



NEW IDEAS IN EAST ASIAN STUDIES

a working paper series for experiments in east asian area studies

RECURSIONS OF COLONIAL DESIRE FOR DIFFERENCES: THE DOUBLY ERASED AND/OR HYPER-VISIBLE AINU

ROSLYNN ANG

Ironically, this paper originated in a somewhat voyeuristic encounter at a Japanese Studies conference in Vienna: An overheard conversation that made me revisit a fieldwork episode that I had deemed unnecessary to my research project. It made me question: what is being erased from my project to sustain its coherence? It raises the questions of power accorded to the privilege of seeing from a perspective of authority, and the effacement of ghostly bodies as the conditions of possibility for that perspective.

In addition to the hauntings and erasures, I am also calling attention to the persons and institutions that are being haunted (Gordon 2008). Hauntings occur when something violently repressed and invisible makes itself known by making unfamiliar one's home. Through the figure of Sensei, one of my Ainu informants, I note how representations of the Ainu and herself as a self-identified Ainu become doubly erased or hyper-visible ghosts when they transit the recursive forms of empire as the conditions of possibility for the temporal and spatial spaces of nation and race.

First, instead of the usual focus on subaltern subjects, I attend to the production of the empire's universal self – the West in the figure of the researcher and the Japanese empire – through logics that are enabled by the doubled erasure of indigenous Ainu bodies. Next, I locate the moments of Ainu hyper-visibility globally and locally across the intersections of colonial space-time as the conditions of possibility for another version of the aforementioned universal self and the collusion of its aphasia on settler-colonialism across continents. I unsettle the empire's internal coherence, when researchers utilize national and racial boundaries as their analytical framework, by pointing out how the heightened erasure/visibility of Ainu lives are the conditions of possibility for their recursive forms of empire and history. Indigenous Studies work to unsettle establishments that unilaterally settle upon and systematically eliminate indigenous peoples

through critiques on state multicultural recognition enforced through disciplining natives (Povinelli 2007), historical texts of indigenous assent that erases dissent (Silva 2004), white possessive logics through cultural difference-making and the discourse of rights (Moreton-Robinson 2015) and many more. The unquestioned consumption of settled national and racial categories requires the effacement of the uneven, the non-generalizable, contingent, un-representable, fleeting and ghostly personas that remains a part of the everyday for my informants. The question is not "What is the subjectivity of Ainu performers," but rather "How do the conditions for their visibility or invisibility sustain the coherency and legitimacy of various social, cultural and political perspectives or realities?"

Most of my informants are members of the *Sapporo Upopo Hozonkai* (SUH, Sapporo Upopo Preservation Society), a traditional Ainu music and dance performance group recognized as intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO. The Ainu are indigenous to Ezo, Sakhalin and the Kuriles Islands, and had been forcibly located to Hokkaido (formerly Ezo) during early Meiji and subject to various assimilation policies. The first wave of their elimination included the large scale migration of settlers bringing with them rationalized frontier violence, structured dependence and foreign contagions (Walker 2006, Lewallen 2016). Their effacement was followed and sustained by assimilation through education, land displacement, elimination from public space including media representations and through discrimination (Siddle 1996, Mason 2012). Hokkaido as native land is not perceived as being colonized by other settler states of the Allied powers at the end of the Pacific war in 1945. As indigenous minorities living upon ancestral lands colonized by settlers, my informants are subject to and engage with dominant local and transnational norms of what being Japanese, being

indigenous, being Ainu means to themselves and to others.

I make a critical difference between colonialism and settler-colonialism, but consciously choose to use the word “colonialism” in its various reincarnations across time and space to utilize the elements of its recursivity. Stoler (1995) calls colonies the laboratories of modernity. Modernity is not a movement that began in Europe and exported, but rather, a phenomenon engendered by the complex of colonial encounters and innovations which circulated back to Europe and then out again to the colonies (Stoler 1995, p.15-16). She continues to expand the working definition of colonialism to include ambiguous zones of governance in its troubled geopolitical and social forms through a strategic refusal of making clear-cut differences and simplified coherence, because it is precisely its ambiguity that allows the width and breadth of colonial governance and the possibility of making bodies exempt and defunct when necessary (Stoler, 2016). Recursion here refers to “processes of partial reinscriptions, modified displacements, and amplified recuperations” that accounts for multiple forms of power operating simultaneously (ibid., 27). Recursive colonialism allows for the figure of the West to circulate between periods of materialization for criticism, followed by resolution and disappearance in certain academic fields, even as it remains influential as a way of seeing. Recursive colonialism is not evidenced in mimicry or resistance, even as it contains elements of both; it is neither a rupture between pre, post and neo-colonialism nor simply that of continuity or repetition (Stoler 2016). It is a biopolitical form of governance that is not linear, with the old replaced by new, but rather:

a series of complex edifices in which... the techniques themselves change and are perfected, or anyway become more complicated... What above all changes is the dominant characteristic, or more exactly, the system of correlation between juridico-legal mechanisms, disciplinary mechanisms, and mechanisms of security (Foucault 2008, p.22).

Colonialism in this paper is expanded to include the neoliberal right to produce and consume Japan, and the influence of certain forms of knowledge or perspective that sustains differential access to universal norms and simultaneously excise subaltern, ghostly ways of knowing and being.

On the other hand, the ghostly excess in the form of the Native sustaining this excision across forms of colonialism is the critical difference I make between colonialism and settler-colonialism. Patrick Wolfe defines settler-colonialism as the elimination of the native through a structure that constantly strives for the negative dissolution of native societies and simultaneously, the positive reconstruction of colonial society on the expropriated land base (2006, p.388). The colonial recursions here are made explicit in Bryd’s Transit of Empire by tracing how indigenous peoples provide the ontological and literal grounds for the neoliberal

state through their past and future erasure. She notes “indigenous peoples are rendered unactionable in the present as their colonization is deferred along the transits that seek new lands, resources, and peoples to feed capitalistic consumption” (2011, p.221). Colonial recursions of history and culture is closely tied to settler-colonialism, but differentiated by the immediacy of indigenous elimination due to settler occupancy on indigenous lands. The layering of recursive colonialism and settler-colonialism are the critical lens that makes the “double” and the “hyper” in Ainu erasure and visibility.

Ethnography in familiar and strange places

Through the ethnographic snapshots I outline here, I trace the ghostly excess of Japan in the form of “untranslatable remainders” (da Col and Graeber 2011). I critically examine the desire to consume difference (culture, social and etcetera) that is made coherent and legible; and the uneven, illegible and willful excess that persist outside these recursive colonial frames of seeing and knowing nation and race within the word “Japan”.

Sensei is of Ainu descent and the instructor of her private *shishū kyōshitsu* (embroidery classroom). Embroidery here means traditional Ainu clothwork and embroidery motifs. Sensei also happens to be the *kaichō* (chairperson) of SUH. I attended Sensei’s *shishū kyōshitsu* in an effort to ingratiate myself while making my own *mōru* (under-layer garment) to wear during SUH events and performances.

Midway through fieldwork, Sensei’s father passed away. Not knowing what to expect, I arrived at the funeral to be served a lunch of *somen*, *onigiri* and *daikon* salad, with the body of the deceased laid out right next to the lunch area. I assumed that a funeral is supposed to be planned and organized by family members, but was confronted by a second surprise. The ladies from SUH were helping with all minute details of the funeral, from cooking and serving food, to driving out to the nearest supermarket for last minute purchases. As I am considered a member of SUH, I was tasked with a number of small errands and only managed to catch the second half of the *nōkan* (encoffining) ceremony. To a foreigner who had watched the film, “Okuribito,” (Departures 2008) it was absolutely fascinating. Nonetheless, my research is supposed to be on contemporary Ainu cultural praxis, and this was clearly different from the usual Ainu rituals I witnessed in the course of my fieldwork. After the ceremony, I was told to help lift the body into the coffin. “Isn’t this the role of family members?” I asked, weakly resisting. Shinne, one of the main instructors in SUH, retorted, “What are you saying? This is a rare chance to experience Japanese culture!” Sensei scolded me and told me to hurry up. I was positioned near the feet, feeling embarrassed and wondering if other members of the extended family are offended at this intrusive stranger. This was followed by more Buddhist chants and ceremonies. Since Sensei and Shinne expected me to experience the full Japanese funeral ceremony, I proceeded

with the family in a chartered bus to the crematory the next day, and joined them in the ceremony of examining the cremated remains with a pair of chopsticks. Instead of being a foreign researcher observing traditional Ainu performance arts, I realized that I was relegated to a foreigner observing traditional Japanese funeral ceremony, while my informants became the practitioners of traditional Japanese culture.

A year after the conclusion of my fieldwork, during a break in between panels at an East Asia cultures conference in Vienna, I was enjoying my coffee when a lady joined the table nearby. There were three occupants who are graduate students from a university in Japan. The lady, let's call her Jane, is a first year graduate at a European university. Jane started telling them about her proposed research on kimonos and national identity. She sounded passionate about her research as she explained that she found kimonos really beautiful. I thought to myself: Most people don't even know how to wear a kimono in Japan these days, much less own one. What does she mean by kimono anyway? Sensei, much like the rest of the members in SUH, calls their handmade robe "kimono" too, with close-looped embroidery that acts as both a charm to keep *uenkamuuy* (evil spirits) away and simultaneously indicate the region of their ancestry. I wonder if Jane will encounter this version of "kimono" in her research. Most likely not, since attempts to incorporate Ainu cloth work into kimono as part of national culture raises the critique of cultural appropriation. After I presented my paper, Jane approached me, expressing her astonishment at the existence of minorities in Japan and her interest in the Ainu.

Making the familiar (not) strange and the strange familiar

I perceive Sensei's everyday activism as a self-identified Ainu within her *shishū kyōshitsu* and SUH, her father's funeral ceremony and the Vienna conference as the uncomfortable symptoms arising from the global and local intersections of recursive colonialism, settler-state practices and racism. These are the intersecting frames of "Japan," with the undercurrent of willful subjects performing something else that undermines or unsettles our expectations, in a place where we do not want to see or will not even think to see. There is a realm of expectations, of a fetishized desire for a coherently visible subject of analysis. Corresponding to that, willing bodies that endeavor to perform accordingly or sometimes not. Here, the invisible and universal gaze (in the case of Jane and I, that of the researcher) uses these dominant frames of perception to make transparent and coherent the particularities of our "subject." For Jane, the material embodiment of national culture symbolized in the form and weave of kimonos that does not include Sensei's "kimono"; for me, the indigenous bodies that are supposed to engage in acts of resistance and Ainu cultural revitalization, not assimilation in the form of a funeral.

One well-known example that makes coherent the Japanese subject is Ruth Benedict's *Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1947). Benedict makes familiar strange Japanese behavior: soldiers' willingness to die for their country during the Pacific War. Japanese socialization into a culture that focuses on group identity and the family unit is contrasted with the American emphasis on individualism. One of the goals of cultural anthropology is to "make the strange familiar and the familiar strange." This is a commitment to think critically and reflexively on human behavior and avoid easy and shallow assumptions on societies, organizations and communities. It is also a call for the generation of a theoretical framework that can be critically applied on our own society. The former is achieved easily enough but the latter, when neglected, concludes in a reincarnation of Said's *Orientalism* (2003) in which the strange is made familiar for the empire.

In Benedict's case, Japanese national culture is posited as the breeding ground for blind obedience and group mentality to become a mirror to reflect American individualism on the other side. Both sides get homogenized within this little slice of history, with its solipsistic influence and effects reverberating across time and space to reify national ideologies in Japan and the U.S. (Ryang 2002, Robertson 2005, Boles 2006). The horror lies not only in the usage of anthropological knowledge for the military or national state security for the U.S. neo-empire (Boles 2006, Price 2016) and the Japanese empire before 1945 (Nakao 2005), but in how that same knowledge is then used in a self-orientalizing discourse for the subjects of analysis. Sahlins (1981, 1992) notes that cross cultural encounters can actually result in the actualization of cultural categories made within the context of historical agents agenda and the pragmatics of their interaction. Geertz (1982) succinctly describes it as "the way in which the logic of a culture is revised when people go so far as to act in terms of it." Informed by Benedict's analysis, American Occupation Forces prevented Hirohito (then-emperor of Japan) from being tried as a war criminal and advocated for the continuance of the Emperor system that becomes a visible symbol of Japanese homogeneity or the local consumption of *nihonjinron* (Fujitani 1992, Befe 2001, Boles 2006). *Chrysanthemum* sustains the postwar amnesia of Japanese colonial violence (Ryang 2002), and the homogeneity of nation, race and culture within *nihonjinron* retains its valence in contemporary Japan (Yoshino 1992). Ginsburg (1994) did point out that Benedict's work is a nuanced ethnography based on Japanese media and Japanese immigrants in the US. However, it gained the legitimacy accorded to a particular media (academic text) and power in the Pacific War, and becomes a normative interpretation of Japanese society and culture.

The same critique of English-language anthropology on Japan can be applied to Japanese ethnography on the subjects of its empire. Well-known for his collection of Japanese folklores in the 1920s, Yanagita Kunio is critical of a modernist

progressive Japan that had lost its authentic cultural base, a base that is located in the heterogeneity of the countryside, including Okinawa (Hashimoto 1998). The perspective of Okinawa as the authentic folkloric base of Japan comes after the fact of Okinawa's annexation, formerly known as and recognized by neighboring China and Korea as the sovereign Ryukyu Kingdom (Smits 1999). Unfortunately, his work was utilized as a discourse to unite Japan as an island nation sharing a common, originative, authentic culture with its periphery. It was part of the discourse that contributed to the legitimization of Japan's expansion into East and Southeast Asia, rendered as cultural regions particular to the expanding definition of "countryside" in diachronic contrast to the modern metropole (Harootunian 1998). Other than Yanagita, there exist a body of literary works on Japan's colonies from 1895 to 1945 that represents a form of "imperial mimicry" of Western empires' civilizing mission of non-modern subjects that becomes defunct in the wake of postwar historical amnesia (Tierney 2010). Christy (2012) tries to salvage Yanagita by showing that Yanagita was arguing against the positioning of a static family ideology within a linear trajectory of a naturalized history of Japan. The emphasis of his ethnology was on subjective experience of individuals, rather than an inscription of the subject into a totalizing framework placed on a linear trajectory of civilizational progress. However, within the context of an expanding empire, Yanagita's work remains an attempt to make coherent potential colonial subject through modern discourse under the implicitly universal and modern figure of one's own social world, that of the "familiar," to become another tool of the empire.

To clarify, I am not focusing on the failed project of making the strange familiar through the frame of Said's Orientalism. I am pointing to the latter, that of making the familiar unquestionably familiar-er and the politics of the empire and colonialism behind it. I am not questioning the analytical validity of a supposedly empirically measurable, observable, finite subject of research. Instead, I want to think critically about who is this research for and its affective power to erase or highlight bodies. The question of "Who should speak" is less crucial than "Who will listen" (Spivak 1990, p.71) and here, the intended audience is mainly the community back home and intellectual accountability held to the neoliberal and race-d production of knowledge. The historian Winichakul notes that the issue of imperial cartographies is not how it is a model of what it represents, but a model for projected imaginaries (1997). To reword the question in the context of Ainu erasure and/or visibility, the question becomes, "Whose Japan are you talking about?"

There is a deep disregard for geopolitics, histories, and the contingencies of national boundaries within the pursuit for the deep culture of this subject called Japan. Since a modernized Japan is no longer considered a "noble savage," but still not exactly the same, it is conferred a non-

synchronous contemporaneity for the researcher. In other words, while anthropology in the past was critiqued as producing allochronic representations of anthropology's Other, where time is spatially differentiated and coevality is denied (Fabian, 1983), time is now spatially differentiated but coevality is allowed. Visible and consumable representations of "Japanese" culture, traditions, uniqueness, including the tea ceremony, *taiko* drums, *buyō* dance, pop culture, otaku culture, may be specific to a specific population within and outside Japan, but gets conflated to represent "Japan" as a monolithic and mono-racial whole both within the analytical conclusion in a monograph and by the readers or consumers of these literatures. These monographs do examine the transnational flows of culture between Japan and its rest, usually in a reflexive initial encounter by the author in a performance outside Japan. This is followed by a fieldwork with some of its practitioners within Japan proper to delineate the production of the subject located within the structure of the nation state, to conclude in the political and/or cultural representation of the nation, sometimes even including an evocation of some kind of Japanese sensibility that remains an untranslatable excess. Coevality allows for the consumption of cultures categorized as nonsynchronous "traditions." Coeval consumption of the nonsynchronous is a global celebration of the neoliberal consumption of the strange or the Other – in this case, Japan – that requires the constant reproduction of "Japan" from outside and within Japan.

Sakai and Harootunian critique the assumed universality of the West against the production of Japan as the particular, pointed out the violence in erasing heteronomy on both sides, and the continuity of the empire in its new clothes. Race and nation plays an unseen hand vis-a-vis the invisible gaze of the researcher who is caught in the allure of other people's history and culture, and is financed by state or global institutions invested in maintaining national status quo (Harootunian 2017). Cultural categories are co-opted to explain either the absence of social change or its presence as a response to capital forces (Harootunian 2004, p.52). Writing from his position as an academic in North America and the deeply intertwined history of imperialism and colonialism between Japan and the US, Sakai (2010, 206) observes the continuity and complicity within Japan and U.S. colonialisms through the manufacture of postwar Japanese particularism and American universalism. He notes that Japanese Studies specialists'

viewing of Japan invariably constitutes the 'we' of the US or 'West' as the subjective position of the observer. In other words, the study of Japan has been a form whereby they identify themselves with the US or the West by fantasizing about their distinction from the object of their observation in particular, and from the rest of the world in general in a voyeuristic optics. Thus, they represent to themselves those exotic ones who are distinct

from, are not them, that is, the negative of themselves (Sakai 2000, p.464).

It is necessary to articulate the particularities of the other in order to sustain the universality of the self. Through a critique on global production of knowledge on race, Silva (2007) notes that this system is really a process on constructing a Western "I" that is dependent on the representation of its others. The discursive power behind this production of knowledge has a self-fulfilling effect that reproduces its logic of exclusion and obliteration. The double-edged sword of consuming difference requires a fetishization of both the consumer and the consumed. The utility of this consumption is especially significant to the consumer of difference, since this whole exercise is to sustain a visible and representable other within the logics of the self.

No matter how excellent the analysis, there remains the potential for a scholarship, whose framework and scholars are already embedded in existing frames of power, to be co-opted into nationalist and racist discourse. I am not implying that all ethnographies on Japan, or for that matter, on any nation, eliminate heterogeneity and sustain the universal gaze of the ethnographer. Bestor is well aware of the danger of his ethnography on Tsukiji fish market falling into the over-simplified and over-determined interpretational forces of the nation. In his introduction, he emphatically writes that this ethnography will not teach foreign businesspeople how to deal with Japan, it is not a "triumphal expose" on Japan's market, "No theory Z; no enigmas of power; no five rings; no free sushi" (Bestor 2004, pp.xv - xvi). The lack of free sushi is his refusal to make the familiar even more familiar. He tries to prevent his work from pandering to a convenient interpretation of a coherent 'Japan' vis-a-vis the 'West' narrative.

In short, I want to highlight the colonial histories, methodologies and structures behind the impetus for and the afterlife of the production of these dominant frames of representation. The geographical scale, context and time might be different for Yanagita, Benedict and various ethnographies conflated to represent the figure of the other. However, there is a framing mechanism at work. We focus on certain aspects of the subject that is deemed "of value" to our gaze, and serves indirectly to sustain our universality behind the empiricism of our gaze. We have ethnographic work that showcases the strange and unfamiliar, giving it a representational framework that gives consideration to various nuances, with the ultimate objective to be coherent and legible for the social world the scholars belong to. We see a nuanced ethnographic work on Japanese national culture in Benedict's *Chrysanthemum*, as against Yanagita's ethnology that showcases the heterogeneity of folklore in the countryside. The work of both scholars ended up co-opted as a justification of nationalist discourse; the former supports US imperialism (Lummis 1980, Boles 2006), while the latter supports Japanese imperialism (Harootunian 2009). The force of its reproduction can be seen in

both the focus of outside interest in a "Japan," and the internal naturalization of homogeneity in *nihonjinron* or the discourse on Japanese-ness within Japan. The figure of the Ainu is erased once within Japan and twice in the gaze of the outside scholar invested in discovering a Japan.

The first section of my paper is my attempt to work backward by focusing, not on the object of analysis, but on the gaze of the researcher and the social worlds they are embedded in, in order to show that the gaze is sustained by the object of its perception. The self is fetishized in the act of consumption so as to materialize the condition of a human in a social system. Thus, the politics of discernment allows a thing to be perceived, recognized, owned and allots a value to it so as to be governable (Simpson 2007, Povinelli 2002). However, I am not making this observation in the vacuum of historical relations between states and racial categories to conclude in the relativism of the observed and the observer. Under the rubrics of making the familiar familiar-er that sustain double layers - external perception of Japanese-ness upon internal perceptions of Japanese-ness - my informants have to be excised from this equation in order for this sum to add up. The presence of the Ainu and other minorities places a cog in the wheels of Japan, not because they are the minority that does not count in the final generalized analysis called Japan, but because they cannot be accounted for. They are doubly erased from our analysis of "Japan," even as their usage of the word kimono on their native clothes and the Japanese funeral continues to haunt and unsettle us.

Neither mimesis nor resistance: Another colonial recursion

The next section is a twist on making the familiar familiar-er through another re-configuration that, this time, renders native bodies hyper-visible to sustain the politics of neoliberal recognition, and maintain the recursive but opaque strands of colonialism that returns to buttress the logics of the familiar. Again, the three subjects under discussion are the unruly bodies of my informants, the figure of Japan, and the West in the form of the researcher. While a double erasure of the Ainu sustains the consumption of Japan for both a Euro-American universality and a homogeneous national identity within Japan, I argue that a hyper-visible Ainu sustains recursive forms of settler-colonialisms, colonialisms, and becomes another method to eliminate indigenous bodies both in the researchers' home settler or colonial nation-states and Japan itself.

The history of modern Japanese state, both prewar and postwar, is re-formed and re-constituted as a reaction, response and resistance to the expanding empires from the U.S. and Europe, and to remember my first point, vice-versa. That said, the narrative here is not simply to colonize or be colonized, since Japan will always be a latecomer to modernity subjected to constant scrutiny by Anglophone scholars and to constant self-questioning and refiguring by intellectuals in Japan,

even as the presence of my Ainu informants, the diversity of minorities in Japan and Japan's colonial legacy in Asia remains to haunt all those invested in the analysis of Japan. I hesitate to place Miyoshi's (2005) monograph as a point of origin but for the sake of an expedient example, I start with Japan's first embassy to the U.S. in 1860. The members of this mission were tasked to amend the 1858 Treaty, which compromised Japan's territorial sovereignty and sole authority in determining tariff rates. Similar to indigenous nations' first contact with Europe, Japan was committed to a game of foreign affairs and international laws in which they were not privy to the rules of interpretation and recognition.

The constant tension over the need to gain recognition from other civilizations was repeated during the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876. Jackson (1992) describes the exposition as a site that focused on the primacy of aesthetics and its connotative links to "civilization," where the ownership of Japan provides an ambiguous space for Britain and America's engagement to gain a better position within the rhetoric of superiority, and simultaneously, a space for Japan's manipulation of knowledge. While generic Japanese arts, featuring mostly ceramics, were the object of display in 1876, the discourse shifted about thirty years later to the display of global civilizational progress in the 1904 St. Louis Exposition. Exhibits included Native Indians, African pygmies, Patagonian from Argentina and most importantly, an Ainu delegation that signals Japan's arrival as a modern empire (Vanstone 1993). The beginnings of the Ainu as hyper-visible is thus figured as the conditions of possibility for Japan's modernity and, within this re-iteration of recursive colonialism in another space called Asia, the self-fulfilling proof of enlightenment's universal truth on modern civilizations through the figure of Japan.

Fast forward ninety years to 10 December 1992, at the General Assembly of United Nations in New York, when Giichi Nomura, a representative of the Ainu nation, gave a speech on the discrimination and marginalization his people experience under Japanese colonization of Hokkaido and this event as the epigraph in Siddle's comprehensive monograph *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan* (1996). He commented on the disjuncture in how Nomura's words fell on deaf ears due to the overwhelming "master narrative of seamless national narrative that dominates Japan's discursive space" (Siddle 1996, p.1). This becomes another recursive twist to various levels and forms of colonialism; within this time and space, a scholar located in Britain critiqued the nation of Japan for its obsession over its mono-ethnic homogeneity while New York City, an expropriated Lenape land, provided the space for Nomura's voice as an indigenous person to be heard. Here, I am not offering a palliative on how the (colonial) gaze shifted from a monolithic Japan to Japan's diversity in the form of its colonized. As evidenced in recent research on Japan, the category of "Japanese-ness" and national culture is always available for mobilization in the analysis of tea

culture (Surak 2013), dance (Hahn 2007) and kimono, despite invisible colonized bodies haunting us when they participate in the same symbols of the nation. The key question is how do literatures subsisting on the double erasure of the Ainu exist concurrently with the above examples of Ainu hyper-visibility?

Staying with my focus on the recursive elements of colonial structures and knowledge production between, across and within empires, the hyper-visible figure of the Ainu becomes the conditions of possibility for the historical amnesia of the collusion between various colonial "familiar" that instantiate the two expositions mentioned leading to Nomura's speech on occupied land. I am pointing to the local historical amnesia of colonial violence on Ainu lands by focusing on a visible Ainu on peripheral tourist sites within Japan on one level, and on another level, the English-language discourse on Japan that swings between the particularities of Japanese uniqueness and the specifically problematized (not problematic) hyper-visible subjects of Japan's colonized or minoritized, to become either a proof of Japan's exceptionality or failure. Another instance of Ainu hyper-visibility globally was during the 2008 G8 summit held in Hokkaido, during which the Ainu community and their allies organized a concurrent "Indigenous Peoples summit in Ainu Mosir" to pressure the state to recognize the Ainu as indigenous. I am not belittling the efforts of the transnational indigenous community leaders here and the importance of indigenous ties across settler-states, including the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand. Instead, I point out the global and local consensus on Japanese government's susceptibility to foreign pressure as the reason for the 2008 state recognition of Ainu, even though most people in the Ainu community realized it was an empty political gesture (Lewallen 2008). Cotterill (2011) notes this as an instance of a broken triangle between the Ainu, Japanese government and international organizations, where the Japanese government refuses to communicate with the Ainu, and the Ainu needs international organization to negotiate and pressure the Japanese government.

What is missing here is the figure of the researcher and the universal they inhabit that erases their own complicit colonial or settler-colonial worlds. The hyper-visible Ainu here is the conditions of possibility for the memory work that recuperates the historical context behind the Japanese empire and consequently, recuperates the recursivity of empire refracted from the West. The figure of the Ainu is either eliminated or made visible for the sustenance of a particular national or imperial trajectory, and I contend that this erasure or visibility is doubled to sustain the gaze of the Western familiar upon a Japan that is either naughty or nice.

I want to make an argument for the recursivity of colonialism across Eastern and Western nations, with the figure of the Ainu as the condition of its possibility. The problem lies not in

the contestations over the power to recognize or produce knowledge between the East and West, but in the different ways forms of colonial power resurfaces and re-connects in various contexts (Stoler 2016). Lowe's study on the genealogy of modern liberalism points to how:

social relations in the colonized Americas, Asia, and Africa were the condition of possibility for Western liberalism to think the universality of human freedom, however much freedoms for slaves, colonized, and indigenous peoples were precisely exempted by that philosophy. Modern history and social science pronounce the universality of liberal categories of development yet omit the global relations on which they depended (2015, p.16).

Even if the contents, contexts and strategies are different, the violent act of making difference to sustain the logics of a colonial familiar remains. The question I ask again and again is, "Whose Japan" and consequently, "Whose familiar is sustained?"

Let me return, again, to the hyper-visible figure of the Ainu that can only be coherent within a binary with Japan as the "bad" colonizer. Locally, they are hyper-visible within the allocated space of tourism and state sanctioned cultural revitalization (Cheung 2005, Hiwasaki 2000). This allows the state to sustain the performance of homogeneity in everyday space against the performance of democracy where the Ainu are allowed to be Ainu within spaces of exception (Siddle 2002, 2003). Globally, they are hyper-visible to sustain a critique of naughty Japanese colonialism, with the figure of the researcher's familiar, usually a nation-state with deep colonial ties to Japan and/or a settler-state, forgotten. Leo Ching (2005) points to Japan's continued disavowal of its war atrocities and coloniality as being due to the Allied Forces's truncated process of decolonization and Cold War geopolitics. Further to this point, I add that member states of the Allied forces cannot conceive indigenous peoples as sovereign people who are colonized, thus contributing to the lack of resolution within native spaces north and south of Japan, in the form of Okinawa and Hokkaido. They are doubly erased since indigenous bodies cannot be visible in a nation-state, but hyper-visible to recuperate global complicity in the unfinished empire of Japan on one hand, and the continued disavowal of sovereign indigenous bodies on the familiar lands occupied by Euro-American settlers.

To return to the theme of this special issue, the Ainu bodies I know are the ghostly excess that connects the body of discourse between the critique of and the critique in Japanese Studies. Their moments of double erasure and hyper-visibility is what makes these two trajectories coherent, legible, co-existing and more importantly, of value to our familiar. Here, our familiar refers to our narratives of liberal thought, freedom to access and consume cultures, and the de facto disavowal of settler appropriation and colonial collusion, as we write about other people's histories and cultures to end up reifying national boundaries (Harootunian 2017).

Stoler notes, "this capacity to know and not know simultaneously renders the space between ignorance and ignoring not an etymological exercise but a concerted political and personal one" (2016, pp.12-13). The moments of other people's "Oppression Olympics" may be performed unconsciously to maintain the self-illusory success of settler-colonial or colonial states, but nonetheless remains the complicit participation of national and international narratives in erasing the significance of Indigeneity that contains the conditions of their very own possibility (Medak-Saltzman 2015). The double layers of global and local discourse on "Japan" are sustained by both the double erasure and hyper-visibility of Ainu bodies. Here, I have teased out the conditions of possibility for the universal self of the Western figure through the various points of Ainu visibility and erasure with the constant questioning of "Whose Japan?" as a way to unsettle and open up the field for more questions.

References

- Beasley, W. G., 1987. *Japanese imperialism, 1894-1945*. Oxford [Oxfordshire], New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press.
- Befu, H., 2001. *Hegemony of homogeneity: An anthropological analysis of Nihonjinron*. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press.
- Bestor, T., 2004. *Tsukiji: The fish market at the center of the world*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Boles, E., 2006. Ruth Benedict's Japan: The benedictions of imperialism. *Dialectical Anthropology*, 30, 27-70.
- Byrd, J. A., 2011. *The transit of empire: Indigenous critiques of colonialism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Cheung, S.C.H., 2005. Rethinking Ainu heritage: A case study of an Ainu settlement in Hokkaido, Japan. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 11(3), 197-210.
- Christy, A. S., 2012. *A discipline on foot: Inventing Japanese native ethnography, 1910-1945*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Ching, L. T. S., 2005. *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the politics of identity formation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cotterill, S., 2011. Ainu success: The political and cultural achievements of Japan's indigenous minority, *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, [online] Volume 9 (12:2) Available from: <http://apjif.org/2011/9/12/Simon-Cotterill/3500/article.html>. [Accessed 31 July 2017]
- Fabian, J., 1983. *Time and the other: How anthropology makes its object*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Foucault, M., 2008. *The birth of biopolitics: Lectures at the College De France, 1978-79*. In: M. Senellart, ed. G. Burchell trans., New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fujitani, T., 1992. Electronic pageantry and Japan's "symbolic emperor". *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 51(4), 824-850
- Geertz, C., 1973. *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.

- Geertz, C., 1982. Historical metaphors and mythical realities: Structure in the early history of the Sandwich Islands kingdom. MARSHALL SAHLINS. *American Ethnologist*, 9(3), 583–584.
- Ginsburg, F., 1994. Culture/media: A (mild) polemic. *Anthropology Today*, 10(2), 5.
- Gordon, A., 2011. *Ghostly matters: Haunting and the sociological imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Graeber, D, and Da Col, G., 2011. Foreword: The return of ethnographic theory. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 1(1), vi-xxxv.
- Hahn, T., 2007. *Sensational knowledge: Embodying culture through Japanese dance*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan Univ. Press.
- Harootunian, H., 1998. Figuring the folk: History, poetics and representation. In: S. Vlastos, ed., *Mirror of modernity: Invented traditions of Modern Japan*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 144–162.
- Harootunian, H., 2004. *The Empire's New Clothes: Paradigm Lost, and Regained*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.
- Harootunian, H., 2009. Constitutive ambiguities: The persistence of modernism and fascism in Japan's modern history. In: A. Tansman, ed., *The culture of Japanese fascism*, Durham: Duke University Press, 80–111.
- Harootunian, H., 2017. Other people's history: Some reflections on the historian's vocation. *Japan Forum*, 29(2), 139–153.
- Hashimoto, M., 1998. Chihō: Yanagita Kunio's 'Japan.' In: S. Vlastos, ed., *Mirror of modernity: Invented traditions of Modern Japan*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 133–143.
- Hiwasaki, L., 2000. Ethnic tourism in Hokkaido and the shaping of Ainu identity. *Pacific Affairs*, 73(3), 393-412
- Jackson, A., 1992. Imagining Japan: The Victorian perception and acquisition of Japanese culture." *Journal of Design History*, 5(4), 245–256.
- lewallen, a., 2008. Indigenous at last! Ainu grassroots organizing and the Indigenous Peoples Summit in Ainu Mosir. *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, [online] Volume 6(11) Available from: http://apjif.org/-ann_elise-lewallen/2971. [Accessed 31 July 2017].
- lewallen, a., 2016. *The fabric of indigeneity: Ainu identity, gender, and settler colonialism in Japan*. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press.
- Lowe, L., 2015. *The intimacies of four continents*. Durham: Duke University Press
- Lummis, D., 1981. *Uchinaru gaikoku: "Kiku to katana" saikō*. Tokyo: Jiji Tsushinsha.
- Mason, M., 2012. *Dominant narratives of colonial Hokkaido and Imperial Japan: Envisioning the periphery and the Modern Nation-State*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Medak-Saltzman, D., 2015. Empire's haunted logics: Comparative colonialisms and the challenges of incorporating indigeneity. *Critical Ethnic Studies*, 1(2), 11.
- Miyoshi, M., 2005. *As we saw them: The first Japanese embassy to the United States*. Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books.
- Moreton-Robinson, A., 2015. *The white possessive: Property, power, and indigenous sovereignty*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Nakao, K., 2005. The Imperial Past of Anthropology in Japan. In: J. Robertson, ed., *A Companion to the Anthropology of Japan*. Malden, MA, Blackwell Pub., 19-35
- Povinelli, E. A., 2007. *The cunning of recognition: Indigenous alterities and the making of Australian multiculturalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Price, D. H., 2016. *Cold War anthropology: The CIA, the Pentagon, and the growth of dual use anthropology*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Duus, P., Myers, R., Peattie, M., 1996. *The Japanese wartime empire, 1931-1945*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Robertson, J. E., 2005. *A companion to the anthropology of Japan*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.
- Ryang, S., 2002. Chrysanthemum's strange life: Ruth Benedict in postwar Japan. *Asian Anthropology*, 1(1), 87–116.
- Sahlins, M.D., 1981. *Historical metaphors and mythical realities: Structure in the early history of the Sandwich Islands kingdom*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Sahlins, M.D., and Patrick V.K., 1992. *Anahulu: The anthropology of history in the Kingdom of Hawaii*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Said, E.W., 2003. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin.
- Sakai, N., 2000. Subject And substratum: On Japanese imperial nationalism. *Cultural Studies*, 14(3/4), 462–530.
- Sakai, N., 2010. On romantic love and military violence: Transpacific imperialisms and U.S.-Japan complicity. In: K.L. Camacho & S. Shigematsu ed., *Militarized currents: Toward a decolonized future in Asia and the Pacific*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 205–222.
- Siddle, R., 1996. *Race, resistance and the Ainu of Japan*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Siddle, R., 2002. An epoch-making event? The 1997 Ainu Cultural Promotion Act and its impact. *Japan Forum*, 14(3), 405–423.
- Siddle, Richard., 2003. The limits to citizenship in Japan: Multiculturalism, indigenous rights and the Ainu. *Citizenship Studies*, 7(4), 447–462.
- Silva, D.F., 2007. *Toward a global idea of race*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Silva, N.K., 2004. *Aloha betrayed: Native Hawaiian resistance to American colonialism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Smits, G., 1999. *Visions of Ryukyu: Identity and ideology in early -modern thought and politics*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Spivak, G. C., 1990. *The post-colonial critic: Interviews, strategies, dialogues*. New York: Routledge, 50–60.
- Stoler, A.L., 1995. *Race and the education of desire: Foucault's history of sexuality and the colonial order of things*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Stoler, A.L., 2016. *Duress: Imperial durabilities in our times*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Surak, K., 2013. Making tea, making Japan: Cultural nationalism in practice. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Tierney, R.T., 2010. *Tropics of savagery: The culture of Japanese Empire in comparative Frame*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Vanstone, J.W., 1993. The Ainu group at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, 1904. *Arctic Anthropology*, 30(2), 77-91.

Walker, B.L., 2001. *The conquest of Ainu lands: Ecology and culture in Japanese expansion, 1590-1800*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Winichakul, T., 1997. *Siam mapped: A history of the geo-body of a nation*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Wolfe, P., 2006. Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 8(4), 387-409.