

# East-West Connections: Review of Asian Studies

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Edited by  
David Jones

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# East-West Connections: Review of Asian Studies

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In 1990, the Asian Studies Development Program was established by the East-West Center and University of Hawai`i to assist two and four-year colleges and universities incorporate Asian studies into the undergraduate curriculum.

As part of its goal of improving the long-term capacity of American higher education to teach about Asia, ASDP offers a variety of programs aimed at faculty, curriculum and institutional development, including summer residential institutes in Hawai`i, field seminars in Asia, and U.S. mainland workshops. ASDP provides on-going support for its alumni and other interested educators including the annual ASDP meeting, the ASDP newsletter, an active listserv for alumni and others, a website of undergraduate course syllabi and bibliographies on Asian topics and, more recently, East-West Connections, an annual volume of edited papers from the ASDP national meeting and submissions from outside the conference.

ASDP works collaboratively with institutions committed to developing and sustaining Asian studies programs by advising on strategies for developing Asian studies programs that include building faculty expertise, sources of funding and support from private foundations and government agencies, and the development of library and other resources. Close to 500 colleges and universities throughout the U.S. are involved in the ASDP network, and there are 20 ASDP regional centers that collaborate with each other as members of the Association of Regional Centers.

ASDP has received funding and support for its programs from the Freeman Foundation, Henry Luce Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, Korea Foundation, Fulbright Group Travel Abroad Program, and ASDP alumni, as well as the East-West Center and University of Hawai`i. Many ASDP alumni are actively involved in ASDP and are integral to its activities and accomplishments.

Elizabeth Buck and Roger T. Ames are Co-Directors of the Asian Studies Development Program.

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The Association of Regional Centers for Asian Studies (ARCAS) is composed of the 20 regional centers of the Asian Studies Development Program. ARCAS is a non-profit organization affiliated with and works closely with ASDP in such initiatives as the development and delivery of faculty development workshops and ASDP's national conferences. As an independent non-profit organization, ARCAS is operated and financed cooperatively by its member institutions of the regional centers of ASDP. ARCAS is committed to promoting the study of Asia and Asian cultures in undergraduate programs at colleges and universities throughout the United States by providing high quality programs for faculty, administrators, staff, and students at member institutions as well as other institutions served by the ASDP regional centers. The purpose of these programs is to enhance teaching, learning, and research in Asian studies.

Joseph L. Overton is the Executive Director of the Association of Regional Centers for Asian Studies.

### **East-West Center**

The East-West Center is an education and research organization established by the U.S. Congress in 1960 to strengthen relations and understanding among the peoples and nations of Asia, the Pacific, and the United States. The Center contributes to a peaceful, prosperous, and just Asia Pacific community by serving as a vigorous hub for cooperative research, education, and dialogue on critical issues of common concern to the Asia Pacific region and the United States. Funding for the Center comes from the U.S. government, with additional support provided by private agencies, individuals, foundations, corporations, and the governments of the region.

Charles E. Morrison is President of the East-West Center.

### **The University of Hawai`i**

The School of Hawaiian, Asian and Pacific Studies (SHAPS) represents the University of Hawai`i's commitment to education and research on Asia and the Pacific. SHAPS has the largest resource

facility for Asian and Pacific studies in the world. Established in 1987, SHAPS offers academic programs in Asian Studies, Hawaiian Studies, and Pacific Islands Studies. SHAPS helps to coordinate the efforts of some 300 UH faculty who offer more than 600 courses related to Hawai`i, Asia, and the Pacific. The Asian Studies Development Program works primarily with the centers for Chinese Studies, Japanese Studies, Korean Studies, South Asian Studies and Southeast Asian Studies.

M.R.C. Greenwood is President of the University of Hawai`i.

East-West Connections: Review of Asian Studies  
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## Editor's Note: For Doug Shrader

Welcome to the tenth anniversary volume of *East-West Connections*. This issue marks a milestone of publishing scholarly articles on content and pedagogical topics. Ten years ago I pitched the idea of *Connections* to Betty Buck, co-director of the Asian Studies Development Program and Director of Education at the East-West Center. Without hesitation Betty offered her support of the idea and the journal became a call for yet another transformation in ASDP's evolution. What started as a modest proposal has now metamorphosed into something far more complex and vibrant than our original intention of a Selected Proceedings of the ASDP national conferences. Although still connected to the conferences, *Connections* has grown steadily and at present we are now approaching yet another transformation in the journal's unfolding. The original model for *Connections* came from Doug Shrader, a long time supporter of the ASDP project. The Oneonta Philosophy Conference, which Doug started at his institution, provided the model for eight successful years of the undergraduate philosophy conferences and accompanying Selected Proceedings that my students and I started in Atlanta. This Selected Proceedings model became the originary moment for *East-West Connections* as well.

So many good ideas came from Doug. Not only was he a good philosopher, Doug was more than anything else a dedicated and devoted teacher. Over the years, many students at SUNY Oneonta prospered under his wise mentoring and benefited from his philosophical openness and dedication. Doug Shrader became

a friend of many in ASDP over the years. Over my sixteen year participation in ASDP, he became a supporter, colleague, and a very dear friend of mine.

Last summer, after glimpsing his death with heart surgery in Honolulu, Doug was later struck down by a car as he walked on a sidewalk in Kaneohe where he was visiting his daughter and grandson. Several days after recovering from the surgery, Doug presented at the 50th East-West Center Association Conference in Honolulu. Doug was indefatigable in spirit and energy. Although I would see Doug only on occasion, my closeness to and respect for him grew over the years. Some nights ago while in Honolulu for a wedding of a beloved former student, Doug came to me in a dream; he came to me with that smile of his, that smile that could bring light and fullness to a dark and empty space. He said nothing to me in the dream; he just nodded and smiled. That nod—a nod I remembered of his on so many occasions when he was understanding a point, finding himself in agreement with some worthwhile project, or just as he was having one of his many insights that emerged somehow through his interactions with others—indicated it was alright on the other side of nothingness.

Perhaps more about me and how much I miss him—and will continue to miss him—than about Doug himself communicating from some great beyond, I was nevertheless elated to see him smile once again. On January 4, 1960 Albert Camus was killed in an automobile accident in the small town of Villeblevin, far from the Paris where he was traveling to with his publisher and friend Michel Gallimard. Gallimard was driving and somehow lost control of the woefully designed Facel Vega, a now extinct species of a four seat sports car that rivaled Mercedes, but only in its looks. In Camus' pocket was a train ticket, his original plan for travel that day. Camus fought the nihilism of his day with absurdity and the absurdity of his death is not lost on us, even fifty years after the train ticket was discovered in his pocket. Doug's death has been unimaginable for us because of its absurdity: to be struck down on a sidewalk is almost unthinkable and with its proximate juxtaposition to his heart surgery just weeks before is the saddest of ironies. Doug too fought

the nihilism of our own day, not with the philosophical absurdism of a Camus, but with positive action to improve whatever context was at hand for him. Doug Shrader made things better for those around him, for those contexts in which he found himself—for those of us who were fortunate enough to enter the space and time of his being.

I dedicate this issue of *East-West Connections*, the journal Doug helped start, to him. I dedicate this issue to his work, to his family, students, and to his colleagues. For them, I realize Doug's absence is more difficult than for those of us who only saw him on occasion. I wish for them what time brings to the death of a loved one: some peace from the turmoil of the absence of the loved one who is all of a sudden gone and the lessening of the suffering of that person's absence and its continued presence in their lives. May the memory of Doug's smile serve as a marker along the way that lights the darkness that we feel all too often in our lives.

This issue is divided into three sections: *Poetics, Culture, and Crossing Over*; *In the Field—Culture, Religion, and Health*; and *Political Interactions and Relations*. As is our practice, articles in this issue extend across a number of the disciplines found in Asian studies and across geographical lines. In *Poetics, Culture, and Crossing Over*, three articles focus on literature in China, Indonesia, and India. In "Notions of Image and Emotion across Culture and Time," Jianqing Zheng examines how imagery occupies a central position in classical Chinese poetry and how the connection between human feelings and nature is essential to the Chinese poetic tradition. Following a somewhat different track, but equally focused on the natural environment and literature, is Shudong Chen's analysis of the Indonesian novel *And the War Is Over: A Novel*. In his "Ginsberg, India, and the Holiness of Dirt," Raymond-Jean Frontain moves us from China and Indonesia to India with his treatise on the aesthetic and ethical dimensions that Alan Ginsberg developed as a result of his experiences in India.

In the next section, *In the Field—Culture, Religion, and Health*, the current state of mental health services in Cambodia is explored by Nancy Janus. Interviews with counselors and social workers in fourteen NGOs in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap and at the

Royal University of Phnom Penh provide her with data to better understand how practicing counselors are currently being trained in Cambodia. Also in this section, Michele Marion discusses “Culture, Context, and The Qur’an.” In her article, she investigates feminist issues in the Qur’an. Her article is based upon several Fulbright-Hays awards to Brunei, Malaysia, and Morocco.

In *Political Interactions and Relations*, the final section of this issue, Koushik Ghosh studies differences of shame across cultures in his “Shin-gate: Misunderstanding the Power of Shame in South Korea.” He uses Shin-gate as an example of the difference of perceptions between the ways in which East-Asians and Americans perceive and respond to the sense of shame. In her “The Rise of China within American Hegemony,” Sungshin Kim investigates the rise of China and evaluates the two emerging major issues in public debate on U.S.-China relations: the growing economic interdependency between the U.S. and China, and the possibility of military competition between these two powers. In her article she provides an alternative analysis of how these two states participate and are affected by larger, global, structures of exchange and competition.

Finally, we are delighted to present our readers with a feature article by the distinguished scholar of Japanese history, William M. Tsutsui. In “Sunrise, Sunset: Japan in the American Imagination since World War II,” Tsutsui suggests how the orientalized and feminized image of a geisha has figured prominently in the American imagination of Japan. By tracing the changes and continuities in American impressions of Japan since World War II, he argues that although American popular culture showed a rising anxiety about Japan’s postwar “economic miracle,” Americans generally have envisioned Japan as an exotic, inscrutable, and inferior place.

The *East-West Connections* staff is most pleased to offer this strong issue to its readers and dedicate it to our dear friend Doug Shrader. This anniversary issue marks an evolutionary process of the last ten years in our desire to create a unique venue for the presentation of scholarly work that provides readers with interesting, informative, and thought-provoking engagements with a variety of topics in Asian studies. *East-West Connections* enjoys ongoing support from

its contributors, generosity from its editors, and funding from its patrons and ASDP National Conference registrants. We continue to appreciate the moral support from Terry Bigalke (Director of Education at the East-West Center), Gordon Ring (East-West Center Alumni Officer), and Charles Morrison (President of the East-West Center). We very much value our grounding in the Asian Studies Development Program and are grateful to the ASDP staff of Betty Buck, Roger Ames, Peter Hershock, Grant Ootoshi, and Sandy Osaki. Without being rooted in ASDP, *Connections* would be adrift in the vast sea of pluralism. *East-West Connections* is commissioned by the Association of Regional Centers for Asian Studies of the Asian Studies Development Program.

This issue was in part put together by Paul Dunscomb. I remain grateful to the *Connections*' editorial staff of Ronnie Littlejohn and Jeffrey Dippmann. I am once again most grateful to Harriette Grissom for her excellent and prompt copy editing that has significantly improved the quality of and timely printing of *East-West Connections*. John L. Crow, our production editor, has taken us once again from electronic text to a quality journal design. Michele Marion has graciously agreed to join the *Connections* editorial staff as an associate editor and we are delighted to have her. Michele brings dedication, commitment, a strong work ethic, and superb organizational skills to the journal. As we move forward into the next transformative phase of *East-West Connections*, we will need her talents to complement our existing ones.

*East-West Connections* continues its commitment to cultivate a special place for publishing in Asian studies. Doug Shrader would have been proud and pleased at how far we've come from that day when we first discussed the journal's conception. Doug will be continually missed, steadfastly respected, and will always be dearly loved.

—David Jones

## Contributors

**Shudong Chen** is professor of humanities at Johnson County Community. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. in English from the University of Kansas and has been teaching since 1999. He is author of *Henry James: The Essayist Behind the Novelist* (Mellen 2003) and various articles on cross-cultural dialogue, including the forthcoming “The Reality-Checking and-Shaping ‘Candid Camera’: The Rising Power of TV Drama Series in China” in John Lent and Lorna Fitzsimmons’s collection on Asian Popular Arts. Since 2000, his research has concentrated on cultural phenomena that reflect subtle but vital differences beneath well-observed similarities and essential but overlooked similarities behind noticeable differences. He has initiated and co-led study abroad tours to China since 2005 and to Japan in 2009 and to Japan and China in 2010.

**Raymond-Jean Frontain** is professor of English at the University of Central Arkansas and editor of *ANQ: American Notes and Queries*. His most recent publication is *A Talent for the Particular: Critical Essays on the Novels of R. K. Narayan*, co-edited with Basudeb Chakraborti (Delhi: Worldview, 2011).

**Koushik Ghosh** graduated from Jadvpur University and pursued graduate studies at Washington State University. Based in Seattle, he is professor and co-chair of economics at Central Washington University. With research interests in globalization and inequality, his recent publications include “Stock Prices and Economic Growth: Are They Related?” and “The Effect of Social Security on Personal Saving in the Short-Run and the Long-Run: A Time Series

Analysis” (both with Peter J. Saunders) in the *Journal of Economics* and the *Indian Journal of Economics and Business*; “Teaching World Economic Issues in the General Education Curriculum, with an Emphasis on Asian Case Studies” in *East-West Connections*; and his *Contemporary Economics: An Applications Approach* is published by M.E. Sharpe.

**Nancy Janus** is professor of human development at Eckerd College. Her doctorate is in counseling psychology. She teaches courses in individual and multicultural counseling to human development and psychology students at Eckerd. Professor Janus has traveled extensively in Cambodia since 2003 and has particular interest in the psycho-social rehabilitation of the country.

**Sungshin Kim** is an assistant professor in history at North Georgia College and State University. She earned her master’s degree from Fudan University and a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. In her dissertation and ongoing research, she focuses on political culture in China and Korea’s modern history. The article published here is the written version of a presentation given at a conference on Chinese-American relations at North Georgia College and State University in February 2010.

**Michele Marion** directs the Center for International Studies and teaches sociology at Paradise Valley Community College. She has had two Fulbright-Hays awards in Malaysia and Morocco. She serves on the executive boards of the East-West Center’s Asian Studies Development Program Alumni Chapter, East-West Center Alumni Association, and the Association of Regional Centers for Asian Studies.

**William M. Tsutsui** is dean of Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences and professor of history at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. A specialist in the economic and cultural history of twentieth-century Japan, he is the author or editor of eight books including *Manufacturing Ideology: Scientific Management in*

*Twentieth-Century Japan* (1998), *Godzilla on My Mind: Fifty Years of the King of Monsters* (2004) and, most recently, *Japanese Popular Culture and Globalization* (2010). His current research focuses on the environmental impacts of World War II on Japan and the history of the phrase “Made in Japan.”

**Jianqing Zheng** is chair and professor of English at Mississippi Valley State University and author of *The Landscape of Mind*, editor of *Valley Voices* and *Poetry South*, and coeditor of *Essays on African American Literature*. He was a Fulbright Scholar in 2009 and a recipient of an NEH grant on Richard Wright. His essays have been published in journals including *Paideuma*, *The Explicator*, *ANQ*, and *The Southern Quarterly*. His book, *The Other World of Richard Wright: Perspectives on His Haiku*, was published by the University Press of Mississippi in May 2011.

# Sunrise, Sunset: Japan in the American Imagination since World War II

William M. Tsutsui

## Abstract

This essay traces the changes and continuities in American impressions of Japan since World War II, focusing particularly on social science scholarship and depictions in American popular culture. Pop images of Japan in the United States have generally paralleled public and academic perceptions of Japan's relative economic strength and international influence. Although American popular culture showed rising anxiety about Japan (as well as desire to learn from the Japanese example) in the wake of Japan's postwar "economic miracle," Americans have generally envisioned Japan as an exotic, inscrutable and inferior place. Both in the wake of World War II and at the start of a new millennium, the orientalized, feminized image of a geisha has figured prominently in the American imagination of Japan.

Twenty years or so ago, Japan experts in the United States were on top of the world. Back in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the Japanese economy flew high, Americans seemed fascinated with Japan: audiences were easy to find, college classes were always full, the media overflowed with reports from across the Pacific. Many Americans viewed Japan with great admiration, some with hostility and resentment, and a majority perhaps with a kind of yearning, an envy tinged with nostalgia. Japan of the late 1980s seemed an eerie reincarnation of 1950s America, a nation in its glory days, economically potent, respected internationally, rock solid socially and politically. Japan seemed to have everything that America had somehow lost: safe streets, stable families, great schools, plenty of jobs and ever-

increasing material wealth. Just twenty years ago, Japan was a model, a vision, a threat, even a rebuke, that a United States down on itself could not ignore.

But in recent years, things have seemed far, far different. In the U.S., patriotism and national self-confidence swelled with the new millennium while Japan stumbled (indeed, stumbled badly) in the years following 1990. Japan has been mired in a tenacious recession for most of the past two decades, and there is no end in sight. Japanese society, once the model of probity and order, has frayed and fractured: gassings on the subway, schoolboy murderers, schoolgirl prostitutes, even the unfolding soap opera in the Japanese imperial family have badly tarnished Western images of Japan's tightly knit social fabric. Amidst the ongoing crisis, the central institutions of Japanese society—the conservative political establishment, the once-esteemed government bureaucracy, the corporate elites—have appeared rudderless and impotent. From our perspective at the start of the twenty-first century, the very notion of a “Japanese economic miracle” seems like ancient history. And indeed, in some ways, it is: few Americans can remember when Japan was an impoverished developing nation, few remember the days when Japanese products were synonymous with “cheap and shoddy,” and soon few will even remember when Nissans were called Datsuns or the days when VCRs were made in Osaka rather than Guangzhou or Tijuana. To Generation X, Generation Y and their successors, nothing about Japan likely seems that miraculous, and most certainly not its economy. Indeed, to most Americans today, Japan and Japan's economic prospects seem rather irrelevant, not only in light of the very immediate problem of America's own economic woes, but even in comparison to the challenge of China, the process of globalization or the endless threat of international terrorism. The Japanese economic miracle is long gone and, just perhaps, is not even worth remembering.

However appealing this option might be, I am a historian and thus I think it is important to look back and get some sense of Japan's economic and social history of the past 60 years, examining a narrative that was (until quite recently) framed as an unparalleled “success story,” but which now may seem more like a roller-coaster

ride of thrilling ascents and harrowing free falls. Rather than presenting endless charts of economic indicators, or a wearying overview of Japan's crabbed political system, or a depressing litany of Japan's failings over the past decade, I would like to examine the rise and fall of Japan's miracle economy from a somewhat more unconventional—and, hopefully, somewhat more interesting—angle.

In 1985, when America's fears of Japan's rising economic power were near their zenith, a *New York Times*/CBS News poll asked 1,500 Americans to name a famous Japanese person. The top three responses were Hirohito, the Hong Kong martial arts star Bruce Lee, and Godzilla. This is, needless to say, a stinging indictment of American public knowledge of Japan: even in the days of Japan's greatest economic successes, Americans had plenty of stereotypes about Japan but little solid knowledge of Japanese history, culture or political economy. At the same time, these survey results are also a testament to the impact of popular culture icons—from Japanese royalty to a Chinese movie idol to a man in a green latex suit—on American perceptions of East Asia and its place in the world. Japan's cultural influence on contemporary America, one might well argue, is even more profound, pervasive and enduring than its economic or political impact.

Thus, my aim in this essay is to provide a whirlwind tour of Japanese history since 1945 by focusing largely on American images of Japan over the past sixty years. How have Americans—from academic specialists to the proverbial man or woman in the street—viewed Japan, its culture and its economic prospects? How have our perceptions—our stereotypes of Japan—changed over time? How, if at all, have they stayed the same? What, in the end, does this tell us about Japan, about ourselves and about the future course of U.S.-Japanese relations?

### Japan as Geisha

Let's go back, then, a full six decades, to 1950. Japan at this point was still occupied by the United States and was still struggling to recover from World War II. Social dislocation, political instability and economic trauma were the facts of life in the years immediately follow-

ing defeat. The American military had done its best to bomb Japan back to the stone-age, and Japanese industry was crippled first by the physical destruction of war, then by the postwar hyperinflation. In the wake of the conflict, Japan suffered from massive unemployment, endemic shortages of raw materials, slumping agricultural production and the loss of overseas markets.

In 1950, few observers could even imagine Japanese economic self-sufficiency, let alone an economic miracle. At the time of Japan's surrender, some in the U.S. government at least briefly entertained the notion of stripping Japan entirely of industry and returning it to subsistence agriculture. Few in Douglas MacArthur's occupying army took such a draconian view, but many believed that Japan had little chance of reestablishing itself as a major industrial power. Although Japan seemed to have the fundamentals for economic prosperity—well-educated workers, experience with modern industrial production, a serviceable financial infrastructure—American commentators were often fixated on Japan's handicaps: no capital, no technology, no natural resources. Even in the rosiest scenarios, Japan could only hope to aspire to dignified impoverishment. Japan's great advantage was seen as its cheap labor and dextrous, docile workers: the future lay in agriculture and light industry (such as textiles), oriented to export markets largely in Asia. The idea that Japan should prioritize heavy industrial development, such as steel, automobiles, shipbuilding and so on, seemed like an overly ambitious pipe dream to most. The notion that the Japanese people would rise above subsistence levels, and that domestic demand for consumer goods would one day fuel economic growth, would have seemed the stuff of fantasy to almost every informed observer at the time.

American perceptions of Japan in 1950 were shaped not only by postwar prostration of the nation, but also by the experience of World War II and America's triumphant victory, as well as by a certain stock of longer-standing Western cultural stereotypes of Japan. As John Dower has documented, America's wartime propaganda machine generated a wealth of images of the enemy Japanese, depicting them sometimes as fearsome supermen and immoral fiends, more often as insects, rodents or simians (Dower). Wartime academic stud-

ies of Japanese “national character” also created enduring impressions of Japan: Ruth Benedict, in her famous work *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, stressed the paradoxical, even schizophrenic nature of Japanese culture: “The Japanese are, to the highest degree, both aggressive and unaggressive, both militaristic and aesthetic, both insolent and polite, rigid and adaptable, submissive and resentful of being pushed around, loyal and treacherous, brave and timid, conservative and hostile to new ways” (Benedict 3). Benedict’s reading of the Japanese was, in the larger range of possibilities, a relatively sensitive and perceptive one. Another basic analysis proposed during the war suggested that harsh toilet training practices had produced in Japan a nation of individuals who were compulsively clean, polite and obsequious, but for whom (in the words of Geoffrey Gorer) “behind the rituals of the individual obsessive can always be discovered a deeply hidden, unconscious and extremely strong desire to be aggressive” (quoted in Johnson 6).

By the early 1950s, however, the dominant American impression of Japan was not that of a race of schizophrenic, repressed bullies whose potty training had gone terribly wrong. Instead, I would suggest, it was the image of the geisha that had come to define Japan. Considering Japan in this feminized, orientalized form does, of course, have a long history in the West: *Madame Butterfly*, the story of Townsend Harris and Okichi, and Pierre Loti’s *Madame Chrysanthemum* were all from this mold and established a stereotype of Japan that would be vigorously revived following World War II. Loti’s book, first published in the 1880s, makes remarkably unpalatable reading today: it is framed as the memoir of a French sailor in Japan who romances the fragile and beautiful geisha Madame Chrysanthemum. Loti’s tale is outrageously condescending throughout, but reaches a real crescendo at the end, when the sailor takes leave of his lover and her country:

Well, little musume, let us part good friends; one last kiss even, if you like. I took you to amuse me; you have not perhaps succeeded very well, but after all you have done what you could; given me your little face, your little curtsies, your little music; in short, you have been pleasant enough in your Japanese way. And who knows, perchance I may yet think of you sometimes when I recall this glorious summer [and] these pretty quaint gardens. (Loti 323)

Loti's spiritual heir in the 1950s was none other than James Michener, whose deliciously awful novel *Sayonara* was on the *New York Times* bestseller list for 21 weeks in 1954. This work, thankfully one of Michener's shorter efforts, is the story of two U.S. soldiers in MacArthur's occupation forces. One, a goodhearted but none too bright private, marries a Japanese woman but ends up committing suicide when the Army refuses him permission to take his wife back home to Oklahoma. The other is an ambitious major with a bright future, who almost torpedoed his promising career by taking up with the delicate and beautiful Hana-ogi, a member of the famed Takarazuka Review. The key word here is "almost," since at the end of the novel the aspiring major unceremoniously dumps Hana-ogi for a promotion state-side and a nice blond girl with pearls and good teeth. Michener's account of Hana-ogi's "Dear John" letter would have made Pierre Loti proud:

As I read it, I could hear her gentle voice groping its way through my language:

*Darring,*

*Pretty soon our vast night. I Tokyo go. You America go. I not think fire die. Frame not go out. I think you many times.* (Then she added a passage from her phrase book. . .) *Ever your devoted and humble servant*

And the letter was signed with the Chinese characters representing her name. How strange they were, those characters, how beautiful, how deeply hidden from me behind the wall of Asia! (Michener 207)

In the aftermath of Japan's defeat, with the nation shattered industrially and psychologically, dependent on the United States for economic aid and political guidance, it probably should come as no surprise that American attitudes toward Japan were patronizing and that Japanese culture was feminized and perceived as somehow passive, premodern, tradition-bound, timeless and (needless to say) inferior.

### Miracles and Monsters

The 1950s was, on the whole, a very good decade for Japan economically. The Korean War was an important catalyst: U.S. military procurements pulled the Japanese economy out of its postwar funk and gave much-needed impetus to the manufacturing sector. Japan's

reentry into international trade proceeded smoothly and many of the overseas markets lost during World War II were progressively regained. Investment in new productive capacity and the introduction of the latest industrial technology from the West (such as the now-infamous case of the transistor) proceeded briskly. By 1954, Japan had clawed it way back to prewar levels of GNP. In 1956, one government economic report boldly declared that “the postwar period is over.” In the latter half of the 1950s, Japanese national income grew at an average rate of 9.1 percent a year; by the 1960s, the real heyday of the miracle economy, annual growth averaged well over 10 percent.

Many elements contributed to this phenomenal expansion: much attention has been given to the role of the government bureaucracy in Japan’s economic successes; some commentators have stressed the importance of Japan’s neo-mercantilism (closed markets at home and ruthless export drives abroad); others have pointed to Japan’s human resources, its skilled workers, able managers and cooperative unionists; a few have also accused the Japanese of getting a “free ride” on the path to prosperity, milking America for the latest technology and sheltering (at low cost) under Uncle Sam’s military umbrella during the hottest decades of the Cold War. In recent years, however, many scholars have begun to acknowledge what may actually have been the most important factor in Japan’s economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s: while the Japanese are usually depicted as the world’s greatest savers, they have also proven to be some of the world’s foremost spenders. And this was never more true than in the decades after World War II, when Japan’s consumers, apparently compensating for the hardships and deprivations of the war years, bought at unprecedented levels.

The Japanese love witty slogans, and during the miracle economy some of the catchiest and most compelling slogans revolved around consumer desire and the intense social pressure in middle-class Japan to “keep up with the Tanakas.” In the late 1950s, the acquisitive dream of the average Japanese family was the “three S’s”: *senpūki*, *sentaku*, *suihanki* (electric fan, washing machine and electric rice cooker). By the mid-1960s, enough Japanese had realized these dreams of

electric appliance ownership that expectations had to be redefined: hence the “three C’s”: *kaa*, *kūrā*, *karā terebi* (car, air conditioner and color television). By the 1970s, only the “three J’s” would suffice for any self-respecting Japanese suburbanite: *jūeru*, *jetto*, *jūtaku* (jewelry, overseas vacations and a home of one’s own). Japan’s economy made great strides in the two decades following World War II, and domestic consumers were, in many respects, both the instigators and the beneficiaries of Japan’s “miraculous” growth.

Japan’s economic achievements during the 1950s had been largely lost on the West, where “Made in Japan” was still more of a joke (or an insult) than a threat. From the early 1960s, though, some Western observers had begun to take notice of a new economic competitor in East Asia. In the fall of 1962, *The Economist* of London published a series of articles on the Japanese economy, subsequently released as a book entitled *Consider Japan*. This thin but influential volume documented Japan’s economic progress since World War II and opened with the controversial (but entirely apt) premise that “Obviously in these circumstances the British economy has lessons to learn from the Japanese, not the other way round” (Correspondents of *The Economist* 15). As *The Economist’s* study began, “The growth of the Japanese economy in the past 10 years has been one of the most extraordinary economic stories of all times. Here is a case where the whole way of life and prospects of a people have been transformed within a decade, and with the aid of an economic policy that has been singularly little studied in the West” (Correspondents of *The Economist* ix). But while *Consider Japan* drew some American and European attention, few of its readers took too seriously its clarion call to apply Japanese lessons abroad. *The Economist* may have put Japan on the radar screens of policymakers in the West, but the vast majority continued to regard Japan as an economic anomaly, a cultural curiosity and, for the most part, an inconsequential distraction.

A similar perspective seems to have characterized American pop culture images of Japan in the early 1960s. The geisha stereotype remained, as did an exoticized, aesthetic view of Japanese culture much at odds with the reality of rapid economic growth and the commodity fetishism of electric fans and rice cookers. By the 1960s, however,

America had also come to embrace a new cultural icon from Japan, one considerably larger than a bonsai, more lethal than a geisha and more radioactive than a Zen rock garden. This new Japanese export was, of course, Godzilla.

The original Godzilla film—*Gojira* in Japanese—was made in 1954 and was intended as serious fare for an adult audience. The story of a prehistoric survivor made monstrous by American H-bomb testing had a sober message: *Gojira* was essentially an anti-nuclear fable which drew effectively upon Japanese audiences' feelings of vulnerability, memories of destruction in World War II and lingering antipathy towards the United States. In the export version of this movie, titled *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* and released in 1956, such potentially provocative themes were excised; in their place was inserted Raymond Burr as the voyeuristic American journalist Steve Martin, who provides an apolitical play-by-play account of the destruction of Tokyo. The Godzilla films (there have now been 28 made) went on, of course, to become staples of American pop culture, the campy delights of Saturday double-features and late-night reruns (Tsutsui).

Conjecturing how Godzilla helped shape American images of Japan is no easy matter, yet it seems that the Godzilla films tended to reinforce (rather than recast) existing American stereotypes. The monster was portrayed as irrational, aggressive, randomly destructive and one might even say inscrutable, much as the Japanese soldier had been perceived by the American public during World War II. Moreover, the Godzilla films portrayed the Japanese people for the most part as helpless and hapless victims: the movies powerfully reinforced American impressions of the Japanese as weak, ineffective, physically small and temperamentally passive. The Japan of Godzilla was fragile and delicate, feminized in the eyes of an American audience. Thus, despite superficial differences, the figure of the geisha and the King of the Monsters could both promote the same enduring stereotypes of Japan's national character.

### Learning from Japan

By 1980, Americans could no longer take the Japanese economic achievement for granted. Over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, Japanese products flooded the U.S. market and American consumers embraced Japanese imports that were no longer “cheap and shoddy,” but increasingly appeared to be high quality and affordable, especially in comparison to domestically produced goods. Perhaps above all, it was the speed of Japan’s economic advance that caught American businessmen and policymakers off guard. In 1959, no Japanese motorcycles were sold in the United States; by 1966, Honda, Yamaha and Suzuki controlled almost 85 percent of the American market. Japanese automakers only started producing passenger cars in the 1950s; in 1964, Toyota shipped 50 Coronas to California to test consumer reactions (and the cars were pretty much a flop); just a decade later, however, Toyota was selling American drivers about 300,000 cars a year; and by 1984, the figure was almost half a million. When President Gerald Ford visited Japan in 1974, he presented a group of Japanese parliamentarians with the latest portable cassette recorders which, embarrassingly enough, under their American trade marks were discretely labeled “Made in Japan.”

Many overseas observers smugly predicted that the 1970s would mark the end of the Japanese economic miracle. Some argued that Japan had closed the gap technologically with the West in the 1950s and 1960s, and that Japan’s rapid “catch up” growth was sure to peter out soon. Others pointed to changes in the world political climate, arguing that rising protectionism would block Japan from the open foreign markets upon which it had come to depend. Certainly, the early 1970s did witness the first real kink in Japan’s amazing post-war success story: the OPEC oil embargo of 1973-1974 brought the high-flying (but hydrocarbon poor) Japanese economy back to earth with a jolt. Thirty percent inflation and the abrupt end of positive economic growth led Edwin Reischauer to remark that “for [the Japanese] the world would never seem the same again” (quoted in Buckley 76).

Such sentiments, however, soon reeked of Western wishful thinking. In fact, Japan bounced back quickly from the shocks of

the early 1970s. The engine of Japan's recovery was exports, and the destination of most of the cars, Walkmen and VCRs that revived the Japanese economy was, needless to say, the United States. In 1974, Japanese-U.S. trade was more-or-less in balance; by 1976, America's trade deficit with Japan was about \$4 billion; by 1978, \$10 billion; and by 1985, more than \$40 billion. The annual growth rate of Japan's GNP slowed in the late 1970s from the heady heights of previous decades, yet hovered consistently around 5 percent, a figure that was more than just respectable in an era of American "stagflation" and pallid global growth.

By the latter half of the 1970s, increasing numbers of Americans had begun to realize that Japan was a force to be reckoned with and studied, not just economically (though the economic challenge was most pressing), but socially and culturally as well. In 1979, the Harvard sociologist Ezra Vogel published the audaciously titled *Japan as Number One*, a book which sold far better in Japan than in the United States, but which had a profound impact on a generation of American policymakers. Vogel's argument was simple and startling to many:

When I first returned to the United States from Japan in 1960, I had not even questioned the general superiority of American society and American institutions. In almost every field we were substantially ahead of Japan, our capacity for research and creativity was unexcelled, and our natural and human resources seemed more than adequate. By 1975 I found myself, like my Japanese friends, wondering what had happened to America.

Japan has dealt more successfully with more of the basic problems of postindustrial society than any other country. It is in this sense, I have come to believe, that the Japanese are number one. . . . In America, our confidence in the superiority of Western civilization and our desire to see ourselves as number one make it difficult to acknowledge that we have practical things to learn from Orientals. I am convinced that it is a matter of urgent national interest for Americans to confront Japanese successes more directly and consider the issues they raise. (Vogel ix)

Vogel's clarion call was soon embraced by an army of aspiring Japan hands, each of whom promised to reveal the secrets of Japan's success for \$12.95 in hardback or \$3.95 in paper: *Theory Z*, *The Japanese Mind*, *The Book of Five Rings*, David Halberstam's *The Reckoning*, and dozens (if not hundreds) of now-forgotten titles

competed to satiate the American public's desire to learn about and from Japan. This theme came to permeate American pop culture treatments of Japan as well. The image of an exotic, feminized Japan was tenacious, yet it was joined in the 1970s by a new emphasis on studying Japan as a potential model for American social and economic revitalization. The best example of this unlikely combination was James Clavell's *Shōgun*, the book and mini-series which defined Japan in the American imagination in the 1970s, and which fused (in its 1200 pages of text and 12 hours of air-time) both an exoticizing perspective and a more earnest didactic message.

*Shōgun* was the story, based rather loosely on an actual historical episode, of an English seaman who is shipwrecked in Japan in 1600 and ends up the trusted advisor of Japan's military hegemon, the Tokugawa shōgun. The work was lambasted by some critics as a virtual "catalog of stereotypes of Japanese violence and barbarity from the Pacific War" (Smith 15) and, indeed, the book both begins and ends with incidents of tremendous savagery. Yet most scholars, both at the time and since, have been willing to overlook *Shōgun's* gratuitous sex and violence, and to praise Clavell for seeking to educate his readers about Japan. As William LaFleur has written,

In reading *Shōgun* I could not shake off the impression that it is the most didactic novel I had read in many years—as strange as this might seem in so swashbuckling a tale. I asked myself exactly what it was that the author, in addition to telling a good story, wanted to say or teach. My first answer was that Clavell in *Shōgun* wanted to provide something of an induction into Japanese civilization, that he intended to convince his readers in the West that, when understood, Japan has been as civilized a culture as our own. But I later revised this opinion and concluded that the author's didactic program is even more ambitious, for he holds that certain aspects of Japanese civilization—basic attitudes about life and death, for instance—ought to be not only appreciated but also adopted by us in the West. (LaFleur 71)

In the end, it may not have been Ezra Vogel, but rather Richard Chamberlain—the mini-series superstar at the head of *Shōgun's* television cast—who eventually convinced America that Japan could be a model as well as a menace, more inspiring than inscrutable.

### Japan Rising

The late 1980s were heady times indeed in Japan. The nation seemed inexorably headed toward global economic dominance: the Japanese were the wealthiest, best educated and longest-lived people in the world; many commentators heralded of the end of the *pax Americana* and the start of the “Pacific Century”; pundits confidently declared that Japan had, in fact, won the Cold War. Enriched by an unprecedented stock market and real estate boom at home, Japan’s corporations and financial titans went on a buying spree abroad: \$80 million for a van Gogh, \$850 million for Rockefeller Center, \$3 billion for Columbia Pictures, a paltry \$900 million for the Pebble Beach Golf Course. Japan’s banks were the largest in the world; the few moated acres of Tokyo’s imperial palace, it was said, were worth more than all the land in the state of California combined.

The wealth of this charmed time was, as we know now, built only on the shakiest of financial foundations. Beginning in 1985, the Bank of Japan pursued an expansionary monetary policy, which led to a speculative boom in real estate and equities, which gave rise to fierce competition in the banking sector and which, in turn, fueled reckless lending policies. The prosperity of the late 1980s was really little more than a financial house of cards, a false paradise of paper profits or, as it has since come to be known, the “bubble economy.”

At the time, however, neither Japanese nor American observers gave much thought to the shallow roots of Japan’s economic ascent. Instead, many Japanese public figures, apparently compensating for decades of perceived slights by arrogant Americans, wallowed in a self-satisfied triumphalism. Japan, they seemed to gloat, was more than just “number one”; it was the apex of modern civilization, a culture so unique and so perfect in its constitution that the discredited societies of the West would be forever vanquished. America should not learn from Japan, but just graciously accept Japan’s lead.

Perhaps the most noteworthy example of this provocative viewpoint was the marvelously titled but atrociously written book, *The Japan that Can Say No*. Originally penned in Japanese by Sony founder Morita Akio and the unsavory politician Ishihara Shintarō, the volume was released in Japan in 1989 and published in the Unit-

ed States (under Ishihara's name only) in 1991. A rambling agglomeration of anecdotes and techno-babble, *The Japan that Can Say No* was a tirade against American racism and conceit, a condemnation of weak Japanese political leadership, and a paean to the transcendent power of Japan's cultural heritage. Ishihara chose some odd literary references but left no ambiguity about his main point:

The message is clear: we Japanese must think and act for ourselves and stop being a dutiful underling.

The first step in that direction is to get rid of our servile attitude toward the United States. We should no longer be at Washington's beck and call. The ending of *The King and I* suggests a great beginning for Japan. As the father is dying, the young son who will become king proclaims a new era for Siam: No longer will the subjects bow like toads. They will stand erect, "shoulders back and chin high," and look the king in the eye as a proud people were meant to do. . . .

Today, the worldwide attention focused on Japan is due to our prosperity and wealth. Of course, money counts, but we also have tradition and culture, wellsprings of creativity, and high technology neither Moscow nor Washington can ignore. To be fully appreciated, we must, when matters of crucial national interest warrant, articulate our position and say no to the United States. (Ishihara 106)

Japan's economic strength in the late 1980s emboldened not only Japanese commentators like Ishihara. American politicians, businessmen, scholars and journalists also joined the fray: some chided Japan for unfair business practices; some criticized U.S. business for its inflexibility; some bemoaned American work culture; some laid the blame on Washington's doorstep. Not surprisingly, many of these debates and much of the handwringing about America's future came to inform the images of Japan being created in U.S. popular culture. Perhaps the best example of this is Michael Crichton's 1992 bestseller *Rising Sun*, subsequently made into a cinematic blockbuster starring Sean Connery and Wesley Snipes. *Rising Sun* was slammed by many Japanese commentators as blatant "Japan bashing," an inaccurate, hostile and racist account of predatory Japanese business practices in the high tech sector. And, to some extent, such criticisms were on target. Yet *Rising Sun*, like *Shōgun* before it, was actually a very didactic novel, and its moral was far less bigoted and malicious than many alleged. Crichton made his agenda clear in an afterword to the novel:

Sooner or later, the United States must come to grips with the fact that Japan has become the leading industrial nation in the world. . . . But they haven't succeeded by doing things our way. The Japanese have invented a new kind of trade—adversarial trade, trade like war, trade intended to wipe out the competition—which America has failed to understand for several decades. The United States keeps insisting the Japanese do things our way. But increasingly, their response is to ask, why should *we* change? We're doing better than you are. And indeed they are.

It is absurd to blame Japan for successful behavior, or to suggest that they slow down. The Japanese consider such American reactions childish whining and they are right. It is more appropriate for the United States to wake up, to see Japan clearly, and to act realistically.

The Japanese are not our saviors. They are our competitors. We should not forget it. (Crichton 393-4)

The plot of *Rising Sun* is too convoluted to summarize, but one central metaphor is worth exploring. The novel revolves around the murder of a wholesome but misguided Los Angeles call-girl who represents America in Crichton's morality play. The call-girl is in the employ of an aggressive Japanese conglomerate, and she is offered as a sexual treat to a venal, self-serving U.S. senator. After she is symbolically raped by the senator (suggesting, of course, the betrayal of the American people by their political leadership), she is unceremoniously murdered by a flunky of corporate Japan. Crichton's imagery is unsubtle, but it is also quite interesting when viewed from a longer historical perspective: there are no geisha in *Rising Sun*, indeed just the opposite—it is America which is the feminized, passive, victimized character here. By 1990, then, the tables seemed to be turning, as even U.S. pop culture began to internalize Japan's dizzying economic ascent and America's disheartening cultural malaise.

### The Return of the Geisha

Things have certainly changed over the past twenty years. The extent of Japan's problems (and the renaissance of American pride) were summarized nicely in an editorial by Mort Zuckerman which appeared in *U.S. News and World Report* in 1997:

The Japanese enjoyed a splendid sunrise in the Eighties. Is the sun now setting in the Nineties?

It seems that way. The Nineties have given them their deepest and longest recession since World War II, a collapse of their stock and real-estate

markets, and a banking system overloaded with bad loans.

The result is a mood of startling pessimism among the people, made all the starker by the memory of the Eighties. Then, Japan was the economic juggernaut. It replaced America as the world's leading and largest creditor. . . . How the world has changed! The Asian values that once were praised for fostering discipline now are criticized for stifling new ideas and the individual enterprise critical to the information age. . . .

Can Japan change? (Zuckerman 80)

Japan's national story has been one of woe since the collapse of the "bubble economy" in the early 1990s. The Japanese economy has been in recession for well over a decade and continues to languish almost two decades later, despite laughably easy monetary policies and massive infusions of government spending. The Nikkei index, which stood at a robust 39,000 at the end of 1989 had withered to only 14,000 two years later (and dipped below 10,000 in mid 2010). Land prices plummeted no less precipitously. One author has described the 1990s as Japan's age of "vanishing wealth," when a decade's worth of capital creation could evaporate in a matter of weeks. Unemployment has hit record levels and domestic industry has been eviscerated as manufacturing has fled Japan for cheaper venues in China and Southeast Asia. The Japanese banking sector has teetered on the edge of oblivion since 1989, and only very imaginative accounting keeps it anywhere near solvent even today. The Japanese political elites have proven themselves thoroughly unable to cope with the nation's economic morass: just when Japan has needed a strong hand on the helm of state, the conservative ruling bloc has fragmented and the bureaucracy waivered. In the midst of economic and political uncertainty, even the bedrock institutions of Japanese society—the family, the schools, the imperial family—have appeared to fracture and fail.

Japan, in short, is yesterday's news in the United States. We Americans have moved on to new international villains and on to new heroes. Yet in American popular culture, at least, images of Japan and imports from Japan have continued to proliferate over the past decade. Phenomena like Japanese animation and *Iron Chef*, Nintendō video game consoles, and Japanese stars in Major League Baseball have all captivated the American public, but I would like

to concentrate on yet another work of fiction, the latest bestseller on Japan to leave its mark on the American popular imagination. Indeed, this title can claim to be *the* most popular book on Japan published since World War II, having been on the *New York Times* bestseller list for over a year. It is, of course, Arthur Golden's 1997 novel, *Memoirs of a Geisha*.

*Memoirs of a Geisha* is the richly textured tale of the coming of age of Sayuri, a poor fisherman's daughter who eventually becomes the most desired geisha in Kyoto. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, *Memoirs* bears far more resemblance to James Michener's or even Pierre Loti's work than to *Shōgun* and *Rising Sun*. *Memoirs of a Geisha* is by no stretch of the imagination a didactic book: it makes no pretense that there are important things to be learned from Japan or even that Americans need to know more about Japan. Indeed, the basic tone of *Memoirs* seems consistent with the general American assumption of the late 1990s that we don't need to worry about Japan anymore, and that we certainly don't have anything useful to learn from the Japanese. Japan, the novel seems to tell us, is very distant, very alien, very exotic; it's a world unto itself, almost a fairytale world into which Golden affords us a voyeuristic peek; it's an unthreatening place, a world not of warriors or shrewd businessmen, but instead of cloistered women, arcane customs and men obsessed with pleasure (rather than economic domination). One might say that, with *Memoirs of a Geisha*, Japan is being reinscribed in the American popular imagination as an "Oriental" place: now that the Japanese economic challenge has apparently been turned back by American might, Japan can be comfortably relegated to its familiar spot in an exoticized, eroticized, orientalized and, needless to say, feminized corner of the American cultural map of the world.

With *Memoirs of a Geisha*, I would suggest, American images of Japan have come full circle since World War II. The economic miracle is over, Japan's threat to the American Way of Life has (apparently) passed. Japan has returned to a familiar and comfortable place in the collective American imagination, a longstanding default-setting only temporarily interrupted by a few incongruous decades of Japanese success and American self-doubt.

One final cultural icon that, along with the revived image of the geisha, may just encapsulate American perceptions of Japan at the start of the new millennium is also worth considering. This icon is diminutive, wondrous and alien, cute and cuddly yet also monstrous and aggressive, intellectually insipid and culturally pervasive, and a product of real marketing genius. Yes, it's Pikachu, the ring leader of Pokémon, the "pocket monsters" that have immeasurably enriched Nintendō and inexplicably entranced American youth after their release in 1998. Back in the mid-1980s, America's foremost thinkers would probably have demonized Pokémon as a wily Japanese plot, a clever scheme for undermining America's economic security and national self-confidence through addictive trading cards and crafty fast-food tie-ins. Such paranoia would, needless to say, be unwarranted in the twenty-first century. Pokémon, like Japan today, is at worst an annoyance and at best an amusing distraction.

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# Notions of Image and Emotion across Culture and Time

Jianqing Zheng

In classical Chinese poetry, imagery always occupies a central position, and nature serves as a source for imagery. As a concrete carrier of an abstract idea, an image can create both a visual picture and an aesthetic pleasure for a reader; therefore, the connection between human feelings and nature is essential to the Chinese poetic tradition. Liu Hsieh (465-520), a literary critic in the fifth century, elaborates on this notion in *Wen-Hsin Tiao-Lung* (*Literary Mind: Dragon Carvings*), a systematic treatise on literature and literary thought that consists of forty-nine chapters. The following passage is quoted from Chapter 46, “The Sensuous Colors of Physical Things”:

When poets were stirred by physical things, the categorical associations were endless. They remained drifting through all the images of the world, even to their limit, and brooded thoughtfully on each small realm of what they saw and heard. They sketched *ch'i* and delineated outward appearance, as they themselves were rolled round and round in the course of things; they applied coloration and matched sounds, lingering on about things with their minds. (Owen 279)<sup>1</sup>

This passage is, as Stephen Owen points out, “one of the most beautiful and important passages in *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*, describing the all-important relation between the human mind and the outer world” (279). This relationship, in other words, can be understood

<sup>1</sup>刘勰《文心雕龙》：是以诗人感物，联类不穷。流連萬象之際，沉吟視聽之區。寫氣圖貌，既隨物以宛轉。屬采附聲，亦與心而徘徊。

as the fusion of emotion and scene. With this fusion, a poet integrates emotion and scene. He can transcend his personal feelings and individual thoughts by objectifying them and, furthermore, penetrate the outward form of an object to grasp *ch'i*, the spirit or inner quality that a good poem should possess.

Wang Changlin (698-757), a poet and literary scholar in the Tang Dynasty, describes more clearly the relationship between the human mind and the outer world in his famous essay "Precepts of Poetry":

Poetry has three worlds. The first is called the world of objects. When one wishes to write a landscape poem, then one sets forth a world of streams and rocks, clouds and peaks—the utmost in beauty and elegance. As the spirit is in the mind, when one situates one's body in the world one sees the world in the mind, as if shimmering in one's palm. Only afterward does one use one's thinking to fully comprehend the world's images and thereby attain a formal likeness. The second is called the world of feelings. Pleasure and joy, grief and resentment are all set forth in one's ideas and situated in one's body. Then one presses one's thinking forward to deeply get to those feelings. The third is called the world of ideas, which also involves setting things forth in one's ideas and contemplating them in one's mind, so that the truth will be attained. (Yu 186)<sup>2</sup>

Among the three poetic worlds discussed in "Precepts of Poetry," the first one—the world of objects—seems the one Wang Changlin favors most. He advocates here an ideal poem in which emotion and scene are integrated, and such integration is the main characteristic of much of the Tang Dynasty poetry. For instance, in the following quatrain by Meng Haoran (689-740), one of Li Po's friends and a famous Chinese poet of the eighth century:

While I moor my boat by a mist-veiled isle,  
The day leaves, my homesickness arrives.  
Far across wilderness the sky lowers behind the trees,  
In clear water the moon is close to me.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 王昌齡《詩格》：詩有三境，一曰物境。欲為山水詩，則張泉石雲峰之境，極麗絕秀者，神之于心，處身于境，視境于心，瑩然掌中，然後用思，瞭然境象，故得形似。二曰情境。娛樂愁怨，皆張于意而處于身，然後馳思，深得其情。三曰意境。亦張之于意，而思之于心，則得其真矣。

<sup>3</sup> 孟浩然《宿建德江》：移舟泊煙渚，日暮客愁新。野曠天低樹，江清月近人。

The first couplet describes the loneliness of a solitary traveler. As he moors by a misty island, an acute homesickness rises to take hold of him. The second centers on the scene alone, but the emotion hides behind images that offer much for rumination: The traveler gazes in the direction of his home, but his eyes meet only the sky and distant trees and vast wilderness. He then looks down at the moon in the water, which may be his only company and, ironically, a non-human one; it is close but aloof and makes the traveler even lonelier.

The relationship between emotion and scene is deeply rooted in the Chinese poetic notion of the essential unity of man and nature. This unity invites a poet to connect the internal and the external by means of imagery. That is to say, an integration of emotion and landscape will reflect the inner being through the external world. Wang Fu-chih (1619-92) remarks on this integration in “Discussions to While Away the Days at Evening Hall”:

Affection [emotion] and scene have two distinct names, but in substance they cannot be separated. Spirit in poetry compounds them limitlessly and with wondrous subtlety. At the most artful there is scene-within-affections and affections-within-scene. An example of affection-within-scene is [Li Po's] “A sheet of moonlight in Ch'ang-an.” This is naturally the sentiment of lodging alone and recalling someone far away. (Owen 472-3)<sup>4</sup>

According to Wang Fu-chih's notion, there must be a wholeness or inseparable element of emotion and scene or the reflection of the inner being through an “objective correlative” in the external world. This is the spirit of all things in the world. In other words, to maintain the inseparable unity of the two distinct concepts, images should be bound to a state of mind or a state of mood. Wang Fu-chih offers a fuller explication of the unity of emotion and scene in another discussion:

Scene is put together by the affection, and the affections are generated by the scene. Initially they are not distinguished and are nothing more than what coincides with one's thoughts. If you separate them into two independent categories, then the affections will not be adequate to stir, and the scene will not be one's own scene. (Owen 475)<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> 王夫之《夕堂永日緒論》：情景名為二，而實不可離。神於詩者，妙合無垠。巧者則有情中景，景中情。

<sup>5</sup> 王夫之《夕堂永日緒論》：夫景以情合，情以景生。初不相離，唯意所適合。截分兩橛，則情不足興，而景非其景。

According to Wang, scene and affection are identical to each other. To describe a scene, the one describing the scene must have affection/emotion. Without affection, it is difficult to present the scene. The scene-within-affection does not mean abstract expression of affection; it must contain the scene that matches the affection. In the same way, it is difficult to describe emotion or affection without the scene. In Owen's interpretation, "Thus, the particular integration of a scene is a product of a given person's 'circumstance' or 'state of mind'" (476).

A good example is "Autumn Thoughts" by Ma Zhiyuan (1260-1325), a short lyric that combines images into a perfect scene to reflect human feelings:

Withered vines  
 Old trees  
     Evening crows,  
 Tiny bridge  
     Sluggish creek  
         Scattered houses,  
 Ancient roads  
     Westerly wind  
         A lean horse.  
 The sun is setting,  
     A tired man travels,  
         Far from home.<sup>6</sup>

This poem produces a composite scene from a sequence of fragments of objects. There is an internal relationship between the bleak landscape and the heart-broken traveler. Words such as "withered," "old" and "evening" intensify the human loneliness. In regard to sensibility to landscape, Ma is particularly good at selecting the autumn images to express his poetic ideas. This poem is a painting of feelings, and its superb expression lies in the revelation of feelings through images that become visible.

Classical Chinese poetics on the integration of emotion and scene, as well as the two poems by Meng Haoran and Ma Zhiyuan, suggest the use of landscape as a bridge between a poet and a reader.

<sup>6</sup> 馬致遠《秋思》：枯藤老樹昏鴉。小橋流水人家。古道西風瘦馬。夕陽西下，斷腸人在天涯。

Poetry, as an art of imagination, should dissolve personal ideas into impersonal objects. The Chinese poetic notion of the integration of emotion and scene is echoed in T. E. Hulme's essay, "A Lecture on Modern Poetry." Hulme says that a poet "is moved by a certain landscape, he selects from that certain images which, put into juxtaposition in separate lines, serve to suggest and to evoke the state he feels" (*Further Speculations* 73). He goes on to say that the two images can form a visual chord in the mind as a mental image:

To this piling-up and juxtaposition of distinct images in different lines, one can find a fanciful analogy in music. A great revolution occurred in music when, for the melody that is one-dimensional music, was substituted harmony which moves in two. Two visual images form what one may call a visual chord. They unite to suggest an image which is different than both. (73)

Hulme suggests here that the juxtaposition of the two objects creates a mental image, or a visual chord of harmony, that conveys meaning. He himself is a practitioner in writing a few imagistic poems, one of which, "Autumn," is worth mentioning:

A touch of cold in the Autumn night—  
I walked abroad,  
And saw the ruddy moon lean over a hedge  
Like a red-faced farmer.  
I did not stop to speak, but nodded;  
And round about were the wistful stars  
With white faces like town children. (Pratt 47)

This short imagistic poem presents unexpected freshness through an unconventional analogy: the ruddy moon is compared to a red-faced farmer who leans over a hedge for a talk, and the wistful stars to the white faces of the town children. The distinction of this poem from the norm of Romantic poems is that the image of the moon does not evoke feelings of melancholy and loneliness. Instead, this "red-faced" moon "seems well-fed, healthy, comfortable and neighborly, and is humorously regarded" (Perkins 337). This poem shows that "the great aim is accurate, precise and definite description," the poetic principle proposed by Hulme in his essay, "Romanticism and Classicism" (732). It also stands as a good example of what Hulme says about the use of fresh imagery in another essay, "Bergson's

Theory of Art”: “The thing that concerns me here is of course only the feeling which is conveyed over to you by the use of fresh metaphors. It is only where you get these fresh metaphors and epithets employed that you get this vivid conviction which constitutes the purely aesthetic emotion that can be got from imagery” (737). However, Hulme’s major contribution is not the several imagistic poems he writes, but his theory about the characteristics of the ideal poetry he describes, which can be crystallized in a poetic line from his poem “The Poet”: “Of gems, colors, hard and definite” (Pratt 49).

Another echo of classical Chinese poetic ideas is T. S. Eliot’s “objective correlative,” set forth in his influential essay, “Hamlet and His Problems”:

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an *objective correlative*; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked. (766)

Here, Eliot tries to express the “emotion he chooses as the subject of his work by finding the appropriate objective correlative” (Christ 82), and this expression bears similarities to Hulme’s “visual chord.” Both Eliot and Hulme underscore the expression of emotion through the fusion of disparate objects, but Eliot’s notion seems more resonant with Wang Fu-chih’s. In fact, his notion of “objective correlative” is presented in an effective way in the opening lines of “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”:

Let us go then, you and I,  
When the evening is spread out against the sky  
Like a patient etherized upon a table.

In the image of the evening as a patient etherized upon a table, Eliot conveys a controlled expression, not a spontaneous overflow, of the persona’s inner state, which is reflected in his view of the world he sees. Therefore, the “*particular* emotion” objectified to the landscape through the persona’s “sensory experience” suggests a complete fusion of the two. Even though Eliot sees the importance of expressing emotion by using an “objective correlative,” he is more interested in stressing impersonality, a detachment from the personal experience,

which he elaborates in an equally influential essay, “Tradition and the Individual Talent”:

The business of the poet is not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones and, in working them up into poetry, to express feelings which are not in actual emotions at all. And emotions which he has never experienced will serve his turn as well as those familiar to him . . . Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from those things. (764)

Eliot wants to say that emotion is not something a poet injects into an object; it is something one can have when an object strikes a chord in his heart. Eliot’s “objective correlative” and his notion of impersonality echo Pound’s idea of treating the “thing” directly, whether subjectively or objectively. In other words, both of them try to present definite objects in which emotion is not described, but experienced; therefore, they stress the impersonal consciousness of emotion.

In fact, the Chinese poetic notion of fusion of emotion and scene, Hulme’s “visual chord” and Eliot’s “objective correlative” all present similar ideas about the relationship between the subjective and the objective, even though their focal points may be different. Although it does not mean that Hulme and Eliot are necessarily influenced by Chinese poetics, it does indicate that critics with different cultural backgrounds and living in different times may come to the same conclusions. However, Ezra Pound, who also reaches the same conclusion, *is* influenced by Chinese poetics. Even before the start of Imagism, Pound already showed an interest in Chinese poetry. He adapts some Chinese poems from H. A. Giles’s *History of Chinese Literature*. His adaptations, including “After Ch’u Yuan,” “Liu Ch’e,” and “Fan-Piece, for Her Imperial Lord,” challenge him to see things in a new way that uses fresh images to create an effect of juxtaposition. In the early autumn of 1913 Pound’s interest in classical Chinese and Japanese poetry becomes fruitful and more significant when he meets Mrs. Fenollosa in London. He receives from her the late Ernest Fenollosa’s manuscripts on Chinese poetry and written characters because she, as T. S. Eliot states in *To Criticize the*

*Critic*, “recognize[s] that in Pound the Chinese manuscripts would find the interpreter whom her husband would have wished” (177). Editing Fenollosa’s manuscripts under the title *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry* fascinates Pound so much that by the summer of 1914 he begins to explain Imagism “in terms that involved the ideogram” (Coffman 15). In December 1914 Pound writes his father that he “got a little book out of Fenollosa’s Chinese notes” (Nolde 21). This little book is *Cathay*, a small collection of English renderings of classical Chinese poems, published by Elkin Mathews in April 1915. The publication of *Cathay* marks Pound’s discovery of China and reinforces his Imagist principles. Ford Madox Ford, who was Pound’s literary mentor and friend, gives his praise: “The poems of *Cathay* are things of supreme beauty. What poetry should be, they are” (Lindberg-Seyersted 25).

It is evident that Pound’s *Cathay*, as well as Fenollosa’s essay on Chinese written characters, has influenced him because he sees the inspiration in classical Chinese poetry and written characters: precise, concrete and clear images that convey exact ideas. We can see from his translations of Chinese poems and from some of his *Cantos* that classical Chinese poetry has inspired Pound through its juxtaposition of images and through the images he deciphers from the ideograms. Among these, what intrigues Pound most are the ideogrammic images, since he believes ideograms present things in visual imagery. For example, in line 430 of Canto LXXIV: “a man on whom the sun has gone down” (*Selected Poems of Ezra Pound* 155), Pound digs out “man” (人) and “sun” (日) from the character “莫,” which means “no” in English. Mainly through his compilation of Fenollosa’s *Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry* and his translation of classical Chinese poems, Pound develops his “ideogrammic method.” He explains clearly in *Guide to Kulchur* that “the ideogrammic method consists of presenting one facet and then another until at some point one gets off the dead and desensitized surface of the reader’s mind, onto a part that will register” (51). Pound’s “ideogrammic method” also shows his misconception that Chinese ideogram “is still the picture of a thing; of a thing in a given position or relation, or of a combination of things. It *means* the thing or the

action or situation, or quality germane to the several things that it pictures" (*ABC of Reading* 21).

However, his misconception seems a lucky one since he talks from a poet's, not a linguist's, view. We need to understand that even though Pound's notion of Chinese written characters is "misconceived," it is "understood well enough" by the poets "who incorporated the principle into their own work" (Bush 196). Obviously Pound's explanation indicates that Fenollosa's essay on Chinese written characters has served as a guiding principle of *ABC of Reading*. He regrets that Fenollosa "died before getting round to publishing and proclaiming a 'method'" (*ABC of Reading* 22) and probably feels it is his obligation to adapt Fenollosa's poetic notion of the Chinese ideograms into his "ideogrammic method." In *ABC of Reading*, Pound goes on to explain the method by using the term *phanopoeia*. He says, "the maximum of phanopoeia [throwing a visual image on the mind] is probably reached by the Chinese, due in part to their particular kind of written language" (42). Pound's elaboration shows that his ideogrammic poetics is one of China's most important contributions to his thought, and, through him, a permanent contribution to modern English poetry.

To summarize, classical Chinese poetics on the integration of emotion and scene, Hulme's "visual chord," Eliot's "objective correlative" and Pound's "ideogrammic method" all suggest the use of imagery as a vehicle for expressing fresh ideas, because imagery is a bridge between a poet and a reader. Poetry, as an art of language, should present new ideas and, as an art of imagination, should dissolve personal ideas into impersonal objects. In other words, the power of language reflects images through objects when ideas are concrete to senses. To a poet, the process of his creative writing is from the invisible idea to the visible image; but to a reader, the process of his creative reading is from the visible image to the invisible idea. This essay reviews a few basic aspects of classical Chinese and modern English poetics with the intention of making them comparable and accessible. It also analyzes the impact of imagery in classical Chinese poetry and written characters on Pound. It is fortunate, I should say, that Pound turns to classical Chinese poetry and ideo-

grams to find a way to cleanse the decadence of the late Victorian poetry and blow a fresh wind into the modern western poetry in the early 1910s. I believe we can still hear a resonance in these poetics.

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# Narration as “De-Metaphorization” via “Environmental Imagination”: A Cross-Cultural and Interdisciplinary Approach to *And the War Is Over*: A Novel by Ismail Marahimin

Shudong Chen<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

This paper describes the remarkable narrative effect of an Indonesian novel *And the War Is Over*, which often made me feel utterly speechless until I found the term “de-metaphorization.” This term characterizes not only the novel in question but also provides an inspired response to the eco-critical views of scholars such as Lawrence Buell, N. C. Anderson, Christopher Manes, Rochelle Johnson, Greg Garrard and others who have offered the thought-provoking idea of “environmental imagination.” The term “de-metaphorization” suggests how we can shift our usual human-centered perspective to achieve a fresh view and understanding of nature, and then everything else. Johnson and Anderson in particular experiment with this

<sup>1</sup> Thanks to my colleagues, Professors Carolyn Kadel and Bob Perry, who, as the co-directors of JCCC’s Title VI Grant on Islam, have so timely and thoughtfully brought the grant project to our campus, the wonderful diversities of Islam, which are especially “well-documented” in fiction, are now no longer beyond the radar of my attention. I also thank my colleague Professor Andrea Kempf. Her thoughtfully compiled and annotated list of fiction by Muslim writers worldwide brought to my attention this praiseworthy novel, which I would have otherwise missed. I am also very grateful to Harriette Grissom for her marvelous work in repairing my English and strengthening and smoothing out my argument.

view. One, for instance, finds his model of environmentally sensitive reading in Susan Fenimore Cooper instead of Thoreau, and the other spots it in Confucianism instead of Daoism. They both discover that, aside from forever serving as a “figure of speech,” nature does not truly enjoy its maximum autonomy in our narratives *until* it appears in the texts of Cooper, Confucius and Mencius, which reveal genuine respect for nature with authentic, nature-oriented accounts. This new “environmental imagination” suggests nature be de-metaphorized for precise depiction and understanding as a worthy object in its own right; however, de-metaphorization does not call for a ban on metaphor altogether; rather it advocates its precise use. It wants nature to be *re-presented* precisely and crisply, as it is, affected by neither “conventional reality” nor facts-magnifying sentiment and sensation. This quality is found in Marahimin’s narrative. Although it seems like a typical “war novel” or “international romance” at first glance, the novel treats with acuity many “messy” issues that might easily be subjects for sensationalism or sentimentalism, such as the intractable conflicts between faiths and cultures, traditional values and personal convictions, freedom and fate, culturally sustained desecration of nature, the tricky process of cross-cultural dialogue, the intricacies of interracial love, unspeakable war atrocities committed in the name of duty and patriotism, and the evils of the old colonialism vs. that of new one, among others. All is done in a style of unusual verbal economy and detached clarity that suggests an immeasurable depth of humanity.

“Dao is like water!”<sup>2</sup> This once fresh and insightful metaphorical expression is now a cliché. Such a cliché, however, still means something quite “phenomenal,” because it still indicates the invisible power of clichés in constructing and conditioning our fundamentally human-centered perception of and relationship with nature beyond our own consciousness. But with the “environmental imagination” that characterizes and inspires recent ecocriticism, we can refresh our minds with the overlooked meanings indicated by such clichés. In the works of Buell and Anderson, we discover that what is most exciting about ecocriticism is the suggestion of how we might re-view, re-discover and re-present nature afresh—not from a human-centered perspective, which explores nature ultimately as a metaphor of convenience and of choice, but through environmental imagination. From this vantage point, Buell suggests, we

<sup>2</sup> With regard to its power of invisible ubiquity, especially in association with nature, Dao is probably more like air than water.

would “be able to imagine nonhuman agents as bona fide partners” (178). With environmental imagination, we may also spot nature at its best, not where it is usually expected, but where it seems least likely; that is to say, not necessarily in works by Daoists or Thoreau, but in some of the most humanized or “urbanized” literary texts, such as those of Confucius, Mencius, Henry James and Susan Fenimore Cooper. What such environmental imagination may inspire us to capture is not something about nature as we usually conceive it, but rather about nature as re-examined through but away from our human-centered perspectives. These critics propose that even in the most representative literature by such renowned nature-oriented authors as Laozi, Zhuangzi, and Thoreau, nature has been so often “metaphorized” or “romanticized” that it emerges as a reducible, serviceable, human rhetorical strategy; nature is therefore deprived of its authentic being to become a synonym or substitute for cultural myth.<sup>3</sup>

What ecocriticism further suggests is the possibility of showing the reality of nature by stripping it of all “conventional reality,” which means, as I call it, a necessary process of de-metaphorization for better understanding of our literary texts through, but beyond, a human-centered perspective.<sup>4</sup> As a critical term, de-metaphorization highlights the problem of our traditional “discourse, including

<sup>3</sup> The situation is very much like “the possibility of describing a picture ... with ... a given form,” which, according to Wittgenstein, would “tell us nothing about the picture”; rather, “what does characterize the picture is that it can be described completely by a particular [module or form ...] chosen over other alternatives because we want to describe the world more simply with one system ... than with another” (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* 1961, 139 emphasis added). Indeed, a metaphorical expression is a picture that pictures a picture of reality as we see it—the way an opaque mirror reflects not only an ambiguous image of reality, but also our actual capacity and motivation to see or to perceive it.

<sup>4</sup> It is truly invisible but indeed ever-present. In the *Zhuangzi*, there are in fact quite a few satirically amplified cases of the implicit absurdity and detrimental consequences of the human-centered perspective; for instance, when the good-hearted, bird-loving Prince Lu innocently “tortures” his beloved bird to death simply because he wants to treat it the way he himself wants to be treated, that is, with the best palace to house it, the best meat and wine to feed it, the best music to entertain it, and the best hordes of servants to accompany it.

reason, that submerged nature into the depths of silence and instrumentality" and how the "nonhuman remains 'banished from Critique,' under 'the double dominance of society and science' (Manes 17). It also makes us aware of how "nature has been doubly otherized in modern thought," and therefore "the natural environment as empirical reality has been made to subservise human interests, and one of these interests has been to make it serve as a symbolic reinforcement made of the subservience of disempowered groups: nonwhites, women, and children" (Buell 21). It thus raises the questions whether it is possible for our "vision [to] correlate not with dominance but with receptivity, and knowledge with ecocentrism" (Buell 82). But where can we find a model with which we can finally see a world "more interesting ... from the perspective of a wolf, a sparrow, a river, stone?" How can we find an "approach to subjectivity [which] makes apparent that the 'I' has no greater claims to being the main subject than the chickens, the chopped corn, the mice, the snakes, and the phoebes—who are somehow also interwoven with me"? How could we "get this point ... to be able to imagine nonhuman agents as bona fide partners" (Buell 178)?

This model is not, according to Anderson, one we can find in Zhuangzi, even if he "is the most sharp-eyed observer of the nonhuman world among Daoist writers," because, as Anderson argues, "his observations of animals and plants are rarely realistic .... Nature is a source of fantasy and imaginative symbol, not a reality to record" (165). Instead, we may find it in Confucius and Mencius, because "by contrast," so argues Anderson, "the Confucian tradition, from Confucius's hunting rules to Mencius and the *Liji*, reveal a genuine knowledge of, understanding of, and desire to work with nature" (167). He asserts that "there is nothing to match the conservationist teachings of Confucius and the *Liji*" (177). Neither can we, according to Johnson, find a model for this new approach in Thoreau, but must turn instead to Susan Fenimore-Cooper. While Thoreau's celebration of nature may sound vivid, like "brag[ging] as lustily as Chanticleer in the morning ... if only to wake my neighbors up," it "seems markedly more self-assured and self-centered than Cooper's description of herself sans metaphor" as a "rustic bird-fancier" who

has completed a “simple record” or “trifling observation” on “the seasons in rural life” (181). It is because, the former, according to Johnson, “often relies on metaphor not only to communicate his purposes in representing his Walden experiment but also to convey many aspects of his physical surroundings,” whereas the latter tries to give nature the most authentic description with *clear awareness* of her human approach by “point[ing] critically to the use of this rhetorical device in describing her place” (182).

What environmental imagination calls for is a new approach, a process of de-metaphorization, which, I argue, will significantly enrich our imagination by stripping it of all conventional reality or metaphorical fanfare. As a result, we will be able to see and understand nature, and then everything else, more accurately according to the way nature truly *is*, beyond our deeply entrenched, human-centered perspectives, regardless of whether we could ultimately understand nature from the precise vantage point of “nonhuman agents.”

*And the War Is Over*, an Indonesian novel by Ismail Marahimin, provides good examples of this de-metaphorized perspective. With its lucid, unabashed and acutely measured, authoritative voice, which often suggests the “transparent eyeball” of a God-like, all-seeing, all-knowing “nonhuman agent,”<sup>5</sup> the novel simultaneously illuminates, and is illuminated by, the concept of de-metaphorization. The novel is essentially about a group of Dutch POW’s and their Japanese captors. It has a clear-cut plot line which, however, resembles an absurdist existential drama from the Sartrean fictional world, such as “The Wall,” in which a perfect lie to the Nazis about a hideout leads

<sup>5</sup> However fully he is aware of “immediate dependence of language upon nature” (16), Emerson still holds that “the whole of nature is a metaphor of the human mind” (18). But when he declares, “I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all” (6), he is close to the idea of the “environmental imagination.” The statements which follow this passage seem to suggest a subtle shift from a human-centered perspective to that of a “nonhuman agent,” “The greatest delight which the fields and woods minister is the suggestion of an occult relation between man and the vegetable. I am not alone and unacknowledged. They nod to me, and I to them ....Yet it is certain that the power to produce this delight does not reside in nature, but in man, or in a harmony of both” (7).

to the arrest and execution of the very person that lie is meant to protect. In Marahimin's novel, the POW's, not knowing that their freedom is near at hand, try to escape from the prison camp with the assistance of the local people. But they are captured and executed by an order from the Japanese commanding officer, Ose. Ose performs his duty faithfully regardless of his own deep doubts or overall reservations about the war; in addition he knows that the war is over, even though his duty is not officially over. Thus, even when the war finally comes to the end, everything still occurs in the usual way, as if to confirm once again, in great earnest, all the absurdity and atrocity of war through an intense and irreversible inertia. All is carried out in the name of patriotism and duty, but with immeasurable cost and damage to humanity.

What is particularly significant in the novel is not so much the intricate relationships among the Dutch captives, local Muslim population and Japanese occupiers, which the novel depicts vividly, but the impossible love between a local Muslim woman, Satiyah, and the Japanese commanding officer, Ose. One is the victim of rape by the Japanese, her happy family completely destroyed because of Japanese occupation, and the other is traumatized by his own war experiences and the betrayal of his unfaithful and ultra-patriotic wife. Across the unbridgeable abysses of cultural, racial and religious differences, and through the impassable maze of misunderstanding and hatred, these two suffering souls of humanity seek and find each in the other inside a dense jungle. In the novel the all-seeing and all-knowing authorial voice is authentic and accurate in fine-tuning the narrative, but it remains barely "visible" or "audible." It de-metaphorizes the story in a dry tone of wisdom and irony that often suggests the viewpoint of a certain thoughtful "nonhuman agent." It implies a comic "transparent eyeball" that appears periodically to raise doubt about every answer one can possibly think of for the seemingly innocent or unassuming questions about humanity that constantly pop up in the neutrally toned narrative. What is important is that this authorial voice does not occur often. It appears only briefly, when and where it is most needed and least expected, to punctuate for a pensive pause or create a moment of stepping back; it is as though a certain distant

and divine voice insisted that “emotion [be] recollected in tranquility” in ways that make one feel how life can indeed be at once a tragedy and a comedy, depending on how we come to *feel* or *think of it*.<sup>6</sup>

The following brief and straightforward authorial comment on Ose’s deep interest in tea ceremony, for instance, occurs in such a context, as a “flashback” on Ose’s pre-war life that provides insight into the ironical and paradoxical aspects of human life.

It is not usually the lower social strata of a culture who maintain the traditions that outsiders view as characteristics specific to that culture. Or if they do, it is in a watered-down form which a more orthodox representative of that tradition would find upsetting if not shameful. (8)

Everything in the novel, including Japanese war crimes and atrocity, seems to be depicted de-metaphorically, as if through the utterly indifferent but precise viewpoint of a “nonhuman agent.” But such a viewpoint often carries sarcasm—not only about one nation but about humanity as a whole—as indicated in this concise authorial comment:

It is difficult if not impossible to fathom the ins and outs of human life. Who determines where a person is born, where he will raise his children, where he will be buried? While one person might be born at the South Pole, spend his life on the equator, and die at the South Pole another person might never leave the village in which he was born. There seems to be a kind of master train schedule regulating the course of human life, determining where a person must be and what time he must be there to meet those who are destined to escort him onward to happiness, disaster, or perhaps only to the memory of a chance and fleeting encounter. (7)

The authorial voice emerges once again as the novel moves to its end:

Now it appeared the war was over and whatever sense of involvement had once excited, suddenly faded. Whatever people felt about the war, whether they approved or disapproved was no longer important. Its end created an entirely new situation. People no longer knew where they stood or where they were to go. Revenge, suffering, sacrifice were suddenly matters of no

<sup>6</sup> Horace Walpole and Wordsworth obviously both argue for detached contemplation by making such comments. When Walpole argues “life is a tragedy for those [who] feel and comedy for those [who] think,” he also suggests the importance of detached contemplation as does Wordsworth who calls for “emotion recollected in tranquility.”

consequence. Their importance had vanished as quickly as a nightmare after waking. (114)

The authorial voice can also be heard in the matter-of-fact depiction of how Japan is dragged or pushed into war through incessant domestic pressure and contagious patriotism which bring much disaster to Japan itself, let alone to all the neighboring countries invaded and occupied by Japan. But all is suggested as in the following passage through a concise depiction of various incidents of “domestic war” between Ose and his wife, who is determined to make a hero out of him with her unyielding argument, “how am I supposed to show my face to my friends whose husbands have gone off toward to defend this country?”

When Ose returned from work a few days later he found hanging in the center room a banner of white cloth. Written in red kanji on the banner was a Kami teaching: “Placing the eight corners of the world beneath one roof.” A debate ensued from that night onward. It was only when Ose finally decided to enlist that some kind of peace returned to the house. But the peace was false and one-sided. (56)

With a detached eye that sees all and filters all “metaphorized facts,” even cases of utmost human atrocity that inevitably provoke sentimentalized and sensational description are reflected on as part of daily occurrences, but with an accuracy and emphatic precision that conveys how locals feel about the Japanese. In the following passage, Ose observes that “the countries that Japan occupied *did little* to help [in its war efforts] .... They were busy with their own affairs and felt much closer to their old masters than their new ones who, Ose had to admit, had brought about a great deal of suffering” (57 emphasis added). Such atrocity is also referenced in this passage: “The Japanese were *harsh* and the Dutch prisoners were beaten regularly. Some were beaten to death. Those who died were buried beneath the rail embankment or thrown into the river” (64, emphasis added). Atrocity is certainly revealed in brief descriptions regarding how “the *difficult* conditions of the Japanese occupation forced almost everyone to seek extra sources of income,” or how “farmers were forced to devise increasingly clever means of hiding their rice for later sale to black market traders” because “under the Japanese,

rice was *taken* directly from the farmers by Japanese soldiers or their helpers” (112-3, emphasis added). Sometimes, it is suggested in a slightly more emphatic tone that “the Japanese era began and the world *turned upside down*” as “good, upstanding people ... faced destitution while people of little account prior to the coming of the Japanese saw their stars rise” (113, emphasis added).

Such a case of de-metaphorization is particularly observable in the description of Ose, a person who is at once very complicated and very simple, who finds himself suspended in a very existential condition. All the traditional values that sustained him previously, such as his belief in his country and his family, become questionable, and Ose is forced to respond to the fundamental meanings of life with nothing but his own bare humanity. He has to redefine and redeem himself for his lost humanity through probably the most unlikely agency of a Muslim girl in the Muslim land that he has his own share in desecrating. In Ose we see all the contradictions or inconsistencies regarding our common humanity quietly exposed. He may act like a well-trained dog, but he is also a Hamlet in distress. He is like the nameless neighbor in Robert Frost’s “Mending Wall” who acts like a “savage” because he can only repeat what his father says about the need for a good fence, but he may also appear at the same time as the “thinking persona” who constantly questions the necessity of mending the wall, even though he has neither a right answer to the situation, nor does he refuse to be part of the dubious “neighborly” endeavor. He is also like Starbuck in *Moby-Dick* who, as the only clear-minded person, has much doubt about Ahab’s mad quest yet remains a reluctant but loyal participant in action.

Ose, for instance, does not like Sergeant Kiguchi, his immediate subordinate, for acting like well-trained dog or the mindless “savage” that Frost alludes to, because he is “100 percent military. A simple man ..., the most often heard expression from his mouth was ‘hai, or yes, sir,’ and that statement alone, [for Ose,] was enough to reveal what the man was thinking” (79). But what makes the situation even worse, as Ose sees it, is the simple fact that there are “hundreds and thousands of soldiers like Kiguchi.” But Ose does not seem to be less atrocious in performing his military duty. Often, as suggested

in the following scene, where, somewhat like Camus’s Meursault, the indifferent “Stranger” who commits murder with senseless or mindless precision, Ose appears as an objective critic of his own thoughts and actions. He remains simultaneously engaged *with* and detached *from* his thoughts and actions, as if they were not his own. His mind could be so mingled with nature and punctuated with the rhythm of nature that he becomes utterly *aloof* from his own thoughts and actions but, at the same time, in the following passage he seems indifferent to the natural scene that nourished him in tranquility only minutes before.

*Ose saw all of this clearly.* The quail had returned to their nests and silence blanketed the scene. The wind barely moved. Faintly, from the direction they had come, came the sound of the drum for *magrib* prayers.

The three people had no idea what kind of fate awaited them.

“Shoot,” Ose cried out.

Ten guns spat bullets and flames. Thunder rolled and the three fell without even a chance to scream. The soldiers fired again and again until all their bullets had been spent. Sergeant Kiguchi jumped forward and plunged his bayonet into Pastor’s body, now little more than a pile of meat wrapped in a bloody and soiled cloth.

The quail rose in a flight once more with their wings beating a low and swift path. (163, emphasis added)

But no matter how Sergeant Kiguchi’s “stupidity and simple-minded appearance appalled him (79),” Ose has finally come to realize that “he too was part of this war and part of the people involved in it. He was not only a spectator, but a participant who had helped to lead the men under him to shame and defeat” (154).

Equally representative of de-metaphorization is the way that Islam is described. Anyone who wants to read about Islam in the novel, since it is work from a Muslim nation, would be simultaneously disappointed and delighted, because Islam is not the way one might imagine it to be. It is not the focus of the novel but, at the same time, it is exactly what the novel is steadily focused upon. This is simply because Islam is *everything*, pervasive in the way of life itself. On one occasion, Islam appears in the form of a respected social institution: “That Haji Zen was in fact a *haji* was apparent to everyone because

he never took off his pilgrim's hat, even when he was working" (65). Sometimes it comes out as a character-building power that instantly commands awe and respect cross-culturally, such as Ose's bewilderment and respect for Satiyah as "a religious woman" who "would voluntarily endure hunger." Often, it is identifiable through local customs that present a hierarchy of values stated as a matter of fact.

Satiyah's marriage to Ngoro Alimin was a very important event for her family because through him the status of her own family was raised. It wasn't that the position of a teacher was highly respected nor that his wage was so man golden per month. It was because Alimin came from a *santri* family, a deeply religious family with a strong leaning toward Mecca. Rarely was a *santri* girl permitted to marry a non-*santri* man. Exceptions were made if the young man was very religious and enjoyed a good position. Similarly, a *santri* man did not take an "ordinary" woman as his wife unless she were truly something special—beautiful, for instance—and when Satiyah was a young woman she was very attractive. (58-9)

Islam is "localized" or "de-metaphorized" in simple and plain language, so that it becomes the natural quality of life itself and does not need to become a particular focus. Thus the *absence* of Islam makes it powerfully ubiquitous.

To understand further the ubiquitous power of Islam as the narrative so de-metaphorically depicts, we need to see what "a religious woman" Satiyah really was in terms of her daily activities, especially her sexual life with her husband and others, which is depicted in a very straightforward, natural or de-metaphorized language. "The sexual needs of Satiyah's husband, the man who had become the pride of her family and who had once been the most sought-after young man in Mersi, were voracious. They made love at least once a night. Satiyah served her husband willingly and with happiness and pride" (78). The intimacy of their happy life is also described in other passages in equally rich but matter-of-fact detail, as in the following scene.

Realizing that Satiyah was making fun of him, Alimin grabbed a ruler and chased his wife around the room. Satiyah laughed and held her large stomach. "No. Mass, be careful. The baby ..." "All right, give me your hands I'm going to rap your knuckles ten times." He tried speaking to Satiyah as he would to a student but could not keep from laughing. "But my hands didn't do anything wrong, Mass," Satiyah pleaded. "What did then?" "My

mouth.” “Okay, give me your mouth.” They kissed. Later that night they expressed their affection for each other once more with passionate, yet careful lovemaking. “Be careful, Mass. The baby,” Satiyah was forced to remind her husband time and again. (78)

Without resorting to any emphatic “figures of speech,” Islam is described as if to say that it is no more or no less than life itself.

If de-metaphorization, as Greg Garrard suggests, also means deculturalization, it nevertheless does not call for depriving our texts of cultural elements; this is practically impossible, even in terms of the very logic of Garrard’s own argument, because “culture is always already involved in nature at every level of culture” (206). De-metaphorization thus simply means to be critically aware of the specific cultural elements that have already become an integral part of nature, such as “the drum for *magrib* prayers.” In this serene scene of nature, “The quail had returned to their nests and silence blanketed the scene. The wind barely moved. Faintly, from the direction they had come, came the sound of the drum for *magrib* prayers.” De-metaphorization thus only suggests that we should be sufficiently prepared for genuine humanity to emerge in eco-critically self-conscious ways that would otherwise be impossible. While the novel may be de-metaphorized to such a “pure” degree (as if it is not about any particular culture but humanity itself), it is, however, a novel of Islamic culture and excellence. Everything in the narrative appears sufficiently Islamic, that is, at once thoroughly Indonesian and at the same time reflective of our common humanity.

De-metaphorization in this work should also be observed with regard to how nature itself is described. Nature in the novel is invisible but ever present. It parallels the authorial vision and voice in that it barely reveals itself except very briefly, at the most crucial moment. The novel, in other words, makes nature powerfully present or ever-present by making it *absent*. The depiction of nature is often brief and casual, yet extremely accurate, as in the serene scene of nature just quoted in this exemplary passage: “...The quail had returned to their nests and silence blanketed the scene. The wind barely moved. Faintly, from the direction they had come, came the sound of the drum for *magrib* prayers.” Then all of a sudden, with the crying or-

der from Ose, "... the guns spat bullets and flames. Thunder rolled ....The quail rose in a flight once more with their wings beating a low and swift path" (163). The brief appearance of nature is decisive. It forces us to pause, to ponder and to re-evaluate the very meaning of humanity. Under the eye of nature, what is taken for granted, such as the unquestionable value of patriotism, appears dubious, because it can drive humanity to be deliberately monstrous. The body-tearing and ear-piercing gun shots that temporarily disrupt the course of nature leave long-lasting echoes in the minds of those who pause to reflect.

This unusual effect of the usual war situation, as revealed through the simple juxtaposition of quails and gunshots, is typical of de-metaphorization. It suggests a better *seeing*, beyond the human-centered perspective or, as Buell would say, "vision [that] can correlate not with dominance but with receptivity, and knowledge with ecocentrism" (82). It indicates, in other words, how we might see it through viewpoint of "quail that rose in flight," thus responding to Buell's question of "whether the word would become more interesting if we could see it from the perspective of a wolf, a sparrow, a river, stone" (178):<sup>7</sup>

Following such a precise depiction of what has happened, one

<sup>7</sup> In the following complete passage from which the above quotation is taken, the possible benefits of de-metaphorization through the constructive power of environmental imagination becomes clearer.

The effect of environmental consciousness on the perceiving self, as I see it, is not primarily to fulfill it, to negate it, or even to complicate it, although all of these may seem to happen. Rather the effect is most fundamentally to raise the question of the validity of the self as the primary focalizing device for both writer and reader: to make one wonder, for instance, whether the self is as interesting an object of study as we supposed, whether the word would become more interesting if we could see it from the perspective of a wolf, a sparrow, a river, stone. This approach to subjectivity makes apparent that the "I" has no greater claims to being the main subject than the chickens, the chopped corn, the mice, the snakes, and the phoebes—who are somehow also interwoven with me. To get this point across environmental writing has to be able to imagine nonhuman agents as bona fide partners. (178)

Such "environmental imagination" or "environmental consciousness" could probably be further explored in terms of what Thomas Kasulis tries to differentiate in

need not be Qu Yuan, Hamlet or King Lear to pose ultimate questions about what is really going wrong with humanity.<sup>8</sup> The sheer echoes indeed compose an endless string of questions that beget further questions. But when the peace-disturbing echoes of gun shots die down and the noises of the train fade away, what has also “returned to normal” is Ose’s mind, which seems to adjust itself gradually to the “perspective of a wolf, a sparrow, a river, stone.”

The train moved slowly forward, twisting, turning, climbing, and descending through the jungle heart of Sumatra. The locomotive groaned and every once in a while stopped to build up steam for a climb or to pick up people in need of a ride. The jungle panorama *receded* ....

The sun had completed nearly three quarters of its daily journey. The wind had died, leaving the branches of the trees hardly moving at all. It was so strange, Ose thought. Even in the middle of the dry season and even with no clouds to block the glare of the sun, the air in this country never felt really hot. The leaves were perpetually green. Thousands of animals inhabited this jungle. They merely disappeared when the sound of the train went past. After the train passed, jungle life *returned to normal*. Static. Relaxed. (146, my emphasis)

Everything in this passage is witnessed so precisely through this de-metaphorized “transparent eye,” that nature seems to become the embodiment of something divine, whether one is religious or not.

*Intimacy or Integrity: Philosophy and Cultural Difference.* On the one hand, there is, according to Kasulis, humans’ special responsibility for nature, based more or less on a cultural model of integrity; on the other hand, there is also what he calls humans’ responsiveness to nature, in accordance with “an ecological ethics” based on the cultural model of intimacy. For Kasulis, “in the integrity orientation ethics is primarily a morality of principles; in the intimacy orientation, however, ethics is a morality of love. Integrity’s moral demand is to be *fair* to the other person; intimacy’s is to be there for the other person. Integrity generates a morality of responsibility, whereas intimacy generates a morality of responsiveness” (120). Even though the authors quoted in the paper may sound at first like traditional environmentalists with a human-centered perspective that justifies humans as special stewards of the planet, their views ultimately suggest a more ecological view very similar to what Kasulis’s intimacy model suggests. De-metaphorization implies a possible combination of both orientations.

<sup>8</sup> Like Hamlet and King Lear, the Chinese poet of Chu (ca. 340 BCE - 278 BCE), with his “Tian Wen (Questions to the Heaven)” does wonder aloud how humanity and the world could be so “out of joint,” or turned so upside down.

How much, if at all, this novel should be read as Islamic, or in any religious perspective, is really hard to say. But certainly the novel could be appreciated in this way. As far as the narrative structure is concerned, the divine seems to be invisible in the same way nature is. Its vision and voice are revealed rhythmically—through the frequency of its appearance and the way the power of nature is punctuated—with one brief scenic episode after another. The novel is beautifully composed, concise and lyrical, straightforward and interwoven, as if God or Allah were at once invisible and present, distant and nearby, giving his accounts of the “human comedy” for us to comprehend as best we can. The “narrator” has a perfect rhythm regarding where to stop, about how much is sufficient for us “poor” humans to digest. No wonder Confucius, who feels the rhythm of *Tian* in the process of seasonal vicissitudes, challenges those who are insensitive to the “divine” rhythms of nature with such a rhetorical question, “Does *Tian* ever speak?”

De-metaphorization in this case does not mean “no use of metaphor,” but rather its precise use without resorting to sensationalism. Ironically, de-metaphorization is sometimes activated through accurate metaphorical expression, the way nature is—indifferently; but its characteristic indifference always suggests something else. One could easily have the impression that the “transparent eyeball” that sees all in this way must be like a great surgeon with all his/her human compassion distilled into “nothing” but the precise motion of his/her operation. This precision appears in the following scene of seppuku by a Japanese officer upon hearing the news of Japanese surrender.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> In Kawabata’s description in the beginning chapter of *Snow Country*, the “transparent eyeball” in the text could be seen as so “transparent” that it becomes transparently opaque, thus resembling a window and mirror at the same time. Like the eyeball of the pretty girl staring impassively outside from her window seat caught on the window of a fast moving night train, it transforms itself into a nexus or focal point where everything overlaps in rapid succession from both inside and outside—the impenetrable darkness outside, the glimmering dimness inside; the curious pupil of a man staring at the beautiful eyeball on the window from behind, and the glittering second that occurs to the pupil and in the pupil as the dim light inside glides occasionally with some glimmering lamp light outside.

He threw his body forward. He did not cry out. Only a small moan escaped from his throat. Then his body began to convulse, *like a chicken with its head cut off*.... No one attempted to stop the man's struggling as he fell and twisted and squirmed *like a fish thrown from the water onto land*. (106, emphasis added)<sup>10</sup>

If we re-think de-metaphorically through the environmental imagination of humanity, in which we all participate, what do we see in this scene? What does it say about the authorial voice, which seems to indicate a special kind of indifference with both rare accuracy and an empathy possible only when certain “nonhuman agents [become] bona fide partners”? The laconic description and the precise use of metaphors reveal everything about our vulnerable humanity so fully that we seem to have no choice but to look squarely into our own “self,” to examine “the ungraspable phantom of life” which has been de-metaphorized with surgical accuracy and precision.

If this is after all an Islamic novel, I enjoy it for exactly what it is, because Islam in the novel is *of* life itself in its utmost humanistic version. The ultimate wisdom revealed de-metaphorically through the narrative makes it impossible for us *not* to read either the novel or reality with restraint and compassion. Thus purified de-metaphorically to reveal the astonishing beauty of simplicity and authenticity,

<sup>10</sup> The language of the narrative often seems to be as stripped to the bare necessity as in Kafka and Camus, especially in *The Stranger*. Its precise use of “simile” also conveys the beauty of Homer in *Odysseus*, where the images of animals are often evoked with frequent and precise use of *similes*. In a sometimes sharp contrast, Virgil's *Aeneid* is loaded with *metaphors*. Johnson would probably also say here that Virgil “often relies on metaphor ... to communicate his purposes,” as Thoreau does in “representing his Walden experiment,” in addition to “convey[ing] many aspects of his physical surroundings” (181). But regardless of the possible similarities, what this novel reveals is a consistent and eco-conscious effort to see things or to involve nature with a kind of self-restraining and open receptivity via constructive environmental imagination. Characteristic of adopting “nonhuman agents as bona fide partners,” this de-metaphorized environmental imagination is also well-reflected in the Chinese poem “Sitting Alone with Mt. Jingting (独坐敬亭山)” by Li Bai (李白), the eccentric Tang poet (701-762 A.D.). “All birds fly high and away, Gone adrift is also the last patch of cloud. Not tired of watching each other are only those, Mt. Jingting and me (众鸟高飞尽, 孤云独去闲。相看两不厌, 只有敬亭山).” (My own translation.)

the novel makes the profound precise and the universal local, or the other way around. Environmental imagination enriches our minds de-metaphorically, so that we are destined to see what we otherwise cannot. We are destined to detect nature's subtle and ubiquitous influences not only where they seem most obvious but also where they seem least possible. We are thus destined to innumerable serendipitous rendezvous with our literary and philosophical canons, not only along the roads not taken, but also on roads that are well-travelled.

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# Ginsberg, India, and the Holiness of Dirt

Raymond-Jean Frontain

Shortly after his arrival for a long-anticipated fourteen-month stay in India, Allen Ginsberg records in his journal a dream in which he imagines himself atop a hill of garbage.

I am climbing about on a pile of refuse when a young married couple spies me & says “Ah, this garbage-haunting is what you represent.” I sit cross-legged Buddha style over the wires & refuse & bless it and say “I am here to make the Refuse sanctified” and smile cheerfully at the refuse as if it were a big happy religious redemption. (*Journals* 8)<sup>1</sup>

The dream brings into focus certain of the tensions in the thirty-six year old poet’s life, most importantly what he saw as the tendency of heterosexual normalcy (represented by “a young married couple”) to dismiss as “garbage-haunting” the spiritual search that he himself found deeply meaningful. And it captures the urge he felt to sanctify or redeem what society has discarded as ugly, useless and, in some cases, profane.

The aesthetic and the ethic that Ginsberg would develop as a result of his experiences in India were in many ways but an extension,

<sup>1</sup> Quotations from the *Indian Journals* are identified parenthetically as *Journals*, and those from the *Collected Poems* as *Poems*. Because Ginsberg’s long breath lines are rarely numbered as verse lines, as is traditionally done when lyric poetry is discussed, I cite Ginsberg’s poems only by page number. The exception is “Describe: The Rain on Dasaswamedh Ghat,” which I analyze in detail, making line number references necessary.

or a deepening, of the system of religious and artistic values that he had already been working eighteen years to articulate. “The world is holy! The soul is holy! The skin is holy! The nose is holy! The tongue and cock and hand and asshole holy!” Ginsberg had asserted in 1956 in “Footnote to *Howl*” (*Poems* 142), the groundbreaking poem in which he celebrated the “angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in the machinery of night” (*Poems* 134) who had been driven mad when forced to live in a world governed by Moloch. Likewise, in *Kaddish* (1959), his haunting requiem for his mother Naomi, Ginsberg invited his reader to contemplate the “ragged long lips between her legs—What, even smell of asshole?” (*Poems* 227). In attempting to recover the sacrality of the body and its functions, Ginsberg went further, even, than Walt Whitman, who had proclaimed that “Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever I touch or am touch’d from, / The scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer” (*Song of Myself* 524-25).

Ginsberg’s *Indian Journals* (1970) record, thus, not a sudden conversion experience, but a significant stage in his gradual movement from the Judaism of his upbringing to the Buddhism that would guide and preoccupy him until his death in 1997. First exposed to Asian religious texts in his undergraduate courses at Columbia College and further guided in his reading and thinking by his earliest mentor, Jack Kerouac, Ginsberg had drawn upon Hindu-Buddhist poetic form as early as 1955 when writing “Sunflower Sutra.” But, as Tony Trigilio notes, until his travels to India in 1962-63, Ginsberg’s “Buddhist practice was autodidactic and, as such, was eccentric and erratic” (Trigilio xii; claim repeated on 102). Nonetheless, Trigilio concludes, “Ginsberg’s struggle with Buddhism is central to understanding his post-‘Kaddish’ visionary work; and only through an understanding of his maturation as a Buddhist can we consider the scope of his career in detail” (xi). Trigilio thus reads Ginsberg’s later career ultimately as an attempt “to reconceive . . . [the] Beat improvisatory aesthetic as a Buddhist one” (2).

The significance of Ginsberg’s traveling to India following an eight-week stay in Israel is suggested by the opening passage in the

*Journals*, in which he records his “first dream of India” (which he titles a “Premonition Dream”). “[A]fter weeks of unhappiness” at sea, Ginsberg sees himself arriving in an unidentified Indian city. “I wonder what city I’m in,” the Ginsberg-of-the-dream records. But his disorientation is inconsequential: “I’m deliriously happy,” he explains; “it’s my promised land” (*Journals* 5). Following this dream of India as his very own “promised land,” Ginsberg-the-diarist notes parenthetically, as though to underscore the religio-cultural irony of his situation, that “I’m writing this *in* the promised land” (emphasis added)—that is, while in Haifa, in modern-day Israel, which remains historically the Promised Land of the Jewish scriptures.<sup>2</sup>

More than marking a shift in a literary/spiritual model from the Book of Jeremiah to the *Bhagavad Gita*, however, the *Indian Journals* record an evolving attitude toward death from seeing it as something to be lamented, which Ginsberg seems to have associated with his family’s Judaism, to revering it as part of an ongoing process of transformation. Several months into his stay in India, Ginsberg composed a poem memorializing dead family members that concludes, “I / am amazed by the dead population / that must grow to include me / with the rest” (*Journals* 48). His journals, however, reveal his increasing fascination with the burning ghats in which Hindu corpses are immolated as part of a religious ritual. Initially Ginsberg associates the ghats with holocaust sites like Belsen and Buchenwald (*Journals* 21, 23), which were presumably brought to Ginsberg’s consciousness by his stay in Israel and which represented for him the destructive, inhumane horror of the modern world.

Such references, however, disappear from the journals as the ghats lost their horror for Ginsberg. In Benares—the Hindu holy

<sup>2</sup> The facts of Ginsberg’s journey are summarized in Miles (298-322), Schumacher (368-96), Morgan (*I Celebrate Myself* 344-73), and Baker (*passim*). Ginsberg’s stay in India was particularly important in terms of his relationship with Peter Orlovsky. Although Ginsberg would remain Orlovsky’s provider, their relationship seems to have ceased being sexual in India, and for the remainder of Ginsberg’s life, Orlovsky would assert his independence of Ginsberg in ways that oftentimes seemed designed to humiliate the older man (Morgan, *passim*). Following India, however, Ginsberg seemed less conflicted about his sexuality. In India he seems to have reached a greater acceptance of himself.

city of the dead<sup>3</sup>—he and Orlovsky rented an apartment on a street leading to one of the busiest ghats, and Ginsberg attempted to record in his journals the complex dramas that played out daily before his eyes: the dignity and deeply felt emotion with which a son ignites his mother’s funeral pyre; the extraordinary skill with which the ghat attendants use long poles, much as one would a fireplace poker, to lift wayward limbs back into the fire and keep the disintegrating corpse from falling off its pyre; “the beauty of the crowding bathing nakedness” (*Journals* 154) of devout Hindus in the Ganges adjoining the ghats; the sheer energy of life in the midst of death. Describing in detail the shifting colors of the flames as they consume a corpse, Ginsberg concluded that it was “like burning away fear—I thought, burning the dross inside me” (*Journals* 125) —immolating what he earlier termed “my own egotism’s death fear” (*Journals* 48-9). Ginsberg seems to have overcome his fear of, or repugnance for, death while in India.

In addition, the *Indian Journals* bear witness to an evolving attitude towards human suffering on Ginsberg’s part. “If you see anything horrible don’t cling to it if you see anything beautiful don’t cling to it,” Ginsberg records Lama Dudjom Rimpoche N’yingmapa as having taught him (*Journals* 3): “Watch the wheels within wheels but don’t get attached to anything you see. Let it pass into you, but be in-active and not grasping nor rejecting” (*Journals* 29). Of course, the socialist outrage over human injustice that Ginsberg inherited from his parents did not leave him entirely. For example, in India he pasted into his journal a newspaper story from the *Calcutta*

<sup>3</sup> For the history of Benares as the Hindu Jerusalem or Mecca, see Eck, *Banaras*. A historian of religion, Eck is strongest when assessing the religio-cultural significance of the city, and offers in passing a good deal of information about Dasaswamedh Ghat (which she transliterates as Dashashvamedha Ghat). For a sociological analysis of the customs surrounding the care of the dying and the disposal of the remains of the dead in Benares, see Parry. He is particularly astute in deducing from the facts of the cremation industries the belief systems that draw pious Hindus to the city. The name of city appears in scholarship on South Asia more often as “Banaras,” but I respect Ginsberg’s choice of an alternative transliteration and use “Benares” in my essay.

*Statesman*, 23 October 1962, titled “The Privileged Class,” whose subtitle explained that “Bulk Of Wealth Owned By 1% In India” (*Journals* 73). But, believing that self-absorption leaves one oblivious to the larger world—that is, that the ego selects from a scene only what pertains directly to its pleasure or what seems a threat to its welfare—Ginsberg set out in a non-judgmental manner to record what he calls “the unnoticed details of the going universe outside the room” in which he and Orlovsky stayed (*Journals* 42). Being in a “third world” country apparently made it possible for him to gaze with equanimity upon instances of dirt, suffering, and death that plutocratic societies resent as silent indictments of capitalism.

His journals, thus, are replete with descriptions of street scenes that attempt to include every detail—the appearance and actions of every human and animal, the voices, the stains on the pavement—giving everyone and everything equal weight. Crippled beggars are described without pity or revulsion—not dispassionately, by any means, but with a remarkable acceptance of the totality of experience. The photographs that Ginsberg took while in India (some of which he included in the 1996 Grove Press reprinting of *Indian Journals*) betray the same religious aesthetic. The camera’s eye looks without judgment, yet with compassionate acceptance, on a boy whose fingers have been eaten away by leprosy, on a three-legged dog that moves through a crowded street, on a homeless woman sleeping in the street. Ginsberg’s *Indian Journals* and the photographs that he took while in India challenge the reader and/or viewer to consider what is beautiful and what makes a person or scene worth looking at. In effect they sanctify “the refuse as if it were a big happy religious redemption”; Ginsberg’s journals and photographs become acts of *namaste*—that is, of bowing in respectful acknowledgment of another’s existence.

Perhaps no poem better illustrates Ginsberg’s progressive reconciliation of a William Carlos Williams-inspired aesthetic of “no ideas but in things” with a Buddhist ethic that accepts all life as holy than “Describe: The Rain on Dasaswamedh Ghat.” Ginsberg composed the poem in his journal while living with Peter Orlovsky in Benares in February 1963 (*Journal* 176-78), and included it with

minor changes in *Planet News 1961-1968* (1968).<sup>4</sup> Although the poem is not discussed by Trigilio in his analysis of the evolution of Ginsberg's Buddhist poetics, it exemplifies what he terms Ginsberg's "impulse to resignify material lived experience as a practice of the sacred" (123); the speaker has achieved a "Buddhist mindfulness" that is simultaneously "a matter of poetic lucidity—a mode of clarity that transforms observation into vision" (140). In "Describe: The Rain on Dasaswamedh Ghat," human suffering is no longer a maddening source of agony to, or cause of mourning for, the speaker as it is in "Howl" or "Kaddish." Rather the poem, which is characterized by a quiet acceptance of suffering and death as part of the ongoing drama of human existence, offers the reader a vision of the interconnectedness of all things.

The poem unfolds like a cinematic Rube Goldberg operation. The eye of the speaker (whose position on a balcony overlooking the street scene below is not established until line 7) is first taken by the "tottering" movement of Kali Ma, a blind street person who is "feeling her way" to the curb where she needs to urinate.<sup>5</sup> Her blindness

<sup>4</sup> I cite the poem as it appears in *Collected Poems 1947-1997*, 303-4. According to Ginsberg's bibliographer, Bill Morgan, the poem was originally titled simply "Describe: The Rain on Dasaswamedh"; the word "Ghat" was not added until 1971 (*Works* item F30). Compare items A15 and A19, with items F30 and A48.

<sup>5</sup> The dramatic impact that Kali Ma had upon Ginsberg and Orlovsky during their months in Benares has been documented by Deborah Baker. Her summary is informed by her interviews with Orlovsky:

At Dasaswamedh Ghat, he [Orlovsky] discovered a leper woman wearing a burlap sack tied with a string, crusted with dirt. When he helped her change into a newly bought sari, he discovered deep, maggot-infested wounds on her buttock and hip. "I was so surprised I didn't know what to do for a second—then I hid it to a doctor." He [Orlovsky] disinfected her wounds, looking into her eyes as he fed her. Upon their return from Delhi some weeks later, he stumbled upon her body and veered away in surprise. "I didn't think she would go so soon. What fooled me was her calm eyes, living so peacefully above her hip woe—" (Baker 199)

While in the army, Orlovsky had been a medical attendant and, thus, was experienced at cleaning wounds. And in Calcutta, as Baker reports, "Peter had worked alongside the nuns at Mother Teresa's ashram for the dying" (Baker 199), so was not unfamiliar with the suffering of the poor and abandoned. The extremity of Kali Ma's condition, thus, is suggested by his rush to consult professional medical expertise.

prevents her from recognizing that there is an abandoned broom lying where she habitually performs her bodily functions. The broom, however, allows for the poem's segue from Kali Ma to the broom's owners, "the Stone Cutters who last night were shaking the street with Boom! of Stone blocks unloaded from truck" (2), and who presumably did not realize that they were leaving it behind as they completed their work in the night-darkened street. Mention of the Stone Cutters leads the reader's gaze from Kali Ma squatting over the broom to "the blindman in his gray rags" who, when the delivery truck arrived and the Stone Cutters began unloading their stones, had been forced to leave the bed that he makes every night in the middle of the street, and before whom there daily pass "cows donkeys dogs camels elephants marriage processions drummers tourists lepers and bathing devotees" (5). Thus, in only six lines Ginsberg has led his reader from the seemingly casual contemplation of a single, apparently isolated figure to a riotous parade of human and animal life.

The speaker's next chain of figures begins as he watches a leper, previously obscured by the stationary bicycle past which Kali Ma lurches, "emerge dragging his buttocks on the gray rainy ground by the glove-bandaged stumps of hands" (8). The leper laboriously drags himself to a municipal water pump, pausing each movement of the way to push before him the tin can that he seeks to fill. He stops to converse with "a turban'd workman" who questions why he uses this water pump when "free rice" is available at the pump near an outdoor altar place in the opposite direction (16-17). As the leper pauses to discuss the matter with the workman, the speaker recognizes that the leper and his can rest just short of "a puddle" formed by Kali Ma's urine, which causes the reader-viewer's gaze to return to the blind woman (19-20). Done urinating, Kali Ma—"her hands in the air" (20)—attempts to find her way back to the pile of rags that is her bed and which, in her absence, a free-roaming cow has begun to chew (21).

Kali Ma quietly disappears from the poem as the speaker-observer's gaze shifts to the dozing "comb-&-hair-oil-booth keeper" who is startled awake by a dog's barking and rushes to chase "her" away with a stick (22). (It is not clear if the pronoun refers to the salivat-

ing cow or to the urinating Kali Ma.) The dog's barking was instigated by the appearance of

... a madman with dirty wild black hair who rag round his midriff & water  
 pot in hand  
 Stopped in midstreet turned round & gazed up at the balconies, windows,  
 shops and city stagery filled with glum activity  
 Shrugged & said *Jai Shankar!* [Victory to Shiva!] to the imaginary audi-  
 ence of Me's,  
 While a white robed Baul Singer carrying his one stringed dried pumpkin  
 Guitar  
 Sat down near the cigarette stand and surveyed his new scene, just arrived  
 in the Holy City of Benares. (23-27)

By offering a chain of seemingly insignificant causal circumstances, the poem in effect provides a vision of how everything in the world is interconnected in ways that cannot be anticipated. The poem *seems* to move forward visually in cinematographic fashion: the reader is asked to look from the speaker's vantage point on his balcony above the street through the camera's eye, as it were, as it pans from Kali Ma, to the disabled leper, and finally to the black haired madman and the white robed Baul Singer. Temporally, however, the poem's actions move constantly backwards in an attempt to explain those actions' causes: to the arrival the night before of the Stone Cutters who would leave behind the broom with which Kali Ma comes in contact, and who disrupted the routine of the blind-man who sleeps "in the middle of the road"; and to the disruptive appearance on the scene of the madman who sets to barking the dog that awakens "the comb-&-hair-oil-booth keeper" who chases away either the scavenging cow or Kali Ma herself. Past and present combine in a moment of extraordinary lucidity in which the reader is implicitly invited to share.

This sense of the underlying connectedness of all things is reinforced poetically by the absence of end-stopped punctuation in the poem. "Describe: The Rain on Dasaswamedh Ghat" is 27 lines long yet possesses only one period, and that only at the very end of the poem. All of the other lines are suspended by commas or em-dashes, the enjambment of the lines combining with Ginsberg's compressed syntax ("Maximum information, minimum number of syllables")

["Cosmopolitan Greetings," 955]) to create a discourse in which seemingly individual actions and identities are collapsed into the shared welter of life. Thus, no one action begins and concludes independently of another. Rather, as in a Rube Goldberg device, each leads incongruously yet inescapably to the next. Similarly, as noted above, the ambiguity of the pronoun "her" in line 23 leaves the reader uncertain whether the "comb-&-hair-oil-booth keeper" is using a stick to force the cow or Kali Ma to vacate the space in front of his booth. Ginsberg's deliberately ambiguous pronoun collapses the animal and the person into a single identity, blurring the border between the human and the animal worlds. Kali Ma's puddle of urine, like the cow's dropping to the ground the wet mass of Kali Ma's rags that it has spent five minutes trying unsuccessfully to digest (21), is undesirable to the booth keeper's business but—like "the Snail's slime track" left by the disabled leper (14)—is suggestive of the Bakhtinian open body whose fluids flow freely, blurring the boundary between the Self and the World. From a businessman's point of view, both the cow and the blind woman are a nuisance; but from the speaker-observer's, each is an essential part of a scene of Bakhtinian grotesquerie in which people are open, not closed, to life.<sup>6</sup>

For Ginsberg it is exactly this weltering confusion of values that makes the world holy. The Amer-European reader is most likely tak-

<sup>6</sup> Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin demonstrates how grotesque bodily realism challenged the hierarchical construction of sexuality in medieval popular culture. Compare the "new bodily canon," which Bakhtin notes came to dominate the High Renaissance and was further refined in the neoclassical style. It "presents an entirely finished, completed, strictly limited body, which is shown from the outside as something individual. That which protrudes, bulges, sprouts, or branches off (when a body transgresses its limits and a new one begins) is eliminated, hidden, or moderated. All orifices of the body are closed. The basis of the image is the individual, strictly limited mass, the impenetrable facade. The opaque surface and the body's 'valleys' acquire an essential meaning as the border of a closed individuality that does not merge with other bodies and with the world" (320).

The "open body," in contrast, allows its fluids to flow freely into the world. "Describe: The Rain on Dasaswamedh Ghat" is, in Bakhtinian terms, ultimately a festive poem and might be analyzed as a South Asian version of a scene by Breughel. For another aspect of Ginsberg's Rabelaisian poetic, see Frontain.

en aback by the concluding phrase of the poem which summarizes the scene as “the Holy City of Benares” (27). The typical Western observer who has been raised to associate the divine with order, and evil with chaos (Yahweh brings form out of the waters, and light out of darkness, in Gen. 1.1-10)—or who has been influenced by the emphasis on cleanness and uncleanness in the Mosaic holiness code and its equivalent in Islam—would no doubt judge a scene “profane” in which a blind woman urinates publicly, a leper drags himself along the street by the stumps that remain of his hands, a madman in a ragged loincloth sets a local dog to barking, and “cows donkeys dogs camels elephants” mingle indiscriminately with “marriage processions drummers tourists lepers and bathing devotees” (5). Conversely, physiologically, Ginsberg’s concluding line allows the reader a momentary experience of ecstasy: even as the long meandering lines of the poem are brought to a conclusion with an end-stop, the open vowel sounds of “Holy City” and weak final syllable of “Benares” forestall sonal closure, eliciting from the reader a gasp—of exhaustion, of wonder, or (the poet may hope) of both. The poem in effect forces the reader to consider not only what makes this particular scene “holy,” but where the holy is to be found in the world in general. Every night the “blindman in his gray rags” shakes under his blanket “telling his beads or sex” (4): is he praying or masturbating? Maybe the two actions are not so dissimilar, the poem suggests, in that both actions are attempts to find release from misery.

Paradoxically, in a poem that opens with Kali Ma blindly “tottering” (1), the seemingly unstable world of Dasaswamedh Ghat proves surprisingly stable. Kali Ma’s routine of urinating at the curb, like the disabled leper’s progress to the water pump and the cow’s scavenging, is repeated daily, vesting the action with almost ritualistic significance. The reader senses that the scene has been repeated innumerable times over the centuries—if not with these exact personages, then with other representatives of their condition. The most vulnerable and perilously mortal members of the city’s community participate in a drama that, while deeply grounded in the immediate experience of the senses, transcends the quotidian to become a primal drama of bodily survival and, paradoxically, spiri-

tual transcendence. The leper's struggle to obtain water, Kali Ma's to evacuate her waste and the cow's search for sustenance are elemental actions invested with the hope of release into nirvana because the actors perform them without complaint in the Holy City of Benares.

Ultimately, the purpose of the poem is to invite the reader to "look" anew at the sacred beauty that inheres in the most humble of circumstances. The poem's closing movement juxtaposes two perspectives: that of the madman who "gazed up at the balconies, windows, shops and city stagerie filled with glum activity / Shrugged and said *Jai Shankar!* [Victory to Shiva!] to the imaginary audience of Me's" (24-25); and that of "a white robed Baul Singer," newly arrived in "the Holy City of Benares," who sits down "near the cigarette stand and surveyed his new scene" (26-27). The madman calls the destructive power of Shiva down upon the bourgeoisie who literally look down on this world from the safe distance and emotional remove of their windows and balconies, and who do not participate in the drama played out in the street below. Significantly, the speaker includes himself in this group, whose actions are controlled by their egos ("Me's"): however much his attention is engaged by the festive bustle along the ghat, he apparently does not descend to join the crowd but holds himself somewhat aloof.

The newly arrived Baul Singer, conversely, "surveyed his new scene" from ground level, fully intending to participate in it. In his notes to the poem, Ginsberg glosses "Baul" as "mystical sect of wandering, patchwork-clothed Vaishvan singers, some devoted to Krishna, in North Bengal," and notes their influence on the songs of Rabindranath Tagore (*Poems* 779), with whose work Ginsberg acquainted himself while in Bengal. (Indeed, according to Deborah Baker, upon first hearing of Ginsberg and the Beats, Sunil Gangapadhyay and the members of the *Krittibas* circle thought of them as Bauls, "those troubadours of the Bengal countryside who rebelled against the conventions that marked class and religious differences" [160].) The singer, thus, is as much a stand-in for the peregrinating, vision-seeking Ginsberg as the somewhat aloof observer in line 7 who seems to be included by the madman in his denunciation of "the city stagerie filled with glum activity."

This dual doppelganger for the poet suggests, finally, the dual function of the poem as well as the complex nature of Ginsberg's experience in India. On the one hand, the madman's devotion to Shiva the Destroyer is at odds with the Baul Singer's devotion to Vishnu the Preserver, suggesting the two men's differing attitudes towards the scene: the one implicitly denounces the "city stager" of those who are sheltered by their middle class comfort and complacency, while the other prepares to engage lyrically with "his new scene." But, on the other hand, in Hindu cosmology the actions of Shiva the Destroyer are necessary before new life can be created, as the actions of the one god actually complement those of the other. The speaker may remain aloof as an actor within the poem, but the poet is fully engaged by life's tragicomedies. In "Describe: The Rain on Dasaswamedh Ghat," the self is relieved of an absolutist point of view.

Ginsberg's description of a scene of dirt, confusion and instability is, thus, also a celebration of the eternal religious: the poet, who is different than the poem's speaker, sits atop the pile of what others may dismiss as "refuse" and blesses it "as if it were a big happy religious redemption." It is not Shiva's fire that rains down on the scene, but the "Rain" that is mentioned in the poem's title and that is present in the text proper only as "the gray rainy ground" across which the disabled leper drags himself (8). That the poem does not focus in greater detail upon the physical fact of the rain, despite its prominence in the poem's title, suggests that Ginsberg is more interested in rain as an image of spiritual cleansing and renewal than in the effect of a meteorological event on the material world. "Materialist lived experience," to repeat Trigilio's claim for Ginsberg's Buddhist poetics, has been resignified "as a practice of the sacred" (Trigilio 123).

The *Indian Journals* are important as a record of Ginsberg's complex spiritual quest. Ginsberg spent much of his time in India looking for a guru. He sat talking with *sadhus*, sought out methods of meditation, and experimented with a variety of local substances, particularly *ganja*. But as he records in his dedication, ultimately his experience in India taught him to "stop going around looking for Gurus"

and instead to follow his own heart (*Journal 3*). Clearly, the torment that infuses “Howl” and “Kaddish” does not disappear entirely from his poetry, but as Trigilio points out, the breathing techniques that Ginsberg developed while in India and through his exchanges with Gary Snyder during these months abroad allowed him to fuse “song” and “concentration” in an “appropriation of mantra speech” (86): rather than a protest against injustice in the world, his poetry became increasingly a means of trying to make something happen.

At the time, even if disappointed not to have found the guru that he was searching for, Ginsberg understood fully that in India he had absorbed more than he could possibly express. “But how ever recreate India?” Ginsberg wondered in his journal two months before his departure (*Journals 193*). It was the unparalleled nakedness of India, the lack of capitalist subterfuge that he witnessed in so many street scenes—in effect, the holiness of dirt—that allowed him to experience what he terms “heartfelt the minute of now” (*Journals 172*). It’s “very satisfying,” Ginsberg records, “the click of the instant” (*Journals 171*), employing a phrase that suggests the snapping of a camera shutter. Yet for all the street scenes that he records in his journal, he worries that there are “thousands of scenes like this in India I haven’t writ, but saw” (*Journals 8*). India offered a richness of experience that transformed him into an Emersonian eyeball: “I / am / traveller / eyes” (*Journals 24*), he notes.

A final observation might be made about the influence of Ginsberg’s India sojourn upon his religious vision and his poetics. Clearly, Ginsberg never renounced the inheritance he received from Emerson, Whitman and Carlos Williams. That inheritance, however, seems to have been reinforced, and their influence redirected, by Ginsberg’s exposure to the South Asian sacramentalization of the gaze. According to Diana Eck, the Hindu custom of *darsan* grows from a belief that when one looks upon an image of the divine, one is seeing and being seen by the deity (3). “When Hindus stand on tiptoe and crane their necks to see, through the crowd, the image of Lord Krsna, they wish not only to ‘see,’ but to be seen. The gaze of the huge eyes of the image meets that of the worshiper, and that exchange of vision lies at the heart of Hindu worship” (7). Conse-

quently, gods are represented with particularly prominent eyes in Hindu religious art—as, by extension, are humans in Indian cinema. In his “Apu Trilogy,” for example, film maker Satyajit Ray repeatedly frames his characters as they look at, or are looked at by, another person, giving them the dignity of religious icons. The characters silently implore each other, and by extension the viewing audience, for relief from want by looking directly at each other.

According to Susan Sontag, conversely, Western aesthetics betray a reluctance to look directly upon a person in pain. In *Regarding the Pain of Others* she notes that, during World War II, American photojournalists showed their respect for fallen American servicemen by carefully photographing their bodies from an angle that obscured the face, thus respecting the grief and guaranteeing the privacy of surviving family members. She compares these photographs with those made for the American news media of people starving in Biafra in the 1960s, of the Tutsi victims in the genocide that took place in 1994 in Rwanda, and of children and adults whose limbs were hacked off by rebel terrorists in Sierra Leone—photographs in which the subject is oftentimes allowed to look directly into the camera. “[T]he more remote or exotic the place, the more likely we are to have full frontal views of the dead and dying” in the popular media, Sontag observes (70).

These sights carry a double message. They show a suffering that is outrageous, unjust, and should be repaired. They confirm that this is the sort of thing which happens in that place. The ubiquity of those photographs, and those horrors, cannot help but nourish belief in the inevitability of tragedy in the benighted or backward—that is, poor—parts of the world. (71)

In Western cultures, she concludes, “whenever people feel safe [. . .] they will be indifferent” (100). Humans are able to look directly on the pain of others—to take a “full frontal view”—only to the extent that we are incapable of identifying with the sufferer because he is either completely alien to us, is dying under circumstances in which we cannot imagine ever finding ourselves, or has been discovered in conditions so extreme that the viewer feels there is nothing he or she can do to relieve such suffering and, thus, can look upon the scene with impassivity.

Like his photographs, Ginsberg's "Describe: The Rain on Dasawamedh Ghat" invites participation in the suffering of others, and may be read in the context of *darsan*. In his dream, Ginsberg "smile[d] cheerfully at the refuse as if it were a big happy religious redemption." Rather than turning his gaze from the distressed, he blessed it. Significantly, Ginsberg's syntax does not make clear who or what is being redeemed: the refuse by Ginsberg's smile, or Ginsberg himself by having discovered what he had been searching for? In the Hindu practice of *darsan* the gaze is powered by *both* participants. Redemption can be found in the streets, and one is made holy by being able to "see" the sacred as it gazes upon one from a trash heap.

It is doubly challenging, Ginsberg recognizes, for someone raised in an Amero-European mind set to communicate the reality of India to someone who has not experienced the culture him- or herself. Ginsberg's description of a street festival that he and Peter witnessed suggests how powerful a hold India took on Ginsberg's imagination.

Elora—Glory, I mean they got great dancing Shivas balanced with ten arms doing cosmic dances of creation 20 feet tall, & fantastic skully Kalis invoking nightmare murders in another yuga, thousands of statues dancing all over huge temple built like Mt. Kailash the Himalayan abode of Shiva— And Ganesha with fat belly & elephant head & snakehead belt & trunk in a bowlful of sweets riding on his Vehicle a mouse—How can Da Vinci beat an elephant on a mouse? (*Journals* 65)

Leonardo's representations of the Mona Lisa, of John the Baptist or of the Last Supper—the standards by which the excellence of traditional Western images are judged—pale in comparison with a culture's ability to unite such contradictory elements as an elephant riding astride a mouse in the popular depiction of the god Ganesh and his vehicle. The sacred cannot be set apart in a museum or church with a halo to confirm its nature. Rather, the holy is to be found in a riotous street scene, in "the click of the instant," in which the goddess Kali, traditionally represented with black skin and with a string of skulls around her neck and/or waist, is addressed as "Beautiful Mother."

Has the incommensurability topos ever been so dramatically expressed, or the gulf between American and South Asian ideas of

Holy Beauty been so movingly articulated? In its acceptance of dirt and its celebration of a seemingly defiled universe, “Describe: The Rain on Dasaswamedh Ghat” enacts the revolt of the *sudras* (untouchable) poet against middle class order and cleanliness.

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# West Meets East: The Current State of Mental Health Services in Cambodia

Nancy G. Janus

## Abstract

Following years of civil war and violence, Cambodians represent a population with significant needs for mental health services. Counseling is a growing field, and many paraprofessional Cambodians are being trained to work in the human services NGOs throughout the country. Most counseling training is done by social services agencies and by Western consultants. This article explores the relationship between this training and current counseling practice in Cambodia. Western assumptions about mental health and specific counseling practices are examined in light of Cambodian cultural beliefs.

## Introduction

Cambodia is a country whose history is shaped by thirty years of conflict, from genocide to civil war to ordinary street violence. Its people still deal with the psychological scars of losing friends and relatives as well as the professional elite that guided the political and educational systems before the Khmer Rouge period. The result is that now there is heavy dependence upon foreign aid to rebuild the country economically, educationally and socially. There is significant reliance on organizations such as the World Bank for economic support, and on some 200 to 300 international NGOs for social and educational reconstruction (Martonova et al).

Poverty is a major problem in Cambodia, with women and children being the most affected. According to Dr. Sotheara Chhim,

the confluence of poverty and Cambodia's violent past yields a significant number of mental health problems within the country and contributes to a dearth of trained professionals to address them.<sup>1</sup> A review of the websites of numerous NGOs working on human rights issues relating to women and children reveals that nearly all of these NGOs claim to be providing some form of counseling or social rehabilitation. This raises the question of how this counseling is being accomplished, by whom and with what training. Furthermore, since most counseling theory has been postulated by Western mental health specialists, how is it being modified for effective use with Cambodian clients, if at all? This article tries to address these questions and further examines the particular issues of working with Cambodian clients within their culture.

During the summer of 2009, this author traveled to Cambodia to interview Western and Cambodian mental health specialists to understand better how the psychological needs of Cambodia's women and children are being addressed. She visited 14 NGOs in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, interviewing counselors and social workers. She also visited the Department of Psychology at the Royal University of Phnom Penh to ascertain how undergraduate and graduate training of mental health specialists is being done.

### **History of Mental Health Services in Cambodia**

Prior to 1975, there was only one psychiatric hospital in Cambodia. After the Khmer Rouge period in 1979, there were no hospitals, and the small number of psychiatrists who had worked previously had been killed. It was not until 1988 that the mental health needs of Cambodians were once again addressed, but this time only those Cambodians who found themselves living in the refugee camps along the Thai border were served. At that time 57 family and child mental health counselors received training from the Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma. This training evolved into an important resource, the *Harvard Guide to Khmer Mental Health* (Lavelle et al).

<sup>1</sup> Sotheara Chhim (Director, Transcultural Psychosocial Organization) in discussion with the author, June 2009

In 1993 the Cambodian National Health Plan made psychiatry a high priority along with general health improvement. However, without Cambodians educated to provide either the services or the training to implement the priority, international organizations had to step in.

In 1994 the Transcultural Psychosocial Organization International (TPO), based in Holland, began a mental health program in Cambodia “to help Cambodian people overcome the psychological consequences of the trauma they experienced in the last three decades of war, socio-political upheavals and the genocidal Pol Pot’s regime in the country” (Chhim 2). TPO exists to this day, based in Phnom Penh with four satellite offices in other cities in Cambodia. This organization provides direct services to Cambodians with mental health problems and is also involved in training initiatives for Cambodians working for other NGOs in the country.

In the same year the Dutch recognized the need for mental health agencies in Cambodia, the Norwegians did as well. The Norwegian government funded the Cambodian Mental Health Development Program to offer three years of training for 10 Cambodian physicians interested in specializing in psychiatry. Several years later, 10 more Cambodian psychiatrists were trained (Savin1). As of 2006, a total of 26 psychiatrists were trained in this program along with 40 psychiatric nurses. Today there are a total of 30 Cambodian psychiatrists in the country, primarily based in Phnom Penh.

After the Pol Pot period in Cambodia, the need for mental health services was strong, and the training of psychiatrists alone would not meet it. Recognizing that paraprofessional counselors might be trained to provide services in the villages, a group of Cambodian-American social workers began a program in 1992. Village volunteers were trained to provide direct social work services to their troubled neighbors in the villages. Training expanded to cover more than 600 staff of the Ministry of Social Affairs. This program evolved into a still-existing NGO, Social Services of Cambodia (SSC), which continues to offer social work skills training to NGO employees throughout Cambodia. (Minotti 1).

In recent years, other international groups have come to Cambodia to provide counseling and social work training to NGO staff. Currently there are training programs at and through TPO in Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy. Staff from NGOs working with traumatized children and young adults are being trained in this model, which, in the West, has proved effective in alleviating the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

### **The Nature of the Cambodian Mental Health Problem**

Due to its violent past and grinding poverty, there are a number of predictable mental health problems manifest in Cambodia. Of 1400 adults measured by the Household Survey of Psychiatric Morbidity in Cambodia in 2001, 42 percent met criteria for depression, 53 percent for anxiety, and 7 percent for post-traumatic stress disorder. Twenty-five percent of the respondents felt that their symptoms were sufficiently intrusive to make them socially impaired (Dubois et al 181). These problems contribute to, or are exacerbated by, the many serious social and economic difficulties in Cambodia today.

Cambodia continues to be a violent place, and the violence takes many forms. Domestic violence is rampant both in villages and urban areas and receives a high level of social acceptance both from men and women (Surtees 32). According to Joseph Mussomeli, "In a society soaked in violence for more than thirty years, and with a lack of trust in the judicial system, Cambodians, and men in particular, believe that aggression is an appropriate tool to control and dominate others. There is no compunction against being violent to women, children, and one another" (Mussomeli 1).

Related to domestic violence is human trafficking: many young people are being sold by their impoverished families to enter a violent world of prostitution. Significant numbers of street children form gangs and engage in urban crime. Homelessness is a reality for many Cambodians who are evicted from their land. Finally, the killing of so many Cambodians in the late 1970's has resulted in the disruption of extended family supports on which the people had relied in time of need (Lee 55). Given the extent of these problems,

numerous international NGOs have stepped in to help. Most offer counseling and social work services that have been copied from Western models of service delivery.

### Cambodian Help-Seeking Behavior

Cambodians are not averse to seeking help for mental distress. However, they prefer to be seen by traditional Cambodian healers before they seek Western-style counseling. There is a deep tradition of spiritual healing in Cambodia and a belief system that incorporates folk medicine as the most viable healing alternative. According to Soeurn Hem,

Besides medicines, folk healers use religion, magical incantations, tattooing, burying magical objects under the skin, pouring holy water, inscribing handkerchiefs with magical scriptures, making raw threads to be worn around the waist, spitting chews of betels and areca nuts, calling souls with magic formulas and other such practices.

Traditional healers also use pinching the skin, coining, glass suction, herbal steaming, massage, bed heating and other treatments. Finally, Cambodian folk healers treat patients by making offerings to the ancestors or spirits, appeasing angry ghosts, ghouls, or the devil. They may use mediums to contact the water spirits, the male spirit, or others. Sometimes they use magical Pali words to “tie” the spirits. They may also “whip” a spirit through the patient’s body in order to chase out the illness caused by evil spirits or the devil. (16)

Specifically, there are several categories of traditional healers in Cambodia. The *Kruu Khmer* is a sort of sorcerer. He may provide traditional medicine or he may offer magic. Lang describes the *Kruu Khmer* as a “practitioner of magic who has a number of talents. He is believed to be able to inject supernatural power into an amulet by drawing on his secret magic formula. He can also prescribe traditional herbs, roots and folk remedies” (Lang 60). The *Kruu Khmer* typically does not become possessed by a spirit when he works with a Cambodian client, but other spiritual healers called *Chol Rup Arak* do. This spirit possession allows the healer to communicate with the spirits that are seen to be infecting the client. The *Achar Wat* is able to communicate with the spirits without becoming possessed himself. Typically it is only the seriously mentally ill who see the *Achar Wat* or the *Chol Rup Arak* and, according to

Sotheara Chhim,<sup>2</sup> it would be unusual for a client suffering from depression or anxiety to go to such a healer. What is essential to understand about these traditional healers is that they are able “to apply a consistent template based firmly on Cambodian cosmology and drawing on its entire biological, psychological, social, and ecological canvas” (Eisenbruch 9).

Cambodians will often choose to see a monk for mental health problems. They believe that if a monk prays for them and helps them to be on the best Buddhist path, they will be healed. Buddhist prayer helps the client to feel empowered to address his or her problems with greater strength. Unfortunately, most monks in Cambodia are not trained in counseling or psychology and do not have skills to address the help-seekers beyond prayer. One exception is the Salvation Center of Cambodia where Buddhist monks have received basic training in Western counseling skills in order to work directly with clients who have HIV/AIDS. However, eschewing the Western approach, Venerable San Pon, director of the Salvation Center explained that the counseling process used with these clients is first prayer, followed by the application of holy water and finally review of the Buddhist teachings called the *dharma*.<sup>3</sup>

Cambodians are not averse to seeing Western mental health professionals or to engaging in traditional verbal counseling with them. However, certain criteria are expected. First of all, confidentiality is of the utmost importance. As a people, Cambodians do not typically complain or tell their personal stories. Consequently, they are particularly sensitive to the notion that the story might be shared. According to Dr. Sotheara Chhim, it can be hard to get Cambodian clients to talk at all, and it often takes several visits before they will open up and tell the true story. In the interest of saving face, they may fabricate a story or hide key details of it.<sup>4</sup>

Secondly, Cambodian clients expect that the counselor will have a thorough understanding of their cultural traditions. The counselor

<sup>2</sup> Chhim, discussion.

<sup>3</sup> Venerable San Pon (Director, Salvation Center of Cambodia) in discussion with the author, July 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Chhim, discussion.

must “have an in-depth understanding of the patient’s values, experiences, behaviors and feelings” (Mam 28).

Finally, the counselor must be empathic, accepting and non-judgmental.

Any professional trained in the mental health disciplines of the West will have no difficulty understanding the criteria of confidentiality, empathy and taking a non-judgmental stance. However, awareness of deep cultural perspectives is more difficult for Westerners.

### **Differences between Western and Cambodian Clients**

Most counseling theory has evolved from Europe and America, and Western assumptions about the mentally healthy person may actually have little applicability in the Cambodian context. As a Theravada Buddhist country, Cambodians believe strongly that suffering is a normal part of life. In the West, counseling is oriented toward the removal of suffering. For the Cambodian client, counseling is about coping with suffering. “The religion teaches people to take what comes, that they are not responsible for their lot in life, that outside forces control their fate” (Coates 148).

The belief that people’s problems are determined by past life behaviors does not permeate most Western thought, but it is very important to Buddhist belief. Steinberg explains that

The doctrinal formula of Theravada Buddhism can be restated as follows: that which a man is, is the fruit of what he has been. Each malicious deed or intent—or for that matter, the failure to gain adequate merit in this life—carries a seed which germinates into misfortune in a later existence. Similarly, each adversity or misfortune encountered in the present life can be traced to some misdeed committed in an earlier one. (Steinberg 61)

Most Western counseling theory is predicated on the notion that the individual can take charge of his or her own life and come to a solution for its problems. The assumption that those problems may stem from mistakes in a previous life can breed passivity among Cambodian clients. The Western counselor needs to understand that the idea of taking charge in this life to bring better outcomes in the next life provides effective leverage for change in the client.

Another Buddhist construct that makes Cambodians different

from Western clients is the unity of body and mind. Mental distress is quickly somaticized into physical distress. The Cambodian client is more likely to seek help for the somatic complaint and consequently may resist the notion that his or her problem should be dealt with through counseling. The client is also more likely to anticipate a medical model fix. That is, the expert listens and immediately proposes a solution to the problem.

The notion of expertise is deeply rooted in the Cambodian belief about hierarchy. Cambodia is a fiercely hierarchical society, with social hierarchy determined by intellectual status, age, gender, urban vs. rural dwelling, etc. This is an issue in counseling since Western theory supports the notion that the client and counselor work together as partners rather than in a hierarchical arrangement. If the Cambodian client anticipates a quick fix by the expert, and the counselor anticipates the unveiling in partnership of the problem and the client's arrival at his or her own solution, they may be at cross-purposes with one another.

The hierarchical arrangement of family, along with the Buddhist precept that the child owes a debt to his or her parents for birthing him or her, make counseling especially difficult when the etiology of the problem is in past or present family relationships. Some Western counseling approaches invite the counselor to explore the client's past and to discuss familial injuries. According to one mental health professional currently working in Cambodia, Cambodians simply will not look at the role of parents in their problems. "Their parents cannot make mistakes."<sup>5</sup> This is in part because of the expectation that one lower in a hierarchy always shows respect for those above him or her. For women it is clearly spelled out in the *Chbab Srey* or women's behavior code (Mal). The code states that the woman must always treat her parents with respect and deference and follow the path that they laid out for her. The Western client is more likely to examine the role of parents in his or her problems with objectivity, while it is culturally inappropriate for the Cambodian client to do so.

<sup>5</sup> Tina Franke (social worker, Social Services of Cambodia) in discussion with the author, June 2009.

Generally Western counseling advocates for the recognition of and sharing of feelings in counseling sessions. However, emotional expression is different for Cambodian clients than for Western ones. For one thing, Khmer is a language that does not have a lot of words to express emotion. This is particularly the case for the negative emotions such as sadness. In order to communicate a feeling state, the Cambodian does so in subtle, indirect ways and only with people who are especially trusted. According to Fitzgerald, et al,

The problem goes beyond language, however, because the whole process involves transferring from one way of thinking about conceptualizing emotions to another.

This is especially the case if this translation is from a language with a limited affective vocabulary to one with an extensive vocabulary where each term carries different, often subtle, shades of meaning. (Fitzgerald et al 56)

### **Current Practice in Cambodia**

At the present time in Cambodia there is a lot of activity in the counseling field. While the number of psychiatrists is still very limited, and the formal training program for psychologists at the Royal University of Cambodia is quite young, there has been considerable training of paraprofessional counselors who are now working with the human-rights based NGO's throughout Cambodia. The two principal training agencies are Social Services of Cambodia and the Transcultural Psychosocial Association. Additionally, some Western-based NGO's such as World Vision and Friends International bring their own trainers over from the United States on short-term assignments. Sometimes the model is to train the Cambodians in counseling skills that they then teach to their colleagues, and sometimes the practicing counselors receive training directly.

One issue noted by this author in discussing counselor education with numerous Cambodian practitioners is the difficulty of integrating the training models with Cambodian cultural belief. The Royal University of Phnom Penh addresses this in two cultural competence courses. However, the number of Masters-level graduates in Cambodia is still very small. The vast majority of counselors in Cambodia are trained in workshop formats that last from one week to periodically over six months.

*Client-centered Counseling*

Social Services of Cambodia (SSC) has trained 300 Cambodian counselors, most of whom have been women.<sup>6</sup> This organization teaches a client-centered model of counseling, stressing careful listening and eliciting of the client's story. Posted on the wall of the center is a list of the steps of their model: 1. Build the relationship; 2. Explore the problem; 3. Identify the client's needs and strengths; 4. Make a plan using the strengths; 5. Implement the plan; 6. Follow up and review.

The client-centered model is very different for the Cambodian client who is accustomed to giving and receiving advice. Ellen Minotti, the director of SSC, explained that the biggest impediment to the use of the client-centered model is the hierarchical structure of society in Cambodia. Cambodians attribute expertise to the counselor, placing him or her on a higher level in the social hierarchy. Consequently they expect advice from him or her, and counselees struggle with the notion that the solution to the problem lies within him or herself. Minotti goes on to explain that the translation of the word "counseling" in Khmer is "to give advice."<sup>7</sup>

Despite their initial discomfort with the client-centered model of counseling, Cambodian clients frequently do open up and reveal their stories in detail. The critical factor is whether the client comes to trust the counselor. Dr. Denis Nicolay, a Belgian psychiatrist working in Cambodia, states that the most difficult problem with counseling Cambodians is establishing trust and helping them to understand confidentiality.<sup>8</sup> Dr. Sotheara Chhim adds that they fear that their story will be spread throughout the community, and that they will lose face if others know about their personal weaknesses.<sup>9</sup>

Building a relationship with a Cambodian client can take a long time. Dr. Chhim states that it may take up to five counseling sessions

<sup>6</sup> Ellen Minotti (Director, Social Services of Cambodia) in discussion with the author, June 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Minotti, discussion.

<sup>8</sup> Denis Nicolay (Consultant Phnom Penh Counseling Center) in discussion with the author, June 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Chhim, discussion.

before the client will share his or her true story. He hypothesizes that this reluctance to share may stem in part from the Pol Pot history wherein people who spoke honestly were often brutally killed. He also reports that listening is not the Cambodian way. "I have the same story as you, so why are you telling me yours. Just forget it." is how Chhim conceptualizes the Cambodian listening style.<sup>10</sup>

Client-centered counseling, the non-judgmental listening to clients, may be awkward for Cambodians who, as they reveal their story, may begin to cry. Dr. Chhim points out that crying is not tolerated in Cambodian society, and that even if a child cries, the parent's response may be "stop that or I'll beat you."<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, many Cambodians really need the opportunity of having a committed listener. According to Pennebaker, "holding back or inhibiting our thoughts and feelings can be hard work. Over time, the work of inhibition gradually undermines the body's defenses. Like other stressors, inhibition can affect immune functions, the action of the heart and vascular systems, and even the biochemical workings of the brain and nervous systems" (Pennebaker 2).

This author had the opportunity of talking with various counselors who had received training in client-centered counseling through Social Services of Cambodia. While they seem to understand theoretically how to utilize the model, in practice the Cambodian way seems often to take over. Counseling quickly becomes advice-giving, and non-directive approaches become directive. Most NGOs do not pay for their employees to receive ongoing supervision from Social Services of Cambodia. So if left on their own, many counselors apparently go back to what they know best.

#### *Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy*

Along with Social Services of Cambodia, the Transcultural Psychosocial Organization has been the second important training resource for counselors in Cambodia. Beginning in 2000, TPO has been the beneficiary of training through the Trauma Healing Initiative of the

<sup>10</sup> Chhim, discussion.

<sup>11</sup> Chhim, discussion.

Minnesota-based Center for Victims of Torture. The CVT has used a train-the-trainers approach to teaching the skills of Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF CBT) to Cambodian clinicians. This is a step-by-step model developed for use with children and families who have had traumatic experiences, and as such it is being applied in Cambodian NGOs that have client bases who are victims of trauma. This author spoke to clinicians working with victims of human trafficking and domestic violence specifically about their work with TF-CBT.

“TF-CBT is a components-based hybrid approach that integrates trauma-sensitive interventions, cognitive-behavioral principles, as well as aspects of attachment, developmental neurobiology, family, empowerment, and humanistic theoretical models in order to optimally address the needs of traumatized children and families” (Cohen, Mannarino and Deblinger 32). At least in the early stages, the components are largely educational, teaching clients about the impact of trauma and normal reactions to it, and, in the case of child clients, teaching their parents skills for living with traumatized children. Then the treatment teaches particular skills, including relaxation and appropriate emotional expression. Clients learn that there are strong links between thinking, feeling and behaving, and the counselor helps them to recognize and modify dysfunctional thoughts about their trauma. Finally the client is led to recount the trauma in detail, first to the counselor and subsequently to the parent or family members. If the client is in danger of re-victimization, the counselor works with him or her to develop a safety plan.

There are elements of the TF-CBT model that are quite consistent with Cambodian expectations of the counselor. This model is highly directive, particularly in the early stages of counseling. The counselor acts as a teacher to the client, thereby fulfilling the “expert” expectation that goes with the hierarchical model of Cambodian society.

When it comes time to teach about the nature of trauma and the links between dysfunctional thinking and feelings and behavior, it is essential for the counselor to have in-depth understanding of the Cambodian client’s cultural beliefs. For example, in Cambo-

dia women are in an inferior position to men in virtually all arenas. Consequently it would not be unusual for a female victim of domestic violence to accept it. "Women themselves are socialized to obey their husband and to tolerate his anger" (Gormon, Dorina & Kheng 33). The Western counselor would see this acceptance as stemming from dysfunctional thinking, while a Cambodian would find it consistent with cultural perspectives on gender relations.

TF-CBT is a model that requires a longer training ramp-up than client-centered counseling. Cambodian counselors have first to learn the listening skills taught in the client-centered model in order to be able to develop the trust relationship with their clients and to reach the point at which the client is willing to talk about his or her actual traumatic experiences. Subsequently they have to be taught the educational material which accompanies the early stages of TF-CBT; the impact of trauma on people, relaxation and stress relief, affective expression and cognitive coping skills. Cambodians are accustomed to didactic approaches that invite memorization and mastery, but the educational system of Cambodia does little to prepare them to analyze and apply the material that they learn. "They copy and memorize, not question" (Grossman 181).

In interviewing Cambodians using TF-CBT with their clients, this author noted that the model had indeed been well-memorized and the counselors were able to restate the necessary steps. However, when asked for more detailed or specific explanations, their level of understanding seemed limited and they were quick to explain how they offered advice and direction to their clients. The problem may be that most NGO counselors receive training but little follow-up supervision. An exception is Hagar, an anti-trafficking agency. According to Sue Taylor, Children Department Manager, the Cambodian counselors are using the strategies of TF-CBT effectively and are seeing progress.<sup>12</sup> However, Taylor herself is able to provide ongoing training and supervision to those counselors, trainers from Boston University are directly involved, and she has created a 10-step manual for them to use in their work.

<sup>12</sup> Sue Taylor (Children's department manager, Hagar) in discussion with the author, June 2009.

TF-CBT was developed for use with children and their families, but it has been extended by Cambodian practitioners for use with adult clients as well. Steps such as teaching parenting skills have been eliminated, and in the final step of sharing the trauma story, the client is able to choose with whom they would like to share rather than being required to share with a parent or family member.

Skeptics in Cambodia suggest that TF-CBT is too complex for Cambodian counselors to master truly. It requires a high level of self-awareness for the client to be able to identify his or her dysfunctional thoughts. This author heard from several Western counselors practicing in Cambodia that Cambodians are not awareness-focused and are unfamiliar with exploring their internal world. Chhim explained that TF-CBT is more effective with “white-collar workers” than with the uneducated masses. The less educated, he explains, just say to the counselor, “I don’t know, it’s up to you.”<sup>13</sup>

### *Group Counseling*

There are efforts to offer group counseling through some of the NGOs in Cambodia. Group counseling can be an economical way to address the needs of numerous clients. However, in Cambodia group counseling seems to be a misnomer for what actually occurs. In Western countries, group counseling serves to build a sense of sharing around a similar problem or issue. Openness and honesty on the part of group members is expected. However, in Cambodia, such open sharing would lead to a loss of “face” and would not find the cooperation that it does in Western societies. What actually seems to occur in “group counseling” in Cambodia is largely didactic. While clients might have the same problem, such as being victims of domestic violence, human trafficking or HIV/AIDS, they do not discuss it among themselves. Rather, group sessions may serve to provide information about legal or medical services available to them, or to teach them life-skills such as hygiene and money-management.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Chhim, discussion.

<sup>14</sup> Oem Phally (Director, Program Against Domestic Violence, Siem Reap) in discussion with the author, July 2009.

### Moving Ahead

So far the book has not been written that integrates traditional Cambodian beliefs and cultural constructs with Western models of psychology. Efforts to teach Western models in Cambodia appear to be working during training programs, but they seem to lose their focus in application. The Cambodian counselors employing them are indeed products of their own culture, and as such return easily to giving advice and short-term, quick-fix solutions for their clients. The majority of Cambodian people still prefer traditional healers to Western-trained counselors and consequently they seek the counselors out in situations of desperation when traditional healing has not worked. Higher levels of success in reaching Cambodian clients with Western approaches seem to occur in NGO settings where the clients are already connected rather than with individuals who seek counseling on their own. When ongoing clinical supervision is a part of the counseling program, the application of Western approaches seems to have a greater hold.

In order to render the practice of counseling most effective in Cambodia, there needs to be greater integration with cultural practice. Happily, the Royal University of Phnom Penh includes a course entitled Cultural Competence-Partnership with Local Resources designed to teach students about “. . . the types of folk and professional healers who work in Cambodia and the manner in which they help people overcome mental suffering and psychosocial distress. The aim is to equip students in their future work as psychologists in Cambodia, to utilize Buddhism and local culture and to augment the capacity of the monks, traditional healers and mainstream psychology to collaborate in community mental health” (Hema 2).

As mental health service delivery becomes more universal in Cambodia, which it surely will in response to modernization, it will be interesting to see how the traditional means of healing might become collaborative with Western counseling practice. Will mental health centers develop in districts that include both types of helpers working in dialog with one another? It seems logical that the credibility of the counselor would be enhanced if he or she were in a referral relationship with a traditional helper. Might clients of the

*kruu* Khmer be referred to the counselor for further mental health support when needed and vice versa? The key would seem to be in the development of high-level understanding between both of them.

Perhaps the helping role of the monks in Cambodia could be enhanced by specific training in the methodologies of Western counseling. In a form of Buddhist pastoral counseling, prayer, recognition of Buddhist precepts and the use of holy water could be combined with client-centered listening skills and willingness to hear the “whole story” from the client.

The creative therapies may also have a place in mental health service delivery in Cambodia. In a culture in which talking about problems is not the norm, expression through art, drama and music has strong potential. Cambodians love to dance, sing and play; and fun, laughter, story telling and role-play are important parts of the creative therapies.<sup>15</sup> Approaches such as these mitigate against the fierce hierarchy and create less distance between the client and the counselor. Already some efforts are being made to use art therapy with children in Cambodia with good success.<sup>16</sup>

### Conclusion

At this time in its history, there is considerable interest in providing mental health services in Cambodia. Various Western-educated specialists are offering training for Cambodian nationals to provide counseling and social work services. While Cambodians are very interested in these training programs, it seems that in practice they do not apply the skills learned and rather revert to approaches that are more culturally consistent. The cultural values of authoritarian hierarchy, subservient gender roles, and client defenses against “loss of face” all tend to erode the building of counseling relationships that match Western expectations inherent in the theory and training of counselors.

While better-educated, urban Cambodian clients may be comfortable with counseling models that involve high levels of self-

<sup>15</sup> Nicolay, discussion.

<sup>16</sup> Kim Son Sok (social worker, Anjali House) in discussion with the author, July 2009.

disclosure, less educated and rural clients much prefer the help of traditional healers such as the *kruu* Khmer. Their methods depend upon ritual and magical practices that are little understood by Western counselor-trainers, and self-disclosure plays a minor role in the application of those rituals and practices.

Although it has been recognized for nearly twenty years that collaboration between Western counselors and traditional monks and healers would be a good thing, there are very few examples of such collaborations occurring at this time in Cambodia. How will such collaboration be promoted and designed? Perhaps an integration of the healing models is not to be, but at least there needs to be increased respect between them. As Cambodian trainees reach levels of understanding deep enough to become counseling trainers, their own appreciation for their culture and its worldview may bring about the link that seems currently to be missing between training and practice.

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# Culture, Context, and *The Qur'an*

Michele Marion

## Introduction

This paper examines feminism in the Qur'an by distinguishing between the *surahs* (verses) and the cultural traditions that affect women. *In Search of Islamic Feminism: One Woman's Global Journey* (1998) by Elizabeth Warnock Fernea initiated my quest to learn more about Muslim women and the religion of Islam. Fernea's book explores feminist diversity in the lives of Muslim women in the Middle East and Central Asia. This reading led me to Cheryl Benard's *Veiled Courage: Inside the Afghan Women's Resistance* (2002) and inspired me to develop a mini-lecture about the Taliban's practices and the women's social movement, the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA). In 2006, I received an award from the Fulbright-Hays office to travel to Brunei and Malaysia for five-weeks, which represented my first experience in predominately Muslim countries, where I would examine the everyday lives of the people and their concept of identity. Several years later I received a second award that took me to Morocco for five-weeks where I specifically focused my studies on the Moroccan women's movement.

When I began the Moroccan project, I intended to develop a teaching module that would simply integrate my RAWA mini-lecture into a comparison with the Malaysian and Moroccan feminist movements and permit students to experience Islamic feminism

in a broader context. The point of this module was to permit my students to challenge some of the stereotypical images they regularly experience with regard to Muslim women. Having traveled to Malaysia, I knew of this country's non-governmental organization, *Sisters in Islam*. However, during my preparatory research and shortly after our arrival in Morocco, I learned, through conversations and lectures with author Leila Abouzeid and feminist scholar Fatima Bouabdelli, I would need to approach my project with much greater respect to the complex cultural traditions that exist within Islamic feminism and requiring careful consideration of the Qur'an as a primary source. This complexity and these considerations are “. . . complicated by the richness and variety of Islamic culture on the one hand, and the authority of a divinely-revealed religion (albeit humanly-transmitted) on the other . . . . [A]ll Muslims will agree that Islam has a definitive position on issues relating to the status of women, but they will disagree over the precise definition of that position” (Roded 2008, 2). This paper examines key surahs for their intended egalitarian reciprocity and cultural traditions Islamic feminists confront as they work to attain this reciprocity.

### Feminism within The Qur'an

“Feminism is not a single, unified perspective” (Renzetti and Curran 1999, 10) because of the cultural traditions and diversity found within lived experiences. The same can be asserted for Islam. Section 35 of *Surah* 33 outlines the expectations for all Muslims. This *surah* provides the framework for practitioners of Islam, yet the religion, like the concept of feminism, is also influenced by the cultural traditions, beliefs, and values of its host society. Although I teach my students about the many perspectives of feminism, I personally embrace Judith Lorber's gender-reform feminism of legally permitting all women and men involved in society to make informed choices (Renzetti and Curran 1999, 22). Some of my peers embrace the gender-resistant form believing that formal laws cannot end the patriarchy of our culture's social relations (Renzetti and Curran 1999, 22), or gender rebellion, which seeks to “analyze the gender inequality as one piece of a complex system of social stratification” (Renzetti and

Curran 1999, 23), or another perspective of feminism, which develops from within perceptions and lived experiences. None of these perspectives are incorrect; instead they serve to provide a context to explain the complexity of feminism because of cultural influences, perceptions, and lived experiences. However, the unification of feminism comes through the issues that women face: poverty, illiteracy, political repression, and patriarchy (Ali 2002). Because Islam is also influenced by the host society's culture, the unifying element is the Qur'an, which addresses the very issues that most women, not just Muslim women, still face.

According to the faith, the *surahs* are the word of God as told to the Prophet Mohammed by the Angel Gabriel. When considering women's issues and feminism, I identify the following within the Qur'an: expectations for believers, marriage and polygyny, women's property rights—dowry (bride wealth) and inheritance, men's and women's modesty, divorce, and men's and women's roles as the key principles. Each of these principles has one or more *surahs* explaining God's directives and intentions for practice. Since I am a non-Muslim observer and do not read classical Arabic, the language of the Qur'an, I examined five translations for each principle: N.J. Dawood, *The Qur'an* (1974); Marmaduke Pickthall, *The Glorious Qur'an* (1992); Abudllah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of The Holy Qur'an* (1997); Laleh Bakhtiar, *The Sublime Quran* (2007); and Mohamed K. Jasser, *The Holy Qur'an: An Interpretive Translation from Classical Arabic into Contemporary English* (2008). I primarily reference the Dawood, Pickthall, and Ali translations because these translations are so readily available, commonly used, and highly respected by Muslims and religious scholars in the United States. For two of the principles examined in this paper, I also include the two very recent translations by Bakhtiar and Jasser to demonstrate key feminist points occurring within Islam. Charting key principles by the *surahs* enables me to construct a visual model, which permits comparative analysis of each translation to ensure credibility within the *surah's* meaning.

Some readers may disagree with the need for including these *surah* translations; however, I include them to provide all levels of

readers with a reference tool for examining these key principles. Most of these principles are primary to all women. While many women in the world have achieved equality with regard to several of these principles, many others still pursue their rightful claim.

Moreover, I do not reference the *Hadith* [traditions], a collection of works chronicling the Prophet Mohammed's daily practices and thoughts. "They constitute, along with the Qur'an . . . both the source of law and the standard for distinguishing the true from the false, the permitted from the forbidden—they have shaped Muslim ethics and values" (Mernissi 1991, 1). My non-consideration of the *Hadith* stems from the many discussions I have engaged in with Islamic feminists who hold a healthy skepticism for the points within the collection. These discussions led me to examine critically this skepticism, which is supported by the Moroccan scholar and Islamic feminist, Fatima Mernissi. In *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam* (1991), Mernissi outlines the scientific criteria for authenticating a *Hadith* by employing interviewing and fieldwork techniques similar to those methodologies used by modern anthropologists (9) to the necessary qualities of being a credible Companion (witness to Prophet Mohammed's daily practices and thoughts) of high intellectual capacity and morals (59). The integration of the scientific criteria with the credibility of the Companion attempts to certify a *Hadith*. This skepticism is not unfounded and is exemplified through the behavior and work of Abu Bakra, a Companion. Mernissi uses historical records to challenge the morals of a Companion who is credited with a *Hadith* and who establishes and supports the political repression of Muslim women (56-7). The Companion proclaimed this *Hadith* twenty-five years after the Prophet's death and at a particularly sensitive juncture in early Islamic history during the Muslim's civil war Battle of the Camel (Mernissi 53). Unfortunately this example is not isolated. Ruth Roded in her revised edition of *Women in Islam and the Middle East: A Reader* argues the literature on Muslim women is value-laden, filled with latent assumptions derived from the culture and society of its author and audience (1). She continues, "For this reason, it is important to return to the primary sources, to try to place data on women

in the proper perspective, to search for alternative meanings and to attempt to critically evaluate them" (2). For this reason many Islamic feminists prefer to rely on the *surahs* and as I will in this paper.

#### *Expectations for Believers*

Egalitarianism in Islam is addressed in *Surah* 33, Section 35, which outlines the expectations for all believers. To summarize this *surah*, all Muslims are expected to believe in one God, be devout to one God, and display patience, sincerity, humility, charity, and modesty. As can be seen below, there is no distinction in these expectations between men and women. (See Table 1.)

When comparing these three translations, the egalitarianism of Allah's (God's) words is apparent and neither expectation nor practice varies for believers. Muslims, regardless of culture, acknowledge that it is this *surah* that demonstrates Allah's expectations for believers; consequently, it is also this *surah* that demonstrates the embedded egalitarianism found within Islam.

#### *Marriage and Polygyny*

In a historical context, polygyny (husband with multiple wives), was developed for rational reasons, such as providing for a relative's wife and children should the husband die. The practice is not relegated to just Muslim cultures, but is historically cross-cultural. *Surah* 4, Section 3 states that polygyny is acceptable with two caveats from Allah: 1) the husband treats each wife with justice and equality and 2) there are no more than four wives. Polygyny is noted not only in the Qur'an, but also in the histories about the Prophet Mohammed who practiced polygyny, acknowledged the difficulties in treating each wife with justice and equality, and even recommended to his son-in-law Ali when he was considering a second marriage to Fatima, the Prophet's daughter, that he forego the practice so Ali could live a just life. The practicality of the first caveat, justice and equal treatment of all the wives, is also questioned by Islamic feminists who believe it nearly impossible for a husband to treat multiple wives with complete justice and equality; therefore, the practice is considered by Islamic feminists to be impractical. The early modern-

Table 1. *Surah 33*, Section 35.

Dawood. 1974.	Pickthall. 1992.	Ali. 1997.
<p>Those who surrender themselves to Allah [God] and accept the true faith; who are devout, sincere, patient, humble, charitable, and chaste; who fast and are ever mindful of Allah—on these, both men and women, Allah will bestow forgiveness and a rich reward.</p> <p>—<i>Surah 33: The Confederate Tribes. 35.</i></p>	<p>Lo! Men who surrender unto Allah, and women who surrender, and men who believe and women who believe, and men who obey and women who obey, and men who speak the truth and women who speak the truth, and men who persevere (in righteousness) and women who persevere, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their modesty and women who guard (their modesty), and men who remember Allah much and women who remember—Allah hath prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward.</p> <p>—<i>Surah 33: The Clans. 35.</i></p>	<p>For Muslim men and women  For believing men and women,  For devout men and women,  For true men and women,  For men and women who are  Patient and constant, for men  And women who humble themselves,  For men and women who give  In charity, for men and women  Who fast (and deny themselves),  For men and women who  Guard their chastity, and  For men and women who  Engage much in Allah's praise.  For them has Allah prepared  Forgiveness and great reward.  —<i>Surah 33: Al-Abzab. Section 5. 35.</i></p>

Table 2. *Surab* 4, Section 3.

<b>Dawood. 1974.</b>	<b>Pickthall. 1992.</b>	<b>Ali. 1997.</b>
<p>...you may marry other women who seem good to you: two, three, or four of them. But if you fear that you cannot maintain equality among them, marry only one or any slave girls you may own. This will make it easier for you to avoid injustice. —<i>Surab</i> 4: Women. 3.</p>	<p>... marry of women, who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) then one (only) or (the captives) that your right hands (pl or sing?) possess. Thus it is more likely that ye will not do injustice. —<i>Surab</i> 4: Women. 3</p>	<p>... . Marry women of your choice, Two, or three, or four; But if ye fear that ye shall not Be able to deal justly (with them), Then only one, That your right hands possess. That will be more suitable, To prevent you From doing injustice. [The restricted number of wives is strictly limited to a maximum of four, provided the husband can treat them equally.] —<i>Surab</i> 4: <i>Al Nisa</i>. Section 1. 3.</p>

ist and Islamic reformist Muhammad Abduh, the Grand Mufti of Egypt, writes at the beginning of the 20th century that Islam does not recommend polygyny “as an absolute, but only in certain historical and social conditions” (Walther 1993, 223). In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Abduh, Ahmad Khan, Qasim Amin, and Mumtaz Ali write for the need for Islamic reform with regard to the plight of Muslim women, thus creating the foundation for feminist movements in the 1920’s and 1930’s in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, India, Pakistan, and Turkey (Esposito 1988, 149-50). (See Table 2.)

Polygyny is legal and practiced in Afghanistan and Morocco, illegal in some more secular Muslim countries, for example, Malaysia, Tunisia, and Turkey, and illegal but decriminalized in many other Muslim countries, such as Iraq. In countries where polygyny is legal, the family courts do not require husbands to consult with their wife/wives before taking another. Furthermore, in countries where polygyny is illegal but decriminalized, the family courts choose to adhere to their country’s cultural traditions rather than uphold the laws of their society as a form of compromise between the Islamic traditionalists and reformists (Esposito 1988, 152). Countries that permit or decriminalize polygyny negate the inherent difficulties of the practice and thereby challenge the justice and equality caveat of this *surah*, repress the reciprocity of a marriage, and negate Allah’s intentions for husbands to demonstrate integrity toward their wives.

Two additional marital practices that are sanctioned within specific Islamic cultures are temporary marriages and trial marriages. A temporary marriage, *sigheh* or *muta*, may be practiced within the Shiite sect of Islam, which is the predominant sect in Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon, with a significant percentage of Shia in Afghanistan, India, Kuwait, Mauritius, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Temporary marriages that include a pre-established termination date and are “agreed between a man and woman and sanctioned by a cleric, can last as little as a few minutes or as long as ninety-nine years. Usually the man pays the woman an agreed sum of money in exchange for a temporary marriage. The usual motive is sex, but some temporary

marriages are agreed upon for other purposes” (Brooks 1995, 43). This practice might be understood as a means to justify prostitution, but neither the man nor the woman violates the chastity requirement set forth in the *surahs* in view of the fact that they are technically married. Unique to Morocco, and a holdover from the cultures of the Tuareg and Berber, is the trial marriage. These unions are “formed during the *mousseem*, but it is commonly understood that the couple can split up after a day or a month or a year. No cost, no hard feelings, no religious stigma” (Warnock Fernea 1998, 64). While the temporary marriage within the Shiite sect mirrors a more traditional Islamic marriage in that it provides money to the bride (similar to a dowry) the trial marriage in the cultures of the Tuareg and Berber do not require this provision. Additional provisions for temporary marriages are “Muslim women can only marry Muslim men, but Muslim men can temporarily marry a Muslim, Christian, or Jewish woman, as long as she is a divorcee or widow” (Ghaddar. 2009). Further, Hezbollah in Lebanon permits the practice with virgins when they have their father’s or paternal grandfather’s permission (Ghaddar. 2009). These culture specific marital practices allow both men and women to make informed choices.

#### *Women’s Property Rights—Dowry and Inheritance*

Established in the 7th century, women are permitted by Allah to own and inherit property in their own name; such a practice was not common or legal in the United States until the latter part of the 19th century. *Surah* 4, Section 4, is specific to the dowry (bride wealth) provision for women. The prospective husband must provide the prospective wife with a dowry (bride wealth) that is to be her own property. All the translations of this *surah* state that if the wife chooses to share her “bride wealth,” then the husband may also enjoy it. It is important to note that the dowry (bride wealth” belongs to the wife and is negotiated on her behalf by her father. In this negotiation process a reciprocal contract is developed with the prospective wife requesting many tangible and intangible components in exchange for her consent to the marriage. Three common intangible components of a dowry (bride wealth), which are particular to

Table 3. *Surrah* 4, Section 4.

<p><b>Dawood. 1974.</b></p> <p>Give women their dowry as a free gift; but if they choose to make over to you a part of it, you may regard it as lawfully yours. —<i>Surrah</i> 4: Women. 4.</p>	<p><b>Pickthall. 1992.</b></p> <p>And give unto the women (whom ye marry) free gift of their marriage portions; but if they of their own accord remit unto you a part thereof, then ye are welcome to absorb it (in your wealth). —<i>Surrah</i> 4: Women. 4.</p>	<p><b>Ali. 1997.</b></p> <p>And give the women (On marriage) their dower (As a free gift, but if they, Of their own good pleasure, Remit any part of it to you, Take it and enjoy it With right good cheer. —<i>Surrah</i> 4: <i>All Nisa</i>. Section 1. 4.</p>
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Table 4. *Surrah* 4, Section 11.

<p><b>Dawood. 1974.</b></p> <p>God has thus enjoined you concerning your children: A male shall inherit twice as much as a female. If there be two girls, they shall have two-thirds of the inheritance; but if there be one only, she shall inherit the half . . . . —<i>Surrah</i> 4: Women. 11.</p>	<p><b>Pickthall. 1992.</b></p> <p>Allah chargeth you concerning (the provision for your children: the male the equivalent of the portion of two females, and if there be women more than two, then theirs is two-thirds of the inheritance, and if there be one (only) then the half . . . . —<i>Surrah</i> 4: Women. 11.</p>	<p><b>Ali. 1997.</b></p> <p>Allah (thus) directs you as regards your children's (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females: if only daughters, two or more, their share is two-thirds of the inheritance: if only one, her share is half . . . . —<i>Surrah</i> 4: <i>All Nisa</i>. Section 2. 11.</p>
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the women's issues being discussed here, are that she be permitted to fulfill her educational goals, not to participate in a polygynous marriage, and to request a divorce. The dowry (bride wealth) provision is intended by Allah to protect wives from poverty, illiteracy, political repression, and/or patriarchy, even though these are the issues most women face because of cultural traditions. This *surah* intends to permit a woman to determine and protect her needs when entering into a formal and legal contract such as marriage. (See Table 3.)

The right of a woman to own property is provided to women in the Qur'an and is again reinforced by the *surah* determining legal inheritance. All the translations of the Qur'an, which I examined, determine the percentage of inheritance for men and women. In pre-Islam 6th century Arabian society, women did not inherit anything at all. Allah's intentions, as stated in *Surah* 4 Section 11, attempt to redress this situation by ensuring women receive a rightful portion and control over their property. While in 21st century United States the principle of a woman receiving less of an inheritance than a man seems grossly unequal, these rights were salient for the era, especially since until very recently most women in the world were deemed the chattel of either their husbands or fathers. (See Table 4.)

As noted in the dowry (bride wealth) *surah*, a woman's property is her own and does not require her to share the dowry (bride wealth) unless she consents. The Kurdish chapter of "Save the Children" has conducted research on Muslim mothers' use of money and repeatedly asserts that money in a woman's hands benefits families more than money flowing to men (Brooks 1995, 186-7). In other words, this research offers evidence that women are more likely to use their money, whether it is dowry (bride wealth), inheritance, and/or earnings, on behalf of the entire family; hence, helping to shield them all from poverty, which often includes illiteracy and political repression. The manifest of this *surah* affords women with property rights and the latent consequences of this *surah* enable women to protect themselves and their families.

#### *Men's and Women's Modesty*

The principle of modesty for both men and women is another

Table 5. *Surah* 24, Section 30.

Dawood. 1974.	Pickthall. 1992.	Ali. 1997.
Enjoin believing men to turn their eyes away from temptation and to restrain their carnal desires. This will make their lives purer. Allah has knowledge of all their actions. — <i>Surah</i> 24: Light. 30.	Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and be modest. That is purer for them.Lo! Allah is Aware of what they do. — <i>Surah</i> 24: Light. 30.	Say to believing men That they should lower Their gaze and guard Their modesty: that will make For greater purity for them: And Allah is well acquainted With all that they do. — <i>Surah</i> 24: <i>Al Nur</i> . Section 4. 30.

area where Allah's egalitarian intentions can be influenced by cultural traditions. However, it is interesting to note that while there are three separate *surahs* describing the modesty requirements for women, there is only one *surah* describing modesty requirement for men. Both men's and women's *surahs* state that men and women work together to maintain their purity through modest behavior. In *Surah* 24, Section 30, all three translations quite succinctly align with regard to men's modesty, stating that men must be modest and keep their gazes and carnal desires in alignment with the modesty requirements. In Afghanistan and Pakistan, Taliban forces have very traditional appearance requirements for men, requiring the wearing of untrimmed facial hair and prayer hats along with their typical dress, the *shalwar kameez* (long-sleeved tunic and trousers). The Taliban also enforces modest behavior for men, (gazes and carnal desires) by forbidding the reading or viewing of print and non-print based media not related to Islam; however, men in Malaysia and Morocco are free to define modest behavior and choose their own clothing. Most Malaysian men do wear shirts with a sleeve-length that covers their elbows. (See Table 5.)

The following *surahs* determine women's modesty requirements with much greater specificity. All five translations prescribe with

whom a woman may interact or appear unveiled; moreover, all require a woman to maintain her purity by not attracting attention to herself and to keep her gaze in alignment with the modesty requirements. Variations within these translations do occur with regard to the type and amount of veiling that is required of women. All the translations agree that a woman should cover her bosom, yet two recent translations specify covering of the hair, Bakhtiar and Jasser, and Ali's denotes wearing specific articles of clothing to maintain a modest appearance. Furthermore, Afghanistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and some other Muslim countries have established strict dress codes for all women, which mandate the wearing of *abayas*, *burkas*, *chador*, *hijab*, and so forth.<sup>1</sup>

In Malaysia, most women do wear a long-sleeved, unconstructed caftan with a long skirt beneath it and a head scarf; neither this form of clothing nor their societal interactions are governmentally regulated. School children are subject to a dress code with the girls' apparel consisting of the long caftan, trousers, and head scarf and the boys must wear a short-sleeved polo shirt, usually covering the elbows, and trousers. Only occasionally did we see select school girls permitted to forgo the head scarf while in uniform. This omission may have been due to the girls being non-Muslim or as several of our Muslim hosts shared that even though a family was Muslim, the head scarf should not be mandated but left as a choice to the individual woman. Governmentally, Moroccan women are also free to define modest dress and Muslim women's appearance and interactions range from progressive to traditional in the cities with some instances of *purdah* (seclusion) existing in the rural areas. Many women are choosing to return to Islamic dress as "a symbolic return to the pre-colonial period" (Armstrong 2000, 172). In Brunei, Malaysia, and Morocco, many of the women we spoke to said they chose to veil yet

<sup>1</sup> In July 2009, thirteen women, only some were Muslim, were arrested in Khartoum, Sudan for wearing trousers in a café. Their sentences were ten lashes with a whip and \$100 fines. One Sudanese woman, Lubna Hussein, a United Nations worker, contested the law and sentence as inhumane. If convicted, she faces forty lashes, plus a greater fine. Many of her colleagues have already incurred their sentences; yet, none of the following *surahs* mentions the *haram* (forbidding) of specific apparel.

Table 6. *Surabs* Determining Women's Modesty Requirements.

<b>Dawood. 1974.</b>	<b>Pickthall. 1992.</b>	<b>Ali. 1997.</b>	<b>Bakhtiar. 2007.</b>	<b>Jasser. 2008.</b>
It shall be no offence of the Prophet's [Mohammed] wives to be seen unveiled by their fathers, their sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, and their slave-girls. Women, have fear of Allah, for He observes all things. — <i>Surab</i> 33: The Confederate Tribes. 55.	It is no sin for them (thy wives) (to converse freely) with their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or the sons of their sisters or of their own women, or their slaves. O women! Keep your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is Witness over all things. — <i>Surab</i> 33. The Clans. 55	There is no blame (On those ladies [Prophet Mohammed's wives] if they appear) before their fathers Or their sons, their brothers, Or their brother's sons, Or their sisters' sons, Or their women, Or the (slaves) whom Their right hands possess. And, (ladies), fear Allah; For Allah is Witness To all things. — <i>Surab</i> 33: <i>Al Abzab</i> . Section 7. 55.	There is no blame on your wives to converse freely with their (f) fathers or their (f) sons, or their (f) brothers or the sons of their (f) brothers or the sons of their (f) sisters or their (f) women or what their (f) right hand possesses, and be Godfearing of God. Truly God has been Witness over everything. —Chapter 33: The Confederates. 33:55.	Wives of the prophet do not need to be restricted in regard to their interactions with their fathers or their children, nor in regard to their brothers or their sisters, nor in regard to the children of their brothers or sisters, nor in regard to their slaves. Worship and fear God, for He is a witness to all things. —Chapter 33: The Parties. 55.

Table 6. *Surabs* Determining Women's Modesty Requirements (Continued).

<b>Dawood. 1974.</b>	<b>Pickthall. 1992.</b>	<b>Ali. 1997.</b>	<b>Bakhtiar. 2007.</b>	<b>Jasser. 2008.</b>
Prophet [Mohammed], enjoin your wives, your daughters and the wives of true believers to draw their veils close around them. That is more proper, so that they may be recognized and not molested. Allah is forgiving and merciful. — <i>Surab</i> 33: The Confederate Tribes, 59.	O Prophet! Tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close around them (when they go abroad). That will be better, that so they may be recognized and not annoyed. Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful. — <i>Surab</i> 33. The Clans, 59.	O Prophet [Mohammed]! Tell Thy wives and daughters, And the believing women [Muslim women], That they should cast Their outer garments [cloak, robe, coat] over Their persons (when abroad): That is most convenient, That they should be known (As such [Muslim women] and not molested. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. — <i>Surab</i> 33: <i>Al Abzab</i> . Section 5. 59.	O Prophet! Say to your wives and your daughters and the women who believe to draw their outer garments closer over themselves. That is more fitting so that they be recognized and not be afflicted with torment; God is Forgiving, Compassionate. —Chapter 33: The Confederates, 33:59.	O' Prophet, tell your wives, your daughters and the believing women (similarly situated) to pull their robes over their heads, so they can be easily recognized and not interfered with, and God is Forgiving and Merciful. —Chapter 33: The Parties, 59.

Table 6. *Surabs* Determining Women's Modesty Requirements (Continued).

<b>Dawood. 1974.</b>	<b>Pickthall. 1992.</b>	<b>Ali. 1997.</b>	<b>Bakhtiar. 2007.</b>	<b>Jasser. 2008.</b>
Enjoin believing women to turn their eyes away from temptation and to preserve their chastity; to cover their adornments (except such as are normally displayed); to draw their veils over their bosoms and not to reveal their finery except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, their women-servants, or their slave-girls; male attendants lacking in natural vigor	And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their husbands or fathers or husbands' fathers, or their sons of their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or their sisters' sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigor, or children who know naught of women's	And say to the believing women That they should lower Their gaze and guard Their modesty; that they Should not display their Beauty and ornaments except What (must ordinarily) appear Thereof; that they should Draw their veils over Their bosoms and not display Their beauty except To their husbands, their fathers, Their husbands' fathers, their sons, Their husbands' sons,	Say to ones who are female believers to lower their (f) sight, and keep their (f) private parts safe, and not show their (f) adornment, except what is manifest of it; and let them (f) draw their head covering over their (f) bosoms, and not show their (f) adornments except to their (f) husbands, or their (f) fathers, or the fathers of their (f) husbands, or their sons or the sons of their (f) husbands, or their (f) brothers, or the sons of their (f) brothers, or the sons of	Say to believing women to also avoid staring, and to preserve their purity, and not to expose items of clothing intended to increase their attractiveness, except when it is on areas of their bodies that are normally exposed, and they should use a cover for their body skin folds, with the exception of their spouses, their fathers or fathers of their spouses, or their fathers of their spouses, or their children, or the children of their spouses, or their siblings, or the children of their siblings, or other

Table 6. *Surabs* Determining Women's Modesty Requirements (Continued).

<b>Dawood. 1974.</b>	<b>Pickthall. 1992.</b>	<b>Ali. 1997.</b>	<b>Bakhtiar. 2007.</b>	<b>Jasser. 2008.</b>
[eunuchs], and children who have no carnal knowledge of women. And let them not stamp their feet in walking so as to reveal their hidden trinkets. — <i>Surab</i> 24: Light. 31.	nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn to Allah together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed. — <i>Surab</i> 24: Light. 31.	Their brothers or their brothers' sons, Or their sisters' sons, Or their women, or the slaves Whom their right hands Possess, or male servants Free of physical needs [eunuchs], Or small children who Have no sense of the shame Of sex; and that they Should not strike their feet In order to draw attention To their hidden ornaments . . . . — <i>Surab</i> 24: <i>Al Nur</i> : Section 4, 31.	their (f) sisters, or their (f) women that their (f) right hands possess, or males, the ones who have no sexual desire, or children to whom nakedness of women has not been manifest; and them (f) not stomp their feet so as to make known what they (f) conceal of their adornment. Turn to Good altogether for forgiveness, O ones who believe, so that perhaps you would prosper. —Chapter 24: The Light. 24:31.	women, or those who belong to them or work for them, or to children who are at an age that would not be compatible with being attracted to women, and should avoid, while walking, to produce noises that will attract attention to them. All of you should submit your repentance to God, so you may succeed. —Chapter 24: The Light. 31.

also identified themselves as modern Muslim women in pursuit of education, careers, and families. Karen Armstrong's statement "The shrouded Islamic body declares that it is oriented to transcendence, and the uniformity of dress abolishes class difference and stresses the importance of community. . ." (172) demonstrates many of the values of the modern Muslim woman. The specific *surahs* determining women's modesty requirements are listed in Table 6.

Modesty requirements for both men and women are apparently equal; however, the additional *surahs* outlining with whom a woman may interact and appear unveiled are used by some cultures to impose *pardah*, or seclusion. *Purdah* is more commonly practiced by rural cultures in Central and South Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East, usually requiring the wife to never leave the family's home to interact in the public sphere. It is important to note that *pardah* often represents a status symbol for the husband in that he demonstrates to his community that he can afford to keep his wife from publicly contributing to the household's endeavors. Fatima Mernissi writes of her childhood experiences with *pardah* in the mid-20th century in *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of Harem Girlhood* (1995). While in Fez, Morocco our group was able to visit Mernissi's family home and examine the actual environment in which her *pardah* occurred, enabling us, for a very brief time, to imagine her experiences with the practice. A modern context for this rural cultural tradition is perhaps most evidenced by the Taliban which implements *pardah* by restricting women's public interactions in society: by preventing them from working outside the home, receiving an education, or even visiting a physician for preventative care or treatment. From these examples, one can view a continuum from supporting informed choice to the repression of women (and even men) through their appearance and interactions because of their societies' cultural traditions, which may exceed those requirements stated in the *surahs*. Examining men's and women's modesty in these *surahs* demonstrates Allah's reciprocal expectations for men and women; however, the additional *surahs* specifying women's veiling of certain body parts and public interactions aligns with another of the principles, men's and women's roles, which will be later analyze.

*Divorce*

In Afghanistan, Malaysia, and Morocco there are three primary pathways to divorce: 1) repudiation, at the husband's will, 2) the wife proves to the family court that she has been abandoned or abused, which is very difficult for the wife to prove because she must have four witnesses to the abuse and/or abandonment, and 3) *khole*, where a woman buys her freedom, which is only available to those women who have the financial means. A fourth pathway is also available, if the woman's dowry [bride wealth] includes this intangible provision. Repudiation can be initiated only by the husband and the wife has no right to contest it. In the presence of three witnesses, the husband must pronounce three times "I divorce you," before the marriage can be dissolved. The Malaysian Family Court even permits the husband to make this legal pronouncement via a text-message. *Surah 2*, Section 231, in all the examined translations requires the couple to adhere to a waiting period before the divorce is finalized; the time period is to ensure that divorce is indeed what the husband wishes and that the wife is not carrying her husband's child. *Surah 2*, Section 232, states that the husband is required to keep his wife with honor or release her from the marriage with honor. As discussed in the polygyny *surah*, the husband damages his own integrity by not behaving honorably toward his wife. Islamic feminists in Afghanistan, Malaysia, and Morocco are attempting to enforce the intentions of this *surah* through the family courts and make it easier for women who are abandoned, abused, or otherwise not honored by the husband able to initiate a divorce. Even though women are able to seek a divorce for these reasons, the family courts are reluctant to address the wife's claims; hence, the Islamic feminists activism toward the court's adherence to the requirements of this *surah*.

The divorce *surahs* are written in such a manner that the husband is permitted to make the decision, yet the expectation is that he will make such decision with honor and integrity. This expectation dem-

<sup>2</sup> If there are any children, they remain with the mother and at puberty they go to the father.

Table 7. *Surah* 4, Section 3.

<p><b>Dawood. 1974.</b></p> <p>When you have renounced your wives and they have reached the end of their waiting period, either retain them in honor or let them go with kindness. But you shall not retain them in order to harm them or to wrong them. Whoever does this wrongs his own soul.</p> <p>—<i>Surah</i> 2: The Cow. 231.</p> <p>If a man has renounced his wife and she has reached the end of her waiting period, do not prevent her from remarrying her husband if they have come to an honorable agreement. This is enjoined on every one of you who believes in God and the Last Day; it is more honorable for you and more chaste. God knows, but you know not.</p> <p>—<i>Surah</i> 2: The Cow. 232.</p>	<p><b>Pickthall. 1992.</b></p> <p>When ye have divorced women, and they have reached their term, then retain them in kindness or release them in kindness. Retain them not to their hurt so that ye transgress (the limits). He who doeth that hath wronged his soul . . . .</p> <p>—<i>Surah</i> 2: The Cow. 231.</p> <p>And when ye have divorced women and they reach their term, place not difficulties in the way of their marrying their husbands if it is agreed between them in kindness. This is an admonition of him among you who believeth in Allah and the Last Day. That is more virtuous for you, and cleaner. Allah knoweth: ye know not.</p> <p>—<i>Surah</i> 2: The Cow. 232.</p>	<p><b>Ali. 1997.</b></p> <p>When ye divorce women, and they are about to fulfill their term of their ('Iddah), either retain them back or let them go; but do not retain them to injure them, or to take undue advantage; if any one does that, he wrongs his own soul . . . .</p> <p>—<i>Surah</i> 2: <i>Al Baqarah</i>. Section 29. 231.</p> <p>When ye divorce women, and they fulfill the term of their ('Iddah), do not prevent them from marrying persons of their choice, if they mutually agree on equitable terms. This instruction is for all amongst you, who believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is (the course making for) most virtue and purity amongst you. And Allah knows, and ye know not.</p> <p>—<i>Surah</i> 2: <i>Al Baqarah</i>. Section 29.</p>
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onstrates the reciprocity of the marriage. These *surahs* place the husband in a superior position or position of power, yet acknowledge that with that power comes the responsibility to honor his wife. Leila Abouzeid's novella *Year of the Elephant* (1989) opens with "He had simply sat down and said 'Your papers will be sent to you along with whatever the law provides.' My papers? How worthless a woman is if she can be returned with a paper receipt like some store bought object! How utterly worthless! . . . 'Why?' I asked. 'I haven't got a reason,' he said" (1). This husband's honor and integrity appears absent, and Abouzeid's novella reveals the impact of repudiation faced by the main character as a result of her husband's dubious and less than honorable actions. When a husband breaches his reciprocal role with his wife, Islamic feminists in Afghanistan, Malaysia, and Morocco are campaigning for their country's respective family courts to intervene on the behalf of women. Family courts too have been legally sanctioned with the power to ensure that Allah's intentions are not subverted by cultural traditions. (See Table 7.)

#### *Men's and Women's Roles*

The most controversial *surah* is *Surah 4*, Section 34. (See Table 8.) It is this *surah* that presents a continuum of meanings to Qur'anic scholars and Islamic feminists in Afghanistan, Malaysia, Morocco, and throughout the Muslim world, who are active in their efforts to combat the women's issues that exist within the various Islamic cultures and work to adhere to the reciprocity found within the Qur'an. Section 34 of *Surah 4* places men's status above that of women's with the man's roles being to protect and provide for the woman: "[F]or his part he should be considerate and concerned for her welfare" (Hanef 1996, 155). A woman's role is to be obedient to the man. In only two of the translations, Ali's and Bakhtiar's, the words "man" and "woman" are substituted for husband and wife, which shape the meaning of the *surah* toward the husband and wife's roles within the marriage contract. Yet in reading the entire *surah*, one is led to believe that the words husband and wife more accurately articulate Allah's intentions toward marital roles because the husband is permitted to admonish his wife by banishing her from his bed.

Table 8. *SSurab* 4, Section 34.

Dawood. 1974.	Pickthall. 1992.	Ali. 1997.	Bakhtiar. 2007.	Jasser. 2008.
<p>Men have authority over women because Allah has made one superior to the other, and because they spend their wealth to maintain them. Good women are obedient. They guard their unseen parts because Allah has guarded them. As for those from whom you fear disobedience, admonish them and send them to beds apart and <b>beat</b> them. Then if they obey you, take no further action against them. Allah is high, supreme.</p> <p>—<i>Surab</i> 4: Women. 34.</p>	<p>Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made them one of them to excel the other, and because they spend their property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. AS for those whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them. And banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. Then if they obey you, seek not a way against them. Lo! Allah is ever High Exalted, Great.</p> <p>—<i>Surab</i> 4: Women. 34</p>	<p>(Husbands) are the protectors And maintainers of their (wives) Because Allah has given The one more (strength) Than the other, and because They support them From their means. Therefore the righteous women Are devoutly obedient, and guard In (the husband's) absence What Allah would have them guard. As to those women On whose part ye fear</p>	<p>Men are supporters of wives because God has given some of them an advantage over others and because they spend of their wealth. So the ones (f) who are in accord with morality are the ones (f) who are morally obligated, the ones (f) who guard the unseen of what God has kept safe. But those (f) whose resistance you fear, then admonish them (f) and abandon them (f) in their sleeping place then go away from them (f); if they obey you, surely look not</p>	<p>Men are in a position of authority over women in as much as God has favored them with certain capabilities, and in as much as they spend their money on maintaining women. Good righteous women are dignified and keep covered what God kept covered (and different) of their anatomy. Those who you have reason to fear their deviation, reason with them, punish them by refusing to have relations with them, and some you may have to get going on their way. Once the devi</p>

Table 8. *SSurah* 4, Section 34 (Continued).

Dawood. 1974.	Pickthall. 1992.	Ali. 1997.	Bakhtiar. 2007.	Jasser. 2008.
		(Disloyalty and ill-conduct, Admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (And last) <b>spank</b> them (lightly); But if they return to obedience, Seek not against them Means (of annoyance): For Allah is Most High, Great (above you all). — <i>Surah</i> 4: <i>Al Nisa</i> . Section 6. 34.	for any way against them (f); truly God is Lofty, Great. —Chapter 4: Women. 4:34.	ation is corrected, do not ever take advantage of them; God is Supreme and Exalted. —Chapter 4: Women. 34.

All of the examined *surahs* state that if the wife is *nushuz* (disobedient, rebellious, disloyal, resistant, and/or deviant) to her husband's request for marital relations, he has the right to admonish her because he paid a dowry (bride wealth) to her to have those marital relations (Mernissi 1991, 156). Suzanne Haneff's interpretation of this *surah* expands the meaning and connects the marital relations to the wife's duty as not being only her husband's property, but also for the "guarding of his honor, dignity, and respectability" (1996, 155). Allah's expectations for the wife's obedience pertains to her maintaining her morality, dignity, and integrity to her husband; much the same as the previous discussion of women's modesty in *Surah* 33 (Section 55), *Surah* 33 (Section 59), and *Surah* 24 (Section 31). In other words, the wife is expected to behave honorably, and if she behaves dishonorably, she shames not just herself but also her husband and the entire family. While Allah may have positioned the husband to have authority over the wife, it seems Allah intends the wife to represent the family's honor, which is possibly an even greater responsibility. By keeping both parties responsible for the other's behavior, Allah establishes a reciprocity which encourages equality and balance to this partnership.

As a last resort, the Ali and Dawood translations specify physical admonishment by the husband for disobedience from the wife, especially if she refuses the husband's marital relations request. Ali and Dawood use such words as "spank" and "beat" respectively. When translated in this fashion, it is this admonishment and its limited context in which readers and practitioners often focus and negate the entire meaning of the *surah* and all the other key principles as explained above. The use of these words by some translators demonstrates just one of the obstacles that Islamic feminists seek to overcome, lest domestic violence be sanctioned by the word of Allah. The RAWA's primary mission is to "overcome the dominance of men" (Benard 2002, 173) because the Afghani culture "profoundly and overwhelmingly favors men, granting them special privileges, more rights and greater power in all aspects of life, at all ages, in all situations" (Benard 2002, 173). Such a social condition is, of course, known as patriarchy. As identified by Kecia Ali, Taliban forces have

made the universal issues of women about poverty, illiteracy, political repression, and patriarchy. Such measures promote them to maintaining their power. Furthermore, the Taliban marginalizes and persecutes many Afghani husbands who attempt to live by Allah's intentions in reciprocity and equality with their wives. The new Shia Personal Status Law further marginalizes women of Afghanistan's Shia minority, who are most often found in the rural areas, by allowing the husband to deny his wife food and sustenance if she does not submit to his sexual requests as well as making fathers and grandfathers the sole guardians of children. It is this *surah* (4:34), which places the husband in a superior position to his wife, that is so often used to negate the reciprocity and equality discussed in all the other *surahs*. To create a complete context for understanding God's intentions for men and women, I believe it prudent to consider not only *Surah* 4, Section 34, but all the other *surahs* discussed within this paper.

### Conclusion

By referencing the primary source of the Qur'an allows for an examination of the embedded feminism within Islam and is a salient method to combat the rampant stereotyping about women and Islam. The Qur'an repeatedly uses ambiguous words in the *surahs*, such as admonish, justice, injustice, honor, grace, kindness, modesty, and so forth. This ambiguity permits Afghani, Malaysian, and Moroccan family courts to justify the continued marginalization of their women in light of their cultural traditions. These cultural traditions, usually pre-dating Islam, are often the root of contextual interpretations which limit a woman's choice and in some Islamic countries they also limit a man's choice. Islamic feminists charge the family courts to distinguish between Allah's words and the host society's cultural traditions. In most countries, women do not have equal political representation in government, and do not have representatives on the family courts. Thus, this situation permits men to presume that their perceptions and perspectives are representative of the needs for both genders. Such a presumption is patriarchal by nature.

In social scientific research, which attempts objectivity, studying one subject's response to a stimulus and then generalizing that all subjects will exhibit the same response would certainly be deemed biased. Yet, patriarchy provides the context to define and determine "normal" practices for all humans in every society. As Ali says, "Poverty, illiteracy, political repression, and patriarchy" (2002) represent the history of women; however, egalitarianism based on informed choice should represent the future of humanity. Clearly, sources are found in the *surahs* that indicate the intent of egalitarian practice within Islam.

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# **Shin-gate: Misunderstanding the Power of Shame in South Korea**

**Koushik Ghosh**

Shame is not perceived the same way in different cultures, nor is it used the same way. How does that difference across cultures influence our interactions in public space? How does it affect our business interactions? It has been argued, especially in the wake of Asia's financial crisis in 1997, that there was a lack of shame in Asian cultures after the economic crash. The same kind of argument has been presented in the United States following the financial crisis which began in 2008. President Obama has tried to shame the Wall Street crowd. Economic commentators have spoken of banks having no shame. The question is, how important is shame in American culture as compared to Asian cultures? In the discussion that follows, this query will be addressed by focusing on one Asian country, South Korea, and a particular case that has been labeled "Shin-gate."

## **Shame Across Cultures**

Though the issue described above might best be studied using empirical methods, obtaining data involving shame is rather difficult. Fortunately, stories and anecdotes can serve as great case studies for understanding and analyzing what role shame plays in different cultures. Sometimes in cross-cultural exchanges, loss of reputation and other damage due to a scandal can indeed create such shame that it leads to loss of income and other types of monetary losses. It is also possible that a society that uses shame as a "sorting" mechanism

to distinguish good businesses and business practices from bad may have great difficulty in communicating the power of this practice. Its relevance and its effectiveness as a tool of public policy may not be apparent to another culture where the practice is not applicable. In such cases, the society that uses shaming may attempt to translate losses emanating from shame into monetary terms, since the society that uses shame may see this as the only effective way of communicating across cultures. A lot can be lost in this kind of translation, and a society that uses shaming as a tool may not achieve the purpose of communication with a society that does not. In fact, resorting to financial damages may actually destroy the possibility of better communication in the future.

#### **The South Korean Case: Shin-gate**

Dongguk University, a famous 103-year-old Buddhist university, has been in the news recently. In 2008, Dongguk filed a \$50 million lawsuit against Yale University for “reckless” and “wanton” conduct, and for defaming, publicly humiliating and shaming Dongguk in the eyes of the Korean public, thus costing the university millions in contributions (*The New York Times*, 10 October 2009). The incident that led to the lawsuit has become infamous in Korea as “Shin-gate.”

In 2005, Dongguk hired Shin Jeong-ah, an art professor and purportedly a graduate of Yale. Controversies over her credentials soon arose, and Dongguk requested verification from Yale. Yale failed to check its documentation carefully despite this request, and confirmed that the degree from Yale was valid—even though the Yale administrator’s name was misspelled in Ms. Shin’s document. Rumors persisted nonetheless, and Dongguk pressed the matter again with Yale in 2007. This time, Yale rectified its mistake and announced that Ms. Shin had no degree from Yale and that her documentation was false. Yale, however, denied that it had ever received any prior requests from Dongguk.

**The American Case: Goldman Sachs, Bernie Madoff,  
and Bear and Stearns**

If one considers the liabilities incurred due to a loss of reputation in the case of Dongguk University and compares that with the fact that Goldman Sachs just handed out multi-million dollar bonuses to its employees after receiving financial assistance from the U.S. government, then it becomes abundantly clear that shame is not a powerful sorting mechanism in the United States (*The New York Times*, 5 November 2009). In fact, shame has little role in areas such as business in the United States. The scandals of Wall Street have not resulted in any mechanisms to sort people out of Wall Street professions. Instead, the ability to make money and lots of it, without impunity, is seen as a particularly American way of conducting business (*The New York Times*, 10 October 2009).

In the absence of shame, the only option to control such rapacious and socially damaging behavior lies with the courts, as demonstrated by the Galleon case, the Madoff case, and the Bear and Stearns case. Yet, the only two cases that are going forward out of these three are those involving Bernie Madoff and Galleon investments. Madoff has been convicted and some Galleon executives may meet a similar fate (*The New York Times*, 31 October 2009). While it is conjectural at best, it is possible that shame may follow on the heels of their conviction in the United States.

The Bear and Stearns executives, on the other hand, were recently acquitted and cleared of wrongdoing. The courts decided that it was not possible to establish that the executives in this case misled the public knowingly, despite the existence of troubling internal e-mails. As far as shame goes, the Bear and Stearns case is particularly telling. The acquittal absolves the executives of all wrongdoing, and hence of responsibility (*The New York Times*, 11 November 2009). If one cannot prove criminality in a court of law, that is, if one cannot clearly establish criminal wrongdoing, it is nearly impossible to impose any other forms of sanctions on behavior in businesses in the United States. Now that the Bear and Stearns's executives have been cleared, they can legitimately say that they bear no responsibility for what happened and hence have absolutely no reason to be shamed.

Thus, shame becomes a non-issue unless one can at least establish criminality.

### **Norms, Sanctions, Regulation and the Courts: Different Strokes**

Shame functions as a social tool by managing norms and imposing sanctions. The only recourse left for cases in which shaming has been rendered ineffective and ceases to function is the use of courts and regulations (i.e. use the judicial and legislative systems), and reliance on them exclusively to manage bad behaviors. Regulations are considered extremely costly by most American businesses, and as the Obama administration attempts to consider how to regulate the economy to prevent another meltdown, the lobbyists of the banking and financial sector have descended in droves on the nation's Capitol. The goal of these lobbyists is to influence members of the U.S. congress so that new regulatory regimes are not adopted, since regulation, which is enforceable in the courts, is a substitute for shame in the United States.

Regulation, however, can be imposed in both lax and stringent ways, thus leaving some room for discretion. Shaming, too, can be pursued with discretion. However, once regulation is indeed enforced, and lack of compliance is observed, sanctions must typically ensue, and in many cases they must be imposed through the legal system. Using shame does not necessarily trigger sanctions since it is not administered by a system as formal as the courts but rather by a broad jury, such as society, thus allowing for correction and recovery from lapses. Relying on a practice of shaming lessens the necessity for a regulatory-legal framework to weed out bad business practice, and it can be a far less costly way to regulate a society, impose sanctions, and articulate and reinforce norms.

### **Shame May Be a Cheaper Alternative, but May Cost Yale Dearly**

It is understandable that less affluent countries and societies may use shame as a substitute for costly regulation from a purely rational, cost-effective point of view. In dealing with other cultures and societies, institutions in the United States should be cognizant of both the function and importance of shame as a powerful regula-

tory mechanism. If institutions in the United States, such as Yale, fail to understand the importance of shaming in a country like South Korea, it is very likely that they have displayed a poor understanding of South Korea's institutions, not just its cultural practices. One can and does continually misunderstand cultural practices in cross-cultural exchange, creating great possibilities for embarrassment; but disrespect for the institutions of another culture is a far more egregious offense. It seems that in the case of Shin-gate, Yale may have done exactly that. The lawsuit against Yale reflects South Korean dissatisfaction and frustration with Yale, as well as Dongguk's inability to communicate to Yale that an institution's shame in South Korea is a powerful sanction, and one that involves significant damages both in terms of lost social trust and financial damage. Dongguk's inability to convey that loss of reputation is a powerful blow and Yale's unwillingness to accept it has landed them in the courts. If Yale had accepted that shaming has occurred in this case, and that it is a powerful regulatory tool in the case of South Korea, it would have displayed an understanding of this culture and a particular practice. In this case, Yale's inattention and negligence has led to severe sanctions for Dongguk, since Dongguk has broken a powerful norm despite the fact that it tried its best to not do so by getting help from the only party in this conflict that could have helped, namely Yale.

Yale was ultimately responsible in this incident, since it was the only party in this dispute that had access to information that could have prevented further damage when Dongguk first inquired. Institutions are important; and while shame has almost no function in the United States as a regulatory mechanism, it is important not to ignore its power in other cultures as one pursues business with them.

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# The Rise of China within American Hegemony

Sungshin Kim

## Abstract

This paper investigates the rise of China, specifically within the setting of United States hegemony. It evaluates two major issues that have emerged in public debate on U.S.—China relations: the growing economic interdependency between the U.S. and China, and the possibility of military competition between these two powers. It argues that we have to move away from an understanding grounded on civilizational divides or the autonomy of the nation state. An alternative analysis looks at how these two states participate—and are affected by—larger, global, structures of exchange and competition.

The past decade has seen a spate of publications on the rise of China and how its ascent will affect the rest of the world. To begin answering this question, one needs to appreciate a remarkable conjuncture: China's economic growth in the last quarter-century is probably the greatest leap in economic development a nation has ever taken, but happened in a world under a global hegemony, namely that of the United States, that has equally few precedents. The only comparison that comes to mind is U.S. industrialization in the age of the British Empire. But British dominance was never as complete as that of the present-day U.S., as is clear from the competition Britain had to face from other major powers in the imperialist division of China during the late Nineteenth Century.

Already, present-day China (or the U.S.) cannot be fully understood without taking into account the mutual rela-

tionship between this new economic powerhouse and the older hegemon. I will illustrate this with two examples: one in the realm of economy, the other in that of military power (although these are of course related). In fact I would argue that we might want to evaluate present day China from the perspective of this relationship, to avoid falling into comparisons that rely on one of the following extremes: a prescribed developmental path in which the West remains the norm, or an inscrutable civilizational divide that makes China fundamentally different.

From a long-term historical perspective China's economic rise has been a return to the norm in world history, as it existed prior to the rise of the West. But commentators disagree whether the China of our time is following a path similar to development elsewhere or is creating a fundamentally new, Chinese, way of doing things (Mahbubani, on Asia, and Leonard are good examples of these respective positions). Both of these viewpoints involve pitfalls. The idea of a single developmental path that will yield predictable outcomes can easily obscure our appreciation of ongoing events. The journalist John Pomfret gives an example of this when he points out that social protest in the P.R.C. can transform from anti-foreignerism into pro-democracy demands in a matter of days (Pomfret 142-3). A complex society, like China or the United States, is never completely at one hypothetical level of development. As Alexander Woodside has pointed out, Imperial China had dealt more effectively with the problem of Feudal power than modern Britain or Germany a century ago. But those who try to single out a specific Asian or Chinese way run into a similar problem, since they can only do so against the background of a presumed Western way, ignoring the multiplicity existing in both the West and China (See Wong on historical comparisons).

Does this leave any encompassing understanding dead in the water? While an Archimedean point is impossible to achieve, I suggest we can better turn to the institutions of glob-

al integration in which both states participate. During the last twenty years, historians have shown that globalization is much older than commonly thought. But with global integration I refer here to the dense system of communication, exchange, and competition that emerged from around the 1860s, mainly built by the empires that were carving up the globe. This integration compressed space and time in such a way that it brought everybody into a simultaneous historical time, even though not all places were integrated in an equal way. One of the most important of these structures was the gold standard. This might seem a dull subject, but we should not forget that it was the centerpiece of American presidential campaigns in the late Nineteenth Century. The present-day dollar regime—and the economic interdependence between the U.S. and P.R.C.—are the latest installment of such global arrangements, and might become as important an issue in American political campaigns of the near future.

Erez Manela recently provided another historical example of this modern global integration in his book on the “Wilsonian Moment.” Earlier, historians had recognized Wilson as a major founder of Twentieth Century America’s approach to the rest of the world, pursuing a Wilsonian dream of spreading liberal democracy. But Wilson’s message was also heard beyond the West (in part via the communication technology of the imperial powers). Remaining unfulfilled at Versailles it sparked, as Manela shows, the beginning of anti-colonial nationalisms—from the May Fourth Movement in China to Vietnam’s Ho Chi Minh—that would color the century as much as U.S. Wilsonianism.

These examples show that a focus on interactions at the global level should not equate with the assumption of a model of international relations in which nation states are basically unitary or autonomous entities. The heated debate on the gold standard in the U.S. was a sectional debate, because this institution had a different impact on the different sections of the country. Manela’s work on Wilson shows that even power-

ful nations that determine the moral high ground might find themselves entangled in the global ideological landscapes they created. Neither does a focus on the global need to coincide with the presumed decline of the state (Mann). States are still the principal players in the construction and maintenance of global structures, but at the same time they have to operate within the networks of these structures.

The single most important component of the U.S.-China relationship at present is their mutual place within the dollar-regime. This goes back to the seventies, when both states made crucial choices in their economic policies, which would bring them closely together three decades later. Anybody who has the vaguest familiarity with China can guess that the reform policies pursued by Deng Xiaoping since the late seventies form one leg of these changes. But in the beginning of that decade the United States took as fateful a turn when Nixon took the dollar off the gold standard. Coincidentally in both the Chinese and American cases these major changes coincided with wars against Vietnam. The Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979 had to do with tensions within the Communist bloc, in particular with the rise of Deng in China and the Soviet attempt to isolate the P.R.C. via Vietnam. In America's case, War in Vietnam was not simply an effect but a key factor that drove the economic change implemented in the seventies.

Since the late sixties America had been running a huge deficit, in part because of the Vietnam War. By 1971 American diplomats could no longer restrain foreign (mainly European) governments from exchanging their dollars for gold, amounting to a run on Fort Knox (Kunz 192-222). The response, taking the dollar off gold, was an ad-hoc decision to ward off this crisis that could threaten the war-effort, as well as Nixon's re-election. Apparently, Nixon and his advisors debated more about when he was going to announce the decision to the public on Television, than about the decision itself—they were afraid to interrupt the highly popular series *Bonanza*.

But in hindsight, Nixon's decision to dislodge the dollar

from gold laid the basis of the U.S.'s continued economic ascendancy, even after it lost its pre-eminence as a producer of goods. The dollar became purely paper money, but remained the world's reserve currency in which most international transactions are conducted. Without the ability to convert to gold, foreign governments could not do much else with their dollars other than investing them in the U.S.—partially on Wall Street but also to a large extent in U.S. government bonds. The latter gave the U.S. government a unique ability to borrow from abroad instead of lending from its own citizens. In fact, it set the United States free from the necessity faced by “normal” countries, to balance payments.

This was an overturning of the whole nature of American power. In the first half of the Twentieth Century, American military might had relied on industrial power—more specifically, an incredible knack for mass-production. Fordism is the most famous representative of this, but also interchangeable parts, developed by American gun-manufacturers. Taking the dollar off the gold standard made it possible for the U.S. to retain its primacy in the world-economy that it had gained through World War II, despite the rise of international competition from Europe and Japan.

Eventually these two major policy changes (Nixon's uncoupling of the dollar and Deng's reforms) came together with the increasing role of China as a buyer of dollar-denominated securities. As Niall Ferguson has pointed out, Asian economies relying on exports (China being by far the largest amongst these) have only increased the ease for the United States to lend money under the dollar regime. These Asian governments wanted to keep their currency relatively weak compared to the dollar, and they have intervened to this end in the world's currency markets. As a result an increasing amount of American debt was bought up by East Asian Central banks, which kept U.S. interest rates lower than otherwise could be expected (Ferguson, 281).

Recent discussion in the American public sphere(s) on the

U.S. budget (and the role of China as lender) has relied on the discourse of early American history, which has precluded a complete assessment of the issue. Conservatives have taken up the issue as a major point of criticism against federal politics, in some ways harkening back to a pre-civil war distrust of banking and federal regulation. But they have overlooked the importance of exactly this dollar regime to American power since the 1970s. It was, for instance, this device that made it possible—until the crash of 2008—to wage two foreign wars without hampering domestic living standards.

Interestingly, Ferguson does not follow most observers who have characterized this economic symbiosis as a mutual lock from which neither of the two can pull free without harming themselves. He points out that the final question will always be who is most dependent on the other (261). But I do not think we can follow Ferguson's line of reasoning that there are only two possible outcomes: continued trust in the U.S. dollar accompanied by a flow of investments in the U.S., or its complete collapse, which would generate the mother of all crises. It is true that China has called in global forums, at the height of the economic crisis, for a different reserve currency than the dollar. Such calls have however also illustrated how difficult it is to find a replacement for the dollar. In fact the evolution described by Ferguson suggests a possible third course. Already the behavior of China and other East Asian states was to join the system rather than destroy it. By keeping their currencies weak opposed to the dollar they made it easier for their industries to compete. But at the same time they supported lower interest rates that benefited the U.S. with the unspoken proviso that the dollar should not be devalued, since this was the reason for China to buy into U.S. securities in the first place. What was already going on before the crisis was a shift from a dollar regime in which only the United States reaped the profits associated with seigniorage, to a system in which multiple states benefited. The direction I suggest this might hint at, which would be a more peaceful alternative to the eventual

collapse of the dollar, and which we might see emerging in the next decade, would be for the U.S. to let other countries—like China—join them in running the dollar system.

Charles Maier has described such a symbiosis as American Empire, but I think his description is too America-centered to grasp the fundamental global structure of this process in which no nation has ultimate control. This process of broadening the beneficiaries of dollar-rule, visible already before the recent economic crisis, actually parallels the development of the gold standard. This earlier global regime might have appeared to be completely centered on London, from the perspective of British investors and bankers who reaped the greatest benefits from it. In reality, however, as economic historians have shown, it came to be divided from the 1870s into subblocks centered on France, Germany, the United States, Japan, etc. The battleground for the competition of these different gold standard variants was the last great silver area in the world, China (See Cohen, Rosenberg, Metzler).

The U.S. experience with the gold standard in the late Nineteenth Century provides an interesting comparison with present day China. The way China operates within the dollar regime is a fundamentally different paradigm than the use of the gold standard to allow investments into the U.S. during the late Nineteenth Century. But for both China and the U.S. these monetary regimes have been key to their economic development policy. In the P.R.C. the government might have liberalized most of the market, but it holds tight control of the value of Chinese money relative to the dollar. Similarly in Gilded Age America, despite that U.S. development happened in a setting of representative democracy, the gold standard was never put to the test of a popular vote in Congress. Instead it was restricted to the executive branch, which was during almost this whole period in the hands of Republican presidents who relied on the sectional support of the northeast, whose Industrial economy profited from the Gold standard (with the exception of G. Cleveland who represented the interest of the

financial center of New York City) (Bensel, 2000).

The parallel between China now and America's Gilded Age has been made before, but has not been pursued beyond the popular images of robber-barons. As we already mentioned, there is probably no closer comparison to the economic development of the P.R.C. in the last three decades than the industrial development of the United States in the last three decades of the Nineteenth Century, which made the U.S. the largest economic power in the world. This comparison not only holds true for the rapidity and size of industrial expansion, but also for the extremely disjointed nature of the process in these two countries, since in both development was heavily concentrated in certain regions. Despite that the Communist Party of China as an organization has more in common with the single-party states that emerged in the Twentieth Century, its dilemmas nowadays, as an agent of development, are those of Gilded Age America. In particular it faces the same contradiction as the Republican Party, which dominated American Gilded Age politics, namely how to balance capitalist economic development with competing claims on unequally divided wealth.

The international structures that came into being from the Nineteenth Century not only brought increased exchange, but also military competition between the great powers. The Debate on a rising China has, especially in American policy making circles, also involved the question of military competition. Before anything else, it should be pointed out that since U.S. military spending is as large as that of the next 15 countries combined, America should have nothing to fear from China or anybody else. Despite the fact that China is still the second largest military spender, and its budget, which is difficult to measure, is the most rapidly increasing, it does not go beyond 20 percent of the American budget (Stockholm Peace Research Institute). On the other hand, comparisons based on budgets are skewed by the differing tasks and commitments, as well as military effectiveness. So we have to look at the ideas behind Chinese military modernization.

Some China hawks—for instance Michael Pillsbury, who was very influential on U.S. strategic planning under the previous administration (if we can believe reports from the *Wall Street Journal* 09/08/2005)—describe Chinese military planning as a search for high-tech asymmetric capabilities, to change the military balance by surprise: for instance, weapons that would throw the opponent's communication in disarray. This supposedly asymmetric approach in his eyes is fundamentally directed against the U.S. But it supposedly has deep roots: according to Pillsbury Chinese military planners find inspiration in the classical past of Sun Zi and other ancient strategists.

There is a great irony about invoking some sort of Oriental military tradition, harking back to Sun Zi. For it was American strategic thought, as it developed after the Vietnam War, that took a Sun Zi-like form, with the emphasis on targeting the decision making of the enemy and the search for swift victory. We know that the most influential American strategists of this period, John Boyd, drank as much from the well of Sun Zi as any Chinese strategist. The reality is that the P.R.C. military tries to follow the paradigmatic military force of the present, namely the United States military. Furthermore, academic research by John Lewis and Litai Xue has shown that this process has been challenging for the People's Liberation Army—both technologically and institutionally.

Two crucial zones of exchange have characterized global military relations in East-Asia: a north-western zone spanning from the north of the Korean Peninsula to Central Asia, and a maritime zone which also springs from Korea but spans southwards across the Asian inner seas. In the Nineteenth Century, China remained much more adept at running the former than the latter. But it is exactly in the maritime zone that it has tried to improve its capabilities in the last decades.

The P.R.C.'s military has invested a lot of effort on the development of sea power, and it is on its maritime frontiers that China has been militarily assertive in the last decades. This is even more marked if one compares with its Central Asian

backyard, where the P.R.C. and U.S. have coexisted without provocation for 10 years, China policing its Xinjiang and Tibetan territories, the U.S. occupying Afghanistan. China's assertiveness on its maritime frontier does not only involve the well-known military buildup against Taiwan, but also the use of military means to underline its claims over parts of the South China Sea—claims which conflict with almost all its neighbors: Japan, South Korea, The Philippines, and Vietnam. A major reason for China's concern with the South China Sea is the resources that are present there, as well as sea-lanes to resource rich areas. To name one key variable, China is far more dependent on Middle East Oil than is the U.S., which is crucial to feed its growing economy.

No wonder China is trying to build a so-called Blue Water Navy which can project force far beyond its own shores. I have to emphasize that it is far from alone in this regard: quite a number of countries are focusing their military modernization on this nowadays. Examples in the crucial Indian Ocean are of course India but also France which has bases there. None of these countries will anytime soon be able to match the force projection capabilities of the U.S. Navy. But China faces some extra constraints in gaining naval capability commensurate with her economic power.

China might have a long coast line, but its access to the ocean seas is blocked entirely from north to south by neighboring countries and the islands they control: from the Korean peninsula; Cheju island in between Korea and Japan; Japan itself; the chain of islands under Japanese control that extend as far as sixty miles from Taiwan; Taiwan herself and then the Philippines. To the south you have another barrier formed by Indonesia and Malaysia, with the narrow Malacca strait as a crucial connection to the Indian Ocean. In order to reach blue water, Chinese ships would have to pass through a potential choke-point. Inside this barrier, its fleet could be attacked by air-forces stationed on the surrounding lands—the U.S. has strong forces in South Korea and Japan. In other words, the

P.R.C. is already contained by geography. No other country that is so dependent on overseas resources has such obstacles to developing credible sea-power.

What is clear from the economic and military issues is that both the U.S. and P.R.C. governments should be careful to inform their citizens that the power of their states is limited by these global structures in which they participate. Debate in America on China will be more productive if it starts from an awareness of mutual envelopment within international systems, in which America's position is still very strong.

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# Asian Studies Development Program Fifteenth Annual National Conference

March 5-7, 2009  
Community College of Philadelphia

## THURSDAY, MARCH 5TH

**12:30 pm**, ASDP - ARCAS Directors Meeting, Center for Business and Industry (CBI), C-3-5.

**6:30 pm**, Reception held in the Chinese Rotunda and adjoining Egyptian Collection, University of Pennsylvania Museum. Nancy Steinhardt, Professor of Chinese Art, University of Pennsylvania, & Roger Ames, Professor of Chinese Philosophy, University of Hawaii: "The Meaning of Splendor: Chinese and Egyptian Art." (See Map / Directions, p. 20)

## FRIDAY, MARCH 6TH

Registration, Coffee, Tea etc. at 8:30 in CBI, C2

### Session One: 9:00 – 10:15

#### Session 1.1 CBI, Room C2-28

*Expanding Asian Studies through U. S. Department of Education Grants.* Chair: Fay Beauchamp.

Featured Speaker: Christine Corey, Senior Program Officer,  
Department of Education

*Panelists:* Carolyn Kadel, Johnson County Community College, and Jim Deitrick, University of Central Arkansas

*Writing a Successful Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Grant:* George Brown, Slippery Rock University of PA, and Joe Overton, Kapiolani Community College

**Session 1.2 CBI, Room C2-5**

*China's Ethnic Minorities: Reports from the 2007 ASDP China Field Study.* Chair: Cecilia Chien.

Biling Chen, University of Central Arkansas

*China's Ethnic Minorities: Incorporating 2008 ASDP China Field Study into Undergraduate Classes*

Suzanne Lang, Community College of Philadelphia

*China's Ethnic Minorities: Incorporating 2008 ASDP China Field Study into Undergraduate Classes*

Marilyn Lashley, Howard University

*China's Ethnic Minorities: Incorporating 2008 ASDP China Field Study into Undergraduate*

**Classes Session 1.3 CBI, Room C2-3**

*Perspectives on Women in Asia.* Chair: Armand Policicchio.

Sarah Jugler, Slippery Rock University of PA

*Asian Concepts of Beauty*

Jessika McInturf, Slippery Rock University of PA

*Western Impacts on Asian Women*

Justin Miller, Slippery Rock University of PA

*The Impacts of Foot Binding on Women in China*

**Friday, Session Two: 10:30 – 12:00**

**Session 2.1 CBI, Room C2-28**

*The Culture of the Silk Road: Representations in Art and Dance.*

Chair: Marthe Chandler.

Ray Olson, College of DuPage (Emeritus)

*The Maijishan Grottoes Along the Silk Road in China*

He Zhang, William Paterson University  
*A Study of the Sogdian Whirl Dance and Shaman's Performance*

Pamela Stover, University of Texas at El Paso  
*Traveling China's Silk Road: Preserving the Past and Preparing for the Future*

Albert Y. Wong, University of Texas at El Paso  
*Traveling China's Silk Road: Preserving the Past and Preparing for the Future*

### Session 2.2 CBI, Room C2-5

*Cross Cultural Literature*. Chair: Pairat Sethbhakdi

Mary Sheldon, Washburn University  
*The Garden Image: A Key to Meaning in Khaled Hosseini's The Kite Runner, with References to Rumi's Poetry*

Shudong Chen, Johnson County Community College  
*Narration as "De-Metaphorization" via "Environmental Imagination": A Cross-Cultural and Interdisciplinary Approach to And the War Is Over: A Novel by Ismail Marahimin*

Andrea Kempf, Johnson County Community College  
*Chinese Fiction: A Window on the Tumultuous History of the Second Half of the Twentieth Century*

Roberta E. Adams, Roger Williams University  
*Reincarnation and Transformation in Mo Yan's Life and Death are Wearing Me Out*

### Session 2.3 CBI, Room C2-3

*Zen, Physical Reality, Monotheism and Golf*. Chair: Jim Deitrick.

Joe McKeon, Central Connecticut State University  
*The Search for a Chinese Vocabulary to Convey a Sense of Western Monotheism*

Robert Feleppa, Wichita State University  
*Is Zen 'No-Mind' Empty Mind?*

Benjamin Olshin, University of the Arts, Philadelphia  
*Some Daoist and Neo-Confucian Views on Physical Reality and Possible Modern Counterparts*

Stephen J. Laumakis, University of St. Thomas  
*An Exercise in Comparative Philosophy: Plato and Confucius on the Form of Golf—From the Ideal to the Real*

### Special Session

Cynthia Ning, Associate Director, Center for Chinese Studies, University of Hawaii-Manoa, and Co-Director, The Confucius Institute (CI) at UHM: “*Confucius Institutes and the Changing Face of Chinese Language Education.*” Winnet, Room S2-3.

### Luncheon Plenary Session: 12:15 – 2:00 pm

Winnet Building, Room S2-19 Victor Mair, Professor of Chinese Literature, University of Pennsylvania, “*Storytelling with Pictures in the Tang Dynasty*”

### Friday, Session Three: 2:15 – 3:30 pm

#### Session 3.1 CBI, Room C2-28

*Negotiating Tradition and Modernity in Japanese Culture.*

Chair: David C. Prejsnar.

Wing-kai To, Bridgewater State College  
*Shuji Isawa (1851-1917) and the Development of Music Curriculum and Teacher Education in Meiji Japan*

Roger Dunn, Bridgewater State College  
*Cross-Cultural Currents in the Visual Arts during the Meiji Restoration*

Minae Yamamoto Savas, Bridgewater State College  
*Crafting Motherhood in Japanese Nob Theatre*

#### Session 3.2 CBI, Room C2-5

*Teaching About Asia.* Chair: Leslie Beale.

Jane Shlensky, Durham Technical Community College  
*"Every Picture Tells a Story, Baby": Teaching Asia with Narrative Art*

Swasti Bhattacharyya, Buena Vista University  
*Nonviolence, Peace, & Justice—Course Title and Pedagogical Strategies: Lessons Learned from the Women of the Brahma Vidya Mandir*

Armand Policicchio, Slippery Rock University of PA  
*Teaching of Asia in the Pennsylvania Schools, Part 1*

**Session 3.3 CBI, Room C2-3**

*Manifestations of Iconic Popular Culture in Japan & China.*

Chair: Chrissie Tate Reilly.

Paul Dunscomb, University of Alaska-Anchorage  
*Tales of the Floating Hood and Monstrous Cute: Creating a Usable Pop Culture Past in Japan*

Fay Beauchamp, Community College of Philadelphia  
*Bodhisattvas and Fairy Godmothers to the Rescue -- from the Tang Dynasty to Disney's "Cinderella."*

**Session 3.4 Winnet, Room S2-3**

*Monuments, Tourism and Memory in Asia.* Chair: Howard Giskin.

Lawrence E. Butler, George Mason University  
*Monuments and Memories of Portuguese Asia*

Cecilia Chien, West Chester University of Pennsylvania  
*Tourism in China Today: Development, Heritage, Environment, and the State*

Marthe Chandler, DePauw University  
*Incident at Stone Forest: travelers, tourists and other academics*

**Friday, Session Four: 3:45 – 5:15 pm****Session 4.1 CBI Room C2-28**

*The Tale of Genji at One Thousand Years.* Chair: Diane C. Freedman.

Diane C. Freedman, Community College of Philadelphia  
*People soon enough will be passing on our tale: Genji Art through the Ages*

Linda H. Chance, University of Pennsylvania  
*Day of the Classic: The Tale of Genji in Cultural Pedagogy*

Laura Nuffer, University of Pennsylvania  
*Repurposing Genji: Situating a 'Timeless' Classic in the Modern Aesthetic*

Masayo Kaneko, Haverford College  
*Setouchi Jakuchô and The Tale of Genji*

**Session 4.2 CBI, Room C2-5**

*Learning from Asian Religious and Philosophical Traditions.*  
Chair: Joanna Crosby.

Ronnie Littlejohn, Belmont University  
*Hidden Commensurabilities? Tu Weiming's New Confucian Political Theory and the Lockean Civil Libertarian Tradition*

Jim Deitrick, University of Central Arkansas  
*What's Karma Got to Do with It? Learning from Asian Religious and Philosophical Traditions*

David Jones, Kennesaw State University  
*Learning from the Chinese Classics: Why History Does (not) Matter*

**Session 4.3 CBI, Room C2-3**

*History, Politics and Strategic Relations in N.E. Asia.* Chair: George Brown.

Chrissie Tate Reilly, Monmouth University  
*Perspectives on the American Occupation of Japan*

Youngtae Shin, University of Central Oklahoma  
*Benefits or Burdens?: US –Korea Security Alliance*

Kazuya Fukuoka, Saint Joseph's University  
*Public Opinion as a System of Dikes? Prime Minister Koizumi's  
 Controversial Visits to Yasukuni War Shrine*

**Session 4.4 Winnet, Room S2-3**

*Heaven and Earth: Leaving Everyday Life for an Alternative  
 Reality.* Chair: Dennis Arjo.

Jessica Ann Sheetz-Nguyen, University of Central Oklahoma  
*China in 1976: Two Memorial Services for Two Men Signaling  
 Mighty Changes*

Christopher Yip, Cal Poly  
*Connecting Architecture and Transcendence: the work of Nelson  
 Wu*

Dona Cady, Middlesex Community College  
*The Reality of Transcending the Virtual*

**ASDP Alumni Chapter Meeting 5:30 – 6:45pm**

CBI, Room C2-28, All ASDP Alumni are invited to attend  
 and to participate in this meeting.

**Saturday, Session Five: 9:00 – 10:15 pm**

**Session 5.1 CBI, Room C2-28**

*Buddhist Visions: Tradition and Practice in Japanese Images.*  
 Chair: David C. Prejsnar.

David C. Prejsnar, Community College of Philadelphia  
*"Buddhist Visions: Tradition and Practice in Japanese Images"*

Frank L. Chance, University of Pennsylvania  
*"Buddhist Visions: Tradition and Practice in Japanese Images"*

Jeremy Sather, University of Pennsylvania  
*"Buddhist Visions: Tradition and Practice in Japanese Images"*

**Session 5.2 CBI, Room C2-5**

*China's Economic Reforms and Identity.* Chair: Albert Y. Wong.

Howard Giskin, Appalachian State University  
*Forgetting, Remembering, and Remaking What It Means to Be Chinese*

William Lowe, Howard Community College  
*Forgetting, Remembering, and Remaking What It Means to Be Chinese*

Howard Bodner, Houston Community College-Central  
*The People's Republic of Capitalism*

**Session 5.3 CBI, Room C2-3**

*Women and Perception of the Other in European Travelogues on Asia.* Chair: Kimberly Allen-Kattus.

Rachana Sachdev, Susquehanna University  
*Do Women Matter? Ming China in Early Modern European Travelogues*

Qingjun Li, Middle Tennessee State University  
*China Travel Narratives and the Transcultural Argument for Women's Roles in Early Modern England*

**Saturday, Session Six: 10:30 – 12:00 pm**

**Session 6.1 CBI, Room C2-28**

*Art and Its Places in Asian Spaces.* Chair: Sheri Moore.

Kimberly Allen-Kattus, Northern Kentucky University  
*Finding the Eternal in the Transitory: Contemporary Chinese Sculpture, Spatiality, Temporality, the Fourth Dimension and Beyond*

Susan Clare Scott, McDaniel College  
*The Chinoiserie Garden Pavilion and the Chinese Bridge*

Mei-ling Hom, Community College of Philadelphia  
*Contemporary Korean Ceramics*

Brian Seymour, Community College of Philadelphia  
*Constructing a Canon in the New Museums of China*

**Session 6.2 CBI, Room C2-5**

*Culture, Generations and Attitudes in Asia and the US.* Chair:  
Linda Lindsey.

Sandy Lopez, Trident Technical College  
*Generations: Parallels and Contrasts Between Japanese and  
American Age Cohorts*

Debbie Dupree, Trident Technical College  
*Generations: Parallels and Contrasts Between Japanese and  
American Age Cohorts*

Michele Marion, Paradise Valley Community College  
*Culture, Context, and The Koran: Afghanistan, Malaysia, and  
Morocco*

**Session 6.3 CBI, Room C2-3**

*Confucianism and Ethics.* Chair: Ronnie Littlejohn.

James VanderMey, Mid Michigan Community College  
*Re-Forming Scholars: Inviting a Confucian Approach to Aca-  
demic Ethics*

Keith W. Krasemann, College of DuPage  
*Virtuous Leadership: The Confucian Ideal as an Antidote to the  
Waning Trust in Government*

Ronald P. Morrison, University of New England  
*Is the Well-Governed Society Just or Benevolent?*

Dennis Arjo, Johnson County Community College  
*A Dilemma for Care Ethics and a Confucian Resolution*

**Luncheon Plenary Session: 12:15 – 2:00 pm**

Winnet Building, Room S2-19, Zia Mian, Research Scientist,  
Program on Science and Global Security, Princeton University:  
*“Peace and Security Issues: Pakistan”*.

**Saturday, Session Seven: 2:15 – 3:30 pm****Session 7.1 CBI, Room C2-28**

*Paranomastic Definitions, Hermeneutics and Natural Beauty.*

Chair: James VanderMey.

Andrew Colvin, Slippery Rock University of PA

*The Metaphysics of Lexicography: On the Use of Paranomastic  
Definitions in Classical Chinese Thought*

Stephanie Theodorou, Immaculata University

*Neo-Confucian Heart-Mind as Progressive Hermeneutics: Zhu-  
Xi, Husserl, and Ricouer in Conversation*

David Brubaker, University of New Haven

*Natural Beauty and Literati Strokes: Shitao and Merleau-Ponty*

**Session 7.2 CBI, Room C2-5**

*History, Diplomacy and Development in West, Central and  
South Asia.* Chair: George Brown.

Richard D. Keiser, Community College of Philadelphia

*The Origins of Contemporary Hindu Nationalism*

Zhu Zhiqun, Bucknell University

*China's New Diplomacy in Central Asia: Motivations, strategies,  
and implications*

Jeremy Tasch, Towson University

*Curse or Blessing, and to Whom? Oil Development and Transi-  
tion in Azerbaijan*

**Session 7.3 CBI, Room C2-3**

*Modern Japanese Literature.* Chair: Roberta Adams.

Kyoko Taniguchi, Emory University

*The Daughterly Subjectivity of the Mother: Problematizing  
“Maternal” Subjectivity*

Elaine Terranova, Community College of Philadelphia

*Two Modernist “New Women”: Yosano Akiko and Edna St.  
Vincent Millay*

Masako Nakagawa, Villanova University

*Kasai Zenzō’s At the Lakeside: Ultimate shi-shōsetsu?*

**Saturday, Session Eight: 3:45 – 5:00 pm**

**Session 8.1 CBI, Room C2-28**

*Indian Literature: Modern and Ancient.* Chair: Jane Shlensky.

Carol Stein, Community College of Philadelphia

*Dream and darkness: images of India in three post-colonial  
novels*

Lakshmi Gudipati, Community College of Philadelphia

*Ramayana: Family Values in the Demon and the Monkey Com-  
munities*

Carol LaBelle, Community College of Philadelphia

*Ramayana: Family Values in the Demon and the Monkey Com-  
munities*

**Session 8.2 CBI, Room C2-5**

*Avian Flu Pedagogy, Music and Education.* Chair: Joe McKe-  
on.

Leslie Beale, Springfield College

*Sorting Out The H5N1 Avian Flu Puzzle: A Multidisciplinary,  
Ecological Approach*

Mary Karen Solomon, Colorado Northwestern Community  
College

*Confucius, Music and Brains Today*

**Session 8.3 CBI, Room C2-3**

*Infusing, Interns, and Exploring with Students.* Chair: Armand Policicchio.

Anne Xu, Austin College

*Infusing China into the Undergraduate Curriculum: a Case Study of an Interdisciplinary Course*

Joanna Crosby, Morgan State University

*Internships, Service-Learning, and Study Abroad*

**Asian Studies Development Program,  
East-West Center, and Association  
of Regional Centers for Asian Studies**

The Asian Studies Development Program (ASDP) is a joint program of the University of Hawai'i and the East-West Center. It was initiated in 1990 to increase American understanding of the Asia-Pacific region through college and university faculty development. The ASDP mission is to infuse Asian content and perspectives into the core curriculum at American two-year and four-year colleges and universities through programs that help faculty expand and refine their knowledge and teaching of Asia. The co-directors of ASDP are Elizabeth Buck, at the East-West Center, and Roger T. Ames, at the University of Hawaii. Peter Hershock is ASDP Coordinator. The ASDP network now includes over 400 colleges in 49 states, with 20 schools designated as ASDP regional centers.

The East-West Center is an education and research organization established by the U.S. Congress in 1960 to strengthen relations and understanding among the peoples and nations of Asia, the Pacific, and the United States. The Center contributes to a peaceful, prosperous, and just Asia Pacific community by serving as a vigorous hub for cooperative research, education, and dialogue on critical issues of common concern to the Asia Pacific region and the United States. Funding for the Center comes from the U.S. government, with additional support provided by private agencies, individuals, foundations, corporations, and the governments of the region.

The Association of Regional Centers for Asian Studies (ARCAS) is committed to promoting the study of Asia and Asian cultures in undergraduate programs at colleges and universities throughout the United States. The mission of this Association is to provide high quality programs for faculty, administrators, staff, and students at member institutions and other institutions served by the regional centers. The purpose of these programs is to enhance teaching, learning, and research in Asian studies. ARCAS organizes the annual ASDP National Conference and organizes the peer reviewed journal, *East-West Connections: Review of Asian Studies*.

#### Association of Regional Centers for Asian Studies

University of Alaska-Anchorage  
 Belmont University  
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 University of Central Arkansas  
 Central Washington University  
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 College of DuPage Eckerd  
 College Johnson County Community  
 College University of Hawai'i Kapiolani  
 Kennesaw State University  
 Middlesex Community College  
 Missouri State University  
 Morgan State University  
 Paradise Valley Community College  
 Community College of Philadelphia  
 University of Redlands  
 Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania  
 Trident Technical College  
 Tulsa Community College  
 And we would like to welcome  
 Portland Community College

### Plenary Speakers

**Roger T. Ames** is Professor of Philosophy, University of Hawaii. He received his doctorate from the University of London and has spent many years abroad in China and Japan studying Chinese philosophy. He has been Visiting Professor at National Taiwan University, Chinese University of Hong Kong, and Peking University, a fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, and has lectured extensively at various universities around the world. Professor Ames has been the recipient of many grants and awards, including the Regents' Merit and Excellence in Teaching 1990-91, and many grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Professor Ames has authored, edited, and translated some 30 books, and has written numerous book chapters and articles in professional journals. He was the subject editor for the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean entries in the Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Currently he continues to work on interpretive studies and explicitly "philosophical" translations of the core classical texts, taking full advantage in his research of the exciting new archaeological finds. Roger is also the Co-Director of the Asian Studies Development Program.

**Victor H. Mair** is Professor of Chinese Language and Literature, University of Pennsylvania. His Ph.D. is from Harvard University, 1976 and his M.Phil from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1984. His research interests are in Sinitic etymology and lexicology, Bronze Age and Early Iron Age peoples of Eastern Central Asia, cultural aspects of Chinese Buddhism; Sino-Indian and Sino-Iranian Cultural interactions; Eurasian cultural exchange, Chinese script and language reform. His selected publications include: *Hawai'i Reader in Traditional Chinese Culture*, co-editor with Nancy S. Steinhardt and Paul R. Goldin (University of Hawai'i Press, 2005); *An Alphabetical Index to the Hanyu Da Cidian*, ed. (2003); *ABC Chinese-English Comprehensive Dictionary*, assoc. ed. (2003); *Columbia History of Chinese Literature*, ed. (2002); *The Tarim Mummies: Ancient China and the Mystery of the Earliest Peoples from the West*, co-author with J. P. Mallory (2000). Prizes/Awards/Fellowships: Member, American Philosophical Society;

American Council of Learned Societies, National Endowment for the Humanities; National Humanities Center; Institute for Advanced Studies (Princeton); Institute for Humanistic Studies (Kyoto); Swedish Collegium for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (Uppsala); Duke University ; University of Hong Kong.

**Zia Mian** is a Research Scientist in the Program on Science and Global Security at Princeton University, and directs the Project on Peace and Security in South Asia at the Program on Science and Global Security. His research interests include nuclear weapons and nuclear energy policy in South Asia, and issues of nuclear disarmament and peace. Previously, he has taught at Yale University and Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. He has worked at the Union of Concerned Scientists, Cambridge (Mass.), and at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad. He is Associate Editor of *Science & Global Security*, an international journal for peer-reviewed scientific and technical studies relating to arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation policy. In addition to his scholarly articles, he is the editor of several books and has helped make two documentary films on peace and security in South Asia. He has a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

**Nancy S. Steinhardt** is Professor of East Asian Art in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations and Curator of Chinese Art at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania. Steinhardt received her PhD in Fine Arts at Harvard in 1981. Much of Professor Steinhardt's research has focused on East Asian architecture and urban planning; but her broader research interests include problems that result from the interaction between Chinese art and that of peoples at China's borders. She is author of *Chinese Traditional Architecture* (1984), *Chinese Imperial City Planning* (1990), and *Liao Architecture* (1997); editor and adaptor of *A History of Chinese Architecture* (2002), co-editor of *Hawaii Reader in Traditional Chinese Culture* (2005), and has written more than 60 scholarly articles and more than 30 book reviews. She has given more than 120 public lectures or conference

talks. Steinhardt has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, American Council of Learned Societies, American Philosophical Society, Graham Foundation for Advanced Study in the Fine Arts, Social Science Research Foundation, and Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation. She is a member of 12 professional organizations.

## Submission and Journal Information

*Editorial Office.* Correspondence regarding manuscripts and editorial matters should be sent to David Jones, Atlanta Center for the Development of Asian Studies, #2206 1000 Chastain Road, Kennesaw, GA 30144-5591. The editorial phone number is (770) 423-6596. Electronic correspondence is preferred: [djones@ksuweb.kennesaw.edu](mailto:djones@ksuweb.kennesaw.edu).

*Book Review Office.* Correspondence regarding reviewing books should be sent to Ronnie Littlejohn, Book Review Editor, Fidelity Hall 313, Belmont University, 1900 Belmont Blvd. Nashville, TN 37212-3757. The phone number is 615-460-6494. Other contact information is 615-460-6914 (Fax) and [littlejohnr@mail.belmont.edu](mailto:littlejohnr@mail.belmont.edu). Reviewers are responsible for obtaining their own copies of any books they wish to review.

*Abstracts.* All submitted abstracts from the conference will be published and must be no more than a short paragraph in length (about 15 lines). Abstracts may be edited for grammar, style, length, and clarity. Send only electronic copies to [djones@ksuweb.kennesaw.edu](mailto:djones@ksuweb.kennesaw.edu).

*Manuscripts.* Published papers should be no more than 20 double spaced pages and follow the Chicago Manual of Style (14th Edition) with in-text citations (Author(s) date, page number) (Hall and Ames 2000, 99) and minimal footnotes. Please note we prefer footnotes to endnotes. Papers should include an abstract following

the title, author's name, and institutional affiliation and prefacing the introduction.

Papers should also include a Reference section that follows immediately after the conclusion. References should be listed with author's family name first, followed by given name, publication date, book or article title, publication place, and publisher:

Ames, Roger T. and Rosemont Jr., Henry. 1998. *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Articles should use inclusive language, and use the author-date system of citation. Submissions with either (or both) a content or theoretical pedagogical focus are welcomed. All communication between the editor and authors will be done electronically, including sending and receiving attachments. Send papers to:

David Jones, Editor  
East-West Connections: Review of Asian Studies  
djones@ksuweb.kennesaw.edu

**Statement of Purpose.** East-West Connections: Review of Asian Studies provides an official record of the annual national conference of the Asian Studies Development Program of the East-West Center in Honolulu as well as making available a forum for the scholarly activity. The journal also provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and findings of Asian Studies content related materials and theoretical pedagogical techniques and curricular contributions. The journal is the on-going responsibility of the ASDP Association of Regional Centers of Asian Studies.

**Sponsoring Organizations.** East-West Connections sponsoring organizations include the Asian Studies Development Program, the Georgia Philosophy Series, and the 20 regional centers of the Association of Regional Centers: Black Hawk College (Moline, Illinois), Belmont University (Nashville), City College of San Francisco, Col-

lege of DuPage (Illinois), Eckerd College (St. Petersburg, Florida), Kapi'olani Community College (University of Hawai'i), Middlesex Community College (Bedford, Massachusetts), Missouri State University, Morgan State University (Baltimore), Paradise Valley Community College (Phoenix), Community College of Philadelphia, Portland Community College (Oregon), Slippery Rock University (Pennsylvania), Trident Technical College (South Carolina), Tulsa Community College, University of Alaska-Anchorage, Johnson County Community College (Kansas), University of Central Arkansas, University of Redlands (California), and Central Washington University.

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