans were allowed to marry only Germans or people of similar (*artverwandt*) blood (see Fig. 10.3). The Japanese were therefore at least partially responsible for the formulation of the Nuremberg race laws given that Germany was interested in closer bonds with Tokyo. In other laws, however, the

37 Gross's letter to the DJG, 30 January 1935, Friese, 1980: 49–53.

38 Bülow-Schwante's memo, 7 August 1934, AAPA, R99182.

39 Bülow-Schwante's memo, 16 November 1934, ADAP, C II, 2, no. 331.

40 Akten der Partei-Kanzlei No. 20817. Decision confirmed by the Ministry of the Interior in a letter to the Foreign Ministry and other ministries, Party organizations and Hitler's deputy Heß, 9 February 1935, BA, R4311/720a.

41 Neurath's memo, 6 May 1935, ADAP, C IV, no. 69. Mushakōji's own wife was half-French and half-Japanese.



Mehr Würde, Ihr Herren!

Wir staunen über die Berliner *V. Z.* am Mittag, die für diese Rassenchande keinen besseren Titel gefunden hat. Dazu bemerken wir, daß wir die Mischheiraten mit Angehörigen der mongolischen Rasse nicht aus Rassenhochmut ablehnen, sondern zum Wohle sowohl der gelben, wie auch der weißen Rasse. Jede Rasse stellt für sich eine ideale Harmonie dar; die Rassen mischen, bedeutet die Harmonie zerstören.

FIGURE 10.3 *An undesired bond: The 1935 wedding of "Aryan" Austrian figure skater Friederike "Fritzi" Burger with Nishikawa Shinkichi, a grandson of the Japanese pearl tycoon Mikimoto Kōkichi, is reported with harsh criticism in the Nazi Journal Volk und Rasse. The anonymous author was unaware of Burger's Jewish origins.*⁴²

expression *non-Aryans* remained without a clear definition. The Nuremberg laws did not change German attitudes towards the Japanese immediately.

42 *Volk und Rasse*, 1935, x: 283. The text within the photo reads: "FIGURE SKATER TIES THE KNOT. Yesterday saw the wedding of the former European figure skating champion Fritzi Burger and Shinkiki Nishikawa from Japan, attended by a circle of close friends and family in Vienna. The groom is the grandson of the pearl farmer of the same name, who is known for his abundant wealth. Fritzi Burger Nishikawa and her husband, also a passionate ice skater like herself, will be moving to London, where he will take charge of his grandfather's branch office." The caption below the photo reads: "MORE PRIDE, GENTLEMEN! We are astonished at the failure of the Berliner Zeitung am Mittag to find a more suitable title for this case of racial disgrace. It should be stressed that our rejection of mixed marriages with the Mongolian race is not based on racial arrogance. Rather, it stems from our

Several weeks after their announcement, the Japanese Embassy complained that German women and girls were met with insults and affronts when accompanying Japanese men in restaurants or walking together in the streets. In an effort to prevent similar incidents, the Foreign Ministry advised the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice and the Nazi Party Propaganda Division to reassure the “man in the street” that the race laws tolerated their association with Japanese.⁴³

The Japanese sensitivity had an effect on other peoples too. An early 1937 Propaganda Ministry instruction to the press recommended avoiding the label “colored peoples” in general since the delicate Japanese were occasionally under the impression that they were also included. It stressed that the Japanese must be evaluated in a different way than black people, for example, and that one must take into consideration that Germany had good relations with Japan.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, German-Japanese intermarriages remained unwelcome, as Gross had already stated in 1934 in his response to the DJG memorandum.⁴⁵ In subsequent years, various ministries and authorities exerted pressure on engaged German-Japanese couples towards giving up their wedding plans or used the tactic of delaying a decision.⁴⁶ It was observed that the “Japanese blood” was dominant in German-Japanese offspring and visible on their faces—an appearance which was negatively commented upon.⁴⁷

Anti-Japanese attitudes were also apparent among Germans residing in Japan. In 1934, the leader of the Tokyo Nazi Party branch, Fritz Scharf, sought to apply the Aryan Laws of his homeland in order to exclude the Japanese and the Japanese wives of German citizens from membership in the “German Natural Science and Ethnology Society” (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens*, known by its acronym OAG). The majority of the German community in Tokyo thought differently but took a rather passive stance which adherents of the Nazi party (NSDAP) were quick to exploit.⁴⁸ Herbert Zachert, a German Japanologist (1908–79), who had married the half-Japanese Susanna (née Schirrbaum) also complained about acts of

concern for the prosperity of both the yellow and the white race. On its own, every race is harmonious; it is the mixing of the races which causes the destruction of harmony.”

43 Letter, 18 October 1935, Akten der Partei-Kanzlei No. 21351.

44 Hagemann, 1970: 269–270.

45 Friese, 1980: 50.

46 Cases Karl Glatzer, Karl Heise, Wilhelm Hillenbrand, Hans-Eckart von Koslowski, in BA, R 64, IV, Vol. 31.

47 Inquiry by Party Chancellery, 13 June 1942, and answer by Foreign Ministry, signed Rademacher, 17 June, 1942, Akten der Partei-Kanzlei No. 15861 and 2769.

48 Nakamura, 2011: 55.

discrimination against his family by the Nazi-dominated German community in Tokyo.⁴⁹ He had been employed as a teacher at the Matsumoto High School since 1933 and became the acting director of the Japanese-German Cultural Institute in Tokyo in 1941 since the unexpected attack on the Soviet Union that June prevented the return of the actual director, top Nazi propagandist Walter Donat, who had been on a visit to Germany.

The Nazi dominated “Tokyo-Yokohama German Community” (*Deutsche Gemeinde Tokyo-Yokohama*), an association which all Germans were more or less obliged to join—and in which other persons with German roots were also welcome in—also exerted pressure towards preventing German-Japanese marriages. Women who wanted to marry Japanese men had to leave the Community, although marriages concluded before 1933 were exempted from that rule.⁵⁰ Other engaged couples became victims of extreme pressure exerted by the German Consulate in Yokohama and by Nazi party activists towards giving up their marriage plans. They even forced the director of a German trade company to dismiss an employee who intended to marry a Japanese girl, a plan the young man had to abandon in order to keep his job.⁵¹

In December 1938, the NSDAP informed several ministries and administrative bodies that Hitler was planning to forbid marriages between Germans and foreigners by law or decree as a matter of principle. Exceptions—for party members or for public officials—could only be granted by the grace of the Führer himself or by his deputy Rudolf Heß.⁵² Hitler would have preferred a formal law, which existed as a draft in August 1939, but when war broke out in the next month he decided to put the project on ice “until the end of war.”⁵³ Therefore, in February 1940, Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop urged the prohibition of marriages between German diplomats and foreign women by decree at the very least.⁵⁴ This was enacted in October of the same year but did not become a formal law, and by Hitler’s order was not published.⁵⁵

Japan assumed an active stance in this regard. It followed the course it set earlier when faced with racist policies in the United States at the beginning

49 Interview with Herbert Zachert by Gerhard Krebs in 1972. See also Susanna Zachert in Ehmcke & Pantzer, 2000: 244; and Zachert et al., 1996: 132–133.

50 *Deutsche Gemeinde* to Consulate Yokohama, 8 July 1940, AAPA D 0003–2.

51 Memo, 7 June 1940, German Consulate Yokohama, AAPA D 0003–2.

52 Akten der Partei-Kanzlei No. 13181, 21 December 1938.

53 Furuya, 1995: 37–38.

54 Akten der Partei-Kanzlei No. 14249, 12 February 1940.

55 Reichsminister und Chef der Reichskanzlei Lammers an Heß, 15 October 1940, Akten der Partei-Kanzlei No. 14249.

of the twentieth century. In what is known as the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 (Jpn. *Nichibei shinshi kyōyaku*), it was willing to impose self-restrictions on Japanese immigration in return for an American readiness to avoid their enactment.⁵⁶ From 1935 onwards, the German media repeatedly mentioned the fact that the Japanese Foreign Ministry had forbidden marriages between Japanese diplomats and foreign women in order to justify Germany's own race policy.⁵⁷ However, one exception was clearly visible in Berlin: Tōgō Shigenori, ambassador to Germany in 1938, was married to a German woman, but had married her during the liberal 1920s. Nazi officials suspected that Edith Tōgō was not of pure Aryan origin and regarded the couple with disapproval.⁵⁸ In a further attempt to justify the German race policy, many authors also maintained that the Japanese custom of arranged marriages resulted in keeping foreigners from intruding into Japanese families,⁵⁹ and that other countries also had laws forbidding interracial marriages. This was true in many US states, particularly with regard to marriages between white people and Afro-Americans or Native Americans ("Indians"), but in some cases also between white people and Japanese or other Asians.⁶⁰ Another example cited was Mussolini's efforts to forbid interracial marriages or sexual intercourse in Italian colonies and particularly in the recently conquered Ethiopia.⁶¹

Germany did not remain behind. As late as September 1940, when the Tripartite Pact was negotiated in Tokyo, Hitler was reluctant to allow Japanese-German marriages. He would have preferred to deny his consent in the interest of keeping the blood of the German race pure during a meeting with his chief of chancellery Hans Heinrich Lammers, who recommended permitting the marriage of a half-Japanese man with a German woman for diplomatic reasons. Hitler ultimately agreed to give his approval to that single case, but demanded that the approval process for all further applications was to be intentionally delayed by at least one year and end in refusal despite the process. He mentioned that one could tell the Japanese that keeping the German race pure meant doing the same for the Japanese race.⁶² However, exceptions were still made from time to time. In August 1941, the famous movie actor

56 Inui, 1925.

57 *Rassenpolitische Auslands-Korrespondenz* 1935: 6.

58 Memorandum, Erdmannsdorff's for Rintelen, 18 October, 1941, AAPA, Büro des Staatssekretärs Japan, vol. 5.

59 Leers, 1936: 121.

60 Krieger, 1936: 150–154.

61 Behrens, 1937: 106; Eicke, 1937: 349, 352.

62 Lammers's copy, 21 September 1940, BA, R 4311/1456a.

Victor de Kowa, who even bore the title “state actor,” married opera singer Tanaka Michiko. The obstacles to this marriage were overcome with the support of influential Ambassador Ōshima Hiroshi. While it was forbidden to publish stories on the marriage in newspapers, journals or radio broadcasts, it soon became widely known, since both partners were very prominent and the newly-weds soon became a glamour couple in Berlin society.⁶³ The reality was apparently less glamorous, since Tanaka mentioned several cases of discrimination she had experienced in postwar interviews.⁶⁴

Becoming More Aryan

Supporters of the Japanese cause did not disappear altogether in Nazi Germany. Johann von Leers, for example, the author of the aforementioned memorandum and since 1940 a professor of history at Jena University, intensified his propaganda on the racial merits of Japan. In the course of time, the Japanese in his portrayals appeared more and more Aryan in spirit and could even be considered the offspring of dispersed Aryans in his and other agitators' publications.⁶⁵ Other prominent writers who joined him in these campaigns were such figures as General Karl Haushofer,⁶⁶ the founder of the discipline of geopolitics; professor Hans F.K. Günther,⁶⁷ since 1935 professor of race studies at Berlin University and later at Freiburg University; the Indian studies scholar Walther Wüst,⁶⁸ a professor of “Aryan Culture and Language Studies” in Munich since 1935, director of the SS-organization *Ahnenerbe* (Ancestors' Heritage) since 1937 and president of Munich University since 1941; the geographer Martin Schwind;⁶⁹ the Swiss architect Max Hinder,⁷⁰ who worked for the German Ministry of Propaganda; the Erlangen professor of philosophy Eugen Herrigel;⁷¹ the newspaper correspondent Albrecht von Urach;⁷² many non-

63 Tanaka, 1937: 129. Interestingly, the couple's joint grave in postwar Berlin is decorated with a Japanese stone lantern.

64 Tsunoda, 1982: 117.

65 Leers, 1934b: 881–83; Leers, 1938: 210–211.

66 Haushofer, 1939: 31–32, 34.

67 Günther, 1934b: 197–201.

68 Wüst, 1935 in a review of Günther, 1934b: 490.

69 Schwind, 1942: 18.

70 Hinder, 1942: 31–32, 34.

71 Herrigel, 1944: 14.

72 Urach, 1942: 19.

fiction writers and last but not least the German Japanologists led by Walter Donat and Wilhelm Gundert.⁷³

The propaganda was intensified when, after its first rapprochement with Japan in 1936, Germany concluded a military alliance with it in 1940 and fought a common war alongside it from December 1941 onwards. German propagandists tried to demonstrate that the Japanese were not an ordinary colored race but must have had an at least partially Aryan heritage. The swastika was believed to have entered Japan during the Indo-Aryan invasion. Chief Nazi propagandist Rosenberg claimed that one should not seek the origin of this symbol in Asia but that it had been created in the heart of Europe and stretched over the Near East to India, China, and finally Japan.⁷⁴ Other writers willfully followed Rosenberg's leadership.⁷⁵

The Ainu, the country's native race, which had gradually become mixed with the Japanese, were considered a European race,⁷⁶ although, as the long-time ambassador to Tokyo Herbert von Dirksen warned, "official Japan"—who held the country's natives in contempt—disliked that theory.⁷⁷ Other proofs for the Aryan origins of the Japanese people were seen in their heroism, martial spirit and code of honor which could have only originated among Aryan, Indo-Germanic or Nordic peoples.⁷⁸ The preference for white make-up by Japanese women,⁷⁹ the alleged blond hair and red skin of Japanese babies,⁸⁰ as well as the noble appearance of the samurai class and the women's beautiful pale faces with rosy cheeks⁸¹ were seen as further evidence supporting that theory. It was also said that many samurai as well as modern political and military leaders had an "un-Japanese" and rather European appearance.⁸² The same was the case with Japanese holders of a doctoral degree, as judged by one author.⁸³ Despite their reputation as tough fighters, the samurai were said to have often possessed an appearance of girlish austerity.⁸⁴ The laws of

73 Donat, 1942: 447; Donat, 1943b: 9; Gundert, 1937: 6, 223; and Gundert, 1943: 19–21.

74 Rosenberg, 1932: 68.

75 Scheuermann, 1933: 13–14; Günther, 1934b: 206; Fehrle, 1934: 24, 26; Welke, 1942: 111.

76 Pustau & Okanouye, 1936: 2; Haushofer, 1938: 22; Hinder, 1942: 31; Roß, 1942: 27; and Eickstedt, 1944: 483.

77 Dirksen in a private letter dated 7 March 1943; Haasch, 1996: 249.

78 Pringle, 2006: 145–76; Mierau, 2006: 311–364.

79 Günther, 1934: 197–98.

80 Leers, 1933: 32; Leers, 1934b: 881–883.

81 Weisbach, 2002 [1878]: 93.

82 Günther, 1934b: 200–201.

83 Günther, 1934b: 201.

84 Keiter, 1941: 56.

land inheritance⁸⁵ and various heraldic symbols⁸⁶ were also seen as proof of the Japanese relationship with European Aryans in general and with the old Germanic peoples in particular. More than any other author, these views were propagated by Johann von Leers.

Most authors of both scientific as well as pseudo-scientific treatises on the Japanese race agreed that Japan was historically populated by immigrants who came from both the Asian continent and the Polynesian-Malayan islands,⁸⁷ with the latter immigrants considered by several publications to have been Indo-Aryans mixing with the native Ainu.⁸⁸ A few of them regarded Malayan blood as the cause of the Japanese fighting spirit but also of their tendency to run amuck and their propensity towards self-sacrifice and self-destruction, which also was said to reflect the unpredictability of the country's volcanic geology.⁸⁹ Similarly, Japan's geophysical character, usually pleasant but occasionally plagued by sudden earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and typhoons, was often compared with the unpredictability of its people, who could instantly move from calmness to an eruption of wrath and a bloodthirsty vengefulness.⁹⁰

Despite their supposed origin from different peoples, the Japanese were seen as a pure race in much the same way that the Germans had their origin in different races, but had finally created a new race from the dominant Nordic part—a conviction also outlined in the commentaries to the Nuremberg laws of 1935.⁹¹ Among the Japanese, however, it was the Yamato race that had become dominant.⁹² By the same token, art historian and museum director Otto Kümmel underlined that while the origin and the race of the Japanese were still under discussion, there was no doubt that they had melded different components in order to build a uniform race body. The Chinese and Korean influence in historical times, he continued, enriched their culture without making any substantial changes to their racial appearance. They were protected against invasions by their insular position—and by the dreadfully sharp Japanese sword—since time immemorial. There were therefore only

85 Leers, 1934a: 49; Leers, 1934b: 885; Leers, 1934–1935: 413; and Leers, 1939: 777–778.

86 Leers, 1933: 28–31; Leers, 1939: 773–776.

87 Wirth, 1934: 14; Ross, 1942: 27.

88 Mühlmann, 1935.

89 Eiardt, 1937: 10.

90 Ueberschaar, 1937: 5; Filla, 1938: 21. This was also the case in the 1936 German-Japanese movie *Die Tochter des Samurai*, or (in the Japanese version) *Atarashiki tsuchi* [The new earth].

91 Stuckart & Globke 1936: 55. The original German races were: Nordisch, fälisch, westisch, dinarisch, ostisch, ostbaltisch.

92 Wirth, 1934: 14; Ueberschaar, 1937: 6; Wirth, 1942: 11–12.

very few Japanese with non-Japanese ancestors: the people and the race are one. Kümmel concluded that this almost complete identity of race, people and state gave Japan a unity of blood, spirit and shape unparalleled by any other civilized nation.⁹³ This, however, contrasted with opinions concerning the partially Aryan origin of the Japanese suggested by other authors.

The Problem with the Japanese in the Nazi Worldview

The Nazi leadership did not forge a consensus with regard to their attitude towards the Japanese, and, needless to say, towards other Asians. While for Hitler and Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels the rapprochement and military alliance were more than anything the result of sheer opportunism and power politics, Rosenberg still adhered to the “yellow peril” view. As early as 1933, the Japanese Embassy in Berlin had protested Rosenberg’s agitation against colored peoples⁹⁴ and the German embassy in Tokyo reported an outcry in the Japanese press.⁹⁵ Rosenberg went as far as planning a constructive role for the Slavic peoples as a buffer between Germany and Asia. In his mind, the Slavs had merely committed one mistake, which was straying too far into the West—areas which should have been reserved for German settlement.⁹⁶ Unlike Hitler, he did not deem it necessary to secure Southeast Asia for the white man. Rather, he suggested, it should become the sphere of life for the Chinese and the Japanese, to which end he supported the Japanese slogan “Asia for the Asians.”⁹⁷ Otherwise the yellow peoples would follow the footsteps of Genghis Khan, Tamerlane and Attila, which could turn a feared vision ascribed to Bismarck and suggesting that some day the yellow people would water their camels in the River Rhine into reality.⁹⁸

Ironically Hitler, Himmler and other Nazis originally admired Genghis Khan, his empire and the Mongols in general.⁹⁹ One author referred to this leader as the prototype of the energetic Japanese with a tendency not so much

93 Kümmel, 1941.

94 Conversation between Counsellor Fujii and the DFG, 21 November 1933 (BA, R 64, IV, Vol. 31).

95 Erdmannsdorff’s report, 7 September 1933 (AAPA, R 85941).

96 Cecil, 1972: 165.

97 Rosenberg, 1934a: 127; Erdmannsdorff’s report, 7 September 1933 (AAPA, R 85941).

98 Rosenberg, 1934b: 645, 655, 672–673.

99 Breitman, 1990; Zelle, 2010: 212.

to conquer as to organize and consolidate.¹⁰⁰ Among the Nazis, however, the mood changed as World War II developed into a disaster for Germany, particularly on the Eastern front. At this point, Stalin became the new Genghis Khan within German propaganda, whose aim was to destroy European civilization.¹⁰¹ Himmler found a simple explanation for the friend-foe relationship between the Aryans and the Mongols: By virtue of their small percentage of Aryan blood, the Mongols—including Stalin and the Slavic peoples with their partially Asian heritage—had developed into ferocious fighters, heroes and conquerors such that they became a threat to their Aryan forefathers.¹⁰² In this, Himmler was probably influenced by the theories of Theodor Mollison, the director of the Anthropological Institute in Munich, who had already proclaimed such a doctrine several years earlier.¹⁰³

Nazi ideologue Rosenberg did not share these opinions. In his foreword, the Japanese editor and chief translator of Rosenberg's bestseller *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* (Ger. *Der Mythos des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts*) praised the author's understanding of the "Asia for the Asians" policy but appealed to him to recognize that it was not only the Aryans, but also the Japanese that had an ancient, highly developed culture and a similar code of honor.¹⁰⁴ The book's translation was completed with the co-operation of Walter Donat, director of the Japanese-German Cultural Institute in Tokyo and an ardent Nazi propagandist. Unlike Rosenberg and other prominent Nazis, SS-leader Heinrich Himmler was a devotee of the idea of a racial relationship between the Indo-Aryans and many Asian peoples, including the Japanese. Influenced by the Indian studies scholar Walther Wüst and the race theorist Hans F.K. Günther, he was convinced of the Aryan origins of some Asian peoples like the Mongols with their hero Genghis Khan, the "pure Aryan" Gautama Buddha, some Tibetan tribes and last but not least the Japanese samurai, all showing "un-Asian" energy because they descended from ancient European conquerors.¹⁰⁵ According to other Nazi theorists, the East-Asians (Mongoloids) were not described as active but as indifferent or even apathetic and unfeeling.¹⁰⁶

100 Lohe, 1940: 226.

101 Domarus, 2, 1963: 1775; Picker, 1977: 493, 495; Himmler, 1942: 2.

102 Himmler's speeches in Smith & Petersen, 1974: 186; Kroll, 1998: 224.

103 Mollison, 1934: 44–46.

104 Suita, 1938: xxi–xxii.

105 Pringle, 2006: 145–176. Similar sources are Günther 1933: 112; Günther, 1934b: 185–86; Leers, 1934a: 34–35; Wüst, 1935: 490; Mierau, 2006: 311–364.

106 Eickstedt, 1934: 20.

Himmler and his theorists believed that the Indo-Aryan origin was in Central Asia, most probably Tibet, or believed that area to have become the temporary homeland of dispersed Aryans who had to flee the sunken city of Atlantis as reported by Plato.¹⁰⁷ In later years, Nazi theorists became convinced that the original home of the Aryans must have been Europe—either the area of what was to become Germany, the Baltic Sea region or Southeastern Europe—such that Nordic elements spread from there to Tibet and Mongolia and as far as Japan.¹⁰⁸ When Himmler was presented with a Japanese sword, he was said to have discovered an alleged relationship between the Japanese and the old German cults and thus instructed scholars in his service to search for connections between the Nordic race and Asian nations and their possible common racial origin.¹⁰⁹ He even dispatched an ss-expedition under his patronage to Tibet in 1938–39, although he did not finance it, charged with proving Aryan relationships with its people. Along with Hitler,¹¹⁰ Himmler also admired Shinto and ancestor worship, regarding it as a purely national and heroic religion suitable for serving as a model for a return to the old Germanic religion.¹¹¹ He was also considering how his “ss-order” could become the German samurai.¹¹² He believed ancestor worship to be the source of Japanese strength and invincibility and that it should thus serve as a model for the ss.¹¹³ To this end, he ordered a large-scale expansion of research on Asia in the spring of 1942.¹¹⁴ He was said to have carried a copy of the Indian epic *Bhagavad Gita* during World War II, to have quoted from it frequently and to have equated the war god Krishna with Adolf Hitler.¹¹⁵ In contrast to Hitler’s opinion, one Nazi author characterized the Tokugawa shogunate in an official ss publication as highly creative in the cultural field, placing Japan on the same level as the Aryans.¹¹⁶

Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels also saw ancestor worship as the source of Japanese nationalism and religion and as such the origin of Japanese strength. In December 1942, and at the height of the battle of Stalingrad, he

107 Greve, 1997: 106–109.

108 Günther, 1934a: 233; a similar source is Rosenberg, 1934b: 25–29.

109 Speer, 1969: 136.

110 Picker, 1977: 81, 107, 209–10; Jochmann, 1982: 151; and Goebbels, 1994–1996: II, 2: 493f, 500, 506, 515.

111 Smith & Petersen, 1974: 192.

112 Ackermann, 1970: 66; Ackermann, 1989: 127; Kaufmann, 2010: 645.

113 Smith & Petersen, 1974: 192.

114 Greve, 1997: 107.

115 Kersten, 1952: 189–90.

116 “Ieyasu schuf Japans Einheitsstaat,” 1939.

declared it to be an example Germany should follow.¹¹⁷ According to a secret police report, Goebbels's article on this issue was well received by the German public because of the vision suggesting that the victims of the war would continue to live on in the minds of the German people.¹¹⁸ For the SS, however, the subject of suicide was a thorny issue, as it was vigorously condemned as cowardly escape from responsibility. On the other hand, it seemed necessary to consider the feelings of the Japanese ally for whom death by one's own hand was a holy ritual. As an attempt to justify Japanese suicide, the SS argued that the individual in the Far East was not only lacking the same importance in the human community as it had in Europe, but, more decisively, that death was an essential means for the transmigration of souls. People in East Asia were said to be so sure of a bright future that they unhesitatingly and even gladly threw away their lives if required to do so for whatever reason. This attitude transformed the Japanese into frightening enemies in a war, dare-devils seeking an honorable heroic death. *Seppuku*—the ritual suicide also known as *harakiri* in the West—could be viewed as the equivalent of a heroic death since it required a great amount of self-conquest.¹¹⁹ When discussing whether Germany should establish suicide squads along the lines of the Japanese Kamikaze model during the last months of the war, Hitler refused since such actions, which, he argued, were too contradictory to Western warfare and the Christian tradition which considered suicide taboo. Thus only a limited number of units were sent on suicide missions—more or less as an experiment—which did not turn out to be very fruitful.¹²⁰

Continuing Mutual Mistrust

Despite his qualified admiration of certain elements in Japanese society and tradition, Hitler never trusted the Japanese completely. This can be seen in the aftermath of his conversation with the “Japanese Asian” Matsuoka Yōsuke, the Japanese foreign minister who visited Berlin in spring 1941.¹²¹ When Matsuoka concluded a Treaty of Neutrality with the Soviet Union against German wishes on his way home, Stalin assured him: “I am an Asian myself.” This episode

117 Goebbels, 1944: 99.

118 Boberach, 12, 1984: 4622.

119 “Selbstmord, Sühne oder Flucht?” 1939: 8.

120 Reitsch, 1952: 295–296, 298–303, 307; O'Neill, 1989; and Croitoru, 2003: 68–70.

121 Schmidt's memo of 3 June 1941, ADAP D XII, 2, No. 584, p. 784.

was registered with displeasure in Berlin.¹²² Even during the wartime alliance Hitler still mistrusted the Japanese, considering them not only secretive but also sly and deceitful.¹²³

The mistrust was certainly mutual. The Japanese never ceased distrusting the Germans on similar racial grounds, fearing that one day they would have to settle with the other white powers. This uneasiness became manifest in the fear Emperor Hirohito expressed in mid October 1941 and even more so at the Imperial Conference on 5 November of that year, when the war decision was made for the second time.¹²⁴ The emperor stressed that all the people of future enemy countries belonged to the white race, as did Germany, where Hitler had described the Japanese as a second-class race. The American indignation against the Japanese must have been a source of even greater nuisance than their hatred for Hitler. American Germans, the *tennō* continued, were considering ways of bringing about peace between the United States and Germany. The *tennō* therefore feared that if Japan started a war against the United States, Germany and Great Britain, as well as Germany and the United States would reconcile and leave Japan on its own due to the hatred of the yellow race in the Anglo-Saxon nations, which might shift and be directed against Japan rather than Germany.¹²⁵ This was where former Foreign Minister Matsuoka's viewpoint had apparently taken effect, since he had always emphasized the influence of the great number of Americans with German roots, which may have been an effect of Germany's boasts to this aim.

Matsuoka was really wary about these German-Americans—about 20 million, he estimated—mobilizing the American public against the Japanese and driving their country into war against Japan. As strange as it sounds, this opinion was even believed in navy circles.¹²⁶ Such fears, which also surfaced in the *tennō*'s thinking, were reflected in the liaison conference between the Supreme Command and the top ministers held on 15 November 1941, when the decision to start the war was made and the restoration of peace planned at the same time: Germany, Italy and Japan should conclude a treaty which would oblige the signatory powers not to sign a separate peace accord or to accept a British surrender, but rather to undertake efforts that would make England persuade the United States to join any peace accord too. Therefore, the diplomatic bonds

122 Goebbels, I, 9, 1998: 359.

123 Heiber, 1962: 168 (5 March 1943).

124 Kido, 1966: II: 914.

125 Ike, 1967: 237.

126 Ōhashi, 1952: 57–59; NARA, Matsuoka interrogations: 241–243; and Shinmyō, 1976: 75, 78.

with neutral countries should be strengthened from the war's outset such that those countries could later be used as mediators.¹²⁷

The fear of an arbitrary German peace arrangement with the other "white" powers was repeated in the discussions preceding the war's outbreak in December 1941 carried out in both the Supreme Military Council (*gunji sangi-in*) as the highest military advisory body and the Privy Council (*sūmitsu-in*) as the *tennō's* highest civil advisory organ.¹²⁸ To Japan's relief, however, the Tripartite powers signed a treaty of common warfare which interdicted any of the partners from concluding a separate peace. This was a treaty born of mutual mistrust and ratified on 11 December 1941, only three days after the Pearl Harbor attack.¹²⁹ Germany and Italy declared war on the United States on the same day, but the nightmarish vision of a separate peace among the white nations never disappeared in Japan throughout the entire war. Actually, Hitler often dreamed his old dream of concluding a peace with Great Britain, possibly by even including Japan in the peace settlement,¹³⁰ but never made any serious attempts to attain it.

The alliance between racist Nazi Germany and the non-white Japanese was a problem for Berlin's policy and propaganda, made worse by the barbed sarcasm expressed by the enemy nations.¹³¹ The Japanese military's surprising success after the outbreak of war in December 1941 posed a dilemma for Hitler as well as for Goebbels. Although they were delighted about their ally's victories, they showed signs of a guilty conscience for joining hands with the "yellow" Japanese: From a strictly racial point of view, they were on the wrong side and regretted the losses the white powers had suffered, particularly after the fall of Singapore in February 1942. They blamed Great Britain for refusing the German hand stretched out in friendship and for appealing to Japan for support in World War I.¹³² The same tone was expressed in the German press.¹³³ Nevertheless, when the Japanese attained overwhelming victories in the early stages of the Pacific War, German radio propaganda praised their racial purity as a source of strength in contrast to the American melting pot that included

127 Ike, 1967: 249.

128 Nihon Kokusai Seiji Gakkai 1963: 557–61. Bōeichō 76, 1974: 269–276.

129 Krebs, 1991.

130 Jochmann, 1982: 184, 269.

131 See Hitler's speech to the parliament on February 20 1938, Hitler, 1938: 48–50.

132 Hassell, 1964: 226; Picker, 1977: 351–52; Jochmann, 1982: 156, 163–64, 179, 182; Goebbels, II, 2, 1994–1996: 495, 564, 591; and Goebbels II, 3, 1994–1996: 59, 65, 78, 514.

133 Japan und die deutsche Rassenpolitik, 1939: 141; Tornau, 1938: 10; and Roß, 1942: 26.

“millions of Negroes and Jews.”¹³⁴ At the same time, Propaganda Minister Goebbels observed the fact that the Japanese were stressing the racial aspect of the war in their propaganda with displeasure.¹³⁵

The German public admired the Japanese military achievements but soon—according to secret police sources—developed an inferiority complex about the Japanese. The latter now seemed to be “super Germanics” (*Germanen im Quadrat*) depreciating the achievements of the German soldiers.¹³⁶ As the Japanese success continued, the fear of the yellow peril arose again,¹³⁷ and had to be suppressed by Propaganda Minister Goebbels who had received a complaint to this effect from the Japanese embassy.¹³⁸ In March 1942, when the British humiliation during the fall of Singapore was seen as a defeat of the white race, Minister Goebbels gave instructions to Nazi party leaders stressing the disastrous effect of “yellow peril” gossip. He therefore banned all discussions of the subject in the media and considered them treasonous.¹³⁹ He even called such gossip a crime against the German people.¹⁴⁰

The End

The ongoing deterioration in both Germany’s and Japan’s fortunes led to a resurfacing of the latter’s fears of a German betrayal. Fearing that Hitler was considering an arrangement with the Anglo-Saxon powers, Tokyo tried to persuade Berlin to accept a mediation for the conclusion of a separate peace with the Soviet Union. Hitler refused.¹⁴¹ His and most Nazis’ perspective on the Japanese had over the years wavered between disrespect and glorification, mistrust and partnership. It seems, however, that the German respect for the Japanese had grown in the course of time, and not just in propaganda boasts. According to General Yamashita Tomoyuki, who visited Europe in spring 1941 as the head of a Japanese military mission to the Axis, Hitler had emphasized at one reception that in the coming age, the interests of Japan and Germany would be identical, because the two had a common spiritual foundation.

134 Kris & Speyer 1944: 263.

135 Goebbels II, 2, 1994–1996: 564, 591; Goebbels II, 3, 1994–1996: 59, 65, 78.

136 Boberach 11, 1984: 4042–7, 4069; Boberach 12, 1984: 4578.

137 Boberach 9, 1984: 3338; similarly see Roß, 1942: 26.

138 Boelcke, 1967: 202.

139 Boelcke, 1967: 202.

140 Propagandaparole 19, Akten der Partei-Kanzlei No. 26245.

141 Krebs, 1990.

Yamashita, the future “Tiger of Malaya” and conqueror of Singapore in 1942, also reported that Hitler hinted that he would leave instructions to the German people suggesting that they should bind themselves eternally to the Japanese spirit.¹⁴² Hitler kept this promise. In a political testament made in February 1945 and found after the war he stated:

In my opinion the Chinese and the Japanese were never of lower value from a racial point of view. Both of them belong to old cultures and I frankly admit that their tradition is superior to ours. They have every reason to be proud about that fact in the same way as we are proud about our culture. I even believe that it would be easier for me to find an understanding with the Chinese and the Japanese the more they persist in their pride of race . . . For us, Japan will be friend and ally for all times. In this war we have learned to think highly of Japan and hold it in high esteem . . . We will be united by a common fate forever and will win together or perish together. Should destiny annihilate us first I can hardly imagine that the Russians will adhere to their myth of “Asian solidarity” towards the Japanese any longer . . . I am convinced that the Japanese, the Chinese and the Islamic peoples will always be closer to us than, say, France—the existing blood relationship with that nation notwithstanding . . .¹⁴³

It is unclear whether this was one of Hitler’s last acts of propaganda or the result of a learning process. In any event, he only lamented that Japan had not joined the war against the Soviet Union or attacked Singapore by 1940.¹⁴⁴ Both countries, Germany as well as Japan, fought their wars separately and lost them separately. When Germany surrendered in May 1945, Japanese propaganda did not stress the heroism and German ethic as spiritual relatives any longer. The mood had changed: it confirmed that the Germans were merely another nation of ordinary weak-kneed Westerners,¹⁴⁵ although Hitler’s suicide did win some modest praise since it appeared to more or less adhere to the Japanese ethic.¹⁴⁶

Overall, Nazi racism ran into difficulties when Hitler increasingly followed a policy of rapprochement with Japan leading up to a military alliance during

142 Tolischus, 1943: 218.

143 Hitler, 1981 [3 February 1945]: 66, 92–93, 123.

144 Hitler, 1981 [3 February 1945]: 92–93.

145 Pauer, 1996.

146 Koltermann, 2009: 153–174.

World War II. At the beginning of Nazi rule the Japanese were more or less thought to be ordinary colored people that often complained about discrimination. Japanese responses and protests first bore fruit in the form of the Nuremberg race laws of 1935, that declared that only Jews would be treated as non-Aryans in the future. In subsequent years, German propaganda stressed the virtues of the Japanese race, such as their fighting spirit, loyalty and self-sacrificing devotion. Some authors even maintained that they might possess a certain percentage of Aryan blood.

The opinions in Nazi circles were not homogenous, however. While Hitler and Propaganda Minister Goebbels admired the Japanese, their policy was more or less dominated by sheer opportunism. Ideologue Rosenberg never gave up his fears and warnings against the dangers arising from the Asian peoples' expansionist spirit. In contrast, SS-leader Himmler perceived a close racial relationship with several Oriental peoples, and most notably the Japanese samurai class with their assumed Aryan origin. Unlike other non-Whites like the Chinese, the Japanese received preferential treatment. Their intermarriage with Germans was not legally prohibited but was certainly obstructed such that engaged couples were pressured to give up their marriage plans. The German public in general admired the Japanese because of their successful modernization and their military spirit. However, after their surprising success in the early stages of the Pacific war, the Japanese "supermen" were often seen as terrifying despite this admiration to the extent that German propaganda had to suppress a resurgence of "yellow peril" rhetoric.

Discourses of Race and Racism in Modern Korea, 1890s–1945

Vladimir Tikhonov

This chapter deals with the introduction of racial and racist discourses to Korea in the 1890s–1910s and their evolution during the Japanese colonial rule until 1945. Race and racism are distinctively modern discourses, but they were not necessarily the most important concepts for East Asians in the midst of their modern transition. “Civilization and progress” were of probably even more paramount significance.¹ They were often subjugated to a much more central modern discourse of nationalism. As we shall see later in this chapter, Japan’s racial (and, at times, openly racist) Pan-Asianism lost its influence among colonial Korea’s nationalist intellectuals as it came into open conflict with their ethno-national expectations. Nonetheless, they were still part and parcel of the modernity narrative which was de-composing and re-composing pre-existing worldviews and knowledge paradigms in late nineteenth-century East Asia. However, at the same time, they were often able to assume the air of authoritativeness on account of their visible connections with comparable pre-modern ideologies.

As Frank Dikötter has persuasively demonstrated, race in the modern meaning of the word might be a modernist importation in China, but the explicitly discriminatory attitudes towards the “faraway barbarians” whose skin color was visibly different from that of Chinese (and especially towards those who looked black) were commonplace in China’s elite culture long before then. This partly explains the easiness—indeed, eagerness—with which the new, race-based classificatory scheme was accepted in China in the late nineteenth century.² In fact, even before the “scientific” concept of race was introduced to China in the mid-1890s by the reformist intellectuals armed with knowl-

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1 Schmid 2002: 9–10.

2 Dikötter, 1992: 1–126; 2013.

edge of the “new” Western classificatory schemes, the pejorative view of non-Whites developed in the Western literature and held as common knowledge among the Western public was accepted by Chinese authors without much reservation.

The new, race-based taxonomic system overlapped with pre-existing models of worldwide civilizational hierarchy. Thus, the “barbarians” of the Confucian and Sinocentric world order evolved into the “savages,” “aborigines” or “inferior races” essential for the new *weltanschauung*. The Europeans, previously classified as “barbarians,” were reclassified as the preeminently civilized “White race,” but often regarded as an existential threat to both Koreans and other “Yellow”—and generally all non-White—people at the same time. On the other hand, the Japanese, previously seen as a troublesome, alien and at best semi-civilized neighbor, were reclassified as “fellow members of the Yellow race.” This classificatory change had huge socio-political and cultural implications, since it appeared to legitimize both modern borrowings from and often even political and military collaborations with East Asia’s new imperialist hegemon.

Race and Its Uncertainties

The development of modern racism in Japan arguably followed a comparable trajectory. The renewed and strengthened emphasis on the supposedly superior position of Japan and the Japanese in the early modern age (1570–1868) presaged the importation of a modern racist framework after the 1868 Meiji Restoration. By the eighteenth century, the likes of Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) and other adherents of the *kokugaku* (“national learning school”) came to view Japan, unified and pacified by the Tokugawa house, as the “divine land,” which influences from China—at that point under the rule of the “barbarian” Qing dynasty—or elsewhere could only corrupt.³ At the same time, and under the obvious influence of European missionary descriptions of non-Europeans and non-Christians in classical Chinese such as Giulio Aleni’s (1582–1649) seminal *Zhifang Waiji* (*Geography of Non-Tributary Countries*, 1623), the 1712 Japanese encyclopedia *Wakan Sansai Zue* (*Illustrated Sino-Japanese Encyclopedia*, compiled by Terajima Ryōan) stated that the inhabitants of Africa were “stupid, ignorant of moral duties and dirty evil-doers,” fond of eating both elephant meat and human flesh and completely illiterate.⁴ In a word, the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries witnessed the emergence of early modern forms of

3 Nosco, 2009; Wakabayashi, 1991: 39.

4 Cited in Fujita, 2005: 65–66; see also Terajima 2006 [1712].

ethno-national consciousness privileging all the Japanese as a descent group at the expense of ethno-cultural “Others.” It was now a question of time and historical contingency until these forms would be fitted into a new worldwide typology of human groups which openly privileged the “hereditary qualities” of some while fully dismissing others.

The Korean case seems to closely parallel the logic of the shift from pre-modern Sino-centrism to modern racist typologies in China. Its way of pejoratively exoticizing the non-East Asian “Others” was influenced by both contemporary Chinese and Japanese attitudes and sources. At the same time, however, the Japanese too were seen as clearly inferior when compared to the Koreans. In pre-modern Confucian Korea, the line dividing the “civilized” people of the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392–1910) and the Manchu or Japanese “barbarians,” or, even worse, the “beastly” Western “barbarians,” became very clear with the progression of Confucianization in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries.⁵ While the Chosŏn intellectuals of the eighteenth century were often eager to learn what they could of the Jesuit sciences (especially astronomy) and technical skills when on diplomatic missions to Beijing (often legitimating it by the widespread belief that the origin of Western science was in ancient China), the appearance and presumed “character” of the Westerners they encountered in China or Japan were typically exoticized in strongly pejorative ways. The Dutch “barbarians” seen by a Chosŏn vice-envoy to Japan, Im Su’gan (1665–1721), on the road from Nagasaki to Edo, for example, were alleged to be “strongly built fellows with good fighting skills,” who always plundered Japanese ships on the high seas. Another Chosŏn intellectual, Yi Tŏngmu (1741–1793), relying heavily on the *Wakan Sansai Zue*, imagined the Dutch “urinating like dogs, lifting up one leg”—although their prowess in maritime trade was duly mentioned too. A leading eighteenth-century champion of less dogmatic and more practically oriented Confucian learning,⁶ Hong Taeyong (1731–1783), characterized Russians—whom he, following the conventions of the time, called *taebidalja* (“big-nosed Mongols”)—as stupid, ignorant and “beastly looking.”⁷

The outward appearance of the Japanese was, understandably, seen as much more conventional, but a strong sense of cultural superiority over the supposedly less Confucian Japan and the painful memories of Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s disastrous invasion in 1592–98 (known in Korea as the Imjin War) contributed to a stronger sense of both political and ethnic distinctiveness in relation to

5 On this process, see the fundamental study by M. Deuchler, 1992.

6 Often referred to in modern research literature as *sirhak*, the “realist school”; for the problems with the use of this classificatory label, see Baker, 1981.

7 Cited in Kim, 2009a: 28–31, 197–227.

the allegedly more “barbarian” eastern neighbors of the Chosŏn kingdom.⁸ Japanese “barbarians” were, for example, allowed to live in the Japan House in Pusan, but any sexual intercourse between them and Chosŏn women was punishable by death (for both the women and Korean go-betweens). The emergence of “half-breeds” was to be prevented at any costs, although it was national security concerns that were likely paramount in this respect. The Japanese-Korean “half-breeds” were assumed to be potential spies for the Japanese and a possible “fifth column” in a Japanese invasion.⁹ Race or ethnic nation in the modern sense of the word did not emerge as a factor here, but there was an evidently keen feeling of ethnicity combined with a political will towards the strictest possible ethnic separation between Koreans and “barbaric” non-Koreans. Ironically, however, the early twentieth-century construction of the “Yellow race” would later place the “civilized” Koreans and presumably relatively “barbaric” Japanese together under the same classification.

The Emergence of Race Theories in Modern Korea: One of the Logics of the “Civilized World”

To late nineteenth-century Koreans, race (*injong*, derived from the Japanese word *jinshu*) was one, but hardly central, element of the new global classificatory matrix. Introduced alongside such paradigms as “civilization” and “progress,” race was often seen as subsidiary in comparison. Yu Kiljun’s (1856–1914) monumental encyclopedia of modernity, *Sŏyu Kyŏnmun* (*A Record of Personal Experiences in the West*, 1895),¹⁰ mentions various “races of humanity” and on several occasions points out the “superiority” of some of them, notably the Whites, and the “inferiority” of others (see Fig. 11.1). Yu subscribed to Blumenbach’s five-fold race classification (“Yellow,” “White,” “Black,” “American” and “Malayan races”). He also mentions that while the “Whites” were omnipresent on all the continents of the world, the “American race” was facing extinction. Nonetheless, Yu’s main classificatory tool was still “civilization,” which even hitherto “backward” people could supposedly achieve by applying some effort. “Civilization,” unlike “race,” was not solely a group designation. There could be “semi-civilized” citizens even in a “fully civilized” country, as well as “civilized” individuals in a “completely uncivilized” country.¹¹

8 Ha, 1989: 22–54.

9 Lewis, 2003: 192–210.

10 See Schmid, 2002: 111 for the significance of this book.

11 Yu, 2004 [1895]: 395.

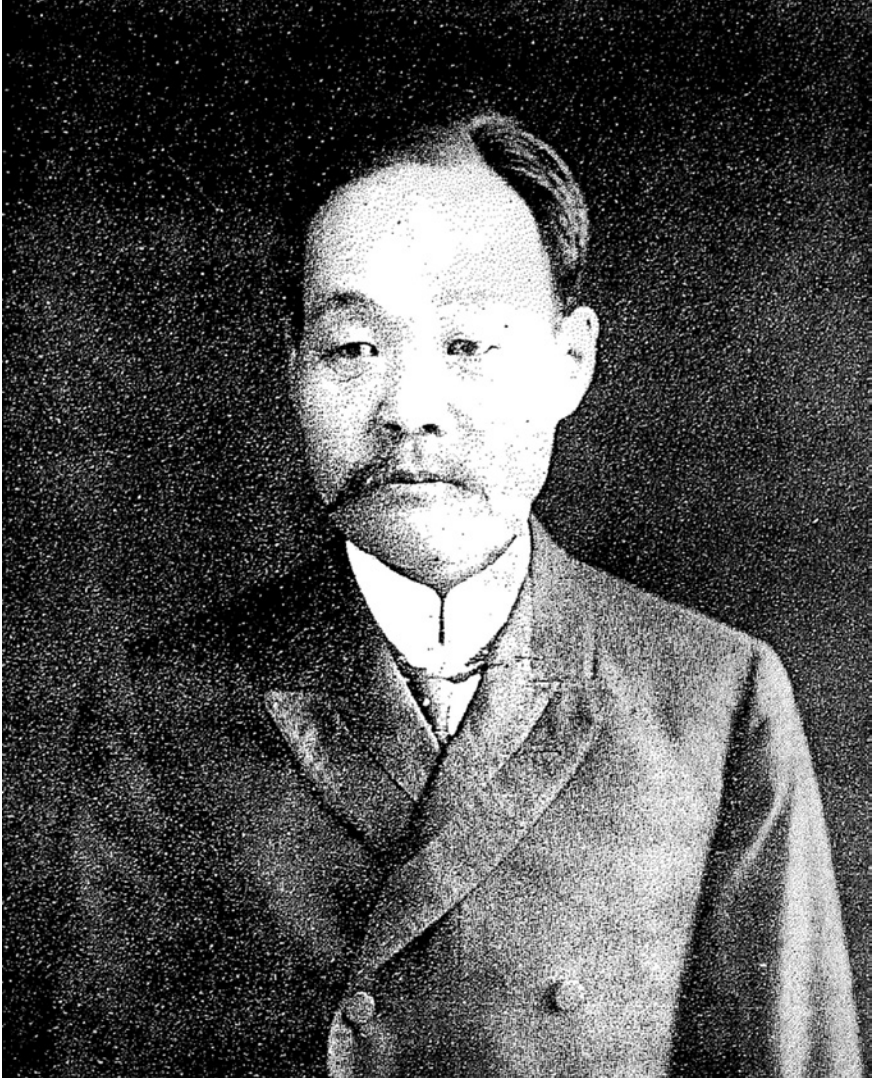


FIGURE 11.1 *Yu Kilchun's portrait (1895).*¹²

Another universal concept Yu greatly favored, “international law,” stipulated that “no state should be placed above another state,” the relationship of racial “superiority” or “inferiority” notwithstanding. In principle, the rule of state sovereignty and equality between sovereign states should be applicable regardless of the differences in countries’ size and strength: “all the states, peacefully

¹² Yu, 1895: 3.

and friendlily, should pay each other's respects and exchange treaties and missions."¹³ Yu Kiljun himself was painfully aware that this utopia of an international law-governed world—reminiscent of the Confucian utopia of a world governed by ritual propriety (*Ch. li*, *Kor. ye*)—was not a realistic description of late nineteenth-century patterns of international relations. However, he still tended to believe that, in the last instance, the “violence and arrogance” of the great powers could be checked by the application of universally approved legal norms. And even colonies were not completely helpless in the face of abuse—did the European states not help Greece to free itself from its Turkish masters once the cruelty of the Turks towards the Greek population reached intolerable levels?¹⁴ Yu's world of universal norms was, in a word, too harmonious and too close to the eighteenth-century Enlightenment spirit to require such an explanatory device as “innate racial inferiority” to any serious degree.

Race attained some prominence by 1898, however, as an attempt by the “racially alien” Russian Empire to secure control over Korean finances caused a nationalist outcry in the Korean capital.¹⁵ Pan-Asian ideas, some definitely influenced by contemporaneous discussions in Japan, suddenly became a major method of articulating frustrations with Korea's precarious international position. “White states,” previously seen by the modernizing intellectuals as the pioneers of civilization, were now redefined as a concomitant threat: “Generally, the aim of the Westerners is to obliterate all the religions other than their own, to put the peoples of the different origins under themselves, (. . . .) and to become the only dominant people in the world.” The sad fates of the Native Americans and Africans were the proofs of Europeans' craving for racial dominance, but East Asians still had reasons to be optimistic. The threat emanating from the “White” Russians and other “Whites” was to be countered by an alliance of the “Yellow” East Asian peoples led by Japan, “the seed of the Yellow race's current progress in the East, and [is] the mirror [showing us how to] put policies and laws into order.”¹⁶

An alliance between China, a state potentially ten times stronger state than Japan, Korea, traditionally closely related to China and encountering largely similar dangers, and a newly victorious Japan—all three states being geographically, culturally and racially intimately connected to each other—was proposed to prevent Russia and other European predators from overrunning

13 Yu, 2004 [1895]: 103–107.

14 Yu, 2004 [1895]: 103–120.

15 See Sin, 1976: 277–303.

16 *Tongnip Sinmun*, editorial, November 9, 1899. *Tongnip Sinmun Yǒng'in Kanhaenghoe*, 1991, Vol. 6: 437–438.

East Asia as a whole.¹⁷ However, all these appeals for a grand regional coalition against Russia could hardly be plausibly characterized as full-blown anti-White racism *per se*. The core of the argument was, after all, cultural unity (*tongmun*—“same letters”) and/or geographical proximity rather than racial affinity. All three potential allies had much more in common than their assumed “Yellowness.” Some editorials appealing for an “East Asian block” did not even mention race, limiting themselves to the more traditionally sounding “friendship (*uŭi*) between the three states of Korea, China and Japan.”¹⁸ In a way, it is possible to argue that the grand East Asian alliance served as a substitute for the more traditional idea of Korea’s unity with its age-long senior state, China, now including both the newly emerging regional hegemon, Japan, and the fashionable racial rhetoric into the picture, but building its argument on a solid classical foundation.

The virulence of regionalist rhetoric greatly increased, however, as the Western punitive expeditions against China’s Boxer rebels in 1900 aggravated fears of an impending partition of China by the European powers. Many Korean intellectuals, as well as the Korean court, were afraid that the Chinese disaster would spill over the Sino-Korean border¹⁹ and that they, too, would eventually be affected by the strengthened influence of the Western powers in East Asia—a situation where China, engulfed by disorder, was no longer a potentially valuable alliance partner. In 1901–1903, a border dispute around the Jiandao (Kor. *Kando*) area in which the Korean court wished to exercise administrative powers over Korean residents regardless of a weakened China’s territorial sovereignty further cooled the relations between the two neighbors and made the East Asian alliance plans look much less realistic.²⁰

An alliance with Japan was a different matter, however. Although it was really “Yellow” Japan rather than any “White” power that sent the greatest number of warships (eighteen ships) and troops (about 21,000 soldiers) to suppress the Boxer rebels, the racialist framework of thinking made it possible for the Korean editorial writers to view the events in terms of a “Yellow-White” confrontation. With China on the road to ruin, the whole Yellow race was now seen to be in a grave danger.²¹ Korea was regarded as directly endangered by the “fire in the neighboring big house”—first and foremost due to the assumed military threat posed by the Russian troops advancing into Northern and

17 *Hwangsŏng Sinmun*, editorial, 13 June 1899. *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, 1971, Vol. 2: 153.

18 *Hwangsŏng Sinmun*, 13 June 1899. *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, 1971, Vol. 2: 129.

19 Schmid, 2002: 58–59.

20 Hyŏn, 2002: 149–173.

21 *Hwangsŏng Sinmun*, 23 June 1900. *Hwangsŏng sinmun*, 1971, Vol. 3: 562; Lone 2000: 80.

North-Eastern China. The probability of them also encroaching upon Korea's territorial integrity and possibly picking up a fight with Japan in the process was the talk of the town in Korea from early 1900 until the very beginning of the Russo-Japanese War in February 1904.²²

Under the threat of an imminent war, King Kojong (r. 1863–1907)'s government attempted to preserve its formal neutrality. In fact, it had been attempting to negotiate a permanent neutral status modeled on that of Belgium or Switzerland for several years beginning from August 1900. It felt seriously threatened by the prospect of the Boxer rebellion suppression developing into a Russo-Japanese contest over Korean territory. The negotiations with Japan, conducted by the successive Korean ministers to Tokyo, did not, however, bring the expected results. The Japanese were apparently much more interested in concluding a formal military alliance with Korea with a view to gradually changing the latter's status from a (de-facto) junior partner into a dependency or a protectorate.²³ However, the efforts to attain Korea's neutralization acquired a new urgency as the danger of war became visibly imminent by the late summer of 1903. The Korean government had to step up its diplomatic activity. It instructed its British Chief Commissioner of Korean Customs, John McLeavy Brown (1835–1926) to draw up a memorial to the British Foreign Office to this end.²⁴ In addition, it sent one of Kojong's most trusted courtiers, the French-speaking Hyōn Sanggōn (Translation Bureau, Ministry of the Court), to St. Petersburg to discuss the matter with the Russian government, and used private channels to express similar intentions to Tokyo.²⁵ It even published a formal neutrality declaration on 21 January 1904, shortly before the hostilities began. However, all these attempts were predictably ignored by both conflicting parties, who were equally bent on adding the Korean Peninsula to their own respective spheres of influence.²⁶

The government's position, viz. desperately trying to buy time by maneuvering between the quarreling imperialist rivals by means of its own network of connections with both the Russians and the Japanese, was not, however, fully shared by a good number of modernist intellectuals, since it did not always fit into their own idiosyncratic visions of the world. Many influential intellectuals saw an alliance with Japan—regarded as both a weaker party and a racially

22 See *Cheguk Sinmun*, 25 June 1900, cited in Kim 2000a.

23 Gaimushō, 1964, Vol. 35: No. 196, 199, 410–411; Han, 2009: 105–136, 230–236; Sō, 2003: 154–161.

24 Jordan to Lansdowne, FO (Foreign Office)/405/139 (No. 6). 26 August 1903.

25 Gaimushō, 1964, Vol. 36: No. 1, 719–728; Sō, 2003: 140–141.

26 Ku, 2005: 47; Sō, 2003: 182–188.

and culturally closer state—as the only way to prevent the looming disaster. Naturally, that alliance was to be an alliance of equals—at this point, the Japanophile visions of Korea’s future, widespread by 1904–1905 among a significant number of Korea’s officials and literati, were distinctively different from the essentially colonialist designs of the Japanese government.²⁷ A possible loss of Manchuria to “White” Russia—which militarily occupied this part of China and did not seem to be particularly willing to withdraw its troops—was seen as a potential threat to the entire “Yellow race,” Japan and Korea included. Consequently, Japan’s coming war against Russia was regarded as being fought “on behalf of all the Yellow race peoples.”²⁸

This image of a “racial war” was the one more or less accepted by Japan’s non-governmental Pan-Asianist societies. In fact, it was the founder of one such society, the East Asia Common Culture Society,²⁹ Prince Konoe Atsumaro (1863–1904), known for his gloomy 1898 predictions of a “White-Yellow” racial war in East Asia,³⁰ who devoted considerable efforts to trying to persuade Korean policymakers that Korea had to sue for “protection” by a “racially homogeneous” Japan rather than make a doomed attempt to proclaim neutrality



FIGURE 11.2 *Russian diplomats and their families leaving the Korean capital soon after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, 12 February 1904.*³¹

27 Cho, 2000.

28 *Hwangŏng Sinmun*, October 24, 1903. *Hwangŏng sinmun*, 1971, Vol. 8: 598.

29 Tōa Dobunkai, established in 1898, see: Aydin, 2007: 53–56.

30 Konoe, 1898a, 1898b.

31 Sands, 1930: 228.

from a position of weakness.³² However, at the time, a “racial war” was exactly the sort of impression the Japanese government, in alliance with yet another “White” power, namely Great Britain, and very mindful of being closely eyed by the European powers, some of which (notably Germany) were already greatly suspicious of the “Yellow Peril” of the Japanese advancement, was hoping to avoid.³³ Talking of the “racial war,” the temporary allies of the Japanese among Korean progressive intellectuals were in fact voicing an aspect of the worldview common to them and their Japanese contemporaries which the Japanese government was attempting to silence.

In most cases, the official editorials in Korean newspapers urged the compatriots to assist Japan’s war efforts on the occasion of the beginning of the hostilities between Japan and Russia. They were largely sticking to a more respectable geopolitical logic rather than to a visceral anti-White racism. They mostly stressed the necessity of “resisting Russia shoulder to shoulder with Japan and China, (...) in order to maintain the general [security] conditions in the East.” Russia was remembered as “a onetime friend of our country, just like Japan was,” and some of the “services rendered by the Russians in the past” were acknowledged; but the war was the only way to prevent the Russian “designs aimed at dividing and Polandizing Korea” from realizing.³⁴ The same was true for textbook descriptions of the events. Hyŏn Ch’ae (1856–1925), a moderately Japanophile mid-rank official, educator and textbook writer, for example, used his influential 1906 textbook of Korean history to tell the story of the Russo-Japanese rivalry over Korea and Manchuria from 1895 to 1904 as that of Russia attempting to illegitimately monopolize the rights and privileges in both areas and place the Korean court under its control, with Japan fighting off the “Russian intrusion” on behalf of such “great powers” as Britain and the United States.³⁵ A similar story was told in a 1909 textbook by An Chonghwa (1860–1924), another prominent public intellectual: Russia was encroaching upon Northern China and Korea, and Japan, by defeating it “on land and on the sea,” won Korea’s “eternal friendship.”³⁶

The unofficial voices were, however, much more straightforward. Famously, or, perhaps, notoriously, An Chunggŭn (Jung-geun; 1879–1910), a Confucian-turned-nationalist, the future nemesis of Japan’s first Resident General in Korea (as it was turned into a Japanese protectorate on 17 November 1905),

32 Konoe, 1968–1969, Vol. 3: 287–291.

33 Lone, 2000: 108–109; Shimazu, 2009: 161–163.

34 *Hwangŏng Sinmun*, February 12, 1904. *Hwangŏng sinmun*, 1971, Vol. 9: 82.

35 Hyŏn, 1906, Vol. 4: 68–71.

36 An, 1909: 64–65.

Itō Hirobumi (1841–1909), and the very symbol of Korea’s militant nationalism, not only supported the Japanese side, but was even dreaming of Japan overrunning Vladivostok and thus precluding any potential “White” threat to the three “Yellow” states of East Asia. The closest alliance between these states—preferably with the blessing of Rome, since An was also a devout Catholic—was exactly the ultimate ideal of the man currently widely regarded in both South and North Korea as one of modern history’s greatest heroes. The anti-White streak in An’s thought did not seemingly disappear even after he turned upon the “heroes of the Yellow race” he hitherto admired, appalled by their betrayal of the promise to keep Korea independent. Writing in prison while waiting for his execution, and addressing primarily his Japanese captors, he accused the US President Theodore Roosevelt of having favored his “fellow Whites” and being unjust towards Japan in his Nobel-winning peacemaking in Portsmouth.³⁷ While An certainly deployed different rhetorical techniques in the writings and speeches addressed to his compatriots, there is little ground on which to doubt the sincerity of his wish to achieve an equal “racial alliance” between East Asia’s states and peoples.³⁸

It was not just An, but also several other prominent early Korean nationalists with strong Confucian backgrounds that succumbed to the temptation of viewing the modern world in rather simplistic racial terms. One of these was Yi Ki (1848–1909), a reformist Chōlla Province intellectual whose writings exerted a serious influence upon the contemporaneous Confucian milieu. Unlike An, Yi Ki was an avowed anti-Catholic—an heir to the eighteenth-nineteenth-century Confucian tradition of anti-Catholic polemic.³⁹ A gifted and well-recognized poet who used to express himself poetically in classical Chinese, Yi Ki used one of his poems—presumably written at some point between 1900 and 1904—to compare Russia, the “White predator,” to a “great tiger.” This dangerous animal, however, was already “tired since he came from such a faraway place,” and could be successfully torn to pieces by a “middle-sized tiger,” Japan, such that “its meat would be equally divided to every household, the stench of blood spreading across three thousand *li*.”⁴⁰

After the “White tiger” was dealt a decisive blow in the Russo-Japanese War, Yi Ki, who had every reason to fear that the “middle-sized tiger” would treat Korea as its booty, went to Japan with a delegation of fellow Chōlla literati and tried to preach the idea of an equal Korean-Japanese alliance based

37 Sin, 1995.

38 On An’s ideology, see Rausch, forthcoming.

39 Cited in Kūm, 2003: 301–327.

40 Cited in Pak, 1995: 171–172.



FIGURE 11.3 *An Chunggŭn in white silk robes before his execution (1910).*⁴¹

on racial affinity to all the Japanese dignitaries he could meet, including An Chunggŭn's future victim Itō Hirobumi.⁴² Two letters Yi Ki sent to Itō, in 1904 and 1905 respectively, are preserved in Yi's collected works; the first letter, along with a with politely formulated protest against Japan's interventions in Korea's domestic politics, also contained praises for Japan's efforts to "assist the independence and protect the territorial integrity" of Korea, something Koreans "could not achieve by themselves." Itō was, in the most flattering tone, referred to as "the man who is being always pointed out to every time we hear

41 *Asahi Shimbun*, 1910 (March 27). See also Pak, 2012: 175.

42 Na, 1982.

about the personalities of the East.”⁴³ *Taehan Maeil Sinbo* even published the memorial Yi Ki and his colleagues submitted to Emperor Meiji (r. 1867–1912). They praised Japan’s success in “stopping the White penetration of East Asia,” a feat “such a weak state as ours could not have accomplished on its own,” but urged their Japanese “brethren” to keep Korea independent.⁴⁴ The victorious “racial brethren” predictably ignored Yi Ki’s plea, and—as in An Chunggŭn’s case—pushed this hitherto rather Japanophile Korean reformer onto the road of more decisive anti-Japanese resistance.

Regardless of the political positioning, however, racial classifications became one of the most important conceptual frameworks for analyzing the outside world and explaining it to the younger generation—such as in school textbooks—by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. In teaching “racial geography” to children and adolescents, Korean educators were following the Japanese example. There, the pioneering modern geography textbooks (largely based on Euro-American sources), such as the series on world geography, *Yōchi Shiriyaku* (*Descriptions of World’s Lands*, 1870–1877), edited and published by Uchida Masaō (1838–1876), divided the world’s populations into “civilized,” “semi-civilized” and “uncivilized” races as early as the 1870s. China, for example, was firmly classified as a country of the “Mongolian race”—“civilized” from ancient times on par with Europe, but inferior to the Europeans as far as the bodily stature of its inhabitants was concerned.⁴⁵ In fact, both smaller body sizes and the “absence or dearth” of facial hair were taken as the main anthropometric characteristics of the “Mongolian race” at the very beginning of the book—and were contrasted with the larger stature and thick facial hair of the “Caucasian race.”⁴⁶ Korea, a “Chinese vassal state,” was classified as belonging to the same race as China and Japan, but Koreans were judged as simultaneously both “stronger in bodily stature” than Chinese and “especially stupid,” since their country was “closed” and “did not wish any enlightenment (*kaiwa*).”⁴⁷ Modern Japanese educators thus saw the world as a finely ordered hierarchy of peoples and states. Racial differences were consequently seen as an important factor underlying this hierarchical arrangement.

Koreans, apparently influenced by both the modern Japanese racial typologies as well as the developments in China—where racialized descriptions

43 Yi, 1955: 104.

44 *Taehan Maeil Sinbo*, November 14, 1905, page 3. *Han’guk Sinmun Yŏn’guso*, 1977, Vol. 1: 1293.

45 Uchida, 1870–1877, Vol. 2: 5–6.

46 Uchida, 1870–1877, Vol. 1: 67–68.

47 Uchida, 1870–1877, Vol. 2: 40–41.

became common in geography textbooks by the beginning of the 1900s⁴⁸—soon came to develop their own racial classificatory schemes as part of their new construction of geographical knowledge. In Korea's earliest modern geography textbooks, the racial classification of the populations was considered a part of their natural environment, on equal terms with climate. Hwang Yundŏk's (1874–?) influential 1908 world geography primer, for example, used the term “race” to identify the world's “five races,” but also used it as a synonym for “ethnic group” at the same time. Thus, China was described as inhabited by “six races” (Han Chinese, Turks, Mongols, Manchu, Tibetans, and Miao tribes), neither of which was seen in a particularly positive light. Han Chinese and Manchu were, for example, portrayed as “either very frugal or outright stingy, unable to reform their old customs, commercially gifted but lacking in solidarity, loyalty and patriotism, fond of fat foods, pork and boiled drinks, and having two bad habits—that of opium smoking and that of female foot-binding.” In contrast, the Japanese were seen as “loyal, brave, smart, adventurous, but somewhat frivolous and imprudent,” while the Ainu were said to be “wild and stubborn people who have thus resisted the Japanese but now are on the verge of extinction as a consequence of the natural law of survival of the fittest.” The same fate was said to soon befall the aborigines of Oceania—“savage tribes incapable of domiciliation, who eat snakes and frogs and have a bad custom of eating people too.”⁴⁹ In other words, the world's races were perceived as existing in a complicated hierarchy in which the East Asian “Yellow” peoples—despite all the perceived shortcomings of the “Han Chinese race”—were placed decidedly higher than the “cannibals” and “savages” of the world's (or East Asia's own) periphery. The book presents a classificatory scheme largely influenced by Uchida Masaō's textbook and other Meiji period Japanese geography textbooks.

Another world geography textbook published in the same year suggested that the “wildest and most stubborn of all the tropical races” were the Sudanese, while the inhabitants of the Bismarck Archipelago were—in passing—characterized as “cannibals.” The “aborigines” of Hawaii (“Sandwich Islands”) became a “lazy race”—something which explained the prominent role of East Asian immigrants, including Koreans, there as far as the textbook's compiler was concerned. Finally, the native Australians scored worst, with their supposed diet of “wild beasts, insects and fish,” their absence of permanent jobs and their “constant mutual warfare.”⁵⁰ The Confucian disdain for peripheral

48 Sun, 2009.

49 Hwang, 1908: 24–25, 50–51, 92.

50 Chŏng, 1908: 90, 106–115.

“barbarians,” with their unsettled nomadic lives and lack of “ritual propriety” and state organization, was thus visibly mixed with the imported racist worldview and the Social Darwinist belief in the eventual “extinction” of the “less fit” races. The obvious affinity some of Korea’s early Confucian nationalists felt towards the racist worldview shows that certain elements of the Confucian mentality were likely to have facilitated the acceptance of Europe’s modern racial classifications of the peoples of the world—largely paralleling the trajectory of the development of racial typologies in late nineteenth-century China.⁵¹ The traditional Confucian emphasis on family, clan and other blood ties seems to have become a fertile ground for accepting the idea of cross-border “racial” brotherhood. Still, the underlying affinity between the agnatic bloodline-based institutional settings of the Confucian Korean society and racialist logic did not mean that race theories were necessarily deemed acceptable by the conservative and anti-modernist Confucian patriots who were generally suspicious about the importation of “Western things” as such.

One prominent case in point is Yu Insök (1842–1915), a veteran leader of the Confucian “righteous armies” (Kor. *ũbyŏng*) and arguably the most prominent leader of the traditional loyalists in the early 1900s. While he himself had fled to Vladivostok in 1908 and had stayed there until 1910 (and even urged Korea’s abdicant king Kojong to flee there and ask for political asylum on the eve of Japan’s annexation of Korea in August 1910), thus accumulating a certain first-hand experience of the (civilizational) West, his worldview was to the very end continuously based upon a traditionalist anti-Westernism rather than a purely nationalist anti-Japanese logic. In his ambitious 1913 *Uju Mundap* (*Questions and Answers on the Universe*), an attempt to succinctly summarize his views on the cosmos, human society and the current world situation, he largely focused on the centrality of China and the teachings of the (Chinese Confucian) “sages” to the normal functioning of the world, and devoted most of the book to opposing everything that seemingly contradicted these teachings, from the republican polity brought to China by the Xinhai Revolution (1911–1912) to Western schooling (especially for girls), ideas of freedom and equality, Christianity, the militarism of the great powers and the Darwinist belief in competition as the driving force of societal development.

Japan was characterized by him as a “habitual aggressor which has often troubled China from throughout history and which was normally held in contempt by the Chinese” and duly scolded both for its “reckless” Westernization and for its predations against China and Korea. At the same time, however, it was also pitied, since it was really just a “weaker country.” Its debt-financed

51 Dikötter, 1992: 1–126.

warfare “made mighty Russia angry and alienated rich America.” Deviant as it was, it still remained a part of the civilizational “East” (Kor. *Tong’yang*), on par with China and Korea. The best solution for Japan as an essentially “eastern” country was to therefore to make Korea independent once again and enter an alliance with China and Korea—“loving each other, worrying about each other, advising each other, helping each other and eventually morphing into one entity.” The “contempt Whites feel about the Yellows,” as well as the possibility of a “war between White and Yellow races” were all mentioned in passing as additional reasons for forming such a regional alliance—but it was readily apparent that Yu’s main point was the “civilizational proximity” of the “three Eastern states,” and not their supposed racial consanguinity.⁵² Race was easily introduced to Korea owing partly to certain ideological overlaps between the racialist and Confucian visions of a hierarchically organized world neatly divided into descent groups. However, it was not a concept the most conservative advocates of Confucian ideological purity were especially comfortable with.

While grounded in certain pre-existing Confucian stereotypes, the “racial enmity towards White predators” appears in many ways to be a very modernist “remake” of the older distinction between the Confucian “civilized people” of China and adjacent countries (Japan, albeit traditionally viewed as relatively more “barbaric” than Korea, being included) and the non-Confucian “faraway barbarians.” Besides a certain affinity with age-honored ideological constructions, the speedy spread of racial classifications and racist beliefs was also seemingly facilitated by more practical considerations. From the early 1880s onwards, Korean reformers were fascinated with the Japanese “short-cut” to modernity,⁵³ and racial “brotherhood” might be a good way for them to legitimize intensive institutional borrowing from a country which, after all, also represented a threat to Korea’s own independence. If “White” racism was meant for legitimizing the privileged position of the “White” Europeans in the supposedly “equal opportunity”-based worldwide capitalist economy, then the “Yellow race solidarity” theories so popular among Korea’s modernizing intellectuals were meant for legitimizing the privileged position of Japan in the modernizing East Asian region—a position which was hardly fully justifiable on either purely political or traditional ideological grounds.

Korean reformers with the experience of sojourns in Japan began to frequent the gatherings of such pan-Asianist societies as the *Kōakai* (Rise Asia Society) as early as the early 1880s, and have left us written evidence of their

52 Yu, 2002 [1913]: 29–171.

53 Hō, 2009.

sympathies with Kōakai's vision of an "East Asian Yellow race alliance against White aggressors."⁵⁴ The famous reformer and mastermind of the abortive 1884 Kapsin coup, Kim Okkyun (1851–1894), visited Kōakai gatherings at least twice, on 21 June 1882 and 27 January 1883; and less radical reformers, who were to play important roles during the 1894–1895 Kabo reforms, such as Ō Yunjung (1848–1896) and Ko Yŏnghŭi (1849–1916), also followed suit.⁵⁵ Contacts continued even after Kōakai was succeeded in 1883 by another pan-Asianist society, Ajia Kyōkai.⁵⁶ Kim Kajin (1846–1922), an important leader of the 1894–1895 Kabo reforms, periodically visited Ajia Kyōkai gatherings in 1887, 1888 and 1891, when he was posted to Tokyo as a mid-ranking diplomat at the Korean Legation. He went so far as to praise the "Asianism" and "willingness to maintain and strengthen the ties of friendship with Korea" of Japan's Foreign Minister Enomoto Takeaki (1836–1908) and Prime-Minister Matsukata Masayoshi (1835–1924)—both in office between 1891–1892—when reporting back (on 21 September 1891) to Korea's king Kojong upon his return to Korea.⁵⁷

Aside from serving as the justification for their controversial friendliness towards the modern Japanese state, a racialized Pan-Asianism could also alleviate the frustrations caused by the apparent contradiction between the universal logic of the modern international law and the reality of a Hobbesian *bellum omnium contra omnes* on the international scene. These frustrations were already expressed by Kang Wi (1820–1884), a noted poet, experienced diplomat and one of Kōakai's Korean sympathizers in his 1882 letter to Nagasaki Governor Utsumi Tadakatsu (1843–1905). He lamented the "lawlessness" of the modern world, "completely devoid of Dao, as Mencius had once put it," where, despite the formal existence of international law, weaker states were mercilessly bullied by the stronger ones, wars were initiated on the slightest pretext, and the scale of manslaughter on the battlefields grew with the progress in war technology and tactics.⁵⁸ In the Darwinian jungles of modernity—especially as seen from the viewpoint of the intellectuals from a weak, endangered Korea confronted by the imperialist forces—the imaginary international "community of blood" envisioned by the racist theoreticians appeared to promise at least some safety. "Should not our racial brethren offer us the security international law is unable to provide?" Events soon showed, however, that racial affinity" was no guarantee against "lawless behavior."

54 Yi, 2009.

55 Yi, 1989: 142–144.

56 Asia Society. See Saaler & Koschmann, 2007: 34–52.

57 Cited in Han, 2010: 284–285.

58 Cited in Yi, 2009: 336.

The illusion that a “racial alliance” may provide a measure of security in an inherently insecure world was one of the reasons for why not only reformist Confucians, but also rather anti-Confucian intellectuals of strong Social Darwinist convictions also exhibited racist beliefs in the 1900s. The Spencerian world of the “struggle for survival” was essentially devoid of safe havens—but a “racial alliance” with a stronger nation of the same “race” could be seen as promising at least some respite and hope for the future. Yun Ch’iho (1865–1945), one of the first Methodist converts in Korea and a devout believer in the “iron law of the survival of the fittest” from his days studying in the US (1888–1893),⁵⁹ made the following conclusion in his diary (7 May 1902) upon having heard a story of Russian brutality towards Korean migrants in Vladivostok:

Mr. Yi’s account of the savage conduct of the Russians towards the Koreans opened my eyes to one fact to which the meanness and often injustice of the Japanese in Korea had made me blind; that is, Japan, with all her faults, is a better friend than Russia. If there were half as many Russians in Korea as Japanese, they—the Russians—would soon make themselves intolerable by their brutality and beastliness. The meanest Japanese would be a gentleman and a scholar compared to a vodka-drunk, orthodox Russian. Between a Japanese and a Korean there is a community of sentiment and of interest, based on the identity of race, of religion, and of written characters. Japan, China, and Korea must have one common aim, one common policy, one common ideal—to keep the Far East the permanent home of the yellow race, and to make that home as beautiful and happy as nature has meant it to be. . . .⁶⁰

“White” expansion here was being perceived as the core of the worldwide “lawlessness” that had frustrated Korean reformers as early as the 1880s, as well as the gravest danger Korea faced. By contrast, the “Yellow race” community offered a glimmer of hope for acquiring some “racial strength” and at least balancing the overwhelming power wielded by the “Whites” to some extent. By virtue of being “racially, religiously and culturally” close Japan was expected to protect Korea from the worst fate suffered by the least “fit” in the unending “struggle for survival”—namely, being “enslaved and exterminated” by the ruthless “White predators.” And every time Japan demonstrated its ability to “fight off” the “Whites” in practice Yun Ch’iho appeared to be excited, even though he fully understood the dangers Japan’s victories potentially implied for Korea.

59 Tikhonov, 2010: 21–57.

60 Yun, 1973–1989, Vol. 5: 325–326.

Upon hearing of Japan's sensational Tsushima victory over the Russian Baltic Fleet (27 May 1905), Yun expressed his "pride at the glorious success of Japan as a fellow member of Yellow race"—fully aware that "every victory of Japan is a nail in the coffin of Korea's independence." But even more than Korea's predicament, the fact that "Yellow race vindicated its honor" and proved its ability to achieve "survival" in the world of Darwinian struggles was what Yun Ch'iho valued most.⁶¹

The degree to which Yun Ch'iho, with his five year experience of studying in America and much longer experience of studying under and working together with the (predominantly American) Methodist missionaries, was exposed to the contemporaneous Euro-American racist thinking was somewhat exceptional for early twentieth-century Korean society. However, the word "race"—introduced only in the mid-1890s and, just as was the case in contemporaneous Japan, still used simultaneously for both "ethnic nation" (synonymous with Jpn. *minzoku*, Kor. *minjok*) and "race" without a precise differentiation⁶²—was steadily gaining popularity throughout the early 1900s. Academic journals were publishing scientific-looking accounts of the bodily and facial features of the "Caucasian," "Mongolian," "American," "African" and "Malaysian" races, as well as their languages and religions as if religious and linguistic differences were directly related to racial ones.⁶³

As the locally produced descriptions of various races did not necessarily possess sufficient authority, foreign ones—often containing strong political implications—were actively sought and introduced. The most common fare in this respect was world-historical discourses translated from Japanese in which race played almost a pivotal role as the main taxonomic and explanatory framework. The seminal 1904 description of the world history of colonialism by Yamanouchi Masaaki (1876–?), for example,⁶⁴ was translated into Korean and published in 1908 with a foreword by a noted modernist intellectual and educator, Wŏn Yŏng'ŭi. Wŏn's foreword lamented the situation of a world engulfed by racial competition, in which the only "Yellow" people able and willing, so far, to successfully withstand the "White" encroachments were the Japanese. His pessimism was fully in sync with Yamanouchi's own, rather tragic, vision of a non-White world threatened by ruthless enslavement and domination by "White" imperialisms. A separate chapter in the book was devoted to the "rise and fall of the [different] races." There, the sad fate of the

61 Diary record, 27–28 May 1905. Yun, 1973–1989, Vol. 6: 111–112.

62 Weiner, 1995.

63 Anonymous, 1907.

64 Yamanouchi, 1904.

Tasmanians—completely annihilated by the onslaught of British colonialism, as well as the plight of the Native Americans or the “aborigines” of South Africa was given a full account. The persistent racism of the British and Dutch, made explicit by their reluctance to allow legitimate intermarriages with non-Whites in their overseas colonies, was also strongly emphasized.⁶⁵

Besides translations from Japanese, translations of race-related publications from European languages—often facilitated by the existence of prior Japanese translations—also appeared too. Paul Reinsch’s (1896–1923) well-known *World Politics at the End of the Nineteenth Century as Influenced by the Oriental Situation* (1900), already translated in an abridged form into Japanese,⁶⁶ was partly translated into Korean by Han Hŭnggyo (1885–1967), then a Korean student in Japan, with an emphasis on the fragments describing the national imperialisms of Europe and their underlying racist ideology.⁶⁷ Reinsch’s discussion of the European commercial penetration of China and the necessity of the powers’ military protection for trade security was understood by the Korean translator as the tale of the competition (Kor. *kyŏngjaeng*) between the “Whites” and the “Yellows”; Korea, he lamented, now had to recover its independence from infringement by people of the same race (obviously referring to the Japanese), no easy feat given the worldwide conditions of the “struggle for survival.”⁶⁸

These conditions, however, were not necessarily seen as an impenetrable hindrance to Korea’s own way towards survival and possibly an even somewhat dignified status in the brave new world of the competing modern states. While early 1900s Korean publications universally accepted that the “White” or Caucasian race “occupied the highest position in the world both physically and mentally and lived everywhere on Earth,”⁶⁹ Koreans, “Yellow race” members as they were, were still regarded as sufficiently competitive due to their “superior” innate characteristics. One émigré newspaper editorial noted that even the “Whites,” generally dismissive of the “Yellow race” and even contemptuous towards the Japanese, praised the organizational capabilities, interest in Christianity and church-going habits of Korean migrants overseas, and concluded that the “Korean race” possessed some “superior traits” which would enable it to recover Korea’s independence once Koreans would unite, “repent

65 Yamanouchi, 1979 [1908].

66 Takata, 1901.

67 Han, 1908; 1909.

68 Han, 1909.

69 Paeg’ak Kōsa, 1909.

their past sins and reform their old corrupt customs.”⁷⁰ A precondition to success, as Yu Sŏngjun (1860–1935), Yu Kiljun’s younger brother, mentioned in his 1906 speech to the National Educational Society (Kor. Kungmin Kyoyukhoe), was to learn from these Asian countries, which—like Japan or Siam—had successfully transplanted the essence (*naesil*) of European civilization rather than simply copied some of its external trappings. The latter way was supposedly chosen by the much less successful China and Egypt (“Yu ssi Yŏnsol” [Speech by Mr. Yu]).⁷¹ Once the former right road was taken, Korea’s ultimate success was seen as fully possible. The world of racial competition was thus full of both dangers and opportunities at the same time.

Indeed, the racist worldview could help early modern Korean intellectuals in reasserting themselves with regard to their status and possibilities. While the supposedly superior “Whites” represented both benchmark and threat, the sight of so many “inferior races” with a decidedly lower status than the Koreans’ in the racial hierarchy pyramid provided a certain degree of solace. After all, Koreans were not “the worst,” or, in Social Darwinist terminology, “the least fit.” As early as the late 1890s, a pioneering description of the “world’s races” in a representative modern periodical could simply dismiss the “African race” (the Blacks) and “American race” (Native Americans) as “hardly belonging to the humanity as such.”⁷² The attitudes hardly improved during the 1900s–1910s either. A detailed account of the “world’s worst barbarians,” the aborigines of Australia, most likely written by a rising star of the intellectual horizon of the 1900s–1910s, Ch’oe Namsŏn (1890–1957), highlighted a more than “several thousand years”-long “civilizational gap” between “us” and the “barbarians of Africa, America and Southern Oceania, (...) whose extremely infantile life differs little from that of the animals.” Their big mouths, protruding lips and strongly projected chins were “typical for the inferior races.” And, above all, these “stone age people” were not aware of numbers greater than four!⁷³ Compared to those “half-animals,” the Koreans looked like decently civilized people, albeit somewhat “backward” due to their long-term isolation from “progressive” Europe.

While the 1914 account mentioned above provides a clear picture of the almost literal acceptance of the “standard” Euro-American descriptions of the “racially inferior Others” in early twentieth-century Korea, exotic and fascinating stories of “savages” began filling the Korean media space at a much earlier point. A 1903 account, for example, told the story of Banaba Island (Ocean Island) in Oceania, highlighting both the “weak and gutless character”

70 Chaosaeng, 1908.

71 *Hwangŏng sinmun*, February 28, 1906. *Hwangŏng sinmun*, 1971, Vol. 14: 509.

72 *Tongnip sinmun*, editorial, July 1, 1899. Cited in Chang, 2000: 118.

73 Anonymous, 1914; Yi, 2010.

of the island's "aborigines" (*t'omin*), with their "barbaric lifestyle" ("they did not even know how to use currency"), and the success of the Americans and the British in spreading Christianity and mining phosphate ore.⁷⁴ As the *Hwangŏng Sinmun* editorialized at an even earlier point, in 1901, the "savages" usually deserved their unenviable fate—namely becoming "like slaves or prisoners," being "oppressed" or "exiled into the deserts" by the "superior" colonizers and conquerors—since their own "stupidity, lack of knowledge, barbarism, ignorance, absence of loyalty above and lack of progress below" and other failings actually made the extermination of their communities possible.⁷⁵

Obviously, early twentieth-century Korean accounts of "savages" were not necessarily fully devoid of evolutionist scientificity. In one example, Ch'oe Namsŏn, while ridiculing the "superstitious" response to a total solar eclipse by the natives of the Caroline Islands in the Pacific ("awe-struck, the savages prayed to their gods and hid in their dugouts"), also recalled that eclipses were accompanied by state-level rituals in ancient China too, leading him to conclude that such attitudes were common to all societies ignorant of modern astronomical science.⁷⁶ They were not devoid of compassion either: the "great compassion" shown by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–1896), the famed author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), towards the "extremely brutally, extremely inhumanely enslaved" blacks of the United States was editorially lauded by *Hwangŏng Sinmun* and taken as an example of a worthy social contribution by an intellectual.⁷⁷ However, the line the Korean authors were striving to draw between themselves and "inferior races" was easily visible.

Koreans rejoiced in the fact that they, at least, were not to be classified as "aborigines (*t'oin*)." But at the same time, they also had to heed to the warnings of such reformist leaders as the renowned Pak Ŭsik (1859–1925), who saw "extermination and enslavement of the inferior races, such as American Indians or African black slaves, by the superior races" as a consequence of the unbridgeable gap in knowledge levels between the former and the latter and appealed to his compatriots to exhaust themselves in the acquisition of the "new knowledge." In the era of "survival struggles," enslavement and destruction were the natural punishments for laggards in this worldwide competition.⁷⁸ While easy to laugh at, the "inferior savages" also served as a gloomy warning of Korea's own sad fate if the reformers' educational and other efforts did not bear the expected fruits.

74 Anonymous, 1903.

75 Editorial, 1901.

76 Ch'oe, 1934.

77 Editorial, 1909.

78 Pak, 1906.

“Race” and “Ethnic Nation” in Colonial Korea, 1910–1945

The full-blown colonization of Korea by the Japanese in 1910 meant that the rise of an interest in issues of “blood” was inevitable. After all, it was the quality of “blood” that separated the colonizer from the colonized but, at the same time, united them too. Unlike the European colonies in Asia, Korea was not to be abandoned under any circumstances; it was to gradually become a part of Japan and its population was to be assimilated. The assimilation was, of course, intended to be gradual, and, in the meantime, the Koreans were to be separated from the Japanese and subject to a different legal system, as well as a segregated system of public schooling, essentially a truncated version of the system applied to the Japanese settlers in the colony.⁷⁹ However, while the realities of life in colonized Korea were—unsurprisingly enough—defined by the patterns of typical ethno-racial colonial discrimination, the planned gradual assimilation of Korea and Koreans into Japan required entirely different ideological justifications, especially in comparison to those raised by European colonialist discourses.

One such justification was the narrative of Koreans and Japanese as “blood relations” elaborated by some of the colony’s most prominent historians both professional and amateur. For example, one of the colonies’ most widely read Japanese historians, newspaperman Aoyagi Tsunetarō (1877–1932), known for organizing the first-ever Japanese association for the study of Korea, Chōsen Kenkyūkai (1910), regarded Korea’s mythological progenitor, Tan’gun, as having supposedly belonged to the same “divine race” of conquerors as the ancestors of the Japanese imperial house. The rest of Korea’s legendary state-founders were “originally Japanese” too: the supposed progenitors of Silla’s (first century to 935) royal houses, Pak Hyökkōse and Sōk T’arhae (first century BC to first century AD), were “from Japan,” and the founder of yet another proto-Korean state, Karak, named Kim Suro (first-second centuries AD), was, in fact, Shionori-Tsuhiko-no-Mikoto, a retainer of emperor Suijin (conventional dates are 97 BC–30 BC), sent to govern parts of south-eastern Korea (Kor. *Imna*; Jpn. *Mimana*).⁸⁰ Semi-traditional explanations like this presenting the “racial affinity” between Koreans and Japanese as a matter of common descent from the same “divine” or “noble” ancestor, were often seen in more popular historical works, including those targeting the Korean public. In fact, Aoyagi’s 1917 outline history of Korea cited above was printed in Korean (in a mixed Sino-Korean

79 Caprio, 2009: 81–111.

80 Aoyagi, 1917: 1–42.

script) and were obviously meant for the consumption of a more educated Korean public.⁸¹

While popular historians were evoking ancient mytho-history in their attempts to establish the racial unity between Koreans and Japanese, modern scholarship was making more “scientific” contributions. One of Japan’s early eugenicists and an early social work theorist, Unno Kōtoku (1879–1954), wrote an article entitled “On Mixed Marriages between the Korean and Japanese Races,” suggesting that Japanese-Korean intermarriage within the bounds of the same “Yellow race” would improve the Japanese nation too in addition to reviving the ancient “racial affinity” between the two ethno-national groups.⁸² Based on both the “Yellow race” unity between the Japanese and the Koreans and on the particularly self-serving interpretation of the ancient mytho-history that made proto-Koreans into (rather inferior) “junior relatives” of the Japanese, the Government-General of colonial Korea carried out a Korean-Japanese intermarriage policy that differed vastly from the contemporaneous policies by the European colonial empires in Asia from the very outset. The latter typically tried to limit “blood mixing” between the whites and “natives,” and treated cohabitations between the Europeans and locals and the offspring of such unions as a social problem.⁸³ The former, on the other hand, publicly approved of such unions although even such a marriage would not in principle entitle a Korean to having his or her place of domicile transferred to Japan: colonial discrimination was yet to disappear.

Still, as the colonial authorities hoped that intermarriage with Japanese women in particular would help to assimilate Korean men both politically and culturally, marriages of this sort were legally given a green light. They came to be even more encouraged after 1 March 1919, when the independence movement in Korea clearly showed the colonizers the extent to which their rule was resented by both the broader public and a large part of the educated elite. Thus, in June 1921, the “Mixed Marriages between Japanese and Koreans Act” was announced in Korea, further simplifying the relevant legal procedures.⁸⁴ In a word, the purported “racial sameness” between Koreans and Japanese was an important part of the official colonialist ideology from the outset. It was further emphasized in the late 1930s and early 1940s when Japan, hard pressed

81 Ch’oe, 2010: 110–153.

82 “*Chōsen jinshu to Nippon jinshu no zakkon ni tsuite.*” *Taiyō*, December 1910, Vol. 16, cited in Oguma, 2002a: 203–205.

83 Stoler, 2002.

84 Kim, 2009b: 39–83.

in a war against the Allies, shifted its policy to the “imperialization” (full assimilation) of Koreans under the slogan *naisen ittai* (Kor. *naesŏn ilch’e*).⁸⁵

The Korean intellectuals’ reactions to the colonialist ethno-racial rhetoric varied greatly, and mostly accorded with their cultural and ideological background and political positions. Some of the veteran modernist intellectuals of the pre-colonial period, who were already exposed to “racial alliance” theories before 1910, were now using these theories as a convenient justification for their own acceptance of alien rule. A typical example is that of Chang Chiyŏn (1864–1921), the famed Confucian-turned-reformer of the first decade of the twentieth century, who started to contribute his journalistic pieces to the Government General’s official Korean daily, *Maeil Sinbo*, in late 1914. Strongly impressed by the unprecedented bloodbath of the Great War, he came to regard the contemporary period as an epoch of battles between nationalist and expansionist ambitions and suggested that the next grand battle was going to take place between the “White and Yellow races” (Kor. *hwangbaek injongjŏn*).⁸⁶ This line of thinking relates directly to the gloomy 1898 predictions of a “racial war between Whites and Yellows” made by Prince Konoe Atsumaro and mentioned above: the horror of the World War gave the gloom an aura of realism. Chang’s recipe for such an ill-omened period in the world’s and East Asia’s history was also a tried and trusted variant of the kind of Pan-Asianism the Koreans—as is showed above—had already come into contact with in the 1880s–1890s. Chang proposed an “Asian alliance” against the “European threat,” based on both geographical and racial (non-Whites united against the “White menace”) criteria and naturally headed by Japan.⁸⁷ Failing this, a “Mongolian race alliance” between the Chinese, Japanese and Koreans was to become East Asia’s hope for salvation (“China Kaksŏng ūi Kŭm’il”).⁸⁸ Based on this logic, the close and intimate relations between Chang—and many other former reform champions—and the Japanese authorities appeared to be a higher, “racial” form of patriotism rather than a banal accommodation of the colonial order.

Other ethno-racial constructions by intellectuals seeking accommodation with the colonial authorities were often even more elaborate and complicated, and also held a certain potential for resisting at least some of the most openly problematic Japanese claims. For example, Ch’oe Namsŏn—already mentioned above—an important political and cultural figure who attained a compromise with the Japanese in the late 1920s after drafting the Independence

85 Caprio, 2009: 141–171.

86 *Maeil Sinbo*, March 19, 1918, cited in Kim, 2000b.

87 *Maeil Sinbo*, 16 September 1916, cited in Kim, 2000b.

88 *Maeil Sinbo*, March 21, 1918, cited in Kim, 2000b.

Declaration (Kor. Tongnip Sŏn'ŏnsŏ) recited by the leaders of the 1 March 1919 independence movement—did not believe in the theory of a “common descent of Koreans and Japanese” and went out of his way to emphasize the cultural superiority of proto-Koreans in relation to the ancient Japanese.⁸⁹ He tended, however, to believe in the existence of a vast “cultural sphere” centered around Korea’s sacred Paektu (Baitou) Mountain and inclusive of Koreans, Japanese, diverse “Altaic peoples” and Northern China. Moreover, he viewed East Asia’s modern history as that of the “racial struggle” between the “White predators” represented by Russia/USSR and the “Yellow race” peoples.⁹⁰ Again, the “Yellow” racism appears here as a convenient ideological foundation for Ch’oe’s support for Japan in its growing confrontation against the USSR and “White” Allied powers.

At the same time, however, the idea of finding the Koreans’ racial brethren somewhere outside the Korean Peninsula was also popular among anti-Japanese nationalists, especially those who experienced the pre-1910 modern reformist milieu with its enthusiasm for pan-Asian projects. What differentiated such nationalists from their counterparts in the pro-Japanese camp was the emphasis on the “racial affinity” with historical China’s varied dynastic states rather than Japan. Given that many of them exiled themselves to China after 1910 and were trying hard to attain anti-Japanese alliances with diverse political forces in post-Xinhai Revolution (1911–1912) China, this was hardly surprising. For example, a certain Kim Chin’yong (aka Kim Sŏngdo), a Korean pro-independence exile in China, financially supported and participated in a 1913 military action led by Sun Yat-sen against the usurpation of power by Yuan Shikai, explaining in a letter to a renowned American-based independence movement leader, An Ch’angho (1878–1938), that he was doing so in order to win Chinese sympathies for Korean independence, and to furthermore build an alliance of the three East Asia states with a view to a future alliance of the Yellow race capable of countering “Western aggression.”⁹¹

Much more elaborate was the race-based vision of the world developed by a veteran Confucian-turned-reform activist (and Chang Chiyŏn’s erstwhile close colleague) already mentioned above, Pak Ŭnsik, in his novel *Mongbae Kŭm T’aejo* (An Audience with Jin’s Taizu in a Dream, 1911), composed after Pak’s self-imposed exile to China in 1910. Written in the form of a dialogue between the author’s dreaming alter ego and the Jurchen Jin Dynasty’s Taizu, Wanyan Aguda (1068–1123), the novel assumes that the world goes through a

89 Ch’oe, 1925.

90 Ch’oe, 1938. See also Ryu, 2009: 168–256.

91 Cited in Pae, 2006: 50–51.

stage of competition between diverse ethno-nations (Kor. *minjok*) and races (*injong*), and attempts to broaden the boundaries of the Korean ethno-nation by expanding it to include both Jurchen tribes and their purported Manchu descendants. As the Jurchen people, as well as their Manchu heirs, had the experience of ruling a dynastic state within the boundaries of China, Pak seems to be claiming a “blood relation” of sorts with China, the “fellow Yellow race” country he counted on for assistance in the anti-Japanese independence struggle.⁹²

By the 1920s, however, with the increasing popularity of more universalist and non-racial political theories including socialism (communism) and anarchism, racialized pictures of the world fell into a sort of disfavor within pro-independence intellectual circles. Even nationalists of a more progressive bent, such as An Chaehong (1891–1965), long-term editor-in-chief and later president of the influential daily *Chosŏn Ilbo*, tended to define the centerpiece of their worldview, the ethnic nation (Kor. *minjok*), as a product of a long-term common economic and cultural life rather than as a “blood”-based community.⁹³ Race, as well as the other “blood”-based groups, was somewhat sidelined, at least for a while: nationalists like Ch’oe Namsŏn, who retained a keen interest in matters of “racial” belonging and descent, were seen as rather unusually conservative against such a backdrop.

Race, however, returned to prominence from the mid-1930s onward owing to a range of mutually intertwined circumstances. As the Japanese, in the midst of an expansionist war in China and in preparation for a possible confrontation with other world powers, were accelerating the tempo of the Korean population’s assimilation (under the slogan of *naisen ittai*, “sameness of Japan and Korea”), the purported “racial affinity” of the two ethno-national groups was given a new and broader significance. On 10 November 1939, for example, the Government General further eased the bureaucratic procedures surrounding mixed marriages, with the stated intent of promoting such marriages as “racial assimilation” tool. The number of intermarrying couples duly rose, from 1,206 in 1937 to 1,528 in 1942. The number of common-law intermarriages in Japan itself was even higher, and stood at some 10,000 couples by 1944. A special journal, *Naisen ittai* (1940–1944), was devoted to discussions of intermarriage and offered both support and advice for intermarrying couples.⁹⁴ The ideology of this journal, which aimed at a “full fusion of blood” between the two ethno-nations, was underpinned by such titans of the colonial literary world as Yi Kwangsu (1892–1950), perhaps the widest read colonial-period prose writer

92 Pak, 1975 [1911]: 199–286.

93 Pak, 2010: 98–99.

94 Kim, 2009b: 55–83.

and an erstwhile proponent of the idea of a separate and “homogeneous” Korean ethno-nation based on the “blood” ties between its members.

From 1940 onwards, Yi Kwangsu wrote a number of journalistic pieces, mostly in Japanese, in which he sharply contrasted the “Anglo-American individualism” with the “full self-denial and self-effacement” supposedly common to both the Japanese and the ancient Korean culture, and called upon his compatriots to “purify” Korean culture from both long-term Chinese and more modern Western influences (especially individualistic, cosmopolitan and socialist) and fully merge with the great Japanese ethno-nation, displaying absolute loyalty to the divine Emperor as the guiding principle.⁹⁵ In one of his (Korean) writings, Yi even suggested that Koreans and Japanese were already of one “bloodline,” since at least two ancient Japanese emperors were of partial peninsular descent; at the same time, however, the enemies of Japan/Korea were defined as “Westerners,” both a racial *and* a cultural category.⁹⁶ Yi, however, preferred in most cases to emphasize the full internalization of the “Japanese spirit” rather than a fusion of the “bloodlines,” knowing full well that colonial anti-Korean racism still existed in practice and prevented the further growth of intermarriages, contrary to all the official pronouncements on “full assimilation.”⁹⁷

While Yi Kwangsu’s ideological construction, underpinned as it was by explicit racist thinking (the primacy of the “bloodline”), comes closest to what can be defined as classical Nazism throughout the entire history of the colonial Korean thought, both Yi and other Korean apologists for the wartime Japanese empire were also eager to accuse their American opponents of racism. In many cases, these accusations were justified despite their obvious propagandist characteristics. For example, a certain Yi Sönggap, writing in the monthly *Chogwang*, cited the Japanese civil casualties (including schoolgirls) during the 1942 Doolittle Raid against Tokyo as a proof of the White Americans’ racist brutality; other proofs were assaults against US citizens of Japanese descent after the beginning of the war, as well as pervasive anti-Black racism culminating in lynching incidents.⁹⁸ Yet another article in the same journal accuses the “barbaric” White Americans of a well-planned, long-term elimination of the Indians and of thorough discrimination against the Blacks even after slavery had been abolished, all underpinned by White-supremacist atmosphere.⁹⁹ The authors did not even have to exaggerate very much, since the facts—and

95 See the Korean translations of these writings in Yi & Kim, 1997.

96 E.g., Yi, 1941.

97 Kim, 2011: 180–199.

98 Yi, 1943.

99 Ko, 1943.

in most cases these were real facts, seemingly gleaned from America's own radical literature, including an array of Black periodicals—spoke for themselves.

The “Imperial army” with Korean participation (a Korean conscription act was promulgated in 1943), was to theoretically “liberate” the non-White victims of White racism, imperialism and discrimination. However, the views on these victims presented by the mainstream Korean periodicals during the war belied a degree of racist arrogance that hardly differed from what the Whites were (mostly rightly) accused of by pro-Japanese Korean intellectuals. One particularly picturesque article in *Chogwang*, for example, describes the “Papua barbarians” as always going naked and wearing a kind of loincloth made of leaves only when entering the White-populated port cities. Their noses were pierced with fish bones, and their bodies were covered by a thick layer of hardened sweat resembling fish scales, since they “never bathe.” However, the “races” of South and South-East Asia were described as less “barbaric” and “inferior,” albeit still living in the world of “feudal superstitions.”¹⁰⁰

Striving to unite the Korean “bloodline” with Japan’s and using White racism and imperialism as a convenient pretext for Japan’s own military expansion, the Korean intellectuals who collaborated with the wartime Japanese authorities were basically drawing on the notions of a world-wide racial hierarchy which had already penetrated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The ideology of a struggle against “Westerners”/Whites was obviously evocative of the ideas of a “White-Yellow racial war” that had already been present in Korea for more than forty years by the early 1940s. At the same time, however, anti-White criticisms were more often accompanied by appeals for a Japanese-Korean “unity of blood” than by broader claims of a “Yellow race” affinity. After all, it was China, an undoubtedly “Yellow” country, that was on the enemy side in the war the racial references were meant to serve. In the same vein, Yi Kwangsu often preferred to criticize “Anglo-Americans” rather than Whites in general (and if Whites in general were to be accused of something, it was often explicitly specified that it was US Whites that were being referred to). This was certainly done with Japan’s German and Italian allies in mind. Once again, therefore, race and racism were to be configured in accordance with the political interests of the day.

That meant, however, that the interpretation of matters of “blood” and “race” was to alter immediately in order to accommodate changes in the political agenda. Indeed, as soon as both the war and the Japanese rule ended in 1945, any speculations on a “consanguinity between Koreans and Japanese” were immediately expunged from collective memory, and substituted, at least

100 Kim, 1943; more examples in Kwön, 2005: 347–377.

on the right wing of the political spectrum (which became fully dominant in South Korea by 1947–48), by the newly-systemized belief in Koreans as a purportedly “homogeneous” ethno-national group.¹⁰¹ In the new political order defined by American hegemony, anti-communism as an overall system of political belief, as well as a statist ethno-nationalism dominating the newly-created state of South Korea, old-time Pan-Asianism or speculations concerning the “Yellow race” and its possible “unity” were no longer required. Alongside anti-communism and, later, developmentalism, the ethnic nation (*minjok*) and the political nation (Kor. *kungmin*), rather than the “race” (*injong*), were to become the central coordinates of the politico-ideological space.¹⁰²

Conclusion: Race as a Path to Modernist Self-assertion?

To summarize, race became just as important a part of the new, evolutionist worldview in Korea as it already was elsewhere by the early 1910s. Koreans were keenly aware of perceived racial differences and hierarchies, and tended to position themselves accordingly as evolutionarily potent members of the “Yellow race” able and willing to withstand the “White” onslaughts and “civilize” themselves to the “White” level. Differences in evolutionary levels between the “Whites” and the “Yellows” were seen as relatively small, if not altogether nonexistent. Japan’s “Meiji miracle” was widely seen as a proof for this. Like the majority of the “White” European states, Japan was also recording a significant population increase.¹⁰³ Its entry into the “ranks of the modern civilized states,” its “patriotism above Euro-American levels,” the growth of its humanities and, ultimately, its brilliant victory over Russians propped the “White” Europeans to discuss the “Yellow Peril” and invoke the Mongolian hordes’ thirteenth-century assault against Eastern Europe.¹⁰⁴ Finally, did the British, French and Russians, who once tended to curry favor with the German Imperial House by expressing a positive interest in Kaiser Wilhelm’s (r. 1888–1918) “Yellow Peril” theories, not switch at the beginning of the Great War to currying favor with their Japanese allies, now pleading the “perilous” Japanese to send an expeditionary corps to an “imperiled” Europe? By doing so, did they not thereby forfeit any right to talk about the “Yellow Peril” in the future?¹⁰⁵

101 Pak, 2010: 85–123.

102 Chang, 2012.

103 Anonymous, 1901.

104 Anonymous, 1909.

105 Anonymous, 1915; Yi, 2010.

The existence of “inferior savages” was not even doubted in the early 1940s, when the Japanese Imperial army was supposedly “saving” them from the “Anglo-American (read “White”) aggression.” Their eventual “extinction,” or at least subjugation (by the Japanese “saviors”) following the “law of the survival of the fittest,” was seen as almost inevitable. But the “Yellow” Koreans, all the misfortunes befalling their state notwithstanding, were never included in their ranks. For example, the hereditary Chinese language interpreter (*yökkwan*) and frequent contributor to reformist publications, Yu Wönp’yo (1852–?), lavishly praised the qualities of Koreans in his well-known 1908 novel, *Monggyöŋ Chegallyang* (*Seeing Zhuge Liang in a Dream*). Although lacking in wealth and power, Koreans were a loyal and patriotic people with a millennia-old literary tradition. Since they were “of the same race” (Kor. *tongjong*) as Chinese and Japanese, Yu Wönp’yo regarded a “Yellow” alliance as natural. He was greatly disheartened by the “unfriendly” acts perpetrated by Japan towards Koreans and Chinese after its “righteous” victory over “White” Russia, presciently warning the Japanese of the danger of China disregarding racial feelings and allying itself with Japan’s “White” competitors if the Japanese infringements continued.¹⁰⁶ As one newspaper editorial put it nine years earlier: “Is there any reason [to think that] only the West [is destined to be] civilized while the East is not?” Koreans, “an old civilized race—good-natured, kind and fond of simplicity,” were seen as perfectly capable of “catching up” with the paragons of civilization elsewhere, provided that badly needed reforms were implemented by the government.¹⁰⁷

In a word, therefore, race could provide an occasion for discursive self-assertion and for positioning oneself within a trans-border, worldwide network of racial enmities and alliances in early twentieth-century Korea. If the “White” racism in the world-systemic Euro-American core was meant for legitimizing the privileged hereditary position of “White” Euro-Americans in a supposedly egalitarian world of capitalist progress, the “Yellow” racism so many modernizing intellectuals in Korea were subscribing to was meant for legitimizing their future hopes for a potentially higher position in the worldwide racial pecking order. While the Koreans’ supposedly superior “racial qualities” sounded like a promise of a better future, race was also seen as a convenient tool for “analyzing” the much more problematic present. Russian imperialism was easy to classify as a “White predation”; Japanese imperialism against the Koreans themselves was, accordingly, a “betrayal of Yellow solidarity.”

106 Cho, 2002: 195–204; Yu, 1908: 96–120.

107 Editorial, 1899.

It was not race alone that dominated the early modernist discourse. As has already been mentioned above, and while certainly important, it was much less central than “civilization and progress.” However obnoxious “Whites” and their predations might be, “civilization” had to be learned from them. And in the context of the “civilization” discourse, even the “predatory White expansion” into the non-White areas, deplorable as it was, seemed, as a public-interest national enterprise, to be preferable to the personal or clique interest based internecine struggles inside the “less civilized” contemporaneous Korean society.¹⁰⁸ Still, even though race as a concept was not central to the newly developed discourse of modernity, it was still important, especially in the context of establishing a conceptual continuity of sorts with pre-existing Confucian axiology. The society, in which clan connections and other forms of blood ties still constituted the main form of societal solidarity, was, unsurprisingly enough, easily receptive to the logic of “White” or “Yellow” blood. And could a Confucian-turned-reformer of Chang Chiyön’s kind find a better justification for his rather cozy ties with the Government General than the idea of a “blood-based brotherhood between Japanese and Koreans”?

The situation changed after the longer experience of Japanese colonial rule, when Koreans became more aware of the persistence—despite all rhetoric to the contrary—of the ethnic discrimination patterns on the part of their “fellow Yellow” colonizers. “Assimilation” did not mean that the racist discrimination was to disappear, and “uniting against the White threat” was in the end simply tantamount to collaborating with the colonizer. The grand visions of Koreans being part of the same wider “race” as the Jurchen, or the speculations around a presumed “consanguinity” between Koreans and Japanese showed themselves to be strongly politically motivated; in the latter case, the politics of the “racial alliance” ideology implied a full abandonment of any nationalist claims in view of Japan’s stubborn refusal to allow Koreans any degree of self-rule. At this point, the logic of blood shifted its direction. Rather than the “bridge” uniting Koreans with either Japanese or the “northern peoples” like the Jurchen, Korean blood now became the unchangeable essence of “Korean-ness,” making marriages with the Japanese, for example, intrinsically problematic for those Korean intellectuals who refused to fully sell out to the colonizers by the late 1930s and early 1940s.¹⁰⁹ In this way, the logic of the presumed “ethnic homogeneity” was cemented towards becoming an important component of both North and South Korean nationalism after 1945.¹¹⁰

108 Anonymous, 1899.

109 Yun, 2011.

110 Pak, 2010: 85–123.

The United States Arrives: Racialization and Racism in Post-1945 South Korea

Nadia Y. Kim

Contrary to the orientation of much of the (global) race and racism literature and the social science canon on migration, millions of immigrants among the Korean diaspora did not suddenly experience a social positioning in relation to the racialized groups in their destinations, but had lived versions of it in South Korea.¹ As Vladimir Tikhonov has demonstrated above with regard to the formation of race and racism in pre-1945 Korea, the advanced West and Japan were influential in the construction of a racial category system that co-mingled with, and moved beyond, mere culture and nationality.² The nearly eighty interviews, two years of ethnographic observation, and countless newspaper and popular cultural analyses I conducted between 2000 and 2005 corroborate and build on such history. The interviewees who ventured to Los Angeles, the second largest Korean city outside of the two Koreas, for instance, did not learn American White-Black and anti-Asian ideologies after they settled in the United States, but lived variants of them long before their arrival in the United States. In this chapter, I wish to submit that the American (neo-)imperial rule is mostly responsible for this. More specifically, I would like to suggest that this system of racialization or racism has relied on merging American military and cultural forces and has done so in two key ways: by ruling over and rendering a non-White country such as Korea invisible and by entrenching a White-Black hierarchy.³

The broader merger of global militarization and capitalist expansion in which these two processes are nested has yielded “commodity racism,” a capitalist-created desire for consumer products that affirms the White racial superiority over “vanquished” peoples of color through products and marketing.⁴ In charting the specifics of what I will call a post-World War II “imperialist racial formation” I show that Korean informants draw on largely Euro-American,

1 N.Y. Kim, 2008.

2 See Tikhonov’s chapter in this volume.

3 N.Y. Kim, 2008.

4 N.Y. Kim, 2008.

Japanese, and internal post-1945 ideologies to perceive themselves as existing “in-between” Whites and Blacks in the United States as well as across the globe. Much of Korean society, however, is simultaneously and begrudgingly attuned to Black Americans’ significant power over Koreans as agents of the American occupational forces. Finally, many Koreans are aware that the White-Black binary in the United States and around the globe elides a people and nation like them. These multiple inequalities and social locations underscore the fact that South Korean internal hierarchies engage in various ways with those of the United States. To be more specific, it can be said that the peninsular society prioritizes the axes of the nation-state, political recognition, and ethnonationality to structure and hierarchize society within and between countries.⁵

In this chapter I will provide germane historical and contextual information on the advent of American militarism and on the interconnected market and cultural economy.⁶ I would then like to discuss the South Korean cultural context of longstanding inferiority vis-à-vis imperial Japan into which the superpower United States entered and co-constructed inferiority vis-à-vis “America.” In both cases, much of South Korean society admired and detested the foreign powers, the perennial dualist products of colonial and (neo)imperial subjugation. In the following section, I examine the Koreans’ adoption, remapping, and rejection of ideologies shaped by (White) American militarist and cultural imperialism, by transnational exchanges, and—among newer immigrants—by the 1992 unrest in Los Angeles.

Contextual Background: America Marches In and Mass Mediates

The rise of an imperial Japan in Asia and the world was one of the reasons for the American engagement in World War II. At this juncture, the United States sought to gain resources and markets, thwart the spread of Communism, and achieve global hegemony both within and from the Pacific Rim.⁷ As part of their World War II treaty, the United States and the then-Soviet Union

5 Most of the information in this paragraph is derived from N.Y. Kim, 2008.

6 This piece focuses on racialization and racism in South Korea post-1945. In other work (N.Y. Kim, 2008), I empirically document how Koreans were racially primed for the United States’ White-over-Black order (and for accepting it) by such factors as Western, Chinese, and Japanese ideologies (see Tikhonov’s chapter in this volume), the force of Confucian notions of social groups’ proper places, and the lack of a history of *antiracist* movements as well as a discourse concerning Black citizenry.

7 Lowe, 1996.

arbitrarily divided Korea, and thus divided the lives of Korean loved ones, most of whom have been separated and estranged ever since. The American occupation began right after the treaty was signed and its military has remained in Korea ever since. The demilitarized zone (DMZ) at the thirty-eighth parallel currently remains the most heavily armed region in the world. In the almost 70 years since its establishment, many expansive military bases and surrounding camptowns have been built to accommodate both the American objectives and the soldiers' material, cultural, and sexual needs and wants.

In the context of US military power, American mass media and commodities have powerfully symbolized "American Fever" in all its modernity and significantly shaped subsequent emigration to the United States.⁸ The convergence between the American military and mass media culture is most readily seen in the American Forces Korea Network (AFKN; AFN Korea since 1997). The United States began this military television and radio broadcasting network for its troops in 1957 and also made it fully accessible to South Koreans, an atypical move given the technical problems that usually preclude it. Yet AFN Korea has transmitted the channel's American movies, soap operas, professional sports and prime-time programs⁹ throughout Seoul and other regional bases since the very beginning. Though I could not locate statistics on South Korean viewer demographics (multiple sources claimed they did not exist), many South Koreans have remarked that those who wish to learn English or who simply adore American culture tend to be regular watchers of AFN Korea.¹⁰ In the wake of AFKN's arrival in 1957, two of South Korea's own popular broadcasting stations—Korea Broadcasting Service (KBS) and Munhwa Broadcasting Co. (MBC)—arrived with a bang.

In fact, the consumption of popular culture has spiked so dramatically and citizens have received so much mass media since the 1960s that the country has earned a reputation as one of the world's most media dependent societies,¹¹ not least because it is also the most wired nation in the world.¹² Furthermore, some of the United States' largest movie markets are in Asian countries like South Korea, which has typically been the second largest Hollywood market outside North America.¹³ Although the United States no longer owns and produces most of the world's globalized media like it once had, the actual texts

8 Abelmann & Lie, 1995: 64; Park, 1997.

9 *The Washington Post*, 15 November 1986.

10 See Kang & Morgan, 1988.

11 Kang, 1991.

12 *The Korea Times*, 30 January 2011.

13 "Asian flu batters healthy o'ceas B.O." 1998. *Variety*.

and their cultural “look” are largely American.¹⁴ The “Americanness” of such imagery is no small matter, as the mass media have been considered to be the most powerful influences on contemporary culture.¹⁵ That said, however, the Korean Wave (Kor. *hanryu*) of popular culture that has taken Asia by storm has, along with other examples such as India’s Bollywood culture, slowly begun to change the shape of global culture writ large.

South Korea, Japan, and the American Concept of Race

In the nation’s own collective imaginary, its early potential and promise were proscribed by external powers: China, Japan, and, most recently, the United States. As with all systems of oppression and marginalization, the subordinated must negotiate the constant reminders of their inferiority, particularly if the foreign power’s prowess is etched into many elements of the peninsula. In modern history, most older Koreans condemn the Japanese as evildoers, while young adults tend to be more uneven in their outlook. It is clear, however, that both share a sense of inferiority to the former colonizer. This struggle is partially traceable to the American occupation government’s favoring of Japan despite deeming it a race of inhuman savages during the war, a policy that partly inspired Japan’s pan-Asian and yellow doctrine.¹⁶ The US army’s respect for Japan, perhaps inspired by the lower status ascribed to Koreans by both powerhouses, involved the continued use of Japanese colonial officers in disturbing shows of camaraderie, ushering in anti-Korean prejudices that would prevail throughout the occupation.¹⁷ Bruce Cumings has found that the “The Japanese were viewed as cooperative, orderly . . . while the Koreans were seen as . . . unruly.” These characterizations cropped up repeatedly in the literature and had probably originated from the initial American responses to Korea in the fall of 1945. The occupational forces still called on the Japanese as unofficial advisors and drew on Korean colluders even after the Koreans had expressed their displeasure with regard to American-Japanese camaraderie.¹⁸

As with South Korea’s tortured beliefs in Japan’s national, and hence *racial*, dominance given its earlier political-economic successes and imperialist past, Koreans have largely accepted White America’s hegemonic construction of itself as the racialized reference point.¹⁹ This self-representation of Whiteness

14 Ang, 1996; Hall, 1991.

15 Bauman, 1992: 31

16 Dower, 1986; and Tikhonov, in this volume.

17 Cumings, 1981: 138.

18 Cumings, 1981: 138–139.

19 See Lipsitz, 1998.

has boded well with the Koreans' association of a nation with its majority group, i.e., its "owners." It was not until the United States military occupied South Korea and the American mass media followed on its heels that residents came to think beyond "America" as just White. In other words, South Korean society gradually began to receive "America" as a White-over-Black nation. I will later argue, however, that the American mass media seared Black people and anti-Black stereotypes more widely across the country than the military presence. It is noteworthy, for instance, that Kang's survey of 1,835 popular stories revealed the Blacks' absence in Korean literature until 1961, sixteen years after the military had proliferated across the peninsula.²⁰

The reception of an ideology of America as a White country in which a lot of Black people live has shaped South Korean society's own sense of its racialized identity. In other words, although Japanese colonization had helped shore up Koreans' sense of oneness as an ethnic nation, the postliberation Koreans were still fragmented along several dimensions such as class, region, dialect, and ideology when the United States occupational forces arrived.²¹ The Koreans' sense of their group as a uniform collectivity in relation to the two emerged, therefore, by virtue of the mass arrival of White and Black Americans onto the peninsula. In addition, the American "race" categories collapsed the ethnic and national differences *within* the White and Black groupings (e.g., German, Spaniard; Ghanaian, Haitian), differences that formerly stood at the center of Korean society's orientation. Thus understood, one of the processes of post-1945 racialization was clearly underway.

Because "imperialist racial formations" often beget dualism such as envy and hatred (of, e.g., Japan) among the subordinated population, the Koreans' reverence for and sense of inferiority to (White) America that began under the Western missionaries was intensified and textured by the US military intervention. General Douglas MacArthur, for example, has served as the icon of United States military humanitarianism in the Korean War and continues to be valorized in South Korean history textbooks. Kang notes that within South Korea's popular culture, Korean characters set in the immediate wake of 1945 express intense gratitude to the "Americans" for "liberating" their nation from the Japanese.²² In my interview research, the informants' expressions of hegemonic "American savior" ideologies were particularly apparent among those who had emigrated or sought to do so, not surprising as most people who choose to leave tend to be predisposed towards a pro-American sentiment. The

20 Kang, 1991.

21 Personal communication with John Lie.

22 Kang, 1991.

older generations in particular tend to regularly share narratives of “America” rescuing Korea from a near inexorable fate (read: Communism, poverty) thanks to such watersheds as its benevolent intervention in the Korean War and its generosity with humanitarian aid and military protection. Although the younger generations do not generally support a continued US military presence, the students and young professionals I interviewed often expressed a desire to perceive themselves according to White Western modernity.²³

Korean society’s emphasis on ethno-nationality and ranking by blood was fundamentally informed by the White/light and Black/dark ideologies introduced by US militarization and by the Americanesque cultural saturation of the peninsula. Indeed, Korean society’s native ethno-national category system corresponded well with the Western powers’ nineteenth-century Darwinism in suggesting a dominant White West, an Asian middle, and an African bottom.²⁴ Despite this history, South Korean society’s perception of being “in-between” has been at its most forceful and popular since South Korea’s own economic development, and has been fundamentally shaped by Japanese (and advanced Western) discourses. As Japan’s economy rose to prominence, and as previously unequal classes converged, a new ideal of a middle stratum embodied by the *sarariman* (salary man or White-collar worker) came into being on the archipelago.²⁵ Another catalyst was the late 1980s’ arrival of low-skilled workers from less-developed nations including South Korea.

Despite many of the foreign workers’ middle-class backgrounds and similar skin tones, Japan constructed itself as a “Whiter” and “middle-class” nation above the “Blacker” and “lower-class” migrants and their countries.²⁶ The seeds of the ROK’s own postwar development were planted by Japanese colonization and by this post-1945 racial context.²⁷ As a later blooming “Asian Tiger,” South Korea similarly Blackened the foreign workers who would join them from “lesser Asia.”²⁸ The Koreans considered these oft-darker skinned workers’ desperation for Seoul’s “three-D” jobs (dirty, dangerous, difficult) as an expression of their inferior national blood and of their own “Whiter, middle-class” standing.²⁹ Despite their great pride in this economic arrival, the peninsular populace had also fundamentally engaged the downside of their color—

23 *Chosun Ilbo*, 17 September 1990.

24 See Russell, 1991: 6; see Tikhonov’s chapter in this volume.

25 Lie, 2001: 31.

26 Lie, 2001: 19.

27 Lie, 1998.

28 Lie, 1998.

29 See Wallerstein, 1974.

class—ethno-national order: their position not on top but in the (invisible) *middle* of the racialized and gendered global economic order.

The American Military, Whiteness, and Imperialist Racial Formation

As noted above, the US military has been central to South Korean society's construction of the Whiteness of the United States and the advanced White West. A key point to bear in mind is that in the eyes of Americans and Koreans alike White Americans were not just benevolent, but quite possibly the most attractive people in the world. Beyond foodstuffs, the United States military also "doled out" a public relations program offering free reconstructive and elective cosmetic surgery to Korean War victims. One of the main procedures offered was the double eyelid procedure in which a fold is cut into the eyelid. As a result of the US military's actions, Asia's multi-billion dollar cosmetic surgery industry actually enjoyed its high point in South Korea in the wake of the Korean War (1950–53) and not in Japan as commonly thought. David Palumbo-Liu's analysis of a 1955 essay by one of these army surgeons, Dr. Ralph Millard, reveals the doctor's sense of racial and national superiority over the "Orientals." "A slant-eyed Korean interpreter," Millard noted, "speaking excellent English, came in requesting to be made into a 'round-eye.' His future lies in his relation with the West and he felt that because of the squint in his slant eyes, Americans could not tell what he was thinking and consequently did not trust him. As this was partly true, I consented to do what I could." Millard proceeded to give the interpreter a double eyelid and extra nose cartilage. The doctor then pridefully remarked that his patient could now go to the United States in order to study successfully for the ministry.³⁰

Nowhere does Millard acknowledge, however, that he and the United States military were partly responsible for the Koreans' sense of inferiority to Whiteness. His stated belief that "Oriental" eyes were problematic legitimates Korean society's sense of shame over their appearance, the shame that motivated them to see Millard in the first place. Indeed, many Koreans' consciousness of their people's aesthetic inferiority intensified in the wake of the Korean War, when "Western-style Whiteness and facial features became the Korean ideal."³¹ Besides wanting double eyelids, Koreans also desired to be as tall or as masculine or feminine as the "Americans." To provide but one example, soci-

30 Palumbo-Liu, 1999: 95.

31 Jo, 1992: 403.

ologist John Lie found that South Korean politicians began to take on “improbable” American names like Patrick Henry Shinicky (Sin Ik-hŭi) and John M. Chang (Chang Myŏn).³² The South Korean populace, then, had been made to feel inferior not just by virtue of their reliance on a superior United States military, but also by virtue of the military’s own *racial ideologies*, with Dr. Millard’s views constituting but one illustration of the latter.

The familiarity of the White physical aesthetic from the missionaries to the post-1945 American forces and mass media had secured the Koreans’ noted sense of aesthetic inferiority. Advertisements for Western products, for example, especially those produced for personal care and beauty products that proliferated in the top Korean and Asian magazines, often used a White model.³³ Beauty in general is far from a trivial matter for Korean women in particular, since attracting a husband has often been a pathway to economic survival. Job opportunities and chances for social mobility for Korean women are comparatively rare, even today. In addition to the trend of middle-class parents giving their daughters eyelid surgery as high school graduation presents,³⁴ the Korean men’s search for conventional attractiveness has also helped to make the country’s cosmetic surgeons the busiest in the world.³⁵

Unsurprisingly, Korean women were more explicit than Korean men in the qualitative interviews with regard to their internalized inferiority about their appearance, despite the men’s intense exposure to the hegemonic White masculinity of a John Wayne or a J.R. Ewing. In addition, heterosexual South Korean women have long expressed favor toward White Western men or, more accurately, the hegemonic White masculinity that defines these men.³⁶ Drawing heavily on American and European mass media images, even women in their sixties noted their younger days of idealizing White male icons like Jeremy Irons (the “ultimate gentleman”), Elvis Presley, and James Dean. Younger women considered desirable the likes of Andrea Bocelli, Harrison Ford, Keanu Reeves (incidentally, part Chinese), Leonardo DiCaprio, and David Beckham. These icons, however, must also be understood in the context of American military dominance, given the fact that South Korean women have historically married White (and Black) American servicemen.³⁷ Informed by this history, Korean women have perceived that White men are more gender egalitarian

32 Lie 1998: 143.

33 Neelankavil, Mummalaneni, & Sessions, 1995.

34 *Toronto Star Newspaper*, 4 October 2001.

35 Holliday & Elfving-Hwang, 2012.

36 Kim, 2006.

37 Min, 2006: 46–50.

than Korean men, an ideology that has motivated them towards racial comparisons and towards a desire for an “international marriage.”³⁸ This social pattern also exists in Japan.³⁹ Such a view does not necessarily mean that Korean women are no longer attracted to Korean men or that they harbor no concerns about the White men’s potential cultural arrogance. Yet the informants continued to racialize White men as gender egalitarian and Korean men as gender traditional.⁴⁰ In so doing, they inadvertently reify a global hierarchy of racialized masculinity.

Another form of racialization that the US military imposed concerned perspectives of “Asians” and Asianness. Despite their respect for Japan, the American military officers were also, at times, ambivalent towards their former enemy. For one, the American forces were also occupying Japan with a view to stripping it down and burying any chance for future military prowess. Inverting Japan’s previously celebrated imperial pan-Asianness,⁴¹ members of the US military racialized *all* Asians, including the Japanese, as foreign, strange, exotic, “gookish,” the “same breed of cats,” and “coolies.”⁴² Indeed, the blurred line between “Oriental” and “Orient” had already been popularized by the Chicago School in the United States⁴³ by the time American military officials came to the peninsula at the end of World War II. It is thus not surprising that American soldiers commonly referred to Koreans as “gooks” or even worse as late as the 1990s.⁴⁴ That said, however, the United States military has always hegemonically lauded itself as a liberator and ally in front of the Korean state and the Korean population at large.

American Mass Media, White Heroes, and Counter-Hegemony

The above ideologies betray the cooperation between the American militarist state and other types of racial formation.⁴⁵ As noted above, the American military and mass culture converged in the form of the American Forces Korea Network (AFKN), and hence the South Korean residents have been exposed

38 Kim, 2006.

39 Kelsky, 2001.

40 Kelsky, 2001.

41 Dower, 1986; Tikhonov, in this volume.

42 Lauterbach, 1947; *The Nation*, 25 June 1960.

43 Yuh, 2002.

44 Lie, 1998: 144.

45 McClintock, 1995. Cf. Omi & Winant, 1994: 56.

to the same United States military propaganda and pro-American representations that have saturated the bases since 1957. In the case of South Korea, this link between the state and dominant representations has forged the superiority and normativity of White America and, conversely, the inferiority and Otherness of Korea and its people. This, in turn, has been linked to several representations.

"America," the Vast Cowboy Frontier. Although in both sites the Koreans who immigrated to the United States since the late 1980s and the early 1990s have had the greatest and most diverse access to American television news and entertainment, movies, music, and print journalism, American popular culture has also been an integral part of South Korean life for the past forty years.⁴⁶ In this setting, even those interviewees who left the country at around 1970, the first year of the mass Korean exodus to the United States, admit to having watched a great deal of American movies and television hits. One pattern was middle-aged Korean men's "absorption" of the United States through their penchant for imported westerns. Exposure to John Wayne's free journeys through the vast terrain of the West provided these men with a portrait of an "America" larger than life. For much of Korean society sharing the common adage "our small country" and frequently attributing shortcomings and even Korean narrow-mindedness to this small size (recall that Koreans believe that people "embody" their nations), the vast geography of the United States is a form of power that is to be envied and admired.

"Americans" Are Richer Than Us. The Korean informants often invoked the wealthier and more powerful White American reference point to construct "America" as an ideal. For instance, none mentioned the Native American sidekicks or enemies in the westerns and rarely discussed the poor people who appeared in the media texts. Invoking White American wealth instead, the South Koreans interpret it in the context of their society's formidable class logic, one that naturalizes the superiority of the rich. The US occupation force's chocolate giveaways, golf courses, and ability to waste unselfconsciously had already alerted Koreans to the fact that common Americans were even richer than the Korean upper class.⁴⁷ Indeed, American junk food is still sold in upscale department stores as a luxury item well into the new millennium. Interviewees remarked that watching "America" from a less-developed Korea involved envying, for instance, the more "modern" lifestyle of the upper-crust New England White family in *Peyton Place* (1964–69; starring Mia Farrow and Ryan O'Neal). In a focus group of young South Korean students and

46 Kang, 1991.

47 Yuh, 2002: 35.

professionals, remarks were in the vein of “Whites wearing tuxedos and drinking champagne.” These American media representations reify an essentialization of national development and social class status that attributes America’s superpower status to the innate talents of its people. The Koreans are painfully aware that they have been playing catch up ever since.

“Americans” Are Happier, Nicer, and Freer Than Us. During their interviews, Koreans of both genders readily conjured up the classic American films they had seen, the vast majority of which featured, and were exclusively about, White Americans—*Breakfast at Tiffany’s*, *Titanic*, and *Roman Holiday*. In other words, Whites are the reference point in every movie offered. Building on the tropes of kind, selfless early missionaries and of American benevolence during the Korean War, the respondents gleaned the notion of happier, nicer, and more liberated “Americans” from these mass media texts. To reach such a conclusion, Koreans understood White Americans within the logic of the South Korean cultural norms that typically do not prioritize extroversion, smiling, making eye contact, and sharing deep emotions with strangers (however, it must be said that the peninsula has incorporated some of these norms in recent years as a result of cultural globalization processes).

“American” Men Are Better Men. Though fewer in number, some women were not just shaped by Hollywood, hegemonic masculinity and hearsay, but by the personal encounters they had with White men in South Korea. Although long-time immigrants in the United States had fewer chances to interact with White men, newcomers reported some, albeit mostly acquaintance-level, meetings with businessmen, exchange students, and language teachers. Such views are supported by data on spousal preferences from Edward Chang’s nonrandom survey of almost 1,300 students (assuming all participants were completely truthful about their sexual orientation).⁴⁸ Among females, White American and European men (United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy—57.1 percent) were a close second to Korean men (South, North, overseas—66.6 percent). The women’s preferences disaggregated by nation, however, revealed that “American” and most Europeans (especially from Western Europeans) ranked above even *North Korean* men. This gendered subtext reveals that South Korean women most desire husbands from highly developed “modern” countries, not co-ethnics.⁴⁹ In contrast, the Korean men’s preferences constellated around perceptions of co-racial and more “gender traditional” women; they preferred Koreans first, then Chinese and then Japanese before White American and European women (41.6 percent).

48 Chang, 1999.

49 See Hirsch, 2003.

Counter-Hegemony and Race

Korean women have also resisted the hegemonic glorifications of White American men in fundamental ways as part of their anti-American resistance in South Korea. Anti-American sentiment has been sparked and exacerbated by American soldiers' violence and abuses of privilege in general and by the rapes and murders of Korean women in particular. Invoking these, some of the women interviewees in Seoul and in the United States had condemned the United States military as a site of oppression at the intersection of nation, "race," and gender. A student named Ms. Park, for instance, remarked that unlike the handsome celebrities that the women in her focus group had invoked, "arrogant" White servicemen immediately came to mind when "Americans" were mentioned. Other women characterized the troops as "uneducated," "anti-women," and "deceitful." "Uneducated" introduces social class by distinguishing between low-class, crude White GIs (subordinate masculinity) and the normative higher-class, refined White professionals who came as elected officials or businessmen, for instance (hegemonic masculinity).

Korean men had been further compelled by the ideology of "they're stealing our women," a common way in which men exercise power over other men within a racialized patriarchy.⁵⁰ These statements reveal that the South Koreans' sense of inferiority to White America's military, political democracy, wealth, beauty, and men did not go uncontested. It is thus not surprising that editorials in this spirit began to appear in *Chosun Ilbo*, South Korea's highest-circulation newspaper, in the 1960s, around the birth of the highly controversial Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). The newspaper also condemned SOFA's land infractions against poor villagers. The 1980s witnessed the shift to anti-Americanism, particularly against dominant Whites, due in large part to the 1980 Kwangju Massacre in which thousands of pro-democracy student protestors against the rise of a military regime were murdered by South Korean troops.⁵¹ The United States came to be implicated in the killings owing to its supreme command over the military hierarchy of the ROK and USA forces.⁵²

A historical watershed of racialization at the transnational crossroads of global and ethnic media involves Korean society's interpretation of the White American state and Whiteness in the 1992 Los Angeles unrest. The social explosion that occurred against urban Korean merchants after four White police officers were acquitted of racial violence against Rodney King signaled an American disposition of derision and dismissal toward Korean ethnics (and,

50 See Collins, 2000; Espiritu, 1997.

51 Clark, 1988.

52 Yuh, 2002: 73, 245.

by extension, the home country) to many South Koreans. Although some South Korean media outlets tagged the unrest the “Black riots” (Kor. *hŭgin pokdong*), the coverage, even among mainstream and conservative outlets, made it clear how Korean immigrants suffered tremendous losses due to the American forces’ protection of predominantly White and rich Beverly Hills and Westwood at the expense of Koreatown.⁵³ The ROK media also claimed that Korean Americans were scapegoats in what was ultimately a White-Black conflict, yet the mainstream US media insisted on absolving Whites of blame by stressing that the unrest was due to mutual Black-Korean antipathy. The South Korean newspapers accused the American media of continuously airing footage of the Korean merchant, Soon Ja Du, shooting a Black teenager, Latasha Harlins, and of airing inflammatory scenes of Black animosity toward Koreans.⁵⁴

Similar constructions of White American dysfunction flow from the South Koreans’ increased exposure to sensationalistic American news broadcasts, as would-be émigrés have been much abuzz about the school shootings in the United States. Such a phenomenon is virtually incomprehensible and wholly bewildering in a society in which civilian gun use is illegal and rarely practiced. Many interviewees asked how White students could shoot and kill each other and themselves in their classrooms, such as in Columbine?⁵⁵ In fact, in an Asian society in which schooling is so paramount that in some parts of the year students attend school from 6 A.M. to 10 P.M. and then supplementary schools until 1 A.M., South Koreans often cancel their immigration plans due to the alarming phenomenon of school murders in the United States. Such incidents prompted new immigrant Ms. Paik to qualify that typical Whites were nice as long as “you don’t offend any of them.”

Blackness and Imperialist Racial Formation

The other side of the imperialist racial formation—Blackness and darkness—also has its fundamental roots in post-World War II American militarism in Asia. The occupation of Japan, for instance, brought both Black soldiers and the White military’s racism to the land of the rising sun, giving rise to a

53 Kim, 1993.

54 *Chosun Ilbo*, 4 and 7 May 1992.

55 More recently, Newtown and myriad other school shootings have only reinforced this perception.

lucrative Japanese market of Blackface minstrel and “darky” goods.⁵⁶ These were then exported, in boomerang fashion, to the United States where they were hot commodities. South Koreans had probably encountered the popular “pickaninny” illustrations in Japanese books from the 1960s, themselves inspired by the American work *The Story of Little Black Sambo*.

Although Koreans had some exposure to pre-World War II ideologies about Blacks, Japan’s postwar commodity racism industry seemed to have popularized the representations across the widest of audiences. After trade relations were normalized in 1965, Japan began exporting Blackface and “darky” products to its former colony. The Sanrio Company’s pickaninny doll was still imported as late as the 1990s, until it was pulled from the shelves after Black American protests.⁵⁷ In response to protests and out of concern for its global image, Japan has since discontinued or modified its products, though imagery is subjective and can often be called into question. Black face or “darky” imagery and products have even survived in the United States and Europe despite fierce taboos. Although the narratives below echo these notions, the situational reality of the Koreans’ scant contact with Blacks in the flesh before the United States’ military proliferation should also be considered. In this case, the fear of the unfamiliar in a predominantly Korean and Asian society should not be surprising, as the Koreans were not only unnerved by the Blacks’ appearance but also by White missionaries’ alien looks, albeit mostly in the early years. During the Jim Crow era, the small number of Koreans who worked as staff on the bases or in the seedier camptowns observed the separate and unequal treatment of White and Black members of the military. Black Americans also have been highly present along the “front line” of the demilitarized zone and have been denied the White GIs’ less dangerous assignments in Seoul.⁵⁸ Since the formal desegregation of the military, the soldiers and the camptown restaurants, bars, and brothels have remained, in many areas, informally segregated.

Over the years, the South Koreans’ encounters with Black troops have been troubled, in part as a result of resentment over the injustices they had suffered and incurred on account of the American presence. In the 1970s, even White soldiers admitted that they heard Koreans repeat the soldiers’ anti-Black epithets without fully comprehending their meaning or the level of animus involved.⁵⁹ On the other side of the line, Blacks have either resisted local prejudices or have adopted their stereotypes and abused their power

56 Russell, 1991: 23.

57 Russell, 1991.

58 Sturdevant & Stoltzfus, 1993.

59 Moon, 1997: 72.

over Koreans, potentially signaling Black Americans' reactionary methods and their oppression of the Korean populace. In addition, shortly after the first big wave of Korean immigration to the United States in 1970, Black nationalism had intensified among soldiers, fueling feverishly racialized conflicts. Fights between Black and White soldiers and between Blacks and Korean residents were common. In a context in which dark skin and Blacks were already seen in a less favorable light, such incidents spurred the idea that Black soldiers cause more trouble than "the Americans."⁶⁰

The multiracial children of American GIs and Korean women, and especially those of part-Black descent, also suffer extreme oppression as a result.⁶¹ Korean society's very language of a "pure" bloodline and consanguinity serves as a symbolic point of resistance against outside powers' intrusions and against the "contamination" of the Koreans' once "pure blood;" the more the marginalized populace can get rid of the evidence, the more it feels sovereign, the more it feels *Korean*. As a formerly colonized and presently dependent people, then, their tendency is to displace internalized inferiority in ways that foster prejudice and discrimination.

It is important to note that Koreans did not always follow the route of racializing Black Americans as "low-class" soldiers and violent occupiers. Although there is a need for more historical documentation of Blacks' relations with Koreans (and others) in Asia during World War II and the Korean War, there is some sparse evidence of Koreans (and Japanese) having treated Black American soldiers with respect. In George Lipsitz's analysis of veteran Ivory Perry, a prominent Black American activist from St. Louis, he finds that Perry attributed the birth of his activism to his understanding of Japan in World War II and the Korean War.⁶² In my interviews, an informant named Mr. Roh, a government inspector during the Jim Crow era, said that he had seen many Korean military personnel and Black Americans bonding with each other. Both sought to beat the White servicemen in every way, including in sport, despite the violent racial conflicts that sometimes erupted as a result. Mr. Roh himself said that he felt much closer to the Blacks than to the Whites, especially at the United States Consulate in Seoul.⁶³

A number of American mass media texts have highlighted Whites' racist treatment of Blacks under slavery. Some South Koreans were horrified by such movies as *Roots*. Several of the young adults cited Spike Lee's critically

60 N.Y. Kim, 2008; in press.

61 Kim, in press.

62 Lipsitz, 1995: 63.

63 N.Y. Kim, 2008.

acclaimed film *Malcolm X* as disturbingly eye opening. The younger generations, therefore, seemed to be wrestling with their indoctrination by White racism (especially against Blacks). Although Edward Chang's noted survey of Korean university students' marital preferences, for instance, revealed that Blacks, referred to as African Blacks, were the least preferred, my data reveal a more complex navigation of prejudices, their contexts, and a nascent awareness of antiracist and socially desirable talk. These baby steps are likely the partial product of Blacks' recent protests against Japanese Blackface or "darky" products. The intensifying cultural interpenetration between the two countries is also responsible, as manifested in the Korean youths' adoration of R&B and hip-hop (although a love of culture does not necessarily suggest a disappearance of prejudice), in their increased marriages to non-Whites, in the number of multiracial military children, in the labor migrants' protests for equality, and in the (politicized) anger over the 1992 LA unrest.⁶⁴

Racism and Invisibility in Korean "America"

Nancy Abelmann and John Lie have pinpointed American mass culture as a central force propagating anti-Black *prejudice* in South Korea.⁶⁵ The saturation of American mass media representations have likely stitched the Black slave, gang banger, drug addict, and one-dimensional entertainer into the South Korean collective consciousness more than any other source. Accordingly, the respondents most frequently invoked cultural representations when describing Blacks' racial characteristics. Although the immigrant cohorts in this study were exposed to racially stereotypical images, differences existed in the type and amount of images they consumed. Koreans who had emigrated during the 1970s to early 1980s tended to restrict their images of Blacks to those of former slaves, servants, and generally poverty-stricken people. Later immigrant cohorts consistently invoked the ubiquitous images of Blacks (mainly men) as criminals and drug addicts popular since the 1980s. As the ROK has long relied on Western news agencies for over 60 percent of its own news content—usually AP, Reuters, AFP and the BBC—all the cohorts have been exposed to Western-centered news.⁶⁶

64 N.Y. Kim, 2008.

65 Abelmann & Lie, 1995: 150.

66 Kang, 1991: 116–17.

Unlike their forebears, however, recent immigrants have been exposed to news images of “ghetto Blacks” and crack, the once White “glamour drug.”⁶⁷ Writing on the media coverage of the Los Angeles unrest, Herman Gray⁶⁸ argues that it is fixated on “neoconservative discourses of immorality and irresponsibility.” Interpreting such discourses within the Koreans’ dominant cultural system can foster intensified prejudice. To illustrate this point, consider newspaper reports of low-income Black Americans’ rage about the large profits made by Korean American small business proprietors in Black communities without living in or giving back to the community.⁶⁹ These do not bode well in a Confucianist society that naturalizes social class hierarchies and heralds diligent hard work as the cornerstone of any person who is worth respecting and any life that is worth living.

Although some of the interviewees indicted White racism and the Koreans’ prejudices as responsible for the unrest, many new immigrants and South Koreans shored up their anger toward, and fear of, Blacks through the “riots.” As South Koreans watched Black Americans set fires, vandalize, and attack innocent White bystanders in a country with few Black citizens, this often sharpened the convictions of would-be migrants like Ms. Paik that they would never open their business in a Black area. As Ms. Paik was also fearful of Black soldiers in the home country she seemed to conflate the potential violence and criminality of the soldiers in Seoul and protestors’ violence and criminality in Los Angeles. In fact, many post-1992 emigrants to the United States reached the same conclusion. The Seoul residents who were not driven by the need to stress Blacks’ criminal wrongdoing followed the other route: identifying with Blacks. Possibly influenced in part by a number of sympathetic media reports, these Seoul residents interpreted the unrest as caused by White racism and believed that Blacks were as much victims of it as the Korean immigrants.

More normalized and affirming images of Blacks in the United States and within global popular culture have influenced recent South Korean émigrés. These more multicultural representations can be seen as one major difference between the mass media and the occupation forces. Mass media texts have attempted to portray Blacks positively and thus encouraged Koreans’ identification with the group while military ideologies rarely did so. For instance, recent immigrants remarked that they saw more Black Americans on screen who “looked smart,” like Denzel Washington, who were “living better” and who were “very strong politically.” In addition to a more multicultural popular

67 Reeves & Campbell, 1997: 63.

68 Gray, 1995: 172.

69 *Chosun Ilbo*, 5 May 1992.

culture, the Korean entertainment industry's emulation of Black American hip-hop since the 1990s could also signal one way in which American mass culture has fostered favorable perceptions. It goes without saying that the appropriation of hip-hop could also move in problematic directions. At the time of this writing, however, I have noticed bits and pieces of both in South Korea, suggesting both hope and concern.

While Asians have been portrayed in Hollywood since the early twentieth century and have become more visible in recent years, Asians and Asian Americans are still less prominent in mass media texts than Blacks and even Latinos.⁷⁰ In my interview study the South Korean informants could thus rarely recall representations of themselves or other Asians in American mass culture. They also did not see themselves as part of "America." It is worth noting that the college student and young professional interviewees in Seoul—the generation who tends to consume the most American popular culture—had only been garrulous about images of Whites and Blacks in the United States. They fell silent and paused for long periods when they were asked about images of Koreans or Asians in the United States.

The inability to associate Asian Americans with "America" is part of my Korean informants' general dismay over being dominated by the United States but being a nation unfamiliar to most Americans. This paradox, coupled with South Korea's subordinate status in relation to the advanced West in the global order, has secured their overall sense of invisibility and partial presence. Although the US White-over-Black order has reinforced Koreans' sense of "middle" positioning above Blacks, it has also reminded many South Koreans that they are not part of the binary at all, leading to their invisibility in the United States and, by extension, the globe. In other words, the relationship between the globe's White West and brown-skinned peoples has largely muted the existence and importance of other nations such as South Korea. Furthermore, as "American" service people, both Whites and Blacks have engendered and can reproduce the Koreans' sense of partial presence in their own country.

When focusing on their group's social positioning *within* the United States, the interviewees had some idea that White Americans coexisted with Asian Americans. Yet they were clear about Korean and Asian Americans (or Latinos, for that matter) not being part of the mainstream American national identity. Similarly, Whiteness is the reference point in the American mass media while Blacks are the most consistently visible subjects of political discourses

70 Entman & Rojecki, 2000.

concerning non-Whites in the United States.⁷¹ Many Koreans, then, and especially in recent decades, have come to the United States armed with the knowledge that Blacks are “more American” while they themselves lack political visibility and recognition.⁷² In this regard, the 1992 Los Angeles unrest was certainly telling. The Seoul residents believed that if the Korean Americans had not been so politically invisible and palatable—and, ostensibly, if the ROK was a superpower—White America would never have turned a blind eye to Koreans and used them as a buffer between themselves and Black Americans.

The theme of Korean political weakness could also be found in a small number of transnational news stories. Consider a 1988 *Chosun Ilbo* piece on an immigrant by the name of Mr. Choi: “Mr. Choi sued the United States government for racial discrimination after he and his Asian co-workers were fired from a police department for no apparent reason. Mr. Choi claims, ‘Asians are more vulnerable to racial discrimination than Blacks because of the lack of human rights protection programs specific to Asians’” (emphasis added).⁷³ Transnational media items on the L.A. unrest, on Black Americans in the political arena, and on experiences like Mr. Choi’s, especially in the context of a partial South Korean presence, familiarize the people with their political invisibility and weakness in the United States. Simply put, it was not difficult for Koreans to notice that they were not part of a national identity consisting of Whites (as citizens) and Blacks (as second-class citizens).⁷⁴

As further testament to the hegemonic power of the White-Black order, most Korean respondents tended to express little awareness of other US residents of color. In particular, most of the informants expressed surprise at the large Latino population in California (and in other states like Nevada, Texas, Florida, New York) given their weak knowledge of just how big the Latino population was in the United States. This surprise was especially true among those who immigrated in the 1970s and 1980s. Although most new immigrants and South Koreans did not possess an in-depth knowledge of Latino groups, they tended to demonstrate much more familiarity with them compared to the longstanding US immigrants. This is due, among other things, to Latinos’ greater visibility in American popular culture in recent decades and to transnational stories from the United States. These have made South Koreans more aware of the exoticized media stereotype of the Latinos’ “penchant” for festive parties, dancing, and singing. Names like Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, Marc

71 Entman & Rojecki, 2000: xi.

72 See Taylor, 1994.

73 *Chosun Ilbo*, 23 February 1988.

74 Collins, 2001.

Anthony, Christina Aguilera, and Shakira are certainly more familiar to them than they used to be. Even those Koreans who had seen images or heard stories concerning Latinos admitted their inability to identify Latinos until they came to the United States (though those with “blond hair and blue eyes” were “impossible” to discern from Whites). In fact, the Koreans’ inability to identify Latinos is partly why they continued to perceive the American military in White-Black racial terms.

The South Koreans’ access to US military bases as well as to the liquor-serving establishments that surround them has long been restricted (exceptions exist for employees and those with special authorization). Camptown bars and clubs post signs above their entrances that read “Korean Nationals Prohibited: This club is registered in accordance with Article 21 of the Tourism Business Act. Only UN forces and other foreigners are permitted patronage. This establishment offers tax-free liquor; Korean nationals are therefore denied entry—Chairman, Korea Special Tourist Association.”⁷⁵ That Americans deny Koreans access to parts of their own country certainly shores up feelings of not being fully present in one’s own “home.” Compounding these feelings is the Los Angeles unrest which further enlightened Korean Americans about their weak recognition and visibility in the United States. Although South Koreans have been told that the United States is their “ally,” they allege that they enjoy little to no halo effect from this “partnership” and actually suffer discrimination and invisibility in White-over-Black America. The paradox only affirmed that the United States has also positioned Koreans as subordinates more than as “equals” even within its own boundaries. Moreover, Japanese and Chinese Americans have a longer and more established history in the United States than Korean Americans.

When Seoul became the host of the 1988 Olympics, South Koreans and Korean immigrants alike were predictably enthralled with this hallmark of the peninsula’s economic arrival and new prospects for global recognition and respect. This led, for example, to a Korean in the United States writing the following in a newspaper editorial: “Just a few months ago, Americans used to ask Korean Americans they met if they were Japanese, a question that badly hurt Korean Americans’ self-esteem. But nowadays, Americans seem to ask all Asians if they are Korean.”⁷⁶ Yet, 12 years later, the almost 80 interviewees overwhelmingly reported that they felt painfully invisible and insignificant when Americans did not know where Korea was, when the Korean language was only popular within the boundaries of Koreatown, when Japanese and Chinese

75 Moon, 1997: 31.

76 *Chosun Ilbo*, 29 July 1988.

cuisine were still more “mainstream,” and when Americans had very little knowledge about Korean luminaries and about the Korean War. I would venture to guess that if I were to interview my informants again since the viral watershed of K-pop artist PSY and his “Gangnam Style” (buoyed by predecessors Rain, Wonder Girls, Girls Generation and even Yuna Kim) many of them would still not feel that Americans or the world at large had a deeper understanding of Korea or Koreans, smiles of validation notwithstanding.

Concluding Remarks

Within the context of Japanese colonization and American dominance over the peninsula, I have identified and examined South Koreans’ and immigrants’ sense of inferiority and invisibility vis-a-vis (masculine) White America and their resistance to such a consciousness. What is striking about this process is that Korean immigrants are racialized not just within the United States but also with respect to ROK–United States relations, both then and now. This cross-border relationship largely determines South Korea’s overall position in the American imagination and the larger global order—the peninsular people’s greatest concern.⁷⁷ One dimension is White (and Black) America’s racialization and treatment of South Koreans as third world, inferior, and intrinsically foreign, a plight that Koreans internalize, remap and resist. Koreans also racially characterize Blacks as “GIS” and “criminals,” adopting White racial prejudices as a way to position themselves above them.

This is not only a strategy of resistance against Black American state power, but also a response to the Koreans’ subordinate position vis-à-vis the White West and Japan, to their liminality in a White-Black world, and to a fear of regressing back into the “Blacker” third world.⁷⁸ These reactionary politics, however, also exist alongside the South Korean rejection of White superiority and Black inferiority and, thereby, an increased identification with Blacks. This pattern, common to most responses to oppression, involves resisting one hegemony by reifying another.⁷⁹ For instance, segments of South Korean society resist Black American state power by drawing on stereotypes of Black people. Indeed, even in a country like the United States that prides itself on its enviable progress into a multicultural, “color-blind”, and even “post-racial”

77 See Espiritu, 2003.

78 See Russell, 1991.

79 Espiritu, 2001; Pyke & Dang, 2003.

democracy, groups of color have reported some of the harshest prejudices toward one another.⁸⁰

As I show in my other work, Korean society's social positioning in the home country below White America and as an advantaged and disadvantaged group in relation to Black Americans is the map with which they navigate and inform the new, but not wholly unfamiliar, domestic United States landscape.⁸¹ As I have stressed above, Korean and other immigrants come to the United States or other diasporic sites already racially triangulated by virtue of the near seventy year American presence in the home country. In more recent years, the ROK state's declaration of South Korea as a new multicultural nation led to racialization and ethnoracism becoming hidden and dismissed by the hegemony of an ostensibly budding multiracial democratic state. The contradiction has not been missed by the multiracial Koreans, particularly those of part-Black ancestry, who saw American Super Bowl MVP Hines Ward (of Black American and Korean ancestry) treated as the Golden Child while they were denied equal rights, schooling, jobs, or even access to Korean mates.

The contradiction was not lost on Indian professor Bonogit Hussain either,⁸² whose struggles with blatant Korean racism spurred the country's first contempt charges as well as incipient legislation on criminal penalties;⁸³ nor was it lost on Jasmine Lee, an ethnic Filipina, who endured an onslaught of racist xenophobia by internet users when she was the first naturalized immigrant to become an ROK lawmaker.⁸⁴ Such racism is certainly not lost on the many low-skilled labor migrants from all over the globe. All in all, the prevalence of ethnoracism throughout an apparently un-multicultural Korea begs further analysis of the global and local inequalities that underpin the racialization and race-making of actors here and everywhere.

80 Cummings & Lambert, 1997; Kim, 2004; Lee, 2000; National Conference for Community and Justice, 2005; National Conference of Christians and Jews, 1994.

81 N.Y. Kim, 2008.

82 There is evidence of discrimination against non-Korean professors, as they are often left out of faculty meetings for their lack of Korean language skills and out of decision-making for their lack of Korean cultural literacy. See McNeill, 2011.

83 *The New York Times*, 1 November 2009.

84 Kim, R., 2012.

A Post-Communist Coexistence in Northeast Asia? Mutual Racial Attitudes among Russians and Indigenous Peoples of Siberia

David C. Lewis

On going into a bakery in Moscow, a man whom I shall call Zhargal asked the assistant for a loaf of bread. She turned to the shelves behind the counter, took one off the left side and gave it to him. Zhargal returned home with the bread but on eating it that evening noticed that it was not very fresh. The next time he went to that bakery he noticed that the new loaves were being put on the right hand side, the older loaves being moved along to the left. On asking again for some bread, he noticed that the assistant again took a loaf from the left hand side. This time Zhargal decided to protest, but instead of raising the matter directly with the shop assistant he demanded to see the manager. “Why does your assistant give me the older bread and not the fresh bread?” he asked. Both the manager and his assistant were obviously embarrassed. Finally it became clear that the sales assistant had thought that Zhargal was Vietnamese and that she could get away with fobbing off the old bread onto a Vietnamese person. From that time onwards, Zhargal visited the bakery frequently and the sales assistant always gave him fresh bread. In fact, he reported that they had even become friends.

Discrimination against Siberian Peoples as an Outcome of Racial Prejudice

This is one instance of a discriminatory attitude towards “Asian” (that is East and Central Asian)-looking people as manifested in the behavior of certain Russians in Moscow.¹ Zhargal was mistaken for a Vietnamese person because his ethnic group, the Buryats, are an Asiatic people but they live in southern Siberia, around the Lake Baikal region to the north of Mongolia. However, being brought up within Russia and speaking Russian fluently, Zhargal was not only more aware of discriminatory behavior but was also able to address it by

1 For a recent and succinct survey of contemporary racism in Russia, see Law, 2012: 23–33.

complaining to the manager (who apparently had encouraged the sales assistant to sell the older bread to their Vietnamese customers).

Discrimination of this kind is difficult to quantify because isolated incidents might not be recognized at first as being racist. There is the question of whether *any* foreigner could be a victim of attempts to pass off lesser quality goods or whether the practice is explicitly targeted at those of other races. It is only when a pattern seems to build up, or if the person concerned admits that those of (in Zhargal's case) Asian origin were especially being targeted that one can consider the practice to be racist. If Zhargal's experiences were unusual one could say that the discrimination he described was atypical. However, in interviewing a variety of different Asiatic people about their experiences, a fairly consistent pattern of discrimination seems to emerge from the data.

Such discrimination is by no means confined to those with 'Asian' features. Aspects of antisemitism, for example, have been manifested in Russia since at least the eighteenth century onwards and continue nowadays in the form of occasional attacks on Jews or their property.² People who look as if they are from the Caucasus region feel that they are subject to discrimination and harassment by the police in Moscow and elsewhere.³ This is primarily on account of fears of terrorist activity by Chechen separatists, although the checks on documents may also provide the police with an opportunity for extorting bribes.⁴ A survey conducted in 1999 asked 1,648 Russians to evaluate positively or negatively a variety of nationalities, including Tatars, British, Americans, Japanese, Jews, Uzbeks, Chinese, Turks, Chechens and others. On the whole, the findings indicate the prevalence of a racial and national hierarchy. Russian attitudes towards Europeans and Americans tended to be more positive than towards the Japanese, but the Japanese in turn are evaluated more positively than the Chinese. Any influence of racist attitudes on the results, however, is probably outweighed by the influence of political and economic relations between the peoples in question: the most negative evaluation went to the Chechens.⁵

2 See, for instance, Goble, 2000; Anti-Defamation League 2001a, 2001b; "Antisemitism in Russia" [Online]; "History of the Jews in Russia" [Online]; "Police hunt Ryazan synagogues arsonists" [Online].

3 Human Rights Watch, 1998.

4 Wendle, 2009; Zagorodnov, 2011; Vasilyeva, 2012; Myllymaki, 2012.

5 Furman & Kääriäinen, 2000: 125 (Unfortunately the published results do not include any indication of any tests for statistical significance but the small percentage differences between some of the groupings make me suspect that some of the variation, though noticeable, may not be at the level of statistical significance.)

Racist attitudes among the Russians need to be understood within this wider socio-political context but, as the focus of this volume is East Asia, I shall be focusing on the indigenous peoples of Siberia. These include Zhargal's ethnic group, the Buryats, whose culture and language are essentially Mongolian.⁶ For most contemporary Russians, a stereotype of the Buryats does not immediately bring to mind images of conquering Mongols at the time of Chinggis Khan; nevertheless, there remains in the minds of many Russians an awareness that in the era of the Golden Horde their ancestors had been subjected to the so-called Tatar yoke.⁷ Russia's position on the threshold between Europe and Asia means that throughout its history it has been subject to influences from both directions, resulting in an amalgam of cultures and ethnic groups: nowadays many Russians will quote Joseph de Maistre, a Sardinian ambassador to St. Petersburg in the early nineteenth century, who commented, "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tatar."⁸ This strikes at the core of what it means to be 'Russian'.

The Origin and Legacy of Russian Attitudes to Asians

Nineteenth-century Russian intellectuals debated whether or not Russia was 'European' and 'Western'.⁹ Even today there are similar issues about Russia's geo-political, economic and cultural spheres of influence. As Alexander Bukh has noted, "Russian views of Asia have always been rather diverse."¹⁰ A love-hate relationship with the non-Slavic peoples was evident also under the Tsars as the empire expanded east and south. On the one hand, the Russians were attracted by the potential economic wealth of the new territories and recog-

6 They have also been known as 'Buryat Mongols' but in Soviet times the term 'Buryat Mongol' was dropped in favor of the ethnonym 'Buryat', presumably as a way of trying to curb secessionist tendencies among those who felt that all the Mongolian peoples should belong to a single state. See Demel (2013) for a more detailed discussion of the way in which European encounters with the Buryats, as well as with Kalmyks and other types of Mongolians, led to the emergence of the concept of a 'Mongolian race'.

7 See Lim, 2013: 157–158 for further details of the way in which this experience influenced Russian attitudes towards Asian peoples.

8 Serov, n.d. The author also notes that the saying has been mistakenly ascribed to Napoleon, but it is in fact from Joseph de Maistre, who was a leading theorist of the Counter-Enlightenment and an exponent of the conservative tradition.

9 Lim, 2013: 156.

10 Bukh, 2013: 198.

nized that to some extent they had to come to terms with the local people who had access to the furs, minerals and other resources. However, at almost every stage there was also violence of some kind, whether it was the conquest of Kazan in 1552, the Chukchi wars in the eighteenth century or the Chechen resistance to the Russians in the nineteenth century (which resurfaced in the late twentieth century). However, in 1904–5 Russian expansion eastwards was abruptly halted through their defeat in the Russo-Japanese War by an East Asian power.

A century later, it is now economic more than military power that is shaping relations with both Japan and China. In the cities of southern Siberia, the increasing importance of trade with China has not only attracted many Chinese traders to the Russian markets but has also fuelled a certain xenophobia among some Russians who fear an influx of Chinese settlers. Similar reactions are also manifested at times towards the “guest workers” and immigrants from Central Asia and the Caucasus, whose numbers are expanding throughout Russia. Although some Russians see the influx of immigrants as a threat and have a xenophobic reaction, others not only recognize the economic need for such migrant workers but also acknowledge that Russia, like other multi-ethnic societies, has to adapt to contemporary conditions. Unfortunately, in any relationship there can be a tendency to remember and focus on those times when neighborly relationships have gone sour and to forget the long periods of relatively amicable relationships when both sides benefited from mutual co-operation and interchange. It is easily overlooked that for centuries Russia has already been absorbing other ethnic groups, with Tatars and others making positive contributions to Russian society and rising to respected positions.¹¹

Even though the indigenous peoples of Siberia were usually the victims of Russian expansionism rather than a threat to the Russians, attitudes towards them have often been negative. For example, a woman belonging to the Even people of Siberia told me of an occasion when she had to fly to Moscow. Describing her experience on her arrival, she said:

A taxi driver in Moscow treated me appallingly. It was so bad... This guy... —he was a “total freak”... I needed a cab. He said he would be the cheapest I ever had, something like fifty or a hundred Rubles. I said, “OK, fine.” On the way to Moscow he asked where I was from. [When I told him], he said, “So you’re from that place where those bad and ugly primitive people are living.” Then he added, “Only a person like you from

11 Mirovalev, 2012.

the far north would believe this nonsense. The fare is not 50 Rubles, but 50 Rubles per kilometer! That's how much you have to pay." He started demanding a very high amount.

I realized he was a dangerous bloke. I asked him to stop; he was most dangerous. He sort of stopped but threatened that if I did not pay he would . . ."—she paused for a moment, as if trying to find the appropriate words, then continued, saying—"do something bad to me. Then he told me to give him something from my luggage. Probably he wanted to rob me but his attitude was all hatred and extremely condescending and insulting. He verbalized his attitude towards non-Russians by saying, "You come and make this place dirty." I grabbed my luggage and he just left. . . .

This informant noted that this episode was only one of many cases of racism she had encountered on the streets of Moscow. Describing her other experiences, she continued,

I am a target for the police to come and ask for my ID or registration document. Out of a whole crowd I am the only one chosen. I am approached in a patronizing manner as if I am a potential terrorist. I gave one of them a bribe of 100 Rubles to leave me alone; otherwise I could have been put in a 'cage' for three days. I have no relatives in Moscow [to vouch for me] . . . Last year when I arrived at the customs in the airport [in Moscow], they checked my ID and passport. The racism was at a very subtle level: I felt that whatever I said would be held against me. I could see how hated I am. I have a non-Russian surname and the woman checking my passport looked at me with such hatred as if I had robbed her. You could see her attitude in her face. It is always like this.

Are this woman's feelings exaggerated? Is she suffering from a form of paranoia? Obviously this kind of subjective account is difficult to evaluate in itself, but others have also spoken of their feelings of being targeted while in Moscow. For example, another Buryat woman recounted the following incident:

My uncle was at a station waiting for an underground train in Moscow late one evening. A gang of skinheads was on the same platform. He sensed their attitude of hatred towards him but he had no chance and nowhere to go to escape from them. They surrounded him and one of them hit him over the head with an iron bar. He fell to the ground and

thinks they would have killed him but then someone else appeared at the other end of the platform and the youths ran away. My uncle was taken to hospital for a few days as a result of the attack.

It might be that the incidence of such violence is exaggerated, but even a few cases are sufficient to evoke fear and caution in the minds of Siberian native people visiting Moscow. By contrast, a man with Asiatic features who has already lived for several years in Moscow told me that he does not fear violence against him on the streets and has never experienced any particular attacks which might be regarded as being of a racist nature. By ethnicity he belongs to the Kalmyk people—a Mongolian people group who in the early seventeenth century migrated from the area which is now Xinjiang in Northwest China and settled in a region of southern Russia adjacent to the Caspian Sea.¹² However, he lives on the edge of Moscow in a district that could be described as a relatively quiet suburb. By contrast, another Kalmyk informant says her son has to avoid certain parts of Moscow for fear of attacks from skinhead groups who victimize those of Asian appearance.

A number of informants agreed that racist attitudes seem to be more noticeable, and hence apparently more prevalent, in Moscow and some other larger cities. There are also some regional differences within Siberia too, as shown by the account of a man from the city of Irkutsk, who said, “At school in the Irkutsk region if a student is not very bright the teacher might say, ‘Are you Buryat?’—as Buryats there in that region had been lesser educated and were from the villages.” In this way the ethnonym ‘Buryat’ had become derogatory in the Irkutsk area, whereas it does not have this connotation in Buryatia itself. However, what is perhaps more widespread not only in the Irkutsk region but also in some parts of Buryatia is a similar kind of expression—“Why is he so dumb? It’s like he is from the ulus”—which avoids the specific term ‘Buryat’. Instead it employs the term *ulus*, a Buryat (and general Mongolian) word meaning both a clan group and also an area of settlement (as related kinsfolk often lived together). An adjective sometimes used to describe Buryats is *tyornii*, which literally means ‘dark’ but in this context means ‘uneducated’.¹³

12 Guchinova, 2006: 12.

13 However, the word *chyornii*, meaning ‘black’, is not used of Buryats but is applied instead to peoples of Central Asia such as Tajiks or Kyrgyz (who may have some Asian features, but they are less pronounced).

Racial Attitudes among Indigenous Siberian Peoples

Russian racism against indigenous peoples does not preclude racism among the latter. A Buryat woman told me that some Russians also consider the Buryats to be racist, in so far as Buryats tend to reserve the best jobs (if one is available and they are in a position to do so) for their own relatives or friends. When a Buryat person gives a job to a friend or relative, a Russian might, as a comment on the perceived nepotism, declare, "He has gathered the whole *ulus*." The members of one Russian family that moved away from Buryatia to another part of Siberia reported that the principal motivation for their move was their feelings of having been discriminated against by Buryats. Local Buryats confirmed that many companies are organized along ethnic lines, either as Buryat or Russian firms. A tendency for social segregation between Europeans and Asians is reported in some other contexts too, such as in some clubs or cafes where the clientele tends to be predominantly one or the other "racial" type. A Buryat visitor might look around and see if there are any other Asiatic people there. If there are, the Buryat is likely to feel more at ease and remain there; if not, he or she might decide to go elsewhere.

Indigenous peoples of Siberia can have negative attitudes not only towards Europeans but also towards some other Siberian peoples. In Yakutsk, where the dominant non-Russian ethnic group is the Sakha—known as 'Yakut' to the Russians—some gangs of Sakha youths are reported to victimize not only Russians but also members of other Siberian ethnic minorities such as Evens or Yukagirs (see Fig. 13.1). A Sakha resident of the city described the inter-ethnic situation as a kind of unspoken 'hidden war' which is particularly conspicuous between the Sakha and the Russians. She said,

There are different attitudes according to various types of Russians. Those Russians who have lived all or most of their lives in Yakutsk and are used to the local population tend to have a peaceful and non-aggressive or non-racist attitude. This also tends to be the case among the intelligentsia and among those with stable jobs. However, the most negative racist attitudes tend to be shown by temporary workers who have recently moved to the city and have jobs that they hold as a stop-gap until they find something better. Often they work on local transport as bus drivers or conductors, or else they have other types of temporary jobs. These are the types of Russians who are most likely to express racist attitudes. For example, they are the kind who refuse to eat any kind of local Sakha food or else they say, in a rude manner, "Don't speak to me in Yakut." Otherwise they use offensive terms to refer to the local Sakha people.



FIGURE 13.1 *Yukagirs and (second from left) an Even woman in the Arctic regions of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia).*

This ‘hidden war’ is described as one that “goes on in waves—up or down—depending on the political power of the two sides.” Under the Soviet system, power was clearly in the hands of the Russians but since *perestroika* the local regional government of the Sakha Republic (formerly known as Yakutia) has managed to gain a greater share of the revenues from local diamond mining, although the lion’s share still goes to Moscow. There has been a tendency for Sakha (Yakut) people to be favored in local government, administrative and educational appointments—or so the Russians believe. From the Sakha perspective, this is merely trying to right the injustices and imbalances which had been created while the Russians were mainly in control. For instance, the above-quoted Sakha woman (who has a doctorate and is highly articulate) told me that previously in the local schools there had been little education at all in the Sakha language:

During the period of Russian dominance, they gradually reduced the number of classes given in the local languages. If questions were raised about this, their attitude was, “Why learn Sakha when Russian is used much more widely and is far more useful?” My son went to a Russian-medium school because it was nearer. However, one day our family had a celebration when he returned home and announced that Sakha classes were to be introduced at the school.

A similar picture could be portrayed for most other parts of Siberia. In fact, it was even worse for most of the other indigenous ethnic groups because they had considerably smaller populations than the Sakha (whose population in the 2002 census was given as 443,852). Therefore few resources were put into the publication of literature or the production of other media resources in most of the local languages. For example, when I first visited the Khanty-Mansi region of Northwest Siberia in 1991, I was shown the only literature available in Khanty—namely a small collection of poems, a Russian-Khanty dictionary and a children's book about Lenin. In recent years the situation for the Khanty people (numbering 28,678 people in the 2002 census) has improved a little, but resources for teaching the language to the younger generation are still very scarce. This is why a teacher greatly appreciated the publication in Khanty of a book entitled *Jesus, Friend of Children* (published by the Institute for Bible Translation, Helsinki and Moscow) because the quality of the Khanty text made it an excellent text for teaching the language. "I had never been interested in reading the Bible in Russian," she commented, "but when it became available in my own language I wanted to read it and to find out what was in it."

From the seventeenth century until the early twentieth century a substantial number of the ancestors of many of the Siberian peoples, including the Khanty and Mansi, became Orthodox Christians—at least on the surface, since they retained many elements of their traditional religions alongside Orthodoxy. In a global context, one might argue about the extent to which any religion was used or misused to promote or to counteract racist views but on the whole it seems as if in Siberia the Christian worldview shared by Europeans and Asians did to some extent provide a bulwark against the racist tendencies which can potentially develop alongside any sustained cross-cultural interaction.¹⁴ In so far as racism is essentially predicated on a sense of superiority felt by one people group vis-à-vis another, a counterbalance to this tendency was the biblical teaching that all humankind is descended from a common ancestor and therefore have responsibilities towards one another.

Practical experience corroborated this view of the world by the existence of offspring from unions between Europeans and Asians, indicating that they share in a common humanity. In fact, the very concept of race, as popularly understood, is untenable in terms of modern genetic research, which has shown that there is far more variation *within* each of the so-called races than there is between them, even when different sequences of DNA (or proteins) are examined.¹⁵ Moreover, as one study suggests, "Citizens of any given village

14 For further discussion of this, see Ham et al., 1999.

15 See, for example, Barbujani et al., 1997; Fitzpatrick 2012; "A New Perspective on Race" n.d. [Online].

in the world, whether in Scotland or Tanzania, hold 90 percent of the genetic variability that humanity has to offer . . . only 0.01 percent of genes account for a person's external appearance."¹⁶ If human beings (*Homo sapiens sapiens*) belong to a single species—that is, a population which is able to breed among its members but not with those outside of the species—by implication all humankind shares a common ancestry. This view of human origins is shared not only by the main monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) but is often echoed also within the ancient traditions passed on from one generation to the next among the indigenous peoples of Siberia. In itself, this teaching is hardly a contentious issue but it was one of the doctrines which the Communists chose to attack in their overall repression of religious beliefs and practices.

The Communist Model of Racial Modus Vivendi

The reasons for the persecution of religious communities were, apparently, largely political, in so far as they were perceived as posing a threat to the establishment of Soviet power. Churches and other types of religious institutions were considered to have a strong influence on the population and they were also opposed to the atheistic teachings associated with Communism. The Communists wanted to create a new society and wanted to encourage the kind of loyalty to the state which Christians already yielded to Christ. Loyalty to any other religion was similarly seen as an influence that undermined adherence to Communist ideals, so all religions were suppressed and persecuted, often brutally, especially during the 1930s. Many places of worship were destroyed or put to other uses (such as cinemas or warehouses), and religious leaders were killed or imprisoned. Among the victims of the repressions were not only Christian, Islamic and Buddhist clergy but also shamans—the practitioners of traditional Siberian religions (see Fig. 13.2).¹⁷ However, the Communists recognized that they needed to replace the religious worldview with a new, substitute ideology.

Following Marx and Engels, the Communists viewed history as a succession of stages (“modes of production”) starting with a “primitive communalism” (or “primitive communism”) and proceeding through slavery, feudalism and Capitalism to Socialism and, ultimately, the establishment of true Communism. There was some divergence of opinion about the status of what Marx called

16 Angier, 2000.

17 Lewis, 2000: 168–169.



FIGURE 13.2 A Tuvina shamaness performing a ritual at a shamanic center in Kyzyl.¹⁸

the “Asiatic mode of production” (associated with despotic regimes and more fully-developed state structures—including those of Russia itself), but it was clear that the economy of the indigenous peoples of Siberia belonged either to “primitive communism” or else perhaps to “feudalism.” It indicated that their *economy and society* was less advanced technologically than that of the Europeans, but an implication in the minds of many ordinary people was that the *people themselves* were “primitives” at a lower stage of civilization. It was a short step from this to racist ideas about the superiority of Europeans over the so-called aborigines—a word which is sometimes used in Russian to refer to the people of Siberia. This Marxist model of society has been one of the influences on racist attitudes among Russians.

Combined with this evolutionary model of society was the propagation of an allegedly scientific view of the origins of human beings based on the ideas put forward by Charles Darwin in his book which, up until the sixth edition, included in its fuller title a reference to ‘favored races’—namely, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*.¹⁹ Unfortunately, competing theories of evolution and of human origins have a danger of being used to lend credence to racist ideas if

18 It should be noted that members of this group prefer to describe themselves as Tuvans but the Russian-derived term Tuvina is already well established as the spelling in English.

19 Darwin, 1859.

it is alleged that different races derive from different stock and do not share a common ancestor, or else if it is argued that some races are remnants of earlier forms of evolution while others are more highly evolved. To some extent, Russian anthropologists were spared some of the excesses of their Western counterparts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who considered Australian aborigines, African Pygmies and others to be remnants of less evolved forms of humanity and, to augment their museum collections, ordered specimens of body parts—creating such a demand that in some cases aborigines were even murdered.²⁰

Likewise, the Russians were also partially shielded from the misuse of evolutionary ideas (of the “survival of the fittest”) for racist and political purposes used to justify German and Japanese policies prior to, and during, the Second World War—that is, Hitler’s concept of a ‘master race’ to justify the extermination of ‘less worthy’ races and the Japanese claim that their political policies were justified because they are more fully evolved than their hairier (and hence more ape-like) Western enemies.²¹ As Bukh notes, “Racialism . . . was officially purged from Soviet discourse,” was condemned as “pseudo-scientific” and “associated with the Nazi regime.”²² Nevertheless, if applied to human society, the concept of the “survival of the fittest” was also found within Communist thought, being consistent, for example, with Marxist views of the ultimate withering of Capitalism and triumph of Communism. In a different form, the concept of the “survival of the fittest” also lent itself to the idea of developing a “new Soviet man” (*homo Sovieticus*) as an advanced race of human beings who would live in racial and ethnic harmony in the new society. In the words of Caroline Humphrey, “In the Soviet Union, diverse ethnicities were recognized as equally legitimate subjects, but they were hierarchicized administratively, and the explicit goal was for differences gradually to be erased with development toward the higher common plateau of the Soviet people (*Sovetskii narod*).”²³

The Impact of Prolonged Racism on Indigenous Siberian Peoples

In practice, however, racist attitudes within the Russian population conflicted with the ideals of trying to create a harmonious new society under Communism. The indigenous peoples of Siberia have often felt that their lands

20 Wieland, 1992, 1998; Ham et al., 1999: 119–122, 136–137.

21 Ham et al., 1999: 11–13, 123.

22 Bukh, 2013: 180–181.

23 Humphrey 2003: 186.

have been taken over by the Russian invaders and that they themselves have been treated as second-class citizens. Often they suppress their feelings of anger or resentment but sometimes will admit that they do feel hurt at being treated with contempt or being looked down upon by the Russian settlers. Their traditional way of life, based on hunting, fishing or reindeer herding, as well as the gathering of berries and other plants from the forests, has often been disrupted by the policies of the Russian state. During the Soviet period a relatively dispersed and mobile population was brought together in larger villages and had to specialize in certain economic activities. Often there was disruption to family life because the children of reindeer herders and others living in remote areas were obliged to attend boarding schools in permanent settlements where they were banned from speaking in their native languages and alienated from their parents and their traditional way of life. In some areas the introduction of modern industry, such as mining coal or drilling for oil and gas, has in many instances led to such a massive pollution of the environment that the traditional way of life of the indigenous people is no longer tenable. However, the local people have often felt powerless in the face of the whole political apparatus of the Russian state and felt that their voice is unlikely to make much, if any, difference to the situation. Apart from some isolated protests, for the most part the indigenous people have retreated.²⁴ The retreat can take the form of a physical retreat to more remote locations, or else a psychological retreat from the world. Among the men in particular (and also some of the women) this escapism has not uncommonly taken the form of alcohol abuse.²⁵

In these circumstances, a vicious circle begins to set in. A sense of being treated like a second-class citizen is one of a number of elements which lead to a loss of self-esteem, especially in the men.²⁶ One of the other components, in many cases, is unemployment or under-employment because of the collapse of Soviet-era state farms that had often been subsidized by the State. Those who sought employment in Russian factories faced a further cultural hurdle. Herders, who were used to regulating their lives by the needs of the animals and by the seasonally varying number of hours of daylight, found it difficult to adjust to the Russians' demands that they should now become punctual factory workers whose lives were regulated by a clock. For the Russians, stereotypes of the native peoples as lazy or shiftless were reinforced. Hence cultural

24 See Lewis 2011: 92–93 for an example of one isolated protest.

25 Lewis, 2000: 23–29.

26 Lewis, 1997: 61–63.

differences such as concepts of the nature of time further contributed to the formation of racist attitudes among the Russians.

These cultural differences also lay behind the telling of jokes about Chukchi people, similar to English jokes about the Irish (see Fig. 13.3). Even if these jokes are not overtly racist, and primarily focus on the Chukchi rather than other indigenous ethnic groups, they are nevertheless a manifestation of some of the stereotypes about the peoples of Siberia that are common among the Russians. Occasionally I have heard jokes recounted also about other ethnic groups but perhaps these are adaptations of ‘Chukchi’ jokes related in the local context elsewhere in Siberia. For example, when I was in the Khanty-Mansi region of north-west Siberia I was told a joke about how a Khanty man was praising his wife: “She is a wonderful woman—hard-working, and with a snub nose that doesn’t get in the way when kissing. Her only fault is that she is *so dirty* that she has to wash her face *every day*.” Such a joke reflects a stereotype of the indigenous people as dirty—a cultural difference that was also one of the accusations made by the Moscow taxi driver quoted earlier.

Many of the indigenous peoples were educated not in their native language but in Russian, and often in relatively poorly equipped village schools, so their average educational attainments often tended to be lower than those of the Russians. In many cases a tendency for the Russian-dominated administration to favor Russian settlements in their allocation of resources—not only in finances but also in skills and infrastructure—further compounded the



FIGURE 13.3 A Chukchi hunter in the Arctic region.

relative backwardness of the indigenous settlements. As a result, the indigenous people were often hampered in the labour market by their relatively lower level of education. A resultant lack of job opportunities and limited scope for improving their social status further reinforces their sense of being treated like second-class citizens.

Added to these factors is a feeling that they have lost many aspects of their traditional culture but are not accepted as full members of the dominant Russian society. These and other crises in their lives can lead to a sense of hopelessness and failure, reinforcing a lack of self-esteem. Often they turn to the illusory antidote introduced by the Russians—vodka—and this in turn further traps them in a cycle of poverty and helplessness. Drunkenness not uncommonly leads to violence and a relatively high mortality rate.²⁷ All these behavioral patterns in turn have led some Russians to look down on the indigenous people, and this further promotes racism. It is therefore not surprising that, in spite of the reputation of many of these peoples for being passive and long-suffering, at times there should be public outbursts of anger and resentment expressed in the form of racist remarks. In Buryatia, for instance, occasional outbursts are heard especially on public transport, when someone might shout at another passenger and say something like, “I hate Buryats” (or even, “I hate Russians”), although those who say such things are reported to be “from the lesser educated sector of society” (either Russians or Buryats).

Derogatory remarks by Russians tend to include name-calling and the use of certain specific terms of abuse. Not uncommonly Buryats are referred to by Russians as *uzkoglazii*, meaning “narrow-eyed.” The Chinese are called *kosoglazii* (slant-eyed); another term of abuse for the Chinese is *khunkhuz*—a term which originally referred to Chinese criminal gangs operating in Manchuria and adjacent areas of the Russian Far East, Mongolia and Korea in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²⁸ Buryats are sometimes called *nalim*, meaning eelpout or burbot (a type of fish related to cod)—a term which

27 In Chukotka and Kamchatka a prohibition on sales of alcohol on working days means that violent deaths by murder mainly occur at the weekends—most often being reported on a Sunday—whereas in Western Siberia such deaths are spread out more uniformly throughout the week (Pika, 1993: 69). In the Yamal Peninsula ‘the average life expectancy among the indigenous population is almost nine years shorter and the standardized index of mortality is 1.8 times higher than that of the nonindigenous population’ (Pika and Bogoyavlensky 1995: 70). Lyudmila Ivanko, a sociologist who has also worked among the northern peoples, mentioned to me in 1991 that life expectancy among the northern peoples was about ten to fifteen years shorter than among the Russians.

28 The word *khunkhuz* is thought to be derived from the Chinese for ‘red beard’ (*hóng húzi*). However, it is not known why such a term should have been applied to the Chinese, who

is probably derived from the shape of the Asiatic eye. Facial features are likewise the basis for an alternative derogatory term for Buryats, *beznosii*, meaning “without a nose.” In Tuva, a region of Siberia also bordering on Mongolia, Tuvian women reported the use of terms by the Russians such as *obez'yana* (monkey), *churka* (a plank of wood), and *chornomazaya* (black colored; black painted). Another term of abuse is *chornozhopaya*, which, being based on a slang term for buttocks, could be rendered in English as “black arsed.”²⁹

On the other hand, where there are economic advantages to be gained by respecting and co-operating with the indigenous peoples, racism seems to disappear. For example, Russian tourists from Moscow and other cities, as well as tourists from outside of Russia, may visit ‘exotic’ villages inhabited by indigenous peoples as part of a tour group to places such as Lake Baikal or Kamchatka. Even if they come to see the scenery rather than the local people, the fact that the tour includes visits to ‘native’ villages—even if the villages are not really authentic but are in fact tourist centers!—is one attempt to *promote*, rather than denigrate, the local cultures. Indigenous people may take part in some kind of cultural performances (*e.g.*, putting on a traditional dance), or act as guides showing people around replicas of traditional dwellings—for example, the tepee-like *chum* tents, or the nomadic felt tents called ‘*ger*’ in Mongolian but normally referred to in English by the word *yurt*, derived from Russian. All this creates a source of income not only for the indigenous tour guides but also for Russian tourist companies, bus and taxi drivers, hotel operators and others (see Fig. 13.4). Those Russians whose incomes depend at least partly on the local ethnic group, and whose work means that they have frequent interaction with indigenous people, are much less likely to be racist.

It is difficult to quantify the degree to which there are generational differences in people’s awareness of, or sensitivity to, racist attitudes. Nevertheless, two different Buryat women both independently commented that they thought older people were more sensitive to racial stereotypes and feelings of being subject to discrimination. They themselves were both in their twenties and considered an awareness of racism to be less strong among younger

did not have red beards, although at a later date these criminal bands also included some other nationalities, including Russians, Ukrainians and people from the Caucasus region.

29 I asked if this derived from the presence of the Mongol spot on the sacrum of Tuvian babies but local informants were not sure that this was the origin of the term. As Tuva was not annexed by the Soviet Union until 1944, the Tuvians have retained their traditional surnames, such as ‘Mongush’, rather than modifying them by the addition of ‘Russian’ endings (*i.e.* -*ov* or -*ova*): this has now become a source of derision among some Russians who say the Tuvian surnames are strange or funny.



FIGURE 13.4 *A Koryak woman entertains Russian tourists inside a traditional dwelling in Kamchatka.*

Buryats. One of these women told me that she did not feel any particular discrimination until she was ten years old and her family moved to a village where ninety percent of the population were Russians and where she began to be called derogatory names by some of the local school pupils.

Marriage as an Anti-Racist Means in a Multi-Racial Society

Another Buryat woman was also about ten years old when a Russian girl remarked to her, “You’re the first nice Buryat I’ve ever met.” This woman said that she had been brought up under Communism and had believed the slogan *druzhiba narodov*, “friendship of the peoples,” and had previously not thought there was any difference between the races. “However,” she continued,

it was when I started studying at university that I first became aware of a possible difference. If I was given a lower mark—a three [where the top grade is a five]—my mother would always ask what the nationality of the teacher was. It was only then that I realized that my mother

thought some Russians were racist and that this was expressed in their giving lower marks to Buryats, and so on. Then, later on, I met the man who is now my husband. At first he did not want to tell his own mother that the girl he was going out with was a Buryat. In fact, I had only met his mother three times, for about five minutes each time, throughout all the time we were dating and right up to our wedding day. She was opposed to the idea of her son marrying a Buryat and later I learned that she had tried to do what she could to stop our meeting each other. However, she did come along to our wedding at our church and was very impressed by the whole service. After that she decided to invite us to visit her and she and I had our first proper conversation. Now we have become friends. In fact, I heard that when some of her relatives saw our wedding photos, one of them asked her, “What’s that Buryat girl doing in the photos?” and my mother-in-law replied, “That’s my daughter-in-law—and she is far better than many a Russian girl.” We now get on very well and she really likes me.

Inter-racial marriage flies in the face of racist attitudes. Whereas racist attitudes lead to feelings of rejection and anger, even of hatred, marriage (at least in a case like this one) is based on acceptance and love. Marriage itself requires a willingness to understand about the other person’s background and viewpoint on life, whether or not the couple are from the same culture, but this quality of openness and of a willingness to learn is even more essential in a cross-cultural marriage. This couple was probably helped in this by the fact that they were both Protestant Christians and they had already been prepared to make a stand for their religious convictions in the face of prevailing social norms (see Fig. 13.5). Besides their belief in a God whose original creation of humankind included the potential for great genetic diversity, a further important factor contributing to the strength of this couple’s transracial marriage was the supportive community of their church, where both Russians and Buryats worship together and respect one another.³⁰

30 At Protestant Christian meetings in Buryatia which I attended in 2003 and 2004, I noticed how the worship songs were in both Buryat and Russian and there was active participation, including leadership, by people of any nationality. A Buryat dance troupe also took part. It was evident that there was indeed an atmosphere of mutual respect and friendship based not on ethnicity but on a common faith and a commitment to live out the biblical command to love one another. In a state that in Communist times had tried, but failed, to create a new society characterized by *‘druzhiba narodov’*—‘friendship of the



FIGURE 13.5
A token of change: Buryat Christians.

Efforts to promote inter-racial reconciliation in at least some parts of Siberia are described by Igor Zyryanov, whose account is worth quoting in some detail:

As Russians and as citizens of Russia we must repent of the fact that, conquering these lands, we shed innocent blood and sowed hatred and nationalism. This is what we did in Bayandai at such a meeting for repentance: we called the Buryats to the front of the church and, as Russians, asked forgiveness of them for the shedding of innocent blood and for the humiliation of the Buryat nation (and likewise of the Evenki and other indigenous peoples). After this we sensed an immense joy in the Holy Spirit. In Irkutsk in 2002... we again conducted such a service. There were five Buryats at that service, all of them were saved, and we put them in front of the church congregation with Russians facing them. These were the leaders of the church, who identified themselves with all of Russia and with those people who had killed and stolen, who had humiliated and laughed at the Buryats, while the Buryats identified themselves

peoples'—it would appear that this kind of community is now being created within Russia among at least some followers of Jesus Christ.

with the entire Buryat nation. The Russians began to ask forgiveness. At first this was difficult, but then it was as if something crashed down and was broken through. There were floods and floods of tears; they hugged one another and again wept. The Russians repented, the Buryats forgave. After that everyone in the church went up to the Buryats and asked their forgiveness on behalf of Russia.³¹

Marx, Engels and Lenin recognized that to create a new society one needed to change the way in which people think about the world and how they relate to one another. However, the new ideology which they advocated, and the means by which the Communists tried to bring about a new society, proved in the end powerless to remove racist undercurrents within Russia. One might even ask if the process of Russification actually helped to instill attitudes of Russian racial superiority in relation to non-Slavic peoples within the former Soviet Union. However, the forms of autocracy within the Soviet state also kept a tight lid on inter-ethnic tensions which have emerged again since the collapse of the Soviet Union—notably in the Caucasus but to a lesser degree elsewhere. As Russian society re-emerges in a post-Soviet context, a question that is coming again to the fore is that of national identity within a multi-ethnic state. What does it mean to be “Russian,” “Buryat,” or “Sakha”?

It is widely recognized that a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society can only be viable if it is based on mutual tolerance and respect. Moreover, this requires a basis for the value of each unique human being which cannot be based on a criterion of value that is less than that of a person’s own humanity. Racist categories implicitly assign greater value to one race while devaluing that of the other. In effect, racism implies that ‘the other’ is somehow less human and therefore less valuable. It divides humanity up into categories, but in practice ideas of race, nationality and citizenship are to some extent artificially constructed concepts for separating members of the human family, with a common ancestry, one from another.

In reality, the degree of inter-ethnic intermixture over the centuries within a multi-ethnic society like the Russian Federation means that any definition of ethnicity becomes problematic. Lenin could be regarded as a typical “Russian”—and, thanks to his Kalmyk grandmother, he was indeed typical of the many Russians in whose veins actually flow ‘Asian’ blood.³² I would suggest that ethnicity could be viewed as something more fluid than the stereotypes

31 Zyryanov, n.d.: 43 [My translation] This was written while Zyryanov was a Protestant minister but he is now an Orthodox priest in the primarily Buryat village of Bayandai.

32 Guchinova (2006: 214–215) reports that Lenin had a Kalmyk grandmother.

which tend to be held by those with a racist viewpoint. Just as light can be seen in one context as made up of photons behaving like particles with definite boundaries, but in many other contexts it is more analogous to waves, in the same way ethnicity often appears to have a fluid, wave-like quality. Within each generation each individual is created through a process involving the recombination of genes passed on ultimately from the first human beings. While sharing the same constituent genetic elements with every other human being, the actual combination within each person is unique. Uniqueness imparts rarity value. What is the value or price of a unique human being?

Unfortunately, a person's value is all too often measured only in terms of how much (or little) he or she is paid to do a job. Nowadays in Russia there is a shortage of those willing to do hard manual work, such as on building sites, so many menial jobs are now filled by relatively low-paid 'guest workers' from Central Asia and even from North Korea. Often this economic underclass is also distinguished by racial characteristics, so racist attitudes among some Russians are now more commonly directed towards Uzbek or Tajik immigrants than towards the indigenous peoples of Siberia. Now that the immigrants come from beyond the borders of Russia, rather than being ethnic groups that had become incorporated into the Russian or Soviet state, racism is sometimes mixed with xenophobia in some segments of the Russian population. Russia is facing the dilemma of many European states that also have a labor shortage (often linked with falling birth rates), so need immigrant workers but also fear the effects of cosmopolitanism on their own national identity. In such circumstances, fear of 'the other' tends to be projected more onto the immigrants, whereas indigenous peoples, including those of Siberia, begin to be perceived more as 'one of us'.

PART 3

Nationalism



Nationalism and Internationalism: Sino-American Racial Perceptions of the Korean War

Lü Xun

China and the United States were allies during World War II. This cooperative relationship naturally contributed some fondness and admiration to the emerging Chinese perception of the United States, if any, as the most powerful but least aggressive among alien powers. By the same token, and despite the United States' traditional bias against East Asians at home, the notorious Chinese Exclusion Act was revised in December 1943. With growing military demands, the two nations' mutual images became largely positive and friendly as opposed to those of the Japanese, for example, in both.

Shortly after World War II, however, the wartime alliance began to suffer from ideological confrontations, in China and then across the globe.¹ The Chinese Communist Party (CCP), assisted by the Soviet Union, overthrew the United States-sponsored Nationalist government in 1949, and then challenged the American-led United Nations peace keeping troops in Korea from 1950 to 1953. During this time, Sino-American relations declined to an unprecedentedly low level, and this was reflected in the images each side had of the other. As in former wars, it is possible to observe the inevitable self divinization alongside the demonization of the Other.² But here the ideological gap seemed broader than ever. Both Communism and Capitalism claimed to be at the top of the international social evolutionary chain. This was also a case in which race also played a significant role. Nevertheless, the ideological conflict was so pervasive and so powerful that the concomitant racial discourse has been largely ignored. This chapter seeks to uncover the racism that underpinned the Sino-American military and ideological conflict during the first half of the 1950s. It examines the sources for the two nations' mutual racial hatred, its manifestation and its consequences.

1 For the relation between the Chinese civil war and the Cold War, see Westad, 1993.

2 For earlier studies on American perceptions of the Chinese in the 1950s, see Neils, 1990; Astarita, 2009. For the opposite, see Y. Yang 1996; J. Zhang, 1999; H. Zhang, 2002.

Descendants of the Mongolian Hordes: American Perceptions of the Chinese

During World War II, the United States witnessed the fall of isolationism and the rise of internationalism. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the American media and popular culture referred to the Japanese openly as racially inferior peoples and as a sub-human enemy.³ The extremely racist depiction of the Japanese was not a major motive for dropping the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but it did little to prevent this measure or generate an effective backlash. As the ideological conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States escalated after the war, the latter was becoming increasingly concerned about its position in East Asia. In the mid-1950s, President Harry S. Truman and Secretary of State Dean Acheson changed their earlier policy of limited military intervention in the Far East and sent American land forces to Korea under the first UN police action resolution. General Douglas MacArthur's underestimate of the Chinese troops ushered them into a prolonged war. The Yellow peril was reanimated, albeit in a modified way.

The Americans did not apply the old language of racism towards the Chinese suddenly or as a whole. It was not long since American wartime propaganda had portrayed the Chinese people as virtuous and industrious. At an early stage of the Korean War, the CCP, as a belligerent puppet of the Kremlin, rather than the people was to blame. General Lin Biao's (1907–1971) outdated photo appeared in *Life* magazine as the Commander of the Volunteer Army, although mistakenly, clenching his teeth with the forefinger pointing up (Fig. 14.1). That pose resembled an impression of Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov, who “even when uttered in a language that is not understood, strikes with the force of bullets from a machine gun.”⁴ As for the Nationalist Chinese, some Americans still regarded Taiwan as “China's Valley Forge” and urged Generalissimo Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek, 1887–1975) “to fight for the Independence of China like our George Washington” in 1952.⁵

3 See Dower, 1986.

4 Dulles, 1950: 27.

5 Bullitt, 1952; JFDP, 1952, December 4: Box 145.



FIGURE 14.1
*General Lin Biao, Life (1950).*⁶

As American casualties increased, however, the large Chinese population gradually surfaced as a major public concern. In early August 1950, a Gallup poll revealed that only 12 percent of the respondents could offer a rough estimate of the size of the Chinese population. From then on, American polls kept asking about the number of the Chinese and Korean draftees. The persistence of these questions was a significant contributor to two biases. First, Americans tended to assume that Chinese lives could not and should not be equal to American ones; and second, that the United States should withdraw its soldiers from the front and let the East Asians fight between themselves. According to *Life* magazine, they only “massed a superiority in numbers.”⁷ In one of its items in early 1951, a Gallup poll observed that Communist China deployed forces “far outnumbering the United Nations troops” into Korea. Two thirds of the respondents thus held that the United States should pull its troops out “as quickly as possible,” and nearly three fourths agreed the fighting should stop if the UN troops pushed back to the 38th parallel.⁸

6 *Life*, 18 December 1950: 66, 31 December 1951: 22.

7 *Life*, December 31 1951: 22.

8 Gallup, 1971: 940, 968, 995.

The cruelty and atrocity of warfare supplied both countries with evidence for racial hatred. On 24 May 1951, Senator Joseph McCarthy stole MacArthur's thunder and told the story of a certain GI, Bob Smith, who brought "the truth to the American people":

When the [Chinese] Communists started to pour across the Yalu, Bob Smith was up at Changjin Reservoir. He was wounded . . . played dead. They took off his shoes and some of his clothing . . . A unit of Marines learned about those wounded soldiers, and slugged a bloody path through the Communist ring and rescued them. Today Bob Smith is at home in Middleburg, Pa., but his hands and his feet are still in the hills on this side of the Yalu—a tribute to the traitorous Red Communist clique in our State Department . . .

McCarthy then jeered in Smith's tone: "Mr. Acheson . . . I saw your agrarian reformers on horseback firing rockets at us—reincarnations of the horsemen of Genghis Khan."⁹ Americans seemed to like the Mongolian analogy. Acheson's successor, Secretary John F. Dulles, for example, once referred to the Communists as "like Ghenghes [sic] Khan, will get on their little Tartar ponies and ride back whence they came . . . can Western civilization survive?"¹⁰ The analogy was forged in a late 1950 cover story in *Time* magazine. Chairman Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung, 1893–1976) was compared to Kublai Khan as "the most successful warlord" in China. His poem was also cited as evidence of his creed of blood and iron, with sample lines that read: "Genghis Khan was favored by Heaven in his generation. Yet he could only shoot arrows at eagles on the wing."¹¹

The image of these hordes, which Americans had applied to the Japanese during World War II, was now used against the Chinese. Others were more subtle, although not necessarily less racist. The cover of the aforementioned issue of *Time* magazine depicted a swarm of red locusts as flying towards Mao. This was a pun, since yellow (*huang*) and locust (*huang*) sound the same in Chinese. In *Life* magazine, the hordes were portrayed as a group of bony peasant-like men (Fig. 14.2) unless they were pointing their guns at American boys. The Chinese, it was noted, "was still, by modern standards of warfare, a primitive army . . . Its logistics were built on human carriers and horse carts and its soldiers were armed with a bewildering mixture of old and new weapons of

9 US Congress, 1951: 89, 1287.

10 Quoted in Immerman, 1999: 60.

11 *Time*, December 11 1950.

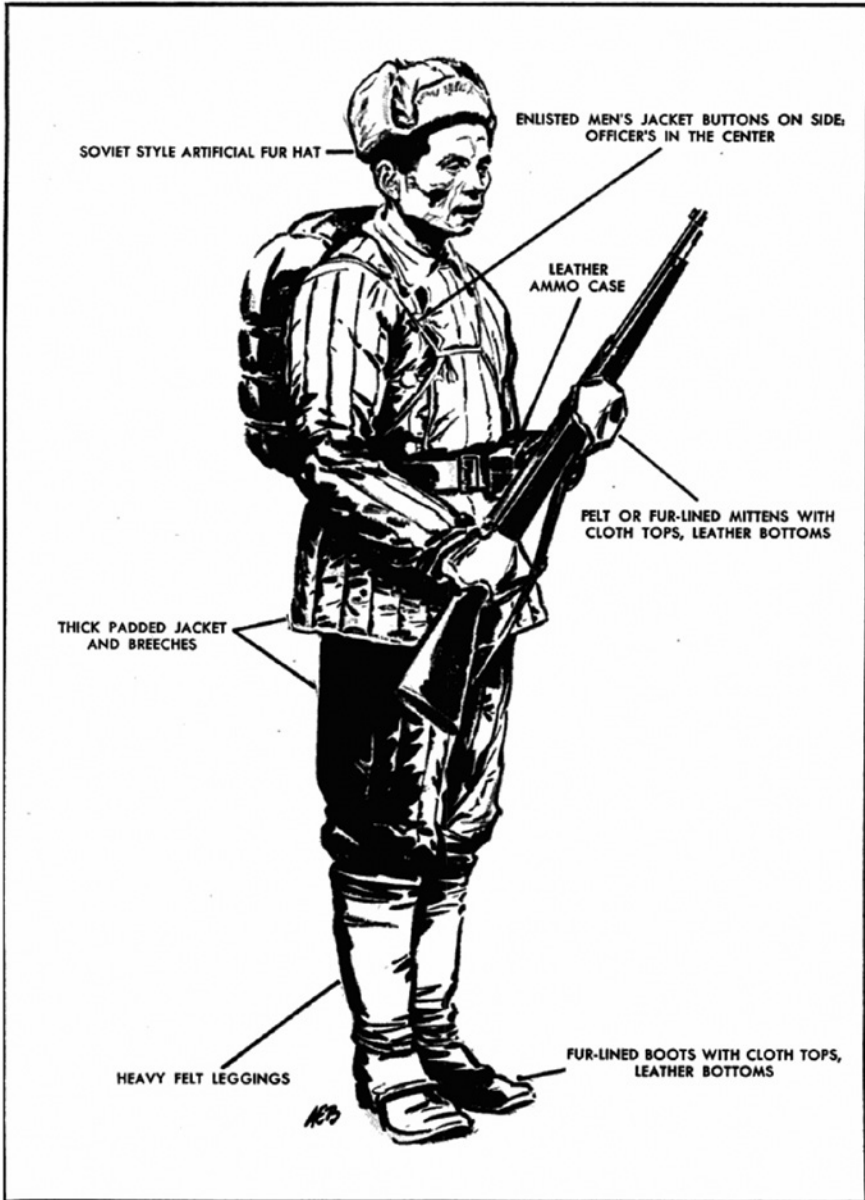


FIGURE 14.2 "Chinese Soldier," *Life* (1951).¹²

12 *Life*, 31 December 1951: 20.

many calibers.” Those “illiterate and virtually uneducated” soldiers fought a “modern army” for the first time. Their “glaringly obvious” weaknesses could simply be compensated for with Russian weaponry and endless manpower.¹³ Moreover, the monolithic and primitive nature of the Chinese implied a sense of racial inferiority.

In addition, Mongolian tropes were resurrected in many Fu Manchu characters throughout the 1950s. Most notable in this respect was the *Yellow Claw* comic. This character was a Fu Manchu manqué in the Marvel Comics Universe, and one which is still alive today.¹⁴ As suggested by the name, the Claw was a long lived Chinese freak with jaundiced-looking skin. He had a full moustache that extended downward past the lips and on both sides of the chin, a feature which was added to the original Sax Rohmer works. Some critics have held that the moustache served to pervert the Chinese “masculine expression.”¹⁵ This was also the case in the depiction of Dr. No as being without eyebrows in Ian Fleming’s 1958 spy novel of the same name and in the first James Bond movie in 1961, and, similarly, in the depiction of Dr. Yen Lo in Richard Cordon’s 1959 thriller novel *The Manchurian Candidate*, adapted into a cinematic namesake in 1962.

By the same token, female Chinese characters were portrayed as aggressive sexual beings. The Dragon Lady, for example, was a popular character of the kind in the 1950s. She was depicted as a cunning sexy villainess and appeared in the 1953 production *Terry and the Pirates*, a television series adapted from a comic of the same name and featuring the typical American he-man hero Colonel Terry. Several years later, a member of the audience recalled that in the series, “[s]he slithered about in silk skirts . . . when it came to my fantasy dreams of gorgeous bad girls, for a brief while, the Dragon Lady ruled supreme. She’d be up to her nefarious crimes and always slip away at the last moment, to strike again.”¹⁶ The Dragon Lady character, considered as a symbol of malevolence incorporated the European mythological attributes of the dragon, in which the dragon is portrayed as an evil fire-spitting creature which must eventually be

13 *Life*, December 31 1951: 21.

14 It was created by DC Comics great Al Feldstein and artist Joe Maneely in *Yellow Claw* No. 1 (Oct. 1956) and published by Atlas Comics, the 1950s predecessor of Marvel. The Yellow Claw appears again in the 2006–07 Marvel series *Agents of Atlas*. In Issue 6, the Claw revealed his true name as being Plan Chu, Khan of a secret Mongol dynasty.

15 Lee, 2002: 218.

16 Dougbrode. 2006 (23 April) [Online]. Available at <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0187669/usercomments> [Accessed on 28 February 2012].

slain. Moreover, it also identified “dragon” with “lady,” which served to further pervert the perception of Chinese femininity.

The villainous image of the Chinese genius exerted harsh repercussions for the Chinese living in the United States. Among other things, it was one of the reasons for a policy of near-segregation directed towards Chinese scholars and students. A case in point is Dr. Tsien Hsue-shen (1911–2009), also known as the “Jet Document Case”, and his arrest in the fall of 1950 attracted public attention. The *New York Times* reported that the American Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) had arrested the Chinese jet propulsion scientist at his home at the California Institute of Technology (CIT), “as [an] alien Red.”¹⁷ The American authorities also confiscated “1,800 pounds of papers containing technical data,”¹⁸ that Tsien had presented for shipment to his address in Shanghai. Tsien, however, who had left China at the age of twenty-four, applied for American citizenship and became a professor at CIT when the “Reds” were winning in China.¹⁹ He also served as the director of the top secret rocket section of the National Defense Scientific Advisory Board under General Henry H. Arnold during and after World War II. In the summer of 1949, he displayed every indication of settling in California permanently.

By the time Tsien was arrested, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had accused him of being a former member of the Communist party on the grounds that in the 1930s he had been present at social gatherings organized by a Russian-born colleague, Sidney Weinbaum, a fan of classical music but later convicted as a Communist despite his denial under oath. Tsien strongly denied the charge, and insisted that he was philosophically opposed to the idea of Communism. Ironically, he was the son-in-law of a leading military strategist for the nationalist leader Jiang Jieshi, but to no avail. The government stripped him of his security clearance. The man felt insulted by the suspicion, and replied rashly with a minatory departure to China. “He was torn between loyalties,” recalled Tsien’s colleague and friend Martin Summerfield, “but I think he was determined to stay in the United States . . . he wanted to be a citizen.” In Tsien’s own words, “I actually informed Professor Watson that it is my wish that I would finally be able to come back to this country and continue my work here . . .”²⁰ In 1954, one official Chinese file even recorded that

17 *NYT*, September 8 1950.

18 *NYT*, December 3 1952.

19 Tsien had been serving as Robert H. Goddard Professor at Caltech since 1949.

20 Chang, 1995: 144, 149–51.

“he [Tsien] meant to *go* to China with his family and then *return* to the United States”²¹ (italics my own).

Tsien was detained for two weeks, losing thirteen pounds along with his patriotism for the United States. In an interview conducted half a century later, his wife Jiang Ying stressed that “once he came home, he did not utter a word. When I asked him, he responded by nodding or shaking his head. I realized that he had lost his voice, and was not able to speak.”²² When he reached Hong Kong in 1955, Tsien recalled that, “I was not allowed to talk to anyone. During the night someone would open the door and turn on the lights every ten minutes to make sure I had not escaped.”²³ Although Tsien tried to focus his energy on teaching and research, it brought him no relief. He was confined to Los Angeles, and forbidden to go to the beach in Orange County. In order to lessen the tight government surveillance, Tsien had to move four times, and even worked in a couch inside the bathroom. His friend and colleague, Professor Yuan-cheng Fung, testified that “when we visited his home to see him, there was also someone from the government there, just watching him on the sidelines. In any case, it was not so free, [since the agent] sat nearby and heard everything we talked about.”²⁴ His phone contacts were interrogated by the FBI, and some faculty members began to shun him in fear of being the next target of investigation. Tsien seemed more and more withdrawn and moody than ever.²⁵ He lived an alienated life and was eventually forced to leave the United States by national hysteria.

Tsien was not the only victim, however. Four returning Chinese scholars en route to Hong Kong from the United States were reportedly detained in Yokohama, Japan. They were only released forty-seven days later.²⁶ In September 1951, another nine Chinese students were detained in Honolulu by the INS on the China-bound ship USS Cleveland, which was “the most dramatic of the personal incidents which received wide attention in the press in the United States and throughout the world.”²⁷ The reasoning was that their advanced technical knowledge could be used against the United States by the Chinese. In late 1951, a Chinese student, Li Yinyuan, wrote his friend to suggest sending letters home anonymously and indirectly. According to Li, “mails heading

21 CFMA, 2060010103. The italics are mine.

22 CCTV, 2009: [video], 04: 14.

23 Tsien, 2006: 249.

24 Qiu, 2010: 52.

25 Chang, 1995: 173, 177.

26 Zhao W., 2001: 109.

27 CEIP, 1956: 10–11.

for China have probably been checked on both coasts.”²⁸ At least one Chinese student was reported to have suffered a nervous breakdown because of the censorship.²⁹ These treatments were later used to support the CCP’s charges of Chinese abuse and American inhumanity at Geneva in 1954. The CCP alleged that by then 199 scholars and students were still detained.³⁰ Former American Consul General in Shanghai Walter P. McConaughy admitted cautiously in June 1950 that: “[a]mong them [those who returned to China] is probably a deep racial feeling. Some of the Chinese students have perhaps received real or fancied slights while here and been subjected to discrimination.”³¹ Given that discrimination, former Chinese Nationalist Minister to Denmark, Chen Kuo-lien, who had been granted personal exchange funds as a refugee, was “highly critical of his treatment while in the United States,” and even returned to Mainland China in September 1954.³²

The Chinese nationals had been treated as a “subversive” community since the Korean War. In August 1950, it was reported that immigration department officials banned three Chinese students from “learning American methods” at a textile machinery plant. They were “kept out” because one of the three had allegedly told a fellow worker in Maine that “Russia is winning this war.”³³ In a March 1951 *New York Times* article, the influential columnist James Reston noted that “a great many of the Chinese Students—at many universities the majority of them—have joined one or two organizations whose national leadership has been branded subversive.”³⁴ He was referring to the Chinese Students Christian Association in North America and the Scientific Workers Association of Engineering and Chemistry. Regional INS offices, particularly in Chicago, adopted an “obsolete and harsh” policy toward many Chinese students. According to Reston, they were very likely to be arrested, or even deported, if they had left school or taken a job after graduation.

The Subversive Activities Control Act (the McCarran Act), enacted on 22 September 1950, permitted an “internal security emergency” to be declared in order to incarcerate the Chinese American population in a manner similar to what the United States government had done with the Japanese Americans during World War II. In 1952, a sum of \$775,000 was allotted in order to

28 CFMA, 2060010106.

29 CFMA, 2060010103.

30 CFMA, 2060010008.

31 US Department of State, 1976: 355.

32 NA, Box 5, Record Group (RG) 84.

33 *NYT*, 1950, August 19.

34 Reston, 1951: 3.

establish six internment camps in the states of California, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, and Florida.³⁵ Publications by Chinese Americans were under strict censorship by intelligence authorities. The FBI also investigated all the subscribers to the biggest Chinese American newspaper, the *China Daily News*. In 1952, this newspaper became the sole victim of the Foreign Assets Control Regulation since its passage in 1917 on account of its acceptance of advertising revenue from the Nanyang Bank of Hong Kong. Its editor and president, Eugene Moy, was sentenced to two years in prison and died shortly after his release. Because of the paper's anti-Nationalist stand, readers were warned to withdraw their subscriptions, and some of them were even interrogated. One of them, Tan Yumin, a member of the Chinese Hand Laundry Alliance of New York, was so distraught by his experiences that he jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge. His body was buried under river mud for days before it finally surfaced.³⁶ In San Francisco, some Chinese-owned bookstores and theaters found supply sources blocked as Customs agents impounded any book or film suspected of having mainland Chinese origins.³⁷

It would not be an exaggeration to suggest that the entire Chinese community fell under federal scrutiny. In 1955, some two years after the conclusion of the Korean War, American Consul General in Hong Kong Everett F. Drumright sent an eighty-nine-page report to the State Department, alleging that almost all the Chinese in United States had entered the country illegally.³⁸ One could imagine that every Chinese would receive hurried knocks on the door and be subjected to a long series of questions about every aspect of life.³⁹ FBI or INS agents occasionally stopped Asian passengers at Chinatown to question their immigration history, or branded a Chinese on the street as Communist without evidence. Many realtors refused to show homes in a white community to Chinese buyers. If Chinese purchased homes from liberal whites or friends, they had to move in furtively at midnight, and sometimes encountered harassment, vandalism or even violence from their white neighbors. Lancing F. Lee, who bought a house in a white neighborhood in Los Angeles, recalled that "[t]he first night, they broke my windows, but I ignored them. Then they brought dogs over to cause trouble. If you crossed the street, they would bully you." In McLean, Virginia, third-grade pupil Alice Young, the only Asian in her

35 Wang, 368.

36 Yu, 1992: 191.

37 Kwong & Miscevic, 2007: 221.

38 NA, Box 720, RG 59.

39 Chang, 2004: 251.

class, was spurned by her white classmates after the teacher had showed a film depicting the Chinese Communist threat.⁴⁰ In the following year, the INS issued the discriminative “Chinese Confession Program,” leading to Chinese Americans encountering bitter feelings among family members or relatives, or even breaking up ties in the maelstrom. Up to twenty thousand persons implicated by the confessions were subjected to undue stress and agony. Maurice Chuck, who was prosecuted based on the testimony of his own father stated in the court: “today’s problem is a result of past exclusionary acts against the Chinese by the United States.”⁴¹

The Ambitious Wolf: Chinese Perceptions of Americans

In the first five months preceding China’s entry into the Korean War, the stereotypes of “American imperialist” and “warmonger” dominated Chinese images of the United States. The impact of Soviet propaganda was undeniable. This was evident in a Manichaeian division of the world map, in an analogy between the American dollar symbol, \$, and the Nazi swastika,卐, in accusations against the evil manipulations of Wall Street and in a well-selected picture of John F. Dulles in a Korean trench before the war. All these served as (admittedly foreign) elements in the first batch of the CCP’s imagery of the American conspiracy of world domination.

The Chinese Ministry of Propaganda embraced this view of internationalism almost immediately and efficiently. It instructed cartoonists, songwriters, composers, playwrights and the mass media to seize on the image of the warmonger and to distribute it widely in all noticeable places. The message emphasized the monolithic and final success of peace loving “people all over the world.” In practice, the Chinese propagandists added national features to anti-imperialist internationalism. Beijing artists and performers, for example, used folk raps, comedy routines, storytelling and street plays alongside slogans, songs and lectures. Similarly, inland Hunan Province songwriters applied local rhythms in choruses. One line of lyrics read: “People all over the world are so many that the song of peace sounds a thunder and sweat dropped flows a river, drowning those warmongering bastards dead! Hey!”⁴²

40 Zhao X., 2002: 168–69; Chang, 2004: 250, 259–60.

41 Yung et al. (eds.), 2006: 252, 254.

42 CPPCC, 2000: 207.

Although internationalist propaganda took various forms, these seldom touched on the core values of ordinary Chinese people and proved to be unsuccessful. Different public views of this seemingly foreign war therefore emerged side by side with and apart from mainstream rhetoric. Nanjing and Shanghai citizens, for example, complained that “Korea is thousands of miles away from us, and their fights are none of our business.” Another commentator in Beijing even observed that “the United States is unwilling to offend China at present. It may abandon Taiwan and let us into the UN if China takes no action.” In addition, a history teacher in a Hebei Province town suggested to his class that China should hold a “third party position” in order to keep neutral in the war. The CCP was not willing to accept such opinions but criticized them as typically wrong.⁴³

Racial hatred was thus easily instigated, given a century of foreign oppression and a lingering sense of victimhood. Old fragments of language and imagery were pulled to the surface, such as earlier incidents of brutality by American GIs in China. The 1946 rape case of Beijing University female student Shen Chong in particular gained new prominence and was used to refresh the Chinese memory of the supposed beastliness of Americans. The 19-year-old Shen belonged to a high-class family from South China. The rape was presented as an extreme violation of the essence of traditional Confucian morality before and after the CCP takeover. The story (Fig. 14.3) appeared on the front page of the nationally circulated propaganda guidebook entitled *Atrocities of American Troops in Pictures* alongside 26 other images.⁴⁴

Half a month after Chinese forces crossed the Yalu River, the leading newspaper *People's Daily* recalled the murder of mechanic Wang Endi in Beijing in September 1946, allegedly by American marines. Illustrated by a picture of a body lying beside the railroad, the lengthy report used several close-ups to replay the miserable death of the victim and the cruelty of the murderers: “The GI was standing on the oilcan near the entrance of West Station . . . targeting Wang Endi's head”; “Brains spreading on the locomotive, Wang lay down under a train, and got beheaded by the wheels”; and “American GIs were laughing, haw-haw . . .” It then utilized more charges of American brutality and barbarity and combined them with several other unsubstantiated cases of bullying and sexual harassment towards Chinese men, women and children in the same railway station in order to confirm that the American “Imperialism is a wolf, and will bite us to death unless killed.” The essay concluded in a reminder: “Now, the American beasts who killed Wang Endi are approaching the border

43 XNA, 1950, August 30: 103; November 24: 115. SMA, A59-1-3: 6, 8. BMC, 1993: 3.

44 See H. Zhang, 2002: 150.

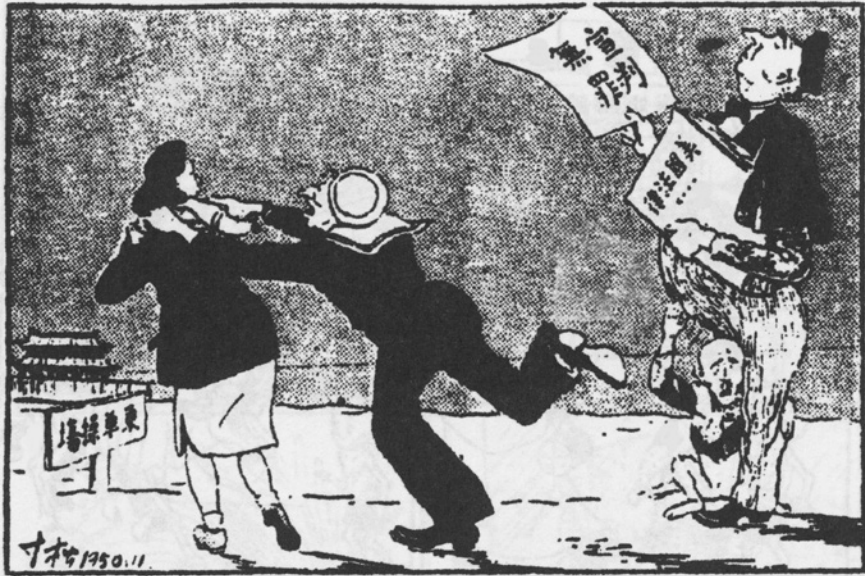


FIGURE 14.3 "The Culprit in the Shen Chong Incident was Acquitted," by Li Cunsong (1950).

of our state... we must help the Korean people."⁴⁵ Undoubtedly, the oft-quoted tale called for a Chinese internationalism justified by the demand for racial vengeance.

Like imperial Japan until its demise in 1945, the CCP took a leading position on behalf of colored peoples in order to resist American racism. One reference book published by the Chinese Central Academy of Fine Arts, for example, produced posters on the lynching of blacks by the Ku Klux Klan in which President Truman once had a paid membership.⁴⁶ Sidney Shapiro (b. 1915), a Jewish American who had been asked by the American consulate to persuade Jewish refugees to seek visas in countries other than the United States in the tumultuous days of the Communist victory was now serving the Chinese. He was made a part of Chinese propaganda as a witness to and a provider of testimony on American racism. Chinese students and scholars returning from the United States were organized to provide testimonies for these charges and sobbed out their mistreatment in public. Famous writer Lao She (1899–1966), for example, who even promised his San Francisco friend to adhere to the "Doctrine of Three Nos" (no political discussions, no participation in meetings,

45 *People's Daily*, 1950, November 5.

46 CCAFA, 1951: 15.

no speechmaking) threw himself into decrying the American “decline into Fascism.”⁴⁷

In order to direct Chinese racial hatred, the public was told to regard the United States as reactionary headquarters and as the cause for all Chinese miseries. The history of Sino-American relations from 1832 to 1950 was rewritten such as to brandish America as racist and murderous towards the Chinese.⁴⁸ As Japan had already been considered an American colony, the Korean War turned out to be an American colonial war aiming at conquering the peninsula followed by China. In rural areas, peasants were taught that Americans planned to puppet Japan in order to bully China again. To make it easily understood, the propagandists pantomimed American soldiers handing over swords to the Japanese. That was the point which pushed peasants to throw away reasons for reluctance like: “it is useless to bring back the miserable old days since they were gone.”⁴⁹

Misery fanned the fires of hatred. In Shanghai, for instance, a student troupe smoothed racial indoctrination with the play *Nation's Vengefulness, Family's Enmity* (*Guohen jiachou*), embodying the miserable lives of three generations. The protagonist was Lin Zhen, a young widow who lost her husband after he was knocked down by a car whose American driver fled with impunity. To add insult to injury, Lin's father-in-law was also killed, albeit by the Japanese. Lin herself was fired improperly because she refused a gang member's flirtation, and later got raped by an American marine in broad daylight. After returning home and seeing her two starving kids, Lin felt so desperate that she hanged herself, but was rescued by her mother-in-law. The play ended with a scene in which the two pitiful women cried and accused Americans of atrocities. Despite its farfetchedness, the play proved to be a great success. The victim-consciousness against racists had been perfectly aroused in post-colonial China. The audience accepted the play as truth, cried sadly with the actresses, and reportedly commented: “Cry for what? We should avenge Lin Zhen!”⁵⁰

The Chinese media then depicted Americans as inhuman or subhuman, as the Japanese had done during World War II. Visual images focused on physical differences, such as the shape of the nose and the color of the hair and eyes. Historically, the Chinese referred to Caucasians as “devils” (*gui* or *guizi*), so now American features were represented by hooked noses, fangs or tusks, chest hair, claws or tails and smallness in relation to the greatness of Asian figures (the Chinese, often depicted besides the Korean people). One typical

47 Spence, 1981: 319–20.

48 See Liu, 1951.

49 BMC, 1993: 124.

50 SMA, A71-2-883.

cartoon depicted a giant Chinese worker holding back a big-nosed codger from waving a bomb or a dagger at the chimney-forested industrial infrastructure (Fig. 14.4). In colored pictures, the skins of American characters were painted blue or green instead of white, and with the corners of the mouth and the hands painted red, indicating their inhumanness and bloodlust. In addition to devils, Chinese artists also depicted Americans in writing, on stage or in songs as mice, vermin, swine or lupine creatures. For example, one *fabliau* play in Henan Province told a fairy tale of a monster named “Old Pig American” (*Zhu laomei*), who broke the peace in a heavenly garden by abducting the beautiful fairies in it and was later defeated and exiled by armed bees as rescuers. On 30 November 1950, the *People’s Daily* published a march song entitled *Defeat the American Ambitious Wolf*, which turned out to be one of the most popular and potent of the time. The march read as follows:

With vigor and high spirits, [We] stride across the Yalu River!
 Defend peace and fatherland as a hometown protector!
 Resist America and Aid Korea, fine Chinese sons and daughters!
 To defeat the US ambitious wolf, hold together!



FIGURE 14.4 “We cannot conduct peaceful construction until the American imperialists’ aggressive deeds are checked,” by Gu Yuan, *Renmin ribao* (1950).⁵¹

51 *Renmin ribao*, 28 November 1950: 1.

The plain words were set to a well-balanced rhyming verse, inspiring and memorable, with the intriguing juxtaposition of the Chinese people and the American lupines.

As CCP troops came into contact with the American forces in North Korea, the language and imagery of the “paper tiger” was pulled to the surface to imply the effeminacy and effiteness of the United States. The Chinese press kept informing that the people’s armies, both Chinese and Korean, were sweeping across the peninsula without a major defeat. Even Chairman Mao himself wrote a radio news broadcast as a “correspondent of Xinhua news agency.” It announced that the Chinese Volunteer Army and the Korean People’s Army were brave and irresistible, defeating everything before them, and that the “two lines of enemy troops [of the United States and its puppets] were in a great panic and hastened to flee.”⁵² Ignoring the Japanese victories over the “Eastern” Russians in 1904–5 and their initial victories over Allied forces in 1941–42, it was considered the first time in modern history that Asians had defeated Westerners in the battlefield. This supposed precedence bolstered a certain racial pride and confidence in China. The Chinese public, including the intelligentsia, seemed to accept the CCP rhetoric of “paper tiger” at face value, especially when photos of American prisoners of war appeared in newspapers. The news coverage of enemies, captured or dead, sharpened racial conflicts in both countries. A case in point is a field report written by a young CCP cadre named Wei Wei about a single skirmish shortly after the Changjin Reservoir Campaign. Entitled “Who are the most beloved people?” it was published on the front page of the *People’s Daily* newspaper in the spring of 1951. The American casualties described in that essay were three times greater than the Chinese, and “enemy [American] corpses were piled up like grains at the foot of a mountain.”⁵³ It turned out to be the most influential literary work produced in China during the Korean War and remains on school curriculums even today. Accounts of American weakness also reappeared in two Chinese popular films produced after the war. In both *Battle of Triangle Hill* (1956) and *Heroic Sons and Daughters* (1964) cowardly American figures were played by Chinese actors wearing fake large noses.

Americidal enthusiasm spread beyond the front too. The public was encouraged to offer physical and material assistance to families with sons or husbands fighting Americans in Korea, and those families had priority in obtaining officially rendered services. This can be seen from a letter written or dictated by Peng Xiubing, a peasant in Hubei Province, and sent to his younger brother

52 Mao, 1987: 710–711.

53 Wei, 1951.

serving in the volunteer army in summer 1951, reading: “since you have been fighting the American devils outside, we have received special treatment from the peasant association and the government at home, and received twice the [amount of] coupon rice. We feel very glorious everywhere at home, and wish you in the army . . . kill several more American soldiers.” A father’s letter to his son in rural Anhui Province carried a similar tone: “cadres in the village treat us very well, for I am in the family of a volunteer soldier. Our family is especially glorious in our hometown. You in the army should . . . fight aggressive American soldiers hard . . .”⁵⁴ The message was convincing with regard to the warmed-up militarism at home. Americidal frenzy appears to be a common feature for some time. Many work unit slogans combined the “more,” “quick” and “good” with the killings. A Beijing Printing Factory, for example, picked up a slogan that read “one more book bound, one more American devil’s head removed.”⁵⁵

A great deal of the anti-American campaign was orchestrated by the government. In fact, the government required that every Chinese citizen officially take part in the simultaneous “triple *shi*” campaign against the United States. On 26 October 1950, Beijing ordered all local authorities to immediately stage another round of propaganda to “foster a prevalent attitude of hatred (*chou shi*), scorn (*bi shi*), and contempt (*mie shi*) towards American imperialism.” The *People’s Daily* accordingly published an outline of “How to Understand America” in order to explain that “the pro-American attitude is reactionary, and ideas of worshiping and fearing the United States are also wrong . . . every patriotic Chinese must hate America, despise America, and scorn America!”⁵⁶ The state weakened the social function of families, and exerted direct control over individual Chinese with dreams and horror. Dissidents were persecuted, incarcerated, and occasionally even killed in a series of political movements. It is possible that the seeds of anti-American animosity were planted here, and among the youth in particular. A children’s rhyme that lingered years later announced: “One, two, three, four, five, go uphill to hunt tigers; the tiger only eats Truman instead of others.”⁵⁷

Nationalism and racism became key elements in the discourse of “struggle” meetings among intellectuals. Formatted accusations and confessions were typically made as follows: “the American university only let the Chinese youth lose the feeling of patriotism towards their own fatherland”; “it is disdained

54 HUACSI, 2000: 66–7, 78–9.

55 CPPCC, 2000: 272.

56 *People’s Daily*, 1950, 5 November.

57 See Yang, 1996: 237.

by everyone among the patriotic Chinese people today to have sent papers to the United States for publication, providing the American imperialists with intelligence"; "it is unforgivable for anyone to still have a pro-American sentiment."⁵⁸ It was no longer possible to separate the American government from its people, and thus individual Americans residing in China were treated harshly regardless of their background. Professor Anne Cochran, for instance, was intercepted and searched by the Chinese police before leaving customs for two red silk banners formerly awarded for her 23-year-service at the church university of Yanjing (Yenching). The policemen argued that "those Americans all act as the tool of aggression, especially the cultural aggression of the U.S. imperialists toward China, either on or without purpose. We should not hold them in any favor."⁵⁹ This attitude should not be surprising if one takes the 1949 arrest of Yan'an communist Sidney Rittenberg (b. 1921) on the charge of being an American agent into account.

Between 1951 and 1953, at least 464 Americans left mainland China, and the CCP acknowledged that "32 Americans, mainly missionaries and businessmen" were under arrest.⁶⁰ Their treatment ended with the occasional fatal results. In February 1952, Bishop Francis X. Ford of Maryknoll died in a Guangzhou prison. He had endured house arrest, public humiliations, and beatings since December 1950. According to his secretary, Sister Joan Marie, Bishop Ford was knocked to the ground repeatedly, and his neck was at one point bound with a wet rope which almost choked him as it dried and shrank. This mistreatment did not end there. To humiliate him as an animal, another rope was made to trail from under his gown like a tail, and he was forced to undress before his secretary. She reported that his hair turned completely white after continuous torture.⁶¹

The Mirrored Self: A Nation-State in the Making

The competing paradigms of nationalism and internationalism in both the United States and China during the Korean War seem to resemble and supplement each other. This is even more apparent when one examines them in terms of a racial struggle. In both nations, this foreign war was portrayed as belonging to the self, and the racial segment became naturally exaggerated.

58 Zhu, 1952: 68.

59 PUA, YJ50029/2/1.

60 CFMA, 2060010007, 2060010011.

61 *Time*, 15 September 1952.

Racism was felt in the international war, albeit implicitly. For the United States, it was irresistibly expedient, or even unconsciously customary to employ anti-Oriental sentiment and a fear of the yellow peril as one means of mobilization. For China, the CCP painted every facet of the war as existing for national and racial justice using techniques it inherited from Soviet Russia and Imperial Japan. A Racial discourse was thus concealed under the guise of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism.

Historically, the Chinese rarely made a conceptual distinction between race and nationality. In essence, both terms were imported from Europe in modern times.⁶² In the Ming dynasty, they named the Japanese *wa* and the Europeans in general as *yi* or *guizi*, all of which originally indicated a sense of racial inferiority to themselves. However, when the Qing court could not prevent the incursion of and exploitation by modern powers, the Chinese developed a certain sense of xenophobia. In the early stage of national revolutions, activists taking part in the Boxer Rebellion and Dr. Sun Yat-sen's ventured to expel the "barbarians," by which they meant respectively Westerners and Manchurians. It was not until the Republican period, however, that the Chinese began to form a modern state with the concept of the five prime nationalities. Having suffered decades of wars and foreign invasions, they had a strong general desire for an independent and powerful state. The CCP took advantage of this and claimed to be the most "scientific and democratic" modern polity ever created. Accordingly, its propaganda suggested that the ideology of racism belonged exclusively to reactionaries, i.e. imperialists and colonialists rather than communists. Thus, at least in theory, all the nationalities in China were to be regarded as equal, as were the various races of the world.

To underline a new international justice led by the Communist utopia, the CCP built up the imagined "Chinese big family" without ethnic chauvinism. Unlike the nationalist leader Jiang Jieshi, Mao Zedong seized the opportunity of "racial" confrontation in the Korean War to urge the ethnic uniformity of China. To this end, members of various ethnic groups were recruited during the war and exhorted to consider themselves as Chinese. The anti-American racism was used as a catalyst for reforming their thoughts to accord with CCP rhetoric. During the war, the ethnic elite and the ordinary people were mostly inspired with a sense of self pride and many expressed their veneration of the state. The Mongolian and American-educated writer Xiao Qian (1910–1999), for example, who was encouraged by patriotic pride, contributed two anti-American essays in tandem to the *People's Daily* in order to engender nationalism: "it [the United States] was a perversion of humankind's love of peace, a

62 See Dikötter, 2013; Lai, 2013; and Barth in this volume.

threat to control the world through bloodshed.”⁶³ Xiao was then commended and promoted by the party’s propaganda industry. In another example, a 103-year-old Uighur woman named Ugunisahan reportedly donated her dowry of silver bracelets together with her revenues from collecting wheat and weaving to the purchase airplanes and artillery. This actually became a front page story in the newspapers at that time. The army then awarded this elderly Muslim a red silk banner and called her “our mother.”⁶⁴ In that sense, all the peoples in China were portrayed as members of a single big family.

The dehumanization of the United States contributed immeasurably to the collective conception of an invincible “Chinese people.” On 27 August 1950, Premier Zhou Enlai claimed that an American fighter plane invaded Chinese airspace in Manchuria and shot “Chinese people,” resulting in three deaths, twenty-one wounded, and several locomotives damaged. For several days, the *People’s Daily* spawned eye-catching headlines, such as “Be Resolute in Demanding that American Aggressors Pay Back this Blood Debt,” and “the blood of workers at Andong Field shed by the American aggressors ignited the imperishable fire of hate in the hearts of the victims . . . everyone mentioned the same words, i.e., ‘We must demand this blood debt back.’” Moreover, the airport mechanic Yu Shiren, who was wounded in this border attack, reportedly said “the proud words of the inviolable people of New China,” suggesting that ‘American devils shot down one of us, and then all our Chinese people will rise up to resist!’” In retrospect, it is obvious that the CCP exploited anti-American racism in order to foster a “new China” identity and in order to prompt military activity against the United States.⁶⁵

The Korean War provided an opportunity for reconsidering the entire course of Chinese history. In order to rewrite this history in racial terms, paleoanthropologists working in 1952 constructed the ancestry of the Peking Man (*Homo erectus pekinensis*) as emerging independently in East Asia rather than being an offshoot of the entire human family. With Peking Man becoming a national property, Chinese propagandists could push their history on this soil back half a million years. Moreover, during the war, several leading Chinese scholars argued that Peking Man was a direct ancestor of the entire modern human race.⁶⁶ Accordingly, history textbooks now presented drawings of Peking Man

63 Xiao, 1950.

64 *Xinjiang Daily*, 22 September 2005.

65 Lü, 2008: 161.

66 This group of fossil specimens was discovered during excavations at Zhoukoudian near Beijing between 1923–27. For the debate on the ancestral status of Peking Man, see Pei, 1950; Jia, 1950; Cheng & Qin, 1953.

fossils together with legendary figures such as Nest Builder, Flint Maker, and the Divine Husbandman of the Chinese classics, stating in a confirmative tone: “our ancestor, Peking Man.”⁶⁷ A Peking Man exhibition hall was also built at Zhoukoudian in 1953. This context was curious. The CCP traditionally claimed to be antiracist. Its officials blindly attacked American anthropological writings, and especially those of the German-born Jewish physical anthropologist Franz Weidenreich (1873–1948) as an example of racism. An educational movie shown at Zhoukoudian in 1959 concluded with a painting of a group of young people of different races holding hands.⁶⁸ However, an antiracist work imbued with racial hatred could hardly not be considered racist. Even in the exhibition hall itself, one could occasionally see groundless accusations alleging the theft of Peking Man fossils by Americans and lamenting the loss of relics belonging to “Chinese ancestors.” To some extent, the whole theme of “Resist America and Aid Korea” (*kangmei yuanchao*) had been produced with racism rather than Communism in mind.

The United States did not fare any better during the same period. In the age of McCarthyism, “witch-hunts” against Communists and alleged non-patriots spread like wildfire. A high degree of ideological anxiety associated with rootlessness and rapid international changes spawned a good deal of support for any enthusiastic campaign, and was usually accompanied by racial discrimination. The campaign to eradicate “un-Americanism” verged on issues of cultural and even racial purity, with harsh consequences to civil rights movements in the United States. Senator Joseph McCarthy even praised himself in a book entitled *McCarthyism: The Fight For America*.⁶⁹ Meanwhile, Senator Patrick McCarran spoke as follows in favor of his Immigration and Nationality Act in March 1952: “I believe that this nation is the last hope of Western civilization and if this oasis of the world shall be overrun, perverted, contaminated or destroyed, then the last flickering light of humanity will be extinguished.”⁷⁰ In this sense, “un-American” became a global crime. It was difficult to resist McCarthyism. Even General Dwight D. Eisenhower had to yield to the new ethos. Discussing McCarthy’s practices of “un-Americanism” with some liberal intellectuals before his election in 1952, Eisenhower admitted that to denounce him would be “indirectly accusing the Republican electorate of stupidity at the least and of immorality at the most.”⁷¹ McCarthyism was actually a counterforce

67 Schmalzer, 2007: 247–248. See also Sautman, 2001.

68 Schmalzer, 2007: 252.

69 See McCarthy, 1952.

70 US Congress, 1953: 1518.

71 Ambrose, 1984: 561–562.

in American self-making, one not single-handedly invented by McCarthy. One may argue that McCarthy himself was more of an opportunistic bandwagon-hopper, riding a phenomenon in which Americans attempted to exclude the “un-American” and build up Cold War style Americanism.

The American public generally considered the war in Korea an American war. A poll conducted in August 1950, shortly after the outbreak of the war, showed that 53 percent of the respondents supported the notion of immediately carrying out a total mobilization of all American citizens. Moreover, some 70 percent supported the notion of raising taxes for the war effort, while 88 percent expressed their approval for providing American soldiers to the UN world army, and no less than 36 percent of those surveyed were willing to risk their own or their family’s lives.⁷²

Some of this initial enthusiasm lingered until the end of the war. In early 1953, a certain George E. Stringfellow from New Jersey wrote to Secretary of State Dulles:

I shall stand with McCarthy, because he stands first for America. You and Eisenhower appear to be internationalists to the point where you think of America second. Don’t forget your obligation Mr. Dulles, that is, the oath of office to support America first.⁷³

At times this extreme nationalism could justify any international action, even one carried out with inhumanity. The genocidal nuclear weapon stood a good chance of being used against East Asians again in the Korean War, even though its radioactive consequences had been widely known by then. The Gallup polls revealed that in August 1950 a mere 28 percent of the respondents approved the use of atomic bomb in Korea, but in December 1951, 51 percent did not oppose its use on enemy military targets in Korea. Similarly, 52 percent of the respondents supported the use of atomic bombs against Chinese cities (including seven percent approving their use only as a last resort).⁷⁴ Nonetheless, for some, China provided an opportunity for self-reflection. The American section of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom once urged the House Committee on Administration to pass a civil rights bill reasoning as follows:

72 Gallup, 1971: 929, 930, 931, 933–934, 944, 924–925, 955, 971.

73 Dulles papers, [unpublished] Box 179.

74 Gallup, 1971: 938, 1027, 950, 965, 967.

Our country cannot pull “moats” out of the eyes of others without having others point to the “beam” they see in our eyes. Since it is impossible to talk with any sincerity about something which we ourselves fail to practice over a large area, we put [ourselves] in an indefensible position if we insist on free elections for . . . China, and fail to make sure that all of our own elections are free.⁷⁵

All in all, escalating ideological and military confrontations during the Korean War strengthened the racial hostility within both countries. In China, the CCP fostered racial hatred against the United States in its antiracist campaigns. Slogans urging the killing of Americans became widespread and individual Americans were mistreated. In the United States, the Asian war rekindled the still-fresh fears of the yellow peril, leading to the discrimination and mistreatment of Chinese and people with Chinese origins.

75 The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Papers, [microform] Reel 95.

Gangtai Patriotic Songs and Racialized Chinese Nationalism

Yinghong Cheng

The emergence of nationalism as an alternative to Maoism in a rising China has been observed attentively by the global China studies community. Discussions have focused on the sources, dynamics and links between official and popular nationalisms. However, as is often the case with powerful nationalisms in modern world history, the racial thinking involved has thus far not been seriously considered. To this end, this chapter aims to analytically introduce the creation and popularization of *gangtai* (a Chinese abbreviation for Hong Kong and Taiwan) patriotic songs as a political genre of Chinese pop music since the early 1980s and to explore their relationship with the politics of nationalism. It argues that the lyrics of these songs construct an explicitly racialized discourse about Chinese identity and Chinese history.

More specifically, it reveals how such a discourse has been incorporated into contemporary Chinese nationalism at the state level through a tacit collaboration between the capitalist cultural producers of *gangtai* patriotic songs and the party-state, and through interactions between performers and audiences in China's pop music market. The chapter also explains why such a discourse about Chinese identity appeals to racialized ideas and interprets the phenomenon in the context of identity anxiety and crises in different parts of Greater China since the nineteenth century. It further analyzes the party-state's ambiguous attitude towards this discourse, demonstrates how it represents a contradiction between the principle of a multi-ethnic nation and a powerful propaganda rhetoric for a Han-based patriotism, and emphasizes its implications in contemporary Chinese national identity politics.

Unlike many topics in contemporary sinology, the literature on contemporary Chinese racism and its relationship with Chinese nationalism is scant.¹

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1 See, however, the *China Quarterly's* forum "Focus on Race and Racism in China," 1994.

The relevant scholarly works can be divided into three parts: general studies of Chinese nationalism, studies of pop culture and pop music, and studies of racial thinking. None of these, however, has examined or even noticed *gangtai* patriotic songs, and the very notion is unfamiliar to many scholars. The same could be said with regard to the racial content in mainland patriotic songs created in the last three decades, which absorb and further develop the racial thinking suggested in *gangtai* songs.² The appropriation of racial concepts, rhetoric and specific language imported from *gangtai* patriotic songs in contemporary Chinese nationalist discourse has not been generally recognized by China scholars. The understanding and interpretation of *gangtai* patriotic songs and their impact on mainland China can therefore lead to a more adequate understanding and interpretation of the nature and strength of contemporary popular nationalism in China.

Gangtai Patriotic Songs: A “Colored” Political Genre of Pop Music

One conspicuous but unexamined phenomenon in contemporary Chinese nationalism is the increasing popularity of “patriotic songs” since the early 1980s. As part of the effort to repair its damaged legitimacy after the Cultural Revolution and the 1989 Tiananmen massacre events, the CCP attempted to identify itself with the nation by placing a greater emphasis on its role as the savior of the nation rather than the liberator of the underclass. To this end, it re-categorized many previously “revolutionary songs” as “patriotic songs.” One prominent example is “The East Is Red,” the most famous hymn to Mao, and another is “Without the communist party, there wouldn’t be new China.”

2 The recent scholarship involving pop music and contemporary Chinese nationalism is represented by Baranovitch (2003) and Kloet (2010). Neither has discussed racial thinking in pop music as a major subject or mentioned the *gangtai* patriotic songs’ role in Chinese nationalism. General works about contemporary Chinese nationalism either do not discuss or mention racism in pop culture perfunctorily, as in Jacques’s *When China Rules the World* (2009), whose discussion of racism (pp. 244–252) is to some extent a synthesis of earlier discussions on Chinese anti-African racism published in *The China Quarterly*’s 1994 forum and in other places. In works on racism in China, a very recent edited volume on the race issue in East Asia has one chapter on racism in the PRC that did not mention pop music’s role in the past two decades. (see Dikötter, 2013). The present author has also published an article entitled “From Campus Racism to Cyber Racism—[The] Discourse of Race and Chinese Nationalism” (Cheng, 2011). This article discussed Chinese anti-African racism since the 2000s, mentions the concept of *gangtai* patriotic songs and analyzes some of their lyrics. The present chapter can therefore be seen as a full development of the ideas introduced within it.

The party also encourages the creation of new patriotic songs and will label any popular songs “patriotic” as long as their lyrics praise the country’s natural beauty and culture or are simply sentimental about the place where one was born and raised. Example of the latter would be “I Love You, The Snow [Fallen] Beyond the Great Wall” and “The Tibetan-Qinghai Plateau.” Both are songs which express awe at China’s natural beauty and magnificent landscapes. Both have also been included in a list of “100 patriotic songs” recommended by the CCP’s Propaganda Department and by the Ministry of Culture in 2009, the year in which the CCP celebrated the 60th anniversary of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). As a result, it is safe to say that contemporary Chinese patriotic songs are more numerous than they were during the anti-Japanese War—“the time of the greatest danger” for the Chinese nation according to the PRC national anthem.³

Some of these officially recommended patriotic songs were created by *gangtai* pop music producers, including “Descendants of the Dragon” (*Long de chuan ren*), “My Chinese Heart” (*Wo de zhong guo xin*), “The Chinese” (*Zhong guo ren*), “The Great Wall Will Never Fall” (*Wan li chang cheng yong bu dao*), and “The Pearl of the Orient” (*Dong fang zhi zhu*). These serve as prominent examples of *gangtai* patriotic songs, a rich political genre of pop music in contemporary China that plays a unique and significant role in contemporary Chinese nationalism. The origins of this genre can be traced back to the late 1970s and early 1980s, and can be represented by two prototypical songs. Composed in Taiwan and Hong Kong at a critical time in their identity politics, “Descendants of the Dragon” and “My Chinese Heart” became genre classics not just in their themes and lyrics but also in the way they were produced and popularized in mainland China.

“Descendants of the Dragon” was created when the US decided to switch full diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing in late 1978. To the Taiwanese, Washington’s change of policy did more than critically limit their international influence; it also essentially questioned their Chineseness. In response, Hou Dejian, a 22-year old college student, wrote the song’s lyrics and composed its music. Content-wise, the song finds a racialized identity for the Chinese and associates it with a totemic mysticism in a succinct sentence: “Black eyes, black hair, and yellow skin (hereafter shortened to “two blacks and one yellow”), forever and ever we are descendants of the dragon.”⁴ The song thus denotes the

3 “List of 100 Patriotic songs,” 2012 [online].

4 Translation of the song’s lyrics: “In the Ancient East there is a river/Its name is the Yangtze /In the Ancient East there is a river/Its name is the Yellow River/Although I’ve never seen the beauty of the Yangtze/In my dreams I miraculously travel the Yangtze’s waters/Although

innate and self-sustaining nature of being “Chinese”—it is physical, biological and primal, and therefore defies any recognition based on socio-political or cultural status. Secondly, it conveys a strong sense of a nationalistic grievance against a hostile and treacherous outside world filled with amorphous, and therefore unidentified enemies. With its racialized identity and victimhood complex, the song thus set the tone for later *gangtai* patriotic songs. It was rapidly promoted by the Taiwanese government in order to boost nationalist morale and Hou was recognized as a pop star with a strong political bearing.

However, Hou defected to China in 1983. Hou’s defection was largely driven by his dream of a “great China” and his belief that it would be the mainland rather than Taiwan that would fulfill the nationalistic mission of representing the Chinese people, wherever they may be.⁵ Hou’s defection was seen by Beijing as a victory over Taiwan in the representation of China and the song was immediately accepted as a “patriotic song” in the mainland. “Two blacks and one yellow” and “Descendants of the Dragon” have been popular ever since in both China and the Sinophone world, and have even become synonyms for “Chinese” in everyday usage.

The second song, “My Chinese Heart,” was created in Hong Kong in 1982 while Beijing and London were negotiating over the colony’s handover to China. To many Hong Kong residents, this was the first time in which the question “who am I?” became acute and pressing after more than a century of ambiguity.⁶ The song reflects this sentiment passionately. It was an odd combination between Hong Kong’s pro-China leftist trade unions and a market-testing

I’ve never heard the strength of the Yellow River/The rushing and surging waters are in my dreams/In the Ancient East there is a Dragon/its name is China/In the Ancient East there is a people/They are all descendants of the Dragon/I grew up under the claw of the Dragon/After I grew up I became a descendant of the Dragon/Black eyes, black hair, yellow skin/Forever and ever a descendant of the Dragon/One hundred years ago on a tranquil night/In deepest night before enormous changes/Gun and cannon fire destroyed the tranquil night/Surrounded on all sides by the appeasers’ swords/How many years have gone by with the gunshots still ringing out/How many years followed by how many years/Mighty Dragon, mighty Dragon, open your eyes/Forever and ever open your eyes.” Source: Lyrics of “Descendants of the Dragon” [online].

5 In 1981, and representing Taiwanese youth, Hou visited a UN refugee camp on the Thai border for ethnic Chinese who had been victims of the Khmer Rouge. Hou led the refugees to sing “Descendants of the Dragon” and hoped that a large number of them could be brought to Taiwan. However, it turned out that Taiwan only took less than ten. This was the event that forced Hou to realize Taiwan’s limits in representing China and protecting the Chinese throughout the world. See Hou Dejian, 1991: 40–41.

6 Zhu Yaowei, 1998: 150–152.

effort by a capitalist pop music company (Wing Hang Record Trading Co. Ltd). The company originally commissioned a musician and a writer to compose the song in Mandarin in order to appeal to Beijing and its admirers in Hong Kong, but since Cantonese had been the dominant language in Hong Kong's pop culture market (the so-called 'Cantopop'), no established pop singer would sing it. As a result, the company selected Zhang Mingmin, an amateur singer associated with a leftist trade union. Zhang was also the first singer to perform "Descendants of the Dragon" in Hong Kong.⁷ The song's lyrics are as follows:

Western outfits dress me/But my heart will always be Chinese/My ancestors branded my heart with a Chinese mark/Blood that flows through my veins/Rolling and roaring—"China"—that's the name/Although I was born in a foreign land/It can never change this Chinese heart of mine.⁸

Like "Descendants of the Dragon," the lyrics of the song appeal to the biological and primal elements in defining Chineseness—"heart," "blood" and "ancestor." It also essentializes such an identity, believing that such a "Chinese heart" defies any political socialization and any possibly non-Chinese citizenship status. The song and the singer were discovered by the CCP's propaganda agents in 1983 and immediately became another symbol of Chinese patriotism in the form of pop music originating from outside the mainland. Zhang Mingmin was later invited to sing this song at the 1984 CCTV Spring Festival Broadcast. "Descendants of the Dragon" and "My Chinese Heart" came to China at a time in which extreme Maoism began to loosen its grip over Chinese society after the disastrous Cultural Revolution and in which nationalism began to gain more significance in the official ideological agenda. The two songs' officially promoted popularity reflected this mixed trend: on the one hand, they introduced pop music and its market to a Chinese musical culture which had been dominated by party propaganda musicians and mechanisms; but on the other hand they fit the party's agenda of patriotic education perfectly in a more spontaneous and engaging form, which is what pop music stands for. To the CCP, the two songs were salient examples of the support expressed by the people of Taiwan and Hong Kong for the "one-China" policy and the agenda of national unification.

Since the early 1980s, inspired and encouraged by the political and market success of "Descendants of the Dragon" and "My Chinese Heart," several more

7 "How 'My Chinese Heart' was created and becoming popular" [online]; "Zhang Mingmin: Singing patriotic songs is my lifelong career." [online]

8 Lyrics of "My Chinese Heart" [online].

patriotic songs were created by capitalist cultural producers in Hong Kong and Taiwan for the mainland audience. The most famous ones include “The Chinese Nation,” “I am Chinese,” “Brave Chinese,” “The Hymn to the Chinese,” “We Possess the Name ‘Chinese,’” “The Youth, the Chinese Heart,” “The Chinese Language,” “Roots and Arteries,” “My Root is in China,” “The Yellow Race,” and “The Yellow.” Many more are less known, such as “The Sons and Grandsons of the Dragon,” “The Dragon Rides the Wind,” and “The Giant Dragon Takes Off.” There are yet more whose titles do not necessarily denote China or any ethnic and cultural symbols thereof but whose lyrics do.

To various degrees, the lyrics of these additional songs have expanded the racialized discourse articulated in “Descendants of the Dragon” and “My Chinese Heart.” Examples include “Never forget my yellow face” (“Pearl of the Orient”), “What an intelligent people and what a beautiful language/the words we utter/the whole world listens” (“The Chinese Language”), “Black eyes and black hair/[you are] truly benevolent . . . With Yan and Huang, the common ancestry/we as descendants share the same blood (“*Long wen*,” or “dragon scripts”). Most of these songs incorporate racial elements in order to color the patriotic theme in their lyrics, but there are several whose lyrics are thick with explicitly racist language expressing a sense of victimhood in the face of unidentified foreign enemies. “The Chinese,” created in 1997, is a case in point. Consider the following lyrics:

Behind 5000 years of winds and rains are many dreams/Yellow faces,
black eyes, our smiles remain the same/8,000 li [1 li is about half a kilome-
ter] of mountains and rivers are like a song/No matter where you come
from and where you go to/The same tears, the same pain/Past sufferings
are remembered in our hearts/The same blood, the same racial seeds /
There are still dreams in the future/Let us pursue them/Arm in arm, let's
march forward together with heads raised high/Let the world know we
are Chinese.⁹

The lyrics of “The Yellow Race,” can likewise be read as a statement of blatant racism:

Yellow race, walk on earth/Stick out a new chest/Yellow race, walk on
earth/The world knows that we have changed/More chaos, more courage/
The more the world changes, the more adventurous I become . . . /After
5,000 years, it is finally my turn to step onto the stage/There is no wound

9 Lyrics of “The Chinese” [online].

that cannot be healed/Ancient might lasts forever/The yellowness in the soil carries the Orient [to fly] with doggedness/Everywhere in the world you will see a yellow face/Red blood flows in the veins of 1.3 billion people/You say it's my fury/I say it's my attitude/Fearless, marching forward are only us, the Chinese/The more chaos there is, the more courage I gain/I shed my yellowness/With the yellow heaven above/You will see how I become a true man.¹⁰

A Tacit Collaboration between the Party-State and Capitalist Cultural Producers in Hong Kong and Taiwan

It is clear that a tacit collaboration between the CCP and the producers lay behind the creation and popularization of these songs, that can also be seen as a type of political economy in China's state capitalism. This agenda first became apparent in the early 1980s with the official promotion of "Descendants of the Dragon" and "My Chinese Heart." Hou Dejian's defection was actually secretly arranged by the Xinhua News Agency's Hong Kong office.¹¹ After Hou arrived in Beijing, the CCP propaganda apparatus launched a press campaign to establish him as a nationalist hero and promote his song, showering him with honors such as meetings with top leaders in Zhongnanhai, where the CCP leaders meet domestic and foreign dignitaries. Hou often appeared or was introduced at public events or in state media alongside the Chinese National Women's Volleyball Team, who had won a number of medals in international competitions in the early and mid-1980s and which subsequently became the symbol of China's revival. The so-called "spirit of the Women Volleyball Team" was officially endorsed as the new national spirit. Hou himself eventually became a close friend of the team and was often seen around its training camp.¹²

All these provided Hou with privileged access to the nascent pop music market in China. Hou was in fact the first pop singer in post-Mao China to make a legendary fortune as early as the mid-1980s (he was able to buy a Mercedes and luxurious apartments in Beijing and Guangzhou, a mark of unusual

10 The market success of this song inspired the lyricist and the composer to create another song with a more concise title, "The Yellow." The lyrics are basically identical to those of "The Yellow Race."

11 "The story of 'Descendants of the Dragon' in Taiwan" [online].

12 Hou, 1991: 6. Hou's public statement concerning the changes in the song's lyrics can be watched at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-btV6XWtFr8>.

wealth at the time). But as an independent and rebellious pop musician, Hou soon ran into conflicts with bureaucratic and doctrinarian propaganda officers, converted himself from a “great China” dreamer to a critic, and eventually got involved in the 1989 prodemocracy movement (he even participated in the hunger strike in Tiananmen Square with Liu Xiaobo, the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize winner and at the time a famous writer in order to support the students’ actions in the Square), which led to his expulsion from China in 1990. However, even after some years of banning, “Descendants of the Dragon” was eventually allowed to return to the public sphere and was eventually included in the aforementioned list of 100 “patriotic songs” officially endorsed by the CCP.

The value of Hou’s “dragon song” to nationalist ideology can be more clearly seen in the official disregard of Hou’s request to change the song’s lyrics. Shortly after arriving in China in 1983, Hou visited the western part of the country and was surprised to find that there were non-Han Chinese who did not have “two blacks and one yellow.” Hou said that he was “ashamed” by his ignorance, and blamed the narrow-mindedness of patriotic education in Nationalist Taiwan for it. In subsequent years he asked for “two blacks and one yellow” to be removed from the lyrics, and made this request publicly in May 1989—along with his “apology” to all non-Han Chinese—at a half-million person mass rally in Hong Kong in support of the student pro-democracy movement in Beijing.¹³ All his requests, however, fell on deaf ears. It is certainly possible to argue that from an official propaganda point of view the removal of these lines would significantly compromise the song’s popular appeal.

Zhang Mingmin’s success has even more to do with the official endorsement of gangtai patriotic songs than any other reason. Zhang was discovered by the CCP propaganda officers who were in charge of CCTV’s (China Central TV) 1984 New Year gala, a nationally (now globally) televised show broadcast on the (Chinese) New Year’s Eve to demonstrate the idea of the nation as a family. The officers were specifically looking for someone in Hong Kong who supported such notions as “One China” and “Reunification,” against the backdrop of Sino-British negotiations on the colony’s renationalization. They were eventually sent to Shenzhen, a small town on the Hong Kong border and accidentally heard the song in Mandarin from a car radio. They subsequently performed a background check on the singer and sent back the lyrics to Beijing for approval. The CCP decided that Zhang should be brought to Beijing to perform at the gala.¹⁴ Zhang was an obscure amateur singer in Hong Kong, but the experience of being under the gala’s national limelight inspired him

13 Hou, 1991: 21.

14 “How ‘My Chinese Heart’ was created and become popular” [online].

to establish himself as a “patriotic singer” in the mainland. Since then he has come up with numerous “patriotic songs” customized by Hong Kong’s music industry whose lyrics are tainted with racial terms and whose concepts were initially expressed in “My Chinese Heart.” The official endorsement of his patriotism was legendary. For example, it was no less than Deng Xiaoping’s favorite song when he spent time at home with his children. After the 1984 CCTV spring gala, Hu Yaobang, then CCP general secretary, asked for a tape of Zhang’s performance and learned how to sing the song overnight.¹⁵ During the following year, Hu approved Zhang’s personal request for a national concert tour of patriotic songs to celebrate China’s hosting of the Asian Olympic Games. As a result, Zhang performed more than 200 concerts in China between 1986 and 1987, and has enjoyed the reputation of a “gangtai patriotic singer” ever since.¹⁶

To be fair, the creation of “Descendants of the Dragon” and “My Chinese Heart” did reflect a spontaneous urge of patriotism and identity anxiety, and the former in particular. However, their reception by the mainland propaganda authorities provided incentives for mimics, and many gangtai patriotic songs that followed were the results of conscious efforts to cater to such patriotic “market” demand and an indication of a tacit collaboration between the party-state and the gangtai capitalist cultural producers. The creation was essentially an exchange of patriotism for market entry, a “patriotic tribute” as it were, and thus far from a sincere expression of genuine patriotism. In paying such a “patriotic tribute,” the producers often fall into a pattern of one-upmanship in its display.

The creation of gangtai patriotic songs follows the mode of capitalist cultural production with the necessary extra procedure of political censorship, either from China or a kind of self-censorship internalized by the producers through years of experience in collaborating with Chinese censors. The Chinese cultural authorities, through such agents as the organizing committees of public or international events held in China and requiring theme songs, permitted the entry of these products into the market and promoted them through official recommendations, press coverage and marketing advantages. There are two ways to initiate such a collaboration: either the issue of work orders by the mainland authorities, often in the form of those organizing commissions or committees, to gangtai pop culture producers; or, and this is more common, the spontaneous submission of “products” to the mainland authorities by the gangtai producers. In both cases the producers “customize” their products to

15 “Hu Yaobang Learned how to sing ‘My Chinese Heart’ overnight” [online].

16 “Zhang Mingmin: Singing patriotic songs is my lifelong career” [online].

suit the individual singers' character and style, a common practice in the pop music industry.

A traditional center-periphery relationship may be useful in our understanding of this relationship between Beijing and gangtai music industry. The periphery (Hong Kong and Taiwan) purports to speak in the center's (Beijing's) voice in order to facilitate the latter's agenda by constructing a new identity applicable to all "Chinese" and thus transcend national and political boundaries and establish a "patriotic" global alignment. This is mainly the center's ideological project, but the periphery does this in an ostensibly unprompted and ingenuous manner. This pattern of a periphery speaking in the center's voice actually has a long history in the PRC's propaganda strategy. Since the 1950s, numerous "ethnic/frontier minority folk songs and dances" have been created in a similar manner to support socioeconomic transformations carried out by the PRC state, such as land reform, road and railway construction and political campaigns such as the Cultural Revolution.¹⁷

An example of such a collaboration between the CCP regime and gangtai cultural producers is the song "The Chinese" (lyrics above), created in 1997 when Hong Kong was in the process of being returned to China. A Music, a Hong Kong based record company, aspired to exploit this historical event and commissioned a lyricist and a musician to compose the song. Both the writer and the musician were Taiwanese and the musician was actually a sales manager for the mainland branch of a Taiwanese music company. The song was customized for Lau Tak Wah, a top Hong Kong pop singer signed to A Music. Lau was well established in China but still wanted to secure and expand his market given the increasing emergence of younger pop singers. As the title of the song clearly demonstrates, this song attempted to beat other gangtai patriotic songs by going so far as to define "Chinese," an undertaking far beyond a pop music product's ideological capacity. But it was such an audacious posture that occupied a patriotic high ground and secured Lau's market share in China. As baidu.com, arguably the most popular search engine in China approvingly introduces, the song "laid down the foundation for Lau's increased market share in China after Hong Kong's return to China"¹⁸ by accommodating the strong

17 Examples of such songs created between the 1950s and the 1970: "The Liberated Tibetan Peasant-Slaves Sing Songs" (*Fan shen nong nu ba ge chang*); "Miao villages now have railroads" (*Huo che xiu jing miao jia zhai*); "On Beijing's Golden Mountains" (*Zai Beijing de jin shan shang*), a "Tibetan folk song," and "A Never-Setting Red Sun on the Prairie" (*cao yuan shang shen qi bu luo de tai yang*), a "Mongol folk song." The latter two both liken Mao to a red sun.

18 "Lau Tak Wah: The background of the creation of 'The Chinese'" [online].

nationalist sentiments prevalent at the time. Ironically, the song was manufactured by two Taiwanese at a time when de-Sinicization characterized Taiwan's mainstream political culture as a result of the Democratic Progressive Party's rise to power. It would therefore be hard to imagine such a song being popular in Taiwan. But it was introduced in China as a patriotic pop song composed by a Taiwanese and performed by a Hong Kong singer. Lau was accordingly rewarded by the Chinese state. In 1999, two years after he sang "The Chinese," he was invited by Jiang Zemin (then CCP general secretary and President) to sing a song titled "I Will Love You for Ten Thousand Years" in Tibet to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of its "liberation," marked by the People's Liberation Army's march into Tibet in 1959 and the ensuing "democratic reform."

Another example is even more illustrative in light of the collaboration. This one concerns Yiu Fai Chow—the lyricist for "The Yellow People" and "The Yellow"—and his engagement in writing the lyrics of gangtai pop songs for the mainland market. Like many gangtai pop song lyricists, Chow mainly writes love songs, but is sometimes also asked to write patriotic or "national" songs, as this genre is known in Hong Kong. Raised in Hong Kong and holding a Ph.D. in cultural studies from Leiden University, Chow is a very sophisticated intellectual and actually does not like patriotic rhetoric at all. But the temptation of market success in the mainland meant that his lyrics were often a struggle between an independent intellectual engagement and a political assignment.

"I was (and still am) intrigued, and troubled, by the role such nationalistic songs might play in the construction of Chineseness," Chow remarked, "especially in connection with the so-called 'renationalization process' of Hong Kong."¹⁹ More importantly, however, our concern here is with how Chinese texts (song lyrics) might be developed to frame Chinese history and identity in narrow nationalist terms, thereby reducing the possibility of defining Chineseness in other terms, such as gender, class or regional space. Chow explains how he had attempted to resist the nationalistic discourse whenever he could, often employing wordplay or avoiding using words and phrases associated with such a discourse. One strategy he often employed was to use the first person singular (I, me) rather than the plural (we, us) whenever the concept of "Chinese" is involved in order to make identity a more individualistically based concept. In 2002, for example, his record company received an order from China's event organization committee to write a theme song for China's football team entering the final round of the World Cup, a heretofore unprecedented sporting accomplishment for China. The designated singer was Leon Lai, a Hong Kong

19 Chow, 2009: 546–547.

pop singer in the mainland. In this case, Chow succeeded twisting the lyrics enough to turn down nationalistic rhetoric.²⁰

But in 2003, Chow faced his most serious challenge yet: defining “Chineseness” in writing lyrics for Nicolas Tse, the most popular gangtai pop singer of all time in China. Tse was going to have a nationwide concert tour in China during the following year, which is the most profitable opportunity for any pop singer. His manager found Chow and asked him to write a song about “Chineseness.” He told Chow that whenever Tse kicked off his concerts in China, he would sing “The Chinese,” and the Chinese audience would “just love it.” This strategy “worked out” quite well. But Tse was unhappy, because the song was not customized for him. It was for Lau Tak Wah, and now Tse wanted his own brand of “patriotic song.” In order to compete with Lau’s signature song, the manager made it clear that the song had to be about Chineseness.

Chow decided to play the wording game again. He attempted a three-fold strategy. Firstly, he problematized the category of “Chinese” by not using the word itself but “yellow people” in order to refer to the Chinese.²¹ The idea, as he explained, is that “yellow people” is more “fluid and open to interpretation and contestation.” In other words, “yellow” was more likely to pass the censorship than “Chinese” if anything seemed inappropriate in the lyrics. Secondly, he played down the sentiment of national victimhood by attributing grievances to atrocities inflicted by Chinese tyrants rather than by foreigners. As he put it in the draft: “yellow people, who buried you with the dead?” and “yellow people, who caused your pain?” Chow explained that the amorphous “who” were meant to remind the Chinese of the stories about Emperor Qinshihuangdi’s tyrannical behavior, such as burying thousands of his tomb-builders to keep the

20 Chow said, “First, by avoiding words associated with victory, I tried to twist the aim of the game from winning to joining. If nationalist sentiments were meant to boost a more militant spirit of fighting and winning, I tried to contain them by invoking a less predictable world of participation and possibilities. Second, by injecting the word ‘your love’ in a way that would also suggest a personal and romantic, rather than national, love, I tried to twist a song of national pride into a mundane love number—I am Chinese, but I am also a mundane lover. When Leon Lai sings ‘I want your love’, does he want the love of the motherland or the love of a girl? Ambivalence, I thought, would be a good antidote to straightforward nationalist longing.” (Ibid.).

21 The Chinese characters in the song’s title and lyrics denoting the Chinese people are *huang zhong ren* (yellow race and people, respectively). In his article, Chow chose to translate them into “yellow people,” omitting the second character. In the context of the lyrics as a whole, I believe “yellow race” is a more accurate translation, but wherever Chow is quoted in this chapter, I have maintained his own translation, i.e., “yellow people.”

construction a secret after it was done, as well as the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre.²² However, these lines were rejected by the commissioning authorities in China. They remarked: “Overall, inappropriate wording. The main objective should be to embody the pride of Chinese people as well as their unyielding spirit.”²³ Chow decide to “give and take” by keeping “yellow people” (“Yellow People, walk on earth”) and thus avoiding “Chinese,” but removed the aforementioned lines alluding to the sufferings inflicted by China’s own tyrants.

One question remains unanswered in reading Chow’s explanation: if “Chinese” was not used for its undertone of a collective identity, then “yellow people” is even more problematic for its obviously racialized connotation. As a sophisticated intellectual, how is it possible that the strong aversion to nationalist expression coexists with an insensitivity to an overt racial term? One explanation may be found in Hou Dejian’s case. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Hou announced that he would like to drop the line “two blacks and one yellow” in the “dragon song” for its exclusion of non-Han minorities in the category “Chinese,” but he never realized that doing so was racist thinking. An insensitivity or even blindness to intra-Chinese racism seems somehow common among Chinese intellectuals, and they tend to fall short of admitting the problem even when they sense something wrong with the rhetoric. In fact, the production (in Hong Kong and Taiwan) and promotion (in the mainland) of the whole category of “gangtai patriotic songs” already demonstrates a stark absence of a basic sense of political correctness or civility in Chinese culture. While lines implicating domestic tyranny were rejected, Chow’s explicitly racist revision was approved by China’s censors. When the song’s DVD album was released, the tagline on its cover promoted it as reflecting “the essence of Chinese culture” and “the spirit of the new generation.”

The Interaction between *Gangtai* Patriotic Songs and Chinese Popular Nationalism

The role of popular culture—especially music and songs—in shaping public consciousness and perceptions in an industrialized and mass media society has been extensively discussed. For example, Theodor W. Adorno’s classical argu-

22 Qinshihuangdi was the founder of the Qin Dynasty (221–206 BCE), the first centralized empire in Chinese history. A notorious tyrant, he mobilized the population to build his tomb when he was alive and allegedly buried all labourers when it was completed to keep the construction secret.

23 Chow, 2009: 558.

ment suggesting that the cultural industry manufactures and indoctrinates false consciousness into passively receptive audiences through standardized expressive forms can apply to *gangtai* patriotic songs.²⁴ An analysis of a “late capitalist cultural phenomenon” is particularly relevant to the understanding of cultural manipulation under a “socialist” party-state. A great number, if not all, of those *gangtai* patriotic songs were customized and manufactured with a clearly-defined ideological agenda and their lyrics are “standardized” by using the same or slightly modified set of racial idioms and metaphors. Essentially serving as an ideological commodity for the party-state’s mass consumption, this political genre of pop music appears to be individualized—many songs were created to suit the characters of different individual singers in order to make them appear more genuinely “patriotic.” But, as Adorno and the Frankfurt school point out, a close look at pop music market communications will also find that the Chinese audience is not a mere passive recipient of the message sent to them in the music, but an active participant in the development of the genre, given that the Internet has changed a previously one-way communication mode and allowed the audience’s voice to be heard.

As with pop culture in many countries, the main audience of *gangtai* pop songs in China are young people and especially students. But since these songs address political subjects, their influence has reached far beyond a specific age cohort to include various groups of people concerned with or affected by pop music’s social role. Although many Chinese realize that many *gangtai* pop singers perform patriotic songs to gain market share in the Chinese market, there is generally insufficient evidence to suggest they are aware of the fact that these songs were manufactured or even customized for mainland Chinese consumption as a result of complicity between mainland nationalistic politics and *gangtai* capitalist cultural production. They may not be as naïve as to believe that individual *gangtai* singers are genuinely “patriotic”—in fact, many Chinese even consider them cynical. But such skepticism concerning the motives of some *gangtai* pop stars never extends to the creation of the music genre itself, and its products have been received enthusiastically by the Chinese audience.

The dialogue between the two ends of patriotic communication takes many forms. Whether and how much these *gangtai* pop stars are “patriotic”—not so much with regard to their sincerity, but with regard to their performance and behavior—often constitutes a large part of the online discussions among Chinese netizens. These reward enthusiastic “patriotic singers” with enormous profits and punish the less enthusiastic (for example, those who unwittingly

24 Adorno, 1941.

refer to themselves as “Taiwanese” or “Hong Kongers” instead of “Chinese,” or who participate in politically misaligned events outside China) with harsh criticism and even boycotts. A case in point is when SHE, a three-girl Taiwanese group popular in China, allegedly referred to themselves as “not Chinese, but Taiwanese” in an interview in Japan. This led to a spontaneous boycott campaign among Chinese netizens against SHE’s concert tours in China, and many believe that this also ruined their opportunity to be selected for the CCTV 2006 spring gala—a promotional opportunity any *gangtai* pop singer would dream about.²⁵ Their group’s producers responded to the crisis by manufacturing the song “Chinese Language” to pacify the angry mainland pop music fans during the following year (2006).

However, the most important part of the communication or interaction is idiomatic: some of these songs’ lyrics have entered public usage in nationalist language. “Two blacks and one yellow,” “Descendants of the Dragon” and “Descendants of the Yan and Huang Emperors” have been chanted as a more sentimental expression for “Chinese” both inside and outside China. In 2008, the year in which China hosted the Olympics, the world witnessed a significant outburst of Chinese nationalism. This was demonstrated in rallies supporting Beijing’s Olympics in many global cities and protesting the Western media’s alleged smearing campaign against China, in which these expressions were essentially identity-related catchphrases for patriotic overseas Chinese. In London, a young Hong Konger-Briton was chosen to participate in the torch relay. By sheer chance, his name happened to contain the Chinese character (*long*), meaning “dragon.” A widespread interview with him by a major Chinese TV network was entitled “Zhang Jinglong: the descendent of the Dragon among the torchbearers in London.”²⁶ During the same year in China, competitions were held for songs, poems and essays promoting patriotism. Many submissions identified the Chinese with “descendants of the Dragon” and “two blacks and one yellow,” clearly showing the influence of *gangtai* patriotic song lyrics.²⁷

25 Whether SHE really denied their “Chineseness” on that occasion has never been clear, and many SHE fans believe that the allegation was an insidious rumour designed to undermine SHE’s popularity in China, possibly committed by their rivals. See “Are SHE really elements of Taiwan independence?” [online].

26 “Zhang Jinglong: the descendent of the Dragon among torchbearers in London.” [online]

27 For example, one middle-aged woman submitted a poem entitled “Glorious Torchbearer” in which she writes: “I am a glorious torchbearer, one of those descendents of the Dragon . . . black eyes and black hair, my eternal pride.” Han Mei, “Glorious Torchbearer” [online].

The influence of these lyrics was so pervasive that a correspondent for a mainland Chinese news journal once ridiculed overseas Chinese patriotism: “numerous times, on numerous stages—in spring festival celebrations, spring festival get-togethers, overseas students’ tea parties, overseas Chinese banquets and dancing parties, ‘Pearl of the Orient,’ ‘Descendants of the Dragon,’ ‘My Chinese heart,’ ‘The Great Wall will never fall,’ ‘the Chinese,’ ‘Love my China’ will have been sung repeatedly. With hot tears in their eyes and high-pitched or often raucous voices, and hand in hand, the singers’ bodies lean to the left as they sing ‘Western outfits dress me/But my heart will always be Chinese,’ and then to right as they sing ‘black eyes, black hair, forever and ever I am a descendent of the Dragon’; as if [they were puppets and] their necks were pulled by an invisible string.”²⁸ The idiomatic influence of *gangtai* patriotic songs in China can also be found in the lyrics of many “made-in-the-mainland” patriotic songs. Consider, for example, “Dear China, I love you” a song created in 2001 for China’s “Great Western Development” campaign (*xi bo da kai fa*), proclaiming “the yellow face is China’s flag,” yet using many non-Han—i.e., non-yellow—ethnic folk elements.²⁹ “I am proud I am Chinese,” a song honored as one of the 100 patriotic songs, proclaims:

Among countless blue and brown eyes, I have a pair of black, diamond-like eyes/I am proud, I am Chinese/among countless white skins and black skins, I have yellow, earth-like skin/I am proud, I am Chinese . . . My ancestors were the first to walk out of jungle/My ancestors were the first to start farming.³⁰

Wang Huairang (1942–2009), the lyricist, won many official honors, one of which was the “people’s poet” by the official China Writers’ Association. The poem was recommended for use in various patriotic education events, such as recitations for school shows and celebrations of public holidays or important anniversaries.³¹ It was also set to music in order to make it a song. A more common practice in mainland patriotic education that shows the impact of *gangtai* patriotic songs’ is the various competitions dedicated to the creation of patriotic songs, especially in schools. One such song, “The Faith of the Dragon,”

28 “Black eyes, black hair, forever and ever a descendent of the Dragon.” [online]

29 “Dear China, I love you” [online].

30 “I am proud, I am a Chinese.” [online]

31 For several examples of the poem being read with background music in popular shows, see http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XODMzOTI2MDA=.html and http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMTU2NTcxMzY=.html.

appeals to the “yellow face,” “Chinese soul,” “descendants of the Yan and Huang Emperors,” “greatness of 5000 years of civilization,” glory of “heavenly dynasty,” national humiliation and the resolve to revive, and proclaims that “the earth knows our might” and that “the sky is waiting for us to fly.”³²

One Chinese netizen’s spontaneous revision of the lyrics of the song “The Yellow Race” reveals more about a vengeful spirit hidden in contemporary Chinese nationalism, one which considers the whole world as the hateful “Other.” This netizen, writing under the online alias “the shield of *Huaxia*” (*Hua xia dun pai*, *Huaxia* refers to China) proclaims that “After 500 years, it’s finally my turn to step onto the stage” (in the original song “Yellow Race,” it is “5,000 years,” and the revision implies that China only lagged behind in modern times), “the yellow as a whole” will “conquer the world with courage.” And finally, where the “Yellow Race” proclaims “With the yellow heaven above/you will see how I become a true man,” the revisionist declares “With the yellow heaven above/you will see how I kill in four corners of the world.”³³ Such a militant spirit was not entirely the revisionist’s invention: in the song’s music video, Nicolas Tse is depicted wearing ancient Chinese imperial armor with numerous armored extras lined up behind him and wielding flags and halberds in an impressive display of ancient China’s might.

Analyses

In analyzing the development of a pop music genre employing racialized concepts to serve a nationalist agenda, three major questions stand out. The first is why the lyrics of the *gangtai* patriotic songs have to be racialized, or why the producers did not choose “colorless” nationalistic or patriotic language? The answer is that, conventional appeal of racism to nationalism notwithstanding, it is because the patriotic Chinese identity of these *gangtai* singers is ambiguous: they were not born and politically socialized in mainland China and none of them is a PRC citizen (many of them actually hold Western, Japanese or Singaporean passports). In order to claim their “Chineseness,” therefore, their lyrics must play up physical and biological characteristics of perceived Chineseness or “yellowness.” The lyrics of *gangtai* patriotic songs assert that the “Chineseness” is essentially innate and immutable, and thus as long as one has “two black and one yellow,” he/she shares the same ancestors, blood and, more allusively, a “Chinese heart,” with the mainland Chinese, regardless of all

32 “Patriotic Lyric ‘Faith of the Dragon’” [online].

33 “I have rewritten the lyrics of the ‘Yellow Race’” [online].

the social, political and cultural factors that might identify a person otherwise. These concepts are so well received among many Chinese that whenever a scientist, cultural or political celebrity of Chinese ancestry emerges outside China, questions and discussions about “how much is he/she still Chinese?” or “what do his/her achievements mean to China?” will certainly be seen in the Chinese media and on the Internet.³⁴

The second question is why such a racialized discourse is so readily accepted and further developed in mainland China. The answer involves a brief review of the modern Chinese history of nationalism. The racialized concepts of Chineseness articulated in these *gangtai* patriotic songs reveal a long-standing identity complex originating in the forced transformation of a multi-ethnic empire into a modern nation-state (in the late Qing and early republic eras) as well as the necessity of modernizing the nation. At the time, China produced its own racialized nationalist discourse by combining traditional Sino-centrism with Western racist ideas and social Darwinism, which accepted the Western constructed concept of the “yellow race” for the Chinese and put it on the top of the perceived global racial hierarchy, under the whites but with the capacity to catch up with them, and far above the perceived brown, red and black peoples.³⁵ The idea that only white people and Chinese are strong and intelligent and thus the master races of the world has remained unchanged and subconsciously prominent in many Chinese’s perception of the world.³⁶

34 For example, when Roger Yonchien Tsien, a Chinese-American scientist, won the Nobel prize for physics in 2008, he was asked several times by Chinese journalists in news conferences about the implications of his success to “China” and “Chinese scientists.” “Tsien: I am not a Chinese scientist.” [online]. A more interesting example is Gary Locke, the current US ambassador to China. Locke is a second-generation Chinese-American. Along with his Chinese name Luo Jiahui, he also has “two black and one yellow”—a perfect Han Chinese look. Since his nomination, speculations and repudiations on “how much is he still Chinese” have bothered numerous Chinese netizens. After some time living in Beijing, Locke seemed to get used to such a thinking and began to use it for public relations purposes. His long interview with a major Chinese popular history journal was entitled “Luo Jiaohui: My Chinese Heart.” [online]

35 For a systematic study of this issue, see Dikötter, 1992. For the Western construction of “yellowness” and its acceptance in China, see Keevak, 2011.

36 For example, one essay entitled “Thoughts on the Olympics,” and written by a fifth grader in the year of the Beijing Olympics claimed that the Olympics “enables people of black eyes, black hair and yellow skin to hug the people of blue eyes, yellow hair and white skin warmly.” The essay was subsequently recommended as an “exemplary essay” by some websites dealing with elementary Chinese composition. “Thoughts on the Olympics” [online].

This global racial hierarchy delimited the space and the imagination for the contemporary construction of Chinese identity, and its predisposition towards more primordial elements in determining such an identity were absorbed into Chinese nationalism. This kind of nationalism faded away from the surface of ideological discussion in Mao's China, largely because nationalism gave way to its predominance to communism and modernization gave way to revolution. A Marxist-Maoist world- revolutionary universalism replaced a global racial hierarchy and came to define China's worldview for many Chinese. Revolutionary, rather than nationalist, was the most important factor in the collective and individual identity. Indeed, from 1949 to the late 1970s, none of the popular patriotic songs in the PRC featured any racial connotations. But as a once-influential thinking, the racialized discourse was never explicitly criticized or officially denounced as many "Western," "capitalist," "colonialist" or "feudalist" ideas would be. Without being critically reflected upon in the public consciousness, it escaped numerous ideological campaigns and insidiously returned to nationalist articulations in post-Mao China.

One example that demonstrates that such racism was hidden during Mao's time only to come out when the circumstances allowed it to do so is the Chinese racist attitude towards Africans. In the early 1960s, a large group of African students in Beijing—sent there as part of the PRC's first effort towards bringing African students to China—were forced to leave shortly after arriving in China, due in large part to the strong racist sentiments they claimed to have encountered in Chinese society.³⁷ Throughout the entire 1980s, China once again supported the studies of Africans in some major Chinese universities only to find that conflicts between Chinese and African students underlined by an explicit anti-African racial rhetoric took place at many of them. This anti-African racism, it is particularly worth mentioning here, was articulated in the language of the modernization discourse, that is to say, that Africans were not only useless for China's modernization, but also an ungrateful receiver of aid from China, a country still struggling with its own "four modernizations."³⁸ A similar and nastier racist attitude fused with nationalist rhetoric reappeared

37 Emmanuel Hevi's *An African Student in China* is a personal account of that Sino-African encounter, and the author claims that he and other Africans experienced anti-African racism in China. Hevi's book was criticized by some western scholars of the time as exaggerating "petty annoyances." Hevi (1963). Based on a declassified Chinese source, Philip Hsiaopong Liu's recent article concluded that Hevi's book reflected the true situation and the Africans' real feelings. See Liu, 2013.

38 The "Four modernizations" (industry, agriculture, science and technology, and military) were set by the government as national goals between the late 1970s and the 1980s.

during the 2000s as China's advances into Africa encountered difficulties and a large number of Africans emigrated to China.³⁹

Within this background, the racial thinking constructed in the late nineteenth century and hidden between 1950s and the 1970s reappeared in the early 1980s with the importation of the *gangtai* patriotic songs. At the time, Hong Kong and Taiwan were also facing an identity crisis, and the collapse of the old Maoist ideology in mainland China naturally led to the question of what it meant to be Chinese after Mao. It was at that historical juncture that a racialized discourse provided a common ground that transcended the boundaries of political differences between these "Chinese" places and allowed for the construction of a new identity for all Chinese wherever they may be. While this new discourse was popular among ordinary people and embraced by the regime, the Chinese intellectuals also appreciated it as an effective rhetoric for addressing nationalist agendas. An early example of such appreciation is "River Elegy," a 1988 popular TV (cultural program) series aiming at revitalizing the national spirit and emphasizing biological components in the definition of "Chineseness."⁴⁰

To say that all Chinese intellectuals are blind to this kind of racial thinking and racialized discourse is not accurate, but their resistance is ominously sporadic, and often encounters repudiation. A case in point is Tao Dongfeng, a history professor at Beijing Normal University, who posted a short essay in his blog that invoked intense discussions in 2005. Entitled "Stay alerted to racism in pop songs," Tao's essay was specifically concerned with the selection of "The Chinese" for inclusion in the list of 100 "patriotic songs" for middle school students by the Shanghai municipal government. Tao argues that the song defines the Chinese racially and excludes ethnic minorities, and thus cannot be regarded as "patriotic" at all. Tao's criticism was contested by a Western-educated literature scholar from Beijing's Youth Politics College. Employing the concept of "resistance" in post-colonial discourse, the scholar posted a blog post in which she argued that the racialized concepts Tao criticized were exactly what the Chinese needed to enhance their confidence in face of the Western racial superiority, in the same way that black people felt proud of their black skin. This latter essay was widely read and also posted on some official cultural websites.⁴¹

39 Cheng, 2011.

40 For a discussion of "River Elegy," see Dikötter, 1994: 404.

41 Tao, "Stay alerted to racism in pop songs." [online] Yu, "Question Tao Dongfeng's 'Stay alerted to racism in pop songs.'" [online]. The author of this chapter has also published a number

Although the fundamental ideas about racial characteristics and Chinese superiority can be found in the racial thinking formed in the late nineteenth century, most of the specific language and vocabulary, e.g., “two blacks and one yellow,” the “Chinese heart and Chinese blood,” “descendants of the Dragon,” etc., used in *gangtai* patriotic songs and their mainland clones was created by the ‘new’ Chinese patriotism that began in the 1980s. A review of patriotic songs lyrics produced during the war against Japan’s invasion in the 1930s and 1940s finds very little in the way of racial terms, possibly because the racial lines were blurred by the fact that a “yellow race” (Japanese) invaded China while many “white races” (Americans, British and Russians) were now allies.⁴² But language referring to the “Yellow Emperor” or “Emperors of Yan and Huang” and their “descendants” was used to enhance the awareness of being Chinese and provided a sense of Chinese identity in some of the poems.⁴³

The third question is the CCP regime’s attitude towards this kind of racial discourse. Although there is evidence indicating a collaboration between the party-state and the *gangtai* capitalist cultural industry in the manufacturing of such a discourse, what exactly do we know of the CCP’s official stand on such a Han-centric construct of Chineseness? Based on the available data, it is possible to argue that the discourse poses a dilemma to the CCP regime: a useful tool in patriotic education and mobilization on one hand, but one which also carries negative connotations over to Han and non-Han relations on the other hand. In practical terms, the regime avoids the discourse in official policy statements, but allows it in propaganda, education, media and (particularly) pop culture.

This analysis can be supported by an observation of the official attitude—and its disregard by the society as a whole—towards “descendants of the Yan and Huang Emperors.” The “Yan and Huang Emperors” were two legendary tribal leaders who purportedly lived somewhere in the Yellow River Valley, probably in the vicinity of today’s Shaanxi Province, at around 4000–5000 BC. The two emperors have been venerated as ancestors of the Chinese nation in many Han historical narratives. This Han-centered monogenesis of Chinese race and

of essays and articles in Chinese addressing this issue, but since he is a Chinese-American scholar, his work has not been included in this chapter as part of the “Chinese” discussion.

42 Miao Qing, 2007.

43 A well known example of this is the case of Wen Yiduo, a very popular poet between the 1920s and 1940s, who wrote a poem entitled “I am Chinese.” The poem contains some lines with racial connotations such as “I am Chinese, I am Chinese, I am the divine blood of the yellow Emperor . . . my race is like Yellow River.” The poem is currently available online at many educational websites. The translation I used here was taken from Dikötter, 1992.

civilization has been disputed since the 1920s and, in the eyes of many contemporary archaeologists, anthropologists and genealogists is nothing more than a myth, but has remained the most popular alternative term to “Chinese” in public use.⁴⁴ The term was often used during the war against Japan’s invasion (1931–1945) as a catchphrase for arousing nationalist sentiments and disregard for the political differences between various political forces. It was such a valuable and effective concept in patriotic propaganda that even its 1920s critics were led to forsake, or at least stop insisting on, their previous position.⁴⁵ The argument was of little importance in political language during Mao’s time. In 1979, as the political circumstances changed significantly, the central government issued an “Open Letter to Fellow Chinese in Taiwan,” a policy statement that called for a peaceful reunification and used “descendants of Emperor Huang” to identify the Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Straits and thus reintroduce it into the nationalist discourse.⁴⁶ Since then the term has been popular in nationalist discourse and also used in *gangtai* patriotic songs.

In 1984, Mi Zhancheng, a Hui Muslim member of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Congress (CPPCC), wrote a letter to the CCP’s central committee stating that using “descendants of Yan and Huang Emperors” for denoting all the Chinese people was not accurate and inappropriate. Mi made it clear that “Yan and Huang Emperors” were merely the legendary ancestors of Han Chinese, and as a Hui Muslim Chinese, he was concerned about such language’s negative effects on national unity. During the next year, 1985, the CCP’s General Office issued an internally circulated instruction requiring the use of “Chinese people” or “all nationalities of China” in policy statements and official occasions, but admitting that “descendants of Yan and Huang Emperors” appealed to Chinese people in Taiwan, Hong Kong and the overseas Chinese world in general, and could therefore continue to be used in the media for propaganda purposes. During a 1991 meeting on frontier security and ethnic relations, Jiang Zemin, the then general secretary of the CCP, demanded that only “Chinese people” or “all sons and daughters of China” should be used for “domestic purposes.” Jiang was specifically responding to “some ethnic minority people’s dissent of the phrase” and excluded it from “domestic use,” which meant that its use was still permitted overseas. In 1993, Li Ruihuan, the then-Chairman of the CPPCC, proposed the use of “all sons and daughters of the

44 For a discussion of a challenge to the “descendants of Yan and Huang Emperors” argument in the 1920s and 1930s by a famous Chinese scholar of antiquity, see Leibold, 2006: 181–220.

45 Leibold, 2006: 209.

46 Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress [online].

Chinese all over the world" (*Hai nei wai zhong hua er nu*) as an official as well as a popular term for referring to the Chinese wherever they may be. However, in the mid-1990s, the continued persistent and pervasive use of the phrase "Yan and Huang Emperors" provoked criticism once more. The representatives of the ethnically diverse Guizhou Province in the National People's Congress proposed that the term be officially abandoned, a request that was supported by the central government in the form of an official instruction issued by the Propaganda Department of the CCP's central committee in 1995. In 2002, the State Administration of Radio, Film and TV issued an official direction requiring that the phrase should not be used in the media, entertainment and pop culture.⁴⁷

Despite all these dissenting voices from ethnic minority people and requests from the central authorities, "descendants of Yan and Huang Emperors" has remained as the most popular synonym for "Chinese people," both domestically and internationally. A web search on the term will certainly find that the minorities' opposition and the official "ban" on the term have simply been ignored by various groups in Chinese society, many of which are essentially official or semi-official. It is certainly possible that they are not even aware of the official position on the use of the term.⁴⁸ Similarly, if the authorities were serious about not wanting a politically sensitive term to be used approvingly, say "multi-party system" or "freedom of press," they would certainly make sure the ban was carried out. In addition, an official who used the term incorrectly will face sanctions, such as dismissal or, at worst, removal from his or her post, but no one has faced any such consequences for the use "descendants of Yan and Huang Emperors," which is a de-facto violation of repeated official warnings.

The explanation for this unusual ineffectiveness in the CCP's political control system, and for the unusual popular disregard of a repeated official position has a lot to do with the authorities' ambivalence. The CCP regime is currently facing a dilemma concerning the contradiction between an effective patriotic propaganda tool and concerns about Han and non-Han relations. On the one hand, the authorities know the term is politically incorrect and even potentially harmful to ethnic relations, but, on the other hand, it is a

47 Ye [online].

48 For example, an organization named "Congress of the National Sentiments of the Descendants of Yan and Huang Emperors" has held eight meetings, most recently in 2012. The organization has an official background and sees its mission as attracting overseas Chinese investment. See "Congress of the National Sentiments of the Descendants of Yan and Huang Emperors" [online].

time-honored, powerful and popular signifier of a majority-based patriotism. The history of the discussions on the use of the term within the party-state show a somewhat perfunctory dealing with the issue: it is not allowed in principle, but it is used everywhere in practice. In this regard, the authorities' dismissal of Hou Dejian's public request to drop the "two black and one yellow" line from the "dragon song" is also illustrative: if asked seriously, the authorities would say that such a description of the Chinese people is wrong, by the same token as their opposition to the use of "descendants of Yan and Huang Emperors." But they never bothered to change it—it is, after all, a mighty catchphrase for a patriotism that appeals to a majority ethnicity (some ninety-two per cent of the population). Therefore, the pervasive use of "descendants of Yan and Huang Emperors" and "two black and one yellow" is by no means a case of petty neglect that either slipped the official censors' notice or never raised government attention. It is rather a result of a deliberate political pragmatism in the resolution of an ideological dilemma leading to a hands-off policy in actual fact.

Concluding Remarks

In September 2009, and shortly before the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the PRC, the Hong Kong *Wenhui Daily* (*Wen hui bao*), Beijing's mouthpiece in the former colony, published an article entitled "Patriotic Songs of Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Mainland and the Formation of National Identity." The author, Yang Zhiqiang, was a "visiting professor at China's Central Conservatory of Music" and the president of the Business and Professionals Federation of Hong Kong, a pro-Beijing organization. Yang felt that it was unfair that the 100 patriotic songs recommended by Beijing honored only five "*gangtai* patriotic songs."⁴⁹ However, Yang's complaint was baseless. Among the 100, about half were actually dedicated to the party, honoring its glorious history and Mao. Within the remaining half, the *gangtai* songs stood out collectively as the most conspicuous category, given the fact that China has 56 ethnicities and 33 administrative divisions.⁵⁰ The party-state's reward to the pop music genre was generous.

49 Yang, 2009.

50 Among the remaining half, more than 40 songs could not be identified with any ethnicity or geographical region, and only five or six could be associated with the cultural or geographical features of Xinjiang, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Yunnan.

As a political genre of pop music, *gangtai* patriotic songs have played a significant role in the development of contemporary Chinese nationalism since the early 1980s. They contributed a number of racialized concepts about Chinese identity and Chinese history to contemporary China's nationalist politics, as well as a set of highly effective idioms that address these concepts, a form of popular appeal and mass mobilization in a seemingly spontaneous and innocent manner, and finally, a mechanism through which the party-state effectively tames and exploits the power of capitalist cultural production and the market for ideological education. An introduction to and an analysis of this pop music provides a particular prism through which the dynamics and intensity of contemporary Chinese nationalism can be better understood as an interaction between the politics of reconstructing the national identity and the origination and popularization of a racial discourse. As George Mosse points out, racism cannot exist by itself, but is often a symbiont of nationalism.⁵¹

Accompanying the popularity of the racialized Chinese identity constructed in *gangtai* patriotic songs is another, somewhat overlapping, nationalistic cultural phenomenon. This is the emergence and popularity of the "China consciousness," a historicized and ideologized nationalistic awareness that directly invokes the name "China," "Chinese" or anything suggestive of the country and the people in cultural production. As introduced earlier in this chapter, many *gangtai* patriotic songs are entitled in precisely such fashion. Some mainland patriotic songs were also entitled in a similar fashion as early as the late 1970s, when Mao's Cultural Revolution era had just ended, and "China consciousness" was represented in such songs such as "China, China, the Red Sun Never Sets" (1977) and "I love you, China" (1979). Before this time, almost no patriotic songs had titles including the word "China" or "Chinese." Instead, the most popular ones just used "motherland" (for example "Ode to the Motherland," created in 1951, and "My Motherland," created in 1955). In other words, there was no need to project "China," the country's very name, in propagating patriotism during the Mao era. Nowadays, the use of the word "China" or "Chinese" not only in lyrics, but also in titles, has become fashionable. The names of the country and the people have become magical spells evoking patriotic sentiments. Eventually, even they were not thought to be powerful enough, leading to the popularity of "dragon," "Yellow People" or simply "Yellow."

In this regard, the word *Chinoiserie* (China spirit) may be the most illustrative in pop cultural realm. *Chinoiserie* is, according to a popular cyber encyclopedia, a trend in contemporary art that "establishes itself in Chinese and oriental culture and uses Chinese elements" to project a globalized image of

51 Mosse, 1995.

China popular in such cultural industries as advertising, movies, music, fashion, and architecture since the beginning of the new century.⁵² This *Chinoiserie* admires, romanticizes and sentimentalizes anything deemed to be distinctively “China” or “Chinese,” reflected in such songs such as “The Chinese Language” and “The Blue and White Porcelain”—the former created for SHE and the latter for Zhou Jielun, both Taiwanese. The former is an assertive articulation of nationalist pride, and the latter suggests a cultural narcissism associated with a historical melancholy that adorns and mystifies the assumed “Chinese essence” codified in the tenderness and delicacy of ancient artifacts and only open to the Chinese mind and soul. In a way, this cultural fashion joins the trend led by the *gangtai* patriotic songs and followed by their mainland peers in collaborating and reinforcing the “China model,” the political discourse of China’s uniqueness among the world’s civilizations. In today’s China, such a trend continues to develop and deepens the divide between “Us” and “Them,” satisfying the imagination of the “Chinese among Others.”

52 See “Chinoiserie,” 2011.

Japanese as Both a “Race” and a “Non-Race”: The Politics of *Jinshu* and *Minzoku* and the Depoliticization of Japanese-ness

Yuko Kawai

Two indigenous concepts of race, *jinshu* and *minzoku*, are essential to the understanding of nationalism and racism in modern Japan. They were constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries respectively, when Japan was opening itself up to the West and building a modern nation-state. *Jinshu*, consisting of the two characters *jin* [Jpn. human] and *shu* [species], was the Japanese translation of the word “race.” *Minzoku*, a combination of *min* [people] and *zoku* [group], is a notion influenced by the German concept of *Volk* that displaced the concept of *jinshu* in self-representing the Japanese people.¹ The process of constructing the two concepts shows not only the impact of Western ideas of race but also how these ideas were resisted.

The notions of *jinshu* and *minzoku* were employed as means for demarcating boundaries between Japanese and non-Japanese in modern Japan. Yamamuro Shinichi argues that *jinshu* and *minzoku* were key concepts in the creation of modern Japanese identity in relation to its significant Others—Asia and the West—and its national and international political practices.² *Jinshu*, used interchangeably with the concept of *bunmei* [civilization], was often used to advocate Japan’s commonality with Asia and its united defiance of Western political practices based on the latter’s racial order; *minzoku*, used along with the concept of *bunka* [culture], however, was more likely to be employed in the differentiation of the Japanese from other Asian peoples and in the building of a “new racial order” led by Japan.³ Put differently, it is possible to say that on the one hand, *jinshu* indicated “a common fate” in which the Japanese and other Asian peoples were assigned to one racial group and labeled “inferior” in the Western racial order; on the other hand, *minzoku* allowed Japan to leave the Western racial order by releasing itself from this fate.

1 Kawata, 2000: 457–458; Yonaha, 2000: 93; Yun, 1994: 38–46.

2 Yamamuro, 2000.

3 Yamamuro, 2000: 9.

After World War II, in tandem with the transformation of Japan's self-representation from a multiethnic empire to an insular, homogenous nation,⁴ the Japanese tended to avoid using *minzoku* to refer to themselves, such as in the terms *Nihon minzoku* and *Yamato minzoku*; instead, the Japanese simply called themselves *nihonjin*, literally meaning the human [Jpn. *jin*] of Japan [*Nihon*], in governmental, media, and popular discourses.⁵ The words *jinshu* and *minzoku* have been largely used in referring to groups other than the Japanese, as well as in racial/ethnic discriminations and conflicts outside Japan.⁶ Nominally decoupling the Japanese from the concepts *jinshu* and *minzoku*, however, does not necessarily indicate that Japanese people view themselves as a non-race, or that racism does not exist in postwar Japan. Scholars who have critically examined discourses on Japaneseness have pointed out that the Japanese are assumed as a group to be the equivalent of a race due to the essentialization of Japanese culture.⁷ In this light, minority groups in Japan have been exposed to what Philomena Essed calls "everyday racism," explained as "the integration of racism into everyday practices [that] becomes part of the expected, of the unquestionable, and of what is seen as normal by the dominant group"⁸ as well as more explicit racism including verbal and physical racial violence.⁹

How, then, do the historical trajectories of *jinshu* and *minzoku* influence the ways in which present-day Japanese are represented in everyday communication when the words themselves are absent? How does the nominal dissociation of the Japanese from these two concepts imply race and racism in Japan? These and other questions are the concern of this chapter. It will first discuss how *jinshu* and *minzoku* were conceptualized and transformed historically by borrowing and challenging the Western notions of race, *Volk*, and ethnicity. It will then employ an analysis of focus group interviews conducted among Japanese university students to examine how the dominant meaning of Japaneseness is shaped by the concepts of *jinshu* and *minzoku* despite their absence. Finally, it will end by exploring the implications of the concepts' presence and the words' absence on race and racism issues in Japan.

4 Oguma, 1995.

5 Yun, 1994. The word *nihonjin* itself was used interchangeably with *Nihon jinshu*, *Nihon minzoku*, and *Yamato minzoku* before World War II.

6 Kanbe, 2007; Stuart, 2002; Yun, 1994.

7 For example, Yoshino, 1992; Befu, 1993a; and Sugimoto, 1999.

8 Essed, 2002: 188.

9 Okamoto, 2005; Yasuda, 2012.

The Historical Trajectories of *Jinshu* and *Minzoku*

Jinshu and Race

The term ‘race’ originally referred to descent or lineage among a group of people sharing a common origin.¹⁰ It was only in the eighteenth century that race came to be considered an immutable and essentially biological concept. This era was also the heyday of European Enlightenment, whose stress on rationalism and empiricism, as well as “objective” and “scientific” ways of understanding the world, promoted the observation and classification of any natural and social phenomenon including human beings. Naturalists proposed countless divisions of humankind: Some offered three races or varieties (Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian), others four (European, Asian, African, American), or five (Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American, Malay), and some even more.¹¹

Such classifications presuppose a particular hierarchical relationship between humans while creating that same order at the same time.¹² According to Étienne Balibar, “classification and hierarchy are operations of naturalization *par excellence*, or, more accurately, of the projection of historical and social differences into the realm of an imaginary nature.”¹³ The classification of people involves observation and categorization based on a particular “difference.” It cannot be completely neutral because the observer and the socio-historical contexts affect what is perceived as a difference and what are selected as the criteria for differentiation. Categories or groups created by classification come to be naturalized or seen as having existed for all time, a fact which indicates the ideological aspect involved in constructing the concept of race. Moreover, classification incorporates both particularization and universalization.¹⁴ In constructing the yellow or Mongolian race, for example, people in China, Korea, and Japan are totalized by disregarding their socio-historical, cultural, and political differences, making their differentiation from people categorized as black or white possible.

The word *jinshu* entered common use in around the final decades of the nineteenth century with the importation of Western knowledge of race into Japan. Fukuzawa Yukichi, one of most well-known early Meiji era intellectuals (1868–1912) played a major role in popularizing the term and in introducing

10 Banton, 2009; Rattansi, 2007; Kowner & Demel, 2013; and Demel & Kowner, 2013.

11 These categories were proposed by Georges Cuvier, Carl Linnaeus, and Johann Friedrich Blumenbach respectively. See Demel & Kowner, 2013; and Kowner, 2013.

12 Balibar, 1991b.

13 Balibar, 1991b: 56.

14 Balibar, 1991b.

modern Japan's most influential racial classification.¹⁵ In his 1869 book, *Shōchū bankoku ichiran* [Pocket Guides to the Countries of the World], following Johann Friedrich Blumenbach's (1752–1840) classification of five races,¹⁶ but replacing the geographical labels assigned to the five categories with color terms,¹⁷ Fukuzawa stated that whites "are beautiful in their facial and physical features. They are bright and the most civilized. They are the most superior race"; the yellow race "have a short nose and slanted eyes. Although they are resilient and diligent, they are less talented and progressed"; the black race "have a flat nose and unusually large eyes. They are physically very strong but are lazy and the least progressed."¹⁸

Such Western classifications and hierarchies were not simply accepted but also appropriated in Japanese contexts. Within Japan, the Western racial order was replaced with one that differentiated the Japanese race from other minority groups including the Okinawans, the Ainu and the *buraku* people.¹⁹ In applying the Western knowledge of race, late-nineteenth-century Japanese academics differentiated and classified races in terms of skin color, bone structure, personality and cultural products such as ancient clay pots. Representing minority groups as "savage," these scholars sought to become "an observing subject, defying being an observed object by the West."²⁰

During this very period, the Western concept of race was becoming more "scientific" and "universal" through the incorporation of social Darwinism and eugenics. A kind of *jinshu* influenced by these theories appeared, for example, in Takahashi Yoshio's *Nihon jinshu kairyōron* [A Treatise on Improving the Japanese Race] published in 1884, and in Umino Kaitoku's *Nihon jinshu kaizōron* [A Treatise on Remodeling the Japanese Race], published in 1910.²¹ What lay beneath their arguments for "improving" or "remodeling" the Japanese was *fukoku kyōhei*, Japan's state policy for strengthening its military and economic power to vie with Western imperial countries. Adopting the eugenicist idea of artificial selection from the viewpoint of an "inferior" race, Takahashi advocated *kōhaku-zakkon*, or intermarriage between the yellow race and the white

15 Morris-Suzuki, 1998: 85; Yamamuro, 2000: 56.

16 The five categories are: Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American, and Malay.

17 Yamamuro, 2000: 56.

18 Fukuzawa, 1959 [1869]: 462–463.

19 Tomiyama, 1994; Kurokawa, 2004. The *Buraku* people or *burakumin* are an outcast group originating in the Edo era (1603–1868).

20 Tomiyama, 1994: 41.

21 Takahashi, 1884; Umino, 2010 [1910]. A revised edition of Umino's work was published in 1911.

race as a means of competing against the latter. Assuming that the Japanese were inferior to whites in terms of physical features such as height and weight, he suggested that “intermarriage with the superior race will produce a better result for an inferior race.”²²

Some 26 years later, Umino used the word *jinshu* in a way that made it interchangeable with the term *minzoku*. Classifying the competition for survival into three types—body, knowledge, and nation, he contended that the Japanese cannot beat Europeans and Americans in terms of individual physique and knowledge but can do so in *kokkashin* [Jpn. national spirit].²³ National spirit, according to Umino, consists of “the Japanese worshiping and respecting the imperial family, the imperial family caring for the Japanese as their offspring, and ancestor worship.”²⁴ Umino argued that the Japanese should strive to remodel themselves, strengthening the body and increasing the overall knowledge level of the Japanese by means of artificial selection so as to secure the national competitiveness founded on the emperor system, its only edge over the West.²⁵

However, the idea of a *jinshu* in which the Japanese share “a common fate” with people in Asia as “yellow”, made it unfeasible to thoroughly differentiate the Japanese from other Asian people. To this end, another term was necessary. The notion of *minzoku* not only made this possible, but also played a role in building Japan as an imperial nation-state by making regional, class, gender, and other differences invisible and by imagining diverse groups of people as Japanese.²⁶

Minzoku, Race, and Volk

The term *minzoku* entered use in around the 1890s and was popularized in the subsequent two decades.²⁷ This period corresponds to the time in which Japan established itself as an imperial and modern nation-state. These years included such events as the establishment and substantial implementation of a compulsory education system in the 1890s; Japan’s defeat of Qing China in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) and tsarist Russia in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905); and the colonization of Taiwan and Korea. This was also a critical period in the establishment of Japanese as the national language due to

22 Takahashi, 1884: 568.

23 Umino, 2010 [1910]: 89–90.

24 Umino, 1911: 267.

25 Umino, 2010 [1910]: 1911.

26 Yun, 1994.

27 Koyasu, 2006; Yasuda, 1992; Yun, 1994.

rising literacy and the increasing circulation of national newspapers,²⁸ which, as Benedict Anderson has argued, are indispensable factors in the construction of a nation.²⁹

The German concept of *Volk* influenced the construction of the notion of *minzoku*.³⁰ In pre-modern times, *Volk* was used to refer to people in the lower strata of society or the governed, as opposed to the notion of 'nation', which suggested those in the upper strata or those who engaged in governing.³¹ As a concept, however, it grew out of the Romantic movement of nineteenth century Europe, a counter-movement targeting the modernity, universalism, and human rationality stressed in the Enlightenment. *Volk* was then incorporated into the concept of 'nation' as a way to differentiate the German nation from its significant Others, the French and the Jews, who were seen as embodying modernity and rationality and thereby drawing the boundaries between Germans and non-Germans.³² Language, culture, and the land represented critical elements of the German *Volk*. The *Volk* were primarily conceptualized as a linguistic cultural group and simultaneously racialized by essentializing the German language and culture as almost "biological" traits transmitted from German ancestors who had lived in their homeland.³³ *Volk* meant "the union of a group of people with a transcendental 'essence,'" which was viewed as linking "the human soul with its natural surroundings, with the 'essence' of nature."³⁴ Put simply, the nature of the *Volk* was regarded as intricately tied to the natural landscape of the homeland.

The prewar notion of *minzoku* was similarly defined as "a group of people who share 'traditions' based on landscape, history, and culture."³⁵ As in the case of the German *Volk*, language and culture were seen as key elements in the constitution of *minzoku*. In 1894, for example, Ueda Kazutoshi, who studied linguistics in Germany and later became a key figure in the construction of *kokugo*, or Japan's national language, in the Meiji era (1869–1912), defined the Yamato or Japanese *minzoku* as "people who have Japanese spirit—loyalty to the emperor and patriotism—and share the language of the nation."³⁶

28 Gluck, 1985.

29 Anderson, 1991.

30 Kawata, 2000; Yun, 1994.

31 Obara, 2005: 81–82.

32 Hutton, 2005; Mosse, 1964; Obara, 2005.

33 Hutton, 2005.

34 Mosse, 1964: 4.

35 Yasuda, 1992: 72.

36 Ueda, 1968 [1894]: 110. Ueda used *jinshu* and *minzoku* interchangeably.

Calling the Japanese language “Japanese spiritual blood,” Ueda argued that “Japan’s fundamental national character [Jpn. *kokutai*] is mainly sustained by the spiritual blood.”³⁷ Here the Japanese language is equated with blood, a critical biological material necessary for the sustenance of human bodies. This intensified the racialization of the Japanese *minzoku*, who were imagined as having blood ties with each other. Moreover, visible biological entities such as the physical body stressed in the notion of *jinshu* were replaced with blood, an invisible entity, in the idea of *minzoku*. Consequently, *minzoku* retained the racial dimension and eliminated the term *jinshu* at the same time.

The conceptual borrowing of *Volk* occurred partly because Japanese academics and elites saw similarities between Germany and Japan as “latecomer” modern nation-states.³⁸ Nevertheless, *minzoku* was not completely identical to *Volk*; it was localized under the influence of the kind Japanese nationalism that prevailed at the time. In the prewar nationalist ideology of Japan as a family nation [*kazoku kokka*] in which the imperial system played the central role, the Japanese *minzoku*, “a group of people who are related to each other, sharing the same blood from the same ancestors,” were the emperor’s children, and he their symbolic father, and thus descendants of the imperial family.³⁹ In addition, as Sakai Naoki has argued, the three unities of Japanese language, Japanese culture, and the Japanese nation formed an integral part of this nationalist ideology.⁴⁰

When Japan sought to consolidate imperial rule over Asia in the 1930s, the notion of the Japanese *minzoku* faced a dilemma in the form of differentiating the Japanese from the Asian people that Japan had colonized, particularly Koreans and Taiwanese, while simultaneously incorporating them into the Japanese as the emperor’s subjects. The solution was to make the Japanese *minzoku* double-layered—the “pure” or “original” Japanese and the rest—a notion which overlapped with another binary division between *naichi* [the inner territory of Imperial Japan] and *gaichi* [the outer or colonized territories of Imperial Japan].⁴¹ Although the argument that the Japanese *minzoku* were a “racially” mixed people was influential and used as a means of justifying Japan’s colonial rule in Asia, it also undermined the boundaries between the Japanese and other Asian peoples by nullifying the differences and hierarchical relationships between them and thereby threatening Japan’s colonization

37 Ueda, 1968 [1894]: 110.

38 Kawata, 1999: 457; Koyasu, 2006: 13–14.

39 Yasuda, 1992: 69.

40 Sakai, 1996.

41 Koyasu, 2006.

of Asia itself.⁴² Therefore, the logic adopted was that "The Japanese *minzoku* were originally a mixed-race but have been racially integrated and 'purified' over the centuries."⁴³

Minzoku and Ethnicity

After World War I, the cultural notion of ethnicity slowly began to replace the "biological" race theories which lost support in such contexts as the international criticism of Nazi racism, UNESCO's rejection of the idea that social categories of race reflect biological differences, and the decolonization of Africa and Asia. In English, the term "ethnic" was used for referring to the "foreigners" or "heathens" in the fifteenth century.⁴⁴ Rarely used by the late eighteenth century and considered an obsolete word, it was revived during World War II because "race" became increasingly linked with Nazi racial policies.⁴⁵ During the 1920s and 1930s, the term "ethnic group" was proposed for use instead of "race"; anthropologists and sociologists such as Franz Boas and Robert Park had already started attacking the so-called biological explanations of differences among human groups and employing the concept of culture instead.⁴⁶ Today, ethnicity is often associated with cultural differences, whereas race is associated with physical and biological differences. Furthermore, the term "ethnic group" is generally used for referring to minority groups.⁴⁷

However, replacing the word "race" with "ethnicity" did not necessarily indicate the disappearance of its meaning. After all, as Étienne Balibar has contended, "culture can also function like a nature."⁴⁸ In addition, ethnicity was also tied to the change from "biological" or "scientific" racism to a racism based on cultural differences. The latter, also referred to by such terms as "new racism," "neo-racism," "differentialist racism," and "cultural racism"⁴⁹ is "a racism whose dominant theme is not biological heredity but the insurmountability of cultural difference."⁵⁰ Consequently, racism has become more invisible and difficult to deal with because "cultural racism" has made it possible to argue

42 Sakano, 2005b.

43 Sakano, 2005b: 248.

44 Fenton, 2010: 14.

45 Fenton, 2010; Sollors, 2002.

46 Jackson and Weidman, 2004; Malik, 1996.

47 Fenton, 2010.

48 Balibar, 1991a: 22.

49 See Barker (1981) for "new racism," Balibar (1991a) for "neo-racism," Taguieff (1999) for "differentialist racism," and Rattansi (2007) for "cultural racism."

50 Balibar, 1991a: 21.

that any exclusion and discrimination based on cultural differences does not constitute racism.

In the postwar era, *minzoku* has come to imply ethnicity rather than *Volk*.⁵¹ After World War II, Japan was placed under the control of the Allied Powers' General Headquarters (GHQ) (1945–1952) and suffered from severe poverty. According to Oguma Eiji, conservative politicians and intellectuals avoided referring to the Japanese as a *minzoku* until the mid-1950s because the word was perceived as linked to prewar militaristic nationalism. Their leftist counterparts, on the other hand, transformed the concept and used it in a new way.⁵² Dissociating the concept of *minzoku* from its prewar notion, the leftists used the term '*Nihon* [Japanese] *minzoku*' to mean a collegial group of people united in their struggle against foreign occupation, and equated themselves with people in Africa and Asia who were seeking self-determination and liberation from Western colonization.⁵³ Put differently, the Japanese *minzoku* were defined as a "minority" group in relation to the Allied Powers in the sense that the former were less powerful than the latter. The leftists further used the phrase *tan'itsu* [single] *minzoku* in a positive sense as opposed to *ta* [multi] *minzoku*, which was seen as characteristic of the empire and an entity to be dismantled.⁵⁴ However, when the GHQ occupation ended and Japan's economic recovery was back on track, the leftists' influence withered and the rhetoric of the Japanese as an oppressed *minzoku* became less appealing. By the 1960s, the Japanese rarely called themselves *Nihon* or *Yamato minzoku*; instead, the term *tan'itsu minzoku* came to imply an essential trait of Japanese society, losing its critical nuance and becoming a term largely used by rightists.⁵⁵

In addition, during the GHQ occupation of Japan, *jinsyu* was barred from becoming a domestic issue despite the conceptualization of the Japanese as the oppressed. The GHQ, led by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), General Douglas MacArthur, banned and censored any discussion of race and racism as well as any references to the Japanese as a "colored race" in the Japanese media.⁵⁶ According to historian Yukiko Koshiro, the American authorities were concerned that their legitimacy could be undermined if the Japanese media were to attack the undemocratic and discriminatory treatment of racial minority groups in the United States, which claimed to be a

51 Stuart, 2002: 193–97.

52 Oguma, 1998: Chapter 21; 2002: Chapters 5–9.

53 Oguma, 1998: Chapter 21.

54 Oguma, 2002b: 260.

55 Oguma, 2002b: Chapters 9–12.

56 Koshiro, 1999: 63, 65.

democratic state.⁵⁷ These fears were unwarranted because the Japanese ruling elites did not complain about the censorship given that "the same logic employed to protest U.S. racism was directly applicable to Japan's colonial rule in Asia."⁵⁸ Ironically, in prewar Japan, critiques of Western racism existed for the sake of justifying Japan's colonization of Asia; in this period of postwar Japan, criticisms of Western racism and self-criticisms of Japanese racism had almost vanished from the dominant Japanese discourses.⁵⁹ By disconnecting the Japanese from the two Japanese terms for race, *jinshu* and *minzoku*, racism came to be perceived as "irrelevant" to Japanese people and society.

Nihonjin and Nihonjinron

Since the 1960s, the Japanese have been commonly referred to as *Nihon-jin* [lit. Japan human], or Japanese people, in the public discourse,⁶⁰ while the word *minzoku* has come to be used primarily in the context of describing ethnic conflicts outside Japan, ethnic minorities, and indigenous people.⁶¹ Yun Kōncha has contended that the term *nihonjin* worked to cover up Japan's responsibility for its colonial rule and wars of aggression in Asia by cutting itself off from the prewar nationalist ideology in which the Japanese were designated as a *minzoku*.⁶² Yun has also suggested that the word *nihonjin* produced "a hollowing-out of *minzoku* from Japanese identity" and thereby created "the perception that the Japanese are not a *minzoku*, and therefore that Japan does not have *minzoku* problems."⁶³ In other words, not calling themselves *minzoku* allowed the Japanese people to not only blur the nation's imperial past and its consequences, epitomized by a substantial number of people of Korean descent living in Japan, but also to imagine themselves as a *tan'itsu* [single] *minzoku* and thus render minority groups invisible.

This issue is of singularly great importance. While the Japanese no longer called themselves *minzoku*, the idea of Japan as a *tan'itsu minzoku* nation prevailed. Okamoto Masataka argues that despite the use of the word *minzoku* in the notion *tan'itsu minzoku*, this *minzoku* has been left "nameless" or unspecified, enabling the Japanese people to feel as if they were not one

57 Koshiro, 1999: 62.

58 Sakai, 2008: 196.

59 Sakai, 2008: 196–7.

60 Yun, 1994.

61 Stuart, 2002: 193–97.

62 Yun, 1994: 13.

63 Yun, 1994: 6.

themselves.⁶⁴ This “nameless *tan’itsu minzoku*” view, coined by Okamoto, is evident in young Japanese people’s remarks such as “I don’t know what *minzoku* I belong to” and “I have never thought I belong to a *minzoku*.”⁶⁵ Furthermore, this view overlaps with the “hollowing-out of *minzoku* from Japanese identity” posited by Yun. Dissociating the Japanese from the *minzoku* concept did not mean the disappearance of Japanese identity. The boundaries of Japaneseness remained intact, and yet its filling, namely the prewar notion of *minzoku*, was “hollowed-out” or eliminated without sufficient reflection.

The resulting vacuum was filled by the public discourse of national identity known as *Nihonjinron* [lit. debates on Japaneseness]. During the 1970s and 1980s, *Nihonjinron* played a significant role in popularly defining the Japanese [*nihonjin*] as a cultural group. *Nihonjinron* refers to “the vast array of literature which thinking elites have produced to define the uniqueness of Japanese culture, society, and national character.”⁶⁶ It was “a reaction against Western ideological hegemony” that explained Japanese cultural “uniqueness” by appropriating the Western definition of Japan to distinguish Japan from the West.⁶⁷ If the West used Orientalism to produce “their” difference, *Nihonjinron* meant producing “our” difference that has been actively used for the reaffirmation of Japanese identity.⁶⁸

Although proponents of *Nihonjinron* tend to characterize the Japanese and Japanese society in a seemingly apolitical manner, it involves highly political assumptions and implications. During this period, *Nihonjinron* typically claimed that Japanese cultural uniqueness lies in the following characteristics: conformity, groupism or collectivism, a vertical or hierarchical social structure [*tate shakai*], homogeneity, mutual psychological dependence among in-group members (*amae*), and a high-context or indirect communication style, among many others.⁶⁹ These characteristics were posited against those that are regarded as most prevalent in the United States in particular: individualism, a horizontal or “egalitarian” social structure, psychological independence, and a low-context or explicit communication style.⁷⁰ In short, the meaning of Japaneseness was constructed by utilizing the West as the significant discursive Other.

64 Okamoto, 2011.

65 Okamoto, 2011: 77.

66 Yoshino, 1992: 2.

67 Revell, 1997: 59.

68 Yoshino, 1992: 11.

69 Befu, 1993b, 2001; Yoshino, 1992.

70 Befu, 1993b, 2001; Yoshino, 1992.

Moreover, the central premise of *Nihonjinron* was "equivalency and mutual implications among land, people (i.e., race), culture, and language," or the idea that "only those who practice the culture also speak the language and have inherited Japanese 'blood' from their forebears who have always lived on the Japanese archipelago."⁷¹ This pertains to what Sakai Naoki has called the three unities of Japanese language, Japanese culture, and the Japanese nation which constituted the pre-war notion of the Japanese *minzoku*.⁷² *Nihonjinron* thus functioned to depoliticize the Japanese as a cultural group without losing its *minzoku* aspect at the same time.

After the collapse of the bubble economy in the early 1990s, *Nihonjinron* lost the popularity it enjoyed in the 1970s and the 1980s. However, after the 1990s and in the light of economic and cultural globalization, exclusive and essentialized ideas of Japaneseness were still produced by diversifying Japan's discursive Other. In "the *Nihonjinron* of the era of globalization," not just the West but also non-Western areas and people are incorporated as Others.⁷³ With the rise of other Asian economies, Asia, and particularly China and Korea, are now emerging as a significant Other for the construction of Japaneseness.

Being a "Race" and a "Non-Race" in Present-day Japan: An Empirical Study

In order to examine how Japaneseness is conceptualized in relation to the notions of *jinshu* and *minzoku* in everyday discourse, I conducted three one-hour focus group interviews with university students in the Tokyo metropolitan area. This form of interviews was chosen for three reasons. First, it provides an opportunity for observing the range of people's ideas and perspectives on a specific issue.⁷⁴ Second, a focus group makes it possible to create more "natural" or "everyday-like" situations than an individual interview because participants interact with and influence each other.⁷⁵ Third, ideas about the meaning of Japaneseness are not personally generated; they are constructed, maintained, and challenged in the collective discursive spaces that exist in Japanese society. Each group consisted of six to eight people who were acquainted with each other, and 21 students participated altogether. Apart from one Chinese

71 Befu, 1993a: 116.

72 Sakai, 1996.

73 Iwabuchi, 2007: 221.

74 Morgan, 2004.

75 Krueger & Casey, 2000.

participant who had been educated in Japan since she arrived in the fifth grade and one participant of mixed Japanese-Korean ancestry, all participants were Japanese nationals born and raised in Japan. The author served as moderator and conducted the interviews on the basis of two main questions: “What kind of people does ‘the Japanese’ refer to?” and “Are the Japanese a *jinshu*, a *minzoku*, and/or a cultural group?”⁷⁶

Jinshu and the Japanese

Most of the interviewees opposed the suggestion that the Japanese are a *jinshu*. The repeatedly expressed idea was that *jinshu* refers to categories based on differences in skin color and physical appearance [Jpn. *mitame*] represented by white and black people. Despite the opposition to the idea of the Japanese as a *jinshu*, they said that the “face” in its physical meaning plays an important role in characterizing the Japanese. One participant argued, for example, that “in general, if a person has a Japanese face, that person is Japanese” (Group 2-interviewee K). Likewise, another participant suggested that “the Japanese are people who look like Japanese, people with faces like ours” (Group 1-F). More specifically, “the Japanese face” was described as “a flat nose and slanted eyes” (Group 3-S) and “a flat face” (Group 3-P). The point of reference in this depiction of the Japanese face is apparently the “white” European face, which was also seen in the illustrations of racial groups by Blumenbach introduced by Fukuzawa in the early Meiji era.⁷⁷

However, physical appearance alone did not determine a person’s *jinshu*; nationality and language were also pointed out as significant markers. One participant commented that “[Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese] are similar in their physical appearance but speak completely different languages. . . . So I think we are not the same *jinshu*. I feel they are different and foreign” (Group 3-R). One interviewee answered that *jinshu* was concerned with “language” (Group 2-G). The following opinions exemplify the conflation between *jinshu* and nation: “What first comes to my mind when I hear the word *jinshu* is skin color or racism against black people. When I think about it, I feel *jinshu* has to do with country as well. For example, Spain has one *jinshu*” (Group 1-B). According to these definitions, the Japanese are a *jinshu* even though the participants quoted above all answered that the Japanese were not. Here *jinshu* overlaps in

76 The interviews were conducted in Japanese.

77 As for the “Mongolian variety,” Blumenbach (2000) claimed that the “face [is] broad, at the same time flat and depressed, the parts therefore less distinct, as it were running into one another, glabella flat, very broad; nose small, apish; cheek usually globular, prominent outwardly, the opening of the eyelids narrow, linear” (p. 28).

part with the prewar notion of *minzoku*: The Japanese are differentiated from the Chinese and Koreans by denying that the Japanese are a *jinshu* and by arguing that the Japanese do not belong to the same *jinshu* as the Chinese and the Koreans due to differences in language and nationality.

Some participants argued that the Chinese and the Koreans, who, at least according to the Western dominant idea of race, are members of the same race as the Japanese, have a different physical appearance. The only interviewee who agreed that the Japanese are a *jinshu* stated: "*Jinshu* is about differences in physical appearance . . . it reminds me of white and black people, and we are Orientals [Jpn. *tōyōjin*] or rather Japanese. The Chinese and Japanese are both called Asians [*ajiajin*] but our faces are different. So I think my *jinshu*, in the sense of difference in physical appearance, is Japanese" (Group 3-Q). A similar discourse emerged in Group 2, as can be seen in the following exchange:

- K: Generally, Japanese eyes are bigger [than Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese].
 G: But you can always make your eyes bigger with plastic surgery.
 K: People often think of me as Korean, saying my eyes are Korean.
 J: I can see that. . . . I also feel Japanese eyes are bigger.

In this exchange, the eyes are singled out as a physical feature that distinguishes the Japanese from other Asians. It should be remembered that "slanted eyes" have often been stressed as a marker of difference with regard to the yellow race in eighteenth and nineteenth century Western treatises on race.⁷⁸ Although one participant pointed out the meaninglessness of comparing eyes among Asians due to the availability of such means as plastic surgery for altering body parts, this idea failed to gain support from other participants, and the discussion kept focusing on differentiating Japanese eyes from those of other fellow "yellows" in Asia. However, after this discussion, J (Group 2), who contended that Japanese eyes were bigger, also engaged in the following exchange:

- H: I can't tell the Japanese from the Chinese in Chinatown [in Yokohama].
 J: I think that comes from the fixed idea that Chinese are working in Chinatown. In Shin-Ōkubo [in Tokyo], there are lots of Korean restaurants and shops these days. Doesn't it often happen that you thought people working there were Korean but they are actually Japanese?

78 Blumenbach (2000).

In this statement, J admits that it is difficult to recognize whether a person is Chinese, Korean, or Japanese. If, as J argued, preconceived ideas determine what people can see, which kind of fixed idea is influencing the observation that Japanese eyes are bigger? This oscillation in stressing the differences in physical appearance between the Chinese or the Koreans and the Japanese and revealing difficulties in distinguishing them demonstrates the instability of differentiating the Japanese from Asians in the *jinshu* sense.

In the following series of comments made in Group 3, one interviewee who initially argued that the Chinese, the Koreans, and the Japanese are all the same race, ended up revising that opinion in the face of opposition from other students:

- P: Many people in Japan may not think Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese are the same *jinshu*. . . . But I feel it isn't so strange to say that we are the same *jinshu* because I can't tell whether a person passing by on the street is a Chinese or Korean. That means we don't look so different.
- S: Really? Chinese and Koreans look different [from Japanese][!]
- P: No[!]
- O: A little different. Eyes[!]
- T: I usually don't look at their face, but I can easily see whether they are Chinese or Korean when they are in Japan for sightseeing.
- P: I can also recognize them in that situation because they are in groups.
- T: Oh, that's right. But in Shibuya or Harajuku,⁷⁹ I can tell by what they have or put on. It is almost like their skin color is different from ours.

Right after this, P started talking about a “very noisy” group of Chinese tourists in Kamakura and said that “I also feel it is difficult to say that we belong to the same *jinshu* as such people.” This exchange epitomizes Balibar's statement that “culture can also function like a nature.” First, P argued that the Chinese, the Koreans and the Japanese belong to the same *jinshu* based on the definition of *jinshu* as being concerned with differences in physical appearance. This idea is then challenged by the claim that the three groups look physically different in the first place. Then differences in personal belongings—not nature but culture—are brought in as a marker for differentiating the Chinese and the Koreans from the Japanese. In the end, P expresses the idea that the Japanese

79 Shibuya and Harajuku are popular shopping areas in Tokyo.

are a separate *jinshu*, referring to a behavioral—cultural—difference in relation to a group of Chinese tourists.

In Group 3, the lack of a shared identity was further raised as a reason for why the Japanese do not belong to the same *jinshu* as the Chinese and the Koreans.

S: For example, black people from different countries have a strong feeling of fellowship [Jpn. *nakama ishiki*] with each other because they belong to the same *jinshu*. Do we have that with Chinese and Koreans? No[!]

Author: So you think that Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese belong to different *jinshu*?

S: Yes.

O: But Europeans and Americans from overseas think all of us belong to the same *jinshu*.

S: Asian [*ejian*] (laughter).

As seen in O's comment, the notion of *jinshu* assumes "a common fate" between the Japanese and other Asian peoples, totalizing the Chinese, the Koreans, and the Japanese as one group. The *jinshu* in that sense is implied in S's use of the English word "Asian" rather than the Japanese word "*ajiajin*." Although associating the Japanese with *jinshu* may mean that the Japanese as *jinshu* are placed beneath the white race in the Western racial order, it also creates a possibility for solidarity with the Chinese and the Koreans. Here, the Japanese are not considered a *jinshu* because such solidarity is not currently seen as existent.

Minzoku, Culture, and the Japanese

As in the case of *jinshu*, very few participants supported the idea that the Japanese are a *minzoku*, which was often understood as a concept closer to ethnicity rather than a *Volk*. More specifically, *minzoku* was associated with indigenous and ethnic minority groups such as "the Maasai [in Kenya]" (Group 2-N), "American Indians with a feathered headband" (Group 3-Q), and "Aborigines in Australia and people in Papua New Guinea" (Group 3-R). Within Japan, *minzoku* was used to refer to the Okinawans and the Ainu. One student, for example, said that "you can find *minzoku* in Hokkaido and Okinawa in Japan," continuing to posit that "Japanese people are at the center of the Japanese," whereas "the Ryūkyū [Okinawan] *minzoku* and the Ainu *minzoku* are away from the center" (Group 1-B). The following exchange that took place in Group 1 between one interviewee and the author clearly shows the relationships between *minzoku*, *jinshu*, language, and the nation:

- F: I think *jinshu* means people with different physical appearances, for example, white and black people.
- Author: Do the Chinese and the Japanese belong to the same *jinshu* because they are said to look similar?
- F: I don't think so, because we look similar but speak different languages. *Minzoku* means the Ainu *minzoku* or people in Ryūkyū [Okinawa].
- Author: What about their *jinshu*?
- F: I think they belong to the same *jinshu* as the Japanese because their nationality [Jpn. *kokuseki*] is Japanese.

This participant sees the Chinese and the Japanese as separate *jinshu* by adding language differences to the initial definition of *jinshu*—differences in physical appearance. Moreover, in this participant's opinion, the Ainu and Okinawans belong to the same *jinshu* as the Japanese not because they look similar or speak the same language but because their nationality is Japanese. While denying that the Japanese are a *jinshu*, the interviewee equates *jinshu* with nation; by associating *minzoku* with ethnic minority groups in Japan, the participant argues that the Japanese are not a *minzoku*. The use and non-use of *jinshu* and *minzoku* here indicates the conflation of the prewar and postwar notions of *minzoku*.

For some participants, *minzoku* meant a group with an established cultural identity. One interviewee who answered that the Japanese are not a *minzoku* argued that “I feel *minzoku* has a tight connection to religion, a group with something absolute [*zettaiteki*]. Buddhism exists in Japan but is not practiced very much. Many Japanese today are atheists. We don't have something absolute” (Group 3-R). The Chinese interviewee said that the Japanese in the Showa era (1926–1989) had a stronger sense of *minzoku*, whereas “today's Japanese seem to think that they aren't a *minzoku*.” This participant also argued that “the Japanese might have been a *minzoku* when the emperor ruled Japan.” According to these opinions, a group is called a *minzoku* when it has powerful institutions such as religion and the emperor system; based on this definition, the Japanese are not seen as a *minzoku*.

Minzoku also had to do with “tradition” or a culture with historical continuity. For example, one participant posited that *minzoku* is about “continuity from generation to generation” (Group 2-G), while another interviewee stated that *minzoku* refers to a group that “keeps something passed down from generation to generation” (Group 2-I). This participant continued to state that “chopsticks, for example, are still widely used in Japan. Many new things have come into Japan but we still retain old things that have been valued. This may mean that

the Japanese are a *minzoku*." This comment indicates that associating culture with continuity can lead to seeing the Japanese as a *minzoku*. However, what is posed as an example of such culture is chopsticks—an apolitical cultural product also shared with other Asian peoples such as the Chinese and the Koreans—and thus differing from the prewar concept of *minzoku*.

Almost all the interviewees concurred with the view that the Japanese form a cultural group. Only one participant expressed skepticism: "I had a huge culture shock when I moved from Kansai. The cultures of the Kansai and Kanto regions were so different. I didn't feel the two regions were in the same country back then" (Group 2-G).⁸⁰ For most interviewees, the culture of the Japanese as a cultural group meant the so-called "three F culture"—fashion, food, and festivals—and the cultural behaviors emphasized in *Nihonjinron*. The Japanese, or *nihonjin*, what Yun calls "a seemingly non-ideological term," are inseparable from the seemingly de-politicized cultural characteristics often claimed in *Nihonjinron* writing.⁸¹ For example, some of the elements of Japanese culture that Group 3 interviewees referred to included *nattō* [fermented soy beans], raw fish, comic books, anime, sumo wrestling, judō, kendō, and bowing. In Group 1, one participant said that "I also think the Japanese are a cultural group. On TV, I heard that American textbooks say Japan maintains its traditional culture. We have cultural traditions that only exist in Japan, for example, chopsticks or the doll festival [*hina matsuri*]" (Group 1-B). Japanese culture also included "*tate shakai* [a vertical society]" (Group 3-T) and "*honne* and *tatemae* [the true feeling and the façade], communication styles and vertically-structured relationships" (Group 2-G).

Conclusions and Implications

The Japanese concepts of *jinshu* and *minzoku* have been constructed and transformed by their intersection with the concepts of race, *Volk*, and ethnicity. *Jinshu*, first introduced in the late nineteenth century as a conceptual equivalent to the dominant Western idea of race, shifted to the concept of *minzoku* in the early twentieth century. Influenced by the German notion of *Volk*, *minzoku* provided a means of culturally differentiating the Japanese as a nation from other phenotypically similar Asian groups as well as excluding and/or assimilating minority groups within Japan while retaining the core meaning of *jinshu*—the essentialization of difference. In postwar Japan, the Japanese have

80 Kanto refers to the area around Tokyo; Kansai means the area around Osaka and Kyoto.

81 Yun, 1994: 13.

become just “people” and a cultural group by disconnecting themselves from the terms *jinshu* and *minzoku* yet preserving them in the conceptual sense. *Nihonjinron* has contributed to this depoliticized and yet highly political conceptualization of the Japanese.

Although the data were limited, the interview analyses show the conceptual entanglement of *jinshu*, *minzoku*, and *nihonjin*. In the interviews, with a few notable exceptions, the Japanese were not designated as *jinshu* and *minzoku* and yet conceptually viewed as such: the Japanese were characterized by particular facial features (e.g., flat face) and were differentiated not only culturally (e.g., language, personal belongings) but also physically (e.g., eyes) from the Chinese and the Koreans. Moreover, the Japanese were largely seen as a group with “unique” cultural characteristics, apparently contrasted with those in the West (e.g., chopsticks) in a fashion similar to *Nihonjinron*.

It is possible to argue that the three unities of Japanese language, Japanese culture and the Japanese nation which sustained the prewar concept of *minzoku* as well as the later *Nihonjinron* are still intact, although the three may currently suggest different meanings or may not be as tightly connected as before. This can also be found, for example, in the national “Study of the Japanese National Character” conducted by The Institute of Mathematical Statistics every five years since 1953. In the latest survey (2008), about half of the respondents (46 percent) still had rather negative or hesitant attitudes toward their children’s marriage to non-Japanese people, even though the rate has been continually falling.⁸² In another example, the most frequently chosen answers to the question concerning education for enhancing Japanese children’s international understanding were “teach children about the culture and tradition of Japan” (39 percent) and “promote opportunities for grassroots communication and exchange with foreigners” (39 percent), with only 16 percent of the respondents selecting the response “promote learning of foreign languages.”⁸³ What is striking here is the emphasis on, or rather, obsession with learning Japanese culture even for the purposes of understanding people with different cultural backgrounds. These results suggest that the three unities have yet to lose their influence in defining what it means to be Japanese.

82 Institute of Statistical Mathematics, 2011: Section 9–14 “Marriage with a foreigner.” The rate of negative or hesitant responses was 56 percent in the 2003 survey, 57 percent in 1998, and 65 percent in 1993.

83 Institute of Statistical Mathematics, 2011: Section 4–18 “Education for international understanding.” The question is “what do you think will help the children of the next generation promote international understanding?” This is a newly added question in the 2008 survey.

The nominal absence and the conceptual presence of *jinshu* and *minzoku* turn the Japanese into an apolitical and ahistorical cultural group but still allow them to be differentiated from other groups. Such Japaneseness overlaps with the notion of whiteness discussed by Richard Dyer which exercises its power through invisibility, ubiquity, normality and universality, or by representing itself as "everything and nothing,"⁸⁴ and not as a race but "just the human race."⁸⁵ At the same time, it diverges from whiteness in the sense that the former is present by being invisible, whereas the latter is ubiquitously present with its normality and universality as well as its invisibility. The Japanese are not represented as "just the human race" but as a cultural group that has "unique" cultural products or as one that engages in "unique" cultural behaviors which were popularized through *Nihonjinron*. Put simply, the Japanese are "not a race but just Japanese."

This Japaneseness is tied to the lack of self-criticism on racism, exemplified by the fact that it was not until 1995 that, following the United States, Japan finally ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) as the 146th nation to do so, more than a quarter century after it was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1965. In the 2000 report submitted to the ICERD committee that monitors the convention's implementation, the Japanese government refuted a concern raised by the committee suggesting that Japan's legal system had to be revised to deal sufficiently with and remove racial discrimination: "We do not recognize that the present situation of Japan is one in which discriminative acts cannot be effectively restrained by the existing legal system and in which explicit racial [*jinshu*] discriminative acts . . . are conducted."⁸⁶ The same argument was repeated in the 2013 report.⁸⁷ Despite the Japanese government's downplaying of racism in Japan, a man was arrested in 2011 and charged with kicking Korean children at a subway station near the Tokyo Korean School because the suspect hated hearing Korean children speaking Korean on the train.⁸⁸ In 2009, a right-wing racist group called *Zaitokukai* [Group Against Korean Residents in

84 Dyer, 1997: 39.

85 Dyer, 1997: 3.

86 MOFA, 2000.

87 MOFA, 2013. The Japanese government claimed that "The Government of Japan does not believe that in present-day Japan racist thoughts are disseminated and racial discrimination is incited to the extent that the withdrawal of its reservations or legislation to impose punishment against the dissemination of racist thoughts and other acts should be considered even at the risk of unduly stifling legitimate speech." (p. 20).

88 "Tökōchū," 2011 (14 September).

Japan] vandalized an ethnic Korean primary school in Kyoto.⁸⁹ In 2013, this group held anti-Korean protests several times in Shin-Ōkubo, a large Korean town in Tokyo, shouting “Beat out Koreans from Japan” and brandishing placards featuring such comments as “Kill all Koreans.”⁹⁰

Conceptualizing the Japanese as both a “race” and a “non-race”—“a nameless *minzoku*” or an absent-yet-present—is problematic because it can depoliticize and dehistoricize the Japanese as a non-*jinshu* and *minzoku* group on the surface but still let the Japanese people keep employing the underlying meanings. Viewing the Japanese as such leads to a forgetfulness of Japan’s imperial past despite its continuing effect on its relationships with other Asian peoples today, and creates the illusion that racism is not a serious issue in Japanese society. Thus, becoming aware of the signification politics of *jinshu* and *minzoku* is crucial in addressing the issues of race and racism in present-day Japan.

89 Yasuda, 2012: Chapter 3.

90 Ishibashi, 2013 (26 March). Photos of the placards used in the 17 March protest are available at: <http://okudokuhakin.hateblo.jp/entry/2013/03/19/121831>. [Accessed on 20 April 2013].

Ethnic Nationalism in Postwar Japan: *Nihonjinron* and Its Racial Facets

Rotem Kowner and Harumi Befu

In an oft-mentioned speech made during a meeting of the Liberal Democratic Party in 1986, Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro praised the achievements of the Japanese education system. His words soon turned into a comparison between ‘we’ (Japanese) and ‘them’ (Americans and the West in general). “Our average [intelligence] score,” Nakasone boasted, “is much higher than that of countries like the United States.” His attribution of the difference is crucial here: “There are many blacks, Puerto Ricans and Mexicans in America. As a result of this, the average score over there is exceedingly low . . .” The ensuing scandal on the other side of the Pacific Ocean led an abashed Nakasone to expose another quintessential cultural dictum. “Things are easier for the Japanese,” he attempted to explain away his earlier statement, “because we are a monoracial society.”¹

This brief, albeit revealing, utterance by Nakasone was not accidental. It expressed a worldview that he believed in and advocated publicly, as would many other major figures in Japan in subsequent years.² At the same time, they all seem to represent a widespread phenomenon: namely, that the Japanese public in general has shown a passionate interest in its cultural and national identity and persistently resorted to international comparisons.³ This is not to say, however, that this interest is a postwar invention. Despite having a somewhat different focus and nomenclature, it can easily be traced back to the time in which Japan turned into a nation state in the late nineteenth

1 Bowen, 1986: 40. For an analysis of the speech, see Ivy, 1989.

2 See, for example, similar remarks made by Watanabe Michio in 1988.

3 In a large-scale survey conducted in the late 1980s, no less than 82 percent of the respondents expressed interest in this topic. Moreover, many of the respondents were familiar with leading writers of this genre, such as Kindaiichi Haruhiko (70 percent), Aida Yūji (50 percent), Doi Takeo (20 percent), and a surprising number of them had read their works, such as Yamamoto Shichihei’s *Nihonjin to Yudayajin* [The Japanese and the Jews] (BenDasan, 1970) (30 percent) and Doi’s *Amae no kōzō* [The structure of Amae] (20 percent). They were also familiar with the main tenets of the genre, such as the homogeneity of the people (72 percent) and the uniqueness of the culture (57 percent). See Befu & Manabe, 1987; Manabe & Befu, 1989, 1992.

century and to even earlier texts.⁴ Nonetheless, this interest does not necessarily make the Japanese unique. A nation, Stuart Hall observed, “is not only a political entity, but something which produces meaning—a system of cultural representation.”⁵ Modern Japan fits this description aptly. Since the early 1970s, however, this quest for meaning had witnessed a quantum leap, as indicated by the number of publications on this topic.⁶ A decade later, the local discourse of identity began to attract considerable scholarly attention and criticism both at home and abroad, and had become identified by a more or less single designation.⁷

This discourse is currently known as *Nihonjinron* (although it is also infrequently referred to as *Nihonron*, *Nihon bunkaron*, or *Nihon shakairon*), which means, literally, “theories/discourses of the Japanese [people].” It seeks to account for the particular characteristics of Japanese society, culture, and national character and provides the building blocks for a domestic identity. Crucially, it has become a societal force shaping the way in which the Japanese regard themselves and with time has also emerged as a hegemonic ideology and as an ‘industry’ whose main producers are intellectuals (mostly Japanese, but also some foreigners), and whose consumers are the masses.⁸ Although *Nihonjinron* literature may have leveled off a bit in recent years, it still seems to be extremely popular and its tenets can be traced easily in a broad range of other public discourses, notably those related to Japan’s place in the world, to its modern history, and to the problems caused by its relations with foreign countries and people. While *Nihonjinron* is primarily concerned with questions

4 For an overview of the history of *Nihonjinron* and the parallel rise of ethnic nationalism and the concept of an ethnic nation in modern Japan, see Aoki, 1990; Doak, 1996; Minami 1976, 1980, 1994; Weiner, 1995; Doak, 2001. Early *Nihonjinron* writings were not necessarily only concerned with the West. For the early twentieth-century debate on the indigenous roots of Japanese culture and the role China had played in its emergence, see Tanaka, 1993: 153–187. For the *Nihonjinron* discourse in the 1950s, see Igarashi, 2000: 73–103.

5 Hall, 1992: 292.

6 There are no up-to-date surveys on the spread of *Nihonjinron* literature. A dated compilation of monographs in this genre published between 1945–1978 contains no less than 698 titles, 25 percent of which were published in the three years that preceded the compilation. See Nomura Sogo Kenkyūjo, 1978.

7 There is an extensive literature that has examined *Nihonjinron* writings and tenets critically, notable among which are Befu, 1987; Dale, 1986; Kawamura, 1980, 1982; Miller, 1982; Mouer & Sugimoto 1986; Sugimoto & Mouer, 1982; Yoshino, 1992. The literature that has criticized or challenged specific tenets of *Nihonjinron* is ever vaster. See, for example, Amino, 1992; Amino et al., 1994; Nishikawa, 1992.

8 For *Nihonjinron*’s producers and consumers, see Befu, 2001: 52–65; Kowner, 2002a.

of identity, it often deals with a wide range of other social phenomena, including social structure, language, ecology, economics, psychology, and even international relations.

Many of these aspects have received scholarly attention, and scholars have tended to associate *Nihonjinron* with nationalism and especially with Japanese cultural nationalism.⁹ No doubt, *Nihonjinron* also serves as a broadly based ideological support for Japanese nationalism through its ethnocentric emphasis on the nation as the people's preeminent collective identity. But alongside its relevance to broad themes in general and to nationalism in particular, there is also an unmistakable racial, and at times even racist, common denominator that pervades its premises. The idea that *Nihonjinron* includes a racial undercurrent may seem to be at odds with the essence of the democratic, civilized, and globally-oriented society which Japan aspires to be and with the harmonious self-image many Japanese profess. However, at stake is not the image which this unpleasant facet evokes but the substantial impact it exerts on the way in which the Japanese regard their own society and the world around it. This chapter thus seeks to unearth the racial elements within *Nihonjinron*'s premises, to analyze their motives, and to examine the extent to which they reflect and shape the public worldview in postwar Japan.

Premises of *Nihonjinron*

The varied and complex discourse known as *Nihonjinron* treats the Japanese culture, national character and individual personality as a unique and unparalleled product of racial, historical, and climatic elements that pervades the essence of current social phenomena. This fundamental approach leads to several premises about the nature of Japanese society.¹⁰ The first premise is that the Japanese are a homogeneous people (Jpn. *tan'itsu minzoku*), and that Japan as a nation is culturally homogeneous (*tōshitsu* or *dōshitsu*). This notion implies that the Japanese share a single language, religion, and lifestyle invariably and belong to a single race. One may take issue with some of these generalizations, but many commentators believe that Japanese homogeneity also

9 For studies regarding *Nihonjinron* as an aspect of Japanese nationalism, see Yoshino, 2002; Befu, 2001.

10 For a critical inquiry into *Nihonjinron* tenets see Befu, 1987; Dale, 1986; Miller, 1982; Mouer & Sugimoto 1986.

exists at a deeper and ahistorical level.¹¹ As the doyen of Japanese ethnography, Yanagita Kunio, stated as early as 1946, this unity can be found in “inexpressible covenants between the gods and people of the village which have been transmitted immutably from the past, and . . . are preserved through the yearly celebration of festivals.”¹² Despite the above, we are not suggesting that there is not a certain kernel of truth in this premise. It is true that Japan is highly homogeneous, at least culturally and socially, when compared to other nation states. Nevertheless, *Nihonjinron* writers tend to overlook class, gender, and regional differences, to mention only a small number if at all, as well as to ignore the existence of under-privileged minorities, some of whom belong to a different ethnicity or ‘race’ within Japanese society.

The second premise asserts a strong nexus between the land of Japan, its people and their culture. *Nihonjinron* writers maintain explicitly that only the Japanese can carry Japanese culture. These carriers are not merely the citizens of the Japanese state but also those who were born into the specific amalgam of the Japanese archipelago. They share the same genetic pool (often referred to as ‘blood’), and they alone can truly master the language and the entire gamut of nuances offered by the rich Japanese culture. As such, the second premise equates land, people and culture in a way that those defined as non-Japanese (‘foreigners’) or partly Japanese can not only never master their culture and national language, but can also never become ‘real’ Japanese due to their ‘foreign’ element.¹³ The third premise treats Japanese society as a vertically constructed group and regards the Japanese as group-oriented. Disregarding individual and organizational differences, it states that the Japanese prefer to act within the framework of a hierarchically organized group in which relations are based on warm dependency and trust. The hierarchical structure of Japanese society is often perceived as the basis of social order as well as the mold of behavior and personality.¹⁴

Given these premises, *Nihonjinron* can be said to be profoundly ethnocentric and at times even racist. Although physical anthropology does not recognize a ‘Japanese race,’ *Nihonjinron* thinkers have nonetheless persisted in perceiving their compatriots as members of a distinct group in both cul-

11 For various statements by the political elite in Japan with regard to the homogeneous character of the Japanese people, see Burgess, 2010.

12 Yanagita, 1963 [1946]: 284.

13 Befu, 1993a.

14 See the writings of BenDasan, 1970; Doi, 1971; Nakane, 1967; but also see Yoneyama, 1976 for a certain de-emphasis of Japanese hierarchy, or at least its placement within a regional context (hierarchy as a Kanto area phenomenon).

tural and biological terms and to elaborate the special relations between race and culture in Japan.¹⁵ There are some unpleasant similarities between this approach and Japan's prewar ideology. During the ultranationalist period that ended with Japan's surrender in 1945, racial homogeneity was associated with the ideology of 'family-nation,' according to which all Japanese were related by 'blood.' Japan's 'racial vigor,' as promulgators of this view maintained at the time, was the predominant factor in Japan's attainment of a distinguished position among nations.¹⁶

Still, postwar *Nihonjinron* is not particularly inward looking. Its current ethnocentric character is amplified by its reliance on comparisons between Japanese culture and other referent cultures, and predominantly Western ones. These cultural comparisons lead to a fourth premise focusing on uniqueness. Japan, and consequently the Japanese people, are perceived as 'unique,' a notion which principally implies their superiority over other cultures within an explicitly stratified world. Japanese society as such is conceived as existing without parallel either among the advanced societies of the West or among the purportedly more rational societies of East Asia. At the same time, due to its emphasis on 'we' (ingroup) versus 'them' (outgroup), *Nihonjinron* has a special place for foreigners.¹⁷ Foreigners, and Westerners in particular, are used as an antithetical and stereotypical representation of the essence of Japaneseness. As a matter of fact, it is only through comparison with them and through the construction of their (foreign) generalized image that Japanese identity can be defined and affirmed.

Nihonjinron as a Manifestation of Japanese Nationalism

The short review of the scope of *Nihonjinron* above should be sufficient to suggest that it represents the very ideology of contemporary Japanese nationalism. It offers a comprehensive worldview that deals with and accounts for all that nationalism is about. By continuously confounding culture, ethnicity, race, and nation, *Nihonjinron* creates a strong source of nationalism. As might be expected, there is a wide agreement among critics of *Nihonjinron* on its inseparability from Japanese nationalism. They may differ on the degree to

15 Oblas, 1995.

16 Dower, 1986; and Hayashida, 1976.

17 Several scholars have pointed out that this view stems from prewar reactions to Western racism ("self-Orientalism"), but its current emphasis on international affairs and even hierarchy is unmistakable. See, Befu, 1995.

which it reflects nationalism and tend to refer to this nationalist strain by different names. In his controversial critique of *Nihonjinron* promulgators, Peter Dale, for example, contended that *Nihonjinron* constitutes “the commercialized expression” of modern Japanese nationalism.¹⁸

Yoshino Kosaku, in contrast, referred to *Nihonjinron* as cultural nationalism and distinguished between this form (which he also refers to as ‘secondary nationalism’) and the original form of nationalism (‘primary nationalism’). Whereas the latter is concerned with the inceptive construction of national identity, the former deals with maintaining and re-enhancing it.¹⁹ Harumi Befu has argued that *Nihonjinron* is the core ideology of Japanese nationalism, but that like most discursive nationalism or nationalistic ideologies, it represents passive nationalism in the sense that it lacks an intense emotional element.²⁰ Despite this difference of opinion, few would deny that *Nihonjinron* offers indispensable precursors to a fully-fledged, emotion-laden nationalism. Moreover, it is almost inevitable that its emphasis on cultural uniqueness and racial distinctiveness, especially when used to account for Japan’s achievements in recent decades, is destined to enhance nationalist sentiments.

To stress the role of *Nihonjinron* in Japanese nationalism even further, we argue that it is, in fact, the hegemonic ideology in contemporary Japan and the core ideology of Japanese nationalism. Not only are its tenets endorsed by the political establishment and the economic elite, as Yoshino claimed, but there is also virtually no other ideology that competes with it.²¹ It is by virtue of this omnipresent role that a notable *Nihonjinron* thinker, Yamamoto Shichihei (1921–1991), went so far as to call it a ‘Japanese religion’ (*Nihonkyō*) under which all other religions and ideologies act as mere sects.²² Hence, and regardless of their religious affiliation, he argued, all Japanese subscribe to the cultural theology of Japan because they invariably accept the basic tenets of Japanese culture. At the same time, one may regard *Nihonjinron* as a complementary mechanism to a deficient nationalism. Despite its own shortcomings, no other ideological discourse has gained a greater degree of consensus. Moreover, its rise took place in a period when “culture” too (that is to say, national culture)

18 Dale, 1986: 14.

19 Yoshino, 1992; 1999: 8.

20 See, for example, Befu, 1987; 1993: 127.

21 Befu, 1993a.

22 BenDasan, 1970; Yamamoto & Komuro, 1981; and Yamamoto, 1997. For an overview of Yamamoto’s perspective, see Befu, 2001: 105–122.

had to be reinvented, especially in face of the tremendous political and social changes that modern Japan has experienced.²³

Nihonjinron and Its Concern with Origin, Blood and Racial Hierarchy

The racial essence of *Nihonjinron* discourse does not end with the emphasis on shared cultural characteristics based on ethnic and even racial homogeneity. The producers of *Nihonjinron* discourse have also been concerned with a number of other, and certainly more explicit, facets of the concept of race in delineating Japanese culture and the identity of its members. For instance, they have often dealt with the question of ethnic origins and the unchanging essence of the society since prehistory; emphasized shared biological characteristics and the significance of 'blood,' and expressed a great deal of concern regarding Japan's place in the present-day international hierarchy.

The past serves as a crucial departure point for many *Nihonjinron* theorists. Its centrality in many of their writings is due to the fact that the examination of domestic history, and preferably even pre-history, can be used to support contemporary ideologies. It can demonstrate, for example, that the primary tenets of Japanese society are not the product of a recent ideological effort but rather of a long and natural process of cultural evolution. Indeed, *Nihonjinron* promulgators often present an idealized picture of the old family system, communal life, and the past in general, stressing their unbroken ties with present institutions.²⁴ As with other aspects of *Nihonjinron*, this attempt to reconstruct the past and to link it with present circumstances is not particular to Japan. It fits Eric Hobsbawm's observation that "the national phenomenon cannot be adequately investigated without careful attention to the 'invention of tradition'."²⁵ But the Japanese strain of this quest for national origins seems to focus on much earlier roots than elsewhere. Prehistory in particular, as Mark Hudson notes, "has been used to renegotiate Japanese ethnic and cultural identities."²⁶

Perhaps the most critical issue associated with the past is the birth of Japanese culture and its historical continuity. At stake here is the origin and questionable co-existence of, by all likelihood, two distinct populations, the

23 Cf. Morris-Suzuki, 1995.

24 Crawcour, 1980.

25 Hobsbawm, 1983: 14.

26 Hudson, 1999: 140.

Jōmon and the Yayoi. Their whereabouts could provide answers to cardinal issues of present-day identity, such as the emergence of the Japanese people, their history in their archipelago, and their affinity to ethnic Japanese (*wajin*), as well as to various ethnic minorities currently living in the Japanese periphery.²⁷ Advocates of *Nihonjinron* have either tended to deny the existence of these two groups as two distinct populations or argued that they merged at an early stage. They also tended to ahistorically “Japanize” the entire pre-historical population of the archipelago and to cut its development from the regional (East Asian) context.²⁸ Archeological research was also utilized to relegate the Japanese emperors—gods not to be stared upon in modern Japan until 1945—to the level of mortals. In doing so, it facilitated the construction of a new image for the society, viz. that of harmonious and peaceful cultivators of rice paddies.²⁹ In this vein, one may understand why postwar Japan has shown an unparalleled interest in its archeology and why the entire discipline has witnessed spectacular growth.

Biological commonality among the Japanese people has been another recurrent theme in *Nihonjinron* writings. While promoting extensive research on the genetic markers of the Japanese population throughout history³⁰ and stirring up tremendous interest in ‘Japanese’ bodily, facial and general appearances,³¹ a number of *Nihonjinron* theorists have frequently referred to Japanese ‘blood’ (*chi*). In using this racially-charged term, they denoted a shared biological heritage and immutable features that characterize the Japanese as a group. A related sub-discourse of even greater racial connotations focuses on the purity of blood (*junketsu shugi*). This is obviously not an indigenous Japanese invention but it is nonetheless a concept that seems to have flourished in postwar Japan. As the ultimate manifestation of homogeneity, the biological ‘purity’ among modern Japanese is supposed to have stemmed from the absence of invaders and from generations of excessive endogamy.³²

As one may expect, not all Japanese could boast of purity, either biological or cultural. The awareness of purity, as personified by citizens of “Japanese”

27 The literature on this topic is vast. An random sample may include Jinruigaku Kōza Hensan Iinkai, 1978–81; Dodo, 1995; and Kamigaito, 2011.

28 For a brief overview, see Hudson, 1999.

29 For an early postwar example of this dual role of archeology, see Edwards, 1991.

30 For research exploring genetic and anthropometric markers of the Japanese population, see, for example, Omoto, 1978; Mouri, 1996; Omoto & Saitou, 1997.

31 See, for example, Yamazaki, 1957; Tsubaki, 1975; Jinruigaku Kōza Hensan Iinkai, 1978–81; Suzuki, 1996; Yamaori, 2008; and Seto, Sugiyama & Hateruma, 2012.

32 See, for example, Ishida, 1969: 159.

origin who had not left the archipelago since time immemorial, side by side with various shades of impurity, seems to be a pastime in Japan and may serve as a basis for discrimination and exclusion.³³ Brian McVeigh has listed the various types of groups residing in Japan according to three criteria: Their legal affiliation (Japanese or foreign citizenship), ethnocultural heritage, and “bio-racial” affinity (see Table 17.1).³⁴ While any of the criteria above may prevent a person from being considered a genuine Japanese, the latter seems to be the greatest barrier for inclusion since its traces cannot be erased in one’s lifetime. Indeed, one of the core definitions of race in modern times has been immutability. It is only racial affinity (Japanese “blood”) that does not depend on one’s efforts to assimilate culturally or on the government’s goodwill to grant its citizenship, but its impact remains for generations to come until “diluted” completely by indigenous phenotypes.

“Blood” is often also used metaphorically. It is socially invented, Yoshino Kosaku has argued, “*not* to refer to genetic traits as such *but* to mold and channel psychological responses concerning we-ness and ‘them’-ness.”³⁵ While occasionally correct, this does not necessarily decrease the racial connotations of the concept but rather enhances the biological implications of other notions of homogeneity. In this context, it should not be surprising that the well-documented popular fascination with blood types in Japan, and the notion that they indicate individual temperaments has also been exploited in the postwar era for addressing issues of national character.³⁶ The discovery that blood is transmitted genetically and that blood groups are distributed in various manners across different ethnic groups originated in early twentieth-century Europe.³⁷ It did not take long, however, before the discovery stirred up considerable interest in Japan too.³⁸ In the postwar era, the specific distribution of blood types in Japan was used initially to assess the affinity between

33 There is an extensive literature on discrimination against members of non-fully “Japanese” groups in Japan. See, for example, Beije, 2009; Chapman et al., 2008; Fukuoka & Tsujiyama, 2011; Kearney, 1998; Kowner, 1999; and Tsuda, 1998.

34 McVeigh, 2014, 39–42.

35 Yoshino, 1992: 120. The italics are in the original text.

36 For the Japanese public interest in blood types, see Hayashida, 1976; and Robertson, 2012: 99.

37 It was a Jewish Polish physician, Dr. Ludwik Hirszfild (1884–1954), who made these discoveries and then applied them to race-related research. Ironically, Hirszfild was dismissed from his work as “non-Aryan” shortly after the German takeover of Poland in 1939 and within less than two years ended up in the Warsaw ghetto. See Hirszfild, 2010.

38 For the prewar emergence of such theories in Japan, see Nakatani, 2006: 294.

TABLE 17.1 *Typology of the Categories of Japaneseness in Japan.*³⁹

Social Designation	Citizenship	Cultural heritage	Bioracial affinity
Imperial family	yes	very high	“pure”
“Japanese” Japanese	yes	high	“pure”
Ordinary Japanese	yes	often high	“pure”
Returnees (<i>kikoku shijo</i>) ⁴⁰	yes	often high but tainted	“pure”
Chinese returnees (<i>Chūgoku kikokusha</i>) ⁴¹	yes	limited and tainted	“pure”/“impure” ⁴²
Burakumin	yes	often high but tainted	“pure”
Okinawans	yes	some/may pass as Japanese	no
Ainu	yes	some/may pass as Japanese	no
Resident Koreans/ Chinese	no	some/may pass as Japanese	no
Naturalized Koreans/ Chinese	yes	some/may pass as Japanese	no
Resident (other) Asians	no	some	no
Naturalized (other) Asians	yes	some	no
Resident Caucasians (“ <i>gaijin</i> ”)	no	some	no
Naturalized Caucasians (“ <i>gaijin</i> ”)	yes	some	no

39 Adapted with minor changes, with permission, from McVeigh, 2014: 40 (Table 6.1).

40 Japanese who lived mainly in Northeast China before and during World War II and who, after the demise of the Japanese empire in 1945, were abandoned (*Chūgoku zanryū Nihonjin*) or could not return to Japan, partly because of the discontinuation of the repatriation efforts by the Japanese government in 1958.

41 Offspring of Japanese company employees stationed overseas for an extended period.

42 In the case of members of this group, their level of bioracial purity depends on their age (young members are mostly the offspring of mixed marriages with Chinese) and family background.

Social Designation	Citizenship	Cultural heritage	Bioracial affinity
Resident <i>nikkeijin</i> ⁴³	no	some/may pass as Japanese	“pure”/“impure” ⁴⁴
Naturalized <i>nikkeijin</i>	yes	some/may pass as Japanese	“pure”/“impure”
People of mixed origin (“ <i>hāfu</i> ”) ⁴⁵	yes	some/may pass as Japanese	“impure”

ethnic Japanese and various minorities living in their peripheries.⁴⁶ Still, certain writers went beyond mere biology. In the early 1970s, a few of them salvaged prewar ideas suggesting that the specific mixture of blood types found among the Japanese shapes their national character.⁴⁷

Of special interest is the journalist Nomi Masahiko, who, until his untimely death in 1981, was a leading advocate of the importance of blood types and linked them with the entire gamut of Japanese characteristics other *Nihonjinron* advocates had taken for granted. In several publications Nomi proposed that the Japanese character is shaped by the predominance of type A in the general population. If one accepts this proposition, the following conclusion is easier to digest: The Japanese national character is governed by the supposed traits found in individuals with type A, such as diligence, group consciousness, respect for traditions and customs, ingroup exclusiveness, and a preference for situational ethnics over ideology.⁴⁸ Curiously, while this fusion of

43 The term *nikkeijin* (literally people of Japanese origin) refers to Japanese emigrants from Japan (mostly during the late nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century) and their descendants that reside in a foreign country. Since the 1990s, Japan has opened its gates to *nikkeijin* laborers, mostly from Brazil and Peru.

44 In the case of *nikkeijin* living in Japan, their level of bioracial purity depends on their family background and on their physical appearance (i.e. resemblance to “Japanese” Japanese).

45 Offspring of Japanese married to non-Japanese.

46 For the use of blood types and inherited antigenic substances in assessing the genetic distance between various regional and ethnic populations within modern Japan, see, e.g., Omoto, 1978. For an overview of blood typology and ethnic origins in general, and Japanese origins in particular, see Mihira, 1993; Wada, 1997.

47 For overviews of this phenomenon, see Yoshino, 1992: 30–32, 120–121; and Nuwer, 2011.

48 Nomi, 1973: 54. See also Robertson, 2012: 97–98.

characteristics may seem unique, the emphasis on type A was not. The World War I discovery that this specific blood type is found more frequently among Western Europeans made it a desirable trait among researchers of race back in Europe. In point of fact, type A soon turned up as the numerator of a biochemical index of race, separating gradations between the more advanced and the less advanced races.⁴⁹ By returning to this prewar theory, Nomi not only stressed the biological basis of the Japanese's unique character but also associated it, consciously and perhaps paradoxically, with the supposedly advanced Western Europeans.

With the heritage of common blood and a unique culture it did not take long before some writers claimed that the Japanese also have unique physical features. Recent scholarship is not as explicit but still stresses the unique and common cognitive mechanisms that the Japanese share. For instance, Tsukimoto Hiroshi, a Professor at Tokyo Denki University, has recently authored a book entitled "[Grammatical] Subjects are unnecessary in the Japanese Brain," in which he argued that certain characteristics of the Japanese language turn into a physiological mechanism. In discussing the frequent tendency to refrain from stating the subject in Japanese sentences, Tsukimoto attempted to provide testimonies for the purportedly unique cognitive mechanism of language processing in Japanese and for its specific location in the brain.⁵⁰

Group ranking is another major concern of *Nihonjinron* writers. This is not surprising since hierarchies of various groups are an inherent trait and at times even a forerunner of any racial discourse. And yet, *Nihonjinron* seems to focus on the Japanese position within an imagined international hierarchy rather than on the Other. Moreover, it is mostly concerned with cultural attainment rather than with physical constitution or any other immutable essence. These tendencies to focus on and elevate the self in cultural and spiritual terms rather than derogate the Other seem to be a long-established trait of racism in Japan and can also be found before 1945, and probably go back to the Edo period (1600–1868).⁵¹ A steep and predominantly fixed hierarchy was an inherent part of human relations in premodern Japan, but the explicit awareness of hierarchy in the international arena and the significance attached to it are a modern product.⁵² The acute concern for the nation's relative position is

49 Holt, 2012: 195–196.

50 Tsukimoto, 2008.

51 For a similar pattern in Japanese wartime propaganda, see Dower, 1986. For attitudes towards non-Japanese, and Europeans in particular, before and during the first half of the Edo period, see Kowner, 2014: 77, 162, 178, 240, 333.

52 For the concern for hierarchy within Japanese society, see Nakane, 1967.

manifested in manifold ways, from public statements made by politicians and frequent newspaper articles to surveys conducted by both official and private organizations.

One of the most reliable and explicit examples of this concern is the extensive national surveys conducted in Japan by the governmental Research Committee every five years since 1953 for the Study of the Japanese National Character (*Nihonjin no kokuminsei chōsa*).⁵³ The 'National Character' surveys are a particularly invaluable source of information because they have sampled the entire adult population of Japan repeatedly over a period of six decades and supplied a breakdown of each response according to gender, age, education, region, city size, and even (occasional) cohort comparisons.⁵⁴ Regretfully, these surveys had only devoted few questions to attitudes towards nation and race, and so they only offer a limited degree of insight into the character and reception of the central tenets of *Nihonjinron* among the Japanese population. As far as hierarchy is concerned, however, the 'National Character' surveys did examine the image of Japan's national status vis-à-vis the West. They asked their respondents whether Japan is superior, inferior, or equal to the 'West'. More than reflecting the international reality, the respondents' views seem to reflect the serpentine image of postwar Japan as shaped in part by *Nihonjinron* (see Fig. 17.1).

At least as important was the identity of the object of comparison throughout the nine surveys above: It was invariably the West. During the entire period, this region also remained the exclusive benchmark for comparisons in *Nihonjinron* writings. As a geographical and cultural designation, the West has definite racial connotations, since it is usually represented as a monolith devoid of national demarcation and ethnic diversity.⁵⁵ In this light, Westerners (*seiyōjin*) are often referred to as either "European-Americans" (*Ōbeijin*) or simply "Whites" (*hakujin*; Caucasians), while non-White minorities, as argued by Nakasone, are merely there to erode this racial designation. Despite a growing national self-confidence within Japan and the dramatic rise of China overseas, the West's position in *Nihonjinron* writings seems unshakable. First emerging in the Meiji era, the strong determination "to catch up with the West" is a valid social force even today, whereas downward comparisons with non-Western entities, including China, seem not only futile for national purposes but also demeaning.

53 Tōkei Sūri Kenkyūjo Kokuminsei Chōsa Iinkai, 1961, 1970, 1975, 1982, 1992, 1994.

54 See, for example, Tōkei Sūri Kenkyūjo Kokuminsei Chōsa Iinkai, 1985.

55 For misconceptions of the 'West' in Japanese scholarship and its generalized notions, see Kuwayama, 2009: 44–46.

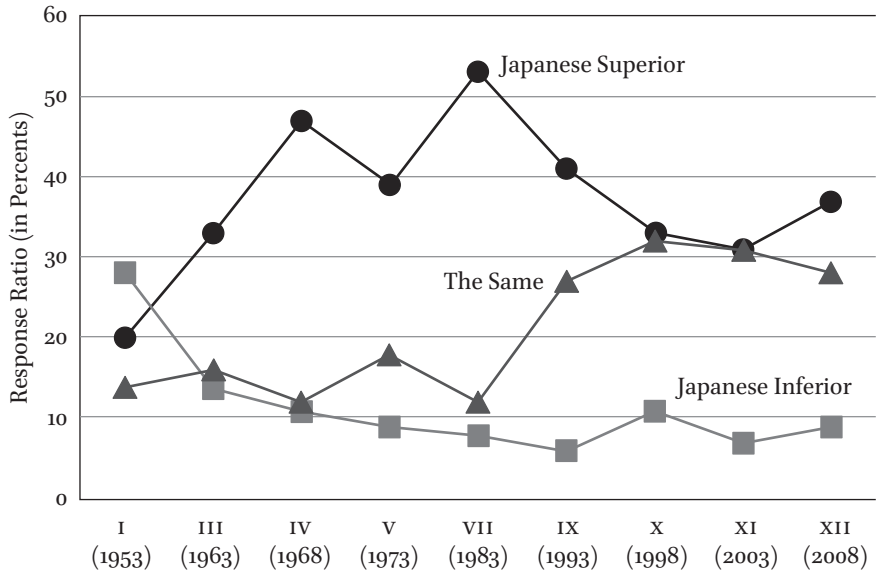


FIGURE 17.1 *The imagined position of the Japanese vis-à-vis the West in a longitudinal perspective (1953–2008).*

SOURCE: THE SURVEYS ON THE JAPANESE NATIONAL CHARACTER.⁵⁶

The Impact of Race-Related Tenets on Everyday Life

The primary tenets espoused by advocates of *Nihonjinron* are pertinent to numerous facets of everyday life in contemporary Japanese society. The idea of homogeneity, the restricted set of criteria that form “Japanese” identity, and the tight definition of what constitutes “Japanese” behavior are all exerting an unmistakable effect on the life and consciousness of virtually every Japanese person, regardless of whether they support the discourse or concur with its tenets. Their impact is so pervasive that they not only leave their mark on life within Japanese society but also on its image abroad and on its relations with the external world. In the next part of this chapter, we proceed to examine some facets of the impact *Nihonjinron* has exerted in these domains.

Identity. *Nihonjinron* writings are in essence a collective attempt to define and shape Japanese-ness. They may differ in their perspective, but the desirable identity that emerges from the discourse is unmistakable. A number of

56 For the data, see Tōkei Sūri Kenkyūjo, 2013. The surveys conducted in 1958, 1978 and 1988 did not include this specific question. The 13th survey on Japanese National Character was conducted from October to December 2013. Its findings had not been available during the preparation of this chapter.

studies have sought to assess the social criteria used when defining who and what is “Japanese.” In a survey conducted in 1973, for example, Cullen Tadao Hayashida asked a sample of 313 adults to indicate the most important criteria for being considered Japanese. Of the six conditions specified, respondents rated national character as the most important, blood relations with other Japanese second, and then particular physical characteristics, Japanese citizenship, birth in Japan, and, least importantly, language fluency. The hitherto most important survey was conducted by Harumi Befu and Japanese sociologist Manabe Kazufumi in the city of Nishinomiya in the late 1980s. Based on questionnaire filled in by almost one thousand adults from a wide range of ages, occupations and educational backgrounds, this survey sought, among other things, to pinpoint the criteria for being “Japanese.” Among the most relevant (“absolutely necessary”) criteria found were Japanese citizenship, Japanese language competency, a Japanese name, having two native Japanese parents, having a Japanese father, having a Japanese mother, living in Japan for some time, and a Japanese physical appearance. While the least relevant criterion was to be born in Japan, none received unanimous endorsement and often much less.⁵⁷ On the whole, these surveys indicate that racial and ethnic characteristics play a far more important role in defining the Japanese identity and sense of group membership than either citizenship, allegiance to the state, or even mastery of the national language.⁵⁸ The public view of national identity reflects the tenets of *Nihonjinron* and is undoubtedly a product of a protracted indoctrination whose onset can be tracked back to the Meiji era. In the prewar era and often also later, the state assumed the principal role in identity formation. After 1945, this role became more diffused, and various individuals and organizations took part in promulgating the essence of ethnos nationalism under the auspices and with the support of the state.⁵⁹

Minorities. While advocates of *Nihonjinron* consider Japan one of the world’s most homogeneous countries, Japan has its own share of minorities, depending on how they are defined by members of the majority and by themselves.⁶⁰ A short list of possible minorities may shed some light on the heterogeneity of Japanese society. Within the borders of postwar Japan there are two groups of indigenous peoples (the Ryukyans/Okinawans and the descendants of the Ainu); a relatively large number of social untouchables (*burakumin*); descendants of prewar immigrants, mostly of Korean (*zainichi Kankokujin* or *zainichi*

57 For this survey, see Manabe, Befu & McConnell, 1989; Manabe and Befu, 1992.

58 For similar views, see also Stronach, 1995: 61; Burgess, 2010.

59 Cf. McVeigh, 2004: 147–164; Kawai (in this volume).

60 For a brief survey of the attitudes towards minorities in contemporary Japan, see Howell, 1996; Kowner, 1999.

Chōsenjin) and Chinese ancestry; a transient population of foreigners comprising work immigrants of mostly South American or Japanese ancestry (*nikkeijin*) as well as non-resident East and Southeast Asians; and more than 100,000 foreign students. These groups alone may account for some 3–5 million people (2–4 percent of the entire population), but a broader consideration may also include “deviants from within,” such as the mentally ill, homosexuals, atom-bomb survivors (*hibakusha*), people who have returned from a long sojourn overseas, and even people with low incomes. In a sense, being a member of a minority group may include anyone who feels inadequate and misplaced in society.

In a mostly foreign backlash to the hegemonic discourse of *Nihonjinron*, the scholarship on Japan in the last two decades or so has witnessed a flurry of publications that present Japan as a multicultural nation. These have aimed to deconstruct the dominant model of the local society as homogenous and mono-cultural by calling attention to its various schisms, multiple identities and social divisions, alongside the existence of certain minorities and their plight.⁶¹ Multiculturalism, however, has not turned into a genuine movement in Japan nor was it accepted by mainstream Japanese or occasionally even by the members of Japan’s minorities themselves. Inevitably, the social insistence, so well presented in *Nihonjinron* writings, on both cultural and biological homogeneity provides minority members with two options. It either keeps on perceiving them as permanent outsiders, or forces them to blend with the mainstream society without a trace of their previous identity. In cases of ethnic minorities, and regardless of their size, the latter has been the official policy since the late nineteenth century.⁶² Postwar *Nihonjinron* functions similarly on the individual level by offering partial admission to the mainstream group to those willing to accept its prescribed behavior and cultural dictums.⁶³

At the same time, paradoxically, the denial of diversity, so common among advocates of *Nihonjinron*, enhances a sense of outsider-ness and alienation and frequently causes strong resentment, hostility and even anti-social behavior among those unable or unwilling to internalize its views.⁶⁴ Mercifully, those

61 See Mouer and Sugimoto, 1986; Dennon, 1996; Lie, 2001; Graburn et al., 2008; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008; Tsuneyoshi et al., 2011; and Htun, 2012. For an overview of the scholarly debate over this issue, see Siddle, 2013: 4–6.

62 See, for example, Weiner, 1994: 154–165; 1995; Caprio, 2009.

63 For postwar pressures for assimilation exerted on the Ainu, see Cornell, 1964; Hiwasaki, 2000. For the high degree of assimilation among members of the Korean minority in contemporary Japan, see Fukuoka, 2000.

64 Sasaki and Wagatsuma, 1981. Cf. Chapman, 2008; and McVeigh, 2004: 192.

who have advocated this line of separation during the postwar era have rarely made use of violence and overt coercion against minority members.⁶⁵ They have not refrained, however, from resorting to tacit discrimination against them and have supported certain measures of legal discrimination against their groups.⁶⁶ Despite the changing nature of discrimination and the growing willingness of minority members to conform, the “Others within” have remained important. Minority groups in general and their individual members in particular are indispensable for the consolidation of the mainstream group and its identity and thus continuous, albeit ever more subtle, discrimination is inexorable.⁶⁷ In this sense, *Nihonjinron* offers a catch: it urges the non-Japanese Others to assimilate, but due to its acute need for them for the purposes of identity formation, it also sets increasingly stricter barriers that do not allow them to become fully-fledged members of the majority.

Foreigners in Japan. Modern Japan has attracted many non-Japanese and has utilized them for the expansion of its economy. Their importance notwithstanding, these foreigners have often been regarded as a threat to social order and national unity. In postwar Japan, *Nihonjinron* has played a central role in this regard by amplifying the differences between the Japanese and the foreigners and enhancing the former’s awareness of the latter.⁶⁸ The promulgators of this discourse often argued that foreigners are incapable of mastering the Japanese culture and language and will harm local harmony in the long run. Foreigners living in Japan are often victims of this awareness. While the treatment meted to them varies greatly according to their personal position and the social status their countries of origin are associated with, they tend to sense the existence of a cultural barrier that prevents them from full integration. A longer sojourn in Japan and a deeper knowledge of the society and

65 See, however, a number of cases of attacks on female students belonging to the resident Korean minority who wore ethnically distinctive uniforms. E.g., “Aitsugu chima-chogori e no kōgeki,” 1994. For a list of discriminatory mechanisms used by the Japanese majority against *burakumin*, see Imaizumi, 1977: 7. For instances of prejudice against members of various groups and minorities and the latter’s sense of discrimination, see Murphy-Shigematsu, 2006; Lee, 2006; Befu, 2006; and Tsuda, 2009.

66 See Tanaka, 2006.

67 The scale and character of racial discrimination (Jpn. *jinshu sabetsu*) against minorities in Japan have definitely changed throughout the last century and the during the recent decades in particular. For recent overviews of racial discrimination in Japan, see Arudou, 2006; and Diène, 2006. For the rise of the internet as a platform for aversive racism in Japan, see McLelland, 2008.

68 For the media’s role in applying *Nihonjinron* tenets and reinforcing traditional stereotypes of ethnicity in the case of Nikkeijin work immigrants, see Tsuda, 2004.

local customs does not necessarily ease the fear of foreigners. In contemplating the mechanisms of distinction in the early 1980s, the American linguist Roy Andrew Miller noted the prevalence of an unwritten “law of inverse return,” which implies that the better foreigners speak Japanese, the less credit and encouragement they receive.⁶⁹ Although later research has found little empirical support for Miller’s hypothesis, it is possible that the growing exposure to a Japanese-speaking foreign community has made this phenomenon less acute.⁷⁰ Similarly intriguing has been the Japanese public’s fascination with Westerners speaking fluent Japanese (*hen na gaijin*) and their use as foreign TV talents (*gaijin tarento*).⁷¹ Their visible presence on talk shows and many other TV programs even today offers a certain clue to the lingering ambivalence towards foreigners transgressing cultural borders.

Children of mixed ancestry (*konketsu*: mixed blood; and, more recently, *hāfu*: half) are another object of differential treatment, ranging from envy to pity and even bullying, depending, among other things, on their origin, looks and family status.⁷² Paradoxically, for some time during the late twentieth century, even the children of Japanese employees returning home after a long sojourn abroad (*kikokushijo*: “returnees”) were subjected to discriminatory treatment, mainly by their peers, for supposedly losing their “Japaneseness.” While this problem has arguably faded away in recent years, it provides an additional insight into the way *Nihonjinron* views function. “The ideal of homogeneity in Japan,” argued sociologist Merry White, “is actually promoted by the stigmatization attached to foreign contact. The returnee symbolizes transgression and thereby represents a sort of photographic negative of the Japanese ideal.”⁷³ Such an attitude was followed by covert and at times even overt discrimination which humiliated the returnees and hindered their re-adaptation. A study that sought to identify the subtle criteria that signaled the returnees’ difference and made them feel marginal found that their negative image stemmed from their insufficient adherence to certain social norms. First, they were somewhat physically marked, often by a different hairstyle or even color and by a different dress code. Similarly, they seemingly behaved differently, acting more confidently and expressively and becoming more direct and less polite.⁷⁴ In recent years, however, the returnees’ plight has eased as more schools and

69 Miller, 1977.

70 See, for example, Haugh, 1998; Ishii, 2001.

71 Miller, 1982: 159–161; McVeigh, 1997: 73–84.

72 For the subtle status of ‘mixed-blood’ Japanese living in Japan, see Fish, 2009.

73 White, 1988: 119.

74 Kidder, 1992.

universities have been willing to accommodate their shortcomings and more employers have been willing to acknowledge their advantages.

Behavior and Language. Encapsulating a narrow definition of Japan as a group-oriented, harmonious and homogenous society, *Nihonjinron* writings exert a constant pressure on their consumers to behave in a similar manner. As such, behaving according to the norms is considered “Japanese” (*Nihonjin rashii*) but transgressing them may easily be interpreted as “un-Japanese” (*Nihonjin rashikunai*). The discourse on the Japanese language is a particular case in point. Advocates of *Nihonjinron* have long considered it, and particularly the cognitive mechanisms involved in its usage and the mode of communication it facilitates, to be unique and have contended that its mastery is associated with Japanese roots and culture.⁷⁵ This view seems to affect the way in which the Japanese interact with non-Japanese and their level of expectations of foreigners’ capacity to learn Japanese alongside their own capacity to learn foreign languages.⁷⁶ Generalized and stereotypical images of Japanese and non-Japanese behaviors thus make communicating with non-Japanese all the more harder than communicating with Japanese. Over the years, exaggerated images of foreign communication styles, and the idea that communicating with foreigners, and Westerners in particular, involves psychological stress, have been disseminated through various means within Japanese culture, such as movies, television, the press, popular guidebooks, and academic materials.⁷⁷ The stereotypes involved are so strong that for many Japanese, the mere sense of expected discomfort makes them nervous before the encounter and affects their communication style during its course.⁷⁸

Society. The ideological bent of *Nihonjinron* seems to drive Japanese society into a locally conservative and internationally isolationist position. By defining strict lines of conduct and etiquette and labeling them as ‘Japanese,’ it poses a counterbalance to liberal trends at home and thus curbs unconventional behaviors and any reconsideration of the division of power in society. As far as the outer world is concerned, it offers resistance to internationalism and globalization by contending that Japan and the Japanese people function according to different rules.

75 See, for example, Kindaichi, 1975; Matsumoto, 1975.

76 See McVeigh, 2000.

77 For books describing foreign behaviors and communication styles as opposed to Japanese behaviors and communication styles, see Inamura, 1980; Natsuoka, 1980.

78 For the stress Japanese tend to experience when communicating with non-Japanese and the reasons for it, see Kowner, 2002b; 2003.

Functions of Ethnic Nationalism in Contemporary Japan

The current prevalence of *Nihonjinron* discourse may baffle some foreign observers. How has an ethnic nationalism of such magnitude survived in an affluent and peaceful society such as postwar Japan? Does its existence, in fact, contradict Japan's image as an open and democratic society? The answers are not necessarily straightforward. Certain *Nihonjinron* writings are evidently the outcome of a frantic identity quest. From an historical perspective, at least, the latest wave is merely seen as another phase in the long swing that has characterized the formation of the modern Japanese identity.⁷⁹ The relative strength of Japan vis-à-vis a referent civilization, viz. China in the past and the West since the Meiji Restoration, has been instrumental in defining Japan in a positive or negative light. After 1945, *Nihonjinron* ideologists altered their rhetoric and offered a new and reassuring image. As Oguma Eiji argues, the new self-image of the country "as [an] island nation that contained no aliens, and was therefore peaceful and tranquil, proved to be very attractive to a people tired of war."⁸⁰ Since the 1970s, however, Japan's economic 'miracle' and social stability prompted the decline of postwar negative introspection and the reemergence of national self-confidence. It is in this milieu that *Nihonjinron* has attempted to challenge the perceived Western dominance by demonstrating the singular character of Japanese culture and social institutions.⁸¹

A key to understanding the social function of *Nihonjinron* is its use of tradition. Not unlike prewar discourse, it often presents an idealized picture of the old family system, communal life, and the past in general and stresses their unbroken ties with present institutions.⁸² As a discourse that weaves old and newly invented traditions into current national identity, *Nihonjinron* fills an acutely felt vacuum, partly due to the absence of clearly defined and accepted major national symbols in contemporary Japan, such as the flag, the anthem, and even the imperial household.⁸³ It is no wonder, then, that the advocates of *Nihonjinron* tend to emphasize the stable and immutable characteristics of Japanese culture and character and thus attempt to offset the precarious nature of modern life.⁸⁴ To this end, *Nihonjinron* is particularly attractive to

79 For an example of such a perspective, see Befu, 1995.

80 Oguma, 2002a: 299.

81 Befu, 1984.

82 Crawcour, 1980.

83 Befu, 1992.

84 For the argument suggesting that modernity is only a thin veneer that cannot spoil the unchanging features of Japaneseness, see, for example, Kawakatsu, 1991: 246–247.

the old generation that seems to be more at loss at times of rapid transition. Moreover, and until recently, the members of “the War Generation” were especially attuned to its tenets. They formed their national identity during a period of ultra-national consciousness and were more likely to maintain a positive disposition toward symbols and practices associated with prewar nationalism. Thus, in a period characterized by constant transitions, urban alienation and the destruction of the traditional family structure, members of the old generation showed the greatest need for traditional values and for a firm national identity.⁸⁵

There seems to be a wide agreement among *Nihonjinron* critics with regard to its ideological role, even though they may differ on the issue of which segments of society benefit from its promulgation.⁸⁶ There is no doubt that the establishment and big corporations derive benefits from the masses’ belief in a hegemonic ideology that advocates social harmony and consequently reduces conflict, social friction and threats to the status quo.⁸⁷ Indeed, the government and large firms in Japan have offered active support to various institutions that promote *Nihonjinron* tenets. Notwithstanding its descriptive stance, the normative overtones of *Nihonjinron* writings are rather explicit, and tell the Japanese “who they *ought* to be and how they *ought* to behave.”⁸⁸ But despite its strong emphasis on national supremacy, *Nihonjinron* also betrays some doubts. Yoshino, for one, has argued that the main purpose of *Nihonjinron* as cultural nationalism is to regenerate the national community by strengthening and even recreating the Japanese cultural identity in an era when it is felt to be lacking or threatened.⁸⁹ Although this contention seems at first to be at odds with the economic success and international prominence the Japanese state has regained in the past three decades, it is hard to miss the identity crisis the society has experienced during this very period. Among the manifold reasons for Japan’s urgent quest for identity one may point out rapid urbanization; the loss of traditional values and their replacement with a fully-fledged acceptance of the values and behavior of a post-industrial, postmodern (but not necessarily ‘Western’) society; and growing demands for regional and even

85 The Surveys on the Japanese National Character indicate that older respondents are more inclined to rate Japan as superior to the West. See Tōkei Sūri Kenkyūjo, 2013. Cf. Gano, 1987.

86 Befu, 1987; Mouer & Sugimoto, 1986.

87 Halliday, 1975; Kawamura, 1982.

88 Davis, 1983: 216.

89 Yoshino, 1992.

global responsibility despite the existence of ambiguous attitudes toward foreign contact.⁹⁰

Despite its negative image among its critics, *Nihonjinron* offers undeniable benefits and merits, especially when viewed from an emic or non-Western perspective. At its core is a tension between the individual and the group, whether nation, society, or culture. *Nihonjinron* is invariably on the side of the group. In essence, all human societies prescribe to similar ideas of groupism but differ in the level of conformity they demand and in the mechanisms they use to enforce it. *Nihonjinron* advocates undoubtedly lie on one extreme as they have made the group (*shūdanshugi*; lit. groupism or collectivism) and human interdependence (*kanjinshugi*, lit. interpersonalism) the essence of their ideology. They champion the submission of the individual to the group and advocate a blind adherence to its goals and rules so it is able to function and compete with rival groups. Moreover, they often contrast this view with a supposed emphasis on individualism (*kojinshugi*) in the West, a characteristic they regard as a source of social evil.⁹¹ This simplistic dichotomy is of crucial significance but no less important is the demand for conformity to certain collective axioms. This does not, however, mean that they do not offer considerable promise for the individual. Apart from economic prosperity, many social advantages can be gained when people behave in an expected and uniform manner. In such a society, pro-social behavior is internalized easily, personal relations require less deliberation, social protests are limited, the crime rate is low, and the capacity to achieve collective goals is high. Japan, advocates of *Nihonjinron* since the 1970s have contended, has turned into precisely such a society. For several decades, in fact, the tremendous economic and social achievements of Japan have served these advocates as proof for the correctness of their views, and so one may argue that the Japanese success did not reduce the need for this sort of ideology but rather the opposite—it enhanced it.

These views explain why *Nihonjinron* plays a positive role for many Japanese. It appeals especially to people belonging to the Japanese intelligentsia, which seem to correspond to Yoshino's category of "thinking elites."⁹² Thus, through their knowledge of *Nihonjinron* tenets, but not necessarily because of their belief in them, these intellectuals fulfill their role as members of a specific social stratum, lower in the hierarchy than the thin layer of the genuine progenitors

90 See Befu, 1984; Oe, 1989; and Stronach, 1995.

91 It is possible to trace this discourse to Watsuji Tetsurō's (1881–1960) famous book *Fūdo* (Watsuji, 1935). However, postwar scholars, and notably Hamaguchi Ehsun (1982), have offered a far greater elaboration of this dichotomous notion.

92 Yoshino, 1992: 1–9, 166–169.

of ideas, but far above the gullible masses who are more prone to accept *Nihonjinron*'s tenets without question. Finally, the fact that many *Nihonjinron* writings had been generated by their authors' own experience in foreign countries or by their encounter with foreigners in Japan, prompted John Davis to suggest that *Nihonjinron* is aimed primarily at a reading public with some international experience.⁹³ This may seem an overstatement, yet over the last few decades *Nihonjinron* has increasingly dealt with the domain of international relations and with Japan's "internationalization," chiefly because of Japan's ever-growing involvement in the international arena.⁹⁴ In dealing with the outer world, *Nihonjinron* allows, as Inoguchi Takashi puts it, "the selective absorption of the global diffusion of foreign ideas, institutions and technologies in a facile and nonchalant fashion, but does not let these penetrate society easily."⁹⁵ This facet is particularly prominent among Japanese living overseas or merely maintaining foreign contacts. *Nihonjinron* writings furnish them, and to a lesser extent also foreigners who deal with Japan, with cultural explanations for their difficulties in intercultural communication, as well as with justifications for Japanese 'national' behavior.⁹⁶ Here, too, the establishment has assumed a substantial role in promoting *Nihonjinron* concepts overseas in various ways, such as funding the translation of *Nihonjinron* publications, supporting foreign and local scholars who conduct research on issues falling under the scope of *Nihonjinron*, and sponsoring performances of 'unique' Japanese art forms around the globe.⁹⁷

Concluding Remarks

Postwar Japan offers an outstanding, albeit not unique, case for a democratic, arguably Westernized, and unquestionably technologically advanced state where ethnic nationalism is rife and reverberating. While militaristic prewar Japan witnessed an increasing overlap between nation and state, postwar Japan did not relinquish many of the tenets of the earlier ethnic-nationalist discourse. Nationalism simply moved down and focused on the nation state's

93 Davis, 1983.

94 See Befu, 1983; Mouer & Sugimoto, 1983.

95 Inoguchi, 2009: 349.

96 Inamura, 1980; Morita & Ishihara, 1989.

97 Sugimoto & Mouer, 1989.

grassroots.⁹⁸ In the same vein, the divine familial state was pushed aside, making room for the cultural unity of the Japanese people as a whole. With the declining role of the emperor as a unifying force, a new identity had to be formulated. The most evident manifestation of this strain of postwar nationalism has been a vigorous and dynamic discourse of identity. Indeed, throughout this period, the pressure for retrospection and for the reconstruction of national identity remained rather constant but changed in content. Shortly after the war, it was mostly a reaction to the military and social debacle and essentially negative auto-Orientalist apologetics. Two decades later, however, it embodied a structured response to the rapid process of modernization, urbanization and consumerism and the resulting dramatic change in lifestyle. Advance another decade, and during the peak of economic success it was associated with dilemmas of Japan's place in a changing world order.

The span and vigor of *Nihonjinron* in postwar Japan is undisputable. It did not take long after Japan's surrender for this discourse of identity to be resurrected and become a hegemonic populist ideology within a few decades. In this chapter, we focused on its racial facets and racist implications. As this case suggests, the line between race and ethnicity, race and culture, and even between racism and culturalism is often ambiguous. As Tzvetan Todorov has predicted, this contemporary Japanese discourse has also tended to replace 'race' with the softer term 'culture' and to set aside "declarations of superiority and inferiority . . . [in] favor of a glorification of difference."⁹⁹ There is no doubt that the exploitation of a racial ideology for the ostensible benefit of the majority and the state has been a frequent phenomenon in modern times. It has been less common, however, in postwar democratic and affluent states. So why, then, has Japanese society kept resorting to such an ideology? We have hinted at the winding issue of identity as a cardinal motive above. And yet, a recent comparative study may offer a supplementary explanation. Its author, Andreas Wimmer, argues that the state's domestic institutions and configuration of power determine the type of nationalism, the level of minority discrimination, and even the likelihood that the state will suffer the ravages of civil and interstate war.¹⁰⁰ This approach may provide some new insights into the survival and contemporary functions of *Nihonjinron*, but, above all, it implies that no state is a *sui generis* and that all subscribe to similar rules and mechanisms.

98 Delmer Brown offered this observation of Japanese nationalism (rather than ethnic nationalism) a mere ten years after the Japanese surrender. See Brown, 1955: 252.

99 Todorov, 1993: 156–157.

100 Wimmer, 2013.

Ethnic Nationalism and Internationalism in the North Korean Worldview

Tatiana Gabroussenko

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK—North Korea) emerged in 1948 as a Soviet satellite.¹ However, and as demonstrated by later developments, the DPRK's leaders proved to be more independent when given the opportunity. While the Soviet Union moved towards de-Stalinization after Stalin's death in 1953, the North Korean ruling elite under Kim Il Sung chose to reject this 'obligatory' policy of political "thawing." Along with a few other dissenting regimes, such as Albania and Romania, it drifted towards a form of "national Stalinism."² Ivan Berend describes this phenomenon as reflecting a confrontational tendency among these regimes towards Moscow, and as a general desire to replace "the Soviet guarantee of communist power with a sort of national, domestic legitimization."³ In order to substantiate this move ideologically, the national Stalinist states presented their own versions of Communist concepts. Like Hoxhaism, which was advertised as a purer version of Marxism-Leninism in Albania,⁴ and Nicolae Ceaușescu's theory of a "multilaterally developed socialist society" in Romania,⁵ Kim Il Sung supplemented the North Korean political lexicon with the term *Juche* (often translated as 'self-reliance'), that was later used for defining a revised and perfected version of Communism.⁶

Despite different roots and traditions, all the national Stalinist regimes, including North Korea's, shared a number of similar features. Among these was a peculiar type of worldview that combined seemingly incompatible features. On one hand, the North Korean view of the world included a nationalist, ethnocentric element which occasionally resembled racism.⁷ As Vladimir Tismaneanu correctly stresses, the "flaming nationalist rhetoric" in national

1 Scalapino & Lee, 1972: 375.

2 Lankov, 2002: 88.

3 Berend, 1996: 129.

4 Blumi, 1999.

5 *Programme of the Romanian Communist Party*, 1974.

6 Kim Il Sung, 1960a.

7 Myers, 2010.

Stalinist states resulted from their elites' tendency "to embrace political strategies" that "emphasize the uniqueness and the particularisms" of their nation, culture and people.⁸ The autarchic economic policies and general isolationism implemented by the national Stalinist regimes further underscored the rhetoric of national uniqueness and exclusivity, and thus helped to further distance these societies from the Soviet Union. Curiously enough, however, the 'messianic' tendencies of the North Korean regime had never been aimed at the South Korean population. In both the rhetoric and practice of North Korean ideology, South Koreans are consistently presented as the forcibly separated siblings of the North Koreans who long to join the North Korean paradise. Accordingly, it is only the continuous intervention of the American imperialists that prevents the unification of Korea under Kim Il Sung's "banner of independence."⁹

On the other hand, national Stalinist regimes sought to emphasize the universalistic application and worldwide appeal of said ideas by presenting their newly invented ideologies as the world's most advanced systems of thought. In this regard, these allegedly novel ideologies had much in common with old-style Soviet "proletarian internationalism." In the DPRK, the "self-reliant" isolationism espoused under the ideological metonym of 'Juche' also featured a strong outwardly oriented Messianic element that sought to embrace all the peoples of the world, bringing them under the North Korean, i.e. Kim Il Sung's, banner (see Fig. 18.1). This duality of North Korean ideology found its clearest exposition in the famous Kim Jong Il saying that is attached to the front wall of the Kim Il Sung University e-library: "Keep your feet firmly planted on your own ground, but turn your eyes to the world. Redouble your effort to make the world admire our great Party and Kim Il Sung's Korea."¹⁰ The nationalist tendencies of North Korean ideology are widely recognized by overseas specialists in Korean studies who have described the North Korean worldview in a variety of ways. Among these, "xenophobic nationalism,"¹¹ "racism,"¹² "ultra-nationalism/anti-internationalism,"¹³ and "national solipsism"¹⁴ are but a few examples. At the same time, however, internationalism, which DPRK ideological practices certainly do not lack, is often overlooked to the extent that some

8 Tismaneanu, 2011: 4.

9 For more details on the South Korean narrative in North Korean discourse, see Gabroussenko, 2011.

10 Kim Chol Ung, 2013.

11 Suh, 1988: 313.

12 Myers, 2010.

13 David-West, 2007: 146.

14 Cumings, 2005: 407.



FIGURE 18.1 *Kim Il Sung surrounded by an admiring world (North Korean poster published in the 1970s): Exclusionist policies did not prevent the mobilization of foreign audience in support of Kim Il Sung's personality cult.*

researchers tend to perceive North Korea's officially endorsed worldview as the polar opposite to Soviet-style "proletarian internationalism" and "classical" socialism with its class-based approach epitomized in the Marxist slogan: "Workers of the world, unite!"¹⁵

In this chapter, I seek to question the perception of North Korea's worldview as entirely and purely ethnocentric, and present other overlooked aspects of this worldview, in which ethno-nationalism and internationalism exist in an inseparable if paradoxical dichotomy. By investigating an array of North Korean official texts, works of state-sponsored art and various cultural practices, I will consider those North Korean ideological practices that pertain to "foreigners," and will compare such practices to those expressed in the Soviet approach to the outside world with all its conditionalities and inconsistencies. Additional sources for this research include interviews with North Korean refugees and people who have extensive experience in communicating with people from the DPRK.

15 Myers, 2010; and David-West, 2007.

The Soviet Discourse of the Outside World: Conditional Internationalism

The fact that the first traces of ethnic nationalism emerged in Korea at the end of the nineteenth century as a means of resistance against foreign penetration is currently accepted by the majority of Korean studies academics.¹⁶ In his detailed investigation of the roots and traditions of Korean nationalism, for example, Gi Wook Shin defines Korean ethnic nationalism as one of the sources of Korean collective identity in its transition to the modern world. This was an identity which was molded in competition with the transnational ideologies of Pan-Asianism, colonial racism, capitalism and international socialism.¹⁷ Shin views DPRK state ideology as a continuation of this confrontational line. In his opinion, the uniqueness of Kim Il Sung's regime was that in apparent opposition to the Soviets, he "began to tailor communist rhetoric to fit the particular case of North Korea"¹⁸ and cleverly used Communist ideology as an instrument for his nationalist cause. However, as demonstrated by the historical experiences of Communist regimes throughout the world, such "tailoring" was far from unique to North Korea, but rather a general rule. It is indeed possible to argue that no socialist state used Marxist "proletarian internationalism" as an exclusive manual for everyday political practices. In this regard, the Soviet case is probably the most representative of them all.

In following the Marxist credo, Soviet ideology understood the concepts of 'nation' and 'race' in the context of class exploitation.¹⁹ The coming 'union of the global working class' under the auspices of the Soviet-centered "progressive camp" would mean the end of bourgeois nationalism and racism. The early Soviet concept of a future world devoid of inter-ethnic conflict and racism was epitomized in a saying by one of the protagonists of the classic "socialist realism" text *Virgin Land under the Plough* (1932).²⁰ Describing the future world, an undereducated yet devoted Communist, Nagulnov, ecstatically exclaims: "All people will be mixed, all with pleasantly tanned faces." This naive idea appealed to the mentalities of many Soviet people.²¹ Driven by the ideology of "proletarian internationalism," the Soviet nationalities policy tended to suppress a legacy of Russian chauvinism, and began the first mass "affirmative

16 See, for example, Chong-sik Lee, 1963, Choe, 1986; Lee, 1986, and Schmid, 2002.

17 Shin, 2006.

18 Shin, 2006: 24.

19 See MIA: Marxists: Marx and Engels.

20 Written by the Soviet writer and Nobel Prize laureate Michail Sholokhov.

21 Berdiaev, 1990.

action” programs for national minorities. The political logic of such measures was to prevent nationalistic resentment and separatism in the multi-ethnic Soviet society and secure its unity.²² The development of minority cultures, with a particular emphasis on folklore as an instrument of modern political mobilization, was also a particularly important element of Stalin’s national cultural policies.²³ Characteristically enough, the Communist governments of Soviet-dominated territories also promoted cultural policies aiming at a revival of folklore and cultural heritage.²⁴ North Korea was also a part of these Soviet endeavors. According to a US Army intelligence report, “The Soviets have created considerable good will by placing a special emphasis on native Korean culture. Drawing on their vast fund of experience in working with minority groups in the USSR, the Soviet advisors on cultural affairs have encouraged the study of native folk dancing, literature, and music.”²⁵

World War II brought a temporary change to the Soviet political rhetoric and the practice of “proletarian internationalism” that had hitherto been *de rigeur*. During the war, it was supplanted with something quite different. First, it came to reinforce Great Russian nationalism. At the time, Russians constituted a majority in the Red Army, and ethnocentric appeals to patriotism seemed to be a better strategy for persuasion and mobilization. Wartime propaganda, such as the poetry of Konstantin Simonov, appealed to the national sentiments of Russians; it emphasized the “Russian character” of Soviet soldiers and the Great Russian legacy of the Soviet people.²⁶ One of the most popular of Konstantin Simonov’s poems, “You remember, Alesha, the roads of Smolensk” (1941), conveys the characteristic sentiments of a soldier before the battle: “I am so proud for my most loving Russian land where I was born/For the fact,” Simonov wrote, “that I am destined to die here/For the fact it was a Russian mother who gave birth to me/For the fact it was a Russian woman who hugged me three times in a Russian way/When she was sending me off to battle.”²⁷ A toast by Stalin during the Kremlin banquet in honor of the victory over Germany on 24 May 1945 was the highpoint of such rhetoric. Stalin, a Georgian, toasted the “health of the Russian people, the greatest people of all nationalities of the Soviet Union.”²⁸ After the war, the notion of Great Russian

22 Hoffmann, 2003: 167; and Martin, 2001.

23 Hoffmann, 2003: 172.

24 Reisky de Dubnic, 1960: 158–159.

25 Quoted in Armstrong, 2003: 83.

26 Gromov, 1998: 320–24.

27 Simonov, 1999: 41.

28 Stalin, 1946: 196–197.

patriotism in Soviet propaganda was toned down, but did not completely disappear. From the mid-1960s onwards, Great Russian patriotism fed the Soviet cultural and ideological school of *derevenschiki* (“villager”), writers and artists who tended to nostalgically extol the virtues of the traditional Russian life and mentality.²⁹

The second new element acquired by official Soviet rhetoric during World War II, albeit only briefly, was an unconditional vilification of the German adversary, which emerged soon after the beginning of the war. Contradicting the principle of “proletarian internationalism,” Soviet wartime propaganda described the enemy as vicious ‘Germans’ regardless of their class membership. In 1942, the notable Soviet Jewish writer and war correspondent Ilya Ehrenburg published a pamphlet titled ‘Kill!’ which promoted a slogan, ‘Kill the German.’ The pamphlet contained the following passage: “We have understood: Germans are not people. From now on, the word “German” is the most terrible insult for us.”³⁰ This slogan was later used as a refrain in Simonov’s poem “If your home is precious to you,” also published in 1942. In this poem, Simonov passionately summons Soviet soldiers to “kill the German/Because it was what he wanted/Kill him so that it would be his home burnt, not yours/His wife would be a widow, not yours/His mother would cry over him, not yours over you./This is all his fault.” With the successful counterattack by the Red Army in 1943, the hostile anti-German rhetoric subsided, as it was no longer necessary and even potentially dangerous. In April 1945, an article in *Pravda* criticized ‘comrade Ehrenburg’ for equating German people with ‘fascists.’³¹ Simonov’s poem “If your home is precious to you” was later republished with the refrain “kill the German” being changed to “kill the fascist.” This signaled a restoration of earlier internationalist norms in Soviet national politics.

The North Korean Worldview in the “Soviet Era”: Echoing the Soviet Paradigm

From the late 1940s to the 1960s, Soviet patterns of nationality politics were transplanted into the DPRK via various channels. These included Soviet works of literature, arts and cinematography, as well as sponsored visits to the Soviet Union by North Korean journalists and intellectuals alongside study trips made by North Koreans in the USSR. Due to these intensive cultural and

29 Lewis, 1976.

30 Ehrenburg, 1943.

31 Alexandrov, 1945: 4.

political interactions, the North Korean discourse was inevitably influenced by the Soviet view of the outside world. Despite the later divergence of political paths, the legacy of the so-called “Soviet era” proved to be immense and to some extent undeletable.³² Since the first contacts between North Koreans and Soviets occurred immediately after the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet channels of influence necessarily delivered Soviet patterns of wartime propaganda with their rhetoric of nationalistic patriotism and unconditional vilification of the enemy. As mentioned above, the dehumanization of German adversaries had been significantly softened in the USSR by the end of war. However, many of the Soviet works of literature, arts and cinematography which were disseminated in North Korea in the 1940s-1950s were produced at earlier stages of the war and bore the characteristic traces of wartime propaganda.

The pathos of patriotism and genuine passion that these works bore was contagious. Simonov’s wartime verses were known in North Korea to the extent that they inspired many cases of near plagiarism among North Korean writers. Some of Simonov’s poems, such as “Wait for me,” became lyrics in popular North Korean songs.³³ A great deal of popularity was also bestowed upon Fadeev’s novel *Young Guard*—a romanticized narration of the life and horrid deaths of the members of an antifascist underground organization, Young Guard, at the hands of German fascists. The same could be said of Soviet wartime films, many of which became genuine blockbusters in the DPRK during the 1940s to early 1950s.³⁴ Narratives about Soviet wartime martyrs such as Zoya Kosmodemianskaya and Alexander Matrosov became widely known and popular in North Korea.³⁵ The Argentine revolutionary Che Guevara (1928–1967) not only became a symbol of radical youth but also exemplified an attractive foreign man (see Fig. 18.2).

32 The term “Soviet era” was invented by Scalapino & Lee (1972) in their *Communism in Korea* and refers to the DPRK’s initial period (1945–1960), when the Soviet influence was particularly profound.

33 Gabroussenko, 2010: 80–92.

34 In a recent example, I was approached by an aging North Korean re-settler in Seoul in 2010. He asked me to help him to get copies of Soviet wartime films which he held in very high esteem.

35 Zoya Kosmodemianskaya was a 17 year old Soviet female partisan who was executed by the Germans (Axell, 2001: 79–91). For one of many North Korean narratives about this partisan, see Min, 1954: 15–19. Alexander Matrosov was another World War II hero who flung himself on the gun-post of a German pillbox to give his unit a chance to advance (Axell, 2001: 3–4). In Ri Yünyöng’s short story ‘Aböji’ [Father] (1960), one of the characters is referred to as “Korean Matrosov”—that is, a North Korean who repeated Matrosov’s trial.



FIGURE 18.2 *“The internationalist fighter Che Guevara is always in our memory” (North Korean poster published in the 1990s).*

The Soviet discourse of wartime propaganda and particularly its dehumanizing equation of the enemy with “the beasts” and its unconditional idealization of “us” deeply penetrated the North Korean official rhetoric during the 1950–1953 Korean War. Indeed, like the Soviet paradigm of the Soviet people’s war with Hitler as a national liberation war, North Korean propaganda presented the

1950–1953 Korean War as a war of the national liberation of the Korean people from the American imperialists, with the South Korean military forces barely even mentioned. In his poem on the Battle of Stalingrad, Yi Puk-myŏng claimed that Stalingrad was “close to the hearts of all Koreans, who, just like the Soviets before them, are now fighting against the foreign [American] invasion.”³⁶ The fact that the foundations of Korean War discourse in North Korean literature were laid down by the Soviet-Korean poet Cho Ki-ch’ŏn further facilitated an acceptance of Soviet patterns of wartime propaganda in the DPRK.³⁷ A case in point is two Cho poems contrasting virtuous Koreans with bestial Americans. Referring to the North Korean youth before the war, Cho Ki-ch’ŏn provides an idealized description of pure youths akin to Fadeev’s *Young Guard*:

We did not do a chore without a song
 We did not start a day without a smile
 We stayed wide awake on spring nights,
 Thinking about newly flourishing flowers
 All inside our beautiful dreams.³⁸

Conversely, the imagery Cho uses to refer to Americans follows the pattern of Soviet accounts of sadistic German fascists:

A child who lost his mother,
 A child who is crawling along the street in tears,
 Both children were pierced
 With a hundred bullets
 Which were targeted at them
 By the blood-loving Yankees!
 ...
 The animals were laughing madly
 While poking people’s eyes out and tearing out their nails!
 The animals carved [pictures of] atomic bombs
 With their bayonets on people’s chests!³⁹

At the same time, however, the Soviet works of literature and arts that were translated and disseminated in the DPRK in the late 1940s and early 1950s delivered

36 *K’ŭnak’ŭn uŭi*, 1954: 59–67.

37 Gabroussenko, 2005: 82–83.

38 Cho, 1952, 11: 137.

39 Cho, 1952, 11: 132–133.

the paternalistic side of the Soviet picture of the world with regard to the liberated nations. Within the Soviet discourse, Korean people were treated with respect and sympathy; yet, they were portrayed as representatives of just another “minority culture,” the ever powerless victims of foreign oppression, imperialism and colonialism who were only freed by the Soviet intervention.⁴⁰ Accordingly, the North Korean travelogues about the visits of North Korean intellectuals to the USSR and “North Korean-Soviet friendship writings” infantilized the North Koreans, presenting them as extremely weak and ever grateful recipients of Soviet help.⁴¹ Such writings presenting North Koreans as a helpless “child race” in need of protection paradoxically reiterated the self-representation of Koreans under Japanese colonial rule.⁴²

The joint Soviet-Korean film “Brothers”⁴³ (1957), which depicts a separated Korean family, presents this idea in a characteristically gendered episode.⁴⁴ The film contrasts the fates of two talented female dancers: one from the South and another from the North. In order to reemphasize the disparity between the two characters’ lives, the director made the characters physically identical: both roles were played by An Sung-hui, a famous North Korean dancer at the time. The story is as follows. Man-chöl, a young Korean scholar who leads a reclusive lifestyle, accidentally comes across a female dancer in a South Korean nightclub. The pretty bargirl reminds Man-chöl of his girlfriend Ok-lim in the North, who had left their hometown to study at a Bolshoi theatre school in the USSR. The bargirl, wearing a red wig and slinky attire, performs a lewd Western dance in front of some sleazy Americans, one of whom then approaches her with flowers and money. The bargirl accepts these gifts and follows the foreigner to his table. Man-chöl is shocked to see how South Korean female dancers are so easily and openly corrupted by foreigners who treat them as prostitutes. He rushes to save the dancer and takes her out of the dirty bar, but is stopped by his cynical teacher, who claims that Man-chöl “cannot save all Korean girls” and that his own girlfriend is also dancing now, somewhere in Moscow.

40 Gitovich & Bursov, 1948; Perventsev, 1950; Hohlov, 1956.

41 Gabrouszenko, 2011.

42 Myers, 1994: 70–71.

43 In Korean, the film bears the title “Itchi mara, P’ajurül” (Do not forget P’aju).

44 This film was written by a group of distinguished Soviet and Korean writers. From the Soviet side it was a famous journalist who specialized in Korean themes, Arkadii Perventzev. From the Korean side well-known writers So Man-il and Kim Sung-gu were involved. The famous Korean dancers of the time, Ch’oe Sung-hui and An Sung-hui, also starred in the film.

The scholar then moves to the North and meets Ok-lim; she has just returned home from the USSR. Ok-lim performs chaste national dances in front of the builders of a dam. After the performance she is approached by the Russian engineers with flowers, polite bowings and friendly handshakes. After parting with their Soviet friends, Man-chöl and Ok-lim go walking and have the following conversation:

Ok-lim, was it difficult for such a beautiful girl to live in Moscow?—Of course, it was not easy at first, Man-chöl. I did not know Russian, and I did not know dance techniques. I can imagine how funny I looked to my teachers . . .—No, I mean, you are so beautiful, and the life of a beautiful girl is not easy . . .—No, I was so happy in Moscow! Everyone was as good as my relatives are here.⁴⁵

The South Korean bargirl in the film is portrayed as a hopelessly corrupted victim of lustful foreigners who has no choice but to rely on their money. Conversely, the North Korean dancer is as safe and as naïve as a child in a happy family. In both cases, the national dignity of the heroines depends on external forces. Just as the Americans in Seoul emerge as the main reason for the national humiliation of a Korean bargirl, the Soviets serve as a natural guarantor of Ok-lim's national pride and personal safety.

Mono-Ethnicity as a Special Korean Virtue: The Evolution of the North Korean World Vision under the Influence of Juche

The North Korean regime began its solitary ideological journey around the late 1950s and early 1960s. In his famous "Juche speech" of December 1955, Kim Il Sung emphasized the necessity of de-Sovietizing the North Korean political and cultural arena—though, unlike other leaders of national Stalinist states, he did so in a less overt and aggressive way, carefully avoiding an open conflict with his Soviet patrons.⁴⁶ The major expression of the new policy was a gradual decline of the rhetoric of "North Korean-Soviet friendship" without its complete eradication. In the new North Korean worldview, Soviets were downgraded from the position of "older brothers/esteemed teachers/major guarantors of North Korean independence" to mere "foreign friends" of the DPRK and admirers of Kim Il Sung's unparalleled wisdom. The mentions of Russians in

45 Perventsev, Kim & Sö, 1957.

46 Kim, 1960a.

the North Korean media thus decreased markedly. However, despite the new political paradigm, many features of the North Korean worldview that had been formed during the Soviet era survived and often re-emerged in an even more accentuated form. One of the most important of these was the self-presentation of Koreans as innocent, infantilized creatures in constant need of protection. During the Soviet era, it was the Soviets who played the role of their protectors; in the 'Juche' DPRK, this role came to be played by that of the Leaders themselves—Kim Il Sung and later Kim Jong Il and Kim Jong Un.

The film *Fates of Kŭm-hŭi and Ŭn-hŭi* (1974), with a script written by a distinguished North Korean writer, Paek In-jun, exemplifies this evolution of the North Korean worldview by reproducing and deepening the motifs found in *Brothers* in the new political setting. The film's narrative focuses on the fates of two separated twin sisters, Kŭm-hŭi in the North and Ŭn-hŭi in the South. Both were born talented dancers and singers, but their fates diverged due to contrasting social conditions. Like Ok-lim in *Brothers*, Kŭm-hŭi performs chaste national dances and inspires workers to achieve greater feats of socialist labor, while an unfortunate Ŭn-hŭi reprises the role of the bargirl in the red wig: she is forced to sing in a bar in front of a lecherous crowd. As in *Brothers*, both roles are played by the same actress, Chŏng Ch'un-ran. Paek In-jun further expands the contrast between the two sisters. The childish naïveté and cheerfulness of the North Korean Kŭm-hŭi is emphasized by adding additional and rather improbable details. Unlike Ok-lim in "Brothers," who for all her innocence travels on her own and has a boyfriend, Kŭm-hŭi's personal contacts are limited by her father and mother, who take particular care in protecting their fully-grown girl from any disturbing information. While undoubtedly an adult, Kŭm-hŭi is depicted as constantly jumping, giggling and making comments like: "There are no unhappy people in our country, are there?"

For unspecified reasons, Kŭm-hŭi is completely ignorant of the terrible lives of people in South Korea. The sudden revelation of her unhappy twin in the South is supposed to serve as a trigger of political awakening; however, her actual reaction goes no further than childish tears and deeper feelings of appreciation for the Father-Leader who protects North Koreans from such awful fates. On the other hand, the victimization of Ŭn-hŭi in a supposedly 'Yankee' occupied South reaches epic proportions. For one thing, the South Korean sister is dragged to prostitution by deception. A childish gullibility had made Ŭn-hŭi trust the false promises of a sleazy pimp she just met and leave her hometown to follow him to a distant Seoul. The girl displays the same naïveté when she tries to escape her shameful life. Instead of planning her escape, Ŭn-hŭi simply runs away from the bar, is promptly followed by her capturers, and is then hit by a car, breaking her leg and becoming handicapped.

In order to reemphasize the victimhood of his South Korean heroine, Paek In-jun employs a motif that is a true favorite of North Korean artists: a protagonist's irreversibly broken leg as a result of a car crash in a cold capitalist country.⁴⁷ With the necessary de-Russification that followed the end of the Soviet era, DPRK propaganda started to more actively employ the rhetoric of North Korean mono-ethnicity as a testimony of its integrity. The idea was framed in a variety of ways, starting from rather neutral ethnocentric references to "our glorious/unique national spirit" and "an ideology of the primacy of our nation" to the unequivocal notion of a "pure Korean bloodline" that is not to be "contaminated, [not] even by a drop of ink."⁴⁸ The latter definition in particular has spurred many discussions among Western North Korean specialists. Some scholars, such as Brian Myers, treat such notions as an expression of the racist and fascist essence of the North Korean worldview.⁴⁹ However, the prevailing view at present is that the North Korean worldview is colored by a kind of defensive and reactive "racial thinking." According to this opinion, the rhetoric of "pure blood" should be read in the context of the reactive nationalism that emerged as a result of racist Japanese colonialism. In this vein, Alzo David-West has recently defined this part of North Korea's mentality in a slightly awkward, yet precise, way as "Korean ethnic-race firstism."⁵⁰

It is difficult to disagree with David-West's logic. Indeed, for all its seeming parallels with fascism or racism, the DPRK's "pure blood" rhetoric never serves as a sign for the national superiority of Koreans over other nations. It rather serves as a sign of distinction for the Korean nation, proof that 'Koreans have remained Koreans' against all odds. It is for this reason that international

47 Among numerous examples of North Korean narrations which employ the motif of a North Korean protagonist's broken leg one can cite the short story by Pak Chong-sang, "Sosaeng" [A Student], *Chosŏn munhak*, 2004, #12 (686), 62–68 or the film *Naega pon nara* (The country I saw) which we will shall later analyze in detail (Gabroussenko, 2011).

48 During talks between General Han Min-gu of the ROK and General Kim Yong-chul of the DPRK in 2006, Han mentioned the issue of South Korean international marriages as the consequence of a lack of women in rural areas. Kim pointed to the danger that by doing so Korean 'singularity could disappear'. Han responded that the number of international marriages has thus far been negligible and that they were little more than 'but a drop of ink in the Han River'; Kim responded by saying that '[n]ot even one drop of ink must be allowed to fall into the Han River'.

49 See Myers, 2010. This assumption gains additional weight from an erroneous translation of a popular North Korean ideological dictum, *uri minjokŭi ususŏng* ("excellence/specifics/distinction of our nation") as "national superiority," which evokes strong associations with fascist and racist rhetoric in the Western mind.

50 David-West, 2012: 6.

marriages are often presented negatively in North Korean propaganda—as being clearly interwoven with the issue of the Koreans’ victimization in their relations with “stronger” nations. A standard North Korean narrative of international marriage presupposes forced relations between a Korean female and a foreign “occupier” or “colonialist.” In a *Rodong Sinmun* article (published on 11 November 2003) about American crimes committed on South Korean soil, the marriages of American men to Korean women and the birth of mixed-race children (which are by definition perceived as being the result of their mothers’ rape) are mentioned among the serious charges.⁵¹

One possible example of the fictional representation of international marriages is a short story by Nam Sang-hyök entitled “Two Women” (1991).⁵² This story’s plot is concerned with the fates of Koreans in Japan. One of the themes it deals with is the Korean protagonist Min-ok’s marriage to a Japanese man, Chükamoto. The latter serves as the living embodiment of the vice that stalks defenseless Koreans in Japan. He is heartless and irrationally xenophobic to the extent that he even abuses his Korean wife for cooking her mother’s culinary specialty. Ugly and lewd in contrast to the delicate and pure Min-ok, Chükamoto constantly harasses her and turns her into his sex slave. To make matters even worse, he later leaves his Korean wife for a Japanese woman with whom he “brazenly” cohabits out of wedlock.

While such a discourse of international marriages is popular in the DPRK, one should not forget that North Korean propaganda occasionally covers the opposite case: cases of international marriages between North Korean males and females from “friendly nations,” which are supposed to serve as testimonies for an absence of ethnic discrimination in Pyongyang. An example of such propaganda is an article written by Yu T’aek-hui,⁵³ a woman of Indonesian background who was repatriated from Japan with her Korean husband in 1961. Yu’s experience contrasts the humiliation both had been subjected to in Japan with a life full of friendly neighbors and kind people in Pyongyang. In this case, North Korean propaganda was apparently not concerned with the issue of “spoiling [the] pure blood of Koreans.” More importantly, according to the logic of North Korean propaganda, “pure blood” in its biological sense is insufficient for securing the Koreans’ unique place in the world. As the North Korean discourse on overseas and South Koreans demonstrates, the genetic

51 The *Rodong Sinmun* article cited memoranda issued in 2003 by the Committee for the Peaceful Unification of the Fatherland and the Research Centre for the Unification of the Fatherland (*Choguk Pyöngghwa T’ongil Wiwönhoe Choguk T’ongil Yöng’uwön Pimangnok*).

52 Nam Sang-hyök, 1991, 1992.

53 Yu 2000: 19–20.

“purity” of Korean blood per se fails to prevent a disastrous “spoiling” of that blood by those overseas Koreans who expose themselves and their children to non-national influences.

While DPRK official propaganda never questions the “blood purity” of Koreans living in South Korea or Japan, their national credentials and moral values are the subject of constant scrutiny. In a standard North Korean narrative, South Korea is described as a territory where, unlike the DPRK, every expression of Koreanness, including the language and the culture, is allegedly suppressed by the puppet government and by “American bastards.” A typical example of such a narrative is a short story by Kim Chongsök, “Mogukö” [Mother tongue] (1996).⁵⁴ The only guarantor of “true Koreanness” for Koreans living in Japan is their allegiance to the DPRK. There is always a risk of them falling under the spell of vicious Westernized influences and losing their “national virtues” like the female protagonist Su-rani from the short story “Embracing the daughter’s fate” by Kim Süng-kil (1988). Min-sök, Su-rani’s widowed father, is so busy earning money that he neglects the “national upbringing” of his beloved daughter, a promising pianist—that is to say, bringing her up as a true Korean girl. Min-sök delegates her upbringing to a renowned Japanese music teacher, Takeo, with disastrous results: the girl loses her “pure national talent” and instead acquires the sexualized and mechanical manners of “foreign performers.” At the same time, Min-sök’s housekeeper’s daughter was able to strongly develop her talent as a musician after her return to the DPRK.

In summary, the North Korean worldview believes that the “purity” of the Korean nation is not automatically inherent in any Korean by virtue of his or her blood. This purity has to be earned by attaining a whole complex of achievements including the conservation of national traditions, the maintenance of a high sense of national pride, and an affiliation with the DPRK. The quintessential expression of this approach is present in a scene from the lyrical comedy *Our fragrance* (*Uriüi hyanggi*) (2003) (script by Ri Suk-kyöng). The scene features the following dialogue between foreign tourists and a North Korean kimchi researcher in Pyongyang:

- Tourists (T): “We really admire your spirit of valuing your own things”
- Researcher (R): “Yes, we value this precious spirit which will ultimately determine the rise and fall of our nation. If the national character is not defended, the nation’s identity will be lost.”

54 Kim, 1996.

- T: "Identity?"
- R: "Yes. All nations have an identity of their own. Take the national bloodline. From generation to generation we Koreans have had black hair and black eyes. This is because we are of the same bloodline."
- T: "You are right. We have blonde hair unlike yours."
- R: "National culture and customs such as national dress and food are also important. Korean schoolgirls living in Japan continue to wear Korean jackets and skirts despite violent attacks by thugs. They do so in order to defend their national character. If people like foreign food and clothes more than their own they are no longer members of the nation."
- T: "I see. That is why we can see culture and tradition so prominent and well respected here."
- R: "Right. And the credit for the fact that we live in an authentic Korea goes to Comrade Kim Jong Il, the leader of our country. By being the nation of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, we can hold our heads high and be proud of our own fragrance."

Like any nationalist mythological narrative, this dialogue fails to precisely clarify the criteria used to define "authenticity." Specifically, the North Korean ideologists fail to clearly explain why *hanbok*, or Korean-style jackets and skirts, are musts for women while Korean men can enjoy the comforts of modern fashion. They also fail to draw a precise logical line between the national and the "foreign," ignoring, for example, the fact that the major ingredient of "traditional" Korean cuisine, red chili pepper, is a relatively recent import from overseas.⁵⁵ Another example is the traditional Korean dress, the *hanbok*. What North Korean propaganda presents as examples of primordial national tradition can hardly be treated as such: contemporary versions of the *hanbok* modestly cover women's breasts and are produced in vivid attractive colors, while a truly authentic *hanbok* used to fully expose the Korean women's breasts and were rather bleak and drab.

In addition, the text includes other misconceptions: one particularly startling one is the contrast between Koreans as people with black hair and eyes and the people of the outside world that are supposedly devoid of these unique characteristics. For all its inconsistencies and misconceptions, though, the dialogue represents a quintessential exposition of North Korean ethnocentrism in

55 The first reference to a chilli-based kimch'i recipe is dated to the mid-eighteenth century. Compared to a supposed background of five thousand years of Korea history, such 'antiquity' is negligible.

which the “national bloodline,” the loyalty to national customs and traditions, and the political allegiance to the DPRK constitute inseparable features. The dialogue finishes off with the obligatory praise to the Great Leader that aims to remind the reader that regardless of blood, ‘true Koreanness’ has a definite political face, i.e. the North Korean, and that only the nation of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il may truly be called Korean.

North Korean Propaganda about Foreigners from Inclusive and Alienating Perspectives

While the global ambition of the *juche* ideology makes “good foreigners” an essential part of North Korean propaganda, the general ethnocentrism of North Korean models of the world and the DPRK’s political isolation naturally limit the occurrence of foreign personages in the North Korean cultural landscape. In the majority of North Korean narratives, therefore, foreigners serve as props for North Koreans rather than as independent figures. However, narratives focused on foreigners do exist in the DPRK and share several common features. Firstly, they contain positive references to the unusual customs and physical appearances of people from other nations. Several North Korean films may serve as a case in point. For instance, Han Ki-sok’s “Spring in Pyongyang” (2010) described a French boy as an “extremely cute boy, with curly blond hair, astonishingly blue eyes, [an] oval face and milky-white skin.”⁵⁶ Takahashi Minoru from the film *The Country I Saw* (*Naega pon nara*) (1988) is a sophisticated representative of the Japanese intelligentsia with refined manners and a love for philosophy and culture. A Russian nurse from Kim Hong-mu’s *Marusya* (1960) is portrayed as both physically and spiritually beautiful. This female character, who sacrifices her life to save Korean children during the Korean War, is described as “slim, with a moon-like shining face, big eyes as tranquil as a deep lake, and a clear forehead above which her blond hair is swept back in waves.” Her beautiful smile “shows snowy-white teeth.”⁵⁷

Secondly, in representing “good foreigners” North Korean propaganda tends to evoke familiar cultural and behavioral patterns, and thus Koreanizing the images of the DPRK’s foreign friends (see Fig. 18.3). In *Red roses of Siberia* (1986) by Yun Kyŏng-ju, a Russian female doctor living in the Siberian wilderness eats kimchi and rice for dinner and plays North Korean marches on the piano for

56 Han, 2010: 9.

57 Kim, 1960b: 35.



FIGURE 18.3 *Glorifying North Korean–Soviet friendship (North Korean poster published in the 1980s): After years of distancing itself from the USSR by underscoring its national uniqueness, it was during this period that the North Korean regime began to actively employ images of the Soviets as friends of Korea.*

recreation.⁵⁸ In *The Fifteen[th] Year* (2008) by Paek Po-hŭm, a positive German character takes care of her mother-in-law in the fashion of a dutiful Korean daughter-in-law, bowing to her, massaging the feet of the older woman and serving tea to her and her guests.⁵⁹ It goes without saying that this inclusive and internationalist aspect of North Korean discourse has a clear political face. The acceptance of foreigners in such narratives is always conditional: positive characters share the symbols of faith, such as their loyalty to the DPRK, to *juche* and to the Dear Leader with the North Koreans. This loyalty is often presented as a result of the foreign character in question's moral journey, after which his/her misconceptions about all things North Korean disappear. Consider, for example, a narrative about an at-first suspicious English biologist, John Haw, who eventually comes to admire the North Korean political system and

58 Yun, 1986.

59 Paek, 2008.

mentality,⁶⁰ or a film, *Story of the Blooming Flower*, in which an initially apolitical Japanese florist, Shimozawa, becomes a supporter of *juche* to the extent that he dedicates his newly invented flower to North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.

According to North Korean mythology, the devotion of people of non-Korean blood to the DPRK pays off because the foreigners in question come under the precious protection of the Dear Leader. The aforementioned “Spring in Pyongyang,”⁶¹ which focuses on the interaction between the French boy Julian, the son of Kim Il Sung’s recently deceased followers, and Kim Il Sung, is reminiscent of the pattern of interaction between the Great Leader and the offspring of his deceased Korean comrades, for whom he often finds suitable partners. In the story, Kim Il Sung inspires the cute daughter of a North Korean diplomat to befriend the lonely French boy and thus distract Julian from the pain of losing his father. In the same way, the unconditional faith of two hundred airplane passengers in a North Korean diplomat in Ri Kümch’öl’s short story ‘Change Course!’ saves their airplane from exploding by the application of anti-gravity technology discovered by DPRK scientists and blessed by the Dear Leader himself.⁶²

However, when the foreign characters are considered within the context of unsettled historical grudges, North Korean discourse treats them in ways not dissimilar to the aforementioned methods of WW2 Soviet propaganda, anti-Japanese propaganda in the United States during the Pacific war,⁶³ or the wartime writings of Chiang Kai-Shek and Mao Zedong with their clear racist intonations.⁶⁴ When issues of the colonial past and discrimination against *zainichi* Koreans in Japan,⁶⁵ the Korean War or the “occupation” of South Korea are concerned, North Korean propaganda eagerly employs openly xenophobic and defamatory rhetoric in order to maintain the required level of political awareness among its citizens.

North Korean authors of such texts generously apply such references as ‘Jap’ or ‘American bastard,’ often without bothering to provide any substantiation for their sweeping anti-foreign arguments. Take, for example, a brief episode in a short story by Kang Kui-mi entitled “The Wallet” [*Tonjigap*] (2001).⁶⁶ The protagonist, a naive Korean peasant, comes to Tokyo in 1921 to earn money and

60 Song, 1988.

61 Han, 2010.

62 Ri, 2004.

63 Moon, 2003.

64 Stevens, 1964.

65 Korean nationals in Japan. For more details see Ryang, 2000.

66 Kang, 2001.

carries all his savings in the traditional manner of Korean peasants, a “money bag,” or little pouch hung on his belt. He openly brags to the people around him about the large sum that he is keeping in his “money bag” and one day finds his bag cut off by an unknown thief in the busy streets of Tokyo. The peasant pours out his emotions to passers-by in the following speech: “You Jap bastards, you bastards! Who of you bloody herd of pigs’ trotters⁶⁷ has stolen my moneybag? You are a wicked pack of Japanese bastards, you seed of the Japanese! You are all leprous bastards!”⁶⁸ The narrator delivers this rant with full sympathy, apparently presupposing that the oppressed position of Korean peasants in 1921 Japan spares him from the normal restraints of manners and common sense. The author then makes far-fetched parallels between the money that was stolen from the peasant by a Japanese pickpocket and his native country that was also taken from the Koreans by the Japanese.

It is noteworthy, however, that while North Korean propaganda eagerly allows all sorts of anti-foreign rumblings to emanate from its fictional characters, official statements of North Korean ideology tend to refrain from referring to any racial or national inferiority in the enemy (see Fig. 18.4). The political meaning of North Korean anti-foreign narratives is clearly explained in the oft-cited saying by Kim Jong Il: “American and Japanese *imperialists* are the sworn enemies of the Korean people.”⁶⁹ To give a recent example, the above expression is used as a quote at the beginning of a set of history-themed comics written by Kim Kyŏng-suk, illustrated by Kim Myŏng-ch’ŏl and entitled “Devils in white clothes,” which was serialized in *Chosŏn Nyŏsŏng* in 2011. The comic presents a horror story about a poor female peasant in colonial Korea who loses her eyesight at the hands of an American missionary doctor called Anderson. The author specifically emphasizes that the evil doctor came to Korea to safely conduct human tests under the protection of a “friendly state”—Japan. The comic is a transparent remake of Han Sor-ya’s classic anti-American novel *Jackals* (1951), in which an American with the same name injects a Korean boy with a deadly bacteria. In both works, the American and Japanese characters personify the despicable and criminal anti-Korean policies of their states, and symbolize the antagonistic ‘Other’ of the Korean people.

67 “Pig’s trotters” is a derogatory nickname for the Japanese which hints at the traditional Japanese footwear or *geta*.

68 Kang, 2001: 37.

69 The emphasis is mine. See Kim, 2011.



FIGURE 18.4 *North Korean and Chinese soldiers collaborating in a fight against an American invader of Korea: A poster (probably published in the early 2000s) glorifying the revolutionary comradeship of North Korean and Chinese people while emphasizing their strong racial similarity compared with Americans.*

This pattern of vilification is not unchangeable, however: when the political necessity arises, North Korean propaganda eagerly switches paradigms and presents representatives of the same American and Japanese nations as friends of the DPRK and thus “good foreigners.” In Kim Ch’ongsu’s *My Arirang* (2002), Kim Il Sung warns his subordinates that “we should separate militarism and the Japanese people.” Numerous North Korean works, such as the films

Story of [A] Blooming Flower (1992) and *The Country Which I Saw* (*Naega pon-nara*) (1988), literary works such as ‘The Second Briefing’ by Ryang Ch’ang-cho (2000)⁷⁰ or ‘The Flag of the Republic’ by Kim Song-ho (2008),⁷¹ do indeed separate the citizens of Japan from the vicious politics of their state and associate them with the North Korean side. A broad-minded, sensitive leftist Japanese intellectual who discards the imperialist politics of his country and the low mores of his capitalist environment, and subsequently throws himself into the embrace of the Dear Leader is a stereotypical personage of this variety.

The same can be said about anti-American sentiments in North Korean propaganda, that are sometimes discarded in order to accommodate twists in the DPRK political line. The most characteristic example is the contrast between the images of Jimmy Carter as the President of the United States and the same Carter as the ex-president who visited North Korea in 1994 in order to convince Kim Il Sung that he should freeze the development of nuclear weapons in exchange for US concessions. While the 1979 narrative bristles with such references as “this bastard Carter, the leader of the American imperialists,” statements like “An American bastard is always a bad bastard” and calls for the eradication of “the very seeds of [the] American bastards,”⁷² a short story entitled “Enchantment” and published by Kim Chun-hak in 1998 presents an essentially identical Jimmy Carter as a physically beautiful and deeply emotional person who, in typical “good foreigner” fashion, discards his lifelong advocacy of gunboat diplomacy against North Korea and comes under the spell of the charismatic personage of Kim Il Sung. Along with his wife Rosalyn, also described as a beautiful and highly cultured personage, the fictional Carter in Kim Chun-hak’s narrative cannot help but become a devotee of both *juche* and North Korea.⁷³

This inclusive aspect of North Korean ideology with regard to foreigners necessarily influences the cultural politics of a DPRK that is much less isolated than is often imagined overseas. Foreign literature, for example, and mostly French, Soviet and English classics are included in the literature curriculum of North Korean middle schools. The national electronic library, Mirae, includes Homer’s *Iliad*, Cervantes’s *Don Quixote*, Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone with the Wind*, the complete works of Shakespeare, Victor Hugo, Charlotte Bronte and Maxim Gorky, as well as children’s fairy tales such as “Cinderella,” among many others. Famous foreign compositions are included in soundtracks of North

70 Ryang, 2000.

71 Kim, S-H., 2008.

72 Kim, 1979: 79–80.

73 Gabrouszenko, 2012.

Korean films: for example, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and the Spanish language romantic song "Bésame Mucho" in Korean translation were included in part 2 of the popular North Korean serial *Nation and Destiny*. Broadcasts of foreign films by state TV are also far from being unusual in the DPRK. According to the testimonies of North Korean refugees in Seoul, foreign films have been regularly aired on weekend television since the 1980s and foreign books have become available in bookshops and libraries throughout North Korea.⁷⁴ An ex-Soviet correspondent in Pyongyang, Ivan Zakharchenko, testifies that he watched Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor* on North Korean television.⁷⁵ This openness to politically neutral works from foreign cultures became particularly pronounced from the early 1980s onwards.⁷⁶

Conclusion

In typical national Stalinist fashion, the DPRK created an ideology that paradoxically combines the ethnocentric rhetoric of exclusivity with internationalist messages. The heavily messianic rhetoric of *juche* has expanded the North Korean understanding and image of the world and curbed the narrowly ethnocentric perspective of the North Korean worldview. Like Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism, Communism and other universal and cosmopolitan ideas, *juche* accepts people of all races, including Koreans, on the condition they share the basic values of its core teachings. In the North Korean view of the world, both ethnocentrism and internationalism have clear political faces, implying that people of both Korean and non-Korean blood must support the DPRK in order to be treated inclusively.

However, North Korean propaganda tends to occasionally reject this inclusive perspective when higher political priorities are at stake. The idea of unsettled historical scores often stimulates North Korean propagandists to employ unconditionally insulting rhetoric against perceived enemies in order to stimulate and mobilize the North Korean citizens under a banner of xenophobia. Racist comments are an inseparable part of this politically necessitated war rhetoric. At the same time, as North Korean narrations about 'good' Americans or Japanese testify, these political necessities may not be permanent. Depending

74 One of my informants, a North Korean female in her late thirties, recalls that her parents were lucky to get her a subscription to a series of children's world classics books, something which made her school friends deeply envious.

75 Zakharchenko, 2010.

76 Personal communication with A. Zhebin.

on the context, different official narrations may present the same political figure, such as Jimmy Carter, in both racist and non-racist and inclusive ways. For all the official praises of the “purity” of the Korean nation, the official narrative does not imbue any person of Korean blood with unquestionable virtue. A Korean who lives outside the North Korean paradise must earn the right to be called “a true Korean” by attaining various political achievements, the most important of which is an affiliation with the DPRK and the Dear Leader.

Under the present circumstances, it is difficult to measure the degree of influence that the officially endorsed vision of the world has on the mentality of ordinary North Koreans with any degree of precision. However, contacts with North Korean refugees in Seoul seem to indicate that this influence is, indeed, significant. Judging by my personal experience with these refugees, they value their “Korean blood,” and generally tend to treat interracial marriages with caution, sharing a common superstition that these allegedly result in the birth of unhealthy children. In their communication with people of different nations and ethnicities, North Korean migrants to the South paradoxically demonstrate some degree of open-mindedness, yet tend to differentiate between “ourselves” and “other” foreigners.

I experienced this form of stereotyping in person during my interviews with North Korean refugees. When I introduced myself as an Australian citizen, I encountered a wary attitude, which transformed into a friendly and relaxed one when I mentioned my Russian origins. This attitude, I am certain, is due to the efforts of North Korean propagandists who tend to represent Russians as kind and repentant “stray sons and daughters of socialism” and by and large friends of the Koreans. Myers, on the other hand, claims to have seen signs of prejudice against him as an American in his interactions with North Korean refugees—which is hardly surprising given the overwhelming amount of DPRK propaganda against “American imperialism” and the comparatively scarce narrations about “good Americans.” Generally, most refugees will advocate their own North Korean identity as radically distinct from that of the South Koreans’ despite being of the “same blood.” They feel the same estrangement towards overseas Koreans, and particularly those living in Japan. All in all, this testifies that the North Korean philosophy of the foreign world is complex and that ethno-nationalism is only a conditional and temporary part of it.

PART 4

Gender and Lineage



In the Name of the Master: Race, Nationalism and Masculinity in Chinese Martial Arts Cinema

Kai-man Chang

Based loosely on the biography of real-life Wing Chun martial arts master Ip Man (1893–1972),¹ the film *Ip Man* (2008) and its sequel *Ip Man 2* (2010) have won the heart of millions of Chinese. Starring Donnie Yen as Ip Man, the teacher of the legendary Bruce Lee, the *Ip Man* films resemble earlier martial arts films in themes, genre conventions, nationalist sentiments and heroic masculinity. Set in Fo Shan, a province of China renowned for its vibrant and diverse martial arts traditions, the first *Ip Man* film begins with a number of brawls between Ip Man and his fellow countrymen: the first challenger is a local martial arts master and the second is from northern China. Using his Wing Chun expertise, Ip Man defeats both opponents and establishes himself as a leading martial artist. In 1938, and after the Second Sino-Japanese War begins, Fo Shan is occupied by the Japanese army, and Ip Man's house is confiscated and turned into the Japanese army's headquarters. Ip Man is eventually forced to fight the Japanese forces' General in order to defend his country's honor, or, as the American DVD cover describes it: "In the last Great War, one man defied an empire." The sequel *Ip Man 2* continues the first film's storyline and exhibits an almost identical narrative structure. After the war, Ip Man settles in Hong Kong with his family. In order to earn a living, he starts teaching Wing Chun style martial arts to the locals. It is not long before Ip Man is forced to take on challenges from fellow Chinese martial arts masters, whom he later befriends. As in the first film, *Ip Man 2*'s final showdown is the title character's triumph over a foreign martial artist, which once again transforms Ip Man into a national hero. This time Ip Man's opponent is a British boxing champion.

Ip Man not only won the Best Film award at the 28th Hong Kong Film Awards in 2009, but both films were instant box office hits in Hong Kong,

1 In Mandarin Chinese *pinyin* Ip Man's name is rendered Ye Wen, which is also the film's Chinese title. Ye can also be romanized as Yeh (according to the Wade-Giles transliteration system), and as Yip, Ip or Jip in Cantonese romanization. Therefore, Ip Man is also known as Yip Man. To avoid confusion, I use only "Ip Man" to refer to both the film's eponymous character and to the real life martial arts master of the same name.

China, Taiwan and Singapore.² As many critics have pointed out, the popularity of *Ip Man* films among Chinese audiences has to do with the films' strong anti-Japanese sentiment and with Chinese nationalism.³ Like Bruce Lee's character Chen Zhen in *Fist of Fury* (1972), Donnie Yen's character begins by single-handedly taking down ten Japanese Karate black belts and then defeating a Japanese Imperial Army general in the film's final showdown. However, unlike Chen Zhen, a reckless young man who ends up sacrificing his life after avenging his master's death, Ip Man fights the Japanese in order to not only save his family and friends, but also to preserve his country's "cultural" tradition. Over and above this, he escapes to Hong Kong and eventually becomes one of the most influential martial arts masters with millions of disciples around the world. Despite its similarities to *Fist of Fury* (1972) and *Fist of Legend* (1994), a *Fist of Fury* remake starring Jet Li, *Ip Man* managed to create a new image of a martial arts master who is not only a national hero but also a family man. Since Ip Man was a real person, unlike Bruce Lee's characterizations of various fictional characters, the two Ip Man films provide invaluable insights into the ever-shifting geopolitical and racial tensions created by competing media industries within Asia.

The regional competition over soft power began to intensify during the first decade of the twenty-first century in light of the Korean wave that created a solid consumer-culture based dominance in East Asia and beyond. With China surpassing Japan as the world's second largest economy, it is hardly surprising that many of the popular films made as Hong Kong/China co-productions depict a strong nationalistic sentiment. By depicting a real life character, Ip Man, who lived during China's transitional period in the first half of the twentieth century and fought against the imperial powers, the *Ip Man* films go beyond a simple martial arts genre adaptation and offer a more complex understanding of how these films function within the context of national cinema and postcolonial identity. In this chapter, I will first investigate the mutual construction of racism and nationalism in the *Ip Man* films and then trace the evolving representations of racialized masculinity that have circulated in Chinese martial arts films since the 1960s, and especially those belonging to the *kung fu* subgenre. Under British rule, many Hong Kong Chinese had forged a culture that incorporated Chinese historical and folk heroes into their imagi-

2 *Ip Man 2*'s box office performance surpassed its predecessor's. It was not only the highest grossing Chinese-language film of the year in Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia (second in Taiwan and fifth in China), but also broke Singaporean box office records. See "2010 nian huayupian," 2011 and "Yewen 2 piaofang chao gongfu," 2010.

3 See, for example, Tang, 2010: 99–102; Peng, 2011: 40–41.

nary representations of social and political uprisings. I will argue that the heterogeneous images of masculinity in Chinese martial arts films derive from interlinked formations of race, gender and national identities that are not only socially produced, but also transnationally, cross-culturally and interpersonally constructed.

From Anti-imperialist Nationalism to Cultural Nationalism

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century and throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century, many Chinese felt that their country had been militarily and politically emasculated by the Western and Japanese empires. Many Chinese believe that this is not a part of China's long history that the Chinese people can really feel proud of. However, the humiliations and the atrocities also led to the birth of legends and to the consolidation of a national identity. Stories of legendary martial arts heroes like Wong Fei-hung (1847–1924) and Huo Yuanjia (1868–1910) have been a popular subject in literature, fine arts, films and TV dramas. For example, more than 100 films on Wong Fei-hung alone were made in the past seventy years. Almost all of the male martial arts stars of our time have played the role of Wong Fei-hung, including Jet Li in Tsui Hark's *Once Upon a Time in China* (1991), a film that probably did more than any other to introduce Wong Fei-hung to Western audiences. 2008's *Ip Man* led to the birth of a "new" Chinese martial arts hero. With world-renowned art film director Wong Kar-wai at the helm, *The Grandmaster*, starring Tony Leung as Ip Man, became the opening film at the 63rd Berlin International Film Festival in 2013. A TV series about Ip Man has also been broadcast throughout China, and subsequently Asia, since 2013. With such prominent examples, it is quite apparent that an Ip Man boom is in progress, especially among Chinese audiences, and will continue for years to come.⁴

4 Hendrix, 2013: 57. *The Grandmaster* quickly became Wong's highest grossing film to date, and the 50 episodes of the Ip Man TV drama have also enjoyed good ratings. However, not every Ip Man spinoff was successful. *Ip Man: The Legend Is Born* (2010) and *Ip Man: Final Fight* (2013), for example, did not perform well at the box office. After the release of *Ip Man 2*, Donnie Yen stated that he was not interested in playing Ip Man again, but later changed his mind and decided to reprise his role as the Wing Chun master in the upcoming *Ip Man 3*. However, in June 2013, Yen decided to withdraw from *Ip Man 3* due to the producer's insistence on having his son direct the new film instead of the original director Wilson Yip. See "Zhen zidan wuyuan dianying yewensan," 2013.

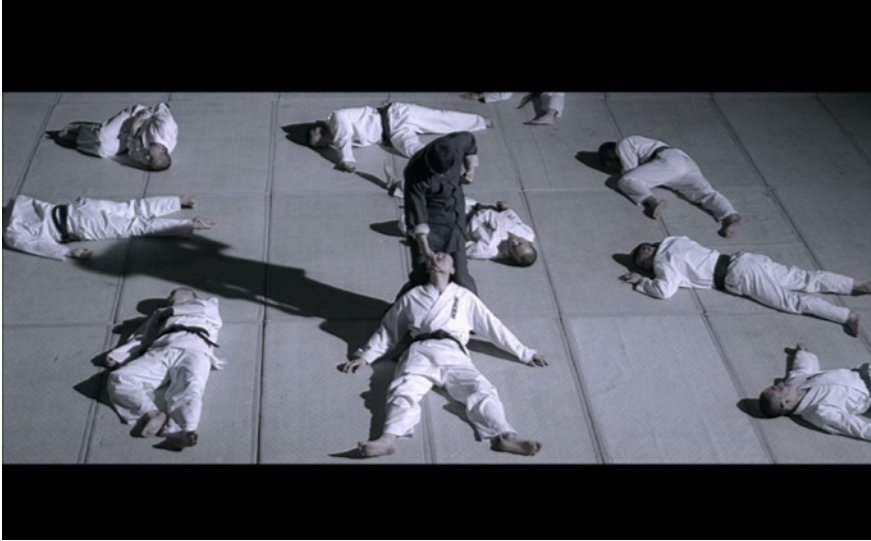


FIGURE 19.1 *Ip Man defeats ten Japanese karate fighters.*⁵

Ip Man clearly displays a classic three-act structure in narrative, character development and scope of conflicts. The first act establishes Ip Man's peace-loving character and his status as a businessman and elite martial artist in the Fo Shan province, where martial arts schools are a thriving industry. The second act begins with title cards describing the events in Fo Shan after the arrival of the Japanese army: "Factories, infrastructures and buildings were destroyed. The population of Fo Shan shrank from more than 300,000 to just over 70,000, and Ip Man's residence was confiscated and turned into the headquarters of the Japanese army." Ip's family is rendered homeless and forced into abjection. As the film unfolds, Japanese General Miura is eager to demonstrate Japan's superiority by having Chinese martial artists fight the Japanese, with the reward of a bag of rice if they win. Many Chinese martial artists take upon the challenge and lose the brawl. Some even lose their lives. After witnessing the death of a fellow martial artist, Ip Man is enraged and asks to fight ten Japanese karate experts at the same time (see Fig. 19.1). This scene marks the climax of the second act. Choreographed by Sammo Hung, the two-minute fight scene is a visual feast of violence, speed and grace. Unlike the "friendly" and even comical brawls Ip Man has with other Chinese martial artists in the first act, Ip Man shows his serious and almost vicious side by snapping the arms and breaking the legs of his foreign opponents with brutal force. The third act involves Ip Man teaching Wing Chun style to cotton factory workers so they can defend themselves against local bandits who take advantage of the

5 Yip, 2008, courtesy of Mandarin Film.

lawless environment caused by the Japanese army's devastating takeover. After being captured by the Japanese, Ip Man refuses to teach Chinese martial arts to the Japanese soldiers, leading to the final showdown between Ip Man and General Miura.

Revealing comparisons can also be drawn here with *Fist of Fury* (1972), the film that established Bruce Lee as an anti-imperialist and anti-racist national hero throughout China and the diasporic Chinese communities. In this film, Bruce Lee plays Chen Zhen, who avenges his master's death by taking down an entire Japanese martial arts school in Shanghai. Although Chen Zhen is no more than a fictional character, Chen Zhen's master Huo Yuanjia is a real historical figure who was believed to have defeated the British boxer Hercules O'Brien in 1910, but to have later been poisoned by a Japanese doctor at the age of 42. However, in *Fist of Fury*, the British element is erased and substituted with a Russian, due to Hong Kong's status as a British colony and the Cold-War politics of the time. *Fist of Fury* opens with title cards that read:

Our story begins with the death of Huo Yuanjia, a legendary Chinese hero who defeated Russia's champion wrestler and Japan's bushido experts, and thus proved that the Chinese are not the sick men of East Asia. Unfortunately, Huo was poisoned to death. This film offers one of the most popular versions of how he died.

The film then follows Chen Zhen, who eventually discovers that the Japanese were responsible for the death of his master. To avenge his master, Chen Zhen kills anyone who gets in his way, including a Chinese interpreter/collaborator. Mixing fiction with reality, *Fist of Fury* successfully evokes the Chinese audiences' nationalist sentiments against imperialist Japan.⁶ Similarly, the *Ip Man* films retell the story of Ip Man's life by depicting a highly fictionalized anti-Japanese and anti-British form of heroism. The real Ip Man had never fought ten Japanese fighters at once, nor did he defeat a British boxing champion. However, many Chinese viewers do not seem to mind the historical inaccuracies. As one Chinese reviewer observed, many people jumped on their feet, cheering and clapping when Ip Man knocked down the British boxing champion in *Ip Man 2*.⁷ More importantly, Hong Kong filmmakers often depoliticize the content of their films in order to appeal to a broader Chinese audience. In *Ip Man*, none of the anti-Japanese forces are associated with any Chinese party, whether Nationalist or Communist. In his discussion of Tsui Hark's films, Kwai-Cheung Lo notes:

6 See Desser, 2001 for further discussions of the anti-Japanese sentiment in Hong Kong martial arts films.

7 Hai, 2010.

[What] Hong Kong cinema conveys is a kind of nationalism without real substance—without, that is, the political content and costs nationalism may accrue. For decades, such depoliticized nationalism has been a significant source of inspiration of the Hong Kong film industry, allowing it to capture the hearts of diasporic Chinese worldwide.⁸

One example of such depoliticization is the film's erasure of the fact that Ip Man used to be a Fo Shan policeman under Nationalist Party rule and stayed in that position until the Communist Party took control of China in 1949.⁹

Due to its unique geopolitical location and colonial history, Hong Kong is one of the world's most important financial centers as well as a highly globalized city. Even after Britain's return of the island to China in 1997, people in Hong Kong still enjoy much more freedom than those living in China. This is clearly obvious in the recent "anti-brainwashing" demonstration by the Hong Kong residents.¹⁰ However, this does not necessarily mean that the people of Hong Kong are not patriotic or nationalist. A group of Hong Kong activists, for example, has been involved in the territorial dispute among China, Taiwan and Japan over the Senkaku Islands (or Diaoyu Islands for the Chinese) for quite some time. Waving the flags of both the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China (Taiwan), these activists landed on the Senkaku islands on 15 August 2012 to protest Japan's claim over the territory. Scholars have often pointed out that it is difficult to define nationalism with one of the reasons being that nationalism is never monolithic. It is often associated with or even hidden within concepts or ideologies like patriotism, national spirit, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, chauvinism, etc. Étienne Balibar, for example, has stated that:

[T]he notion of nationalism is constantly dividing. There is always a 'good' and a 'bad' nationalism. There is the one which ends to construct a state or a community and the one which tends to subjugate, to destroy; the one which refers to right and the one which refers to might; the one which tolerates other nationalisms and which may even argue in their defense and include them within a single historical perspective... and the one which radically excludes them in an imperialist and racist per-

8 Lo, 2006: 38.

9 Ip and Heimberger, 2001: 25.

10 On 2 September 2012, tens of thousands of people demonstrated outside Hong Kong's government headquarters demanding the cancellation of the National Education Curriculum designed to introduce patriotism classes into Hong Kong's school curricula.

spective. There is the one which derives from love (even excessive love) and the one which derives from hate.¹¹

In the *Ip Man* films and in many other Chinese martial arts films, the notion of nationalism can be considered in terms of good Chinese nationalism versus imperialist Japanese and British nationalisms. However, the kind of nationalism promoted in the *Ip Man* films is not merely a matter of patriotism. It is also a philosophy of life deeply rooted in both anti-racism and cultural nationalism.

In his seminal work *The Wretched of the Earth*, Franz Fanon suggests that nationalism provides one of the most compelling drives towards the liberation of colonized peoples. For Fanon, the first step in national liberation is for individuals to see themselves as affiliated with and committed to other members of their community. Members of such a community see themselves as sharing a common destiny and are thus highly dependent on the prosperity of the group as a whole. Imagining a Manichean world of colonized and colonizer, Fanon materializes the notion of nation in the natives' struggle against European racism. Racial confrontations and the ideology of racism have thus played a significant role in the understanding of Fanon's definition of nation and nationalism.¹² Although Fanon's examples largely derive from his experiences and observations of the African continent under European colonialism, which might not be directly applicable to the case of Japan's invasion of China, his psychoanalytical approach to the mutual formation of anti-racism and nationalism is insightful. In the *Ip Man* films, racism and anti-racism play an important role in the unification of Chinese people and in the rise of cultural nationalism.

Before the Japanese invasion, the Chinese martial artists of Fo Shan are often depicted as fighting among themselves for reputation, profits and students. Despite their constant brawls, they coexist and show respect for each other's presence. However, with the arrival of the Japanese army, the film's color palette changes from a sunny and warm yellow to a muted grey and the Chinese are shown as downtrodden and starving. Ip Man, an aristocrat, becomes homeless and has to find a job for the first time in his life. He ends up shoveling coal at a coal factory alongside other Chinese. He begins to realize that as far as the

11 Balibar, 1991: 47. Although Balibar tries to demonstrate the complexity of nationalism, his distinctions between good and bad nationalism come across as simplistic and dualistic. In fact, any form of nationalism implies a differentiation between insiders and outsiders; not just foreigners, but also discriminated minorities. In other words, a good nationalism is, in and of itself, a product of discrimination.

12 Fanon, 1996: 47–52.



FIGURE 19.2 *Ip Man's claim of national and racial identity.*¹³

Japanese soldiers are concerned, he is no different from any other Chinese. Therefore, when Japanese General Miura (played by Ikeuchi Hiroyuki) asks Ip Man for his name after witnessing his strength, Ip Man defiantly responds, "I am just a Chinese" (see Fig. 19.2). The interpreter Li Zhao, who used to be a policeman as well as Ip Man's friend, does not translate what Ip Man says. Instead, he tells Miura Ip Man's name. Later in the film, Ip Man scolds Li Zhao for being a lackey, but Li Zhao responds "I am a Chinese too!" Although the reason for Ip Man's claim to Chinese identity is not the same as Li Zhao's, both should be taken as valid forms of nationalism, since Li Zhao also resists Japanese occupation and protects his countrymen in his own way. On several occasions, he warns his countrymen before the Japanese soldiers arrive. When the Japanese soldiers search for Ip Man, Li, speaking Chinese, asks people not to cooperate. By not translating Ip Man's words accurately, Li might have prevented a harsh retaliation from General Miura. From this perspective, both Ip Man and Li Zhao are "Chinese" national heroes in an imagined Manichean world of the colonized versus the colonizer.

When examining the prevalent anti-Japanese sentiments in kung fu movies, one should ask whether this is a case of racism, nationalism or both. According to Franz Fanon, the role of racism in nationalism is decisive. Although race and racism do not manifest themselves equally in all races and regions or through-

13 Yip, 2008, courtesy of Mandarin Film.

out their entire histories, as Balibar argues, both racism and nationalism are concerned with the question of “historical articulation.”¹⁴ On the level of textual analysis, before the Sino-Japanese war, Ip Man, who is a respected martial artist, defeats the Northern martial artist and redeems “Fo Shan’s reputation.” In the face of Japanese racism and imperialism, Ip Man rises up to defy an empire. On the contextual level, one might enquire just which kind of historical articulation *Ip Man* produced in 2008. Likewise, which kind of articulations were produced by *Fist of Fury* in 1972, *New Fist of Fury* in 1976, and *Fist of Legend* in 1994? Each of these anti-Japanese kung fu movies helped to instill a sense of nationalism and Chineseness at their respective historical junctures. As Stuart Hall has argued, the cultural industries have the power “constantly to rework and reshape what they represent . . . and there is a continuous and necessarily uneven and unequal struggle, by the dominant culture, constantly to disorganize and reorganize popular culture.”¹⁵

To understand the changing images of racism and nationalism in kung fu movies, it is necessary to examine Hong Kong’s positioning within the inter-East Asian socio-political milieu of the time. For example, the anti-Japanese sentiment in *Fist of Fury* (1972) coincided with the emergence of a decolonization struggle in Hong Kong, with students campaigning for the adoption of Mandarin Chinese as the official language in 1970 and protesting against Japan’s occupation of the Senkaku Islands during the same year, leading to violent clashes between the protestors and the police force.¹⁶ As Japan continued to claim sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands, the nationalist “call to arms” message became much stronger in *New Fist of Fury* (1976). Director Lo Wei and script writer Pan Lei moved the anti-Japanese narrative from Shanghai to Taiwan. Jackie Chan plays a character who evolves from a thief into a martial artist, inspiring other Chinese martial artists to rebel against the Japanese colonizers.

Moreover, it is also useful to examine how the negative portrayals of Japanese in Chinese kung fu movies have changed over the course of four decades, becoming less malicious and more dynamic. In *Fist of Fury* and *New Fist of Fury*, the Japanese characters are often one-dimensional—cold-blooded murderers, sadist officers or plain buffoons, but in *Legend of Fist* (1994), Jet Li’s Chen Zhen character has a caring Japanese teacher and a loving Japanese girlfriend. In *Ip Man*, the Japanese characters continue to be the bearers of racist and imperialist prejudice, considering themselves superior and exercising

14 Balibar, 1991: 50.

15 Hall, 1981: 232–33.

16 Kato, 2007: 61.

physical and symbolic violence against innocent Chinese civilians. General Miura's deputy, Colonel Sato (played by Shibuya Tenma), for example, is portrayed as a racist villain, who not only looks down upon the Chinese, but also attempts to rape Ip's wife and shoots Ip Man in the back after the latter's victory over General Miura. Nevertheless, the Japanese General has a sense of integrity despite his brutality, a portrayal which was unthinkable in the earlier kung fu movies. This trend can be interpreted as a sign that the films' racist tone has been gradually reduced over time while their nationalist sentiments continue to thrive.

Next, we turn to production and consumption. In this respect, we are concerned with the roles martial arts stars such as Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, Jet Li and Donnie Yen play in the construction of Chinese nationalism. For example, consider how Jackie Chan's 2009 pro-China statement suggesting that Taiwan and Hong Kong have too much freedom and need to be controlled drew applause from the Chinese in China but enraged residents in Taiwan and Hong Kong. According to an anecdote of Jet Li's childhood, the twelve year old Li turned down American president Richard Nixon's job offer of being his future bodyguard, saying "I don't want to protect any individual. When I grow up, I want to defend my one billion Chinese countrymen!"¹⁷ Given his on-screen persona, Li's public confirmation of Singaporean citizenship in 2009 made many people in China feel betrayed by their national hero.

In addition to the anti-racist and anti-imperialist narratives, Chinese culture is also utilized in the Ip Man films for the purpose of forging a nationalist consciousness or spirit. Before the final showdown between Ip Man and General Miura, we hear Ip Man's internal monologue:

Although martial arts involve armed forces, Chinese martial arts are Confucian in spirit. The virtue of martial arts is benevolence. You Japanese will never understand the principle of treating other people as you would yourselves because you abuse military power. You turn it into violence to oppress others. You don't deserve to learn Chinese martial arts.

Traditional Chinese culture is thus reinvented and incorporated into the discourse of modern Chinese nationalism, asserting—paradoxically—both the violence and the benevolence of Chinese martial arts. In a manner akin to the way in which Anthony Smith describes the role of lexicographers, philologists and folklorists in the early nationalisms of Eastern Europe and Asia, one can argue that the *Ip Man* films succeed in "substantiating and crystallizing the idea of an ethnic nation in the minds of most members" by "creating a widespread

17 Li, 2007.

awareness of the myths, history and linguistic traditions of the community.”¹⁸ Ip Man’s claim of Chinese martial arts as being Confucian in spirit is no more than an abstraction, a myth that does not correspond to a reality that can be scientifically defined. In accordance with postcolonial theory, national culture is reimagined and naturalized at different historical junctures to serve the interests of various groups rather than the interests of an entire nation.

After defeating General Miura, Ip Man is shot from behind and falls down. When this happens, the Chinese crowd revolts and overpowers the Japanese soldiers. The title cards appear once again, along with several old photos of the real Ip Man, telling us that:

Ip Man refused to be subjugated by the Japanese army and used his fists to call forth the unity of the Chinese people. Ip Man escaped to Hong Kong and started his first Wing Chun class at Kowloon Hotel in 1949. In 1967, Grandmaster Ip Man started the Wing Chun athletic Association in order to foster the spirit of Wing Chun with a group of like-minded enthusiasts. Since then, Wing Chun has become a world renowned branch of Chinese martial arts and the lineage of Grandmaster Ip Man’s disciples has exceeded 2 million people. There are many talented people among his disciples, including the most illustrious action star of all, Bruce Lee.

By incorporating photos of the real Ip Man and his most famous disciple, the film gains an aura of reality and even authenticity (see Fig. 19.3).

Unlike Bruce Lee’s “polycultural identity,”¹⁹ Donnie Yen’s Ip Man appears to be a cultural nationalist. Before his fight with General Miura, Ip Man states that due to the benevolent spirit of Confucianism, Chinese martial arts will prove superior to their Japanese counterparts. This statement can be viewed as indicative of the rise of cultural nationalism in post-1997 Hong Kong and China. In recent years, the cultural heritage of Confucianism has been reclaimed by the Chinese government and society. Examples can be found not only in the rhetoric of a “harmonious socialist society” developed by the former president Hu Jintao and in the rapid growth of Confucius Institutes around the world, but also in an increasing number of TV dramas and films based on Confucius’s life.²⁰

18 Smith, 1991: 12.

19 Prashad, 2003: 53. Using Bruce Lee’s Asian American identity as a prime example, Prashad argues that the theory of the polycultural is not meant to reinvent humanism without ethnicity, but to acknowledge that our notion of a cultural community should not be built inside the high walls of parochialism and ethno-nationalism.

20 Guo, 2004: 89–90. In January 2011, a statue of Confucius was erected in Tiananmen Square. It was placed beside the statue of Mao Zedong, who used to condemn Confucius’



FIGURE 19.3 *Ip Man in a photo with Bruce Lee.*²¹

Interestingly, China's efforts to cultivate its cultural capital and soft power are similar to what Yoshino Kosaku observed of Japan's cultural nationalism in the early 1980s, a policy that aimed "to regenerate the national community by creating, preserving or strengthening a people's cultural identity when it is felt to be lacking, inadequate or threatened. . . cultural nationalism is concerned with the distinctiveness of the cultural community as the essence of a nation."²²

However, unlike the Japanese, who have historically tended to perceive themselves as a distinct racial group,²³ the Chinese cultural nationalists imagine a pan-Chinese cultural nation which includes all ethnic groups while rejecting the ethnocentric notion of China as a Han nation. Nevertheless, what passes for Chineseness today is in reality more Han than Tibetan, Mongolian or any other ethnic minority.²⁴ This led cultural studies scholar Kuan-Hsing Chen to argue that "distinguishing the Han from the many minority groups subsumed

philosophical thought as backward and feudal. Due to subsequent Maoist pressures, the statue was later relocated to a less prominent spot on the square.

21 Yip, 2008, courtesy of Mandarin Film.

22 Yoshino, 1992: 1.

23 Yoshino, 1992: 19. See also Sakai, 1997. Unlike Yoshino, who focuses on the discourse generated by Japanese elites, educators and businessmen, Sakai looks into how translation theory can complicate our understanding of Japan's homo-lingualism and nationalism, and particularly into how these relate to the oppression of minorities and migrants.

24 Guo, 2004: 135.

under the category ‘Chinese’ is a necessary step toward critically confronting the history and current expressions of Han racism.”²⁵ From this perspective, the way in which the *Ip Man* films conflate race (*zhongzu*), ethnicity (*zuqun*) and nationality (*minzu*) into one galvanizing line, “I am just a Chinese,” and credit the essence of Chinese martial arts to Confucianism rather than Taoism and/or Buddhism could be viewed as a form of Han racism and an attempt at cultural hegemony.

Masculinities That Matter

Besides the nationalist appeal, the success of *Ip Man* films, according to producer Raymond Wong, also derives from the films’ portrayal of Ip Man as a “family man.” Wong points out that martial arts films usually attract predominantly more males than females, but that this was not the case for *Ip Man*. In many cases, it was the women who brought their boyfriends or husbands to watch the film.²⁶ In one interview Donnie Yen even claimed that “the success of the *Ip Man* films has nothing to do with Wing Chun . . . If I practice Hung Fist in the film, then there will be a craze for Hung Fist . . . The reason why the film is able to move the audience is because we have created a believable character—a family man who can fight.”²⁷ Indeed, both *Ip Man* films contain strong feminist and pro-family discourses. For example, after Northern martial artist Jin’s insult, Ip Man calmly responds, “There are no men who are afraid of their wives. There are only men who respect their wives.” It is Ip Man’s wife (played by Lynn Xiong) who has had enough from the intruder and gives Ip Man permission to fight. Before she walks away, she reminds Ip Man, “Don’t break my things.” It is no wonder, therefore, that Ip Man carves *lao po da ren* (“Majestic Missus”) on his training dummy to remind himself to spend more time with his wife. In *Ip Man 2*, it is not only Ip Man, but also Master Hong Zhen Nan (played by Sammo Hung) who consider their families as a top priority. In fact, the suggestion that Ip Man was afraid of his wife helped bring more female audiences into the theater.²⁸

In the past few decades, academic studies on gender and sexuality have become one of the most productive areas in cinema studies. Following feminist and queer theories, the notion of “queer” as a critical analytical tool has challenged established paradigms across disciplines. This notwithstanding,

25 Chen, 2010: 259.

26 Wang, 2012.

27 Xiang, 2010.

28 Dong, 2009.

however, the hyper-gendered and racialized bodies in martial arts films remain largely unexamined and under-theorized. In what follows, I will address the evolution of Chinese masculinity as seen in the images of martial arts heroes such as Bruce Lee and Donnie Yen. The evolution of the martial arts genre is not only tied up with racism and nationalism, but also with issues of gender and sexuality, and masculinity in particular. Before the late 1960s, many martial arts films featured female warriors until one man, Cheng Cheh, took it to task and decided to popularize a strong masculinity in Hong Kong cinema. By changing the look of the male protagonist in a fundamental way, Chang pushed Chinese masculinity to new heights. The invincible one-armed swordsman played by Wang Yu became the prototype of many martial arts films to come. As David Desser has noted, Chang Cheh's work and particularly *One Armed Swordsman* (1967) "began a new tradition in Hong Kong movies by breaking away from the female-centered star system of Cathay and Shaw Brothers."²⁹ In one interview, Chang Cheh states: "I felt that in movies around the world, male actors were at the top. All the important parts were played by men. Why is it that Chinese movies didn't have male actors? If male actors could stand up, the audience would double . . . That's why I advocated male-centered movies with [masculinity] as the core element."³⁰ Chang's films not only nurtured a new generation of muscular male stars, but their emphasis on male bonding, phallic weaponry and bodily disembowelment also instilled a shade of violence in Chinese masculinity. Moreover, Chang's films were not nationalistic. This was because the Shaw Brothers had extensive transnational distribution networks in Southeast Asia and sought to make their products less nationalistic and more suitable for export.³¹

However, no one comes to represent the ultimate image of Chinese masculinity more than Bruce Lee. Bruce Lee entered the scene in the late 1960s and rapidly became an icon of masculinity in Hong Kong and many parts of Asia. He redefined Chinese masculinity by defeating criminals, greedy landlords, Japanese martial artists and Western boxers. In addition, M.T. Kato has called Lee's decolonizing kinetic narratives, and especially his use of nunchaku in *Fist of Fury*, "the nexus that unites the historical instances of the Asian people's resistance to the Japanese empire."³² Nevertheless, Bruce Lee's hyper-masculinity, as Jachinson Chan points out, could also result in a new stereotype

29 Desser, 2005: 21.

30 Desser, 2005: 22.

31 Teo, 2009: 98.

32 Kato, 2007: 44.

that marginalizes and excludes other Asian or Asian American masculinities that do not fit into “the stereotype of the kung fu master.”³³

As third-wave feminists have argued, one’s gender and sexuality derives from preexisting norms. Nevertheless, according to Judith Butler, an individual’s agency to resist and even alter the established normativity is still feasible because normativity requires repetition.³⁴ One’s race or gender is reified through repeated performances. It is precisely at the point of repetition that it is possible to try something new and expand the boundaries of social norms. It is precisely this broad structure of masculinity, which is heterogeneous and yet tightly controlled, that contributes towards the production of a fictive national identity. With this we are led to a discussion of the intersection of racialized and gendered bodies in Chinese martial arts films. In other words, we are led to consider that the entities we tend to think of as feminine and masculine, or as woman and man, are not based on ideal forms, but are rather the “phantasmatic” effects of the reiterated practices of “doing” gender and sexuality. Through generations of reiterative performances, the binary categories of sex and gender have settled in our culture as conceptual norms. However, the very reiterative and performative nature of the law that enforces such norms creates an opportunity for its own disruption.

Despite the muscular nationalism of *Fist of Fury*, many scholars were also led to consider the complex racialization and sexualization of Bruce Lee’s body in his films. After examining the roles of Bruce Lee and the American male stars in *Enter the Dragon* (1973), Yvonne Tasker claims that Bruce Lee’s Chinese sexuality is erased as a result of one of the most enduring Western stereotypes of the East as a site of mystical, asexual knowledge.³⁵ On the other hand, the Taiwanese film critic Chiao Hsiung-Ping notes that despite his platonic relationship with female protagonists, Lee’s films often “exploit[s] Lee’s sexual charge. . . . His bare chest and muscle[s] unremittingly demonstrate a pristine masculinity and immediately lend him an animal-like quality.”³⁶ In an even further twist, Jachinson Chan considers the fight scene between Tang Lung (played by Bruce Lee) and Colt (played by Chuck Norris) in *The Way of the Dragon* (1972) homoerotic, given that the most masculine man of the West takes on the most masculine man of the East.³⁷ Through the unique lens of racialization, Bruce Lee’s on-screen body has been sexualized, desexualized or

33 Chan, 2001: 73.

34 Butler, 1990: 177.

35 Tasker, 1997: 328.

36 Chiao, 1981: 40.

37 Chan, 2001: 85.

homosexualized to the extent that his “real” sexuality becomes phantasmatic and elusive.

In analyzing Jackie Chan’s films, Aaron D. Anderson argues that “Chinese martial-arts movements cannot necessarily be considered or described in terms of a static dichotomy of masculine versus feminine . . . In Chinese martial arts, to fight is not always to be male, to yield is not always to be female, and attack and defense are not always opposites.”³⁸ In *Ip Man*, when Northern martial arts master Jin mocks Ip Man by saying, “how can a man fight like a woman?” Ip Man responds with a smile and states that “Good kung fu does not depend on age or sex.” Ip Man’s fighting style is Wing Chun, originally developed by Yin Wing Chun, a Buddhist nun, as a means of female self-defense.³⁹ Wing Chun emphasizes speed as opposed to strength, and this is most evident in the fight scene between Ip Man and Jin. Holding a feather duster, Ip Man is able to hit Jin before the latter’s heavy broadsword can even reach him. Not only is the feather duster, an ordinary household cleaning tool, turned into a formidable weapon, but the way in which Ip Man strikes Jin’s buttocks evokes a mother-child relationship, and what Eve K. Sedgwick calls “homosociality.”⁴⁰ As we can see in the film, Ip Man spends more time training and practicing Wing Chun with fellow martial artists than with his wife and his son.

Notwithstanding the homosocial undertone between male martial arts masters, the producer, the screenwriter, the director of *Ip Man 2* and Donnie Yen devoted a great deal of effort to molding Ip Man into a family man. As previously mentioned, the *Ip Man* films’ combination of the martial arts genre with family drama has greatly enhanced their appeal to female audiences. Despite being a biopic, the portrayal of Ip Man was based on Donnie Yen’s real life.⁴¹ In addition, Ip Man’s filmic image of a family man resonates with the image of his opponent, Master Hong Zhen Nan. In the middle of an unplanned match at Hong’s residence, Hong’s son suddenly enters the room behind him and would have certainly been hit by Hong if not for Ip Man’s quick hand. A second later, Hong’s wife and six daughters come to bring Hong to the dinner table. Ip Man then asks Master Hong, “Which is more important? The outcome of our match

38 Anderson, 2009: 194.

39 Gibson, 2002: 19. Ironically, Ip Man’s claim that the essence of Chinese martial arts derives from the benevolent spirit of Confucianism makes him not only a Confucian nationalist, but also a chauvinist who seems to forget the roots of his own fighting style.

40 Sedgwick, 1985: 49.

41 “Yewen zai li xin hao nanren zhibiao,” 2010. Donnie Yen has often publicly expressed his pride in being the loving father of the two children he has had with his current wife, Cecilia Wang, whom he had married in 2003.

or dinner with your family?" Master Hong chooses the later and subsequently becomes less hostile towards Ip Man. The bonding between Ip Man and Master Hong is based on the fact that both are "family men." In fact, the Hong Kong film industry has a long tradition of mixing various genre conventions in order to attract greater audiences. Jackie Chan's success, for example, was largely derived from his ability to combine Bruce Lee's kung fu films with comedy. Similarly, in his study on masculinity in Hong Kong action films, Julian Stringer has argued that the pre-1997 male identity in John Woo films is constructed by mixing two film genres, namely, the gangster film and the melodrama.⁴²

Although the *Ip Man* films' portrayal of masculinity is far from the entirely dominant heterosexual, patriarchal masculinity of other martial arts films, women are still relegated to certain roles like mother and victim, and their femininity is used to soften the chauvinist dimension of nationalist sentiment and make it more appealing to a worldwide audience. After the Japanese invasion in the early 1930s, China became open to Japanese soldiers' sexual violence, and in this respect, the whole country was akin to a female waiting to be conquered, most prominently evident in the case of the Rape of Nanjing. Given that this is a period film, the character of Ip Man bears significant genre conventions and historical resonances. Not only does he display the bearing of a typical martial arts hero, but his masculinity is also gradually enhanced by the greater cause of the nation's destiny. From this perspective, it is possible to argue that *Ip Man* reinforces a traditional chauvinist narrative of man as the protector of woman, family, community and country by evoking memories of Japan's invasion of China some seventy years ago. In addition, the film also touches upon the question of collaboration, especially with regard to the role of interpreter Li Zhao who was a police chief before the Japanese occupation. Unlike the one-dimensional Chinese interpreter in *Fist of Fury*, Li Zhao has a more complicated relationship with his family, his local community and the Japanese army.

His collaboration and defiance, self-emasculatation and re-masculinization in the face of Japanese imperial force also makes the audience reconsider the connection between racism, nationalism and gender. As Homi Bhabha has stressed, the question of nation as narrative and identity is posed most effectively from "the area of ambivalence between race and sexuality; out of an unresolved contradiction between culture and class; from deep within the struggle of psychic representation and social reality."⁴³ In *Ip Man*, there is one scene that recounts a very familiar scenario: a kung fu master disarming his

42 Stringer, 1997: 29–30.

43 Bhabha, 1994: 40.

opponent's gun. When Li Zhao flaunts his gun in front of Ip Man and derides martial arts as being obsolete, Ip Man suddenly grabs Li's gun and ejects its cylinder with his thumb. This action constitutes a cinematic and symbolic castration of modern Western technology by a Chinese martial arts master. In the world of martial arts cinema, the human desire for or fantasy of physical prowess has not changed regardless of the advancement of technology. Though only for a fleeting moment, the *Ip Man* films provide many viewers, especially Chinese males, with a fantasy which suggests that traditional Chinese martial arts are not only superior to Japanese or Western martial arts, but also have the ability to defy modern technology.⁴⁴

Conclusion

How, then, does one define "Chinese" or "Chineseness" without falling into the essentialist trap that has tended to erase differences and suppress dissident others under the nationalist banner of creating a prosperous and harmonious society? Many people consider a race to be a group of people defined by a shared culture. Chinese people share Chinese cultural elements, such as kung fu, by definition regardless of whether they like it or even know anything about it. In other words, kung fu is culturally marked as being Chinese. Similarly, jazz belongs to African Americans, karate belong to the Japanese, and opera belongs to the Italians. The world of Chinese martial arts cinema has thus been an enchanted double world since its very inception. It is not only a world in which reality and fantasy merge, but also a place in which men and women fuse their physical prowess with ethics, spirituality and patriotism. For thousands of years, human cultures have seen historical stories of warriors who sacrificed their lives for their countries or literary stories of chivalrous knights who travelled around the country righting wrongs with their physical or super-human prowess. They fly over rooftops and defeat multiple enemies with a single stroke of their swords. Similarly, stories of warriors and knights have also been popular in Peking opera and many other regional folk operas. When cinema was introduced to China, martial arts stories were rapidly adapted for the silver screen. Despite being banned by the Chinese government in the 1930s for being superstitious and feudal, martial arts cinema found its way to Hong

44 One might even argue that Chinese martial arts cinema carries on the legacy of the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901).

Kong and became one of the most popular movie genres among the Chinese in China as well as overseas.⁴⁵

Any selection of films standing for a genre is contestable. I have chosen several of the most famous martial arts films to illustrate the intertwined and shifting representations of race, gender and cultural nationalism in Chinese martial arts cinema. By focusing on the social and political underpinnings of these visual depictions of heroism and nationalist morals, we are able to see the construction of Chinese masculinity as partly fictional and partly real, partly racial and partly national. Similar constructions can also be observed in nationalism and racism. Given Hong Kong's unique geopolitical location and colonial condition, martial arts cinema has certainly experienced a long history of depoliticizing nationalist agendas. However, this has changed in recent years as the Hong Kong film industry became more and more dependent on the financing power and large audiences available in China.

Li Cheuk-to, a prominent film critic and the artistic director of the Hong Kong International Film Festival provides a twofold explanation for the strong nationalist sentiment in the *Ip Man* films: "On the one hand, it is an homage to, or an exploitation of, the Bruce Lee films. On the other hand, it is a calculated move to please the audiences, especially the Chinese in the mainland market, where anti-Japanese and xenophobic sentiments are stronger than in Hong Kong."⁴⁶ According to an online survey, about 60 percent of mainland Chinese audiences were moved by the spirit of nationalism in *Ip Man 2*, and 54 percent of the interviewees agreed that the film used the appeal of nationalism to conquer the box office.⁴⁷ In addition, although Japanese figures continue to be portrayed as enemies in recent kung fu movies, they appear less vicious than those employed in the 1970s and do not necessarily evoke a hatred toward the Japanese in every Chinese audience. In fact, a recent study shows that the *Ip Man* films were successfully used in a Taiwanese high school to teach the idea of forgiveness and to alleviate prejudices against other genders and races.⁴⁸ The meaning of Chinese race, nationalism and masculinity is thus a passage across space and time, a meaning continually remade by people, institutions and discourses. By focusing on the transnational production, circulation and

45 According to Zhang Zhen, the so called "martial arts-magic spirit" films that flourished in 1920s and 1930s Shanghai were accused by cultural elites and by official censors of entrenching "feudal superstitions" that hindered the progression of China's modernization. See Zhang, 2005: 52–55.

46 Quoted in Lim, 2011.

47 Fan, 2011.

48 Ng & Lin, 2013: 87–88.

consumption of the heroic masculinity of Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, Jet Li and Donnie Yen, this chapter examines the complexity of the racialized and gendered personas embodied by these on-screen and real-life martial artists and argues that the constructions of race, gender and nationalism in martial arts cinema are not only reified through repeated performances and cinematic language, but also negotiated through Hong Kong's unique postcolonial history and cultural identity.

Nationalism and racism have undoubtedly taken part in complicated battles over different political entities, regions and agendas. Both can be envisioned in the form of violence, strikes, consciousness, class struggles and cultural artifacts. Postcolonial theory suggests that nationalism plays a central role in the shaping of individual consciousness, beliefs and self-perceptions. But is national identity more significant than other types of social identity? Marxism tells us that class struggles should lead to the emancipation of the working class; feminism urges people to give priority to a gender-based identity; nationalism encourages people to see themselves as members of a continuous community, while humanism asks people to reinvent and discover a new identity that transcends nationality, class and gender.

In the *Ip Man* films, cultural nationalism emerges from anti-racism and anti-racism emerges from cultural nationalism. In the process of interrogating the mutual construction of gender, nationalism and anti-racism depicted in Chinese martial arts movies, we must therefore consider the various factors that characterize their existence as natural, cultural, political and epistemological entities. Chinese masculinity in general is currently better represented than in the past, but further efforts are needed in order to encourage a cultural production and consumption that recognizes the diversity of both Chineseness and masculinity. In addition, further questions need to be asked about how Chinese masculinity is portrayed in other film genres and in other media, and about how different shades of masculinity are deployed in response to neighboring popular culture powerhouses like South Korea, Japan and India. With China's emergence as a global economic power and its continuous territorial and economic conflicts with other countries in the region, we shall certainly expect to see a greater influence of nationalism, racism and transnationalism on people's imagination and consumption of Chinese masculinity.

Sexualized Racism, Gender and Nationalism: The Case of Japan's Sexual Enslavement of Korean "Comfort Women"

Bang-Soon L. Yoon

Class and gender discrimination, rather than racial or ethnic conflict, was a conspicuous feature of (the unified) Korea.¹ This significance notwithstanding, it was not considered a legitimate political issue in Korea during the latter part of the Choson dynasty (1394–1910).² Japan's colonial rule of the Korean peninsula (1910–1945), however, brought this issue to the fore as a hierarchically structured race politics positioning the Koreans at a lower level.³ This racial order was not based on a biological or medical categorization, nor was it based on cultural inferiority. It was rather the outcome of an artificial political grouping by the colonial hegemon.⁴ Armed with the Western model of modernization, the Japanese government directly controlled key institutions in Korea, and intentionally downgraded Koreans to lower class citizens in the colonial power map.⁵

1 Korea has been a unified nation-state with a highly centralized political system since the late seventh century.

2 The Choson dynasty adopted Confucianism as the guiding social doctrine with a social harmony based on hierarchically structured specific human relationships in which social class, age and gender were determining factors as a core component.

3 As Koreans and Japanese are both categorized as East Asians, the term "ethnic" politics may be more appropriate than "racial" politics. However, by defining "racial" politics as inclusive of ethnic politics, I will use the term "racial" politics to fit the theme of this book.

4 As a matter of fact, Koreans had historically been proud of their cultural superiority over Japan, one which had a huge impact on the earlier development of Japanese arts (e.g., in ceramics), Buddhism, etc.

5 The Japanese land survey law of 1912, also known as the Korean cadastral survey, transferred the ownership of Korean peasants' land to the Japanese. The Government-General, Japanese companies, and Japanese people in Korea thus became Korea's largest landowners. The Japanese Oriental Development Company alone, for example, ended up owning a fifth of Korea's arable land as a result. This economic situation made the majority of Koreans fall into a lower class. For this, see Lee, 1984: 318–319. For background information on Japanese colonial policies and their relations to race, see Kim, 2013; Koshiro, 2013; and Zachmann, 2013.

Race is not necessarily gender blind. This issue becomes all the more apparent when one examines the fate of Korean women during the Japanese colonial period. This chapter focuses on this issue of race and gender by using the infamous wartime rapes of the so-called “comfort women” as a case study. These were the sexually enslaved victims of the Japanese military from the 1930s to the end of World War II.⁶ The case of Korean “comfort women” (KCW) explains the intersections of racism, sex, gender and nationalism, which have not been widely studied as a primary research focus. The following questions will be specifically addressed: How were Korean women drawn into the Japanese military’s “comfort women system”? What characterizes their victimization? How were KCWs treated in comparison to Japanese “comfort women”? How does colonialism explain the mass exploitation of Korean women? And, finally, how did South Korea’s nationalism affect the half-century of public silence on the issue after World War II, and the eventual revelations about it since the early 1990s? Carrying out these inquiries will facilitate three assertions: First, Japan’s colonialism in the Korean peninsula made it possible for a large number of young Korean females to be systematically sex-trafficked⁷ into a Japanese “comfort women” system.⁸ Second, an institutionalized racism allowed the “comfort women’s” victimization, or, in other words, the “comfort women’s” enslavement was not possible without state involvement, whether directly or indirectly. Third, since Japan’s colonialism set the stage for the victimization of the KCWs, nationalism occupies a core component of the “comfort women”

6 Studies and former “comfort women’s” testimonies indicate that forced sex in captivity was the dominant pattern. Among others, readers may find the following studies essential to understanding the sexual slavery issue: International Organizing Committee for the Women’s International War Crimes Tribunal, 2001; The Korean Council, 1992; The Korean Council, 1997; The Korea Council, 2001; The War and Women’s Human Rights Center, The Korean Council and the Ministry of Gender Equality, 2011; McDougall, 1998; Howard, Ed., 1995; Inter-Ministerial Working Group on the Comfort Women Issue, 1992; Pang, 1992; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1992; Asian Women Human Rights Council, 1998; Chung 2004; Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2007; Coomaraswamy, 1996; The Ministry of Gender Equality, 2002; The Northeast Asian History Foundation, 2009; Shin & Cho, 1996; Violence Against Women in War Network Japan, 2002, January 31; The United States Office of War Information Psychological Warfare Team Attached to U.S. Army Forces, India-Burmese Theater, APO 689 Report, 1944; Yun, 1992; and Yoshimi, 2000.

7 Sex trafficking is defined as a three dimensional activity involving recruitment or “acquisition,” transportation, and slavery in that order. See Kara, 2009: 6.

8 Japan was not only a colonial power but also an imperial power. Japan took over Korean sovereignty by occupying the country between 1910–1945. In addition, the entire Korean economy and social structure were developed as a periphery to serve the Japanese center’s national interests.

issue in South Korea. Thus far, the nationalist approach to analyzing the KCW issue has produced a mixed bag. It maintained both the long silence and the silence breaking with material benefits and public education about the issue, while national pride occasionally superseded the individual victims' personal interests.

This chapter begins with a brief review of the development of the comfort women system and of how Korean women were drawn into the system in the first place. It then discusses the nature of the Korean women's victimization and Japan's racialized colonial politics. After this, the analysis will focus on the intersections of nationalism and on the evocation of the "comfort women" issue as well as on advocacy movements in South Korea. The victimization of KCWs occurred widely across the Korean Peninsula and beyond, but due to the limited accessibility of victims in North Korea, this chapter is primarily based on South Korean sources. The South Korean government has been identifying and registering these victims since the early 1990s. Among the 237 registered victims, a large majority has already passed away, and only 57 are still alive as of August 2013.

Korean "Comfort Women": Drawn in as Substitutes

Imperial Japan's wartime comfort women system was a prominent feature of the Second Sino-Japanese and Pacific wars, as well as the earlier Japanese intrusion into China, which began with the takeover of Manchuria in late 1931 and the Japanese navy's actions in Shanghai in 1932. The navy model evolved from Japan's earlier congregational prostitution model used during Japan's Siberian Intervention (1918–1922). The navy model was then immediately benchmarked by the army and widely practiced until Japan's defeat in 1945.⁹ In Siberia, Japanese women who were already working in the sex industry at home, or the so-called *karayuki-san* (poor young Japanese women, largely from Nagasaki Prefecture, working as indentured prostitutes in Siberia, Southeast Asia and throughout the Pacific) were sent. The comfort women system seems to have begun with professional Japanese entertainers (i.e., prostitutes, geishas, etc.) who were sent to China.

As Japan's aggression escalated, however, the supply of these women alone was insufficient for meeting the military's increasing demands, especially

9 Yoshimi, 2000: 42–47. The congregational prostitution can be found around military bases, and at civilian work sites with a large number of male workers such as mines, saw mills, lumber yards, etc.

after the breakout of the China War.¹⁰ Manifestly, preventing the rape of local Chinese women by Japanese soldiers, especially after the “Nanjing Massacre” of 1937, appears to have been the prime justification for the comfort women system. As Japan’s colonial subjects, young Korean women were ideal substitutes for local Chinese women (women in the war zone) and Japanese women (women at home). After the mass rapes in Nanjing, Korean women were systematically drawn into the comfort system to serve Japan’s public relations in international diplomatic circles. Survey reports show that the initial surge of KCW mobilization/recruitment was during 1937–1938 and continued to remain high until 1944–45.¹¹ Sending colonial women from Korea meant that ordinary Japanese women, as a Japanese wartime nurse testified, were protected and could then continue their traditional roles as wives and mothers.¹²

The comfort women system was, however, also developed with other purposes in mind. The soldiers’ pleasure or emotional wellbeing as well as their health (i.e., the prevention of venereal diseases) were serious Japanese military concerns alongside other military and political considerations.¹³ “Comfort women” were necessary for raising military morale and for supporting military imperialism, given Japan’s highly disciplined and hierarchically structured military rules and training that did not permit holidays. As a Japanese war veteran testified, repeated beatings and other forms of physical violence were a daily routine in the Japanese military and those in subordinate status desperately looked for means to burn out their frustrations.¹⁴ Such Japanese terms as *ianfu* (officially, *jūgun ianfu*; Jpn. (war) comfort girl or comfort woman; a euphemism for *shōfu*: a prostitute) and *ianjo* (Jpn. comfort station) also explain the importance of this pleasure function. A popular slang term among soldiers for the *ianjo* was, as a matter of fact, “public toilets.” As colonial subjects, Korean females were the ideal underdogs. The KCWs, which the Japanese soldiers called *chosenpi*, served as the soldiers’ sexual outlet.¹⁵ The Kamikaze pilots would be allowed to spend the night with “comfort women” before their death missions.¹⁶ In other words, “comfort women” made soldiers fit to fight

10 Yoshimi, 2000: 44–45.

11 The War and Women’s Human Rights Center, 1992: 32; and Chung, 2004: 58.

12 See Sekiguchi, 1990 (“*The Senso Daughters*”). See also Tanaka, 1996: 96–97.

13 Yoshimi, 2000: 43–47, 49.

14 BBC, “Unfortunate Incidents,” 1992.

15 *Chosen* is the Japanese pronunciation of the *Choson* dynasty, but the Japanese used it pejoratively; “*Pi*,” literally meaning ‘vulgar,’ was the soldiers’ slang for “comfort girls.” See Ienaga, 1978: 159.

16 See my interview with a former “comfort woman,” Lee Young-Soo, 4 February 2006, at Central Washington University, Ellensburg, WA, USA.

physically, emotionally and spiritually. In the absence of a normal daily life as an individual person with family and friends, etc., the “comfort women” served as the soldiers’ substitute. In addition, the protection of local women from rape was necessary from a military strategic perspective in order to dilute rising anti-Japanese sentiments which might affect Japan’s military operations. For security reasons, the comfort stations were under the direct control of or kept under close monitoring by the Japanese military in order to prevent spy activities. The Japanese *kempeitai* (military police) would frequently visit comfort stations to make sure that the “comfort women” were not spies. “Comfort women” were even used as tools for reinforcing Japan’s militarism: condoms distributed by the Japanese military featured the inscription “attack number one.”¹⁷

The Nature of Victimization

The sex-trafficking of Korean women into the comfort women system apparently began in 1932 (although some have speculated it began earlier). Four prominent features characterize this victimization: its sheer size, its wide spread of geographic locations, its long duration, and its systematic movement across borders. All these suggest the systematic involvement of government power was made possible by Korea’s colonial status. The total number of “comfort women” is unknown for multiple reasons, such as the lack of documented data and certain methodological issues.¹⁸ Thus far, however, scholars generally agree that Korean women were the major victims, and have speculated that the number is “approximately 170,000 to 200,000,” or that they made up as much as 70–80 percent of the total number of “comfort women.”¹⁹ In the

17 Sekiguchi, 1990.

18 The lack of documents is a serious problem. When Japan lost the war, records were destroyed en masse, and the Japanese government is still withholding large quantities of government documents and even soldiers’ diaries, that are considered classified documents with no public access. The definition of a “comfort woman” is also a methodological issue. Unlike the KCWs, who were systematically sex-trafficked across borders and who endured sex-slavery for a lengthy time, other countries’ victimizations were rather sporadic and usually the result of Japanese occupation. See Drea, et al., 2006; and Yoshimi, 2000.

19 A recent study claims that Chinese victims may number about 200,000. Yoshimi Yoshiaki notes that Korean women were proportionally overrepresented among “comfort women” victims. However, he also cautioned that “the number of Chinese comfort women was probably larger than is usually supposed.” See Yoshimi, 2000: 91, 96.

Japanese Kwantung Army, for example, a comfort station called the “Hygienic Facility for the Prevention of Epidemics” was set up in 1933 to control the soldiers’ venereal disease, and out of a total of thirty eight women, thirty five were Korean and three were Japanese.²⁰ An official 1940 Japanese government medical report also confirms that Korean women were the majority: Koreans (51.8 percent), Chinese (36 percent), and Japanese (12.2 percent).²¹

Most comfort stations were usually clustered around China but also stretched to Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan (in the mainland and Okinawa in particular), South and North Korea (5 locations), Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Burma, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, New Guinea, the Kurile Islands, and Sakhalin.²² A survey of one hundred and ninety two former KCWs suggests that nearly all the women (98.4 percent) were first taken out of the Korean peninsula while only three women (1.6 percent) were sent to comfort stations located in Korea. Despite the large number of Chinese “comfort women,” Korean women were sent to China en masse. China (49.5 percent) and Japan (12.5 percent) were the most frequent destinations (62 percent).²³ Over one third of the surviving KCWs recall that their second transfer was to another town within their original destination countries or to other foreign destinations in the Southeast Asia/Pacific region. Roughly one fifth of them (19 percent) were transferred again after this. In essence, Korean women were treated as a commodity to be transported with the soldiers in accordance with the military’s movements. During their “service,” the KCWs endured long and inhumane suffering. The majority (77.7 percent) of the surviving “comfort women” reported that their “service” ranged between 1–2 years and 7–9 years.²⁴ Among the seven former “comfort women” who responded “more than 11 years,” the longest had “served” for 14 years. Those Korean women who had experienced less than 4–5 years of “service” seem to have been victims of the Asia/Pacific War that broke out at the end of 1941 and of the various national mobilization acts Japan enacted in preparation for the full-blown war. In contrast, former Filipina “comfort women” who filed for compensation at the Tokyo District Court claimed that their victimization ranged from as short as a few days to two years.²⁵

20 Tanaka, 2002: 11.

21 Yoshimi, 2005: 94–95.

22 The Korean Council, 2005: 24; Yoshimi, 2000: 91; and Morikawa, 2005, 2007.

23 The War and Women’s Human Rights Center, The Korean Council and the Ministry of Gender Equality, 2002: 46.

24 The War and Women’s Human Rights Center, 2002: 66–67.

25 Yoshimi, 2000: 94.

Border-crossing sex-trafficking is a prominent feature of the Korean women's victimization, and was not a clear-cut model of victimization commonly found in "comfort women" cases in other countries.²⁶ Sex-trafficking may also be related to Japanese "comfort women." However, a major difference exists between the Korean and Japanese cases: The Korean women were tricked into sex-trafficking, or conscripted without any knowledge of the nature of their future jobs, whereas the Japanese women were most likely already involved in the prostitution or entertainment industry. In other words, many Japanese women became "comfort women" as a form of employment. An analysis of the sex-trafficking of Korean women, however, shows the systematic involvement of state power through various policies throughout the sex-trafficking process: recruitment, transportation, and "work" situations. How did Japan's racial politics explain the large number of Korean women sex-trafficked to distant war zones?

Colonial Policies and the Mobilization of Korean Women

Colonial policies towards Koreans under the military Governor-General's rule were harsh, repressive, and para-militaristic in nature, and ones in which government officials and police were disproportionately empowered. Due to the persistent anti-colonialist and nationalist movements in colonial Korea, the police surveillance of Koreans was common and often entailed harsh punishments. Within this political environment, the Koreans were disciplined to comply with and obey public authority. The Police were a symbol of fear during the colonial era, especially the patrol police (Kor. *sunsa*; Jpn. *junsa*) of which everyone was afraid. When Japan colonized Korea, Korea was under the rule of its last dynasty, the Choson, which officially adopted Confucianism as the country's guiding doctrine in all aspects of society. Following Confucian teachings, people were socialized to obey authority, seniority and class hierarchy. In addition, females were taught to obey males, with a high value placed on female chastity and virginity. Until the Japanese colonial government introduced a licensed prostitution system practiced in Japan since the Edo era to Korea, there was no such institution in Korea. Nor was there a Korean social custom equivalent to Japan's *karayuki-san*, who would be sold by poor parents to the sex industry for money. Given the above, it was highly unlikely that

26 My forthcoming manuscript on "comfort women," tentatively entitled "Japan's Comfort Women and Sex-Trafficking from Korea" suggests a typology of "comfort women" victimizations from a comparative perspective.

young Korean females voluntarily joined or were sold by their parents to “comfort women” recruiters. Even if there were some cases of professional entertainers who voluntarily joined, hardly any would have joined if they knew their job was to be confined and gang-raped by soldiers without proper economic compensation. The massive scale of KCW victimization could therefore be explained as a product of the colonial era power relationship between Korea and Japan during the first half of the twentieth century, Japan’s emperor system, militarism, imperialism, and Japan’s colonial policies toward Korea.

Japan adopted a series of reform policies in Korea that included very specific integration policies, such as pushing intermarriages between Koreans and Japanese in 1937 with a view to diluting the strength of the Korean ethnic identity. The “Policy of Korean-Japanese Oneness” of 1938 (not found in Taiwan) forced Koreans to become citizens of imperial Japan, and thus forced to obey Japan’s Emperor and practice the Japanese *Shinto* religion (very different from orthodox Korean Buddhism). A highly regimented public school system was an important socialization venue in which students were taught how to be good imperial citizens of Japan as well as such practices as students starting their day by bowing to the East (where the Japanese emperor’s palace is located) and singing the Japanese national anthem, etc. Japan’s bold 1939 policy of “assimilation” forced Koreans to abandon the Korean language and to adopt the Japanese language (in both their public and private lives), as well as to change their Korean names into Japanese names.

As Japan’s expansion escalated, Japan promulgated a series of national mobilization decrees for both Koreans and Japanese, as well as for the production of materials for the war efforts. A series of mobilization acts was also announced within the Korean-Japanese “Oneness” policy framework. The “National General Mobilization Order” was announced in 1938. A labor mobilization process that included unmarried women began in 1939, and was followed by more specific laws: the “Act for Coordinating the People’s Labour and the State’s Development” (1941); the “Act for Increasing Productivity” (1943); and the “Women’s Voluntary Labour Corps” Act (1944). A series of special forced mobilization laws were also declared for both military personnel and for laborers after 1938. The Japanese government made them appear voluntary, but they were actually coercive, and subjected Koreans to a kind of labor draft. Throughout the colonial era, an estimated total of 7.5 million Koreans were mobilized (both men and women) as forced laborers, war industry workers or (for males only) soldiers and sent to foreign countries. Among these, one million are estimated to have died while in forced service. This includes those

who were forcibly removed from Korea (1930) and sent to coal mines in Japan, Sakhalin or Southeast Asia.²⁷

For Korean females, the most prominent mobilization was that declared under Imperial Order (1944. 8. 22), creating The Women's Voluntary Labour Corps (officially referred to as the Korean Women's Voluntary Labor Corps (Kor. *Chosŏn yŏja kunlo chŏngsindae*, abbreviated *chŏngsindae*; Jpn. *daishintarō*). The *chŏngsindae* was a group of young Korean women between the ages of 12 and 40 who were drafted to Japan's military/industrial work sites for a year or two as part of the Japanese war efforts. In order to implement this order, the colonial Government-General developed a comprehensive mobilization system in 1944 that targeted all women fourteen years of age or older and that included all new school graduates as well as unmarried young women. Japanese schoolteachers in Korea would be promoted if they persuaded young and "well-developed" Korean women to join Japan's labor corps, which resulted in young women being sent to the Labor Corps. Two KCW survivors revealed that it was their Japanese school principal and teachers who had tricked them with promises of schooling and good jobs in Japan if they joined the *chŏngsindae*.²⁸ The *chŏngsindae* was mobilized by Japan's state power in the form of a draft. Some former KCWs thought that they would be working as part of a labor corps: When the first fact-finding studies in search of survivors were conducted in South Korea in the 1990s, former "comfort women" who came forward identified themselves as *chŏngsindae* victims.²⁹ Some of these *chŏngsindae* laborers were later transferred to comfort stations for forced sexual services, although their precise number is unknown. The conscription of a large number of young women during Japan's military expansion was colloquially referred to in Korea as the "virgin recruitment" (Kor. *cheoyo gongchul*). The Japanese Home Ministry rebuffed such a claim:

27 Korean Overseas Culture and Information Service, 1993: 112.

28 *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 16 and 17, 1992, The Korean Council and the Korean Research Center, 1997: 225–226, 238–239.

29 Although the term *chŏngsindae* as 'war industry workers' should not be mixed with "comfort women," in Korea (both South and North) *chŏngsindae* would be used for either meaning interchangeably. The primary reason for this seems to be that both "comfort women" and *chŏngsindae* were largely drawn from a certain social group: young, unmarried and relatively uneducated women from poor families. Furthermore, since both "comfort women" and *chŏngsindae* women were taken out of Korea after conscription/recruitment by the military/police/civilian recruiters, etc. it seems that the two terms have become mixed.

Dispatching a patriotic labor corps is not the same as impressment. Do not follow the example of those who flee from the general recruitment of labor or who take part in unlawful violent riots. The conscription of unmarried women is considered necessary. It is said that some of those mobilized will be made into comfort women and such, but these are absurd rumors. On account of these pernicious rumors, we can expect the labor situation to become increasingly difficult.³⁰

But this did not work so well. Korean parents would withdraw their daughters from school so they were absent from the public scene or would marry them off to avoid such state mobilization for the war effort.

Unlike the mobilization of KCWs by state power, no documents show that Japanese “comfort women” were subjected to a national conscription or a draft. Most Korean females were young (between the ages of fourteen and nineteen) and unmarried when they were taken, and in some cases as young as eleven and thirteen when World War II ended.³¹ The surviving KCWs’ hometown locations were all over Korea, although the majority (74 percent) were from the southern part of the Korean peninsula, and the majority (88 percent of one hundred forty one survivors whose data was obtainable) had no formal schooling. Unlike Japan, compulsory education was not required for Koreans during the colonial era, and this left a large number of young women outside the schooling system.³² KCWs largely came from the lowest social classes. During the colonial era, the starvation level was high: 48 percent of the people in rural areas and 19.9 percent of the people in urban areas were thought to have lived in extreme poverty.³³ To escape from extreme poverty, a major internal migration of young women into urban areas began to occur. Poor women both from rural and urban areas were the targets of “comfort women” recruiters. Economic hardship and low social standing made Koreans even more vulnerable to Japan’s political authority under the para-military colonial rule, and it seems that apart from a few upper class Korean young women, most young females targeted by the recruiters were from poor and rural backgrounds.

The Japanese state’s role in the recruitment of KCWs is still in dispute, since the Japanese government has either denied or blurred the issue,³⁴ although

30 Yoshimi, 2000: 109.

31 The War and Women’s Human Rights Center, 2002: 3–4; and Chung, 2005: 58.

32 Yoshimi, 2000: 104; The War and Women’s Human Rights Center, 1992: 13.

33 The Korean Council, 1994: 6.

34 Refer to “Wartime Comfort Women” published by the Japanese Cabinet Councilors’ Office on External Affairs on August 4, 1993. Quoted from McDougal’s report in Yoshimi, 2000: 36–37.

former KCWS and some Japanese war veterans have consistently testified that state authorities were involved in the recruitment.³⁵ Of the one hundred and fifty seven surviving KCWS surveyed, 52.2 percent testified that they were abducted by government employees such as soldiers, *kempeitai* agents, policemen and village level government officials. Private recruiters were also major players in this field (47.1 percent), and among these Korean civilian recruiters outnumbered the Japanese. Significantly, however, most of the Korean women recruited by these civilians were immediately transferred to local police stations or to transit places by military trucks or trains.³⁶ The testimonies suggest that these civilian recruiters were not free or autonomous, but merely agents of “acquisition” working for the colonial government (e.g., military and police) and carrying out the orders of the higher echelons of Japan’s military. An archival document which survived the Japanese government’s systematic attempts to destroy war documents after its surrender in 1945 shows the state’s role in recruitment:

Since the Ministry of War ordered that the cooperation of the military police and local police be sought when comfort women were being rounded up, even in Japan, we can only assume that the cooperation between procurers and the military or local police in Korea and Taiwan was even closer. It grew ever closer, and especially after the start of the “Kwantung Army Special Maneuvers” in 1941. As we have seen, when preparing for the “Special Maneuvers,” The Kwantung Army is said to have attempted to round up twenty thousand Korean comfort women. It appealed to the Government-General of Korea, and eight thousand Korean women are said to have been rounded up and sent to northeastern China. If this was the case, those women were gathered in a very brief period of time, which would have been impossible without extensive assistance from the Government-General. There were three different methods or levels of impressing laborers: “recruitment,” “official mediation,” and “requisitioning.” In the rounding up of comfort women, the most common method was probably “official mediation,” in which bureaucrats and the police played prominent roles.³⁷

35 Ueno, 2004 argues that regardless of who recruited the KCWS, the more important issue is their sexual slavery, the ensuing public silence, and the Japanese right wing’s attacks on these women.

36 Some KCW survivors have testified that given their remote rural locations and poverty, they saw military trucks for the first time in their lives. They were excited to ride the trucks without knowing that they were being kidnapped for “comfort women” service.

37 Yoshimi, 2000: 108.

Deceit by offering false employment (45.9 percent) and coercion using violent force (37.6 percent) were the most common recruitment tools used. Remarkably, whereas civilian recruiters lured, cajoled, made fake promises of good jobs with high pay and so forth, the military as well as the police used physical force as the dominant tools of mobilization. Poor young women might have been easier and hence served as the primary targets to be manipulated/persuaded to join, especially when deceived with false promises about the nature of their “jobs.” Some former KCWs actually recall that they were lured with “three bowls of white rice everyday” by recruiters—at the time a very appealing bait that was hard to decline. Young women in colonial times were also yearning to become modern women.³⁸ A former “comfort woman” named Mun Pil-Gi followed a recruiter when she was falsely promised the schooling that she had been dreaming of. They were particularly vulnerable to manipulation when the authorities were involved through threats, intimidation or force, as former KCW Mun Ok-Chu recalls in her memories of Fall 1940, when taken to serve in Northeast China at the age of 16:

... a Japanese man in a military uniform approached me (on my way from a friend's house). Suddenly, he grabbed my arm and pulled me, saying something to me in Japanese. That was a time when even hearing the word “policeman” was a scary thing, so I was led off without saying a word... I thought I was being taken to the military police.³⁹

Treatment of Korean “Comfort Women”

Upon mobilization or recruitment, “arrested” Korean women would be kept in police cells or in prisons (when police stations were full) until they were sent to Japan for further processing. Since they were under full surveillance, escaping was unthinkable. Upon recruitment/kidnapping/conscription, the Korean women’s ethnic identity would be challenged in a highly discriminatory manner: the Korean females lost their identities as well as their virginity. A new Japanese name was given to them even before their departure for foreign destinations, confusing or diluting their sense of identity. Many of the survivors have also testified that they wore Japanese *kimonos* and not by choice. No communication with family members was available or allowed. When they were shipped to war zones, they were simply “military commodities” without

38 Soh, 2008: 12–13.

39 Yoshimi, 2000: 107.

any specific records.⁴⁰ Rapes were a routine occurrence during their transportation to the first transit point or destination.

Evidence of institutionalized discriminatory policies against colonial women abound. Colonial Korea's regulatory policy on prostitution, for one, required a minimum age of seventeen for Korean women compared to eighteen in Japan. However, many KCWs were (most of them were not prostitutes by any means) younger juveniles. Travel permits demonstrate another policy. After 1937, Koreans were required to use a special permit issued by the colonial government (i.e., the police) when aboard ships or trains to foreign destinations (this regulation also applied to Taiwanese and Japanese). Then there were immigration regulations too. For example, women travelling to China for employment (i.e., sex work) should meet the age requirement to acquire a travel permit, which was at the time twenty one years of age.⁴¹ For Japanese "comfort women," the strict regulations applied not only to age but also to social background: They had to be over twenty-one years of age and were "chosen from groups of prostitutes," although such restrictions were not always observed.⁴²

Such restrictions were entirely absent in Korea and Taiwan. Whereas most of the KCWs were teenage girls who were coaxed or mobilized by state power, this pattern is not dominant in Taiwan, as some of the former Taiwanese "comfort women" revealed that they were working at bars or entertainment venues when recruited, albeit mostly against their will.⁴³ Even though both Korea and Taiwan were Japanese colonies at the time, Korean women were also sent to Taiwan to perform sexual services. Japanese "comfort women" were able to leave when their contracts were over, whereas Koreans had to remain for the duration of the war. While it was a serious crime for the colonial government in Korea to "torture, kidnap or traffic people with the intent of sending them overseas or to transport kidnapped or purchased people overseas," not a single former KCW testified that she applied for or obtained a travel permit. Nor were any survivors rescued by government authorities when they were kidnapped or sex-trafficked as "comfort women."⁴⁴

How did Korean women get to the comfort stations? Various Japanese government offices were involved, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (e.g., overseas travel, immigration and residence), the Ministry of Home Affairs

40 Sekiguchi, 1990.

41 Chung, 2004: 57.

42 Yoshimi, 2000: 100–102.

43 The Korean Council, 1992: 64.

44 Yoshimi, 2000: 112.

(e.g., issuing travel permits and recruitment), the Ministry of War (e.g., the establishment and management of comfort stations) and the Government-General of Korea (e.g., mobilizing, recruiting, issuing travel permits, utilizing the railway system, etc.). Although foreign travel fell under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Japanese army and navy took over that jurisdiction in 1938. Under an arrangement with the Ministry of War, the Army's Central Command controlled the "comfort women's" travel (e.g., supervision of all "comfort women" dispatches to Southeast Asia and the Pacific region as well as the issue of military identity papers in lieu of passports).⁴⁵ Since the KCWs were first taken to Japan, China or Manchuria as transit points from which to be sent out to Southeast Asia or the Pacific islands, they were under the direct supervision of the Ministry of War. Transfers and transportation were carried out by Japanese military ships, Japanese government-owned railroads, trucks, boats and even airplanes. KCW survivors, regardless of whether they were recruited by civilian agents or mobilized by government officials, all testified that they were taken by trains, "ships as big as a mountain" (i.e., navy vessels) or military trucks . . . all government conveyances.

Lives under Sexual Slavery

"Sexual slavery" involves coercion, captivity and the provision of sexual services against the will of sex-trafficked persons, as well as the forced provision of sexual services with no pay or minimum pay coupled with no freedom of movement. As acknowledged by the United Nations, the "comfort stations" that were maintained by the Japanese military during the Second World War and the "rape camps" that have been well documented in the former Yugoslavia are particularly egregious examples of sexual slavery.⁴⁶ Korean survivors have testified that their lives at comfort stations were under guarded captivity without any freedom of movement. Comfort stations were surrounded by barbed wire and military check points in addition to the watchful eyes of military personnel, comfort station managers (i.e., civilians) and peers.

Under such circumstances, "comfort women" rarely dared to escape, for they were forced to witness the cruel torture and punishment given to those who failed such attempts. Korean women recall that they were treated as sex machines rather than as human beings with feelings and physical limits. Receiving between ten and thirty soldiers daily was common, although there

45 Yoshimi, 2000: 82–83.

46 McDougall, 1998: 9.

were quiet days when soldiers were away at the front.⁴⁷ With a huge crowd of soldiers queued outside comfort stations that could easily stretch to over a mile, these women had no time to eat or to take care of personal hygiene in between soldiers. The soldiers' physical violence (e.g., beating, stabbing, burning with cigarettes, etc.) were frequent occurrences, especially when the "comfort women" refused to perform the sexual acts desired by the soldiers. A Korean victim named Whang Kum-Joo recalled a comfort station scene where soldiers would shout at her: "It is an order from the Emperor, the military, and myself!"⁴⁸

A (possibly informal) racial and ethnic hierarchy governed the comfort station's management. Japanese "comfort women" were usually the most favored providers (and thus treated differently), and hence occupied the top position. These were followed by Korean women who looked physically similar (e.g., fair-skinned) and had a more similar culture (e.g., in terms of food). Korean women were in fact forced to act like Japanese women (e.g., in taking a Japanese name and wearing kimonos). Beneath the Korean women were Chinese women, followed by darker skinned Southeast Asian women and Pacific islanders. In Rabaul, Papua New Guinea, for example, one of the more distant locations to which KCWs were dispatched, Japanese soldiers avoided the local women because their skin was "not clean" (e.g., they had skin diseases and scratches) and "smelled like coconut oil," which was used by local people as an insect repellent.⁴⁹ The officers were therefore assigned Japanese women. Many former KCWs testified that they served more soldiers than officers.⁵⁰ Upon their first arrival at comfort stations, however, their virgin bodies would be raped by officers first, and then made available to enlisted soldiers.

The Japanese military charged soldiers a fee for the comfort stations' "services," although the majority of former KCWs testified that they received no such payment whatsoever. Even though a minor number of Korean women did receive money, it was in the form of military currency (tickets) which became useless trash when the war ended.⁵¹ Those who received cash also experienced great losses as a result of Japan's high postwar inflation rates and currency reforms. Even worse, a former KCW, Mun Ok-Chu, was not able to withdraw money from her military postal savings account after the war, even though her

47 The War and Women's Human Rights Center, 2002: 74.

48 My interview data, 1994: 9, 14. Seoul, Korea.

49 Sekiguchi, 1990; and Hicks, 1994: 12.

50 The War and Women's Human Rights Center, 2002: 70.

51 Earning patterns varied among different nationalities: a large portion of the Taiwanese "comfort women" received cash, a pattern not commonly found among Korean and Filipina "comfort women." The War and Women's Human Rights Center, 2002: 81.

account was still registered under her Japanese name, Fumihara Yoshiko, in the Kumamoto Savings Office Center. As a former colonial woman, she was unable to withdraw the savings after the war.⁵²

This discrimination in the management of KCWs continued when Japan surrendered. The KCWs, widely scattered in Asia and the Pacific Islands, were “disposed” of (i.e., killed or abandoned) by the Japanese military as part of Japan’s efforts to “clean up” the comfort women system and avoid war crimes trials. Japanese “comfort women,” on the other hand, were evacuated by Japanese vessels and sent home. Out of the tens of thousands of Korean women drawn into the comfort women system, only a little over two hundred women had revealed their identity (as noted earlier). Even considering those who chose not to disclose their identity to preserve their family honor, etc., the actual number of survivors could only be in the few thousands. Where did all the other young KCWs go? No one knows. Only scant leaks from war histories tell us that many of these women were told to hide in the underground shelters because the Allied Forces’ air raids would drop bombs. The bombings that actually ended many “comfort women’s” lives, though, seemed to have actually been executed by the Japanese military. At least seventeen Korean women abandoned in China and one woman in Thailand were spotted since the 1990s, of whom a few were able to return home after half a century and regain their South Korean nationality. While Korean and other Asian “comfort women” cases were deeply buried in history, the Japanese soldiers responsible for coercing sexual services from Dutch women in Indonesia were tried and punished (including executions) in 1948 by the Allies at the Batavia (Jakarta) Court and the Dutch victims were materially compensated.⁵³ In sum, it is quite readily apparent that race and ethnicity mattered in Japan’s management of the comfort women system.

Nationalism, Gender and Sexual Violence

Modern world history confirms that the inclusion of gender and sexual violence in the analysis of war atrocities is not automatic. It was not until the

52 Yoshimi, 2000: 142–144. Actually, in February 1992, Mun filed a legal action against the Shimonoseki post office to get her savings back (accrued to 50,108 yen as of April 1965). However, the Japanese government denied the payment referring to the 1965 Rep. of Korea-Japan Basic Treaty, which included a Korean’s property rights clause despite the fact that the “comfort women” issue was never included overtly in the treaty negotiations. Refer to Machiko, 2005: 162–163.

53 Hick, 1995: 168.

late 1970s, for example, that gender-specific Nazi holocaust stories began to emerge in academic circles as a primary research focus separated from mainstream racial analyses.⁵⁴ In traditional approaches to colonialism and nationalism studies, gender and sexual violence against women is either omitted or has been a rare research subject.⁵⁵ Silence has prevailed over the issue of how women's lives as the weaker sex or as sexualized subjects were not contextualized in the same way as men's experiences during colonial times or in the same way as national struggles.⁵⁶ South Korea was no exception. The public discourse on KCWs took half a century to break a long silence. Why? These long silences were associated with Korea's unique post-war situation, its masculinist political and academic orientation, the character of the women's movement per se, which failed to pursue gender-specific, women-centered issues, and the lack of interest articulation agents in society that could have raised or promoted the "comfort women's" rights when these victims were not able to fight for themselves.⁵⁷ Furthermore, the nature of South Korea's nationalist approach toward the "comfort women" needs to be investigated in and of itself.

Korea was in turmoil upon the partition of the nation into South and North (1945), immediately followed by the Korean War (1950–53), and at the time political stability, nation-building, military security and economic survival were the nation's primary concerns. "Comfort women" or prostitution (both military and industrial) were not perceived as important political issues. In South Korea, the congregational prostitution in U.S. military base areas emerged during the post war era as a new social issue for moral, health, crime, race, and women's rights reasons. However, the earnings from military base prostitution or other forms of entertainment were so significant that the South Korean government chose to officially ignore them given the country's poor financial situation during the 1950s and 1960s.⁵⁸

Aside from such political economies of military prostitution, military base area sex was also used at times as an important South Korea-U.S. foreign policy tool, for the specific aim of preventing a drastic reduction of the U.S. military forces in South Korea.⁵⁹ In the 1970s, the increase of sex tourism by Japanese

54 "Women Surviving the Holocaust," held in 1983, is the first landmark conference to separate gender from race-oriented Holocaust studies. See Baumel, 1998. Inquiries into the Ravensbrück Concentration Camp would have to wait until the mid-1990s. See Saidel, 2004.

55 Jayawardena, 1994; and Ranchod-Nilsson & Tereault, 2004.

56 Ranchod-Nilsson & Tereault, 2000; and Ueno, 2004.

57 Yoon, 2001a; and Yoon, 2010.

58 SBS, November 19, 2006; and Moon, 1997.

59 Moon, 1997.

businessmen to South Korea emerged as a serious new social issue. A few feminist scholars and activists saw such an industrial model of prostitution as a revival of colonial Japan's comfort women system or "neo *chōngsindae*." These activists' main argument was that during wartime, it was Japanese soldiers who exploited Korean women, while now (1970s and 1980s) it was Japanese businessmen instead.⁶⁰ Racism and nationalism were significant elements of this NGO activism in addition to women's rights, since it was Japanese males who were once again using Korean women's bodies for pleasure. But such an organized anti-sex tourism campaign was suppressed by South Korea's then authoritarian government for perceived economic gain, given that Japan was a major source of technology transfer and capital investment. As far as the government was concerned, this end outweighed the women's concerns about sexual violence or about the commodification of women in prostitution.⁶¹

The masculinist orientation of nationalism studies has also tended to focus on hero studies, and thus mainly on men's stories and male leaders' stories. Unlike this andro- and elite-centered academic approach, the "comfort women" issue has incited nationalist sentiments in both South Korea and Japan since the early 1990s. Before that time, South Korean nationalism erupted against Japan when the South Korean government began negotiating with Japan about officially cleaning up the colonial legacy and restoring the two countries' diplomatic relationship. The nationalist protests opposing the treaty were widespread and intense, but they were rather short-lived and largely ended when South Korea's Basic Treaty with Japan was signed in 1965. The KCW issue was completely ignored at both the intergovernmental negotiation table and in the protests. Up to the mid-1960s, KCWs as victims of colonialism were absent from formal records.

However, this situation has since changed. As the public began to learn the graphic details of the KCWs' victimization through the landmark 1991 public TV testimony by former victim Kim Hak Soon, a protest movement was organized and is still active today. One of its more noteworthy actions is the "Wednesday Demonstration," a weekly noon-time street protest in front of the Japanese embassy in downtown Seoul attended by former KCW victims as well

60 Since 1973, female church leaders and a few woman professors began to conduct several fact-finding field surveys on sex tourism followed by an international conference on prostitution and Womens' Movements in 1988, just before South Korea hosted the Summer Olympic Games. Korean Church Women United, April 1988, "Women and Tourism: Report on an International seminar held on 13-20 April 1988 in Seoul and Cheju Island, Seoul."

61 Yoon, 2001b.

as by “comfort women” advocacy groups and supporters. Since 8 January 1992 and in any weather, this street protest, organized by the Korean Council for the Women Drafted to Sexual Slavery by Japan (hereafter referred to as the Korean Council), has been demanding the Japanese government’s sincere formal apology⁶² and the payment of reparations to “comfort women” victims.⁶³ Nationalism was a primary motivation of these protests, that continued to occur over the past three decades, with the 1,083th protest marked on 24 July 2013. The South Korean nationalist flames would be further fanned by Japan’s ultra-conservative politicians, whose occasional politically incorrect public statements about “comfort women victims” would often incite South Koreans to action, as evidenced by Osaka mayor Toru Hashimoto’s remarks of the 13 May 2013: “When soldiers are risking their lives by running through storms of bullets, and you want to give these emotionally charged soldiers a rest somewhere, it is clear that you need a comfort women system . . . (brothels) were necessary at the time to maintain discipline in the army.”⁶⁴ Hashimoto’s statement has certainly helped to divert more South Korean attention to the “comfort women” issue and thus raise the nationalist consciousness even further.

If nationalism stands at the core of the “comfort women” issue, why was there a prolonged silence over the topic? Some answers might be sought in the gendered analysis of nationalism. From this perspective, silence was associated with the nature of the subject itself, viz. female sexuality, rape and shame. An analysis of female sexuality, especially one associated with “dirty” women, was hard to accept as a legitimate research subject by the academic community. Even history books on Korean women authored by women overlooked the “comfort women” issue.⁶⁵ In political communities, war rapes were not conceptualized as an important political issue requiring societal or

62 The Japanese government has made several public apologies since 1993, but these were not considered sincere enough by many South Koreans for two main reasons: First, the Japanese government has shown a pattern of apology immediately followed by denials for decades, and second, that the persistent denials and accusations concerning “comfort women” were used by Japanese (ultra) conservative social activists in defense of Japan’s own nationalism.

63 More specifically, their demands span seven issues: an acknowledgement of the crime; the full disclosure of the facts; a formal apology; legal reparations; the erection of a monument; correct descriptions in school history textbooks at school, and the punishment of those responsible. Thus far, the Japanese government’s official position has been that it bears no legal responsibility towards individuals.

64 Tabuchi, 2013.

65 For example, see Kim, 1976.

governmental attention. Rape tended to be perceived as the unfortunate victims' personal issue in the private sphere. A patriarchal political culture further reinforced the marginality of female concerns such as those associated with rape. In South Korea's political culture, the KCW issue was long assumed to be an unfortunate individual problem allowing no public responsibilities. Nor did a male-oriented political culture, the political economy of security (i.e., military base prostitution) or economic development (sex tours) show any sensitivity towards women's sexual exploitation.⁶⁶

At the same time, however, the character of nationalism per se also contributed to this historical silence. In South Korea, nationalism seems to be equated with the national pride of the entire nation—a group-based perspective with little attention paid to a victim's individual sufferings and human rights. From this perspective, the mass rape experienced by “comfort women” was a challenge to the Korean male's ego or pride, and an invasion of their property rights (i.e., Korean women belong to Korean males). With their pride on the line, the Korean males who controlled the political agenda and other institutions in society remained silent when the “comfort women” advocacy movement was launched and led by few Korean women's NGOs. Many South Koreans, both male and female, maintained their silence when the “comfort women” issue was first raised publicly by feminist activists/scholars in the 1990s.⁶⁷ Some males were even hostile towards the victims because of their “dirty” bodies. Such attitudes reflect negative feelings about digging up Korean's shameful and embarrassing past, something which goes against national pride.

The shame was felt not only by the KCWs but also by the whole nation. In essence, and as Yang Hyun-Ah clearly points out, “the nation becomes gendered, and women's sexuality becomes nationalized. . . . the Military Comfort Women issue is no longer between Korean women and Japanese men, but between Korean men and Japanese men.”⁶⁸ Thus it was only a group of small scale women's NGOs who jointly established the Korean Council that played the pivotal role in breaking the “comfort-women” silence. Without this and other NGOs' hard work, dedication, and persuasion in fact-finding studies, and without their documentation of former “comfort women's” oral histories, etc., the public would have waited much longer—not a good idea given the victims' old age—to learn about this war atrocity. Thus far, the “comfort women” advocacy movement has at times exhibited a similarly nationalist approach. The

66 Yoon, 2007.

67 Two women professors, Yun Chong-Ok and Lee Hyo Je among others played key leadership role in the “comfort women” advocacy movement.

68 Yang, 1988: 130–131.

Korean Council's position in relation to The Asian Women's Fund (AWF) is a case in point, placing nationalism (i.e., Korea's pride) first over the individual victim's interests.⁶⁹

The AWF set up in 1995 by the Murayama Tomiichi cabinet had three projects: "Atonement money" of 200 million yen was to be given to each former "comfort woman" financed by civilian sector donations; the Japanese Prime Minister's letter of apology; and "medical/welfare support projects" funded by the Japanese government.⁷⁰ The Korean Council campaigned against the receipt of such "sympathy" money since it was not financed by the Japanese government's budget, nor were sincere state apologies, nor acknowledgement of legal responsibilities, etc. made before the atonement money was to be paid. Although this boycott was later lifted, South Korean nationalist pride did not accept such non-public funds and the South Koreans responded with a counter fund-raising campaign. The South Korean government also set up a special fund for financially assisting these victims. Altogether, each surviving victim received a lump-sum payment, beginning at 5 million *won* and increasing to 40 million *won* in 1998 (when the AWF de facto terminated its funding) in addition to various welfare benefits (e.g., free health care, low-cost housing, etc.). In other words, the "comfort women's" humiliation was perceived as a challenge to national pride, which seemed to be a more serious concern compared to individual victims' rights. Rather than an individual's sufferings per se ("I"), all Koreans (i.e., "we" the nation) seemed to capture people's attention, and thus justifying counter material offerings by the Korean citizens and government in lieu of Japanese "sympathy money." Holding the same view, the majority of KCW victims refused to accept the AWF's money because it was against their pride and dignity (arguing that they were not prostitutes who sold their bodies for money). Unofficially, however, 61 former KCWs were said to have accepted the fund's payments.⁷¹

The "comfort women" advocacy movement within this nationalist framework thus far focused its efforts on challenging Japan (e.g., its government, ultra conservative politicians and civilian groups) as the main target of activism, although the South Korean government was also criticized for its rather passive role vis-à-vis Japan until a few years ago. Such an approach might be natural given that Japan was the perpetrator of the war crimes. However, the movement's truth-seeking efforts in the domestic scene have not been properly carried out. Those who put personal interests above and beyond

69 See Asian Women's Fund, 2007.

70 Asian Women's Fund, 2007: 120–126.

71 Park, 2013: 187.

nationalist group interests (e.g., over the AWF issue were not included at times in the advocacy movement. Despite the large number of Korean males who actually recruited KCWs (as noted earlier), only one has come forward to testify.⁷² How the “comfort women” case should be separated from the non-female specific, male oriented, or group-oriented nationalist approach is yet another area for both academic inquiry and civil activism.

Conclusion

This chapter attempted to analyze why and how Korean women were drawn into the comfort women system en masse. Several arguments are made: First, institutionalized racism is what characterizes the Korean women’s victimization. Although the KCWs’ misery reflects the Japanese soldiers’ personal prejudice against Korean women as seen in the usage of the term “*Chosen Pi*,” it goes beyond mere personal attitudes. Second, the Korean women’s victimization was possible because of Japan’s colonialism, militarism and imperialism. The systematic involvement of state power exhibited by a series of wholesale mobilization policies as well as by the politics of fear (e.g., patrol police) impelled Koreans to become the easy targets of recruitment activities. Japan’s wartime state power was strengthened, and impoverished young women from Korea, fearful of government authority (for they were subject to mobilization), were taken from the Korean peninsula en masse. The private recruiters who abducted them were not autonomous either. Third, the “comfort women” issue in South Korea cannot be considered without taking nationalism into account, given that a greater nationalist outlook has thus far framed South Korea’s discussion of the topic.

Despite the significance of such “comfort women” victimization, the issue remained silent for many decades. Multiple reasons explain this considering the particularities of South Korea’s post war history, politics and military and the economic contexts which framed the directions of the local women’s movement. A nationalist endeavor to challenge Japan’s colonialism was thus the major engine of the “comfort women” advocacy movement. Admittedly, being both “for” and “with” victims is a highlight of the current KCW advocacy movement. At the same time, however, separating the politics of female bodies from the broader group-based, gender-neutral or masculinist orientations of South Korean nationalism is an important task that needs to be addressed by political institutions, academia and civil society.

72 Phone interview data obtained from the Korean Council, August 2013.

“The Guilt Feeling That You Exist”: War, Racism and Indisch-Japanese Identity Formation

Aya Ezawa

In this chapter, I examine the role of race and racism in the identity formation of Indisch-Japanese children, “enemy” children who were born to Indisch (Indo-European) women with Dutch citizenship and Japanese men during the Japanese Occupation of the Dutch East Indies (1942–1945). The existence of children fathered by enemy forces in an occupied territory is always a highly sensitive issue.¹ However, the case of Indisch-Japanese children is particularly charged as Japanese forces not only took over the administration of the Dutch East Indies, but also subjected large parts of the Dutch civilian population to internment. As a consequence, the memory of the war is strongly felt at a very personal level not just by veterans but also by the families and communities Indisch-Japanese children were born into. Over and above this, Japan’s occupation of the Dutch East Indies also subjected white Europeans to the rule of an another “race”—“the Japanese”. What is significant about the discourses on the Japanese occupation is not only the brutality of the Japanese military’s conduct and the civilian suffering they bring to light, but also the racialized image of the Japanese aggressor and occupier they produce.² Race and racism are therefore central elements in the story of these children.

Race features in the stories of Indisch-Japanese children at several levels. Growing up surrounded by a community traumatized by the Japanese occupation, the Indisch-Japanese children’s image of Japan and the Japanese was largely formed by their community’s wartime memories and racial stereotypes. As children fathered by a Japanese man, they not only pondered the “Japanese” aspects of their appearance, but also the implications of their racial origins on their personal character. Does having Japanese DNA make them as cruel as the Japanese occupier by nature? Moreover, the negative stereotypes associated with “the Japanese race” had profoundly affected their own self-perception. What does it mean to belong to a much hated enemy? An

1 See, for instance, Ericsson, 2005.

2 See, for example, Heijmans-van Bruggen & Raben 1999, 165, 172. John Dower’s comparison (1986) of war propaganda on Japan and Germany in the US is relevant here.

examination of Indisch-Japanese identity formation promises to offer insights into the mechanisms and processes that not only construe racial stereotypes, but also shape the identity of enemy children.

Power, Discourse, and “Mixed Blood”

The available scholarship on “mixed” identities has long underlined the impact of specific historical contexts and discourses on “mixed race” identity formation. In other words, the social meanings associated with being mixed vary significantly across different social and historical contexts.³ And yet, context and discourse, in the case of children born of war, are not merely a question of variation and diversity in the meaning and experience of being mixed. In fact, many children born under these circumstances grow up in hostile environments and feel guilt for their very existence.⁴ They not only face rejection because of their ethnic or racial heritage but also because of the violence committed by the nation to which their fathers belonged. As a consequence, what defines their identity is not so much their own roots in a specific national or ethnic community or culture, but rather the memories and interpretations offered by other people of a conflict they had not witnessed themselves. The identity formation of children born of war, in short, is closely intertwined with the politics involved in the history and memory of World War II within the communities and families they grow up in.

Recent scholarship on identity provides a useful framework for examining the relationship between discourses and identity formation. The consciousness and articulations of identity are not simply a matter of personal choice; they are conditioned by social structures, the unconscious, and linguistic discourse.⁵ Apparently, we are not the masters of our own identity—who we are and our own consciousness are embedded in specific social, historical and discursive contexts. Following Foucault, moreover, “truth” itself loses its claim to neutrality and objectivity, and is instead shaped by regimes of power.⁶ Discourses on Asia and the Middle East—in form of Orientalism—illustrate this idea: what has long been claimed as a truth about “the Orient” and the inhabitants of these regions is currently considered as an expression

3 Nakashima, 2001; Root, 1992; and Spickard, 1989: 27.

4 Ericsson & Simonsen, 2005.

5 Hall, 1996.

6 Foucault, 1977.

of the power relations between West and East.⁷ Under such conditions, the very idea of a singular, stable and essential identity becomes questionable.⁸ Hence, the main question posed by identity analysis is not so much the meaning or "essence" of a specific racial, ethnic or national community, but rather the mechanisms, processes, shifting power relations and discourses that create identities and differentiate between self and Other.⁹

This does not mean, however, that identities no longer need to be claimed. On the contrary—strategic engagement with and the construction of discourses on identity appear to be the primary means of being able to locate and claim one's origins.¹⁰ The struggle over identity in this case is not a question of the unearthing of national, ethnic, or cultural history and origins, but rather a negotiation over the meanings and memories of war in the effort to resist racist imagery and constitute one's identity. Accordingly, the analysis which follows focuses on the interplay between discourses and memories of the Japanese Occupation and the Japanese and Indisch-Japanese identity formation. It is based on twenty life history interviews I conducted with Indisch-Japanese born in the Dutch East Indies (1944–1946) who have resettled in the Netherlands. I will first outline the history of the Japanese Occupation of the Indies and the wartime experience of the Indisch community and then examine how Indisch-Japanese experienced and negotiated the discourses and memories of the Japanese during the Japanese Occupation within their communities and families.

The Indisch and the Dutch East Indies

Central to the life stories of Indisch-Japanese is their relationship to the Indisch community and its experience of the Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies. The Indisch community not only constitutes the social context within which most Indisch-Japanese were brought up, but also the imagined community whose wartime memories and traumas provided the discursive context for their own identity struggles. In other words, although the Indisch-Japanese were far too young to remember the occupation, their childhood was saturated by the wartime memories of the Indisch community that profoundly shaped the meaning of their existence. But before we turn to the occupation and

7 Said, 1994.

8 Kondo, 1990.

9 Hall, 1995.

10 Hall, 1996.

wartime memories, we should briefly introduce the *Indisch*. Who, in fact, are these *Indisch* we are concerned with?

Indo-Europeans, or *Indisch* in Dutch, are defined by their colonial origins.¹¹ Strictly speaking, the *Indisch* are Dutch nationals born in the Dutch East Indies. Most *Indisch*, but not all, are partly of Asian origin, as the intermarriage of Dutch and other European men (with Dutch citizenship) with local women was common throughout the colonial period. Even as late as 1940, about a fifth of the Europeans in the Dutch East Indies married Indonesian or mixed-blood Indo-European spouses.¹² Estimates about the size of the Dutch and Indo-European population in the Indies vary. According to Japanese internment records, approximately 80,000 Dutch and 280,000 Indo-Europeans lived in the Netherlands East Indies in 1944,¹³ but the actual number of individuals with partially European ancestry in Indonesia (but without Dutch citizenship) is likely to be significantly higher.¹⁴

Within the colonial hierarchy, the *Indisch* were differentiated from the “full-blooded” Dutch born in the Netherlands, the *totoks*, on the one hand, and the Chinese and local Indonesians on the other hand. However, race was not the primary dividing line between the different social groups. The status of European was not so much a matter of complexion, but of paternity and social class. Indo-Europeans with a Dutch father and an Indonesian mother obtained their status as Dutch citizens by virtue of being recognized by their father; those who were not recognized by their fathers lived among the Indonesian population without being able to claim Dutch citizenship.¹⁵ A career in the Indies, moreover, depended heavily on class and upbringing; *Indisch* individuals with an education could obtain positions in the colonial administration (although top ranks were unreachable for them in practice).¹⁶ Moreover, many *Indisch* men joined the Royal Dutch East Indies Army (Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger, known by its acronym KNIL), making them part of and complicit with the colonial state.¹⁷ As a consequence of the supposedly colorblind idea of being European, the *Indisch* were encouraged to prove their

11 I will use the Dutch terms “*Indisch*” or Indo-European in favor of “Eurasian” throughout this paper since the term “*Indisch*” captures the more specific experience of Dutch nationals with Indonesian origins that resettled in the Netherlands and formed a specific social and cultural identity in the postwar period (see, for example, van Leeuwen 2008).

12 Gouda, 1995: 165.

13 Jong, 2002: 507.

14 Gouda, 1995: 165.

15 Gouda, 1995: 163.

16 Bosma & Raben, 2008: 151.

17 Meijer, 2004: 119, 177.

whiteness by means of their education, their use of language, their personal conduct and their loyalty to the Colonial state, as it allowed them to differentiate themselves from the Indonesian locals.

This color-blindness in the status of a white European was notably also present in the position of Japanese residents in the Dutch East Indies before World War II, who were classified as honorary Europeans.¹⁸ They lived among the Dutch as traders and owners of small businesses, with their children attending Dutch schools alongside Dutch children. Inter-marriage between Dutchmen and Japanese women occurred long before World War II.¹⁹ Yet, the status of Japanese within Dutch colonial society changed radically with the outbreak of the Pacific War. Half-Japanese with Dutch citizenship born and raised in the Dutch East Indies were forced to leave and were refused reentry even after the Japanese surrender.²⁰ The Japanese occupation, therefore, constitutes an important juncture in redrawing racial lines within Dutch colonial society. The Japanese occupation did not just generate anti-Japanese sentiments, but fostered a racial perception of the Japanese that made them essentially and unquestionably other than European.

The Indisch Community under Japanese Occupation

The Japanese attack in January 1942 and subsequent occupation of the Dutch East Indies is a key moment in the history and memory of the Dutch East Indies, as it constituted the beginning of the end of the Dutch colony. The Japanese occupation not only came with the loss of Dutch sovereignty, but, more significantly, the internment of its very large civilian colonial population. Approximately 42,000 Dutch and Indo-European men were imprisoned and 100,000 Dutch or Indo-European civilians were interned during the Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies.²¹ Those who were interned had to endure three years in camps which came with harsh living conditions for civilians and forced labor at the Thai-Burma railway and in Japanese coalmines for POWs. Many lost their lives during internment due to malnutrition, shortages in medical supplies, illness and exhaustion. The war was thus not only experienced directly by the soldiers fighting at the front, but had also become inscribed in

18 Gouda, 1995, 163.

19 See Leupp, 2003: 105–119.

20 Kurasawa 2011: 59 ff.

21 Jong, 2002: 510.

the traumatic memories of harsh discipline and material deprivations suffered by the civilian population.

Moreover, the occupation and internment policies had important racial dimensions. Unlike German-occupied territories in Europe, the Dutch in the Indies faced the indignity of being occupied by and having to bow to the Japanese.²² Moreover, their civilian population was interned and lived in impoverished conditions while the Indonesians who they had governed and had been served by walked freely and took over their positions.²³ In short, the occupation not only signifies a change in power relations but also evokes bitter memories because of its inversion of the racial hierarchy.

To make matters even more complicated, Japanese internment policies created racial and gender divisions within the Dutch colonial community which contributed to differential experiences of the Japanese occupation. Internment policies initially primarily targeted full-blooded Dutch. By contrast, the *Indisch* born in the Indies with partially Asian heritage were at the beginning of the occupation largely exempted and encouraged to see themselves as part of the “Asian brotherhood.” However, since a large number of *Indisch* men had been recruited into the colonial army or worked as administrators in the colonial government, many were interned during the occupation.²⁴ But even with the sharpening of internment policy, a sizable part of the population, and *Indisch* women and children in particular, were still exempted from internment. For instance, an estimated 220,000 Indo-Europeans were not interned.²⁵

Life outside the camps, however, also came with significant hardship. In the absence of fathers, husbands and brothers, *Indisch* women and their children lost their source of income and had to live by selling their belongings or by finding employment to make ends meet. Conditions were so dire that some women asked to be interned; in this way, at least, they would then have food and a roof over their heads.²⁶ It is under these circumstances that many *Indisch* women encountered Japanese men—at their workplace or in the form of a personal relationship that offered financial support and protection from arrest. It goes without saying that these women’s relationships with the Japanese occupiers caused a great deal of friction within families after the end

22 The image of exhausted and wretched Dutch civilians bowing in front of a Japanese soldier is a very central image and reference in wartime memories of Japanese internment. See Raben, 1999: 12.

23 Meijer 2004: 207.

24 Bosma, Raben, & Willems, 2006: 182.

25 Jong, 2002: 509f.

26 Meijer, 2004: 207.

of the war. A relationship with a Japanese man not only transgressed national boundaries and offered women's bodies to the enemy, but above all contradicted the traumatic experiences of fathers and brothers and the internment experience of POWs and civilians.

The ordeal of the Indisch community did not end with the Japanese capitulation. In the power vacuum which existed before the arrival of Allied forces, the Republic of Indonesia declared its independence on 17 August 1945, unleashing a period of intense violence by Indonesians against the Dutch colonial population. The establishment of the Republic of Indonesia in 1949 came with a massive repatriation of the Dutch colonial population to the Netherlands, a country many of them had never set foot in. The losses and indignities associated with the period, including the loss of their property, unpaid salaries and pensions of former members of the KNIL and employees in the colonial administration, as well as the racial distinctions between *totoks* and Indo-Europeans in Dutch government support for repatriates, left many struggling financially, bitter about their cold welcome in the Netherlands and nostalgic about the Indies.²⁷

The hardships and injustices suffered by members of the Indisch community during and after the Japanese occupation constitute a key element in the history and memory of the Indisch community. The Japanese occupation not only constituted the beginning of the end of their life in the Dutch East Indies, but Japanese internment policies also disrupted the colonial racial structure and the Indisch population's position within it by exempting them from internment based on their Asian ancestry and thereby differentiating them from other Europeans. Furthermore, Japanese internment policies generated gendered experiences of war. While most men were interned or fought at the front, women were surrounded by Japanese, with relationships with Japanese men seen as a unique source of protection and support. It is from these conflicting experiences and memories that Indisch-Japanese children emerge.

Indisch-Japanese Relationships

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to judge the exact nature of the relationships between Indisch women and Japanese men which resulted in the birth of children. However, it is important to differentiate these women from the so-called "comfort women" (Jpn. *ianfu*, a euphemism for women forced into a prostitution corps) who have drawn much attention in recent debates about

27 Leeuwen, 2008: 39ff.

the contacts between local women and Japanese men in the territories occupied by Imperial Japan during the war.²⁸ Unlike “comfort women” (a phenomenon that also existed in the Dutch East Indies), most of the known mothers of Indisch-Japanese offspring experienced a relatively long-term relationship with a single Japanese man, and several even had more than one child with the same father. Most of these mothers also knew the name of and sometimes other details about the father of their child, or kept mementos and photos. Relationships were individual and took place in secret (i.e. not in brothels or so-called “comfort stations”) and typically involved men who had the opportunity to interact with the local population by virtue of their position. This included high ranking officers, plain-clothes secret police agents (*kempeitai*) or civilians working in transport and distribution or as technical experts. While some mothers claimed to have been forced into a relationship, others considered their Japanese partner their first love even after remarriage and named their children after their father even after the Japanese surrender.

Regardless of a mother’s own perspective, the presence of a half-Japanese child after the war created difficult circumstances. Many mothers were faced with the loss of fathers and brothers or had family members returning from Japanese internment who, needless to say, often had difficulty with the presence of a half-Japanese child. Another problem was that most mothers appear to have married very soon after the end of hostilities and invariably to an Indisch man with a recent experience as a POW. These circumstances often resulted in tense and sometimes abusive relationships within the family for Japanese children and their mothers. The circumstances of their upbringing put a significant strain on parent-child and family relations—a strain which became a significant feature in Indisch-Japanese lives.

Indisch-Japanese Descendants

The Indisch-Japanese who are the focus of this chapter are members of Vereniging JIN, a Japanese Indonesian-Dutch Descendants’ Association established in 1991 in the Netherlands. Founded with the goal of establishing a community and supporting interaction among Japanese descendants, its activities have included the promotion of a better understanding of their existence in Dutch society as well as support in searching for their Japanese fathers.²⁹ Two

²⁸ Ars, 2000. Cf. Yoon’s article in this book.

²⁹ The sister organization Sakura Foundation, which pursues similar goals, is not captured in this specific research.

earlier studies have already examined certain elements of the life stories of Indisch-Japanese descendants, which this chapter seeks to extend by examining the identity formation of Indisch-Japanese in greater detail.³⁰

Beginnings

One of the main points of departure in the identity formation of Indisch-Japanese is that they have no certainty about their origins. While a life story might normally start with a note about one's birth and parentage, in the Indisch-Japanese case, the time and circumstances of their conception and birth are among the most difficult and sensitive topics. Most of them grew up with no knowledge of their Japanese father. Even if they were aware that their father was Japanese, they typically lacked fundamental details such as his name and information on their looks and character, and were often left uncertain about the exact circumstances of their parents' encounter. Was it a forced relationship? Did he love my mother? Despite the urge to know and break the silence, however, they were keenly aware that the identity of their father was something that should not be talked about. As a consequence, their image of Japan and the Japanese largely took shape in the context of everyday encounters in their family and community.

Due to the fact that their own mothers had a mixed heritage including Indonesian family origins, the Indisch-Japanese vary significantly in their looks and complexion. Nevertheless, some felt picked out because of their looks, mainly because of the stark differences in their own and their siblings looks. Richard,³¹ for instance, stood out within his family since his half-siblings where of a much lighter complexion and had blond and not black hair like himself. He says: "People at the football club . . . older boys would come and ask [me and my brother]: "Hey, you guys are brothers, right?" "Yes, we are brothers." "Yeah, but you don't resemble each other." . . . I had never thought about it. You wash yourself and look at yourself in the mirror. But I had never thought about it, that we may not be brothers, or not full brothers. . . . [So I would say] 'Our grandmother was Chinese, and you can see that after three generations, that's why I am slit-eyed.'"

Richard's remark is notable not only because he could not see differences in his own and his siblings' appearance—his was not an isolated case—but also because of the common paradigm he used to explain away his features—a Chinese ancestor. This was by no means an unusual reaction. Ron, who was

30 Buchheim, 2008; Huijs-Watanuki, 2006.

31 To protect the privacy of individuals featured in this essay, all names have been changed to psudonyms.

the only one among my interviewees to consider himself to have come from a white colonial family offers the following concept of whiteness: "My mother was a typical colonial woman. Her family remained white all this time, well, there are some [family members] who had a bit of color, but that was suppressed, because, it's not really, you know, they were all primarily white." Color in this case is not so much a matter of appearance but the ability or willingness to see it. In this context Asian features are considered a genetic aberration caused by extra-marital affairs that should not take away from the principal "whiteness" of the family. Despite glaring differences between themselves and their siblings, therefore, many Indisch-Japanese could not see them.

The inability to recognize Japanese features in one's appearance in the Indisch-Japanese case can, however, also be understood as a consequence of the hateful and threatening reactions their features could evoke. Their Japanese looks were something they may not have dared to see. Richard describes a typical encounter:

There was a family and [a boy in our neighborhood], who was two years older than me. I played on the street . . . that's how we met each other. And after two times . . . he would say, 'Come to my house.' He went in and his father was sitting there [in the living room]. His father was also in the military, or an ex-soldier, he had been in New Guinea, and fought in Korea . . . So I said: 'Hello Sir.' And he stared at me. He looked like he wanted to throw me into his soup. Or like he wanted to eat me. And after that, I didn't really go to [the boy's] house anymore, it was over. . . .

Unaware of why some people reacted in such fierce fashion, Richard felt haunted, and questioned for something he had no knowledge about. He says: "I have that [feeling] quite frequently. I stand somewhere, waiting for my wife and children, and all of the sudden someone gives me this mean stare. 'What have I done?' That's the first thing I think, 'did I do something wrong?'" It was only once he discovered his Japanese roots in his fifties that things began to fall into place. Where Asian features in colonial times were a matter of extra-marital affairs that were to be kept in secret, Japanese features took on very different dimensions after the occupation. Their features could not only evoke threatening reactions but their racial heritage also made them apparently culpable for the deeds of their unknown fathers.

The historical weight associated with Japanese features had a deep impact on many children's self-perception. Even without knowing whether they had Japanese parentage, they felt accused, rejected and inferior. Mary, for instance,

was frequently bullied by one of her aunts, who would sit behind her and whisper 'dirty Jap!' and point out her Japanese eyes. She says:

As a child, I always pulled at my nose. Because I didn't want, I was afraid of, I didn't have slit-eyes at all, but I felt, because I was told every time, I thought if I kept pulling it, the nose would become longer. Yes, terrible. You get a real inferiority complex from it. And that stays, until now. But well, that's because of my family.

The negative connotations associated with Japan during the war were further reinforced by what she learned at school. Mary continues:

[When] I came to the Netherlands, when I was eight or nine years old. I learned [at school] that [the Japanese] are cruel people. I didn't know anything else about Japan. I only knew about [Japan at] war. And war, what's war? That's about those cruel people. . . . I thought: Oh, how terrible. And women were raped and all. That's all I was told. I knew nothing else.

Race is not merely about appearance but also about the beliefs and assumptions attached to perceived physical differences. What made the children stand out, then, was not their appearance as such but rather the identification of difference and associations with Japan within their families and communities. Their appearance came to matter because of the meanings produced by the adults' threatening looks, cursing, and narratives of wartime cruelty, leading to a deep sense of inadequacy and exclusion within their own families and communities. Whether they really had Japanese features and ancestry was not the most central issue. Rather, the mere suggestion of having Japanese blood made children feel haunted and defenseless.

Such attitudes about Japan also deeply affected their most immediate family relations. Even within families, their Japanese origins could cause cold or hostile reactions. To begin with, some children were not raised by their mothers, particularly if the mother remarried and her new partner rejected the possibility of raising a Japanese child. Some grandmothers took care of the children instead of their mothers and provided a caring environment, telling their grandchildren to be proud of their father. After all, all of them had Indonesian or Indo-European backgrounds and themselves grew up in the borderlands of two communities. Others, however, mourned the death of their own husbands or sons and had conflicting feelings about the presence of a

half-Japanese grandchild. As a consequence, a number of children not only had a strained relationship with their mothers, but also felt little affection from their guardians. Mary, who was also brought up by her grandmother, explains: "My granny never held, cuddled, or kissed me, and of course neither did my mother . . . I always noticed that she was very strict towards me, and when she had to sit with me for two hours, I would usually cry the second hour, I couldn't bear her presence." Their Japanese origins, in short, could make children feel alienated from their own families.

If a mother remarried and took her offspring with her, another problem was often their relationship with their stepfather. Notably, some Indisch-Japanese children had very good relationships with their stepfathers, and did not see any reason to question whether they were their biological fathers. Geert's stepfather, for example, had been tortured during Japanese internment but never laid a hand on his half-Japanese stepson. But even then children often felt that something was not quite right. Herbert, who had a cordial relationship with his stepfather, notes "I always felt [that there was something unspoken], I always felt the difference, without knowing why." In some cases, children also felt that they were the target of parental conflicts. Helga's stepfather, for instance, had adopted her, but as she says "He was never there for me. As I grew older, he would shout at me 'And you are the child of a Japanese!' See, in his anger, he would take it out on me. Then my mother would defend and support me. That marriage also broke up. . . . I carry his name, but he never behaved like a father." The presence of a stepfather not only meant that a father had to consciously invest in a relationship with a step-child, but also that the children's Japanese origins could also further complicate these relationships by making them the focus of family conflicts.

In other cases, children felt they were treated unfairly and scapegoated by their family, and this caused them to wonder why they were treated in such fashion. A number of children also suffered serious physical violence and abuse. Bertram, for instance, explained that his stepfather's wartime experience had robbed him of a clear sense of the "boundaries of civility." He reports:

My older half-sister, she saw everything. So: I am not lying. She knows very well [what happened]. She was older than me, and tried to protect me—what can a little toddler do against an adult man? Nothing. . . . I actually don't want to, err, talk about the maltreatment I suffered, because then . . . no, actually we have to talk about that. For example, Dutch, he would put a Dutch textbook in front of me, and there was a word, say: emmer [bucket]. That's the word 'emmer' and if you always spoke in Indonesian until then, it could easily become pronounced as 'ember.' And whenever I said it that way, . . . then he would hit me on the same

spot [on my head], with a [metal] petrol lighter, the whole evening. And my mother would sit on the sofa again in tears. 'Dad, stop it' [she would cry. But I had to go on reading. At least 30 times [whenever I made a mistake], with that lighter. You can feel that very well. It's like a drop of water, which falls every five minutes on the same spot. And he says: 'you are stupid, and will remain stupid. Go to bed.' And the next day, the same would happen, and life went on.

Despite this experience, Bertram states that he never hated his stepfather, tried to empathize with his condition and even took care of him in his old age. Instead, he appears to question his own story. Rather than asserting the pain he suffered, he feels the urge to back up his story with the possible testimony of his sister and is hesitant to relate his grievances, as if he felt guilty and illegitimate in making such accusations. His story underlines the idea that Indisch-Japanese children could experience the differentiation, injustice, conflicts and violence surrounding their presence as a reflection of their own guilt. The fierce and hateful images of "the Japanese," the arguments and conflicts between parents and the contradictions and taboos surrounding their parentage, as we can see in these stories, made many fearful and ashamed of being associated with the Japanese and unjustified in defending their existence. That is to say, children were not only struggling with racial stereotypes which made them feel inadequate and inferior, but keenly felt that their appearance and blood-relation to Japan made them culpable for the deeds of their forefathers.

Disclosures

An important moment in Indisch-Japanese children's identity formation was the disclosure of the news that their father was Japanese. While the suspicion may have been present for some time, the moment they were explicitly told that their father was Japanese made children directly confront their Japanese roots and the direct consequences of being Japanese for their self-perception. One may expect that after years of secrecy and taboo, the acknowledgment of their Japanese origins might come as a moment of relief. After all, they had been pondering the neighbors' reactions and their treatment by some family members for years. Their reactions, however, were in most cases initially quite muted. The news did answer some questions but posed others, and, above all, did not alter the negative image of Japan they had grown up with. They were not just struggling with questions about their parentage, but, more importantly, with hostile attitudes towards Japan and the Japanese.

The ways in which the children came to know that they had a Japanese father varied. A number of mothers informed their children when they were considered old enough to know (usually twelve years of age). In other cases, children



FIGURE 21.1 *H. knew since he was a child that he has a Japanese father. Photograph courtesy of Miyuki Okuyama.*³²

stumbled on the issue or were informed by their parents when getting married (which required the submission of a birth certificate). In yet other cases, children became confronted with questions about their childhood because of health problems later in life. In other cases, the revelation was triggered by life events such as a divorce or the death of a loved one which prompted a search for their roots.

But even when the truth was finally told, their reactions were often hardly enthusiastic. Bertram, who was told about his Japanese father by his mother at the age of twelve simply avoided the news and left the room before she had finished with her story. Some were evasive even when offered the chance to talk

32 The photographic images are intended as visual illustrations, and the stories of the depicted individuals are not directly featured in the essay.

as adults. Herbert, for instance, was asked by his stepfather to have "a private talk" before Herbert's wedding. He says:

So we went to the bedroom, and I had a hunch of what it was, because I knew of course that I was born before they got married. I knew that alright. But I thought, well, it was in Indonesia. I mean, you know, maybe, a sort of shotgun marriage—[a child that was born before they could get married], you know, in those days, it was even common in the Netherlands. There were many children born before the parents were married. So I thought, well, it's not that important. So I told [my stepfather]: "Dad, listen, . . ." You know, he wanted to tell me something, but, I say: "Dad, listen, whether you are my biological father or not doesn't make a difference for me. Because I only have one father, and that's you." That was it. . . . I just didn't want to bother with it, I was busy starting my own family and my career.

Given the long silence surrounding the issue and having their own life ahead of them, the children acutely felt that knowing the 'truth' could hardly come with comforting new insights. Even if the status quo came with many questions, many preferred not to know what else could be in store. As their stories show, the discovery of having a Japanese father could indeed be traumatic because most had grown up with the war memories of family members who had been interned and with wartime footage of Japan as the enemy. Herbert continues:

When I was 48 [I knew for the first time that I had a Japanese father]. That happened because I had a serious burn out at work, some people thought I had a stroke. The same symptoms. I had something with my heart, but it turned out later not to be so serious. So I was sent to all kinds of specialists, the cardiologist, the internist, whatever, and nobody knew what I had. And then at one moment they said, it must be something "between my ears" so I got a referral to a psychiatrist. And with that psychiatrist I had psychological sessions, and he told me: "you have the personality of a Japanese warrior, a samurai." That's how he called it and what he told me. I thought: "What's that supposed to mean?"

So I thought back to age 24, when my [step]father had wanted to tell me something. I was now 48, and I called my parents and said: "Dad, Mom, would you be able to come over tonight?" and they came to our house. I explained the problem to them, and I said: "Mom, listen, I really want to know whether Dad is my real father, yes or no." And only then did I learn of the big family secret. Everyone knew it, except for me, that's how it is, that's how it often happens, the family secret, it is always a

secret for the one . . . and the rest of the family all know it. That's how it also happened in my case. So I learned of the family secret, that my father was Japanese. And I had to swallow hard, yeah.

Because until then, until that moment, Japan was, I don't want to say, the enemy. But it was the enemy in some ways. What I mean, when I looked at a war film, . . . it was great that the Japanese lost the war, that kind of thing. Now, I look at these films differently, at least in a more nuanced way. And then you have to discover all of a sudden that you have another side, which you didn't know about. There are many aspects of it which I didn't know about, now I know why I am different from my brothers.

The children's discovery of Japanese origins was often deeply troubling because it confirmed their association with a country and people they had been taught to despise. While some suspicions and secrets were resolved, they were replaced by a contradiction: they were the child of the enemy. Richard, for instance, was finally able to find out who his father was after much probing within the family. But when he was finally told he had a Japanese father, he was in utter shock. He says: "That was really something. I had real difficulties with [the news that I had a Japanese father]. But it's understandable, my stepfather was always talking about the "Japs" [in a derogatory fashion], and I had seen what was needed in films etc. I really didn't want to be Japanese." It generated a deeply conflicted sense of self: now they knew who they were, but their sense of self was bound to a negative image that they were unable to replace.

What made the disclosure of their Japanese background particularly unsettling was that although they now knew that their father was Japanese, this knowledge provided few answers and did not offer a replacement for the sense of self that had been disrupted by the news. What was his name? What was he doing in Indonesia? What kind of person was he? Do I resemble him? While the breaking of the silence surrounding their fathers opened up a new avenue towards discussing and thinking about their existence and identity, most were left with more questions than answers and no alternative story to challenge the wartime discourses on Japan they had grown up with.

Seeking Japan

The real turning point in most stories was thus not the discovery of the truth that they were Japanese, but rather the moment in which the children began to question the accepted truths about Japan and stereotypes of the Japanese by taking ownership of their identity. This involved not only the collection of information, but also a negotiation of the way in which their existence



FIGURE 21.2 *T. did not know of her Japanese background until she was an adult. Her father gave her the name Keiko. Photograph courtesy of Miyuki Okuyama.*

as Indisch-Japanese could be talked about. More concretely, collaboration between Japanese war veterans in Japan, and organizations of Indisch-Japanese descendants in the Netherlands have made the search for fathers a real possibility and many have taken advantage of the possibility to find out more. In a number of cases they were able to trace and even meet their fathers and families in Japan. After years of silence, father searches offered them a glimpse of hope towards finally completing the puzzle, and re-constituting the meaning of their Japanese roots in new ways. What makes “father searches” special is that they provide a unique outlook on a new source of meaning of their identity as Japanese. If the children had felt alienated from their families or communities because of hostile views about Japan, the possibility of the father being a “good man” could provide them with a counter image that would positively confirm a child’s identity as a Japanese. In short, the search for their

fathers offered the possibility of challenging wartime discourses on Japan and constituting the meaning of having a Japanese father in new ways.

The pursuit of more information about their fathers, however, was a complex affair. Despite the eagerness to find out more, father searches also come with the legitimate fear that the historical evidence would confirm the negative wartime image: he could have been convicted for war crimes. As many fathers were members of the *kempeitai* (who could more easily mingle with civilians, unlike soldiers), this was a real possibility. Richard's first encounter with information about his father, for instance, was his court record from the International War Crimes Tribunal of the Far East, which is available in Dutch archives. He sums up the record: "After the war, all members of the *kempeitai* were gathered and had to go in front of the military war tribunal for judgment regarding war crimes. My father was part of the police division of the *kempeitai*, he had political and logistical tasks, . . . and he had responsibility for it. . . . I am not sure whether you have read the reports of the things that were done. Since his report was in a book, from which I got one page, I was able to read what the men before and after him had done. And I read what kind of practices they used in order to squeeze information out of people." His was not an isolated case. The euphoria of having found information about one's long lost father therefore could be bittersweet.

The pursuit of more information, moreover, is complicated as it is often dependent on the cooperation of family members. Since the children themselves could not know about the times before their conception, they had to rely on family members who had withheld the information for decades to reconstruct the story and provide more specific information about their father. But pressing the mothers, uncles and aunts who had witnessed their father for more information could also result in family tensions.³³ Geert had an aunt who had told him some things, but the way she told the story also made him suspicious. He explains:

I am always held back from asking, how it actually was. I am still struggling with it. I want to know, but also don't. There are many things that hold me back. I am curious, but also not. I am conflicted. That's because the person who knows a lot is not open towards me. Or maybe not? Does not provide enough information, and holds too much back. . . . To interrogate her like that, means that I put her in a shameful position. I would humiliate her. And how can you do that as a younger person to an older person? You are not supposed to do that. . . . Maybe she is ashamed

33 Stuyvenberg & Liesker, 2010.

because she had to stay silent all this time. Something seemed to make her feel uncomfortable. . . . I felt aversion. Because of that, I stopped trying to go deeper. It's really unpleasant.

Geert's story illustrates the complexity of finding out more information about his own past. Obtaining information about his father was not simply about the collection of facts through family narratives. It was rather a question of negotiating family relationships in order to uncover a story that had wider implications for the family as a whole. While eager to know, pushing for more information felt like an imposition to Geert as it challenged family relations and a family secret. The disclosure of his father's identity could also be considered a possible source of shame for the family—after all, his mother had given birth, unmarried, to a Japanese child. The search for his Japanese past was thus not simply difficult because it could reveal an individual's silenced past; it was met with apprehension because it could alter the family's and community's accepted narrative of the Japanese occupation.

In addition, father search "success stories" were not just about a personal quest to find out more about one's individual family origins, but could similarly be seen as partaking in a wider negotiation of the history, memory and representation of the Japanese Occupation and the Japanese children's place within it. One particularly striking story is that of a daughter who found her father, and whose encounter was filmed by a Dutch television crew. She notes: "My father said himself: is that ok [to have this all over the media]? I said, 'so what'? I felt: I have found him. I am half-Japanese, and the whole world can know it. I was so happy . . . it was as if doors were opening. I had always locked things away, I wasn't able to be who I am. And now, all of the sudden I could say: Boom! Here I am! . . . I know the man, I felt freer. I am not ashamed of being Japanese anymore because I know everything now. . . . I didn't just do it for myself. . . . I thought I would do it for the other children, because they are in the same shoes as me. I will see *that it becomes possible to finally talk about it*, for the outside world, I did it for that." Her courage in stepping into the media limelight is remarkable given the silence and taboo that continues to make Indisch-Japanese invisible. While the Dutch media seized on the cliché of the reunion of a long-lost father and daughter, the publicity empowered her to make the subject of Indisch-Japanese children visible and discussable in public. Indeed, her case inspired others, and led to a growing number of Indisch-Japanese searching for their roots.

The culminating moment for many even if they could not eventually find their fathers, has been the opportunity to visit Japan, which allowed the Indisch-Japanese to formulate an alternative image and story of Japan and the

Japanese for the first time. Since 1997, the Japanese government has granted Indisch-Japanese the opportunity to travel to Japan as part of a reconciliation program originally meant for former Dutch POWs. Their travel reports testify to the enormous impact of these trips on their identity, sense of self and image of Japan. The keyword in most of these reports is that the trip was like “coming home.” Richard notes: “For me, the only place where I feel safe is at home. But it’s strange, I still find it strange that when I am in Japan, I feel at home. Incredible. My [Japanese] father didn’t want to see me, I don’t speak the language, I was not born there. But I feel at home.” What does “home” mean in this case? How can a person feel “at home” in a place he or she has never set foot in? “Home” may be understood in this case in its more abstract sense: a place to feel safe and free in. Even if there is no actual familiarity with Japan as a country, the trip was, at the very least, a rare occasion to visit a place in which being Japanese is legitimate—where one does not have to be fearful of anti-Japanese sentiments or hide one’s identity. Resemblance also often played an important role. Many could see themselves in the happy children they encountered in an elementary school they visited and were struck by the fact that they were often assumed to be Japanese in shops and restaurants. Being recognized as Japanese was a rare positive confirmation of their identity which provided a unique sense of belonging—they fit right in.

The trips also allowed participants to develop an alternative image of Japan and the Japanese and counter the wartime image of the “cruel Japanese” with the kind and polite treatment by shopkeepers. Mary notes: “I love Japan. It’s incredible. The people there. Here in Holland, I really started to dislike people here. They are so rude and impolite. Particularly the day I came back from Japan. And you come here, and go to a shop, and you are barked at like that, and I think: ‘Horrible.’ In Japan, there you are always served well, good service . . . the client is king.” Whereas associations with Japan had always made her feel inferior, the trip made it possible to assert the superiority of Japanese culture and behavior. These trips undoubtedly had a healing impact on many in creating a sense of safety and belonging, and in making it possible to contrast wartime images of Japan with the experience of a modern and successful country with polite shopkeepers. Notably, their story of the “real” Japan did not question the idea that race determines one’s personal character, but rather seized on it: using the same logic as a point of departure, they happily aligned themselves with the Japanese who made Japan into a modern and highly successful society and economy.

Conclusion

What can we conclude about the nature of race as a concept in light of the identity struggles of Indisch-Japanese children? The experiences of the Indisch-Japanese offer an intriguing example of a group who grew up without any direct contact to Japan, Japanese language or culture, or, for that matter, their Japanese fathers, and largely even without the knowledge of having Japanese ancestry. Yet, the mere suspicion that they may be partially Japanese had a deep impact on their self-perception and life experience. Being Japanese in this case has no direct relation to ethnic or cultural traits. Instead, it has been heavily shaped by the wartime experiences of their families and communities as well as their memories and discourses about Japan at war. What is significant about these discourses is not just the racial stereotype they construe but also the general understanding of race they promote. While whiteness had no clear relation to complexion and physical appearance during colonial times since the Japanese were included among white Europeans, the aftermath of the Japanese occupation meant that supposedly Japanese features such as slit-eyes, black hair or bent legs became an unquestionable indicator of their "race" and a symbol of the cruel deeds of wartime Japan. A partially Japanese appearance was equated with a cruel personality that made even young children feel guilty and presumably capable of the brutal actions of a war they had never witnessed.

These assumptions about the nature of their racial heritage deeply affected the children's self-perception and their subsequent identity as Indisch-Japanese. They were not only conscious of the acts committed by the nation their fathers belonged to, but internalized the idea that, as Japanese, they were by nature similar in character to the wartime Japanese experienced by their families and communities. Being identified as Japanese consequently generated a deeply conflicted sense of self, as it tied them to the racial stereotype of an enemy they had learned to despise.

As their struggles to come to terms with their Japanese identity show, the main issue at stake was not the racialized assumptions about the Japanese alone. Rather, what was at stake was how being Japanese could be thought of or talked about within their own families and communities. To talk about Japan and the Japanese in more positive ways and as part of the family heritage and wartime experience not only required alternative images and information about Japan, but also a negotiation of family and community narratives of the Japanese occupation. Recognizing the presence of an Indisch-Japanese child

could “taint” a mother’s reputation and alter the accepted story of the family’s experience and position in relation to wartime Japan. It challenges the enemy image of Japan as the racial Other that community narratives rely on to constitute their own identity and position within Dutch society. Indisch-Japanese identities are therefore not about who the Japanese are and whether their race has implications for their personality. Rather, the struggle over what it means to be Japanese is about the recognizing the wartime experiences of women and children and negotiating their rightful place within their community’s history and memory of World War II.

The “Amerasian” Knot: Transpacific Crossings of “GI Babies” from Korea to the United States

W. Taejin Hwang

In a *New York Times* article published in 1968, Nobel laureate Pearl S. Buck spoke of her ongoing efforts “to spark interest in the children” whom she called “Amerasians.”¹ Buck defined Amerasians as the progeny of Asian mothers

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1 The term “Amerasian” denotes people born to American and Asian parents in the Asia-Pacific region after the Second World War, and it was popularly assumed that American military

and American military personnel who constituted “an entirely new group of human beings” living in a “‘no man’s land’ . . . a citizen of no country . . . with no rights of any kind.” This eminent writer entreated that “responsible Americans” help Amerasians realize “that his father’s people have not forgotten him!” In especially advocating the transpacific migration of Amerasians to the United States, Buck also promulgated her message of integration—that these children would “grow to become the living examples of the common bond that can exist between East and West.”² By the 1980s, efforts like Buck’s and other campaigns by “responsible Americans” culminated in two immigration laws enacted by the United States in order to address the so-called Amerasian problem.

In tracing the Amerasian Immigration Act of 1982, the first of the two, this chapter examines the connection between transpacific discourses and their corresponding policies—on how and for what purpose the two nations constructed their respective representations of Amerasians and grappled with the question of responsibility. For the United States, these immigration openings were intended for those born in Korea and Vietnam and as responses to the perceived American “responsibility” for its cold war military engagements. The discourse surrounding the laws was also ensconced in the rhetoric of “rescuing” the “outcasts” of Asia and integrating them into the multiracial United States as “our children.” The disentanglement of the Amerasian “knot” through these immigration reforms, argued as an act of both humanity and patriotism, was thus constructed in the nexus of American responsibility and rescue; opening its immigration gates for “GI babies” also offered an opportunity to reassert America’s image and imaginary as an exceptional multicultural nation.

For Korea, the existence of *honhyeola*, literally “mixed-blood child,” challenged the identity of a nation-state that defined itself as racially and ethnically homogeneous as well as reminded Korea of the unwanted evidence of the national subordination of women’s bodies for state building. During the cold war decades, The South Korean state and society considered the emigration of the mixed-race population to the United States by both inter-country adoptions and adult Amerasian emigrations as the “true solution” to the “problem.” Amerasians, therefore, personified a “knot”—both the problem

personnel fathered a majority of Amerasians. The term also implies a racial mixture because the American fathers were presumed to be non-Asian. It does not, however, encompass all the racially-mixed persons of American and Asian parents, but rather specifically refers to those born within this historical context. Its use here, therefore, is recognized as problematic but historically appropriate nonetheless.

2 “Pearl Buck at 76: More Books to Write, More Children to Help,” *New York Times*, 7 December 1968. Display Ad 110, *New York Times*, June 1967; Display Ad 407, *New York Times*, 22 September 1968; Display Ad, *New York Times*, 25 May 1969.

and a solution. They not only represented the "byproducts" of cold war military containment, but also embodied the mixing particular to American militarism in Asia. However, transpacific crossings of "G1 babies" eventually integrated and reinforced the "tense and tender ties"³ between the United States and its cold war allies in Asia.

"An Act of Both Humanity and Patriotism": The Amerasian Immigration Act of 1982⁴

Reverend Alfred Keane, a Maryknoll priest and the director of St. Vincent's Home for Amerasians in Korea, spent three months of late 1977 and early 1978 in Washington DC advocating for Amerasian immigration legislation. When the initial bill authored by Stewart McKinney, a Republican Representative from Connecticut, did not garner much support, Reverend Keane went on a speaking tour to raise public awareness. "I went down South," he recounted, "I went through midlands, I talked to anyone who had a local radio station, I talked to two people, I talked to ten people."⁵ Like Pearl Buck, Father Keane devoted himself to bringing to American attention the Amerasian "plight." And Reverend Keane's tireless labors seemed to have stirred enough interest by the early 1980s. McKinney's Amerasian Immigration bill (H.R. 808) had 140 cosponsors by the time of its first hearing in November of 1981.⁶ During the House and Senate hearings, legislators discussed the Amerasian bill as both a "humanitarian act" of rescuing "half-Americans" from racist Asia as well as a "patriotic act" of Americans taking responsibility for the consequences of its cold war policies. The proponents of the bill warned that a failure to resolve this issue would undermine America's prestige in the international community.

Introduced in the midst of economic recession and major efforts to check illegal immigration, the Amerasian Immigration Act embodied a compromise between the pressure for immigration control and a compulsion to act upon what had been deemed an American obligation. The conservatism of the first act reflected the public's anti-immigration sentiments fueled by continuing economic frustrations from the 1970s' stagflation and the on-going legislative efforts to reform immigration law in the early 1980s. According to a 1980 Gallup-Newsweek poll, two-thirds of Americans wanted a complete suspension of

3 Stoler, 2006: 24.

4 "Coming Home," 1982.

5 "Priest Fights on Behalf of Half-American Children," 1982.

6 US House, *Immigration Reform, Part 2* (17 November 1981): 899.

immigration until unemployment fell below five percent.⁷ The anti-immigration sentiments also manifested in rising violence against Asian-Americans, scapegoated for the trade imbalance with Asian countries and targeted for Southeast Asian refugee resettlement problems, such as competition between refugees and other groups for jobs and low-income housing.⁸ Given this milieu, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), introduced in 1981, attempted to close the illegal “back door” to undocumented migrants while slightly opening the “front door” to accommodate more legal immigration.⁹ Attentive to this public sentiment, the Amerasian Immigration Act, introduced as a minor piece of this omnibus IRCA, proposed to grant visa preference to the “sons and daughters” of American citizens who had served in active duty with the United States Armed Forces or the United Nations in Korea, Vietnam, Thailand and Laos. The bill sought to extend the first and fourth family reunification priorities under the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act to Amerasians as the progeny of American citizens despite the fact that they were not expected to reunite with their paternal relatives.¹⁰ It also proposed to use such evidence as “photos, letters, proof of past financial support from a U.S. father, local testimony and other pertinent information” to prove paternity “beyond a reasonable doubt.” The bill limited the eligibility from the Korean War (1950) to the date of the legislative enactment (1982) in order to prevent the potential for “infinite” Amerasian immigration and also explicitly excluded claims from Japan and the Philippines—allied nations with continued American military garrisoning and large numbers of Amerasians.¹¹ In addition, the act required a five-year financial sponsor for each Amerasian arriving to the United States.

7 US House, *Immigration Reform, Part 2* (19 November 1981): 941.

8 Another 1980 poll indicated that only 21 percent believed that Southeast Asian refugees should be encouraged to move into their communities, while one-fourth believed that “America had too many Asians.” “Violence Against Asians: The Draft Report,” *AsianWeek* 7: 15–16.

9 Zolberg, 1990: 320–323.

10 Based on the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, which introduced hemispheric quotas to replace the National Origins Act of 1924. Immigration priority was subject to seven levels of preference based chiefly on an applicant’s relationship to American citizens: 1) Unmarried sons or daughters of American citizen; 2) Spouse of unmarried children of permanently resident aliens; 3) Skilled professionals possessing skills needed in the United States; 4) Married children of American citizens; 5) Siblings of American citizens; 6) Unskilled workers; 7) Refugees.

11 On the other hand, the application of the bill was extended to include the progeny of non-military and non-government American citizens as well as to add “physical appearance

Overall, H.R. 808 sought to "recognize the legitimate and long-ignored immigration claims of certain children of U.S. citizens" while not increasing overall immigration, preventing the potential for fraud through paternity substantiation and not demanding a significant financial expenditure from the United States government.¹²

Despite its conservatism, the bill nevertheless provided the United States with a means of addressing a compelling "humanitarian" issue. The panel testifying on behalf of the bill as well as media reports employed the rhetoric of national responsibility and shame by repeatedly contrasting the American "hypocrisy" with the "French model." Reverend Keane contended that "Other great countries which have been active in Southeast Asia, such as France, took these children back with them," and rhetorically posed, "Are these countries greater than our own?" A special to the *New York Times* from Vietnam cautioned that the "difference between the two countries' current policies toward the children they left behind are even more closely followed here than in the United States."¹³ A *Washington Post* columnist concurred that the contrast with the French policies "shames us most as a nation."¹⁴ "Everybody talks about the discrimination in Asia against these children, but we discriminate against them completely and entirely," stated Reverend Keane, and claimed this hypocrisy "the American tragedy."¹⁵ Representative Barney Frank of Massachusetts also implored, "Doesn't society, doesn't one of the wealthiest, most powerful societies in the world have some responsibilities for problems created by its citizens who are in another country in pursuance of national policy?" Representative Patricia Schroeder of Colorado found it disturbing that "the military can go into foreign countries and do whatever they want, and they won't be responsible" and likened it to an "imperial America." She elaborated that the American government's unwillingness to take responsibility "communicate[d] all the

of the applicant" to the list of evidence that could be used for verifying paternity. Senate, *Amerasian Immigration Proposals*: 8–10.

12 US House, *Immigration Reform, Part 2* (17 November 1981): 903–904.

13 "Vietnam's Amerasians Drift in Sea of Indifference," 1982.

14 "Bring Home Our Children of War," 1981.

15 Reverend Keane explained that when the French left Indochina in 1954, they took 25,000 "of their children," back with them, put them in foster care, paid for their education, and guaranteed that those who chose to remain with their Vietnamese mothers would be allowed the option of French citizenship until the age of 21. US House, *Immigration Reform, Part 2* (17 November 1981): 901, 933–934, 911.

wrong message[s] to the world.”¹⁶ The Amerasian legislation thus brought the intersection of immigration reform, cold war legacy, and concerns for the nation’s international image to attention.

At the same time, the legislative discourse surrounding the Amerasian legislation was also infused with the rhetoric of “rescue.” During the Senate discussion that followed the House hearing in June 1982, Asian and American “barbarism” was also repeatedly juxtaposed. “The United States is considered barbaric and is ridiculed because we abandon our offspring,” wrote one supporter in a letter submitted to the hearing. Father Keane agreed that the “passage of this bill is of the utmost importance to us as a nation as well, because it allows us to be free from one criticism that . . . we are a country of barbarians who would abandon even its own flesh and blood.” Keane argued that this bill would remedy this barbaric image of America and reinstate the United States as “a nation of truth” in the eyes of the world. This debate on barbarism was double-sided, however, in that while acknowledging American responsibility in creating this problem, the discussion also blamed Asia, highlighting Asia’s “backward” traditions and racist practices in particular.

Cosponsor Senator Jeremiah Denton contrasted the discrimination and cruelty, “grounded in Asian culture,” to Americans, “who were just trying to help others from other nations and love their neighbors as they loved themselves.” Another cosponsor of the bill, Senator Carl Levin of Michigan, concurred that America offered a better home than “the homogenous societies in Asia.” Even Commissioner Alan Nelson of the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS), which had earlier opposed the bill, agreed that “there has been an intolerable situation in Asia” and believed that the lives of Amerasians would improve in America since the United States was “amazing in its receptivity to accepting people of different backgrounds and cultures.”¹⁷ All seemed to agree that the United States offered a welcome haven for Asia’s mistreated and unwanted. More than serving its most obvious purpose of garnering sympathy, the emphasized rhetoric of a “cruel” and “intolerable” situation in a “homogeneous” Asia as opposed to a “receptive” and racially diverse America offered the United States an opportunity to reassert itself as a responsible democracy.

In the end, when understood as a humanitarian and moral obligation as well as a constructive step in international relations, Congress passed the Amerasian Immigration Act and President Ronald Reagan signed it into law on 22 October 1982. The *New York Times* declared the bill “an act of both humanity

16 US House, *Immigration Reform, Part 2* (17 November 1981): 879, 933, 876–877, 883.

17 US Senate, *Amerasian Immigration Proposals* (21 June 1982): 8–13, 20. 44–46, 65.

and patriotism."¹⁸ In signing the bill, President Reagan stated, "Instead of saying welcome to these children, we should say, 'Welcome home.'"¹⁹ Ensclosed in the rhetoric of rescue, responsibility, humanity and patriotism, the Amerasian Immigration Act of 1982 was both a policy response and an ideologically significant answer to a cold war legacy.

"Confucius' Outcasts":²⁰ The Korean Amerasian "Plight"

The rhetoric of rescue and responsibility was not a 1980s construct, but rather a reverberation of what had been articulated several decades earlier and can be summarized as follows: Rejected by their homogenous and traditional "motherland," Amerasians as the racial Other lived pitifully in the peripheries of Asian societies. The United States, however, bore part of the responsibility for this unfortunate situation since Americans fathered and then abandoned them to their marginal existence. The best way to untangle this East-West knot was for responsible Americans to welcome and integrate them to their progressive and multicultural "fatherland." The United States, moreover, had a vested interest in not having these "half-American" progeny throughout Asia as reminders of American irresponsibility; welcoming Amerasians would instead demonstrate American responsibility. Finally, cold war culturalists like Pearl Buck advocated that the mixed-race families formed via inter-country adoption would further transpacific integration and that Amerasians would be the symbolic and material knot that would tie Asia and the United States together.

Pearl Buck, a representative figure of these early advocates, founded the Welcome Home International Adoption Agency in 1949, which placed children with parents of different racial backgrounds for the first time, as well as the Pearl S. Buck Foundation in 1964 to provide financial and educational assistance to Amerasian children in several Asian countries. She also went on speaking tours and published the aforementioned series of soliciting advertisements in the *New York Times* throughout the 1960s. However, it was her popular writings that perhaps best captured Buck's mission of depicting the Amerasians' "plight" and advocating their adoption. To this end, Buck published a children's story entitled *Matthew, Mark, Luke and John* in 1966, and a novel, *The New Year*, in 1968.

18 "Coming Home," 1982.

19 "Reagan Approves Amerasian Access," 1982.

20 The phrase is taken from "Confucius' Outcasts," 1965.

Matthew, the protagonist of the illustrated children's book, lives under a bridge with Mark, Luke, and John. Abandoned by their respective mothers, these four homeless boys with biblical names are all "GI babies." The four boys witness American abundance and generosity for the first time at a Christmas party hosted by the American military in Korea for a local orphanage. But more than the overflowing gifts and food, it is the chance meeting with a GI named Sam that demonstrates American munificence. Sam becomes a father figure to them and eventually adopts Matthew. Although Matthew is "home at last," he does not forget about his three "brothers" left behind in Korea and wishes that they too were brought to the United States. Matthew shares his concern with his parents, who then invite their neighbors on Christmas day to hear Matthew describe the miserable world that he had left behind. People listened and with the promise that by next Christmas the remaining three boys would be adopted by their neighbors, Matthew sings, "Joy to the world."²¹ From a life of abandonment and destitution, Matthew is welcomed into a compassionate American home. Matthew, furthermore, clearly acts as the bridge that facilitates the transfer of information on the Amerasians' plight and their subsequent migration to the United States. Through the character of Matthew, Buck promulgates a hopeful message suggesting that Amerasians would grow up to become the "bridge" and "living examples" of the transpacific "bond."²²

In *The New Year*, Buck further advocates the international adoption of Amerasians and "amalgamated" families. *The New Year* tells the story of Chris, who, as a married American soldier in Korea, meets Soonya and has a son, Christopher, with her. Upon his return to the United States, Chris resumes his life with his wife, Laura, until a letter from Christopher makes it impossible for Chris to conceal his past. Laura embarks on a journey to Korea, where she finds her husband's son, convinces the child's mother to relinquish Christopher and brings him back to Pennsylvania. In order for Christopher to move to America, the natal Asian mother sacrifices any connections to her lover and her child. Soonya relinquishes her son to Laura and the only thing that she wants in return is money for a new start in life. The magnanimous American wife "frees" her husband's former mistress from a life of entertaining foreign soldiers by "purchasing" her son. This "transaction" evokes an all too familiar theme of doomed romance between a white Western man and Asian woman and the sacrifice made by the latter in the story's resolution.²³ In contrast, Western

21 Buck, 1966: 71, 77, 80.

22 Display Ad, *New York Times*, 25 May 1969.

23 *Madame Butterfly* (1904), *South Pacific* (1948), and *Miss Saigon* (1989) similarly tell the tales of tragic romances involving an Asian woman abandoned by her Western lover. The

women in the narratives play the crucial role of maternal integrators, who, like Laura, become the new mothers to mixed-race children and realize the new blended families. For Buck, the white mother of the multiracial child represents the emblem of antiracist commitment and benign global power.²⁴

What Buck advocated in these two stories was both a Christian and an American solution. As in a biblical tale of persecution, the ostensible outcasts in both stories are actually the "chosen" people and their trials and tribulations eventually serve a higher purpose for humanity. Buck likened them to "bridging creatures," "knots," products of a "special alchemy" and "beautiful hybrids" embodying elements of the Orientalized feminine East and the masculine West. Boys like Matthew and Christopher signify a "treasure" with a "mission to fulfill in the future." At the same time, these are also American stories; the compassionate and responsible "Uncle Sam" is represented by "GI Sam" and even more explicitly in *The New Year*, where American redemption comes through Chris's atonement. Chris publicly hides Christopher as he is running for the office of governor of Pennsylvania—not coincidentally the birthplace of the United States of America. Chris starts anew on the eve of a new year when he finally shares the existence of his son with the public and also educates the audience about "the new people, children of the future, born too soon, before the world is ready for them."²⁵ Through these stories, Buck quite explicitly solicits Americans to demonstrate both their caring Christianity and their benevolent Americanism by adopting Amerasians and welcoming them "home."

For the United States, international adoption began as a humanitarian and largely Christian response to the Korean War, especially for mixed-race children, but it also served a cold war purpose. During the 1950s, the reasons for American receptivity to international adoptions ranged from humanitarian responses to wars to beliefs of Christian obligation and/or American international responsibility on account of the looming cold war.²⁶ For devout Christians like Harry

settings may have relocated from Japan to the South Pacific and then Vietnam, but these Asian women, like Soonya, either disappear or sacrifice themselves for the redemption of the white protagonist and a solution to the "problem of miscegenation."

24 According to Christina Klein, Buck "proposed Welcome House as part of a solution to America's foreign policy problems: in her view, the mixed-race children available for adoption were 'key children' who could facilitate relations between the U.S. and Asia and perhaps prevent further losses of Asian nations to communism." Adoption affirmed "that Americans, despite their nation's history and their own prejudices, were not irredeemably racist or imperialist." Klein, 2003: 143–146, 167, 178, 190.

25 Buck, 1968: 139–40, 253.

26 Oh, 2005.

and Bertha Holt—the evangelical farmers from Oregon who are often credited for having helped institutionalize inter-country adoption in Korea—adoption became a Christian-Americanizing mission. The Holts had an evangelical conviction to “save lives, to get these children into Christian homes,” and to assimilate and Americanize them as soon as possible.²⁷

The subsequent creation of multiracial families in the United States also served a cold war purpose of exemplifying American anti-racist commitment. Christina Klein contends that Buck and other middlebrow cultural figures actively advocated the American adoption of mixed-race children because these “hybrid” families “offered a way to imagine U.S.-Asia integration in terms of voluntary affiliation . . . rather than by biology.” This integration was crucial because the “apparent color blindness of the Christian adoptive families . . . support[ed] [American] Cold War claims of racial democracy,” according to Arissa Oh. The cold war competition prompted the United States to seek the integration of nations and regions, especially those in the decolonizing nonwhite world, into liberal-democratic spheres. Interracial adoption helped to counter the cold war criticism of the United States as a racist nation, and the American government responded positively to these private initiatives by passing a series of laws that not only facilitated these transpacific adoptions, but also served an ideological function of reversing the racist immigration practices and images of the past. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (McCarran-Walter Act), for example, lifted the numerical national origin quotas and de facto racial ban on Asian immigration set by the National Origins Act of 1924. The reform bill also made non-quota exceptions for family members of American citizens, and made a number of non-quota visas available for orphans in 1953, followed by amendments made in 1957 that authorized unlimited orphan visas.²⁸ Interracial adoption policies aligned the cultural crusaders’ advocacy of anti-racism in the sense of color blindness and national cold war interests.

Inter-country Adoption of Korean “GI Babies”

Beginning with the American military occupation period (1945–1948) and followed by the Korean War (1950–1953), a significant number of “GI babies” were born in Korea. The American military personnel were commonly credited

27 Holt, 1972: 283; Holt, 1956: 145, 149, 218.

28 The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1961 incorporated provisions for the international adoption of foreign-born children for the first time. Klein, 2003: 175.

for both creating the problem of mixed-race children as well as initiating adoptions as a partial solution. During the war, Korean boys often provided for themselves and their families by working as "houseboys" on American military bases, and some military units occasionally took care of young, often orphaned, children as unit "mascots." At times, the relationship between a GI and a "houseboy" or "mascot" developed into a literal parent-child relation when some of the young Koreans who had been integrated into the military camps became among the first Koreans to be adopted by Americans. Using individual adoption permits, military and diplomatic personnel, along with missionaries and relief workers, brought an unknown number of Korean children to Western countries during the chaos of war.²⁹

The combination of the war's devastation and its concomitant massive population dislocation, no social precedence of adoptions beyond traditional forms of intra-family, informal practices, as well as racial prejudice toward mixed-race children contributed to the postwar Korean state's inadequate responses to the problem of orphaned wartime children. Inter-country adoption offered partial relief, especially for multiracial children. Concerned with the complete absence of a legal framework, the South Korean government established the Child Placement Service immediately after the war in 1954. All in all, around 3,500 Korean children were sent for adoption abroad between 1953 and 1960, and among these an estimated 2,270 were children of mixed-race parentage. Until 1958, mixed-race children comprised the majority—90 percent—of all the children leaving Korea via inter-country adoptions. During the 1960s, 1,829 more left.³⁰ The number of "Amerasian" children sent out for international adoption from 1953 to 2005 totaled 6,533, and among these, the vast majority, 5,546, left Korea between 1955 and 1973.³¹

With the continued cold war military stationing of American troops, however, the birth of "GI babies" in Korea persisted in the postwar decades. The early 1960s marked a significant shift in inter-country adoption for both the sending and receiving nations, as adoption in subsequent decades became a response to the entrenching cold war as well as to the respective domestic changes in both Korea and the United States. If in the 1950s the Korean War and the burgeoning cold war shaped international adoptions, and especially those of Amerasians, the continued stationing of American troops and Korea's

29 Hubinette, 2004.

30 The number of international adoptions involving mixed-race children began to decline in the 1970s with 1,292 in total, followed by 694 during the 1980s, and 84 between 1991 and 2003. Overseas Korean Foundation (OKF) 2006: 276, 615.

31 OKF, "Characteristics of International Adoptees, 1953–2007."

development profoundly conditioned post-1960 adoptions. The majority of those adopted away from Korea changed from mixed-race to “full-Koreans” from 1961, having spread to include the children of unmarried women and poor families. The Park Chung-hee [Pak Chŏnghŭi] military government passed the Orphan Adoption Special Law, Korea’s first modern adoption law, in 1961 in order to facilitate international adoption.³² International adoption became a cost-saving, if not profitable, alternative to supporting a welfare system for an increasing number of broken homes and abandoned children that were one of the consequences of Korea’s compressed development and rapid urbanization. This policy remained in force throughout the authoritarian regimes of both Park (1961–79) and Chun Doo-hwan (Chŏn Tuhwan 1981–87), with the 1980s as the peak years of international adoption. From 1958 to 2005, South Korea sent 157,145 children to be adopted, of whom 104,718 were sent to the United States.³³

Especially geared for independent adults beyond adoptable age, the Amerasian immigration laws of the 1980s were a continuation, in both policy objectives and surrounding discourse, of the earlier transpacific adoption migrations. The 1961 shift in the composition of Korean adoptees to “full-Koreans” did not mean that the Amerasian “problem” had been resolved. In fact, the postwar stationing of American troops meant the continued births of Amerasians. More than a decade after the Korean War, the *Los Angeles Times* reported the “desperate plight” of “abandoned children of American soldier fathers” or “GI Orphans” in 1965.³⁴ *Time* magazine also estimated that there were 20,000 “half-caste children in Korea” in 1965, with 500 to 600 more born each year.³⁵ The Korean state did not keep official records, but it estimated that the total number of those born to mixed-parentage since the Korean War ranged between 20,000 and 60,000.³⁶ This lack of accurate accounting indicated the official or legal invisibility of multiracial Koreans and their socio-economic marginalization. As it had welcomed inter-country adoption as a solution to the wartime births of mixed-race children, Korean policy continued to advocate their exodus in postwar decades. Korea systematically and ideologically rejected Amerasians as racially impure non-Koreans as well as shameful evidence of Korea’s gendered subordination to foreign powers. Although there were concerted efforts to integrate them into Korean society,

32 Hubinette, 2004.

33 OKF, 2006: 612.

34 “Foundation is Helping Those GI ‘Orphans,’” 1965.

35 “Confucius’ Outcasts,” 1965.

36 Lee, 2008: 60.

a consensus formed that the exodus of these “GI-babies” was the most viable option by the late 1970s.

Living as a “Mixed-Blood Child” (*Honhyeola*) in Cold War Korea

The problem stemming from generations of American military and civilian personnel siring children out of wedlock in Asian nations that held patrilineal traditions translated into a legal absence from the family registry and, in turn, official social illegitimacy. The common practice of Korean women and American servicemen setting up temporary homes or “hooches” [derived from the Japanese word for house, *uchi*] in the *yeobo* (“sweetheart”) arrangements was at the root of this problem of “legitimacy.” During the postwar decades of the 1950s and 1960s, camptowns adjacent to or near US military installations proliferated and large numbers of Korean women, driven by poverty and dislocation from industrialization, sought their livelihood in these communities. The director of an American service center in Seoul, Reverend Ernst W. Karsten, claimed in 1964 that “Some of them [American military personnel] own their girls, complete with hooch and furniture.” Although the going rate for setting up such arrangements was more than the monthly salary of a private at the time, an enterprising GI could make up the difference by playing the black market. “A G.I. can provide his moose [corrupted derivative of a Japanese word for girl, *musume*] with cigarettes, radios and cameras, all of which are resalable on the black market for several times their original cost,” explained the *Time* article that colluded with Karsten’s claims. At the end of a tour, a GI could sell the “package”—“the hooch, complete with furniture and moose, to an incoming soldier” for \$200 to \$300.³⁷ As the American application of corrupted Japanese words such as “hooch” and “moose” to refer to the similar system in Korea indicates, American military personnel and local women temporarily cohabiting in camptowns was a common practice in both Japan and Korea. According to Reverend Sveinung Moen’s study on Amerasians conducted in the early 1970s, women who lived together with a serviceman in this “half legal marital status” constituted the majority of those with mixed-race children.³⁸ A 1977 American military report published in Korea confirmed this assessment.³⁹

37 “A Hooch is Not a Home,” 1964.

38 Moen, 1974: 25.

39 A 1977 Eighth United States Army report stated the following: “The Amerasian child is usually the result of a ‘yobo’ relationship between an American and a Korean woman.

The central discourse on Amerasians in the 1960s and 1970s Korea involved dilemmas of citizenship, race, migration, and the national imaginary. The discrimination experienced by the numerically small but hyper-visible multiracial Koreans—often born in these stigmatized camptown communities and referred to as *honhyeola*, literally—relegated many of them into a socially marginalized life. Although conferred de jure citizenship, many mixed-race Koreans experienced de facto statelessness. Without a father, the mothers often did not register the child with any local census bureau since the birth registration had to be done under the male-based family registry. Although legislative changes in 1968 allowed women the right to register a child born out of wedlock in her own family's registry, the stigma associated with this practice prevented some from registering their children. Not registering the child in the family registry or delaying it until the child reached middle school age as well as the frequency of informal movement in camptown communities made compiling exact figures difficult. Undercounted and/or not registered in family registries, Amerasians constituted an ambiguous sector of legal belonging and de facto citizenship in Korea.

On the other hand, an "illegitimate" Amerasian could claim his or her American citizenship, but the burden of proof created great obstacles in attaining legal connections to their "fatherland." Despite the popular American rhetoric of calling Amerasians "our" children, the automatic citizenship conferred to children of American citizens was not extended to them. Although the United States uses both *ius soli*, citizenship acquired by everybody born within its territorial boundaries, and *ius sanguinis*, citizenship conferred by "blood,"⁴⁰ the latter law only applies to cases in which the American citizen is the mother of the child born abroad. In other words, in cases where the father is the American citizen, the category within which a vast majority of Amerasians fell into, the child does not have automatic citizenship rights. Therefore, the process of proving their paternal connections to the United States entailed that the child submit a notarized statement of paternity from the father, the results

These women will rarely conceive a child unless they believe the father intends marriage. Yet, all too often, the marriage does not occur. The father returns to the United States and either makes no further contact with mother and child, or makes initial contact which dwindles to nonexistence over time. In some particularly unfortunate cases, the father actually marries the mother but abandons her upon the mistaken belief that his marriage in Korea somehow 'doesn't count.' [...] It is because of situations such as these that the Amerasian child is forced to grow up in Korea." US Command Headquarters, USKA, EUSA, 1977: "Report, The Amerasian in Korea."

40 Preuss, 1998: 309.

of blood tests, a copy of the father's service record, and a proof of cohabitation. Obtaining such substantiation from a father who had rotated out of Korea proved impossible in most cases. Moreover, neither the United States nor the American military had the legal rights to enforce this proof of paternity or hold the father accountable for the abandonment of his children. The United States not holding fathers accountable for either the paternity registration or the abandonment of their children while placing the near impossible burden of proof on the mother and child thus further reinforced the child's "illegitimate" American status. Both states left the "half-Korean, half-American" persons in an ambiguous space, an in-between citizenship.

Studies conducted by two private organizations and the Republic of Korea (ROK) government in the 1970s confirmed the legal invisibility of this population, their educational and employment disadvantages, and their sense of alienation from larger Korean society.⁴¹ In terms of education, the required proof of family registration beginning with middle school, and the subsequent registration under their mother's family registry marked or officially documented the child's "illegitimacy." At this juncture, some discontinued their education or turned to camptown economies, such as prostitution and black markets or menial work. Those who continued their education or even excelled academically had other obstacles stand in the way towards good employment. Exemption from mandatory national military service, for instance, limited employment for males. As a result of several "racial" incidents and one in particular wherein an Amerasian draftee shot and killed two other Korean soldiers, the ROK government exempted Amerasians from the draft.⁴²

41 A 1973 study sponsored by the Robert T. Wilson Foundation located 1,692 mixed-race residents, not including the approximately 1,300 children of legally established marriages who held American or foreign citizenship. If these "legitimate" children are included, then approximately 3,000 Amerasians lived in Korea in the early 1970s. In general, the study found that Amerasians had received less education than other Korean children and that 61.4 percent lived below the average Korean standard of living. The 1974 study published by Reverend Moen, the then director of the Pearl S. Buck Foundation Opportunity Center, reported that of those surveyed on their relationship with other Koreans, 40 percent answered, "Koreans do not like us." Moreover, while 40 percent indicated Korea as their "homeland," 33 percent considered the United States their homeland. 15 percent felt that they had no homeland at all, while 12 percent expressed indifference. Nearly half of them also indicated that they did not know their fathers. See Robert T. Wilson Foundation, 1973; Moen, 1974.

42 Although the Korean government eventually began providing Amerasians with a "draft exemption" status card, not serving in the military continued to have employment repercussions. Amerasians could neither earn the "extra-points system" given to veterans in

Consequently, the Amerasian males' non-participation in mandatory military service excluded them from asserting their male social positioning in Korea's militarized modernity.⁴³

The marginalization of Amerasians also stemmed from their challenge to Korea's national imaginary—the identity of a nation-state that defined itself as racially and ethnically homogeneous, a *danil minjok*—as well as being shameful “evidence” of Korea's subordination. A 1965 *Time* article claimed that Amerasians forced “Koreans to think about something they would rather forget—the problem of illegitimate half-castes. And the mixed-blood children remind many Koreans of the shame of widespread prostitution and of the subservient role Koreans have often had to play to the bigger and richer G.I.'s.”⁴⁴ These “G1 babies,” as “products” of the American military presence in Korea, not only reminded Korea of the painful war but also of the shameful postwar camptown sexual industries. The following excerpts from the *Korea Times* published in 1974 and 1978, respectively, convey examples of such sentiments:

There is a new race of sufferers who have shouldered the weight of sins committed by a strange turn of history. Born “by accident” amid the chaos of the Korean War, darker- or lighter-faced Koreans fathered by aliens are coming of age to bear the poignancy of “sins” they never committed. With a long tradition of homogeneity, Korean society is not particularly favorable to alien-looking appearances in its ordinary life.

People call the mixed-races “the sad leftover of the Korean War,” which sounds rather romantic and too sentimental to express the true situation . . . they experience severe treatment in Korea. Perhaps it is severer in Korea than in any other country because this country takes pride in its 5,000-year-long history of homogeneity. In addition, people know a large portion of the mixed-races were born out of wedlock of a union between American soldiers and Korean mothers engaged in shady jobs. This is what causes the discrimination. One is reminded of the war whenever mixed-race is talked about. But there are those born during the period of the U.S. military government between 1945 and 1948, though very small in

hiring calculations nor establish the personal networks made during military service for employment purposes. US Command Headquarters, USFK, EUSA, 10 January 1978: “Memorandum for CINC.”

43 Seungsook Moon contends that the militarization of society characterized Korea's modernization, where mandatory military service and industrial mobilization intertwined and contributed to the definition of a modern gender hierarchy. S. Moon, 2005: 12.

44 “Confucius' Outcasts,” 1965: 43.

number, and thousands of younger persons who have continuously been born in the vicinities of U.S. military camps since the war.⁴⁵

A looming reason for the social alienation of Amerasians, therefore, was their ambivalent positioning in a society that highly valued "pure" racial heritage in defining its national identity. As explained by sociologist Gi-Wook Shin, their existence challenged this historically constructed national imaginary,—created by the exigencies of colonialism, territorial division, war and postwar authoritarianism of a *danil minjok*, the single ethnic nation, and a viable new modern state.⁴⁶ Amerasians were further conflated with the shame of camp-towns, which, perhaps more than any other spaces, symbolized Korea's gendered subordination in relation to the United States, but which were at the same time considered a "necessary evil" for facilitating the cold war military alliance judged fundamental to furthering Korea's development and security.⁴⁷ Amerasians were considered unfortunate and undesired "byproducts" of the nationalist project. Thus, the mixed-race subjectivity stemmed from the interconnection between the patriarchal and racially homogenous imagining of the nation.⁴⁸

Into this historically constructed *danil minjok*, American popular culture and military presence introduced another form of racialization, that of

45 "Mixed-Race Children Face Difficult Life," 1974; "Korean War Products: Mixed-Blood Offspring Suffering Ostracism," 1978.

46 Gi-Wook Shin finds the formation of Korean ethno-nationalism embedded in the specifically Korean historical experiences of external threats and colonization, which stressed internal solidarity and a submission to collectivist goals. With the decline of China, the rise of Japan, and the increasing Western presence in the East Asian region, late nineteenth century Koreans faced the daunting challenge of finding an identity and vision that could guide their efforts to create a viable modern nation. By stressing the ethnic, collectivist and organic nature of the nation, ethnic nationalism functioned as an anti-colonial and anti-imperialist ideology after Korea fell to Japanese rule, one employed to counter the colonial racism that aimed to erase the distinctiveness of the Korean nation. In the postwar era of the late 1960s and early 1970s, ethnonationalism served as force of modernization, "a crucial source of pride and inspiration" for Koreans during the turbulent transition to modernity. At the same time, Shin contends, "ethnic nationalism became a totalitarian force in politics, culture, and society." Shin, 2006: 8, 224–229, 231–232.

47 For a discussion on camptowns and their crucial role in the US-Korea military alliance, see K. Moon, 1997.

48 As Mary Lee contends, the "abjection of mixed-race people from South Korean society cannot be understood without exploring the intersection between the racial politics of 'blood purity' and a gendered politics of patriarchy." In Lee, 2008: 56.

“white-over-black,” which complicated the Amerasian position even further. Heinz Insu Fenkl’s autobiographical novel, *Memories of My Ghost Brother*, explores growing up Amerasian in a camptown in 1960s Korea. In this borderland between America and Korea, Insu learns his early lessons in American racial hierarchy. As a six-year-old on his way to his first day of American school, Insu observes that the white GIs sat in the front half of the military bus while Korean women and their children, Korean soldiers and black GIs sat in the back half. The stories told by Insu’s neighbors further reinforced Insu’s perceptions of racialized camptowns. Insu overhears Changmi’s mother telling inexperienced women how to navigate the racially segregated camptowns and adapt to American racial practices. “And you have to decide, before you start, whether you’re going to date the Black or white GIs. They won’t let you date both,” Changmi’s mother explains, “The white bastards won’t touch you once they see you with a Black man.” Over and above the Korean penchant for *danil minjok*, American racial ideas served to exacerbate the obstacles faced by people of black mixed-parentage. Insu comes to realize what it meant that his friend, James, was black: “To both of us, I think his Blackness was lost under the labels we heard—*ainoko*, *chapjong*, *t’wigi*—and that commonness obscured the fact that when people looked at us oddly, they looked at him more oddly than me.”⁴⁹ This transplanted American racial stratification translated into a white-over-black landscape within camptown communities that also filtered into Korea in general.

“Half-American Also is American”: Towards Migration⁵⁰

Policy-wise, two general solutions to the “Amerasian problem” were advocated in the 1970s—integration into Korea or emigration to the United States. Those who supported integration criticized the *danil minjok* explanation as outmoded. A 1974 *Korea Times* editorial chastised Korean society for opting out of its responsibility and taking the “Korean pride in racial purity . . . a bit too far.” “Everything possible [should be] done to integrate them into Korean society,” the writer advocated, “After all they are Koreans, born and brought up in Korea, and should have been prepared to take their part in the community.”⁵¹ Several private organizations attempted to facilitate the integration process by various sponsorship programs. Through education, counseling and financial support,

49 Fenkl, 1997: 93, 121, 210, 232.

50 “Progeny of Two-Cultures: Amerasians Strive for Life of Dignity,” 1980.

51 “Thoughts of the Times,” 1974.

the Pearl S. Buck Foundation assisted around 900 individuals a year during the late 1970s.⁵² The United World Mission also sponsored the education of 175 children in middle and high schools. The International Human Assistance Programs financially supported six Amerasians in college and 14 in vocational schools as well as the "Hapa Club." In October 1971, a group of older Amerasians founded the Hapa Club with the objectives of forming unity, protecting each other from discrimination, and helping each other with social adjustments and finding jobs. The club had 200 members in 1974 and 350 by the late 1970s. The Korean government also established a vocational training center for Amerasians. This school opened in October 1979, and a total of 57 youths were enrolled in order to learn skills in three fields by 1980.⁵³ The Health Ministry also began providing limited "relief funds" for "needy Amerasians."⁵⁴

Integration and acceptance in the 1970s, however, appeared limited to token sectors such as entertainment and sports, arenas in which mixed-race parcentage translated into embodying more stereotypically "American" cultural qualifications or superior physical qualities. The media reported minor indications of Amerasian integration, juxtaposing the majority who lived in marginalization against the few who had "succeeded" in overcoming their adversity. Unlike 1977 employment data indicating that the majority, 88 percent, worked in the non-skilled labor sector, the visible few that the media spotlighted often excelled in either sports or in the entertainment industries.⁵⁵ "So far, the most successful among the half-blood youths is Jang Ho-nam," claimed the *Korea Herald*, reporting that Jang had been selected as a member of the national basketball team.⁵⁶ Another *Korea Herald* article, "Yoon and Kim Carve Success Out of Adversity," spotlighted two popular singers. Yoon Soo-il, born of a Korean mother and an American father in 1955, chose a singing career because he had found singing comforting during his times of depression and social isolation, and perhaps fittingly named his latest album the "Vagabond." Yoon also advocated that society should try to help others like him "in their efforts to establish themselves as a good citizen." Singer Kim In-soon, born to a black American father and a Korean mother in 1957 also voiced concern over Amerasian social isolation and advocated that, "To fight the inferiority complex, we must take a

52 "Pearl Buck Foundation Stresses Mixed-Race Children Education," 1978.

53 "Progeny of Two-Cultures," 1980.

54 "Vocational Training Sought for Amerasians," *Shina Ilbo*, 20 June 1978.

55 Statistics from the ROK Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in October 1977, as quoted in "Memorandum for CINC, Orphans and ROK Government," 1978.

56 "Success in Sports," 1971.

positive attitude toward life.”⁵⁷ Kim also expressed an ultimate hope of becoming a popular singer in the United States. Thirty years later, Kim In-soon, better known today as Insooni, realized her dream in part by holding a concert in New York’s Carnegie Hall. Korean media would comment on this occasion as Insooni’s “triumph” despite the struggles of living in Korea as a mixed-race Korean as well as “a sad victory of the human spirit.”⁵⁸

Besides employment, integration advocates also attempted to facilitate educational opportunities. Dr. Richard F. Wilson of the Robert T. Wilson Foundation found encouragement in “the fact that 130 youngsters received a college education or vocational training and nearly a hundred were placed in jobs under the program,” which he considered positive signs of “their acceptability in Korean society.”⁵⁹ Whether the increased number of students in vocational schools measured the success of the various integration projects, however, seemed ambiguous at best. A lengthy 1980 feature in the *Korea Herald* quoted three students enrolled in the government-established vocational schools for Amerasians. All three expressed their desire for future emigration to the United States and viewed their vocational training as a means for leaving Korea. They shared these following sentiments:

The United States ought to share the responsibility for our future—the future of the mixed-blood children in Korea . . . I don’t want to know who my father is and where he is. What’s the use in talking about him? He, an American soldier, left home leaving my mother and his son behind after I was born. Now, I have one wish. I hope to be employed in the United States or emigrate there. In order to realize this single wish of mine and of all my friends in similar situation, I have been receiving vocational training here for nine months, in a vocational training school conducted by the Korean National Red Cross (KNRC). Half-American also is American. We have the right to receive the help from the United States.

But I have nothing to hope for, except emigration to the United States . . . Most of us entered this vocational training school last year to seek a way to go to the United States or other overseas countries where we Amerasian people can be easily assimilated into society.

After finishing school, I long to be employed in the United States or other overseas countries. If that goal is not realized in the near future, I will seek to work in the U.S. Army facilities in Korea for the time being.

57 “Yoon and Kim Carve Success Out of Adversity,” 1980.

58 “Insooni and Her Father,” 2010.

59 “More Half-Breeds Accepted,” 1977.

According to a survey conducted by this vocational school, all these students longed for emigration to foreign countries or employment in the United States Army facilities rather than domestic industries.⁶⁰ Amerasians reinterpreted the purpose of the government-run vocational training centers and considered them a springboard to emigration from Korea, rather than the intended means towards better integration into Korean society. Given the marginal conditions under which the majority of multiracial Koreans lived—socially stigmatized from birth and prohibited from full social integration due to de facto discrimination in education and employment opportunities—their desire to leave Korea for an idealized America was hardly surprising.

This seeming contradiction actually paralleled the Korean government's inconsistent policies towards Amerasians. While it established vocational schools and implemented a limited form of financial assistance, the Park administration also encouraged emigration by legally easing the restrictions against Amerasians leaving Korea.⁶¹ Like the 1961 Orphan Adoption Special Law, facilitating the exodus of Amerasians also meant an alternative to a costly social welfare system. The statement by Kim Young Ja, Director of the Women and Children's Welfare Bureau, was widely quoted by newspapers and the USFK reports as summing up the government position. Director Kim stated that “the only true solution to the problem is for all these children to be adopted by U.S. families or allowed to emigrate to the U.S.”⁶² The “only true solution” was to encourage their exodus.

Amerasians and their supporters began to campaign for United States immigration changes to allow adult Amerasian migration to their “fatherland” during the 1970s. Because inter-country adoption was limited to children aged 14 and younger, a separate immigration law was needed to facilitate the trans-pacific passage for older Amerasians. Reverend Alfred Keane, the aforementioned Maryknoll priest who founded St. Vincent's Home for Amerasians in Korea, returned from a trip to the United States in 1977 with the news that Senator Edward Kennedy promised to help the “half-American children” in Korea.⁶³ The United States Forces in Korea also joined this push for Amerasian

60 “Progeny of Two-Cultures: Amerasians Strive for Life of Dignity,” 1980.

61 In 1975, the ROK government changed the restrictions on Koreans traveling out of the country in order to exempt Amerasians from certain requirements. For instance, while most Koreans could not leave the country except to study for a master's or doctorate degree, and even then only after passing an examination, Amerasians were permitted to leave if they were accepted at an institution of higher education for any level of education.

62 “Memorandum for CINC: Orphans and ROK Government,” 1978.

63 “Amer-Asians: Senator pledges help,” 1977.

migration.⁶⁴ The impending American troop pullout, which appeared imminent under President Carter's late 1970s directives, made the Amerasian "problem" in Korea even more urgent.⁶⁵ The military, a 1977 report urged, "has the resources and the influence to go right to the heart of this problem, and to solve it. We should do so before we leave Korea." Ultimately, the report concluded that the military should use its tremendous influence in Washington to press for changes in United States immigration law that would permit the immigration of Amerasians of *all* ages.⁶⁶ A "solution" to the problem came with the Amerasian Immigration Act of 1982 followed by the Amerasian Homecoming Act of 1987.⁶⁷ The Amerasian legislations of the 1980s, therefore, can be considered a culmination of these 1970s efforts, as well as a continuation of the earlier proposals for inter-country adoption policies.

Conclusion and Postscript

As Pearl Buck had hoped, Amerasians did become the "knot" across the Pacific, reinforcing the "tense and tender ties" between the United States and Asia during the last decade of the cold war. The transpacific migration of Amerasians from Korea stood at the intersection of empire and the multidirectional migration of institutions and peoples. As Mae Ngai contends, "Americans want to believe that immigration to the United States proves the

64 "With Outside Help Amer-Asian Problem Not Hopeless," 1977.

65 In January 1977, President Carter announced his intention to withdraw the 2nd Infantry Division, followed eventually by a complete withdrawal of American ground forces from Korea. The USFK 1977 report on Amerasians concluded that the military "should admit a duty to the children and a responsibility to help them," especially because the problem had "become increasingly acute with the imminent withdrawal of U.S. ground forces." "The Amerasian in Korea: Present Problems and Future Prospects," 1977.

66 Bednar, USFK, EUSA, 4 January 1978; "The Amerasian in Korea: Present Problems and Future Prospects" 1977; "Memorandum for CINC: Orphans and ROK Government," 1978.

67 Despite the fanfare and anticipation, the 1982 Act soon proved too limited and ineffective, and a revision of the first Act eventually culminated in the Amerasian Homecoming Act of 1987. Although the Korean case initiated the legislative efforts, the latter Act opened up a far more comprehensive migratory pathway than the former, and Vietnamese-born Amerasians would constitute the majority of those who benefited from the "homecoming" legislations of the 1980s. Unlike the first bill, the latter aimed to specifically benefit Vietnamese Amerasians, but, as in the first debate, it was ensconced in the rhetoric of rescue and responsibility. Most of all, and in the process of passing the second bill, the Amerasian issue played a crucial bridging role in the normalization of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and the United States.

universality of the nation's liberal democratic principles; we resist examining the role that American world power has played in the global structures of migration."⁶⁸ Indeed, the tender and tense ties created by the immigration of peoples of mixed-race and -parentage testified to the ways in which American cold war policies and their legacies conditioned transpacific migratory flows. The process of both "creating" and "untangling" the knot through transpacific migrations transformed the social and cultural topographies of Korea and the United States. In both sending off the "GI-babies" on Korea's part and receiving them on the United States' part, the Amerasian issue ultimately reconfirmed their respective national imaginaries. To Korea, Amerasians personified the national modernity conditioned by dependency and challenged its identity as a homogenous nation; the Amerasian exodus from Korea thus enabled the nation to rid itself of a glaring contradiction in this constructed self-image. To the United States, Amerasian legislations reinforced America's national imaginary as a responsible, benevolent, and exceptional nation of immigrants that welcomed the world's persecuted peoples "home." In other words, the Amerasian migration ultimately reconfirmed the parties' respective defining national identity: one united by its constructed homogeneity and the other by its exceptional heterogeneity.

In addition, although inter-country adoptions and Amerasian immigration acts did provide partial solutions to unintended cold war legacies, these transpacific migrations certainly did not constitute the end of Amerasian involvement in Korea's history. On one hand, many of the first and second generation Amerasians, born during the Korean War and cold war decades, did indeed leave Korea for the United States, facilitated by channels created for international adoption and (military) family reunification immigration preferences from the 1950s and 1960s, followed by the 1980s' Amerasian immigration acts for independent adults. The number of "illegitimate" "GI babies" born also decreased significantly from the 1980s onwards—a trend that is confirmed by the drastically reduced number of multiracial children relinquished for adoption.⁶⁹

On the other hand, however, many of these first two generations of Amerasians have also remained in Korea, with some becoming visible members of society and others continuing to live in the peripheral edges of Korean society. Moreover, although the Korean government's contemporary policies on multi-ethnic children of international marriages are focused on "Kosians"

68 Ngai, 2004: 10–11.

69 Between 1991 and 2003, the total number of multiracial Koreans sent abroad for adoption was 84.

(children of Koreans and other Asians) and no longer on “Amerasians,” and the state has officially adopted the concept of multiculturalism and established a wide range of institutes and policies in 2005, its practices have been criticized as essentially assimilationist in intention rather than truly multiculturalist. As Gi-Wook Shin contends, Korea has become a multi-ethnic nation, but has yet to become a multi-cultural society.⁷⁰ Thus, the historical precedent of the cold war Amerasian generation could prove instructive to Korea as it addresses its contemporary realities as a multi-ethnic nation, and considers whether its transition to a multi-cultural society is possible.

70 Shin, 2012: 370–373, 382–383.

PART 5

Conclusions



The Essence and Mechanisms of Race and Racism in Modern East Asia

Rotem Kowner and Walter Demel

Our cooperation during most of the last decade is drawing to its close. It has been a rewarding endeavor in many ways. Most importantly, the quest for investigating the roots, manifestations, and implications of race and racism in and about East Asia in modern times forced us to reexamine some of our deeply held convictions and basic assumptions about these concepts in general, and, needless to say, also about the region, its societies and its recent history. We have not done it alone, nor could we. It became quite obvious from the outset that due to the scope of this project, the broad questions examined, and the number of disciplines involved, it had to be a collaborative effort, shared by more than a few individuals. Eventually, nearly forty scholars representing 14 countries spread throughout four continents, contributed their manuscripts. Each of them offered a unique perspective, the outcome of a synthesis between a distinct disciplinary outlook, regional focus, and their respective personal backgrounds. In addition, many other scholars took part in the two symposiums we organized and in reviewing the manuscripts of their peers.

This project has not been the first to explore issues of race and racism in East Asia.¹ Nonetheless, the questions put forward here and the breadth of issues facilitated by an extensive team of contributors made the re-examination of these topics from additional perspectives possible. The first and foremost outcome of this project is the two tomes devoted to exploring, sorting and analyzing the broad phenomena involved in racial constructions about and within the region and the mechanisms of racism used by and towards East Asians. The publication of this second volume presents a timely opportunity for summing up the findings of our entire project briefly and for drawing preliminary conclusions with regard to the issues it entails. Modern East Asia, as we reconfirm here our initial argument, offers a quintessential

1 Notable endeavors aimed at providing a systematic survey of the region are Dikötter, 1997b (China and Japan); and Gladney, 1998b: 13–134 (China, Japan, and South Korea, among others, but with a focus on majority-minority relations). For notable single-country surveys, see Dikötter, 1992; Weiner, 1994, 2004; and Shin, 2006.

case in point for the study of race and racism. This is not to say that the study of these concepts elsewhere is inconsequential or has been exhausted, but that the region as a whole, and each of its nations separately, offers a complementary and highly instructive case study.

The importance of East Asia is not necessarily recent. Since antiquity and throughout their history, the peoples of this vast region had construed various rudimentary "racial" theories and notions of humankind and held distinct xenophobic and discriminatory views of the Other which bordered, if not resembled, racism. Moreover, East Asians have been plagued by explicit racism since their exposure to the modern concept of race for the last 150 years or so. These are all well-established facts. Nonetheless, by initiating a research project on the constructions of race and racism in and with regard to this region, we sought to overcome the oversight and departmentalization found in both Western and East Asian scholarly literature with regard to the prevalence and sources of these topics. In addition, we wanted to draw attention not only to the importance race and racism have had throughout the modern history of East Asia but also to the significant role the region has played in the development of the concepts of race and racism as a whole. So significant and revealing are the manifestations of race and racism in East Asia that beyond the realms of Europe and North America, this region is arguably the first place in which the rise of the concept of race and the modern phenomenon of racism should be examined. This seemingly provocative statement is well grounded as the next part will demonstrate.

The East Asian Contribution to the Study of Race and Racism

There are several reasons for why we believe that East Asia contributes in a unique way to the study of race and racism, and could thus serve as an unrivaled, and perhaps even indispensable, case study in these domains. First, the peoples of the region have enjoyed an advanced civilization since ancient times and were frequently thought of as equals in many respects by Europeans until well into the eighteenth century. By virtue of this high status, East Asians also became a requisite in European ethnographic constructions of humankind and played a pivotal role in the implicit global hierarchies that began to emerge in Europe since the sixteenth century. By placing East Asians in these primary taxonomies, European scholars and explorers offered a monogenic continuum of abilities and traits rather than a polygenic worldview in which their own group ("Europeans") stood at one extreme and the rest of humanity stood at the other. One may even argue that the presence of highly

cultivated East Asians in rudimentary European constructions of race before Enlightenment delayed the construction of a steep hierarchic and immutable hierarchy of race of the kind that became prevalent since the latter half of the eighteenth century.²

Second, the region's continuous sovereignty exerted a substantial impact on the power relations it experienced with the West. After all, none of the East Asian countries was fully colonized by a European or North American power. Apart from a relatively short period lasting several decades, in which a number of Western powers leased limited territories in the region and extracted concessions and extraterritorial rights for their citizens, China and northern East Asia did not follow any of the known patterns of submission and inferiority that the Western powers and their overseas representatives had established with large segments of humanity in the latter half of the second millennium and the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in particular.

Third, East Asia has breached the Western monopoly on the use and exploitation of the idea of race. More than partially and passively accepting their immutable position in the European racial taxonomy, East Asian elites tended to adopt the modern concept of race, or at least certain tenets of it, rapidly and willingly, whereas certain East Asian governments and regimes did not hesitate to emulate and implement Western racial policies in their own territories.³ Furthermore, since the late nineteenth century, Japan, and subsequently China and the Koreas, have used the concept of race in order to form a more cohesive society within their own national borders. In fact, ethnic and even racial nationalism has been flourishing in the region to this very day. Still, the adoption of foreign concepts of this sort does not mean that they remained in their original forms or that the inherent notion of European superiority was taken for granted. Quite the contrary. East Asia was essentially the most prominent region in modern times to have developed coherent theories and radical policies that sought to explicitly undermine the Western racial worldview. This brings us to the final reason.

Fourth, East Asia was the only region in which Western dominance and racial worldviews provoked a genuine backlash amounting to prolonged adverse reaction in the modern era. Surely, East Asia was not the only region to be in conflict in the West during this period. But while other regions came into conflict due to their struggle for independence or due to religious and cultural clashes, East Asians were conspicuous in abhorring Western racism and actively reacting against it. Race, nonetheless, was not the only cause of

2 See Demel & Kowner, 2013 (volume 1); and Kowner, 2014: 325.

3 See Dikötter, 2013 (volume 1); Zachmann, 2013 (volume 1); and Tikhonov, in this volume.

conflict in the region. Japan's war against the West in 1941–45, and North Korea and China's involvement in the Korean War, and even the trade war in which Japan, and subsequently China, have been involved were all the result of complex factors mostly related to Realpolitik and political economy. Still, in all these examples, a racially-motivated conflict and backlash against the West did much to exacerbate the hostility and deepen the feud on both sides.⁴

East Asia's Role in the Rise of Racial Theory and the Resulting Hybridity

East Asians had already played an important role in the European discourse on race before and certainly during the Enlightenment and have continued doing so even more significantly throughout modern times. Initially, the peoples of the region assumed a passive role in this endeavor, but very few European observers have ever ignored their presence and prominence. As early as the sixteenth century, European theorists who sought to classify humankind and arrange its peoples in a hierarchical order regarded East Asians (mainly the Chinese and Japanese) as a major group equal to Europeans.⁵ So critical were the encounters with East Asians and the positive assessments of them, that the initial European discourse on them was instrumental in shaping the early modern construction of a hierarchical racial outlook. East Asians maintained their prominence in European eyes also during the rise of the modern idea of race. Carl Linnaeus, the father of racial taxonomy, referred to Asians as a whole (*Homo Asiaticus*) in constructing his four varieties or sub-species of humankind, but, as we have shown in this volume, his view was largely based on reports from East Asia and China in particular.⁶ Subsequent theorists, however, and notably Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, recognized East Asians as a distinct race, a classification that remained dominant well into the twentieth century and is often referred to even today.⁷

East Asians were relatively late in developing their own systematic and explicit constructions of race.⁸ Although they nurtured a hierarchical outlook

4 See Zachmann, 2013 (volume 1); and Lü, in this volume.

5 Demel & Kowner, 2013 (volume 1).

6 Kowner & Skott, in this volume.

7 See Demel & Kowner, 2013 (volume 1); Kowner, 2013 (volume 1); Demel, 2013 (volume 1); and Demel, in this volume.

8 Lai, 2013 (volume 1); Dikötter, 2013 (volume 1); Barth, in this volume; Tikhonov, in this volume; and Kawai, in this volume.

of humankind based on Confucian traditions, shared xenophobic views of the peoples in their vicinity with whom they came into contact and had an unmistakable preference for lighter skin, they did not construct taxonomies of humankind on a global scale or theories suggesting that human differences were immutable.⁹ By the late nineteenth century, however, and following a short-term but intensive exposure to Western military power, technology and scientific thought, East Asians began to develop a racial consciousness based on Western constructions. Put differently, the rise of racial thought in the region was not due to internal development or mere modernization but was rather a direct outcome of the encounter with the West in this particular historical juncture.¹⁰ Initially, East Asians relied heavily on contemporary advances in racial theory that had been developed in the West since the mid eighteenth century and borrowed not only its taxonomies but also a great deal of its hierarchical views. Obviously, East Asians tended to adopt those aspects of the racial theories that they were relevant to remote, unknown or politically insignificant peoples more easily than those that related to themselves. In this manner, anti-Black (African) attitudes and certain aspects of anti-Semitism were emulated without significant consideration or opposition, whereas theories which relegated East Asians to a secondary position in a presumed human ladder encountered a growing degree of opposition.¹¹

Nonetheless, with time, the constructions of race in East Asia, especially with regard to the East Asians themselves, were increasingly affected by local Asian-centric views, if not by opposition to the apparent Western racial arrogance and self-importance. The main outcome of this trend has been a growing hybridization in constructions of race theories and racist policies. By hybridization, we mean a cultural process in which “forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices.”¹² No doubt, the existence of an earlier ethnic worldview in the region in general, and in China in particular, facilitated the adoption of Western racial views alongside traditional views of the universe and the region. This process, in turn, resulted in somewhat inconsistent but steadily changing constructions of self and Other.¹³ Still, the notion of race was flexible enough to withstand these changes and local pressures. After all, in the West too race was an

9 See Wyatt, 2013 (volume 1).

10 E.g., Lai, 2013: 348 (volume 1); Dikötter, 2013 (volume 1); Barth, in this volume; Tikhonov, in this volume; and Kawai, in this volume.

11 E.g., Yano, 2013 (volume 1).

12 Rowe & Schelling, 1991: 231.

13 See Lai, 2013 (volume 1).

ever-changing concept. This is evident in the way Westerners construed their own perceptions of East Asians. Their increasingly intensive economic, cultural, and military encounter with East Asians, together with the successful modernization of the region, led to ongoing interactions and exchanges of knowledge between the two regions, which did not exclude the domain of race. Growing national power and assertiveness in East Asia and its successful emulation of Western technology also had an effect on the shaping of Western views of the region, while persistent local pressure and implicit “negotiation” in racial matters exerted a further effect.¹⁴ Although less discernible now, this sort of negotiation has lingered to this very day and would probably persist for as long as the present racial worldview remains.¹⁵

The rise of the concept of race in East Asia does not imply uniform constructions or a single strain of thought throughout the entire region. In fact, each nation state in the region has produced its own strains of racial theory which stemmed from its own distinctive legacy in ancient and modern times, its colonial experience, type and intensity of contacts with the West, political structure, and national goals, to mention only a few aspects of regional variance. Indeed, China offers a case study for a partial adoption of racial theory along with a protracted resistance to Western ideas of race, whereas Japan has displayed a more enthusiastic adoption along with occasional vehement rejection. Korea represents a completely different case because it was colonized by an Asian power since throughout much of the first half of the twentieth century and has been divided into two states since 1945, with one lying within the Western capitalist sphere and the other residing in the communist block and opposing its neighbor. Despite these considerable national differences, we remain firm in our conviction that treating East Asia also as a single unit is justifiable to some extent, in a manner akin to how most studies have treated the rise of the idea of race in modern Europe as a distinct phenomenon alongside a more recent tendency to break it down into a country-by-country analysis.

Sources and Manifestations of Racism

East Asia has had its own strains of racism since antiquity. Each of the major nations of the region displayed xenophobic views, discriminatory attitudes and policies, as well as a non-egalitarian worldview of humankind that some

14 See Otte, 2013 (volume 1); Towle, 2013 (volume 1); Seok, 2013 (volume 1); Metrick-Chen, 2013 (volume 1); Lehner, in this volume; Hübner, in this volume; and Krebs, in this volume.

15 E.g., Goddeeris, 2013: 258–259 (volume 1).

may construe as forms of racism, long before the early modern encounter with Europe or the process of modernization. While the late-nineteenth-century acceptance of the racial paradigm also facilitated the adoption of certain Western aesthetic preferences, it often merely strengthened traditional prejudices. The aforementioned preference for light skin color is a notable case in point. In recent decades, for instance, the entire region has become a huge market for skin-whitening products for women. However, this aesthetic and commercial trend stems largely from traditional preferences rather than from the recent adoption of Western notions of beauty or admiration for people of European origin.¹⁶

Racist views borrowed from the West were directed towards both self and the Other, and notably towards non-Europeans living outside East Asia. In addition, the emulation of Western imperialism at around the same period by the emerging Japanese state and the subsequent colonization of territories in the surrounding Pacific islands and then in the Asian continent served as another source of racism. Colonialism was a driving force in bolstering efforts made towards the construction of racial categories of the native populations in conjunction with anthropological research of their customs and collective character.¹⁷ But can we examine Japanese racism in its colonial context alone? As some authors have questioned the validity of analyzing Japanese colonialism without referring to the broader context of concurrent Western colonialism, one may justifiably raise similar doubts about Japanese racism during the same period.¹⁸ Indeed, while instituting racist policies that discriminated against colonial subjects, Japanese authorities and ideologists alike often proclaimed their commitment to the liberation and betterment of the lives of their Asian brethren. In fact, an ingrained sense of racial superiority did not necessarily contradict pan-Asian sentiments. Moreover, the opposition to Western colonialism and its racist worldview did not entail the relinquishment of a hierarchical frame of mind that expected each group of people to have a designated place. Similarly instructive is the emulation of racist attitudes towards peoples with whom East Asians had barely any historical contacts, such as dark-skinned Africans and especially Jews, as it demonstrates how racism can be transplanted into a new environment and how it can proliferate without significant acquaintance with the target group. Worse, limited

16 Whereas contemporary Japan is the region's largest market for these products, South Korea and China are the markets where their growth is the fastest. See Nakano, 2009; 180.

17 See Tamanoi, 2013 (volume 1); and Zachmann, 2013 (volume 1).

18 For this view, see Kim, 2013: 429–430 (volume 1).

contacts with members of these groups often proved to validate long-established generalizations.

The internationalization of Western racism, and especially the denigration of East Asians within a supposedly universal view of humankind, has had certain repercussions on individual and group consciousness in the region. During the early stages of modernization, when local constructions of race were merely fledging, feelings of self-denial and inferiority became common among intellectuals in the region, and in Japan in particular.¹⁹ Feelings of self-victimization, humiliation and racial injustice during overseas visits or encounters with Westerners at home often served as a trigger for the rise of new national and racial identities among East Asian intellectuals.²⁰ What made racial discrimination and a sense of superiority among Westerners so appalling was the sense that the barrier of race could not be overcome regardless of effort due to its immutable character.²¹ While the region as a whole barely suffered from direct Western colonialism, the legacy of this phenomenon elsewhere is unmistakable.²² Even today, when the nations of the region are prosperous and fully independent, it is not difficult to pinpoint certain aspects of what Homi Bhabha has termed “colonial mimicry” among the urban masses. While declining, the desire for the Western Other “as a subject of a difference that is almost the same but not quite . . .” are still very evident, *inter alia*, in the region’s media, popular culture and consumer culture.²³

Is there a distinct East Asian racism? We have not recognized any form of racism unique to East Asia or to one of the nations in the region, nor did we discover a uniform attitude to the Other. This said, certain observations about the form and manifestations of racism in the region can be made. First and foremost, East Asian racism is not uniform. Even within the region, the geographical remoteness and political secludedness of pre-modern Korea (a peninsula bordering the backyard of two empires and politically referred to as “the Hermit Kingdom” well into the late nineteenth century”) and Japan (geographically an archipelago separated by 160-kilometer straits from the continent and referred to as “the closed country” until the mid-nineteenth century) is not without consequences. These circumstances have not only brought about a very high degree of ethnic homogeneity (which is often celebrated in these countries) and helped to minimize contacts with foreigners well into modern

19 See Majima, 2013 (volume 1).

20 Dikötter, 2013: 361–362 (volume 1); Majima, 2013 (volume 1); and Chang, in this volume.

21 E.g., Majima, 2013: 409 (volume 1).

22 See, for example, Kitahara, 1989; and Hirakawa, 2005.

23 Bhabha, 1984: 126.

times, but have also promoted the prevalence of xenophobic attitudes. Historically unaccustomed to the intensive presence of foreigners, ethnically different peoples, or even compatriots from remote regions, both Japanese and Koreans seem to display a relatively low tolerance for ethnic Others who do not conform to the local ways of life.

China, however, where cross-border cultural and commercial encounters alongside foreign invasions were frequent and which is characterized by a broad ethnic variation both culturally and politically, has developed a different approach to the Other. While essentially less xenophobic and often more welcoming, the Han Chinese, at least, have developed a strong sense of cultural, if not racial, superiority and self-importance since ancient times.²⁴ This, in turn, has sustained a firm conviction, which often entailed racist sentiments, in the capacity and necessity of Sinicizing the Other in the long run. Still, viewed from a regional, let alone a Western perspective, Chinese racism is conspicuous for its cultural essence. Historically, it did not originate from what George Fredrickson defined, based on the European experience, as “a mindset that regards ‘them’ as different from ‘us’ in ways that are permanent and unbridgeable.”²⁵ The opposite might in fact be true. Both in theory and practice, the Chinese were often willing to absorb various ethnic groups and individuals as long as they accepted the precepts, behavior, and script of their culture.

Traces of these traditional tendencies can also be uncovered today, although for certain groups they may have been exacerbated by the selective emulation of Western views. As mentioned above, highly negative racist attitudes can be found throughout East Asia towards black Africans, and to a lesser extent also towards African-Americans, usually despite the very limited contacts before modern times. These attitudes are often materialized into discrimination, avoidance, and hostility towards intermarriage.²⁶ Negative attitudes toward Jews, often side by side with a certain (racist) admiration for their supposed economic genius, are also found throughout the region, but they reflect an almost en bloc adoption of European views.²⁷ These negative attitudes notwithstanding, there are no records of serious attacks against Africans or Jews

24 European travelogues of the eighteenth century, however, tell a different story. They suggest that the inhabitants of Canton (present day Guangzhou) were rather xenophobic, but this, of course, may reflect the European expectations of being welcomed as members of an equal or even superior culture and race bringing new and valuable products to China.

25 Fredrickson, 2002: 9.

26 E.g. Basabe, 1996; Russell, 1991; and Dujon Johnson, 2007.

27 E.g., Zhou, 1997; Kowner, 1997; and Goodman & Miyazawa, 2000.

in the region nor is there any evidence of the systematic persecution of any minority on a racial basis in recent years.²⁸ In this sense, the East Asian racism of recent decades has tended to be covert and to remain in the realm of attitudes rather than manifest itself in explicit acts of hatred.

The type of political regime in each country has not altered these patterns of racism in modern times with any degree of substantiality. Communism is perhaps the most notable example. Traditionally, this social, political and economic ideology regarded racism as a product of Western capitalism and in communist countries where this phenomenon did rise, its existence was often denied. However, the Soviet-driven “anti-minority, anti-ethnic, anti-cultural, antilinguistic ethos,” as Ian Law notes, had also permeated other communist regimes too.²⁹ Thus, in East Asia, and seemingly elsewhere, Communism had a minor, and mostly a short-lived, impact on attenuating local racism. In communist China, for instance, racism towards minorities became less overt, but the rhetoric of equality has often masked continuous Han attempts to force minorities into assimilation and submission.

Extremism on the other side of the political map was no less detrimental. Ultra-nationalism, in the form prevalent in Japan during the 1930s and throughout World War II, was definitely a political setting that promoted racist attitudes, even though some writers have regarded this period as an aberration and considered its impact short-lived. Despite their differences, both Chinese and North Korean Communism and Japanese ultra-nationalism promoted racist sentiments against the West and against Westerners.³⁰ These were partly the outcome of the political and even military struggle against the West but also an expression of a backlash against Western racism. In addition, certain political and economic contexts seem to have exerted a greater impact on racism than the prevalent regime of the time. For instance, due to their involvement in capital accumulation and their export-led economic orientation, Japan, South Korea, and recently China too, have become more attuned to international currents and more willing to promote various gestures of mutual understanding. On this account, it is within reason to assume that as long as their economies run smoothly and international conflicts are averted, these countries are less inclined to promote state-run racism and thus more likely to employ a cultural nationalism rather than a more blatant form of racial nationalism.

28 One may point at the persecution of Tibetans and Uighurs in contemporary China, among other groups, but these do not necessarily stem from racism but rather from political, national and religious sources.

29 Law, 2012: 148.

30 See Lü, in this volume; Gabroussenko, in this volume; and Zachmann, 2013 (volume 1).

If broad generalizations can be made, East Asians tend towards an auto-referential racism in which they designate themselves as a superior race on the basis of their culture, spirit, or historical legacy with little reference to the Other. Westerners, in contrast, have often resorted to hetero-referential or hetero-phobic racism, in which they derogate the Other due to allegedly inferior biological attributes, and thereby elevate themselves.³¹ Likewise, East Asians are inclined towards inclusive racism, which in this context means that they are mostly concerned with those who belong to the group rather than those who do not. Westerners, in contrast, are inclined towards exclusive racism and thus focus on those members of outgroups in their vicinity through which they define themselves. The above notwithstanding, it is still possible to discern regional variations in these general patterns. Chinese mainstream racism is rather heterophile or assimilating, to borrow Pierre-André Taguieff's distinction, whereas Japanese and Korean racism is heterophobe, that is seeking to keep the Other separate.³² Nonetheless, one may find both internal and external racism in many parts of East Asia, by which we mean racism against local members regarded as a minority alongside racism against foreign outgroup members respectively.³³ But while the more or less ethnically heterogeneous Chinese seem to be inclined towards internal racism more than others in the region, the isolated and ethnically homogenous North Koreans occupy the other pole as they tend to mostly display external racism.

By the same token, postwar China is also more notable than its neighboring countries in the employment of institutional racism. This form of racism, to paraphrase Stokeley Carmichael and Charles Hamilton's definition with regard to White-Black race relations in the United States, is the active and pervasive operation of anti-ethnic minority attitudes and practices and the prevalence of a sense of superior group positioning. This form of racism is expressed in China in the view of Han Chinese as "better" than other ethnic groups and the expectation that the latter be assimilated into or subordinated to the former. Through the power of the regime and the majority, this attitude "permeates the society, on both the individual and institutional level, covertly and overtly."³⁴ This institutional use indicates that contemporary racism in China, and

31 We have used Etienne Balibar's (1991b: 39) distinction here with certain modifications. Dower's (1986) analysis of the way in which racism operated in the United States and Japan within their respective propaganda and ideology during the Pacific War provides a strong case for this distinction.

32 Taguieff, 1988: 18–20, 38–39.

33 For this distinction, see Balibar, 1991b: 38–39.

34 Carmichael and Hamilton, 1967: 19–21.

seemingly in the region as a whole, is not necessarily “rooted in yesterday’s colonial and in post-colonial structures maintaining quasi-colonial relations of subordination under new clothes,” the way it is arguably taking place in the United States at present.³⁵ Instead, it is an attitude that draws from both local, traditional (and even pre-colonial) sources and Western influences and constantly transforms itself within established lines and in aid of social needs. Regardless of the political form it takes in each country, the governments of the region are involved in various forms of institutional racism. But whereas the North Korean regime mobilizes it blatantly against those considered enemies of the state outside its territory, both Japan and South Korea employ it in more subtle ways. In these two democracies, institutional racism, and more often the absence of any state-run efforts to subdue it, is used to maintain a cohesive and conformist society while curbing what are considered to be the deleterious effects of globalization.³⁶

The Close Links between Racism and Nationalism

The line between nationalism and racism is often unclear, ever-shifting, and undoubtedly complex.³⁷ Nationalism is associated with both racial constructions (about the self) and racism (about the Other) in the sense that they reinforce each other. Both lead to a further distinction of the self from the Other through the elevation of the former and degradation of the latter. These causal relations between nationalism and racism are not accidental. Both facilitate the mobilization of ingroup members in the pursuit of political self-determination for that group. In modern Europe, as George Mosse has asserted, “racism was dependent upon nationalism, and it was through nationalism that racism was able to transform theory into practice.”³⁸ East Asia does not differ much in this respect, as racial theories have underpinned nationalism in the region and have served as an important source of identity formation and national mobilization in pursuit of political agendas.³⁹ The notion of race in East Asia, as Frank Dikötter argues for China, “emerged as a very powerful and cohesive form of identity . . . precisely because of the extreme diversity of reli-

35 The quotation refers to the United States. See Betancur, 2013: 373.

36 See Shin, 2013; Kawai, in this volume; and Kowner & Befu, in this volume.

37 E.g., Balibar, 1991b; and Eatwell, 2013.

38 Cited in Shin, 2013: 371 (volume 1).

39 Dikötter, 2013 (volume 1); Chang, in this volume; Kowner & Befu, in this volume; Tikhonov, in this volume; and Gabroussenko, in this volume.

gious practices, family structure, spoken languages and regional cultures of population groups . . .”⁴⁰

It is not surprising, then, that ethnic and even racial nationalism is a prevalent phenomenon in the region. While the twentieth century has witnessed a gradual eclipse, as William Safran refers to it, of “ethnic nations” by “civic nations,”⁴¹ East Asia remains a virtual island in which ethnic nationalism is the rule rather than the exception. Although not unique, this regional tendency requires explanation. Ethnic nationalism thrives in nations in which the local population is relatively homogenous and enjoys a long-lasting common heritage and a tradition of popular mobilization against external groups alongside a limited democratic tradition in modern times. These conditions are found throughout modern East Asia and can be regarded as the outcome of a relative demographic stability along roughly the same geographical lines since ancient times.⁴² China may seem at first to be an exception to this pattern but even in this case the pressures for homogeneity in language, behavior, and thought have been rife throughout the twentieth century. One may argue, in fact, that ethnic nationalism in contemporary East Asia functions as a partial substitute to local racism, not unlike the way in which culturalism functions in a unified Europe or in a multi-ethnic United States.

The Role of Gender and Lineage in Constructions of Race and Racism

Racism is associated with gender and especially with gender-based discrimination since it has traditionally focused on masculine power and uses gender symbolism to elevate the self and derogate the Other. This phenomenon can be observed throughout the history of contacts between East Asia and the West. Westerners have occasionally referred to East Asians as feminine, whether as a form of derogation or simply due to misconceptions of differences in physical appearance. The latter were not oblivious to these insinuations and were determined to refute images of effeminacy in modern times. Apart from exhibiting their prowess in the battlefield, the emulation of Western sports has been an important arena in which East Asians could prove their masculinity.⁴³ Hence,

40 Dikötter, 2013: 367 (volume 1).

41 Safran, 2008: 177.

42 For national homogeneity in the region and its importance within national discourse, see Shin, 2013 (volume 1); Kowner and Befu, in this volume.

43 See Hübner, in this volume.

a high position in the Olympic medal count and then in the capacity to host mega sports events became a major token of national power and higher stature in the international hierarchy.

Societies in which lineage exerts a considerable importance experience more acutely the impact of race and racism upon inclusion and exclusion of ingroup and outgroup members. As we argued in the introduction, this is because the ideology of lineage emphasizes the purity of ancestral stock and as a result the anxiety about its violation (“pollution”) brings about the exclusion of outgroup members. Our project suggests that lineage plays a special role in East Asian societies. This may stem in part from the long tradition of ancestor veneration, which is held up by Confucian philosophy, Taoism, Buddhism and folk religions throughout China, and the region as a whole.⁴⁴ Thus, it is possible to witness the total rejection of “mixed-blood” children, with the offspring of local women and American soldiers in postwar South Korea serving as an extreme case.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, even in modern Japan, where kinship was traditionally not necessarily based on blood relations and where adoption was common, the offspring of similar unions were at most grudgingly accepted.⁴⁶ Both cases suggest that where racist attitudes against the impurity of lineage are concerned, it is also important to consider their context. The ‘tainted’ male line is thus not only foreign but is also perceived as conqueror whose presence is construed as a forced exploitation if not a collective rape.

East Asia and the Future of Race and Racism

In recent decades, the Western racial discourse towards both ingroups and outgroups has diminished, often transforming into a culturalist and certainly less aversive discourse. Racism against East Asians is much less glaring today than during any other period in modern times. In East Asia too the use of overtly racist images and racial language has waned considerably compared with its level several decades ago. Yet, many of the mutual racial stereotypes that were previously prevalent with regard to East Asians and Westerners and with regard to East Asians have persisted. They have not disappeared completely, but have rather mutated into a more implicit form or a stand-by state at best, ready for re-operation when necessary.⁴⁷ Still, the issue of race and racism

44 E.g., Lakos, 2010; Janelli, 1975; and Befu, 1971: 87.

45 See Hwang, in this volume.

46 See Koshiro, 1999.

47 E.g., Kowner, 2013: 123–125 (volume 1); Goddeeris, 2013: 258–259 (volume 1); and Dikötter, 2013: 366 (volume 1).

is not the concern of the United States alone, nor does it necessarily apply only to countries where a multiethnic society collapses or in which recent mass-immigrations are rife. It has grave repercussions in East Asia too, both within each country in the region and with respect to their respective regional and international relations.

As in the past, East Asia has remained the West's alter ego, second to the West in certain domains but increasingly second to none in many others. Racial rhetoric is thus currently employed in discourses on civilizations and cultures on both sides of the Eurasian continent and the Pacific Ocean.⁴⁸ The persistence of this rhetoric in an age of globalization may seem contradictory, but its notions of race, and often its view of an immutable cultural heritage linked with "blood," serve occasionally as the last bastion in a conservative struggle to keep traditional values and social structures intact. The East Asian attraction to globalization seems to stem largely from economic motives, and particularly from the belief that it provides a competitive edge in an unrestricted struggle between nations. Still, in reality, one cannot simply counteract globalization with racial nationalism since the two, as Gi-Wook Shin finds out, are often compatible and interactive.⁴⁹

In an era of rapid growth in China accompanied by realistic expectations that it would become the world's leading economy in a few years time, the prospects of an international clash are alarming. Like the British views of Japan more than a century ago, it is the fear of relative decline rather than entrenched racism which generally explains the opposition to China within the United States today.⁵⁰ But, whatever its sources, the inability to accept the consequences of an adverse historical eclipse on the one hand, and the unwillingness to face deep-rooted prejudices and act prudently on the other hand, may lead to disastrous outcomes. Taking place in several domains, ranging from culture and economics to political influence, such a clash could easily regress to a racial conflict and military confrontation. Race may not only boost nationalist and patriotic sentiments but also define the conflict as primordial and thus intractable in peaceful terms. It is thus our hope that the two volumes we have edited will contribute to a deeper awareness and better understanding of the background, mechanisms, and hazards involved in racism on both sides of the Pacific Ocean and the Eurasian landmass, and to the creation of measures for counteracting them if not eradicating them altogether.

48 See, for example, the negative view in which the "Sinic civilization" is presented in Samuel Huntington's (1996: 169, 181) *Clash of Civilizations*; and Morita & Ishihara, 1989.

49 Shin, 2013: 384 (volume 1).

50 For this observation concerning the British elites' view of Japan in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War, see Towle, 2013: 306 (volume 1).

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