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The Perception of Ginseng in Early Modern England and Its Significance in the Globalising Trade*

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Abstract

This paper aims to redress serious imbalances in the research on ginseng. Most accounts of ginseng treat it as an exclusively East Asian commodity, and are dominated by the natural sciences. Ginseng, however, was much discussed in England and America in the early modern period: the discussion encompassed not only botanical and medical interests, but also discourses on the commercial marketability of ginseng; ginseng was also an item that embodied European prejudices, symbolizing perceived ‘differences’ between the West and East. As such, ginseng was an ‘indigenous’ item of ‘the East’ that was much discussed in ‘the West’, but one that resisted assimilation into its systems of knowledge.

Key words: ginseng, botany, medicinal commodity, East India Company, orientalism.

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Introduction

Early modern Europe experienced an unprecedented expansion of material culture through exploration, trade and colonialism.¹ This new global era was largely initiated and proceeded with an ardent search for costly spices and valuable medicinal plants,² and historians have investigated the migrations and economic effects of such prominent items as tobacco, sugar, pepper, cloves, and tea. Recently a number of scholars began to pay attention to relatively less recognised medical plants such as the columba root, the cinchona bark and the peacock flower, investigating their natural and cultural significance.³ Paying close attention to the recent discussion on the ‘social life of things’, they also examine how these medicinal plants were traded and sold and acquired different identifications in various social settings. This paper, building on such research, examines ginseng, one of the less academically discussed medical plants which underwent a peculiar social life in the global market.

The way ginseng entered the Western world was analogous to that of other spices and medical plants. The aura of mystery surrounding ginseng resembles how products such as sugar, coffee, and tobacco were once given credit as panaceas following their wide diffusion since ‘the discovery of the

¹ Maxine Berg, ‘In Pursuit of Luxury, Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century’, *Past and Present* 182, 2004, 85-142; T. H. Breen, ‘An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776’, *Journal of British Studies* 25, 1986, 467-499; Pratik Chakrabarti, *Materials and Medicine: Trade, Conquest and Therapeutics in the Eighteenth Century*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010.

² Londa Schiebinger and Claudia Swan, eds, *Colonial Botany: Science, Commerce, and Politics in the Early Modern World*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.

³ Chakrabarti, *Materials and Medicine*, 172-175; Roberta Bivins, *Alternative Medicine?: A History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, 31-32; Londa Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004, chapters 3-4.

new world'. But unlike other materials mentioned above, the primary consumers of ginseng have been limited to East Asia well into the late twentieth century. Today's academic interest on ginseng clearly reflects this glaring imbalance. While much research has been done on ginseng since it first became an academic subject in the 1950s—the relevant literature amounts to 7,000 articles—the studies on ginseng show a noticeable asymmetry in two aspects. First, as most of the research is concerned with the pharmacological effects of ginseng and conducted in the fields of science, there is a conspicuous lack of research in the humanities. Second, the literature is dominated by scholars of East Asian origin, who treat ginseng as an exclusively Asian commodity. As a result, countries such as the US or Canada have been largely excluded from the fields of research, despite being two of the largest producers of the plant. Similarly, it is difficult to understand how people perceived this particular commodity in America or Europe, where demand for this product has risen recently.

This paper will focus on how ginseng was perceived in early modern England. The fact that England played a central role in the ginseng trade, and that it greatly influenced America's subsequent discovery and export of ginseng, warrants foremost attention to England among all Western countries. The historical focus on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is justified for two reasons. First, it was in the seventeenth century that ginseng was first introduced to Europe, and in the eighteenth century England was the major player in the global ginseng trade. This prominence was short-lived, however: circa 1798, America emerged as the most important exporter of ginseng to China, effectively driving England out of the trade market. The other reason for focusing on the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries is that an important work on ginseng, John H. Appleby's 'Ginseng and the Royal Society' (1983), focuses on the same

period.⁴ Being one of the very few historical accounts of ginseng in early modern England, Appleby's paper is of particular significance, although not without its limitations. As the paper's historical focus is set after the establishment of the Royal Society, events that precede the 1660s are largely overlooked. In a similar vein, as it focuses on the discourse on ginseng conducted by the Fellows of the Royal Society (FRS), the object of discussion is confined to that particular academic circle.

The aim of this paper is to broaden the scope of Appleby's argument and to examine how ginseng was perceived and discussed in early modern England and colonial America. Its analysis incorporates the entire range of around two hundred printed materials relating to ginseng, published in England and America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: medical treatises, dispensatories, East India Company reports, botanical texts, geographical texts, topographies, almanacs, correspondences, travelogues, dictionaries, novels, poems, and advertisements. By utilising such diverse sources, this paper will focus on three defining features of the early modern discourse on ginseng—botanical interests and medical practices, international trade, and orientalism.

Botanical Interests and Medical Practices

It is generally accepted that ginseng was first introduced to Europe by the East India Company in the early seventeenth century. Despite a lack of detailed records, a close examination of the Company's correspondences reveals that by 1611, English and Dutch⁵ vessels were already competing to

⁴ John H. Appleby, 'Ginseng and the Royal Society', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 37, 1983, 121-145.

⁵ From early seventeenth century the Dutch smuggled and sold ginseng to the Japanese: William Mavor, *Historical Account of the Most Celebrated Voyages*,

procure ginseng. Interestingly, the central site of competition was the Cape of Good Hope, not someplace in Asia. In 1615, the natives of that port came and sold roots by the name of *ningine*⁶ and employees of the Company exchanged them for pieces of copper.⁷ The records show that the employees climbed nearby mountains in search of the root, but those they found were evidently smaller and less ripe than those brought by the natives.⁸

In 1617, Richard Cocks, the head of the British East India Company stationed in Hirado,⁹ wrote to headquarters, reporting that the ginseng of ‘Cape Bona Speranza’ was ‘worth nothing, [being] dried, [and] that no substance remained in it’. He continues: ‘Herewithal I send your Worships some of it, with another piece of that which is good and cometh out of Corea’. He also comments that ‘[ginseng] is [in Japan] worth the weight in silver,

Travels, and Discoveries from the time of Columbus to the present period, 25 vols, London, 1798-1802, XV, 191-192. The historical records of early missionary activities of the United Brethren write, ‘Ginseng, a plant brought first from Corea to Europe by way of Japan, grows wild in North America. In China and other countries in Asia, this root is deemed an universal remedy, in every kind of disorder ... Formerly it was very dear, and sold in Holland for twenty-five florins a pound’. George Henry Loskiel, *History of the Mission of the United Brethren among the Indians in North America*, trans, Christian Ignatius La Trobe, London, 1794, 117.

⁶ The term ‘ninjin’ comes from Japanese, written in Chinese as 人蔘, and in Japanese as にんじん. Ninjin, ningine, ninsi were all names used to refer to ginseng in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

⁷ ‘A root gathered in the Hottentot countries called kanna, is highly esteemed for its great virtues, that the Hottentot adore it ... Several authors have supposed this to be the ginseng of the Chinese’. John Payne, *Universal Geography Formed into a New and Entire System*, 2 vols, London, 1791, I, 368; Thomas Salmon, *Modern History: or, the Present State of All Nations*, 31 vols, London, 1725-1738, XXVII, 133.

⁸ In May, 1611, Pieter, who had instructed by the Company to seek it at the Cape on his outward voyage, met two Dutch ships ‘expressly come thither for the same purpose, being one of that first discovered the secret’. William Foster, ed., *Letters Received by the East India Company*, 6 vols, London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., 1896-1902, V, 18, footnote 2.

⁹ Hirado is a city located in Nagasaki Prefecture, Japan.

but very little to be had in any common man's hands, for that all is taken up for the Emperor by the King of Tushma, who only hath licence to trade with the Coreans; and all the tribute he payeth to the Emperor is of this root'. Cocks considered the roots of the Cape as identical to that of Korea, but inferior in quality due to the different process of collecting and curing.¹⁰

Further information on ginseng comes from Jesuit missionaries who traveled through East Asia. The Jesuits, as befitting their reputation as conduits of knowledge of Asian goods and technologies,¹¹ played a significant role in introducing ginseng into European culture. Alvarus de Semedo (1585-1658), a Portugese priest who lived in China for 20 years, was the first European to discuss Chinese ginseng in detail, speculating that it grew around the Liaodong region. He describes ginseng as a tonic medicine considered by the Chinese to possess remarkable powers of aiding physical recovery. Ginseng is also mentioned in Martinius Martini's book *Bellum Tartaricum*. These two books were subsequently bound together and translated in English in 1655, drawing many people's attention to ginseng.¹²

The first issue of the Royal Society's official bulletin, *The Philosophical Transactions* contains an article that treats the subject of ginseng by Melchisédech Thévenot (1620-1692), a French natural philosopher and public official who was also an employee of the Dutch East India Company. After discussing the distinctive features of Chinese medical science, which employed herbs, trees, and stones, Thévenot describes the powerful effects of ginseng as revered by the Chinese. A medicinal herb so valuable that a

¹⁰ Foster, *Letters Received by the East India Company*, V, 17-18.

¹¹ Berg, 'In Pursuit of Luxury', 116.

¹² Alvarus de Semedo, *History of the Great and Renowned Monarchy of China, to which is added a History of the late Invasion and Conquest of the Flourishing Kingdom of the Tartars, with an Exact Account of the Other Affairs of China*, trans, Thomas Henshaw, London, 1655. Athanase Kircher, a German Jesuit priest and mathematician, quotes Martini's *Atlas Sinesis* (1655) in his *La Chine Illustrée* (1670), in which he mentions ginseng in great detail.

single pound is exchanged for three pounds of silver, ginseng is described as ‘an extraordinary Restorative and Cordiall, recovering frequently with it agonising persons’.¹³ It was in this milieu that the natural philosophers in England would observe, experiment, and document on ginseng from the 1670s.¹⁴ Such pursuits of the Royal Society would be justified by claiming to introduce new knowledge for the common good, i.e. commerce, science and national wealth.¹⁵

Those particularly interested in ginseng brought the roots from China for their own collections and analyzed them. According to records from a Royal Society meeting on June 26th, 1679, Dr. Andrew Clench, along with vice-chairman Sir Christopher Wren, showed ginseng to the Society members, tasting the root and explaining its medical effects.¹⁶ It was during this era that botanical gardens, medical gardens and ‘cabinets of curiosities’ were spreading throughout Europe, many of which included ginseng among their primary collections.¹⁷ This phenomenon had to do with both the post-Renaissance intellectual milieu encouraging natural studies, and the fact that many plants brought from the New World to Europe were highly acclaimed for their medicinal value. The European elite of the seventeenth century, including monarchs, took an active interest in botanical and medical studies, which was occasioned by the increased likelihood of death due to frequent wars and plagues and supposedly ‘new’ epidemics caused

¹³ Melchisedec Thévenot, *Relations de divers voyages curieux*, Paris, 1655, *The Philosophical Transactions* 1, 1665-1666, 249.

¹⁴ See Appleby, ‘Ginseng and the Royal Society’, 122-126.

¹⁵ See Chakrabarti, *Materials and Medicine*, 27.

¹⁶ Thomas Birch, *History of the Royal Society*, 4 vols, London, 1756-1757, III, 490.

¹⁷ Anon, *A Companion to Every Place of Curiosity and Enjoyment in and about London and Westminster*, London, 1767, 93; William Curtis, *A Catalogue of the British, Medicinal, Culinary, and Agricultural Plants, Cultivated in the London Botanic Garden*, London, 1783, 44; Lady Charlotte Murray, *The British Garden. A Descriptive Catalogue of Hardy Plants, Indigenous, or Cultivated in the Climate of Great-Britain*, 2 vols, Bath, 1799, I, 241.

from interactions with the New World.¹⁸ As Londa Schiebinger and Claudia Swan argue, botany was ‘big science’ and also big business which was ‘enabled by and critical to Europe’s burgeoning trade and colonialism’.¹⁹ Here botanical collections and gardens served not only as the seedbed for metaphysical and intellectual quests but also as the laboratory to experiment various missions for the idea of improvement which dominated British imperialism.²⁰

Hans Sloane (1660-1753), the King’s physician and a prominent collector who established the Chelsea Physic Garden, was known for his interest in ginseng and had over thirteen samples of ginseng in his collection. The Japanese ginseng seeds and leaves in his collection, in particular, contributed to his unrivalled reputation as an expert on Japanese ginseng.²¹ Some of his samples were given to him as a gift from a high ranking official, and this fact testifies to the privileged status that ginseng enjoyed among the English elite. In the *Catalogue and Description of the Natural and Artificial Rarities belonging to the Royal Society* published in 1681, ginseng is mentioned as follows:

The Root Ninzin, corruptly called Ginseng, Taken from a parcel sent over by a Chinese Physician ... divided, as often the Mandrake and some other Roots, into two Legs. Of a sweeth Taste ... The Root is not known to grow (wild) anywhere, but in the Kingdom of Corea, In which place, as also in Tunquin, China, and Japan, it is much used, and relied upon in Epilepsy, Fevers, and other both Chronick and Acute

¹⁸ The establishment of the Paris Royal Medicinal Garden in 1630 can be understood in a similar context. See Eugene Flaumenhaft and Mrs. Eugene Flaumenhaft, ‘Asian Medicinal Plants in Seventeenth-Century French Literature’, *Economic Botany* 36, 1982, 147.

¹⁹ Schiebinger and Swan, ‘Introduction’, in *Colonial Botany*, 3.

²⁰ See Chakrabarti, *Materials and Medicine*, 127-131.

²¹ Nat. Hist. Museum (BM), Botany Library, Sir Hans Sloane-Vegetables and vegetable substances, nos. 887, 12140 and 12141.

Diseases ... On China, accounted so great a Cordial, that one pound hereof, is there sold for three pounds (weight) of silver.²²

In 1713, a document that would make the most significant contribution to ginseng's status in Europe was published: a report written by a French Jesuit priest Pierre Jartoux (1668-1720).²³ In 1709, ordered by the Kangxi Emperor, Jartoux was travelling around the Manchu region to draw a map of China when he came across ginseng near the region bordering Korea. Jartoux writes that while relatively unknown in Europe, ginseng is acclaimed by the most prominent doctors of China and that they make it 'an ingredient in almost all remedies'. Stressing the high value that the Chinese and Manchurians place on this root, Jartoux confesses that he himself had experienced its effects on a day that he was particularly exhausted, without so much the energy to mount a horse. He also tried tea made out of ginseng leaves and admitted to prefer it over other teas of the highest quality.²⁴

Jartoux's documents provide a highly detailed botanic description of ginseng. He writes that ginseng only grows in 39-47 degrees north latitude and 10-20 degrees east longitude, in the shades of a mountain, among thousands of different plants. His book includes an illustration accompanied by a detailed account on the five leaves, stem, and root of ginseng. Regarding ginseng's habitat, he criticises Martini's claim that ginseng grows on a mountain near Beijing.²⁵ Having never seen a ginseng flower himself, he adds that some people claim it to be small and white, while others claim that

²² Nehemiah Grew, *Musaeum Regalis Societatis*, London, 1681, 227.

²³ *Letters of the Missionary Jesuits*, Paris, 1713. Of Jartoux's report, *The Philosophical Transactions* of 1713 extracted only those passages discussing ginseng, testifying to the contemporary interest of English scientists in the plant.

²⁴ 'The Description of a Tartarian Plant, Call'd Gin-seng, with an Account of Its Virtues. In a Letter from Father Jartoux to the Procurator General of the Missions of India and China', *Philosophical Transactions* 28, 1713, 237-247.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 246.

it doesn't have flowers, and wonders which of the accounts is true.²⁶ The book further explains that the Manchurians only value the root of the plant, that they bury it in the ground for 10-15 days before brushing its surface and fumigating it. Providing a detailed account of its processing method, Jartoux emphasises that if European doctors could closely examine its ingredients, and prescribe the right amount, ginseng would bring enormous medical advantages.²⁷

Another French Jesuit priest, Père Du Halde (1674-1743) was known for compiling a massive amount of records written and sent by other priests. Despite the fact that he himself had never been to China, Du Halde was regarded a prominent Sinologist thanks to his publication. Owing to the popularity of his book *The General History of China*, the information and myths about ginseng described in the book also came to spread wide across Europe: Ginseng is a 'cure of all kinds of diseases which weaken and emaciate the body'; that its roots resemble the 'hand, feet, visage and eyes of man', or that it is full of the 'spirit of nature' and grows in the mountains of 'Corea, Leao tong, or Pe tsi'. The book notes that Japanese ginseng is being circulated in the market as well, but it was considered to be of inferior quality. According to Du Halde, ginseng was considered 'a great duty to the Emperor' and it was sold at six times the price of silver in Beijing. Those who didn't meet this duty were subjected to harsh penalties, including capital punishment. He mentions a method of identifying 'true ginseng', which has two people walk two kilometers on foot, each with a root in his mouth. The person that appears relatively composed, against the other who runs out of breath, is considered the person holding the true ginseng. The comprehensive information on ginseng provided in Du Halde's book runs the whole gamut of its cultivation process, taste, medical effect, curing method,

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 244.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 238, 246.

medical uses for 77 different diseases, and ways to mix it with other medical ingredients.²⁸ The influence of Du Halde's book was such as to trigger extensive searches of ginseng or similar plants across the world. In *The Natural History of Norway* (1755), the author makes a reference of a certain type of berry by the name of 'Norway teyobaer' as closely resembling Du Halde's description of ginseng.²⁹

Having once visited Canada, Jartoux writes that ginseng is highly selective in its habitat, and speculates that perhaps the only other place in the world that would produce ginseng might be Canada.³⁰ This statement is to be understood in light of the search, in eighteenth-century Europe, of cheap substitutes for expensive oriental luxuries: the colonies proved fertile ground for these pursuits.³¹ After reading Jartoux' article in the Jesuit newsletter, Joseph François Lafitau (1681-1746), another French priest, came to discover in 1716 a similar plant between Montreal and Ottawa, 45.31 degrees north latitude. In his *Mémoire* (1718) published in Paris, Lafitau writes that this may be the plant that Jartoux mentioned, and expresses his astonishment at how the name the Iroquois use to refer to the plant is etymologically similar to the Chinese name for ginseng.³² From this parallel, Lafitau became certain in his belief that either the two continents were in close cultural contact or that they were originally a single continent.

²⁸ Père [Jean-Baptiste] Du Halde, *The General History of China*, 4 vols, London, 1736, IV, 1-21.

²⁹ Erich Pontoppidan, *The Natural History of Norway*, London, 1755, 133.

³⁰ 'The Description of a Tartarian Plant, Call'd Gin-seng', 240.

³¹ Berg, 'In Pursuit of Luxury', 134.

³² J. F. Lafitau, *Mémoire ... concernant la précieuse plante du gin-seng de Tartare, découverte en Canada*, Paris, 1718. Peter Kalm also notes that 'The Iroquese, or Five (Six) Nations, call the Ginseng roots Garangtosing, which it is said signifies a child, the roots bearing a faint resemblance to it; but others are of opinion that they mean the thigh and leg by it, and the roots look pretty like it'. Peter Kalm, *Travels into North America*, trans, John Reinold Foster, 3 vols, London, 1770, III, 115-116.

If not that, then at least the Bering Sea would have served as a bridge connecting the two continents.³³

Based on the writings of Jartoux and Lafitau, English and French intellectuals would engage in a lively discussion on the botanic features of ginseng.³⁴ Peter Collinson (1694-1768), another prominent English naturalist alongside Sloane, exchanged correspondences on ginseng with an American planter and naturalist, William Byrd (1674-1744), which subsequently led to a vigorous discussion among the American literate class. The role that John Bartram (1699-1777), the first American botanist whose genius was acknowledged even by Carl von Linné (1707-1778), played in this is no less significant than that of Byrd. Not only did he discover ginseng in eastern Philadelphia,³⁵ he was appointed as the personal botanist of George III and was given the responsibility of actively corresponding with many English scholars and of sending objects of natural-historical value to

³³ Subsequent articles also considered the presence of ginseng in North American ginseng as evidence that the two continents were once connected. See Jean Bernard Bossu, *Travels through that Part of North America Formerly Called Louisiana*, trans. John Reinhold Forster, 2 vols, London, 1771, I, 386-391; Bernard Romans, *A Concise Natural History of East and West Florida*, 2 vols, New York, 1775, I, 53-54. 'The Tartars of Mantchou are incontestably the ancestors of the Peruvians ... A plant resembling the ginseng of the Chinese grows in Canada, therefore the Chinese carried it thither, even before they were masters of that part of Chinese Tartary where their ginseng is produced'. Voltaire, *The Works of M. Voltaire*, trans, Tobias Smollett, 25 vols, London, 1761-1765, XII, 91.

³⁴ An article titled 'A new genus of plants, call'd Araliastrum, of which the famous ninzin or ginseng of the Chinese, is a species. Communicated by Mr. Vaillant, Praedemonstrator at the Royal Garden at Paris, to the Learned Dr. Will. Sherrard, LL. D., late Consul at Smyrna, and by him to the Royal Society' was published in *The Philosophical Transactions* of 1717. Another important document is Père [Noël] Regnault, *Philosophical Conversations: or, a New System of Physics*, trans and ed, Thomas Daly, 3 vols, London, 1731, III, especially at 38. It synthesises various discussions by intellectuals on ginseng, including Lafitau's discovery.

³⁵ 'Extracts from the Gazette, 1738', in *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 41 vols, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959-2014, II, 209-217.

England. As T. H. Breen emphasises, England was America's mother country, and knowledge and materials were exchanged within the frame of this Atlantic Empire.³⁶

By 1740, Collinson was growing the ginseng he brought from Pennsylvania at Peckham Garden,³⁷ and in 1769, John Fothergill (1712-1780) also notes that the ginseng sent by Bartram are growing well in his famous Upton Garden at Essex.³⁸ Both Collinson and Fothergill were ultimately interested in the cultivation and trade of ginseng. Ginseng was also being cultivated in Oxford's and Edinburgh's botanical garden around this time, and it also appears in the list of 'currently blossoming plants' of London's Pleasure Garden in 1757.³⁹ On the other hand, Philip Miller (1691-1771), a botanist of Chelsea Garden, was not as fortunate as his colleagues when he tried to grow ginseng roots brought from Maryland. According to Miller, the plant successfully blossomed and its seeds were impeccable, but the plant wouldn't sprout. He waited for three years without disturbing the ground, but to no avail.⁴⁰

The trans-Atlantic correspondence would continue. While American naturalists claimed that their ginseng had equivalent medical effects to those of the Chinese, English scholars considered American ginseng to be inferior to the latter.⁴¹ Tobias Smollett(1721-1771), a doctor as well as novelist and critic, for instance, in his *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* has Mr. Bramble express his doubt as to whether the North American

³⁶ Breen, 'An Empire of Goods'.

³⁷ R. Hingston Fox, *Dr. John Fothergill and His Friends: Chapters in Eighteenth-century Life*, London: Macmillan and Co Ltd., 1919, 197.

³⁸ 'J. Fothergill to J. Bartram, 1 May 1769', in *Memorials of John Bartram and Humphrey Marshall*, ed, William Darlington, Philadelphia, 1849, 339.

³⁹ Philip Miller, *The Gardener's Kalendar*, 11th edn, London, 1757, 215.

⁴⁰ Anon, *Encyclopaedia; or, a Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and Miscellaneous Literature*, 18 vols, Philadelphia, 1798, VIII, 689-690.

⁴¹ John Payne, *Geographical Extracts, Forming a General View of Earth and Nature*, London, 1796, 336.

ginseng he procured from London would have the same effect as Chinese ginseng imported by the East India Company.⁴² M. Brunel records that Canadian ginseng is considered ‘not only inferior in point of colour, scent, and transparency, but equally deficient in its virtues and properties’.⁴³ An English doctor, William Lewis (c.1708-1781), however, compared American ginseng with that which he received from Nanjing, and claimed that there was little difference in their material quality, except that the Chinese ginseng was ‘paler coloured’ in the outside and whiter in the inside. Concluding that the difference in effect comes from the preparation process, Lewis expresses his doubt as to how American ginseng that wasn't subjected to the same process could be accepted as equal in quality.⁴⁴ Thenceforth the curing methods of ginseng, particularly that of the Chinese, attracted large scholarly attention. As Maxine Berg points out, the global interconnections of trade offered opportunities to learn desires for new goods.⁴⁵ On 11 November 1773, a paper titled ‘The method of Preparing the Gin-seng Root in China’ was read at the Royal College of Physicians in London.⁴⁶ Although there were ongoing discussions on the processing methods of Chinese ginseng, it appears that the scholars weren’t able to draw a satisfactory solution. A rather pessimistic comment expresses that ‘we cannot preserve

⁴² Tobias Smollett, *Humphry Clinker* [1771], London: G. Routledge & Co, 1857, 31.

⁴³ M. Brunel, ‘A Memoir on the Chinese Trade’, in Abbé Alexis Rochon, *A Voyage to Madagascar and the East Indies*, trans, Joseph Trapp, London, 1793, 378.

⁴⁴ William Lewis, *An Experimental History of the Materia Medica*, 2 vols, Dublin, 1769, I, 393.

⁴⁵ Berg, ‘In Pursuit of Luxury’, 103.

⁴⁶ The title of the article is ‘The method of preparing the Gin-seng Root in China, Communicated by Dr. Heberden’. *Medical Transactions, published by the College of Physicians in London*, 3 vols, London, 1768-1775, III, 34-36. Also see Matthew Carey, ed., *The American Museum, or Repository of Ancient and Modern Fugitive Pieces*, 7 vols, Philadelphia, 1787-1790, II, 448; ‘J. Banks to H. Marshall, 5 April 1786’, in Darlington, *Memorials of Bartram and Marshal*, 559-560.

any root as [the Chinese] do Ginseng'.⁴⁷

Due to the constant discovery of new varieties, natural philosophers were at a loss as to how to categorise ginseng in botanical terms for quite some time. Even the renowned natural historian John Ray (1627-1705), provides a description of ginseng in his famous *Historia Plantarum* (1688) without any precise information of the plant.⁴⁸ After Lafitau's discovery of Canadian ginseng, English and French scientists often remarked that there were three varieties of Ginseng: first, Korean and Chinese; second, Japanese; and third, Canadian. In 1700 an eminent Canadian botanist, Michel Sarrazin (1659-1734), sent Canadian ginseng to the French Royal Garden, labeling it as *Araliastrum*, and classified it into three different varieties.⁴⁹ In 1753 Linné, after systematically describing Canadian ginseng, defined it as *Panax genus quinquefolius* of the *Araliaceae* family.⁵⁰ In an encyclopedia published in 1798, the *Panax Ginseng* was sub-classified into five different groups.

1. Quinquefolium. 2. Trifolium. 3. Fruticosum 4. Arborea 5. Spinosa.
- The first and second are natives of North America. The quinquefolium is generally believed to be the same with the Tartarian ginseng.⁵¹

⁴⁷ John Hill, *Valerian or, the Virtues of that Root in Nervous Disorders*, 2nd edn, London, 1758, 17.

⁴⁸ 'Cap. XX. Radix Ninzin Pisonis Mantis. Arom. Quibusdam Ginseng & Gensing', in John Ray, *Historia Plantarum*, 2nd edn., London, 1688, 1338.

⁴⁹ *The Philosophical Transactions* 30, 1720, 705-707. '1. Araliastrum Quinquefolii folio, majus, Nin—zin vocatum Dr. Sarrazin. Gin-seng. 2. Araliastrum Quinquefolii folio, minus. Dr. Sarrazin. 3. Araliastrum Fragraria folio, minus. D. Vaillant'.

⁵⁰ John Abercrombie, *The Propagation and Botanical Arrangements of Plants and Trees*, 2 vols, London, 1784, II, 456; J. Gordon, T. Dermer, and A. Thomson, *A Catalogue of Trees, Shrubs, Plants, Flower Roots, Seeds*, London, 1783, 68.

⁵¹ Anon, *Encyclopaedia*, VIII, 689, s. v. 'ginseng'.

In 1842, a Russian botanist, Carl Anton Meyer, classified five different variables of ginseng,⁵² labeling the real ginseng (Korea ginseng) as the ‘Panax ginseng C. A. Meyer’. With Meyer, the long debate on ginseng’s taxonomy would come to a close.

Another botanical debate during this period was the distinction between ‘ginseng’ and ‘ninzin’. While many documents treated the two as identical, there were also efforts to distinguish them. One of the main figures who were especially interested in this matter was John Hill (1714-1775), English botanist and author of many scientific works. In his *History of the Materia Medica* (1751), Hill claims that ginseng grows in shady mountains, 39-47 degrees latitude, in America and Korea as well as Manchuria. Arguing that the ‘Ginseng of Corea’ is bigger but hollower, he claims that the reason Korean ginseng is inferior in quality is because it is actually a different root called Ninzin.⁵³ In his chapter devoted to Ninzin, Hill identifies it as an umbelliferous plant and writes that the Chinese or Japanese ‘attribute to it all the virtues of the ginseng, but they acknowledge that it possesses them in a less degree’.⁵⁴

There are other documents that attempt to further elaborate on the difference between the two: ‘Ninsi, or Ninzin is a larger Root, oblong, whitish on the outside and yellowish within, less firm than the Ginseng, and less bitter in the Taste’.⁵⁵ Another document that analyzes the difference in ingredients remarks that despite the fact that ‘Ninzin or Nindsin has been commonly supposed a name synonymous to ginseng’, recent research

⁵² According to Meyer, *Panax quinquefoliate* grows in North America, *Panax trifoliate* in North America and Canada, and ‘real ginseng’ in the middle of Heilong River, east to the island of Sakhalin and Japan, and south to the southern parts of Korea, and the Shanxhi and Hebei provinces in China.

⁵³ John Hill, *History of the Materia Medica*, London, 1751, 590. In another document, Hill writes that ginseng and ninzin were often used in fraud. Hill, *The Vegetable System*, 26 vols, London, 1759, V, 25.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 593.

⁵⁵ James Millar, *A New Course of Chemistry*, London, 1754, 89.

reveals that they are in fact different plants cured in a similar way. Indicating that Ninzin has a ‘weaker virtue’, the author is confident that this is also the case with American Ninzin.⁵⁶ The effort to distinguish the two was especially active in the pharmaceutical field, most likely because it was a highly sensitive issue to those who prescribed and sold ginseng. It appears that the confusion between Ninzin and Ginseng was prompted by ‘the interest of the seller’.⁵⁷ The comment that Ninzin was provided to the pharmacists at a ‘much smaller price than Ginseng’⁵⁸ supports this speculation.

How frequently was ginseng used in the medical field in England during this period? A pamphlet anonymously published in 1680 records over ten successful medical cases that were treated by ginseng.⁵⁹ Its author, a doctor living in Hull, Yorkshire, proudly remarks that his success was based on a bundle of ginseng he had received as a gift. He describes how his patient Mr. Andrew Marvell, a famous poet and critic, was previously suffering from a ‘long hectick feaver, with an ulcer of the lungs’ and how this ‘perfect skeleton, a mere bag of bones’ came to regain weight and successfully recover from his illness when he drank a mix of ginseng tincture with red cow’s milk every day.⁶⁰ The pamphlet ends with a comment from the famous natural philosopher Robert Boyle (1627-1691): ‘Mr. Boyle once told me, he thought it [ginseng] was a medicine sent from heaven, to save the lives of thousands of men, women and children’.⁶¹

Samuel Stearns (1741-1810), an American doctor who practiced in Massachusetts, often prescribed ginseng for the treatment of ‘coughs and

⁵⁶ Lewis, *Experimental History of the Materia Medica*, I, 393.

⁵⁷ Hill, *History of the Materia Medica*, 590.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Anon[William Simpson], *Some Observations Made upon the Root called Nean, or Ninsing, Imported from the East-Indies*, London, 1680.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

other disorders of the longs' testifying to its effectiveness. He recommends the taking of 'a drachm, in slices or powder, [boiled] in a gill of water, and sweetened with sugar, [drinking it] as soon as it is cool enough' every morning and night.⁶² In fact, many pharmacopoeias or dispensatories recommend the intake of ginseng.⁶³ A case in point:

Ginseng, P. E.

Panax Quinquifolium. Linn. Ginseng: a small plant growing in Tartary, China, and North America

Part Used: the root

Sens. Prop: Mucilaginous, with sweetness, bitterishness, and some aromatic warmth

Med. Virt: Tonic, obtunding

M. Exhib: Power, Infusion, Extract.⁶⁴

There is also published evidence of an advertising pamphlet on a medicine made out of ginseng. It shows 'Dr. Anthony's Irish Pills' as a patent medicine made with ginseng ingredients which was thought highly effective for stomach disorders.⁶⁵ Another pharmacopoeia recommends infusing ginseng three times when preparing it for medicine.⁶⁶ Meanwhile there

⁶² Samuel Stearns, *The American Oracle*, London, 1791, 584.

⁶³ H. Boerhaave, *Boerhaave's Treatise of the Materia Medica*, London, 1739, 41; John Nott, *A Posologic Companion to the London Pharmacopoeia*, London, 1794, 41-42; Royal College of the Physicians of London, *The New Pharmacopoeia of the Royal College of Physicians of London*, trans, Thomas Healde, 7th edn, London, 1796, 29; Richard Brookes, *The General Dispensatory*, 3rd edn, London, 1773, 42; William Buchan, *Domestic Medicine*, 15th edn, Dublin, 1797, xxxvi; John Elliot, *The Medical Pocket-book*, 3rd edn, London, 1791, 12, 78, 91; *The London Practice of Physic*, London, 1769, 84, 127; Robert James, *Pharmacopoeia Universalis: or, A New Universal English Dispensatory*, 3rd edn, London, 1764, 164.

⁶⁴ John Aikin, *A Manual of Materia Medica*, Yarmouth, 1785, 80.

⁶⁵ Michael Devlin, *Pillula salutaris; Or, the justly celebrated Dr. Anthony's Irish pills*, London, 1790, 1.

⁶⁶ Pierre Pomet, *Pomet's General History of Drugs*, 4th edn, 2 vols, London, 1748, II, 195.

appear some records of unsuccessful instances of treatment with ginseng. A patient with genital ulcer, for instance, was prescribed with herbal medicine made out of hemlock and ginseng, but his medical conditions worsened after the treatment.⁶⁷ There are also reports of ginseng being ineffectual for patients with venereal infection.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, these cases invariably testify to the fact that ginseng was used for medical purposes during this period. The usage of ginseng also appears outside the immediate scope of medical discourse. Smollett's picaresque novel *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* includes a passage in which ginseng is prescribed as medicine. In this episode, a patient in distress takes a 'tincture of ginseng' prescribed by the doctor and claims that he 'found it exceedingly grateful to the stomach'.⁶⁹

Nevertheless, the range of usage or the frequency of application is difficult to determine. This is especially so considering the fact that ginseng was often used without official prescription. For instance, Byrd once wrote that he would chew on ginseng roots to 'help bear the fatigue', when he was on the task of surveying land to solve an old territorial dispute between Virginia and North Carolina. However, even for Byrd, the ginseng expert, this plant was not so easy to come by. He complains that while ginseng 'cheers the heart even of a man that has a bad wife', it grows 'sparingly as truth and public spirit'.⁷⁰ It demonstrates that even medical practitioners themselves did not have ready access to ginseng. At one point, ginseng's medical use was highly restricted due to its low supply. Lewis, in his *The New Dispensatory*, expresses his hope that although China had banned the

⁶⁷ Franz Swediauer, *Practical Observations on the More Obstinate and Inveterate Venereal Complaints*, London, 1784, 98-99.

⁶⁸ George Wallis, *Annual Oration, delivered March 8th, 1790, before the Medical Society*, London, 1790, 53-54.

⁶⁹ Smollett, *Humphry Clinker*, 123.

⁷⁰ John Spencer Bassett, ed, *The Writings of Colonel William Byrd of Westover in Virginia*, New York: Doubleday, Page & Co, 1901, 211.

export of ginseng due to its immense value, the discovery of ginseng in North America would yield a more stable supply.⁷¹ In a similar vein, there are records of ginseng not being easily prescribed because of its price. William Cullen (1710-1790), David Hume's physician and a key figure in the Scottish Enlightenment, explicitly states that while ginseng 'has now for many years been well known in our shops, the great price put upon it by them, would ever have engaged our attention to it as a medicine'.⁷² *The Edinburgh New Dispensatory* writes under the entry of ginseng that 'among us it has been very rarely made use of due to its 'great price'.⁷³

The wild fluctuations in the price of ginseng also invited many complaints. In *Humphrey Clinker*, a character complains that in the span of six months, a store changed its price for ginseng 'from sixteenth guineas for two ounce to five shillings per pound'.⁷⁴ The medical account below shows another problem pertaining to the prescription and circulation of ginseng:

Hence apothecaries are necessitated to sell plants which they have had by them many years, and which have lost all their vertues ... the root of ginseng, tho' a great restorative, being so very costly, is seldom prescribed; and when it is, it generally has lost its properties thro' age. For which reason we ought to contrive methods of cultivating it ourselves ... But we would not be understood as if in all cases we prefer the cultivated plants to the wild ones.⁷⁵

Meanwhile, there existed two common precautions regarding ginseng prescription. One is that its overdose may lead to critical consequences,

⁷¹ Lewis, *The New Dispensatory*, Dublin, 1782, 146.

⁷² William Cullen, *A Treatise of the Materia Medica*, 2 vols, Edinburgh, 1789, II, 161.

⁷³ Lewis, *The Edinburgh New Dispensatory*, Edinburgh, 1789, 194.

⁷⁴ Smollett, *Humphrey Clinker*, 31.

⁷⁵ Benjamin Stillingfleet, trans and ed, *Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Natural History, Husbandry, and Physick*, London, 1759, 179.

despite its beneficial medical effects. This is a recurring warning, traceable even to a 1617 correspondence of an East India Company employee presiding in Japan.⁷⁶ A further comment states that ‘The rich confine themselves to take a small dose of it every morning, not heavier than a grain of corn’.⁷⁷ The other advice is not to prescribe ginseng to young or sanguineous people.⁷⁸ This advice is in tandem with the common knowledge that ginseng increases body temperature and has optimal effect on old people of feeble health.

International Trade

Another discourse pertinent to the discussion of ginseng appears in the area of international trade. Especially with the discovery of ginseng in North America, a dramatic increase of discourse on ginseng’s international exportation can be witnessed. Those who first recognised the commercial potential of exporting American ginseng to China were the French fur traders. Records show that from an early stage, they often used ginseng roots to treat diseases such as asthma or stomach disorder for themselves, and often took it to enhance fertility.⁷⁹ Dutch traders, also realising the potential profit of exporting ginseng to the East, joined the rush and mobilised Indians to search the mountains of Canada and America.

The aforementioned botanists Bartram and Fothergill also began their search for viable ways to commercialise ginseng. Collinson, who was in close

⁷⁶ William Foster, *Letters Received by the East India Company*, V, 17-18.

⁷⁷ Abbé Rochon, *A Voyage to Madagascar and the East Indies*, 379.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*; Hill, *History of the Materia Medica*, 591; Temple Henry Croker et al., *The Complete Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, 3 vols, London, 1765-1766, II, s. v. ‘foeniculum’, and ‘ginseng’.

⁷⁹ Kalm, *Travels into North America*, III, 116.

contact with both, not only had the ambition to cultivate ginseng on English soil, but used his commercial background and international connections to sell American ginseng in the Chinese market. In 1739, Collinson succeeded in shipping ginseng to China, and requested Bartram to prepare the products for the next shipment. For Collinson, American and Chinese ginseng were similar enough to ensure a successful trade. Nevertheless, he entreated Bartram to keep secret the fact that the ginseng sent to China were originally from America, promising in return to yield all his profits from that particular trade.⁸⁰

Bartram continued to send his ginseng to Collinson in 1743-1744, and Collinson was able to make a huge profit by selling them in China. It appears that the Chinese ginseng dealers were willing to purchase American ginseng at unreasonably high prices in spite of its inferior quality. This was most likely because it was still cheap when compared to Chinese ginseng. It was well known, even to the Europeans themselves, that the quality of the American ginseng was not as good as its Chinese counterpart. Robert Dodsley, cataloguing the collections of the British Museum in 1762, commented that 'The Chinese do not esteem that which grows in America, valuing only their own'.⁸¹ In 1753, *The Gentlemans' Magazine* reports that while it is good news that the North American colonies of England are producing ginseng, it must be 'collected [at] a proper season and cured [in] the Chinese manner' in order to yield more profit in the future.⁸²

In 1747, a large quantity of wild ginseng was discovered in Stonebridge, Massachusetts, which subsequently led to a ginseng rush across America,

⁸⁰ 'P. Collinson to J. Bartram, 1 February 1738-39'; 'P. Collinson to J. Bartram, 24 February 1738-39', in Darlington, ed, *Memorials of Bartram and Marshall*, 125-127.

⁸¹ Robert Dodsley, *The General Contents of the British Museum*, London, 1762, 156.

⁸² *The Gentleman's Magazine* 23, 1753, 209.

which was comparable to the nineteenth-century Gold Rush to the West. American geographical writings, travelogues, almanacs, and even textbooks would report, in the fashion of newspapers publishing a scoop, that ginseng had been discovered in states including Massachusetts, Virginia, Connecticut, Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Vermont, South Carolina, and Georgia. Regions where ginseng was discovered were busy promoting it as a local specialty or a typical export item.⁸³ The ginseng rush eventually spread to the west of the Appalachians, and Americans complained that the process brought about the moral hazard of American Indians who collected the roots. Some workers refused to attend church; others used the money they earned from ginseng to indulge in delinquent activities.⁸⁴

By the 1780s, English merchant ships that chose a sea route passing through the American West Coast opened up new opportunities to collect and export ginseng from the North-West regions of America, including Alaska.⁸⁵ One observer remarks: ‘The ginseng of this part of America is far

⁸³ Peter Whitney, *The History of the County of Worcester, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts*, Worcester, Mass, 1793, 98; Sir Charles Whitworth, *State of the Trade of Great Britain in Its Imports and Exports, Progressively from the year 1697*, London, 1776, lii; Anon, *American Husbandry*, 2 vols, London, 1775, I, 256; II, 230; J. F. D. Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America*, 2 vols, Dublin, 1784, I, 190; Anon, *Geography for Youth*, London, 1782, 183-184; William Burke, *An Account of the European Settlements in America*, 2 vols, London, 1757, II, 204; Andrew Burnaby, *Travels through the Middle Settlements in North-America*, 2nd edn, London, 1775, 21; Anon, *Fleets Pocket Almanack for the Year of our Lord 1790*, Boston, 1789, 20-21; Jedidah Morse, *Geography Made Easy, Being an Abridgement of the American Geography*, 2nd edn, Boston, 1790, 87; Carey, *The American Museum*, VII, 15, 126-128, 295, 301; Benjamin Trumbull, *A Complete History of Connecticut from 1630 till 1713*, 2 vols, Hartford, 1797, I, 25.

⁸⁴ A. W. Schorger, ‘Ginseng: A Pioneer Resource’, *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Science, Art and Letters* 57, 1969, 67.

⁸⁵ John Adams, *Modern Voyages*, 2 vols, London, 1790, II, 164. Also, at that time, ‘Certain Merchants, residing in the East Indies, communicated to Sir John Macpherson, the Governor-General of India, a Plan of opening a Trade

preferable to that of the Eastern side, and approaches nearer to that of China'.⁸⁶ However, as this new wave of enthusiasm led to reckless exploitation, there was increasing criticism concerning the extinction of this plant. In many regions, it was already impossible to find ginseng roots anymore. Canada in the mid-eighteenth century shows one such example:

During my stay in Canada, all the merchants at Quebec and Montreal, received orders from their correspondents in France to send over a quantity of Ginseng, there being an uncommon demand for it this summer. The roots were accordingly collected in Canada with all possible diligence; the Indians especially travelled about the country in order to collect as much as they could together, and to sell it to the merchants at Montreal. The Indians in the neighborhood of this town were likewise so much taken up with this business, that the French farmers were not able during that time to hire a single Indian, as they commonly do, to help them in the harvest. Many people feared lest by continuing for several successive years, to collect these plants without leaving one or two in each place to propagate their species, there would soon be very few of them left; which I think is very likely to happen, for by all accounts they formerly grew in abundance round Montreal, but at present there is not a single plant of it to be found, so effectually have they been rooted out. This obliged the Indians this summer to go far within the English boundaries to collect these roots.⁸⁷

Many American regions were facing a similar problem. At Joseph Banks' request from England, Humphrey Marshall of Pennsylvania travelled west to Chester County in 1786 to obtain one hundred pounds of ginseng for

with the North-West Coast of America, for the Purpose of supplying the Chinese Market with Furs and Ginseng'. See Anon, *A Narrative of the Negotiations Occasioned by the Dispute between England and Spain*, London, 1791, 24.

⁸⁶ John Meares, *Voyages Made in the Years 1788 and 1789, from China to the North West Coast of America*, London, 1790, lxxi.

⁸⁷ Kalm, *Travels into North America*, III, 116-117.

Banks. Upon arriving, however, he discovered that ‘the Ginseng [was] either dug up for sale, or rooted up by the hogs so much’. Marshall predicted that ginseng would soon go extinct in the vicinity of human residence.⁸⁸

A decline in prices was another problem triggered by the mass-collection and exportation of ginseng. Around 1752, French Canadian merchants were selling about 100,000 dollars’ worth of ginseng to China. This ginseng was collected from Canada, sent to France, and from there again shipped to China, bringing in a huge fortune for the merchants. However, the oversupply of ginseng subsequently led to a dramatic fall in revenue to around 6,500 dollars by 1754.⁸⁹ The oversupply of American ginseng, which flooded the Asian market via Guangzhou (since 1757 the only port where Sino-European trade could take place, as declared by Emperor Qianlong), was such that henceforth American ginseng would be called ‘Guangdong Ginseng’. In 1764, Collinson criticised the excessive frenzy of ginseng exportation, pointing out that the greed of Americans and Canadians was significantly damaging the ginseng trade with China. Calling this ‘a rage after Ginseng’, Collinson argues ‘I call it so, because all the mountains and uncultivated country was ransacked for this valuable root, and imported hither by hogshead full, and the market in China glutted with this root’. Further, he claims that ginseng ‘had been artfully concealed and prepared by the cunning Chinese, and sold under secrecy to the great people for true Chinese ginseng, but this great plenty soon discovered the cheat, and then it sank to nothing’. He even refers to the Americans who brought about this crisis as ‘great losers’.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ ‘H. Marshall to J. Banks, 14 November 1786’, in Darlington, *Memorials of Bartram and Marshall*, 561.

⁸⁹ Kalm, *Travels into North America*, III, 116.

⁹⁰ L. W. Dillwyn, ed., *Hortus Collinsonianus: An Account of the Plants Cultivated by the Late Peter Collinson*, Swansea, 1843, 37.

The ginseng trade entered a new stage after the independence of America. America not only designated ginseng as one of its specialties, but also secured new trade bases for its exports: ‘The Cape of Good Hope, the Isle of France, Surat, Batavia and Canton, have lately opened their ports to receive the articles of beef, pork, bacon, butter, cheese, timber, ginseng, and several others’.⁹¹ The British East India Company suffered the most critical blow from America’s ginseng exports. Prior to America’s independence, ginseng was one of the main trade items of the Company,⁹² being privately traded and securing huge profits for the Company. However, once the under-supplied ginseng started to be mass-exported from America to China, it resulted in ‘the Chinese [pretending] to have discovered that [the North American Ginseng had] no virtue, and it [has] actually become unsaleable’. This eventually led to America ceding the upper-hand of the ginseng trade to China.⁹³ The following is a record from the East India Company:

It is generally admitted that no Market varies more than that of China, the Prejudices of the Natives operating most powerfully upon their conduct. Of this, the Article of Ginseng is a striking Proof. The Moment it was offered in Quantities larger than usual, and by Persons from whom the Chinese were not accustomed to purchase, it became unsaleable; and your Committee are confident that American Ginseng will never be consumed in China as heretofore.⁹⁴

Now ginseng would take an unexpected turn in the American society, in relation to tea. As Breen rightly points out, tea was the central item

⁹¹ Jedidah Morse, *The American Geography*, London, 1792, 182.

⁹² Godfrey McCalman, *A Natural, Commercial and Medicinal Treatise on Tea*, Glasgow, 1787, 67; Anon, *Tables of the Net Duties Payable, and Drawbacks allowed on Certain Goods*, London, 1787, C2.

⁹³ East India Company, *First, Second, and Third Reports of the Select Committee, appointed by the Court of Directors of the East India Company*, London, 1793, 32.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

testifying to the burgeoning of consumer society, and by 1766 in Philadelphia even the poor people consumed Bohea tea.⁹⁵ The most important product in the Sino-American trade was tea, and due to the fact that the British East India Company supplied most of the products, there was a huge trade imbalance between the countries. In 1790, an additional 416,652 pounds' worth of tea would enter America from other European merchant ships as well.⁹⁶ In order to redress this imbalance and to establish direct trade with China, the Americans seized upon the possibility of exporting ginseng.⁹⁷ Mathew Carey (1760-1839), a Philadelphia economist, perhaps most explicitly and bluntly addresses the circumstances that America was facing when he criticises English merchants for monopolising the East Asian trade. He argues that 'the inhabitants of America must have tea',⁹⁸ and in order to continue to enjoy the 'elegant luxury' the Americans should utilise another product to meet the cost for it, and the other product was to be 'otherwise useless produce of its mountains and forests'.⁹⁹ At last, in 1784, the first American merchant ship *Empress of China* successfully lowered its anchor in Guangdong, China. Exporting American ginseng, leather, and fur, and bringing in diverse Chinese products in exchange, the *Empress of China* made a profit of 1,500%.

This gave rise to other discussions that America might be able to discover or cultivate its own tea plants in a similar way it discovered ginseng. This

⁹⁵ Breen, 'Empire of Goods', 488.

⁹⁶ Tench Coxe, *A Brief Examination of Lord Sheffield's Observations on the Commerce of the United States of America*, Philadelphia, 1791, 5, 60.

⁹⁷ Dave Wang, 'Chinese Civilization and the United States: Tea, Ginseng, Porcelain Ware and Silk in Colonial America', *Virginia Review of Asian Studies* 13, 2011, 114.

⁹⁸ Carey, *American Museum*, VII, 126 .

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, VII, 126-27. Carey argues that in 1786, '1800 picul of [American] ginseng was sold in China, and one half of which was carried in American vessels. Notwithstanding this increased quantity, the sales were no materially affected; and it is probable there will always be a sufficient demand for this article, to make it equally valuable'.

was a speculation not entirely without reason. If ginseng was not known to grow anywhere else but near Beijing, China and America, and if among all regions on the same latitude, America was closest to China in its soil and ecology, then the argument was that by the same token America might be able to discover native tea on its soil.¹⁰⁰

Meanwhile, the argument was raised that Chinese tea was detrimental to health, and that it should be substituted with ginseng tea produced in America. The contention was based on many grounds: an analogy between ginseng tea and regular tea, as both were drinks made by processing leaves and roots of plants; an economic perspective that it would be possible to produce more tea with less ginseng leaves; and a nationalistic perspective of preferring native to imported tea.¹⁰¹ There were also claims that Chinese themselves preferred ginseng tea over ‘Chinese’ tea, that they were fully aware of the detrimental effects of their own ‘enervating and slow-poisoning teas’ but still attached ‘various fine titles’ to sell them to foreign markets.¹⁰²

A similar discourse was witnessed in contemporary England as well.¹⁰³ Ginseng tea was widely advocated primarily from the recognition that Chinese tea was causing trade deficits. *The Essay on the Virtue and Properties of the Ginseng Tea* written by two doctors, Count Belchilgen and A. Cope, in 1786, most strongly represents this sentiment. Controversial in both sides of the Atlantic, this essay claims that Bohea tea causes fatal body disorders such as ‘spasms, palsies, and scrophulous diseases’ and that ginseng tea is the most effective cure for all physical weaknesses. It urges the wide use of ginseng tea for sailors on long voyage, as it is the optimal preventive measure for scurvy.¹⁰⁴ For Belchilgen and Cope, ginseng tea was

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 177; *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 1, 1771, v.

¹⁰¹ Jonathan Carver, *The New Universal Traveller*, London, 1779, 4-5.

¹⁰² James Adair, *The History of the American Indians*, London, 1775, 361.

¹⁰³ Carver, *New Universal Traveller*, 4-5.

¹⁰⁴ Count Belchilgen and J. A. Cope, *An Essay on the Virtues and Properties of*

‘one of those beneficent dispensations of Providence’.¹⁰⁵ In a similar vein, an American doctor claimed to have used ginseng as a posterior application for patients who ruined their health from Chinese tea. He reports that many other doctors have applied the same treatment and met success.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, Belchilgen and Cope not only claim that the everyday use of tea is detrimental to health, but also provide statistics that the per capita consumption of tea and sugar amounts to half of that of bread.¹⁰⁷ They also list many other cases that describe how those who replaced tea with ginseng tea were able to recover health and return to their daily routines:

Miss Harriot Moulton, daughter of Edward Moulton, Esq. has been constantly afflicted with laughing and crying hysterics, rising in the throat, continual pain in her stomach, violent pain in her head, bad sight, and great tenesmus. Is now happily restored to health by the sole use of the Ginseng Tea.

Witnesses

Edward Moulton, Esq.

Wm, Henry Winsor, Esq.

Ed. Norton Hayes, Esq.

Geo. Henry Duncore, Esq.¹⁰⁸

Orientalism

The most prominent feature of the discourse on ginseng is without doubt the comments on the high regard in which ginseng was held in China. In *A New Vocabulary of the Most Difficult Words in the English Language* (1784),

the Ginseng Tea, London, 1786, 8.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁰⁶ Adair, *History of the American Indians*, 362.

¹⁰⁷ Belchilgen and Cope, *Virtues and Properties of Ginseng Tea*, 20.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 26.

ginseng is defined as ‘a famous plant greatly esteemed in China’.¹⁰⁹ This was a rhetoric commonly appropriated by Americans well after the discovery of native ginseng, both in its marketing of ginseng as a national specialty and its export to other countries. It appeared either as a form of respect paid to the country of origin or as a way of appropriating China’s authority and its long history and tradition of ginseng cultivation. As Maxine Berg argues, ‘the exotic provenance of imported foods made them into luxuries in Europe’,¹¹⁰ and as such the aura of the mighty kingdom in Asia could be conveniently used for commercial interests. At the same time, however, it may have been a conscious strategy to associate and bind ginseng to the realm of the *other*, the exotic ‘China’.

China, or East Asia as a whole, represented an arena that operated with principles and criteria different from those of Europe. That is why American and English discourses on ginseng are grounded on the binary spatial categories of China and Europe. While ginseng is ‘looked upon by them [the Chinese] as a panacea’, ‘in Europe it is esteemed to be no better than most other mild aromatic substances’.¹¹¹ Even those records testifying to the successful effects of ginseng are often accompanied by the comment that their effect was ‘milder’ than was acclaimed by the Chinese.¹¹² Some narratives are much harsher in their tone: ‘[Ginseng] may be of use, but the weakness of its sensible qualities gives it no foundation for a place in

¹⁰⁹ William Fry, *A New Vocabulary of the Most Difficult Words in the English Language*, London, 1784, 102.

¹¹⁰ Berg, ‘In Pursuit of Luxury’, 99.

¹¹¹ Donald Monro, *A Treatise on Medical and Pharmaceutical Chymistry, and the Materia Medica*, 3 vols, London, 1788, III. 119. See also Samuel Williams, *The Natural and Civil History of Vermont*, Walpole, N. H., 1794, 70. ‘But we do not find them [ginseng] extraordinary, as the Chinese have represented’.

¹¹² William Woodville, *Medical Botany*, 3 vols, London, 1790-1793, II, 272-73; John Quincy, *Pharmacopoeia Officinalis or a Complete English Dispensatory*, 15th edn, London, 1782, 61.

medicine'.¹¹³ Also, it was frequently claimed that ginseng had a 'cordial and restorative' effect rather than being the 'universal medicine' that the Chinese regard as.¹¹⁴ Despite the fact that Du Halde's *The General History of China*, a text that had a wide readership in Europe, listed 77 different diseases that ginseng could cure, European physicians of this era limited its effects to the treatment of mainly three diseases: convulsions, vertigoes, and nervous complaints.¹¹⁵ These evaluations add weight to Roberta Bivins's claim that increasing contacts in the eighteenth century between East and West, rather than eroding walls and boundaries between their different medical systems, actually reinforced them.¹¹⁶

However, there is an exceptional medical case that is often discussed with ginseng in detail: sexual dysfunction. Byrd, for instance, mentions that both Charles II and Louis XIV saw the effects of ginseng offered by Siamese ambassadors, but argues that he didn't consider ginseng an aphrodisiac, speculating that it may have lost many of its effects during long voyages.¹¹⁷ Hill's *History of the Materia Medica* mentions that '[Ginseng] is famous in the East for giving strength and spirit to persons who have disabled themselves by too free a use of women'.¹¹⁸ In this context, it appears that ginseng's aphrodisiacal effect was widely known and contested in Europe. William Hanbury's horticultural text, for instance, warns that 'under a pretense of contributing to health and long life, many [people], it is to be

¹¹³ William Cullen, *Lectures on the Materia Medica*, London, 1772, 276. See also Richard Pearson, *A practical Synopsis of the Materia Alimentaria, and Materia Medica*, 2 vols, London, 1797-1802, II, 125.

¹¹⁴ Richard Brookes, *The General Dispensatory*, 3rd edn. London, 1773, 42; Munro, *Treatise on Medical and Pharmaceutical Chymistry*, III. 119; Cullen, *Treatise of the Materia Medica*, II. 161.

¹¹⁵ Croker et al., *Complete Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, II, s. v. 'foeniculum', and 'ginseng'.

¹¹⁶ Bivins, *Alternative Medicine?*, 31.

¹¹⁷ Louis B. Wright, ed., *The Prose Works of William Byrd*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1966, 292.

¹¹⁸ Hill, *History of the Materia Medica*, 591.

feared, use it for bad purposes'.¹¹⁹

Other documents often deny ginseng's aphrodisiacal quality in a more somber tone. Cullen claims that the myth that ginseng possesses 'the engaging virtue of a powerful incentive and aphrodisiac' is based on a 'slender, and indeed absolutely false foundation'.¹²⁰ He offers a case in which a middle-aged gentleman he knew took ginseng every day for the past few years but 'never found his venereal faculties in the least improved by it'.¹²¹ Such arguments by Europeans that the 'panacea' turned out to be little more than a 'mere common root' further led to a cultural evaluation of the Chinese as being largely unreliable in their words or judgment.¹²² The Scottish historian William Guthrie, for instance, writes on the meager medical effects of ginseng in Europe and claims that 'this instance alone ought to teach us with what caution the former accounts of China are to be read'.¹²³ Here, as Bivins argues, 'the observer's gaze was no longer primarily acquisitive', but became 'critical, assessing, and increasingly jaundiced';¹²⁴ there was growing skepticism toward many oriental remedies.

The more interesting fact is that such assessments went beyond the academic arena of botany or medical science, frequently recurring as common metaphors. 'Chinese ginseng' often referred to a greatly-valued object or luxury,¹²⁵ or cases in which such objects allowed one to gain sudden

¹¹⁹ William Hanbury, *A Complete Body of Planting and Gardening*, 2 vols, London, 1770-1771, I, 690.

¹²⁰ Cullen, *Lectures on the Materia Medica*, 276.

¹²¹ Cullen, *Treatise of the Materia Medica*, II, 161.

¹²² Thomas Bankes, Edward Warren Blake, and Alexander Cook, *A New royal Authentic and Complete System of Universal Geography Antient and Modern*, London, 1790, 221; Timothy Dwight, *The Triumph of Infidelity: A Poem*, London, 1791, 13; Hanbury, *Complete Body of Planting and Gardening*, I, 858.

¹²³ William Guthrie, *A New System of Modern Geography*, 5th edn, London, 1792, 691.

¹²⁴ Bivins, *Alternative Medicine?*, 32.

¹²⁵ Anon, *Siris in the Shades: a Dialogue concerning Tar Water*, London, 1744, 17; Anon, *A Description of England and Wales*, 10 vols, London, 1769-70, II,

wealth.¹²⁶ Ginseng was also often mentioned as an essential ingredient in distinctively Oriental dishes such as 'sea swallow nest soup', with emphasis placed on its exotic qualities.¹²⁷ At the same time, ginseng was used to refer to illusory medical effects attributed to foreign products,¹²⁸ or products whose values were over-inflated.¹²⁹ One record notes 'panacea' as one of the many 'pompous names' ascribed to ginseng, listing others such as 'the spirituous simple', 'the pure spirit of the earth', or 'the plant that dispenses immortality'.¹³⁰ Such discourses are based on a condescending attitude towards Chinese people as 'bluffers' or as having lost an objective rationality due to their imagined supremacy.

Collinson, for instance, made a highly derogatory remark of the Chinese, writing that 'Fanciful as the Chinese are, their prejudices on this head were not so firmly rooted as those of John Bull'.¹³¹ This comment is ironic in light of the fact that Collinson himself was making a huge profit by passing off American ginseng as Chinese. *The Philosophical Transactions*, in introducing an article on Chinese ginseng, sneeringly adds: 'As for their Chemists, of which they go beyond ours, [promises] not only to make Gold,

117.

¹²⁶ Baron Patrick Murray Elibank, *Thoughts on Money, Circulation, and Paper Currency*, Edinburgh, 1758, 28; Anon[Oliver Goldsmith], *The Citizen of the World; or Letters from a Chinese Philosopher, residing in London, to his Friends in the East*, 2 vols, London, 1762, I, 96-97.

¹²⁷ Anon, *The Natural History of Birds*, 3 vols, London, 1791, III, 204-205; Thomas Pennant, *Outlines of the Globe*, 4 vols, London, 1798-1800, III, 66; Anon., *The Wonders of Nature and Art*. 3 vols, Reading, 1750, III, 68.

¹²⁸ James Anderson, *Recreations in Agriculture, Natural-history, Arts, and Miscellaneous Literature*, 6 vols, London, 1799-1802, VI, 143.

¹²⁹ John Huxham, *Observations on the Air, and Epidemic Diseases*, 2 vols, London, 1759-67, II, 241.

¹³⁰ Thomas Salmon, *Modern History: or, the Present State of All Nations*, 3 vols, London, 1739, I, 20.

¹³¹ 'P. Collinson to J. Bartram, 1 February 1738-39', in Darlington, *Memorials of Bartram and Marshall*, 125.

but to give Immortality'.¹³² In a similar tone, Charles Johnstone (c.1719-1800), an Irish novelist, sarcastically remarks that it was due to ginseng's power to grant immortality that 'the empire of China [flourished] above fifty thousand years more than the age of the world'.¹³³ Such derogatory rhetoric was also accompanied by a discourse that ginseng's high status in East Asia had to do with the relatively underdeveloped state of medical science there.¹³⁴ Despite the fact that he himself had traveled around Europe in search for medicinal waters, Smollett, for instance, writes that the Japanese's dependence on 'medicinal waters and certain roots-ginseng' comes from their lack of 'skill in physic and surgery'.¹³⁵

Ironically, the Chinese are often portrayed as 'expert cheats' despite their lack of medical knowledge. For instance, there are many accounts of how the Chinese ginseng-diggers would cut off the top knots (or tubera) of their old roots, as their marketability drops once the knot dries up. The list goes on: the Chinese would fill in wormholes with yellow powder and they often put 'pieces of lead' inside roots to increase their weight.¹³⁶ Moreover, the often quoted description by Jartoux's description of ginseng collecting process, in all its vividness, underlines the enormity of 'oriental despotism' in the scene. In 1709, the Chinese emperor ordered the Tartars to collect ginseng. Each had to offer two ounces to the Emperor, and the surplus would be weighed and rewarded with silver.

¹³² *Philosophical Transactions* 1, 249

¹³³ Charles Johnstone, *The History of John Juniper, Esq.*, 3 vols, London, 1781, II, 167.

¹³⁴ William Julius Mickle, *The Lusiad; or, the Discovery of India*, Oxford, 1776, 469.

¹³⁵ Smollett, *The Present State of All Nations*, 8 vols, London, 1768-1769, VIII, 15.

¹³⁶ Abbé Rochon, *A Voyage to Madagascar and the East Indies*, 378; Hill, *History of the Materia Medica*, 589; Hill, *The Vegetable System*, V, 25; Stearns, *American Oracle*, 45; Croker et al., *The Complete Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, II, s. v. 'foeniculum', and 'ginseng'.

It is computed, that by this means the Emperor would get this year about twenty thousand Chinese pounds of it, which would not cost him above one fourth part of its value ... This army of herbarists observed the following order. After they had divided a certain tract of land among their several companies, each company, to the number of an hundred, spreads itself out in a straight line to a certain fixt place, every ten of them keeping at a distance from the rest ... These poor people suffer a great deal in this expedition. They carry with them neither Tents nor beds, every one being sufficiently loaded with his provision, which is only millet parched in an oven, upon which he must subsist all the time of his journey ... In this manner these ten thousand men passed six months of the year.¹³⁷

In 1783, ginseng would come to catch the English public's attention, due to an unfortunate incident. In March 1783, the ship *Imperial East Indiaman* heading from Liverpool *en route* to China sunk near Dublin Bay in the Irish Sea. This ship was loaded with a large amount of silver and lead. Charles Spalding (1738-1783), an Edinburgh engineer and diver, had signed a contract with the ship owner and arrived at the scene to recover the ship's cargo. On June 2nd, Spalding and his nephew dived down to 42 feet only to be discovered dead in the diving bell. Their funeral was delayed because the corpses were hardly decomposing, uncannily retaining their original appearance. Other divers who had approached the ship reported of a foul odour coming from the ship and speculated that it was the stench coming from rotten ginseng, which were also loaded on the ship. This was reported in the newspapers,¹³⁸ occasioning a lively discussion among the public as well as scientists; the matter was controversial enough to be discussed twice in Royal Society meetings as well. Most people traced the smell to either the

¹³⁷ *Philosophical Transactions* 28, 1713, 241-242.

¹³⁸ *The Weekly Entertainer; or Agreeable and Instructive Repository*, 2 vols, Sherborne, 1783, I, 592.

putrefied bodies of the sailors or the 'highly noxious fluvia' coming from the rotten ginseng. Despite an autopsy, no one was able to verify the exact cause of their death. Nevertheless, the putrid air coming from the rotten ginseng was considered the most likely cause, and until now the 'mysterious herb' bears this unfortunate stigma.¹³⁹

Conclusion

In *Materials and Medicine*, Pratik Chakrabarti argues that within imperialism local knowledge and experience in medicine were eventually either absorbed into Western modern medicine or marginalised.¹⁴⁰ Within this two-trajectory model, ginseng in the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries stands in a curious position, because it was neither completely marginalised nor absorbed into modern Western medicine. Despite the common perception of ginseng as a plant exclusive to East Asia, it was widely discussed in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England and America and actually used for medical purposes. Whereas other materials were severed from their indigenous origins when they were accepted within Western medicine,¹⁴¹ ginseng was labelled with and maintained its Asian provenance. This root which was 'so highly valued in China' often occupied the center of discussions in scientific circles. It was an object of botanic interest and also a valuable commodity in international trade, and a national specialty considered as a solution for trade deficits. Ginseng was also a theme and a metaphor that contributed to the construction of myths

¹³⁹ John Bevan, 'Paper: Charles Spalding's Diving Bells', Presented to a meeting of the Historical Diving Society at Norwegian Underwater Institute, Bergen, 5 November 2005.

¹⁴⁰ Chakrabarti, *Materials and Medicine*, 207.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 209.

and prejudices against East Asia.

The discourse on ginseng in the early modern period manifests a tension between its perception as a 'mysterious panacea of the East' and a 'puzzling medicine' that couldn't quite be subsumed or categorised under the modern medical science of the West. Such a tension betrays a sense of Western inferiority concerning Chinese techniques such as curing, the economic context in which merchants were highly occupied with the export of ginseng and the possibilities for its domestic consumption being relatively unexplored as a consequence, and the difficulty of applying its own strictly standardised model of medical science to its medicinal use. Such limitations often wore the façade of imperialism in which the West would tout its own products as superior, while attributing cultural inferiority to Oriental products which it paradoxically claimed to be identical to its own. Such is the ironic fate of not only ginseng, but many of the non-western products which encountered the West.

This ostracising gaze that creates the dualism of 'I' and the 'Other' extends beyond the immediate object to those who use it and the spatiality in which it is located. Such distinctions have a persistence that is incorrigible even with the aid of 'objective experiments'. This is the reason that we should shift the focus of research on ginseng from its pharmacological properties and embrace perspectives from the humanities and social sciences, especially in a global-historical context: we should aim to provide a corrective to such prejudicial perceptions of 'the Other'.

Asian Immigrants and the British Empire: Canada's 'White Women's Labour Laws' in their Imperial Context

Michihisa Hosokawa*

Abstract

In the 1910s, Canadian provinces enacted or tried to enact 'white women's labour laws', preventing Asian male immigrants from employing 'white' women. The laws originally targeted Asian male immigrants at large, but some of them were amended to aim at Chinese male immigrants only and the others were withdrawn. This article examines imperial factors in the amendment and withdrawal, by analyzing the reactions against the laws of the governments concerned, including Japan and Britain. Specifically, it describes how Canada and its provinces had to accommodate its motherland's special relations with Japan, known as the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, along with anti-Asian feelings in western Canada, and how the Japanese government tackled these laws during the critical period when Canada's adherence to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation of 1911 was being negotiated. It also sheds light on the treatment of East Indian immigrants by both the Canadian and British governments, which might have inflamed the anti-British movement in India. Furthermore, it shows that the British government still had keen interests in domestic affairs in Canada long after it was given semi-autonomous status as a 'dominion' in the Confederation of 1867.

Keywords: 'white women's labour laws', immigration, Canada, Japan, India, Britain

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Introduction

In March 1912, the Province of Saskatchewan enacted *An Act to Prevent the Employment of Female Labour in Certain Capacities*. Section One of it stipulates “[n]o person shall employ in any capacity any white woman or girl or permit any white woman or girl to reside or lodge in or to work in or, save as a *bona fide* customer in a public apartment thereof only, to frequent any restaurant, laundry or other place of business or amusement owned, kept or managed by any Japanese, Chinaman or other Oriental person”.¹ But in the following January, the law was amended by striking out the words ‘Japanese’ and ‘or other Oriental person’, to regulate only Chinese immigrants.² Following this, the neighbouring prairie province, Manitoba also passed *An Act to Prevent the Employment of Female Labor[sic] in Certain Capacities* targeting “Japanese, Chinaman or other Oriental person”³ in February 1913, but it failed to obtain royal assent from the Lieutenant-Governor and was finally repealed in 1940.⁴ In 1913 the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario also tried to enact a much more radical bill, *An Act to Prohibit the Employment of Women by Orientals*, to prevent Asian immigrants from employing any women, but it was abandoned at the second reading.⁵ In the following year this province enacted an act prohibiting Chinese immigrants from hiring ‘white’ women,⁶ and this was in effect until 1947.⁷ On the Pacific side, the Province of British Columbia legislated an act, which was similar to Saskatchewan’s, to

¹ *Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1912*, c. 17, s. 1.

² *Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1912-13*, c. 18, s. 1. This Act, with repeating changes, was in effect until 1969. *Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1969*, c. 24, s. 73.

³ *Statutes of Manitoba, 1913*, c. 19, s. 1.

⁴ *Statutes of Manitoba, 1940*, c. 35.

⁵ Foreign Ministry of Japan, March 11, 1913, *Nihon Gaiko Monjo [Documents on Japanese Diplomacy]* 1913, vol. 1, 110-111.

⁶ *Statutes of Ontario, 1914-15*, c. 40.

⁷ *Statutes of Ontario, 1947*, c. 102.

prevent the employment of ‘white’ women by Chinese immigrants in 1919,⁸ which was finally repealed in 1968.⁹

These ‘white women’s labour laws’ are regarded as “the first overt racial recognition of ‘whiteness’ in Canadian law”¹⁰ in that they specified the protection of ‘white’ women. Besides, around the 1910s Asian immigrants to Canada were mostly male, so it was clear that these laws tried to regulate the boundaries of gender as well as race. They were also unique in the North American context. As Constance Backhouse observes about Saskatchewan’s law, while “many American states promulgated statutes prohibiting intermarriage between white women and Asian males, there appear to have been no laws quite like this one”.¹¹

These laws reflected the growing tendencies of demarcating the boundaries of a ‘white’ Pacific. From the mid-nineteenth century, Asians began to emigrate to booming white settlements, such as the United States,

⁸ *British Columbia Statutes, 1919*, c. 63.

⁹ *British Columbia Statutes, 1968*, c. 53. As for the changes of all the ‘white women’s labour laws’ in Canada, see Michihisa Hosokawa, *‘Hakujin’ shihai no Kanada-shi: Imin, Senjumin, Yuseigaku [History of ‘White’ supremacy in Canada: Immigrants, Aboriginals, and Eugenics]*, Tokyo, 2012, 159, Table 8.

¹⁰ Constance Backhouse, *Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1900-1950*, Toronto, 1999, 136.

¹¹ Backhouse, *Colour-Coded*, p 137. According to her, the only exception was the bill that was introduced to the Oregon legislature to prohibit the employment of white females in restaurants or grills owned or operated by Orientals, but it was defeated. *Ibid.*, 137, n. 12 (extensive note). But there existed another case in the State of Washington. In January 1913, the Japanese Consul at Seattle reported as follows. “Senator Scott from Adams Franklin Walla Walla Counties introduced on Monday a bill prohibiting employment of white women by Chinese and Japanese. He asserts practice is quite prevalent in the eastern part of state for Mongolians to work immigrant white women in their field as well as employment throughout state of white girls as cashiers in restaurants etc. which he asserts has a very demoralizing effect on society as a whole”. Japanese Consul at Seattle (Takahashi) to Foreign Minister (Katsura), January 28, 1913, *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1913, vol. 3, 531.

Canada, and Australia, but they were not treated equal with 'white' citizens. There existed a solid hierarchical order in terms of race and ethnicity.¹²

Canada's 'white labour laws' have so far only been examined by the legal historians, Backhouse and James W. St. G. Walker, who both carefully analyze the legal cases to show the ambiguity and contingency of 'whiteness' and how the human rights of Asian immigrants were trampled upon.¹³ Their works, however, have not been enough to situate the laws in the imperial context, although Backhouse briefly touches upon the negotiations between Saskatchewan and Japan. Furthermore, the historiography on pre-WWII Japanese immigrants to Canada have focused upon British

¹² There are many works on anti-Asian racism in the Pacific Rim. To name but a few, Marilyn Lake & Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge or Racial Equality*, Cambridge, 2008; Kornel S. Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the US-Canadian Borderlands*, Berkley, 2012, Andrea Geiger, *Subverting Exclusion: Transpacific Encounters with Race, Caste, and Borders, 1885-1928*, New Haven, 2015. The following work includes native Indians as well, to describe the racial encounters between European colonists, Chinese immigrants, aboriginal peoples, and mixed-race populations in British Columbia. Renisa Mawani, *Colonial Proximities: Crossracial Encounters and Juridical Truths in British Columbia, 1871-1921*, Vancouver, 2009.

¹³ Backhouse, *Colour-Coded*; do., "White Female Help and Chinese-Canadian Employers: Race, Class, Gender and Law in the Case of Yee Clun, 1924", *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, vol. 26, no. 3, 1994; do., "The White Women's Labor Laws: Anti-Chinese Racism in Early Twentieth Century Canada", *Law and History Review*, vol. 14, no.2, 1996; do., "Legal Discrimination against the Chinese in Canada", in David Dyzenhaus & Mayo Moran (eds.), *Calling Power to Account: Law, Reparations, and the Chinese Canadian Head Tax Case*, Toronto, 2005; James W. St. G. Walker, "Race," Rights and the Law in the Supreme Court of Canada: *Historical Studies*, Waterloo, 1997; do., "A Case for Morality: The Quong Wing Files", in Franca Iacovetta & Wendy Mitchinson (eds.), *On the Case: Explorations in Social History*, Toronto, 1998. Recent study on the Chinese community in prairie provinces describes regional differences between Saskatchewan and Manitoba by pointing out the former's 'white women's labour law', but overlooks the fact that the latter also tried to enact a very similar law. Alison R. Marshall, *Cultivating Connections: The Making of Chinese Prairie Canada*, Vancouver, 2014, 13.

Columbia where their overwhelming majority resided,¹⁴ almost neglecting other areas. But it should be noted that ‘white women’s labour laws’ targeting Japanese immigrants were first planned to be enacted in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, not in British Columbia, which was beyond expectations for the Japanese government as well as Japanese immigrants. Although their concerns disappeared soon, because these two prairie provinces amended or withdrew the enactments shortly, but, with hindsight, they might have worsened the relations between Japan and Canada, even with the British Empire at large. And in the case of India too, such laws might have outraged East Indians to deteriorate their relations with Canada and Britain.

This article attempts to explain external or imperial factors in the amendment and withdrawal of ‘white women’s labour laws’ in order to clarify why the laws that originally targeted Asian male immigrants were amended to aim at Chinese male immigrants only. To be more specific, it tries to elucidate why the Province of Saskatchewan dropped Japanese immigrants from the target list and the Province of Manitoba stopped the enactment, showing that Canada, a semi-autonomous dominion in the British Empire,¹⁵ had to accommodate its motherland’s friendly relations with Japan, known as the Anglo-Japanese Alliance along with anti-Asian feelings in western Canada.¹⁶ Furthermore, it also sheds light on the

¹⁴ Population of Japanese immigrants in 1911 was as follows. Total: 9,021, British Columbia: 8,587 (95.2% of the total Japanese immigrants), Saskatchewan: 57, Manitoba: 5. Ottawa, *Canada Year Book 1911*.

¹⁵ During the period here examined, Canada was not given treaty-making power. It was not until 1923 when Canada first signed the Halibut Treaty, the Canada-U.S. agreement concerning fishing rights in the northern Pacific, independently from Britain, which paved the way to the dominions’ autonomous status in the British Empire, embodied in the Balfour Declaration of 1926 and the Statute of Westminster of 1931.

¹⁶ As for the Anglo-Japanese relations in this period, see Ian Nish & Yoichi Kibata (eds.), *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations: vol.1: The Political-Diplomatic Dimension, 1600-1930*, London, 2000.

treatment of East Indians by both Canadian and British governments, which might have inflamed the anti-British movement in the British Empire.

Historical background: Canada-Japan relation in the early 20th century

Since the arrival of Manzo Nagano from Nagasaki in 1877, who was the first officially documented Japanese immigrant to Canada, an increasing number of Japanese poured into British Columbia, building their ethnic community, like the Chinese immigrants, who had been entering Canada since 1850s. Both Japanese and Chinese were unwelcomed by the British Columbians, who asked for their exclusion from Canada.¹⁷

In the case of Chinese immigrants, the Canadian government decided to levy a head tax on them-----fifty dollars in 1885 (effective as of 1886), one hundred dollars in 1900, five hundred dollars in 1903-----, and finally passed the Chinese Exclusion Act to prohibit their entry to Canada in 1923.¹⁸ The Japanese, on the other hand, were not given such harsh treatment. The

¹⁷ Major works on the history of Canada-Japan (including China) relation in this period are as follows. Ken Adachi, *The Enemy that never was: A History of the Japanese Canadians*, Montreal & Kingston, 1976; Patricia Roy, *A White Man's Province : British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914*, Vancouver, 1989; W. Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia*, 3rd ed., Montreal & Kingston, 2002; John Price, *Orienting Canada: Race, Empire, and the Transpacific*, Vancouver, 2011.

¹⁸ *An Act to restrict and regulate Chinese immigration into Canada (The Chinese Immigration Act, 1885)*, *Statutes of Canada, 1885*, c. 71; *An Act respecting and restricting Chinese Immigration (The Chinese Immigration Act, 1900)*, *Statutes of Canada, 1900*, c. 32; *An Act respecting and restricting Chinese immigration (The Chinese Immigration Act, 1903)*, *Statutes of Canada, 1903*, c. 8; *An Act respecting Chinese Immigration (The Chinese Immigration Act, 1923)*, *Statutes of Canada, 1923*, c. 38.

legislature of the Province of British Columbia tried to exclude Japanese, but their attempts were reserved by the lieutenant governor, or disallowed by the federal government, who feared those might deteriorate the motherland's good relations with Japan, embodied in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, first signed in 1902 and renewed twice, in 1905 and 1911.

In the early twentieth century, major issues between Canada and Japan were the treatment of Japanese immigration to Canada and the development of their commercial relationship, both of which were linked in the negotiation of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation.¹⁹

The treaty was first signed between Britain and Japan in 1894, but Canada did not adhere to it for the following two reasons. Firstly, its most-favoured-nation clause was to bring Canada into Britain's most-favoured-nation parties, Germany and Belgium, which would be against Canadian protective policy. Secondly, the clause to ensure the freedom of movement and dwelling of the people of all the membership nations would apply to Japanese immigrants, which would be unacceptable for most Canadians.

¹⁹ The following article is the only study on the Canada-Japan relation over Canada's adhesion to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. Masako Iino, "Nichiei tsusho joyaku to Kanada no Nihon-jin imin mondai [The Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation: The Japanese Problem in Canada]", *Kokusai-Seiji* [International Relations] (Japan Association of International Relations), vol. 79, May 1985, 1-18. It was not until the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation of 1911 that Japan was able to claim full tariff autonomy. As James Hoare points out, the 1911 treaty has been generally neglected compared to that of 1894, suggesting "[w]hile 1894 was clearly the more important, 1911 should not be ignored, overshadowed as it was by the Japanese annexation of Korea-----where it also had consequences." James Hoare, "The Era of Unequal Treaties, 1858-99" in Nish & Kibata (eds.), *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations: vol.1: The Political-Diplomatic Dimension, 1600-1930*, 123, 129.

As trade began expanding between Canada and Japan, both governments realized the relevance of the treaty. Canada successfully persuaded Britain to repeal the Anglo-German and Anglo-Belgian treaties, while Japan voluntarily limited Japanese immigration to Canada, which had become 'tacit' understanding between Canada and Japan since the early 1900s. As a result, Canada joined the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation in 1906.

In spite of this 'tacit' understanding, the number of Japanese immigrants jumped from 442 in 1906 to 2,753 in 1907, which stirred up anti-Japanese feelings among British Columbians. In September 1907, the Vancouver riot occurred, in which Japanese and Chinese communities in downtown Vancouver were attacked by those who sympathized with nativist appeals of organizations, such as the Asiatic Exclusion League.

Following the riot, the Canadian government sent Rodolphe Lemieux, Minister of Labour, to Japan to solve the Japanese immigration problem. Initially, Canada wanted to secede from the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. But, fearing it might deglorify the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Sir Claude Maxwell MacDonald,²⁰ British Ambassador to Japan, asked Lemieux to continue the treaty. Lemieux agreed, and he pressed Japan to specify quantitative restrictions on Japanese immigration to Canada. Then in 1908, Lemieux and Japanese Foreign Minister Tadasu Hayashi²¹ signed the 'gentlemen's agreement' in

²⁰ He served as British Minister to Japan from January 1901, and became the first Ambassador in December 1905 with the establishment of an embassy in Tokyo. He held the office until March 1913.

²¹ He was appointed as Minister at the Japanese Legation in London in July 1900, and signed the second Anglo-Japanese Alliance in August 1905. With its promotion to embassy in December, he became the first Ambassador to Britain. He served as Foreign Minister (May to August 1906, September 1906 to July 1908, and, concurrently appointed, August to October 1911) and Minister of Communications (August 1911 to December 1912). Diplomatic

which Japan consented to restrict the number of passports it issued to male labourers and domestic servants to 400 annually.²²

Although the Hayashi-Lemieux Agreement functioned to decrease Japanese immigration to Canada, it did not soften anti-Japanese feeling effectively. In 1910, Canada revised its immigration policy to provide for greater selectivity in the admission process. Section 38 of *An Act respecting Immigration (The Immigration Act, 1910)* stipulates the prohibition of the entry of “immigrants belonging to any race deemed unsuited to the climate or requirements of Canada, or of immigrants of any specified class, occupation or character”.²³ This law was not aimed squarely at Japanese immigrants, but they were surely a part of the ‘undesirable’ immigrants. To make matters worse for Canada-Japan relations, the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce did not contribute to the growth of trade over the Pacific [Table 1].

In April 1911 when Britain and Japan renewed the treaty,²⁴ the so-called ‘Komura Treaty’ named after Duke Jutarō Komura who played a major role in the negotiation,²⁵ Canada was unwilling to adhere to it.²⁶ Japan, on the other hand, wanted Canada to join in the renewed treaty because it regarded Canada as an important trade partner and an essential component

Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (ed.), *Nihon Gaiko-shi Jiten [Dictionary of Japanese Diplomatic History]*, new edition, 1992, 842.

²² Ward, *White Canada Forever*, pp. 53-76; Adachi, *The Enemy that never was*, pp. 63-85; Masako Iino, “Japan’s Reaction to the Vancouver Riot of 1907”, *BC Studies*, vol. 60, 1983, 28-47.

²³ *Statutes of Canada, 1910*, c. 27.

²⁴ As for the full text of the treaty (*Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between the Empire of Japan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland*), see *Nihon Gaiko Monjo, Tsusho Joyaku kankei [Respecting Commercial Treaties]*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1079-1099.

²⁵ Its predecessor, the treaty of 1894, is known as the ‘Mutsu Treaty’ in Japan, named after then Foreign Minister Duke Munemitsu Mutsu.

²⁶ Newfoundland joined the treaty in December, 1911. British Ambassador to Japan (Claude M. MacDonald) to Foreign Minister Uchida, December 30, 1911, in *Ibid.*, 1119.

of the British Empire. The Japanese government worried the immigration problem would influence the treaty negotiation. Then in March 1912, Japanese officials began considering approaching not only the Canadian government but also the British government on this matter.²⁷ Eventually Canada decided to adhere to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation in April 1913, but it was during this very critical period when another serious problem arose in the Canadian Prairies, not from British Columbia: the enactment of ‘white women’s labour laws’.

<Table 1>					
Trade between Japan and Canada, 1900-19					
[thousand yen]					
Year	Japan to Canada	Canada to Japan	Year	Japan to Canada	Canada to Japan
1900	2,950	316	1910	4,261	850
1901	3,276	181	1911	4,006	333
1902	3,485	517	1912	4,808	664
1903	2,923	499	1913	5,090	1,839
1904	3,211	837	1914	4,994	1,073
1905	3,240	782	1915	7,024	1,063
1906	3,958	1,002	1916	11,301	1,666
1907	3,863	1,217	1917	16,158	2,557
1908	3,130	1,119	1918	27,334	7,775
1909	3,855	1,083	1919	24,839	6,126

Source: Finance Ministry of Japan, *Dai-Nippon Gaikoku Boeki Nenpyo [Annual Return of the Foreign Trade of Japan]*, 1900-19.

²⁷ Foreign Minister Uchida to Nakamura, March 29, 1912, in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1912, vol. 1, 1.

Enactment of the law in Saskatchewan and its impact on Japanese government

The original Saskatchewan law of 1912, as mentioned above, targeted all the Asian male immigrants. In those days, unlike British Columbia there existed very few Japanese residents in the prairie province²⁸ and no serious incidents had occurred, so the enactment of the law shocked the Japanese government as well as Japanese immigrant communities in Canada.

Why did Saskatchewanians try to legislate? It is very difficult to determine, but the only possible cause can be found in the upsurge of Chinese in Saskatchewan. In 1901, four years before it joined the Canadian Confederation as province, only 41 Chinese lived there. But in 1911, they increased to 957-----23.3 times as many as in 1901. In contrast, British Columbia, which had the largest Chinese community in Canada, had a modest increase-----from 14,885 in 1901 to 19,568 in 1911-----only 1.3 times. The rapid increase of Chinese immigrants seemed to make them an obnoxious 'visible' minority-----easily associated with opium addicts, gambling dens, and so on-----to the eyes of Saskatchewanians.²⁹

It was from a letter of a Japanese resident of Moose Jaw, a city located in Southern Saskatchewan, named Nakane, who had been running a restaurant for seven years, that the Japanese government first learned about the enactment of the 'white women's labour law'. On April 9th, 1912, Mr. Nakane sent a letter to the Japanese Consul General at Ottawa, Mr.

²⁸ As shown in the footnote 14, in 1911, fifty-seven Japanese lived in Saskatchewan, comprising only 0.01% of the total population, while in British Columbia resided 8,587 Japanese making up 2.19% of the total.

²⁹ Population in 1901 and 1911 was as follows (total; Chinese). In 1901, British Columbia (178,657; 14,885), Alberta (73,022; 235), Saskatchewan (91,279; 41), Manitoba (255,211; 206). In 1911, British Columbia (392,480; 19,568), Alberta (374,663; 1,787), Saskatchewan (492,432; 957), Manitoba (461,394; 885). Ottawa, *Canada Year Book 1901; Canada Year Book 1911*.

Takashi Nakamura,³⁰ to ask to take immediate action against it. About a month before, on March 5th, ten days before the province's Legislative Assembly passed it, Mr. Nakane had submitted a petition to William Turgeon, Attorney General of Saskatchewan, to request the word 'Japanese' to be omitted from the bill. "[S]hould this Bill 'to prevent the employment of female labor in certain capacities', however, be passed and applied to the few of as (*sic*) Japanese, I feel it would be a great dishonor to our nation in general. So, since, we are trying to live as far as in our power without reproach in a foreign land for the honor and credit of our nation", he mentioned. Then he argued "if the principle of this Bill to prevent undesirable affairs, it would be extremely unjust to apply to all those who are carrying on honest and straight forward business merely on account of birth".³¹

On March 28th, Turgeon replied to Mr. Nakane, saying that "[i]t is certainly regrettable that any law of the Province should be found objectionable by any portion of the respectable citizens of the Province. However, general conditions some time require things to be done which cannot be agreeable to everybody. In the present case, this law was put through, in so far as at least as some of the people affected by it were concerned, not so much to remedy an existing state of affairs, but to prevent the occurrence of conditions which have arisen elsewhere".³²

This reply did not satisfy Mr. Nakane at all, who then decided to ask the Japanese government for help. In the letter to the Japanese Consul General,

³⁰ He served as Consul General at Ottawa from March 1909 to April 1913. In December 1916, he became Director of Trade and Commerce department. After retiring from the Foreign Ministry in May 1923, he was elected member of the House of Representatives twice, and was appointed Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs by Prime Minister Takaaki Kato in August 1924. *Nihon Gaiko-shi Jiten*, 665.

³¹ N. Nakane to the Attorney General (F. T. A. Turgeon), March 5, 1912, in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1912, vol. 1, 286-287.

³² Turgeon to Nakane, March 28, 1912, in *Ibid.*, 287-288.

he referred to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the difference between civilized Japanese and uncivilized Chinese, by pointing out “this bill was originally proposed to prevent inferior Chinese from using violence to force white women to do as told by prohibiting white women from frequenting a gambling den or opium den, but it would apply to all the Orientals regardless of profession, character and status, which would be trespass against the spirit of law of a civilized nation and be a show of contempt for Japan, an ally of Great Britain, and its subjects”.³³

On having received Nakane’s letter, Consul General Nakamura instructed Mr. Chonosuke Yada,³⁴ Consul at Vancouver, to investigate the situation in Saskatchewan. Mr. Nakamura also reported to Japanese Foreign Minister, Viscount Kosai (Yasuya) Uchida, by suggesting not to treat this law as an anti-Japanese problem. Although he admitted that it would be unfair that the law whose main purpose to crack down on prostitution might influence upright professions, but, anticipating that strong reaction against it would worsen the Japanese relationship with Canada, he hoped that friendly negotiations with the Saskatchewan government might lead to the amendment of the law.³⁵

³³ Nakane to Nakamura, April 9, 1912, in *Ibid.*, 285-286.

³⁴ Yada served as Consul at Vancouver from November 1907 until he was promoted to succeed Nakamura as Consul General at Ottawa in April 1913. Then he became Consul General at New York in September 1916 until he moved to Honolulu as Consul General in December 1919. *Nihon Gaiko-shi Jiten*, 1009.

³⁵ Nakamura to Viscount Uchida, April 12, 1912; Nakamura to Viscount Uchida, April 19, 1912 in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1912, vol. 1, 288-289. Uchida, who had helped Munemitsu Mutsu in the negotiations over the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation of 1894, became Ambassador at Washington D.C. in November 1909 and signed the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Commerce and Navigation in February 1911. Then in October he became Foreign Minister in Kinmochi Saionji’s second cabinet. From November 1921 to September 1923, he served as Foreign Minister for three ministries-----Takashi Hara, Korekiyo Takahashi, and Tomosaburo Kato-----consecutively. In July 1932, he was once

Having left Vancouver on May 6th, Mr. Yada visited Moose Jaw, Saskatoon and Regina. In the provincial capital, he met with several dignitaries including Turgeon and M. C. Wright, an organizer of the Liberal Association in the Province of Saskatchewan, from whom he enjoyed a good personal impression.³⁶

On May 28th, eight days after he returned to Vancouver, he proposed to Viscount Uchida that the Japanese government should engage in negotiations with the Canadian federal government, arguing that this matter should be treated as a Canada-Japan 'diplomatic' issue rather than as a Canadian provincial issue, although he added that he was willing to make contact with the Premier of Saskatchewan before the session of the legislative assembly began if Viscount Uchida would prefer the latter. On the same day, Mr. Yada also reported this matter to the Japanese Ambassador to London as well as the Consul General in Ottawa.³⁷

In reply, Uchida instructed Mr. Yada to negotiate with the Attorney General of Saskatchewan. "Among the issues relating to Canada, we must give the highest priority to the establishment of the [Anglo-Japanese] treaty of Commerce [and Navigation]. To this end, it is essential for us not to bring any other issues to the Canadian central [federal] government", he mentioned, adding "this does not mean we have any intention to belittle the problems concerning Japanese immigrants".³⁸ His instruction was based upon the department meeting held at the Deputy Foreign Minister's office in Tokyo about three weeks before, in which it was decided to ask Mr. Yada

again appointed Foreign Minister by Prime Minister Makoto Saito until he resigned by illness in September 1933. *Nihon Gaiko-shi Jiten*, 79-80.

³⁶ Report on the visit to Saskatchewan, May 28, 1912, in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1912, vol. 1, 289-295.

³⁷ Yada to Viscount Uchida, May 28, 1912, in *Ibid.*, 289.

³⁸ Viscount Uchida to Yada, July 22, 1912, in *Ibid.*, 295.

not to make a direct demand to the Canadian federal government, because such would harm the negotiations of the treaty.³⁹

As shown above, the Japanese officials had been discussing whether they should treat Saskatchewan's matter as a Canada-Japan 'diplomatic' issue or a Canadian provincial issue. Under the British North America Act which was equivalent to the Canadian Constitution at that time, each province could make laws respecting immigration to the province, but the federal government had the power to override provincial laws, if they infringed on federal laws.⁴⁰ So the Japanese government could negotiate with the Canadian federal government as well as the Province of Saskatchewan, although there were not official diplomatic relations between Japan and semi-autonomous Canada.⁴¹ The Japanese government chose the latter as the first option, because it keenly hoped Canada's adhesion to the treaty and feared that the Saskatchewan issue would be an obstacle in the treaty negotiation.

³⁹ On July 3rd, 1912, high-level officials at the Japanese Foreign Ministry held a meeting concerning Canadian adherence to the treaty and concluded that it would be essential to make use of the 'influence' of the British government as well as approach Ottawa (Canadian federal government). They also discussed the Saskatchewan's 'white women's labour law', and decided to ask the Consul at Vancouver not to make a direct demand to Ottawa, because it would harm the negotiation of the treaty. Mr. Nakamura, General Consul at Ottawa, attended the meeting. Confidential, July 3, 1912, in *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴⁰ Section 95 of the British North America Act stipulates, "In each province the Legislature may make laws in relation to ...immigration into the province; and it is hereby declared that the Parliament of Canada may from time to time make laws in relation to ...immigration into all or any of the provinces; and any law of the Legislature of a province relative to agriculture or to immigration shall have effect in and for the province as long and as far only as it is not repugnant to any Act of the Parliament of Canada. Canada, *The Constitution Acts 1867 to 1982*, 35.

⁴¹ It was in 1928 that an official diplomatic relationship between Canada and Japan was established. In the next year, Sir Herbert Marler was appointed as first Canadian Minister in Japan, and Prince Iemasa Tokugawa arrived at Ottawa to assume the Japanese Legation.

Amendment of the law in Saskatchewan

Following the instruction from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yada formally demanded the omission of the word 'Japanese' from the law to the Government of Saskatchewan. In his letter to Hon. A. Turgeon, dated September 4th, he pointed out the contradiction between the purpose of the law and its scope, which ultimately meant ill-treatment for Japanese immigrants. "[T]he enactment of this law aims at the suppression of immorality which is supposed to exist in doubtful restaurants or apium (*sic* opium) dens run by some Chinamen in your Province, but the scope of the Legislation is so sweeping and drastic that the threatened enforcement of said Act according to its direct language is a great affront morally and materially to the Japanese residents in your Province who are engaged in an honest business. An interpretation of the law as enacted would prevent a Japanese bank, wholesale house, factory or any other legitimate business from employing any white girls as stenographers, book-keepers or cashiers. Any offence you fear could be prosecuted criminally which is, needless to say, a grave injustice and discouragement of business development between Canada and Japan".⁴²

Mr. Yada then suggested that such unfair treatment of Japanese residents might eventually damage the commercial relations between Canada and Japan as well as the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. "To-day, Great Britain and Japan are bound to each other as allies, each taking upon itself vast responsibilities for the other in endeavouring to maintain the peace of the world as well promoting that freedom and justice to all people which is the certain outcome of modern civilization. Canada is now a great nation in a mighty Empire. The greatness of her prosperity is due in a great part to

⁴² Yada to Turgeon, September 4, 1912, in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1912, vol. 1, 297-298.

her loyalty to the mother-land.... The forwarding of her trade in all quarters of the globe (*sic*)(globe) is now advancing and other nations are watching her policy and enterprise. A large trade with Japan is at her door and my nation looks upon her with favour as the fairest of the daughters of Britain. Canada has sent her trade agents to Japan to consummate her aspirations and has subsidized steamers to improve that trade at vast expense. Features of progress in trade and good-will are abounding and in the wide spirit of friendship great development is promised. These thoughts and reflections are submitted to you and through you to the Government of your Province that you may consider the wrong and injustice which result from a policy towards Japan so widely at variance with the general policy of the Empire, and I trust the greatness of your endeavour to serve your Province may assist you to avoid any injustice to a people who stand at the right hand of the great Empire of which you are all so justly proud".⁴³

On October 23rd, Saskatchewan Attorney General Turgeon replied to Mr. Yada. In it he himself fully understood Japanese government's view, and he would make efforts to work upon the whole provincial government to take this matter into consideration.⁴⁴ A week later, Mr. Yada sent Hon. Turgeon a letter as follows: "I can not (*sic*) help appreciating the very cordial spirit pervading your whole letter. In view of the sweeping victory of the Liberal Party in the recent election in your Province, I entertain no doubt that the Act in question will be amended in the coming session of the Provincial Legislature so as to remove the objections made on behalf of the Japanese Government".⁴⁵

On the same day, October 20th, Mr. Yada reported to Viscount Uchida on Turgeon's reply, expressing the possibility of the amendment of the law in

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Turgeon to Yada, October 23, 1912, in *Ibid.*, 306.

⁴⁵ Yada to Turgeon, October 30, 1912, in *Ibid.*, 305-306.

the next legislature to be opened on November 14th with a clear majority of continued Liberal governing party, although he was still cautious by suggesting that the Japanese government should begin negotiation with the Canadian federal government, if such amendment had not been passed or if the amended law had not been sanctioned by the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan.⁴⁶ Regardless of the instruction from Foreign Minister Uchida not to make a direct demand to the Canadian federal government as mentioned earlier, Mr. Yada, as a ‘man on the spot’, suggested direct negotiation with Ottawa again and again.

But, on January 15th the next year, Mr. Yada received from Regina a telegram notifying him of the amendment of the law: “I have the honour to inclose herewith a copy of Bill No. 60 passed during the last Session of the Legislature and assented to January 11, 1913....”⁴⁷ Thus, *An Act to Prevent the Employment of Female Labour in Certain Capacities* was amended by striking out the words ‘Japanese’ and ‘or other Oriental person’. And this news was reported to the Japanese Foreign Minister, Duke Taro Katsura,⁴⁸ as well as the Japanese Ambassador to London and the Consul General in Ottawa.⁴⁹

What made the amendment possible? It can be said that the direct negotiation of the Japanese government with Saskatchewan, as described, proved effective. But, as will be discussed later, other factors were at work that involved Anglo-Japanese and other imperial relations.

⁴⁶ Yada to Viscount Uchida, October 30, 1912, in *Ibid.*, 306.

⁴⁷ Deputy Attorney General (T. A. Colclough) [on behalf of the Attorney General], January 15, 1913, in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1913, vol. 1, 108.

⁴⁸ Prime Minister Katsura served concurrently as Foreign Minister from December 21, 1912 until Takaaki Kato succeeded on January 29, 1913.

⁴⁹ Yada to Duke Katsura, January 20, 1913, in *Ibid.*, 107.

Manitoba and Ontario

Since what had happened in Saskatchewan, the Japanese government was apprehensive for its influence on other provinces, fearing it might drive anti-Japanese feelings eastward, although the main target of the ‘white women’s labour law’ was the swarm of Chinese immigrants, who were thought to be depriving jobs from white labourers.⁵⁰ Indeed the provinces of Manitoba and Ontario also began considering such laws. Let us take a look at these cases briefly.

The legislature of the province of Manitoba, another prairie province where only five Japanese immigrants lived⁵¹ discussed a ‘white women’s labor law’ during its February session. On obtaining the news, the Japanese Consul at Vancouver, Mr. Yada, telegraphed the Japanese Foreign Minister, Baron Nobuaki Makino,⁵² to report on the situation in Manitoba on February 8th, who then gave his instruction to Mr. Yada to make inquiry to the Manitoba government. But the law was passed on February 15th.⁵³

On February 26th, James Howden, Attorney General of Manitoba replied to Mr. Yada, saying “[t]he Act respecting the employment of female labour in certain capacities passed the Legislature without amendment, this Act comes into force upon proclamation. It has not yet been proclaimed”.⁵⁴ A month later, in reply to Mr. Yada’s demand of the amendment, Hon. Howden explained that the law had no intention of being obnoxious to Japanese people and also hinted at the possibility of a future revision of the law as

⁵⁰ e.g. Yada to Baron Makino, March 8, 1913 in *Ibid.*, 109-110. For union workers’ views on Asian immigrants, see David Goutour, *Guarding the Gates: The Canadian Labour Movement and Immigration*, Vancouver, 2007.

⁵¹ In 1911, the total population of the province was 461,394.

⁵² He served as Foreign Minister from February 1913 to April 1914.

⁵³ Yada to Baron Makino, March 8, 1913, in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1913, vol. 1, 109-110.

⁵⁴ Attorney General (J. H. Howden) to Yada, February 26, 1913, in *Ibid.*, 113.

well as of intervention by the federal government, by pointing out “I might say that the scope of the bill will be thoroughly discussed with the authorities at Ottawa before being acted upon. In view of what has been done by the legislature of Saskatchewan I do not think there will be any objection to amend the act in the manner suggested in case it is found desirable to bring it into effect”.⁵⁵ Then Mr. Yada suggested to Baron Makino that it would be better to ask the Manitoba government to amend the law at the next session.⁵⁶

The following May, Mr. Yoshitaka Hori, who had succeeded Mr. Yada, visited Winnipeg, capital of Manitoba, to meet with the Premier and Attorney General. During the meeting, Hon. Howden delivered a notice to Mr. Hori: “it is not the intention of the Government to bring this Act into force in its present form. The Act will be so amended that all reference to Japanese will be eliminated, in case it is decided to bring it into force”.⁵⁷ Howden did not mention at all about why the Manitoba government had decided to amend the law, but it can be said that Manitoba would be following Saskatchewan’s case. On this point, Mr. Hori predicted that the British Colonial Office might have intervened,⁵⁸ but as will be shown later, they had not yet taken action at this stage. Anyway, Manitoba’s ‘white women’s labour law’ was rescinded.⁵⁹

In the Province of Ontario, too, some legislators proposed a ‘white women’s labour law’ early in 1913. But, unlike Saskatchewan and Manitoba, they demanded an act to prohibit Asian immigrants from employing *all* women. The Japanese government learned about this from a Toronto

⁵⁵ Howden to Yada, March 17, 1913, in *Ibid.*, 112.

⁵⁶ Yada to Baron Makino, March 17, 1913, in *Ibid.*, 112-113.

⁵⁷ Howden to Hori, April 17, 1913, in *Ibid.* 118.

⁵⁸ Hori to Baron Makino, May 15, 1913, in *Ibid.*, 117-118.

⁵⁹ Manitoba’s ‘white women’s labour law’ was listed as “An Act to repeal certain Enactments which have become Obsolete”, *Statute of Manitoba, 1913*, c. 35.

newspaper on March 5th, and the Consul General, Mr. Nakamura, in Ottawa promptly asked Ontario Premier, Sir James Whitney, about the details and obtained a copy of the bill. Sir Whitney also sent him a telegram predicting that the legislature would probably cease to discuss it. In his report to Foreign Minister Makino, Mr. Nakamura pointed out that this bill was too drastic, impracticable and ridiculous because it might ban the hiring of Asian women by Asian male immigrants, suggesting that this Ontario case should be left as it is.⁶⁰ On March 27th, in the Legislature of Ontario one of the cabinet ministers questioned the bill and it was abandoned in the second reading.⁶¹

Around the same time that the issue of ‘white women’s labour laws’ was solved for Japanese immigrants, the negotiations over the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation of 1911 ended, and Canada decided to adhere to the treaty on April 10th, 1913.⁶² During the negotiations, regulation of Japanese immigration to Canada remained a big issue. Although Canada understood Japan’s close relation with Britain, it did not want to repeal or affect any of the provisions of the Immigration Act of 1910.

Then in February 1913, Canadian Prime Minister Robert Laird Borden asked Japan to offer a written promise that the Japanese government would continue the limitation on Japanese immigration to Canada, following the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Commerce and Navigation that was ratified in 1911.⁶³

⁶⁰ Nakamura to Baron Makino, March 11, 1913, in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1913, vol. 1, 110-111.

⁶¹ Nakamura to Baron Makino, March 28, 1913, in *Ibid.*, 114-115.

⁶² Telegram, April 12, 1913. Canada, Department of External Affairs, *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol. 1, 748.

⁶³ F. L. Borden to Consul General of Japan (Nakamura), February 7, 1913, *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol. 1, 744-747. The same document is compiled in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1913, vol. 1, 7-8. On February 21st, 1911, Uchida, Japanese Ambassador at Washington, signed and published the following declaration. “In proceeding this day to the signature of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between Japan and the United

On March 1st, the Japanese government agreed with Borden's proposal, and Consul General Nakamura sent him the following declaration: "His Imperial Japanese Majesty's Consul General at Ottawa, duly authorized by his Government, has the honour to declare that the Imperial Japanese Government are fully prepared to maintain and intend to maintain with equal effectiveness the limitation and control with they have since 1908⁶⁴ exercised in the regulation of emigration from Japan to Canada".⁶⁵

For Japan, this was the only way to save its honour. In order to solve the Japanese immigration issue as well as the Canadian adherence to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, the Japanese government relied on Britain's mediatory role.⁶⁶ As for the British government too, Canadian secession from the treaty would worsen Anglo-Japanese relations. Therefore, the presence of Britain was very important.⁶⁷

States, the undersigned, Japanese Ambassador in Washington, duly authorized by his Government, has the honour to declare that the Imperial Japanese Government are fully prepared to maintain with equal effectiveness the limitation and control which they have for the past three years exercised in regulation of the elimination of labourers to the United States". *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, 746.

⁶⁴ This designates the Hayashi-Lemieux Agreement.

⁶⁵ Consul General of Japan (Nakamura) to F. L. Borden, March 1, 1913, *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol. 1, 748.

⁶⁶ After Canada decided to adhere to the treaty, Japanese Foreign Minister Makino instructed Chozo Koike, Chargé d'Affaires in London, to express his gratitude to the British Foreign Minister as follows. "You will express to Sir Edward Grey the satisfaction with which the Imperial Government received notice of Canada's adhesion to the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation and assure him of their warm appreciation of his friendly offices which were so helpful in bringing the Dominion to this happy decision". Makino to Koike, May 5, 1913, in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1913, vol. 1, 36.

⁶⁷ Iino, "Nichiei tsusho joyaku to Kanada no Nihon-jin imin mondai [The Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation: The Japanese Problem in Canada]", 6.

‘White Women’s Labour Laws’ and the Britain Empire: East Indians, Japanese and Chinese

The issue of ‘white women’s labour laws’ was also influenced by the British presence. The treatment of Japanese, East Indians, and Chinese in the laws reflected upon their country’s relation with Britain respectively: Japan as an alliance partner, India as a dependency with rising anti-colonialism, and China as an unstable community outside the British Empire.

Saskatchewan’s original ‘white women’s labour law’ was amended to target only Chinese immigrants by dropping the words ‘Japanese’ and ‘other Oriental person’, and Manitoba’s law failed to obtain royal assent. In the backdrop, not only Japanese approaches towards Canada and Britain worked, but also did British government’s concern about the treatment of ‘other Oriental person’, namely East Indian immigrants.

As early as 1900s, East Indian immigrants, who were very few in number though, were also unwelcome in Canada along with the Chinese and Japanese immigrants.⁶⁸ As India was a part of the British Empire, outright discrimination against them by Canada would dissatisfy the British government which feared that anti-colonialist passion in India would be inflamed further. Canada also took into consideration that East Indians were its fellow British subjects, who could not be barred entry on the basis of citizenship only. This led the Canadian government to issue the order-in-council in 1908, known as ‘continuous passage (or journey) regulation’ that authorized the immigration ministry to prohibit their entry

⁶⁸ Total number of immigrants from India from 1900 to 1910 was 5,195 which then dropped to 112 from 1910 to 1920. Hugh Johnston, *The East Indians in Canada*, Ottawa, 1984, 7.

unless they came from the country of their birth or citizenship,⁶⁹ which eventually caused the *Komagata maru* affair in 1914.⁷⁰

Sharing the view that Canada should continue to be a white man's country and that East Indians, accustomed to a *tropical* climate, were unsuitable to Canadian society, the British government understood the relevance of the 'continuous passage regulation', although it still feared that it would stir up the anti-British movement in India and beyond.⁷¹ As for 'white women's labour laws', they also became the concern of the British government.

On August 17th, 1912, the Secretary of State for the Colonies Lewis Vernon Harcourt asked Charles Doherty, Canadian Minister of Justice, to amend the law by removing "any discrimination by name against Japanese or British Indian subjects", "bearing on questions of international relations and the consideration due to His Majesty's British subjects". Doherty then recommended his government that it should send a despatch to the Province of Saskatchewan to demand the amendment. On September 6th, the Canadian government transmitted its despatch to Saskatchewan Lieutenant Governor, George W. Brown.⁷²

⁶⁹ Ninette Kelly & Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, 2nd ed. Toronto, 2012, 150. 'Continuous Passage regulation' is as follows. "All immigrants seeking entry must come to Canada by continuous journey and through tickets from the country of their birth or nationality or citizenship". Order in Council, dated 8th January, 1908.

⁷⁰ As for *Komagata maru* affair, see Hugh J. M. Johnston, *The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada's Colour Bar*, expanded and fully revised edition, Vancouver, 2014; Ward *White Canada Forever*, 79-93.

⁷¹ *Canada, Sessional Papers 1908*, No. 36a, pp. 7-9. As for India's anti-colonialist movements in North America, see Seema Sohi, *Echoes of Mutiny: Race, Surveillance and Indian Anticolonialism in North America*, Oxford, 2014.

⁷² Order in Council, P. C. 2431, September 6, 1912, in *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol. 1, 616.

Harcourt also informed Canada that the Japanese government had asked Britain to amend the law. On January 15th, 1913, in his secret despatch to the Governor General of Canada, Duke of Connaught and Strathearn (third son of Queen Victoria, Prince Arthur), he mentioned that Baron Takaaki Kato,⁷³ then Ambassador in London, called “attention to the fact that the scope of the law is so sweeping that it would prevent any Japanese bank, wholesale house, factory, or other legitimate business from employing any white girls as stenographers, book-keepers, cashiers, etc.”. Harcourt then expected the Canadian government to make efforts to “secure the repeal of the Act by the Provincial Legislature and the subscription of a measure in terms not offensive to Japanese or other Asiatics”.⁷⁴ Shortly after Saskatchewan amended the law, he sent a secret despatch to Prince Arthur to tell his satisfaction.⁷⁵

In the case of Manitoba, the British government made a similar approach. In his secret despatch to Prince Arthur dated September 20th, 1913, Harcourt showed his desire, saying “as in the case of the Saskatchewan Act, Ch. 17, of 1912 [*An Act to Prevent the Employment of Female Labour in Certain Capacities*], steps will be taken by your Ministers to secure the amendment of the measure”.⁷⁶

As indicated, the British government were much concerned by the ‘white women’s labour laws’, which might have caused British imperial relations with both India and Japan to deteriorate. Although these laws were within

⁷³ He was appointed as Ambassador to Britain twice (March 1895 to April 1899 and February 1909 to January 1913), when he contributed to the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in July 1911, and as Foreign Minister four times (October 1900 to June 1901, January to March 1906, January to February 1913, and April 1914 to August 1915). He held the premiership from June 1924 to January 1926. *Nihon Gaiko-shi Jiten*, 181-182.

⁷⁴ Colonial Secretary to Governor General, January 15, 1913, in *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol. 1, 618.

⁷⁵ Colonial Secretary to Governor General, February 17, 1913, in *Ibid.*, 620.

⁷⁶ Colonial Secretary to Governor General, September 20, 1913, in *Ibid.*, 621-622.

Canadian provincial jurisdiction, ill-treatment of East Indians would inflame their anti-British patriotism, while regulation of Japanese immigrants would worsen the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Therefore, the British government tried to intervene behind the scenes. But this fact was disclosed soon in the House of Commons by a Liberal member from Moose Jaw, who attacked Robert Laird Borden's Conservative government in terms of violation of provincial autonomy by pointing out that the amendment of the law was the result of the negotiations between the Saskatchewan government, the British Colonial Office and the Canadian Government.⁷⁷

Eventually Japanese and East Indians were removed from the target of 'white women's labour laws'. At least as far as their treatment was concerned, the British government still had keen interest in Canadian domestic affairs, long after Canada had become a 'dominion' in the British North America Act of 1867. Then what about Chinese immigrants?

Just before the Province of Saskatchewan first enacted the law in 1912, the Chinese community in Moose Jaw held a protest meeting. The Chinese minister in Canada promised them to take action if such a law were passed in the legislature, but he was unable to visit the Saskatchewan government. Only after it was enacted, did the Chinese government demand its disavowal. But it was too late, long after the set period for disavowal had expired. Also its action was delayed by the Chinese Revolution, and lack of cordial relation with Britain or Canada had led China to be at a disadvantage.⁷⁸

In the end, only the Chinese became the target of the 'white women's labour laws'. It was not until 1914 that the Chinese government protested against the discriminative treatment. On April 2nd, Lew Yuk-Lin, Chinese

⁷⁷ Nakamura to Baron Makino, April 8, 1913, in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo*, 1913, vol.1, 116-117.

⁷⁸ James W. St. G. Walker, "Race," Rights and the Law in the Supreme Court of Canada: *Historical Studies*, Waterloo, 1997, 52.

minister in London, sent a letter to the British Foreign Minister Edward Grey, 1st Viscount Grey of Fallodon. Lew begged Grey to use his influence to remove this kind of law, by pointing out that “it is a discriminative Act against the Chinese people lawfully resident in Saskatchewan” and that “the Act was passed at a time when my country was undergoing a revolution and my Government had not the time to attend to protest against such measures, but now that my Government has been fully established”.⁷⁹

This letter was forwarded to Colonial Secretary Harcourt, and he inquired Prince Arthur, Governor General Canada, about Canada’s reply to it,⁸⁰ suggesting that the British government had no intention to intervene, in comparison with the cases of Japanese and East Indians as described above. After having made contact with the Saskatchewan government as well as federal immigration officers, the Canadian government confirmed the legitimacy of Saskatchewan’s ‘white women’s labour law’ by issuing the Order in Council in February 18th, 1915.⁸¹

In the meantime, having been asked by the Canadian government, E. Blake Robertson, Assistant Chief Controller of Chinese Immigration, submitted his view as follows, which is worth being cited to describe the federal and provincial relations in Canada: “With regard to the suggestion that Chinese persons should enjoy the same rights and privileges in Canada as the subjects of the most favoured nations, the Government would very likely be put in the position of having to veto provincial legislation such as that introduced in the Saskatchewan and Ontario Parliaments prohibiting the employment of white girls by Chinese and Japanese employers, although possibly if it was apparent that the Government had made a serious effort to limit this class of immigration the Provincial Governments

⁷⁹ Minister of China to Foreign Secretary, April 2, 1914, in *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol. 1, 645.

⁸⁰ Colonial Secretary to Governor General, April 16, 1914, in *Ibid.*, 644-645.

⁸¹ Order in Council, P. C. 315, February 18, 1915, in *Ibid.*, 655-656.

would be less likely to attempt to enact drastic legislation”.⁸² As this indicates, the Canadian government found it improper to intervene directly in provincial affairs such as controlling Chinese residents, hoping its levying on head tax on Chinese immigrants at their entry worked.

All in all, both the Canadian and British governments kept or tried to be bystanders towards the provincial regulation of Chinese immigrants, which totally differed from the Japanese and East Indians issues. Unlike Japan, China did not have a useful diplomatic channel with Britain, and, unlike Japanese and East Indians problems, Chinese immigration issues were not taken seriously.

Conclusion

The original ‘white women’s labour laws’ of Saskatchewan and Manitoba targeted Asian male immigrants at large, but Saskatchewan amended its law to aim at Chinese immigrants only and Manitoba failed to obtain royal assent. This article examined the backgrounds of the enactment, amendment and withdrawal of the ‘white women’s labour laws’ by paying attention to how Japan, Canada and Britain responded to them.

Japan had to tackle this issue during the critical period when Canada’s adhesion to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation had been under negotiation. Taking it as both a domestic/provincial and external (‘diplomatic’) matter, the Japanese government not only approached Canadian provincial governments but also asked the British government to quietly intervene into its dominion’s affairs. Saskatchewan and Manitoba accepted the appeals of the Japanese government, and they also took the

⁸² Assistant Chief of Chinese Immigration to Secretary, Minister of the Interior, June 29, 1914, in *Ibid.*, 653.

demand of the British government into consideration to review how their laws would affect imperial relations by worsening the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and inflaming anti-British feelings among East Indians, while the treatment of Chinese immigrants was not taken seriously in its imperial context. This suggests that the British government was still attentive to and, to some extent, intervened in such Canadian domestic affairs that might have deteriorated Britain's imperial or external stance, long after Canada obtained semi-autonomous dominion status by the Confederation in 1867.

* In this article, permit me to use offensive terms. All of them are citations from contemporary sources, which reflect the biased thoughts of the period here examined.

Winston Churchill in Visual Propaganda: British and Japanese Depictions of the 'Great Man' in the Second World War

Hanako Ishikawa*

Abstract

This paper analyses how Winston S. Churchill was portrayed in wartime visual propaganda in the United Kingdom and Japan. It will firstly deal with his depiction in Britain, analysing what Churchill symbolized, through an examination of caricatures and posters in wartime Britain. It will be demonstrated that, through such propaganda, Churchill embodied many virtues of his country, such as democracy, liberty, and history. After this, an analysis of Japanese perspectives, similarly seen through propaganda material, will offer another angle on these themes. It will be argued that, although he also symbolized the aforementioned virtues in Japanese materials, they were considered to be vices, founded on the sacrifice of Asian and African people. By comparing his depiction in two countries, the nature of the Britishness Churchill personified in wartime will be comprehensively delineated.

Keywords: The Second World War, Winston Churchill, Propaganda, Japan

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Introduction

Images of Winston S. Churchill (1874–1965) have been a part of everyday British popular culture since the Second World War and he has been widely researched over the course of the last century. This article aims to present a comparative approach, taking visual materials out of the limitations of British historiography and into the broader, global context. By using British and Japanese national propaganda, the nature of a Britishness that Churchill symbolized, such as the British democracy, liberty, and history will be examined from two perspectives. It will offer multiple examples of national propaganda from the Second World War. The significance of this approach is that it will reassert those concepts of wartime propaganda that can be considered ‘national’, but more significantly, those that can be considered ‘international’ in a somewhat opposite sense in her Asian enemy. It will offer an insight into the nature of his leadership in Britain and, indeed, globally.

Winston Churchill’s role in the Second World War has been studied from various perspectives. The depiction of Churchill in wartime propaganda has been well documented by, among others, Addison, Mackay, and Rhodes whose research discusses Churchill’s political life, civilian life in wartime, and British propaganda in general.¹ Churchill’s image in wartime propaganda and its reception by the British public has indeed been extensively investigated by Sinclair.² In the twenty-first century, Churchill possesses a somewhat mythical status in Britain and America, as both a defender of the democratic world and a founder of the modern world. It is

¹ P. Addison, *Churchill on the Home Front 1900–1955*, London 1993; A. Rhodes, *Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion: World War II*, London 1975; R. Mackay, *The Test of War: Inside Britain 1939–45*, London 1999.

² G. L. Sinclair, ‘Winston Churchill and the British Public: Propaganda and Perception, 1939–1945’, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Kent 2004.

deluded to think that Churchill was popular from the beginning of the war and that he created his legendary status during the course of it, yet this unconditional exaltation was constructed in the second half of the twentieth century.

In the academic world, his contemporary scholars adored him as a great man post-World War II. From the 1940s to the 1960s, most of those writing about Churchill knew him personally. While they were critical of his failures, nothing could supersede his achievement as a war leader. A. J. P Taylor described him as ‘a saviour of his country’,³ and historians constructed his image with unceasing applause. Churchill has since been depicted positively, but more objectively, by younger historians like Gilbert, Addison, and James.⁴

Of course, there have been negative depictions of him. Autobiographies of Samuel Hoare (1880–1959), a notable Chamberlainite politician, and of Allan Brooke (1883–1963), Churchill’s military adviser, were critical about Churchill before and during the Second World War.⁵ From the 1980s revisionists judged Churchill responsible for the end of the empire, and focused in negative fashion on his attitude towards, for example, colonialism, and class division.⁶ Their view has some importance in terms of colonialism, and in this context the Japanese criticism of Churchill in her wartime propaganda may have been partially valid.

³ P. Addison, ‘Churchill and the Price of Victory: 1939–1945’, in *From Blitz to Blair: A New History of Britain Since 1939*, ed. Nick Tiratsoo, London 1997, 53.

⁴ M. Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill vol. 3–8*, London 1971–1988; Addison, *Churchill on the Home Front*. R. Rhodes James, *Winston Churchill: A Study in Failure 1900–1939*, Harmondsworth 1973.

⁵ S. J. G. Hoare, *Nine Troubled Years*, London 1954; A. Brooke, *War Diaries, 1939–1945: Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke*, Berkeley 2001.

⁶ G. Best, *Churchill: A Study in Greatness*, London 2001; J. Charmley, *Churchill: The End of Glory*, London 1993.

On a popular level, people in general could not unquestioningly applaud him. The approval of his premiership was never less than seventy-eight per cent in wartime;⁷ however, Mass Observation reports noted minority opinion of him as a dictator or warmonger from 1941 onwards.⁸ It is undeniable that Churchill was a subject of admiration as a strong war leader who would take Britain towards victory, but at the same time people understood him not as a peacetime leader who would make their lives better. He could be a 'national leader', but not a party leader. He was not expected to be a peacetime leader by British people,⁹ while they certainly admitted that he played an important role in sustaining civilian morale by his speeches and fighting spirit.¹⁰

In examining the reputation and popularity of Churchill, historians have used Mass Observation reports, which aimed to study the everyday life of ordinary people in Britain, and Gallup polls, which were directed by the British Institute of Public Opinion. They offer valuable insight into the civilian perception of Churchill. The paper adds visual materials, such as posters, pictures, and caricatures, and tries to look at his image more concretely. In her PhD thesis at the University of Kent, Sinclair used various visual materials to depict his leadership inclusively. She used posters, caricatures, photographs, and even pottery to understand him from various angles, yet her study covers only those in Britain.¹¹ The paper will use visual propaganda in Japan, an Axis Power during the Second World War, in order to understand his historical role in different perspectives. By

⁷ G. H. Gallup, *The Gallup International Public Opinion Polls: Great Britain 1937–1975*, New York 1976, 29–123.

⁸ Mass Observation Report File (MORF), No. 749, 23 June 1941.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Mackay, *The Test of War*, 143–4.

¹¹ Sinclair, *Winston Churchill*.

examining caricatures created by the Japanese government, it will offer another angle to observe Churchillian leadership.

The paper will discuss the nature of his leadership in visual propaganda in an international context. Firstly, it will deal with his depiction in Britain, and analyse what Churchill symbolized through an examination of caricatures and posters in wartime.¹² It will demonstrate that he embodied many virtues of his country, such as democracy, liberty, and history. Then, analysis of Japanese perspectives seen in their propaganda materials will offer the other angle of those themes. It will argue that although he also symbolized those virtues in Japanese materials, they were considered to be vices, founded on the sacrifices of Asian and African people. By comparing his depiction in two countries, the nature of his Britishness in wartime will be understood comprehensively.

Churchill in British visual propaganda

Winston Churchill was a hugely popular subject used in British wartime propaganda, both by public and private sectors. The Second World War is remembered with nostalgia and, for good or ill, he represents a particular kind of Britishness in the twenty-first century. Previous works have shown that he personified virtues such as defiance, resolution, the spirit of hope,¹³ justice, freedom, and truth.¹⁴ They have emphasized his role in uniting the

¹² Due to copyright reasons, all of the British caricatures and posters described in this paper cannot be inserted; therefore, the URL links for each caricature is cited in the footnotes.

¹³ Mackay, *The Test of War*, 144.

¹⁴ J. Fox, 'Winston Churchill and the "men of destiny": Leadership and the Role of the Prime Minister in Wartime Feature Films,' in *Making Reputations: Power, Persuasion and the Individual in Modern British Politics*, ed. R. Toye and J. Gottlieb, London 2005, 92–3.

British people, and in making them recognize their historical part in freeing the world. It is said that through him people attained their collective, romantic, and heroic identity.¹⁵

The portrayals of Churchill transformed over the wartime. His image changed from being based more on reality to one more mythical as the war progressed. Before Germany invaded Poland, Churchill was generally considered to be an old imperialist, looking for a war. While Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain (1869–1940) was praised for Munich in 1938, Churchill was a complete outsider, who was viewed sceptically by both the Conservative and Labour parties. Stanley Baldwin (1867–1947) described him as ‘the flotsam and jetsam of political life thrown up on the beach’,¹⁶ and Herbert Samuel (1870–1963) remarked ironically that ‘if indeed the truest patriot is a man who breathes hatred, who lays the seeds of war and stirs up the greatest numbers of enemies against the country, then Mr Churchill is a great patriot’.¹⁷ From 1929 to 1939, Churchill experienced his ‘wilderness years’. His revolt against Tory orthodoxy over both appeasement and India increased mistrust in him among Conservative MPs. When appeasement was mainstream among politicians and people, his alarm against Hitler was not reflected at all. Soon his prediction was to be realized, yet it was never acknowledged by politicians and public before the German invasion of Poland.¹⁸ He was considered to have raised unnecessary hostility between two nations through his speeches and actions, and, in general, he was considered to be a ‘warmonger’ who sought his promotion and prestige through war.¹⁹ Once Hitler revealed his ambition and

¹⁵ D. Jablonsky, *Churchill, the Great Game and Total War*, London 1991, 123.

¹⁶ B. Gardner, *Churchill in His Time: A Study in a Reputation 1939–1945*, London 1968, 6.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 2.

¹⁸ Rhodes James, *Winston Churchill*, 267, 409–36.

¹⁹ Gardner, *Churchill in His Time*, 5.

launched his invasion, history proved his legitimacy. His opposition to the policy and his strong words in the 1930s were to raise his popularity during the war.

In the early stage of the war, the practical image of Churchill as a war minister emerged. From 1939 to May 1940, it is said that Churchill enjoyed his reputation on account of his honesty and as an information supplier at the Admiralty. During the phoney war period, the Navy was almost the only force who fought against Nazi Germany. Naturally, Churchill became the one responsible for informing people of the cause of the war.²⁰ While other ministers lacked news on the war's progress, he had plenty to offer people as the First Lord of the Admiralty who presided over the Navy. The image of a truth-teller was created partly because of his contrast with the men associated with Munich, and partly because of his position at the Admiralty.²¹ This image has often been questioned since many reports in wartime show scepticism about his information, yet his role as informant continued in his first premiership.²²

In the first phase of the war, the image of Churchill was based on his practical work in the war cabinet. When he became prime minister, his image attained a spiritual or even mythical status. After May 1940 he gradually personified his nation, associated with its history and virtues. Addison claims that 'at some point between May 1940 and the London blitz of September' his career 'merged with the history of British people' because of disasters.²³ As a national leader, he embodied his country, 'the United Kingdom'. Britain found the best emblem at the right time. As a child of the Victorian era, he sincerely believed in a certain kind of Britishness, which could have reminded people of a glorious British history.

²⁰ S. Heywood, *Churchill*, London 2003, 74.

²¹ Sinclair, *Winston Churchill*, 72.

²² *Ibid*, 44.

²³ Addison, *Churchill on the Home Front*, 344.

The Britishness emphasized in the war relied on British history, which was still in the tradition of the progressivism of the nineteenth century, and it had to emphasize the peculiarity and superiority of the British Empire. The concepts of Britishness in British propaganda are well exhibited in the wartime posters of London Transport. Four posters published in 1943 were named 'Our Heritage', and were intended to make both the staff and users of London Transport reflect on 'other occasions of the nation's will and high purpose'. Sir Francis Drake, Lord Nelson, William Pitt the younger, and finally Churchill himself were portrayed in each poster and they propagate a historical heritage which was passed on from British leaders in the past to Churchill.²⁴

The first myth in the series is 'British destiny'. Posters of Drake and Nelson exploit the notion of the grace of God, by quoting words by them before the battles. Those captions in the lower section of each poster associate British fate and victory with the will of God, and this link with God was important in creating the myth of 'British destiny'. Churchill believed in 'British destiny' and 'a special relation with God', and the belief was shared by the British public. They favoured the myth of the victories by

²⁴ 'Our heritage; Sir Francis Drake', London Transport Museum, http://www.ltmcollection.org/posters/poster/poster.html?_IXSR_=MXgiMKT49qk&_IXMAXHITS_=1&IXinv=1983/4/5615&IXsummary=dates/decade&IXfromdate=1940&IXtodate=1949&_IXFIRST_=173;

'Our heritage; Lord Nelson', London Transport Museum, http://www.ltmcollection.org/posters/poster/poster.html?_IXSR_=MXgiMKT49qk&_IXMAXHITS_=1&IXinv=1983/4/5618&IXsummary=dates/decade&IXfromdate=1940&IXtodate=1949&_IXFIRST_=172;

'Our heritage; William Pitt', London Transport Museum, http://www.ltmcollection.org/posters/poster/poster.html?_IXSR_=MXgiMKT49qk&_IXMAXHITS_=1&IXinv=1983/4/5624&IXsummary=dates/decade&IXfromdate=1940&IXtodate=1949&_IXFIRST_=170;

'Our heritage; Winston Churchill', London Transport Museum, http://www.ltmcollection.org/posters/poster/poster.html?_IXSR_=MXgiMKT49qk&_IXMAXHITS_=1&IXinv=1983/4/5621&IXsummary=dates/decade&IXfromdate=1940&IXtodate=1949&_IXFIRST_=171.

‘a few’ English people: a small island stood alone against a Continental tyranny and defended their land and freedom.²⁵

It is said that the myth of ‘a few’ was created by British geography and the history of the island country. For Britain, her geographical status as an island was one of the factors that formed an identity. Froude describes how ‘a combination of curious circumstances, assisted by four and twenty miles of water, had protected England hitherto from sharing the miseries of the rest of Europe’.²⁶ The physical distance from the European continent made people believe in a primordial nation, and led Churchill to believe in the ‘island race discourse’.²⁷ The sea which divides Britain from Europe had an important role in creating British identity. Because of this separation, the history of her battles against foreign nations had been naturally determined by the Navy until the nineteenth century. The Battle of Gravelines in 1588 tends to be described as a sweeping victory by ‘a few’ English over a massive Spanish Armada. The Battle of Trafalgar illustrates a clear contrast between free England and the oppressed continent under a tyrant, Napoleon. Those posters remind people of the high virtue of the British fighting against continental vices. Victories in history had given the British a sense of being a chosen people, and made them believe in ‘a special relation with God’.²⁸ Britain is right and has been right. The series reminded people of British legitimacy in history. The myth of ‘a few’ was shared by Churchill, and he explains the fate of a small island in his essay, ‘Faith, Hope and Nationality’:

²⁵ M. Connelly, *We Can Take It! Britain and the Memory of the Second World War*, Harlow 2004, 96.

²⁶ Cited in P. Guedalla, *Mr. Churchill: A Portrait*, London 1941, 302.

²⁷ A. Law, ‘Of Navies and Navels: Britain as a Mental Island’, *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography* 87:4, 2005, 267–9.

²⁸ Connelly, *We Can Take It!*, 96.

God controls our lives, yet they are ours to shape [...]. At any rate there is no doubt about one miracle. A wandering tribe in many respects indistinguishable from numberless nomadic communities, grasped and proclaimed an idea of which all the genius of Greece and all the power of Rome were incapable.²⁹

The myth was used to emphasize how alone Britain was against Nazi Germany after 1940.³⁰ In this story, Churchill was a war leader who nobly stood alone against Hitler since the 1930s in contrast to the appeasers. Those posters propose the divine image of the United Kingdom, and made people believe in continuity of the nation.

The second theme in the series is the 'fighting race'. The series of posters suggests an image of Britain as a nation of warriors. Posters of Drake and Nelson showcase two victorious warriors in history. Drake is depicted with his sword, and his presence reminds people of the great sea battles with Spain. Nelson is depicted alongside battleships, and recalls the victory over Napoleon. By aligning Churchill with those great military leaders, the series succeeded in creating the image of Churchill as warrior. Also, those leaders in the past have important roles in reminding people that those battles were fought for liberty. Churchill was proud of British liberty, and he believed that British people acquired it thanks to centuries of struggle against tyranny. He traced the origin of liberty to the Anglo-Saxon race, and declared that the English people had been fighting against oppression for more than a millennium, and they had defeated enemies of justice.³¹

Churchill believed in the history of the 'fighting race' and when he became prime minister, the mass media and the government spread his belligerent image as a war leader. It was very easy to associate Churchill with fighting spirit, since he was inescapably tied to the armed forces throughout his life.

²⁹ W. Churchill, *If I Lived My Life Again*, London 1974, 191.

³⁰ Connelly, *We Can Take It!*, 96.

³¹ W. Churchill, *The Island Race*, London 1964, 24.

His youth at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, his position at the Admiralty, and at the Ministry of Munitions in the First World War, had made a link between Churchill and warrior before it was emphasized in propaganda.³²

War is a consistent topic throughout his personal history, and the armed forces are inseparable from his career. He was often depicted in caricatures and posters, which focused on his fighting spirit, using traditional motifs, such as John Bull, a bulldog, and St George, the patron saint of England. In a poster by Leslie Illingworth in 1940, Churchill was depicted as a warlike John Bull, the symbol of Britain, in a Union Jack shirt and identical hat, holding a bayonet.³³ The poster indicates that he was a symbol of his country and that all the British were behind him. In addition, a poster entitled 'Holding the Line!' was created and distributed by an American artist, Henri Guignon. It first aimed to mobilize public opinion in America to support British warfare, yet the image soon became widespread in Britain. It shows Churchill as a bulldog standing on a Union Jack, staring resolutely at the viewer above the words 'Holding the Line!'. It implies that he stands alone to defend the democratic world and Britain is the 'last bulwark against totalitarianism'.³⁴ On 26 August 1942, a caricature in *Punch* entitled 'The Bulldog Has Wings' not only exhibits Churchill's strength but also his role in saving Europe.³⁵ Churchill was known for his footwork, and the caricature shows him travelling across oceans to build and maintain partnerships for the ultimate victory. The bulldog was a popular motif depicting Churchill in visual propaganda. It is said that traditionally the

³² Guedalla, *Mr. Churchill*, 314.

³³ 'Back to the wall', Kew, National Archives, INF 3/1325. See: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/nationalarchives/17365061086>.

³⁴ D. Hall, 'Bulldog Churchill: The Evolution of a Famous Image', *Finest Hour: Journal of the Churchill Center and Societies* 106, 2000, 19.

³⁵ 'The Bulldog has wings', *Punch*, 26 August 1942. See: <http://punch.photoshelter.com/image/I0000puX0n47aRsE>.

British bulldog had qualities such as ‘pedigree, highly intelligent, formidable, loyal, exploring, determined, hard fighting, adaptable to new circumstances, and stocked with untiring reserves of stamina’.³⁶ Those characteristics of the bulldog were required of the wartime prime minister, and propagandists made use of these characteristics by associating him with the bulldog.

Another motif used in depicting Churchill was St George. The caricature ‘A Dragon Slayer’, again in *Punch* on 1 January 1941, shows a masculine Churchill in armour vanquishing a German dragon, insinuating that the British army should persevere in taking over German towns. By portraying him as a saint, it suggests that Churchill, or Britain, was a type of saviour of Christendom.³⁷ By exhibiting masculine images, such caricatures show a paternal Churchill who would protect Britain and Europe. British wartime propaganda used British history and myths, and Churchill became their emblem. Those illustrations signify that people were fighting against Germany for high purposes, and made the war ‘the battle for freedom’.

The third idea deduced from the series of posters is democracy, which was perhaps the most important concept for Churchill and his country. The images of British destiny and the warrior were used in various mediums, but there was only one restriction: in any medium, Churchill had to be portrayed as a leader of the democratic world. The Ministry of Information was heedful of depicting him within the framework of representative democracy.³⁸

³⁶ J. W. Miller, ‘Winston Churchill: Spokesman for Democracy’, *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 28:2, 1942, 133.

³⁷ ‘The Dragon-Slayer’, *Punch*, 1 January 1941. See: http://punch.photoshelter.com/image?&_bqG=0&_bqH=eJxNj8sKwjAQRf.mGzep4qKBLGKSyvhIZJIuXAVbah8UFa0gfr2JiDqbOZdh7p3pRVUiOT67C8h7mesZyR9ZWq2zUdeZnc4JTUkoC15awUR7v1ZtNwwTO06W9fna1MI74rmWbAawsO1Z6NZxpyIIU2iHew_WRAnWo9oobpX8yN2_NghKh1Uw.u1i0DHkeh24sAo9SFbEe_pV382xPA3QJF4sPASbkP_B4ouY_3AbkQvHbvUhfJGI6PYCuplNVA--&GI_ID=

³⁸ Sinclair, *Winston Churchill*, 94.

While Hitler pushed his charisma to the forefront and emphasized his singularity in newsreels and speeches, Churchill had to be the representative of the British people, and had to show he was one of them. Roberts argues that Hitler was a charismatic leader and that Churchill was an inspirational one.³⁹ Yet it is important to note that a different kind of leadership was required in democratic Britain from totalitarian Germany. In Churchill's belief, what one person could do was limited, and the role of a national leader was to mentor people in the framework of democracy,⁴⁰ and ultimately his power rested with the House of Commons.⁴¹ In contrast to Hitler, a totalitarian leader who possessed a somewhat sacred status among German people as seen in 'Hitler greeting' and 'pilgrims for the Berghof near Berchtesgaden',⁴² Churchill had to remain a representative of the British people.

Although Churchill symbolized democracy in many visual materials in Britain in wartime, his idea of democracy was that of a privilege bestowed on people from above, and it was not widely shared by the popular public. David Low, a cartoonist who had depicted Churchill frequently, commented on his attitude towards democracy in 1920s:

In those days, whenever I heard Churchill's dramatic periods about democracy, I felt inclined to say: 'Please define'. His definition, I felt, would be something like 'government of the people, for the people, by benevolent and paternal ruling-class chaps like me.'[...] I could never accept him as a democrat in the Lincolnian sense.⁴³

³⁹ A. Roberts, *Hitler and Churchill: Secrets of Leadership*, London 2003, xx.

⁴⁰ Churchill, *If I Lived My Life Again*, 1.

⁴¹ Roberts, *Hitler and Churchill*, 96.

⁴² I. Kershaw, *The 'Hitler Myth': Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, Oxford 1987, 60.

⁴³ D. Low, *Low's Autobiography*, London 1956, 147.

Churchill was, in many eyes, not a democratic figure before the war despite his support for democratic policies.⁴⁴ In the Second World War, the old language of ‘liberty’ was often used to emphasize free Britain in order to distinguish democratic Britain from Hitler’s dictatorship. According to Quinault, ‘in their struggle with the dictators, Churchill and Roosevelt mixed the “new” language of all inclusive democracy with the “old” language of popular liberty’.⁴⁵

In order to contrast totalitarian Germany under the Nazis and democratic Britain under Parliament, the wartime propaganda distributed a dogmatic and ambiguous concept of democracy via images of Churchill. As seen in the poster ‘Our heritage’, depicting Churchill with the British Parliament,⁴⁶ Churchill was portrayed as the symbol of parliamentary democracy. Behind him is blue sky and the Houses of Parliament and in his hands a book and glasses. The caption was taken from his speech delivered in the House of Commons on 4 June 1940. The original speech used an old word ‘freedom’ or ‘liberty’ rather than democracy.⁴⁷ It aimed to plant the image of personal freedom as an important element of democracy, which he strived to protect from Germany. The inclusion of the Houses of Parliament implies that Churchill is a banner of representative parliamentary democracy, and clarifies the ideological dichotomy between Britain and Germany. It reminds people of the role of Churchill as a democratic leader who would lead them

⁴⁴ R. Quinault, ‘Churchill and Democracy’, in *Winston Churchill in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. D. Cannadine and R. Quinault, London 2004, 27.

⁴⁵ R. Quinault, ‘Anglo-American Attitudes to Democracy from Lincoln to Churchill’, in *Anglo-American Attitudes from Revolution to Partnership*, ed. F. Leventhal and R. Quinault, Aldershot 2000, 134.

⁴⁶ ‘Our heritage; Winston Churchill’, London Transport Museum, http://www.ltmcollection.org/posters/poster/poster.html?_IXSR_=MXgiMKT49qk&_IXMAXHITS_=1&IXinv=1983/4/5621&IXsummary=dates/decade&IXfromdate=1940&IXtodate=1949&_IXFIRST_=171.

⁴⁷ R. Quinault, *British Prime Ministers and Democracy: From Disraeli to Blair*, London 2011, 149.

to freedom. The poster also shows that Britain is destined for victory. The series depicts the rightness and justice of Britain in both past and present, and perhaps the future. Those four heroes represent Britain's destiny to make things right, and to lead the world to freedom.

Churchill symbolized his country in various media, and embodied some concepts of Britishness, such as British destiny, fighting spirit, and the democratic world. Those themes already existed in the Whig tradition of history, and Churchill and propagandists used them to unite peoples. Throughout the war, Churchill was depicted as a brave, heroic, and romantic leader, who would lead the world right. He personified British virtues and contributed to clarify Britain's war aims and to raise civilian morale.

It is certain that in European battles between Britain and Germany, this scenario was right. Seen, however, in a global context, or from the viewpoint of other ethnic groups, the characters he showed can be understood differently.

The Japanese depiction of Churchill

In the Western world, Churchill is remembered as a democratic leader. An analysis of British visual propaganda provides overwhelming evidence for the positive and adulatory British perspectives of Churchill. This section aims to challenge such concepts more objectively, by looking at Japanese propaganda depicting Churchill. Notions of 'Christendom', 'civilian force', and 'democracy' appear beyond question in Europe in the mid-twentieth century; however, seen from the perspective of other ethnic groups, or in terms of postcolonialism, they are understood differently. In this sense, Churchill was considered as a leader of colonization, who had exploited Asia

and Africa, and Christian civilization or democracy was viewed as an imposition on others. While Germans depicted Churchill as an exploiter of the working class in Britain, as well as a liar and a drunkard,⁴⁸ the Japanese emphasized him as a symbol of white arrogance. In order to examine the Japanese perspective on Churchill, this paper will use Japanese propaganda during the Pacific War, from December 1941 to August 1945. His depiction in cartoon form can often be found in *Shashin Shuho*, the Weekly Photographical Journal, first published by *Naikaku Jouhoubu* and later by *Naikaku Jouhou Kyoku*. The magazine was published between 16 February 1938 and 11 July 1945. In March 1941 its circulation was claimed to be more than 200,000, while in April 1942 it was approximately 300,000. The number of readers per copy was 10.6, which meant that the magazine had roughly two to three million readers.⁴⁹ In order to examine how the Japanese conceived the character of Churchill and the British Empire, this paper will mainly use caricatures from the aforementioned magazine, as well as some other posters and leaflets produced by the Japanese forces as a supplement.⁵⁰ By so doing, it will draw a picture of the great man in the global context, seen from a different ethnic group.

It is undeniable that there was no freedom of the press in Japan after the National General Mobilization Law in 1938, which allowed the bureaucracy to issue any orders in a time of emergency.⁵¹ As a political consequence, censorship was enforced over radio and press, and critics of the government

⁴⁸ R. Bytwerk, 'Churchill in Nazi Cartoon Propaganda', in *Finest Hour: Journal of the Churchill Center and Societies* 143, 2009, 15.

⁴⁹ "Shashin Shuho'nimiru Showa no sesou", <https://www.jacar.go.jp/shuhou/towa01.html>.

⁵⁰ Due to copyright reasons, images except those in *Shashin Shuho* cannot be published in the paper.

⁵¹ A. Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, New York 2003, 212.

were purged.⁵² Japanese primary sources in this paper only reflect the governmental ideas of Britain and Churchill. In Japanese visual propaganda, Churchill and Roosevelt were depicted as twin bearers of evil imperialism, who had oppressed and exploited Asian and African people.

Japanese propaganda can be categorized in two forms: one for Asian and African people who had been under the control of the British Empire, and the other as propaganda for Japanese domestic use which intended to stir up hostility towards Britain and America. The former tried to make Asian and African soldiers secede from the British army and revolt against Britain.⁵³ Through various media, the Japanese claimed a just cause for her Asian invasion: the liberation of Asia from Europe.

By referring to Japanese propaganda, the paper will deal with colonialism and imperialism in Churchill. It must be mentioned first that in terms of race, the historical context has to be considered, and there is no intention in this text to denounce him or to support him, much less to affirm the superficial Japanese war objective. It will first seek to grasp and understand the racial feeling among the British in general and Churchill in particular, and then analyse Japanese visual propaganda depicting Churchill, distributed across the Asian continent and in Japan.

On the eve of the Second World War, Britain possessed a great deal of power in Asia. She had taken over several regions in Asia, such as India, Burma, Malaya, Hong Kong, and some ports in China. In the middle of the twentieth century, racism was prevalent among many Britons. A British police officer in Hong Kong called Chinese 'yellow pigs' and a 'bunch of worthless, treacherous, yellow-skinned reptiles'. He declared that the Chinese 'should only be treated as the animals they are'. Asian people in

⁵² W. G. Beasley, *The Modern History of Japan*, London 1981, 254.

⁵³ Unfortunately, for copyright reasons, the caricatures aimed at appeasing Asian and African people cannot be inserted in the paper.

Hong Kong were not allowed to enter theatres or European hotels and clubs.⁵⁴

This inequality was justified in terms of moral responsibility of those who sought to civilize the less advanced people,⁵⁵ and many white people in general saw non-whites as animals.⁵⁶ At the heart of British imperialism was their belief in British racial superiority. Churchill never doubted the superiority of his race and was an outdated imperialist even in his own time. Franklin Roosevelt was against Churchill's imperialism, and it caused a certain amount of tension between those two leaders.⁵⁷

Churchill shared the general attitude towards racism in the late nineteenth century. In his youth he mentioned the role of white people and the inferiority of 'the other' as follows:

Year after year, and stretching back to an indefinite horizon, we see the figures of the odd and bizarre potentates against whom the British arms continually are turned [...]. These extraordinary foreign figures – each with his complete set of crimes, horrible customs, and 'minor peculiarities' – march one by one from the dark wings of barbarism up to the bright footlights of civilisation.⁵⁸

He considered colonization as 'White men's burden' and did not understand 'native' cultures outside Europe. It is famous that Churchill called Gandhi, who visited London for an Indian conference in 1931 'a

⁵⁴ G. Horne, *Race War! White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire*, New York 2004, 17–22.

⁵⁵ P. Darby, *Three Faces of Imperialism: British and American Approaches to Asia and Africa 1870–1970*, New Haven 1987, 31.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁵⁷ J. Charmley, 'Churchill and American Alliance', in *Winston Churchill in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. D. Cannadine and R. Quinault, 148–9.

⁵⁸ Guedalla, *Mr Churchill*, 321–2.

half-naked fakir',⁵⁹ and claimed that non-white races were unsuitable for democracy.⁶⁰ Churchill believed in the civilizing mission and defended British rule in India in 1920:

Our reign in India or anywhere else has never stood on the basis of physical force alone, and it would be fatal to the British Empire if we were to try to base ourselves only upon it. The British way of doing things has always meant and implied close and effectual co-operation with the people of the country. In every part of the British Empire that has been our aim, and in no part have we arrived at such success as in India, whose princes spent their treasure in our cause, whose brave soldiers fought side by side with our own men, whose intelligent and gifted people are co-operating at the present moment with us in every sphere of government of industry.⁶¹

Churchill expressed an idealistic view on the relationship between the mother country and colonies in public. In private, he often used casual words on coloured or foreign people, such as 'blackamoors', 'niggers', 'wogs', 'chicks', 'eyeties', etc.⁶² He shared the common feeling among people against different ethnic groups, and, as Best contends, 'racial difference did matter to him' till the end of his life.⁶³ For him Asian cultures were not worth considering, and he expected and believed that they should have imitated the European way of life for good, if it was possible. He held a paternalistic view on Japan, believing that Britain and America were the godparents of modern Japan, and Japan attained her industrial power thanks to British

⁵⁹ R. C. Kemper III, 'Introduction: The Rhetoric of Civilization', in *Winston Churchill: Resolution, Defiance, Magnanimity, Good Will*, ed. R. C. Kemper III, Columbia 1996, 7.

⁶⁰ Quinault, *British Prime Ministers*, 147.

⁶¹ M. Gilbert, *Churchill's Political Philosophy*, Oxford 1981, 85.

⁶² Best, *Churchill: A Study in Greatness*, 138.

⁶³ *Ibid*, 138–9.

and American guidance.⁶⁴ This stance often irritated Asian countries, and his attitude towards non-European races was a fat target to be attacked by other ethnic groups. In the Second World War this aspect of Churchill was emphasized by the Japanese, combined with complaints about Western civilization in general.

Before the Second World War, Churchill's image and his position in British politics was partially explained in the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, with the paper containing several articles describing Churchill, each time with a different portrayal. In 1914 the newspaper offered an idealized picture of him, stating that he was tall, spruce, and donnish. It was explained that he had made his name as a literary man although he had a military background.⁶⁵ In 1920 the paper called Churchill 'the man for the new era'. Describing his life since he was nineteen years old, it claimed that he was indispensable in the British government, which, at that time, was headed by Lloyd George.⁶⁶ While these two articles in 1914 and 1920 positively depicted Churchill, an article in 1925 was bitter about his opportunism; it described him as eccentric, changing his party from the Conservatives to the Liberals and back again, and claimed that he was 'wicked' because he did whatever took his fancy,⁶⁷ once joining the front lines as a soldier and then occasionally attending parliamentary debates at home. The article even claimed that some British people hoped he would die during the First World

⁶⁴ S. Dockrill, 'Britain's Grand Strategies and Anglo-American Leadership in the War against Japan', in *British and Japanese Military Leadership in the Far Eastern War, 1941-1945*, ed. B. Bond and K. Tachikawa, London 2004, 13.

⁶⁵ The *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Morning, 28 November 1914, 2. Although the article described Churchill as tall, he was, according to the material preserved at Sandhurst, 5 ft 6 7/10 ins. In this sense, he was not considered to be a tall man in Britain. See M. Gilbert, *In Search of Churchill: Historian's Journey*, London 1995, 17.

⁶⁶ The *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Morning, 20 March 1920, 3.

⁶⁷ The article used the Japanese word 'haraguroi' in describing Churchill, which is translated into English words like 'wicked', 'black hearted', and 'scheming'.

War.⁶⁸ Then, in 1933, the paper claimed that Churchill took an accommodating view on the position of Japan at the annual assembly of the Anti-Socialism Union. In this sense, it positively described Churchill as an understanding politician, who declared that it was unwise for Britain to enter into a military conflict with Japan, and that, before criticizing Japanese actions, Britain had to try to accept the position of Japan in the Far East.⁶⁹ As such, the image of Churchill in the newspaper changed over time as his position in British politics and the position of Japan in the international community changed.

The idea of democracy and freedom, which Churchill embodied in British and Japanese visual propaganda, was disregarded in pre-war Japan. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan sought to develop a modern political system, but the new system was authoritarian, not democratic. The 1889 constitution framed Japanese citizens as 'subjects', and although it enumerated the freedoms of 'subjects', such as freedom of thought, speech, religion, assembly, association, press, and property, it provided no guarantees for such freedoms. They were carried out only within the bounds of the law and, according to Maki, 'what was guaranteed was not the enjoyment of freedoms by the people, but the right of the government to limit their exercise.'⁷⁰ Although the Imperial Diet, in which the House of Representatives represented the constituency, was established in 1889, suffrage was limited to men who paid a certain amount of tax and, as a result, voters were restricted to only one per cent of the total population in Japan.⁷¹ It was not until 1925 that universal suffrage for men over 25 years old was achieved. However, although the democratic movement in the

⁶⁸ The *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Morning, 1 May 1925, 8.

⁶⁹ Ibid, Evening, 19 February 1933, 1.

⁷⁰ J. M. Maki, *Government and Politics in Japan: The Road to Democracy*, London 1962, 22–3.

⁷¹ A. Mukhopadhyay, *The Japanese Political System*, Delhi 1994, 23.

Taisho period (1912–26) seemed to advance democracy in Japan, at the same time the government enacted laws that suppressed freedoms, such as the Peace Preservation Law in 1925.⁷² Authoritarianism and militarism took control of Japan after the Manchurian crisis in 1931–2, eliminating moderates and political parties through targeted strategies of assassination and oppression. Maki explains that the political parties ‘were accused of being un-Japanese because they represented a foreign, Western institution and, even more, liberalism that was incompatible with the unique structure of Japanese politics’.⁷³ As such, democracy was assumed unsuitable for Japanese politics by certain militaristic and chauvinistic civilians, and, especially after the Manchurian crisis, it collapsed and was eventually disregarded through a series of political assassinations, censorship, public indoctrination, and suppression of political activities.

In Japanese propaganda during the Pacific War, Churchill was depicted as a symbol of Britain. Themes like ‘Christianity’, ‘fighting spirit’, and ‘democracy’ were used to describe the nature of Churchill and his country, yet these concepts were synonymous with imperialism and colonialism. These motifs, in Japanese eyes, were based on British supremacy, which was built upon the sacrifice of Asia and Africa. Those ‘virtues’ were filled with Eurocentricity and hypocrisy, seen from those who lived in non-Western regions in the middle of the twentieth century. The ‘freedom’ Churchill believed in was achieved at the expense of others. At the outset of the war, Japan emphasized Churchill’s support for colonialism in order to poison non-white populations’ minds against Britain, yet as the momentum of the war turned against Japan and Japan seemed certain to lose the war, Churchill became a symbol of the old world, one pushed around by Japan’s prime enemy, the United States of America.

⁷² Maki, *Government and Politics in Japan*, 27.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 25-7.

At the beginning of the Pacific War, Japan proclaimed herself the leader of Asia and advocated the freedom of Asia from American and British control. She named the Pacific War the 'Greater East Asian War' and tried to found a 'Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere' by overturning Western rule.⁷⁴ Japan intended to unite Asian peoples through anti-Western propaganda and, in this context, Churchill and Roosevelt were seen as the symbols of Asian colonization. Rhodes, in *Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion: World War II*, presents various Japanese visual propaganda. One leaflet, entitled 'One Billion Asians Against Anglo-Americans' shows that Japan intended to unite disparate Asian peoples through anti-Western propaganda.⁷⁵

The anti-British and anti-American campaign during the war was not very successful, but some Asian people preferred new imperialists to the old ones. Prior to the Second World War, Japan was held in a different, special regard by non-white races in Asia and America. The fact that she defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5), that the coloured beat the white race, gave Asian people a hope of freedom from Western colonization. Nehru, later prime minister of India, praised the Japanese triumph:

So Japan had won, and she entered the charmed circle of the great Powers. The victory of Japan, an Asiatic country, had a far-reaching effect on all the countries of Asia. I have told you how, as a boy, I used to get excited over it. That excitement was shared by many a boy and girl and grown-up in Asia. A great European Power had been defeated; therefore Asia could still defeat Europe as it had done so often in the past. Nationalism spread more rapidly over the eastern countries and the cry of 'Asia for Asiatics' was heard.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Horne, *Race War!*, 3.

⁷⁵ Rhodes, *Propaganda*, 248.

⁷⁶ J. Nehru, *Glimpses of World History: Being Further Letters to His Daughter, Written in Prison, and Containing a Rambling Account of History for Young People*, Bombay 1934, 479.

Japanese propaganda before and during the war stirred the non-white population in Asia and even in America, which had been oppressed and segregated by the white population.⁷⁷ By the outbreak of the Pacific War, many Asian countries had experienced some kind of Western rule. Sutan Sjahrir, an Indonesian nationalist leader, analysed that Asians felt 'disaffection with the Whites' and they had 'the Asiatic inferiority feelings, which seek compensation in a glorification of the Japanese'.⁷⁸ Japanese propaganda did not create a new hostility, but inflamed one which had already existed among Asians. The Japanese emphasized racial discrimination and exploitation by the British, and sought Asian and African deference to Japan. British defeats in the early stage of the war and their evacuation were celebrated by some Asian people.⁷⁹ The British and American approach to Asian and African people made it possible for Japan to use these propaganda tactics.

A poster by an unknown artist entitled 'Rise of Asia' proclaims that Japanese leadership would break Western control over Asia.⁸⁰ The alphabet letters ABCD meant America, Britain, Republic of China, and the Dutch, who held interests in Eastern Asia and had implemented economic sanctions on Japan,⁸¹ and the Japanese government regarded them with hostility. At the bottom of the figure, Churchill can be seen lying on the Union flag. His face looks like a traditional Japanese ogre, and he grabs a stick with his right hand. It implies that Britain led by Churchill had beaten Asia with his stick, but that the Japanese saved people by breaking down

⁷⁷ Horne, *Race War!*, 43.

⁷⁸ C. Thorne, *Racial Aspects of the Far Eastern War of 1941–1945*, Oxford 1982, 338.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 343.

⁸⁰ Rhodes, *Propaganda*, 247.

⁸¹ M. Hane, *Modern Japan: A Historical Survey*, Oxford 2001, 314.

the 'ABCD circle'. The chain which the Japanese soldier ripped down suggests oppression and slavery by Western powers.

For Japan her main enemy in the Pacific War was the United States of America, and for Britain it was Nazi Germany in the Second World War. Although the Pacific War had caused fatal damage to the British Empire, it was deemed to be of less importance in Britain's and Churchill's mind.⁸² Thus in Asia, the British army relied a great deal on Asian and African soldiers to fight against Japan,⁸³ and was ambivalent about the racial identities of those who fought to defend the British Empire. Japanese propaganda emphasized British colonialism in order to convert those soldiers and persuade them to switch to Japanese forces.

A caricature collected at the Churchill Archive, Cambridge,⁸⁴ was distributed by the Japanese army for African soldiers fighting for Britain in Asia. It emphasized that 'Japanese soldiers are fighting against the white British soldiers', and, in this sense, they did not intend to kill non-white people. It declared that:

The Japanese Forces are so strong that the British soldiers are afraid of fighting against them, so that the British soldiers make you fight. You have been brought here from Africa to be killed by the Japanese soldiers. The Japanese soldiers are fighting against the white British soldiers. The Japanese don't want to kill you, Africans. Come soon to the Japanese with a white flag and your rifle upside down.

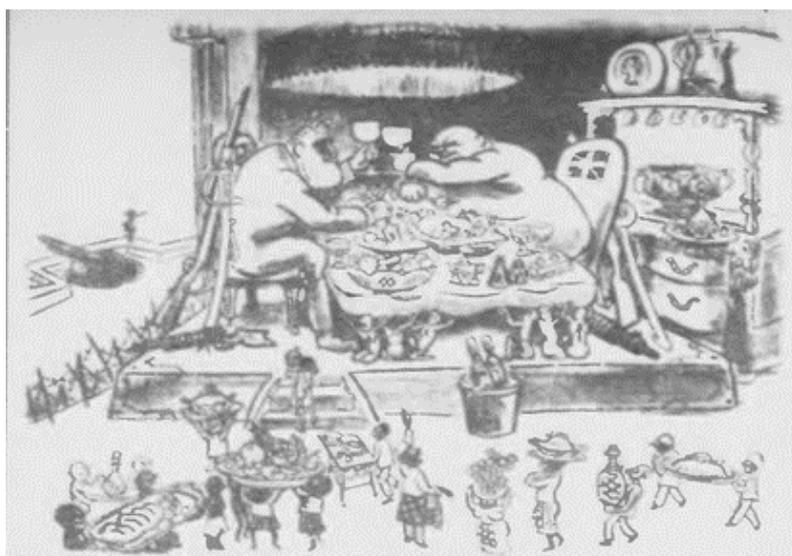
The suggestion here appears to be that Africans should surrender and desert to the Japanese army, where they would be well treated. The caricature depicts Churchill as a slave owner, holding chains around the

⁸² R. Douglas, *The World War, 1939–1943: The Cartoonist's Vision*, London 1990, 148.

⁸³ D. Ford, *The Pacific War*, London 2012, 120.

⁸⁴ Artist unknown, Xerox copy of Japanese cartoon featuring WSC, 1945, Churchill Archives Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge.

African soldier, with a whip on his left arm. His famous cigar is drawn to make him look like a gangster, and his nice John Bull-esque clothes are contrasted with the soldier's bare feet. By depicting crosses with skulls, it made up the image of the British Empire or western culture as a tomb of African people. The themes of this picture are inequality and false masculinity.



<Figure 1> *Shashin Shuho* No. 294, 20 October 1943

In Japan, images of Churchill as an exploiter of Asia, and a henchman of Roosevelt were also circulated. After Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941, Churchill was frequently depicted in the *Shashin Shuho*. Fig. 1 is a caricature in *Shashin Shuho*, published on 20 October 1943.⁸⁵ While a huge Roosevelt and equally large Churchill are enjoying a luxury meal, small native people in their colonies deliver their dishes for them. The table

⁸⁵ Japan Center for Asian Historical Record (JACAR) Ref. A06031088900, Cabinet Intelligence Bureau Related Publications, *Shashin Shuho* (Weekly Photographical Journal) No. 294, National Archives of Japan.

was built upon naked coloured people, and indicates that Anglo-American superiority was attained at the expense of their colonies. An artillery gun was drawn next to Roosevelt and implies how violent they were in order to seize power over colonies, and destroy natives' lives. By depicting those two leaders ominously, it emphasized the cruelty of Britain and America.



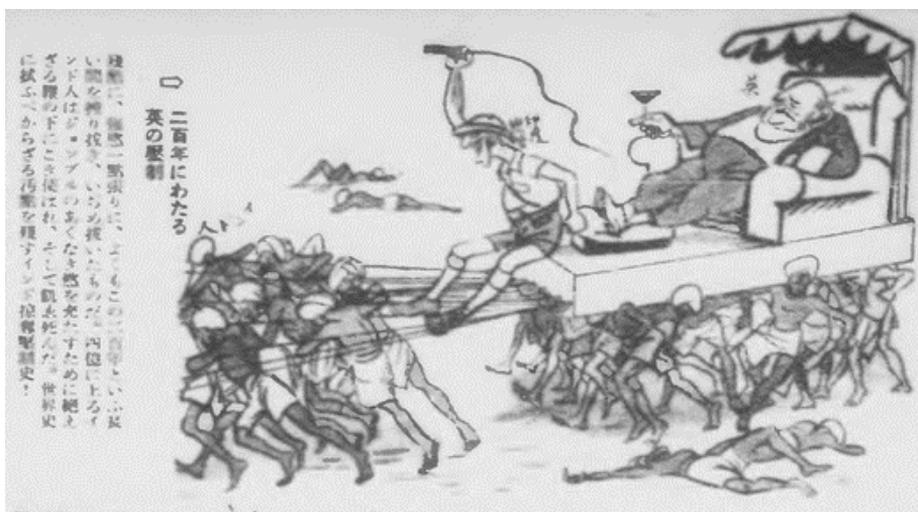
<Figure 2> *Shashin Shuho* No. 294, 20 October 1943

Fig. 2 is also from the 20 October 1943 issue.⁸⁶ Churchill and Roosevelt are monsters, half-mankind and half-beast, who eat Asian and African profits. The caption implies the mistrust in those leaders, who were ready to break any international treaties and laws in order to profit from Asia and Africa. It implies that they had attained power over Asia and Africa by

⁸⁶ Ibid.

concluding ‘legitimate’ yet unequal treaties, and had exploited native people with their hypocritical attitude of the ‘White men’s burden’.

As mentioned before, Churchill was vehemently against Indian independence, and his attitude was too imperialistic even in his own time. In Japan, Churchill was often used to symbolize Indian coercion. In the context of the liberation of Asia, he could not be a leader representing the free world.



<Figure 3> *Shashin Shuho* No. 281, 21 July 1943.

As Fig. 3 shows,⁸⁷ Japanese propaganda asserted that Britain had to be swept away from Asia to protect native people in India. The caption of the figure denotes two hundred years of colonization, and how badly Indian people were treated by Britain. The caricature does not mention the name of Churchill explicitly; however the fat John Bull on the seat can easily be seen to represent him.

⁸⁷ JACAR Ref. A06031087600, Cabinet Intelligence Bureau Related Publications, *Shashin Shuho* (Weekly Photographical Journal) No. 281, National Archives of Japan.



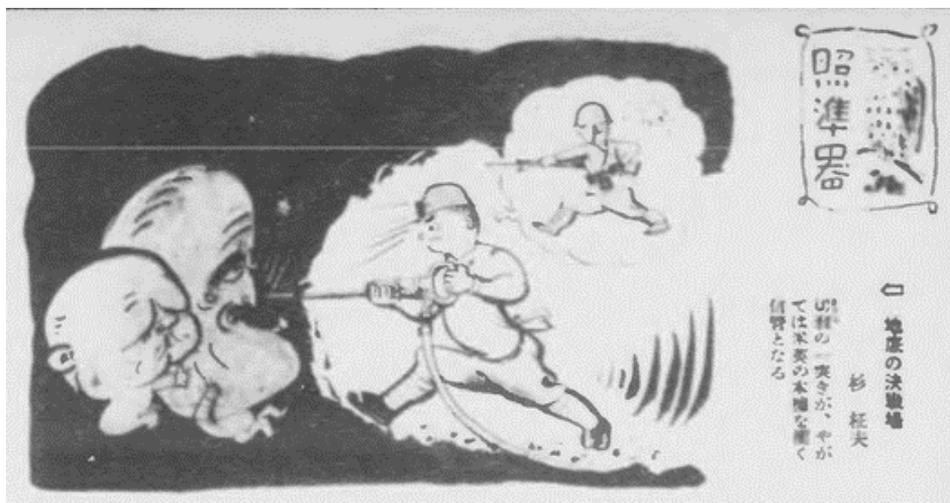
<Figure 4> *Shashin Shuho* No. 317, 19 April 1944.

Fig. 4 is a caricature of the Indian liberation from Britain.⁸⁸ Churchill is sitting on the couch of India, but overturned by the Indian, who has been imprisoned in the base of the chair. The caption says that ‘now that your fellow beings came to save you, let’s spread your arms and legs’. The man running away from Indian flags is Lord Mountbatten, who was the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia Command (1943–6).⁸⁹ It implies that with Japanese help, India could liberate herself from British rule. Visual propaganda distributed in Japan focused on British colonial history, and aimed to legitimize the ultimate Japanese war objective of Asian freedom. Japan found the best emblem of Western arrogance in Churchill, due to his late-Victorian imperialism.

The other image of Churchill is found in his relationship with Roosevelt. Since Japan’s main enemy was the United States, Churchill was frequently drawn alongside Roosevelt in Japanese propaganda. Except for the colonial context, he was depicted as a sub-entity of Roosevelt.

⁸⁸ JACAR Ref. A06031091200, Cabinet Intelligence Bureau Related Publications, *Shashin Shuho* (Weekly Photographical Journal) No. 317, National Archives of Japan.

⁸⁹ ‘Mountbatten, Louis Francis Albert Victor Nicholas (1900–1979)’, *ODNB*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31480>.



<Figure 5> *Shashin Shuho* No. 285, 18 August 1943.



<Figure 6> *Shashin Shuho* No. 340, 27 September 1944.

Fig. 5 shows Churchill's position in the Pacific War.⁹⁰ Behind Roosevelt, he is awaiting the attack by the Japanese army. He is almost like a baby, seeking protection from the USA. Fig. 6 shows that Roosevelt is tying up Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975), the leader of the Republic of China, with the chain of dollars.⁹¹ The caricature was published on September 1944, when airstrikes by the American army were destroying Japanese social structures. It denotes that for America, Britain or China were just stepping-stones or vehicles for American prosperity.

The Japanese government tried to show people that the Allies were not monolithic. Those countries seemed to be united under the name of democracy and proclaimed a 'free world'; the propaganda warned that America would rule the world once the war was over. It certainly sounds like sour grapes on the Japanese part, yet it was proved correct. When defeat seemed apparent, Japan depicted Churchill as a winner of the war but a loser in the new international system.

Although Japan justified the invasion of Asia for the nobler purpose of the 'liberation of Asia', it was apparent that her aim was to exploit Asia just as Western powers had done previously. To counter the claim of racial discrimination by the Japanese, the Atlantic Charter was signed by Churchill and Roosevelt, which declared idealistic guidelines such as self-government. Yet Churchill, because of the empire, still clung to the idea of rule by white men. Gandhi told Roosevelt in 1942 that 'the Allied declaration that [they] are fighting to make the world safe for freedom of the individual sounds hollow so long as India, and for that matter Africa, are

⁹⁰ JACAR Ref. A06031088000, Cabinet Intelligence Bureau Related Publications, *Shashin Shuho* (Weekly Photographical Journal) No. 285, National Archives of Japan.

⁹¹ JACAR Ref. A06031093400, Cabinet Intelligence Bureau Related Publications, *Shashin Shuho* (Weekly Photographical Journal) No. 340, National Archives of Japan.

exploited by Great Britain, and America has the Negro problem in her own home'.⁹² This statement clearly aimed to denounce the attitude of Churchill, who was convinced that white men should rule the world. What Asia wanted was not cultural imperialism or paternalism where people would lead a Westernized and 'civilized' life.⁹³ Churchill ran counter to the trend towards decolonization and held on to the principle of white power. He personified Asian coercion by Britain in Japanese visual propaganda, and at the same time he symbolized the British Empire in ruination. In Japanese propaganda, Churchill was the one who had fought against Japan for American supremacy. The Japanese depicted in images of Churchill two types of Britishness. He represented both old and new Britain: the old empire which had colonized Asia and Africa and oppressed non-white people, and the new kingdom which would serve America.

Conclusion

The paper has examined contrasting perceptions of Churchill's leadership in Britain and Japan. In Britain, he was praised for his military leadership. He was considered to be an inspirational leader who always stood alongside the people. He embodied his country, and the concepts he was proud of: British destiny, fighting spirit, and democracy. In Japan, on the contrary, he was depicted as a leader of Western civilization in a negative way. Because of Japanese negative campaigning against Britain in Asia, Churchill was portrayed as an exploiter, symbolizing colonialism and imperialism. He was almost like a slave owner or gangster in Japanese visual propaganda, and

⁹² Thorne, *Racial Aspects*, 356.

⁹³ *Ibid*, 369.

those concepts of British virtue were depicted to show British arrogance and racism.

The paper could not cover visual materials outside Britain and Japan, and because of the limitation of Japanese primary sources, it could not cover the Japanese depiction of Churchill by the popular public. In other countries, German propaganda accused Churchill more of his exploitation of working-class people and emphasized his upper-class insularity. Propaganda in continental Asia might tell us more about how Asians viewed Churchill through the prism of his imperialism and colonialism. Also, because it compared 'British' with Japanese propaganda, it did not mention the diversity within Britain. Some English people might have respected Churchill as a hero, yet the Scots, Welsh, and Irish could have considered him differently. By simplifying the definition of Britain, the paper did not discuss different identities within the country. It is very important to look at Churchill from such perspectives, in order to grasp the entirety of perspectives on one of the 'greatest' men in history.

The Politics of Stalemate in the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Case of the Harold Wilson's Policy towards the June 1967 War

Erika Tominaga*

Abstract

The article examines British Prime Minister Harold Wilson's policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict during the June 1967 War, exploring why Wilson was reluctant to become an active arbitrator in the conflict and why he supported the Resolution 242 even though he sustained economic and political damage from the war. Answering those research questions helps to clarify one part of the historical background of the enduring Arab-Israeli stalemate. Three historical interpretations could be provided in the article: the first reason emanated from Britain's wish to contain the Soviet influence in the Middle East. As a result of the June 1967 War, Israel seemed to serve as a deterrent power, the role of which Britain used to act in 1950s. Secondly, unlike Arab countries, Israel was regarded to be deserving of Western support. Thirdly, even though it turned out that Israel had territorial ambition, Britain was no longer an influential power in the Middle East to assume the required leadership to mediate the conflict. In other words, peace was not necessary for Britain and, one may go so far as to say that Britain's reluctance to arbitrate the Arab-Israeli conflict in part caused the long-lasting and entangled stalemate of the conflict.

Keywords: The Second World War, Winston Churchill, Propaganda, Japan

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Introduction

Despite the United States being the leading mediator of the Arab-Israeli peace process for more than 70 years, a lasting peace agreement has not been achieved. This prolonged period of conflict has impacted many of America's Western allies more profoundly than America itself, and leads us to question: why was the United States the only major power to lead a peace process? Why did other countries not propose a viable peace plan and lead a wider peace initiative in the region? The aim of this article is to depict a historical picture by focusing on Western allies' reactions, thereby clarifying one of the reasons why a lasting peace settlement has eluded the region for so long.

As a case study, it will focus on British Prime Minister Harold Wilson's policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict during the June 1967 War. Wilson was known for his attempts to mediate between the United States and North Vietnam. His peace initiative was, in part, motivated by a desire to avoid Britain's military involvement in the Vietnam War,¹ but he also hoped that mediating this conflict would bring some international prestige to Britain at a time when its power and influence was waning.² Despite the

¹ Wilson also faced the growing unpopularity of the war at home and increasing pressure from Labour backbenchers to take action for peace, particularly after the United States began its bombing campaign and introduced ground troops. Rhiannon Vickers, "Harold Wilson, the British Labour Party, and the War in Vietnam," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 10, no. 2 (Spring: 2008), 43. Wilson's support also complicated London's relationship with members of the Commonwealth, most of whom were either opposed to the war or neutral, and no doubt played a part in establishing the British as too pro-American in the eyes of General de Gaulle of France, thus contributing to the delay in Britain's entry into the EEC. Sylvia Ellis, *Britain, America, And the Vietnam War* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2004), 270.

² John Dumbrell and Sylvia Ellis, 'British Involvement in Vietnam Peace Initiatives, 1966-1967: Marigolds, Sunflowers, and "Kosygin Week",' *Diplomatic History*, vol. 27, no.1 (January 2003), 118-119.

ambition, Wilson was not eager to be actively involved in the peace settlement of the June 1967 War even though he later lamented that the negative outcomes provoked by the war, namely the closure of the Suez Canal and an Arab oil embargo, in part, resulted in the November 1967 Sterling devaluation.³ It is true that UN Resolution 242 was based on the British proposal. But the main content, namely requiring Israeli withdrawal from ‘territories’—one interpretation of which was that Israel should not necessarily return all of the lands occupied in the June 1967 War—, partway caused the protracted conflict. People involved in the UN negotiation indeed realised the meaning of this clause, foreseeing that the peace settlement would not be achieved easily.⁴ It is therefore important to explore why Wilson was so reluctant to become an active arbitrator in the Arab-Israeli conflict and was satisfied with the flimsy UN Resolution while sustaining damage from the war.

With regard to Britain’s policy towards the Middle East, events before and during the 1956 Suez Crisis as well as political interactions between the Gulf and South Arabian nations have attracted much attention by scholars. But its policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict after 1956 has been generally overlooked. While Mosh Gat has broadly analysed the relationship between Britain and Israel during the 1967 War, he did not cover some important newly declassified documents as the book was published in 2003. Although Simon C. Smith has analysed Britain’s policy during the June 1967 War, the analytical focus has been limited in exploring the Anglo-American

³ Scott Newton, ‘The Sterling Devaluation of 1967, the International Economy and Post-War Social Democracy’, *The English Historical Review*, vol. CXXV, no.515 (2010), 919.

cost Britain the balance of payment £20m a month.

⁴ Author’s Skype interview of Kunio Katakura, 27 September 2016. Katakura was an Arabic-trained diplomat of Japanese Foreign Ministry from the time and later became Ambassador to Iraq, UAE and Egypt in 1990s. See also Sydney Dawson Bailey, *The Making of Resolution 242* (Dordrecht, Boston and Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1985), 143-196.

relationship.⁵ Within this respect, this article will also contribute to the development of the research in this field.

It is also valuable to look at the June 1967 War in order to consider the historical background of the stalemated conflict. The June 1967 War markedly changed the balance of power in favour of Israel. Washington found an opportunity in Israel's overwhelming victory to curtail the Soviet influence in the region, which resulted in the origin of America's overt and obvious support for Israel. One might perhaps indicate that Israel's invincibility backed by the United States and the clause of Resolution 242 made the country less prone to compromise to the peace negotiation, which frustrated the Arab neighbours over the occupation, jumping to commence the Yom Kippur War. The shift in balance of power between Israel and the Arab states also consolidated the influence of the Palestinian liberation movements, partly originating the terrorist activities nowadays.

The analysis of this article is based on the archival documents stored in The National Archives (TNA), Kew, and, to a lesser extent, The Lyndon B. Johnson Library (LBJL), Austin, Texas. The other sources include the author's interview to related persons, the official report of parliamentary debates and the related volumes of the *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*.

⁵ Moshe Gat, *Britain and the Conflict in the Middle East, 1964-1967: The coming of the Six Day War* (Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger, 2003); Simon C. Smith, *Ending Empire in the Middle East: Britain, the United States and post-war decolonization, 1945-1973* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012).

1. Historical Background: The Wilson Government's Concealed Pro-Israel Stance

The 1956 Suez adventure convinced the leaders of Britain that actions abroad regarded as 'imperialist' would no longer be tolerated by the international community. The world was witnessing a period of decolonisation and the trend was increasing. Tore T. Petersen goes so far as to say that, if some Britons continued to believe that their country was a world power even after 1945, 'this view could no longer be sustained after 1956'.⁶ Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser's prestige was boosted profoundly as a champion of an anti-Western pan-Arabism, and the regional balance of power marked the end of European predominance in the Middle East. The leaders of Britain realised that it was only a matter of time before Britain would be forced to quit the region.

This declining power concerned the leaders of Britain since the country had acted as a deterrent against Soviet encroachment. Britain and the United States were concerned that the Soviet Union was trying to exploit Arab nationalism. In particular, Nasser was regarded as sensitive to the Soviet political encroachment. The two leading countries in the free world believed that the USSR was attempting to create political instability, thereby threatening the Western interest, particularly access to Gulf oil. They therefore considered that the preservation of Western interests was dependent on political stability in the region.⁷ Since Britain appeared to be the most vulnerable power in the Middle East, it hoped pro-Western

⁶ Tore T. Petersen, 'Suez 1956: European colonial interests and US Cold War prerogatives', eds. by Daniel Möckli and Victor Manuer, *European-American Relations and the Middle East: From Suez to Iraq* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 19.

⁷ See Peter L. Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East: US Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1945-61* (Chapel Hill, NC, and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

regional regimes would be a deterrent power against the Soviet-backed Arab radicals. Britain therefore tried to protect oil-rich and pro-Western regimes by providing physical security, thereby allowing them to combat the Soviet threat. The pro-Western Arab regimes were, nevertheless, vulnerable to the growing influence of Nasser's anti-Western campaign.

Britain was aware of the fact that Israel was enhancing its military abilities and this dampened the Arab nationalists' willingness to wage war. France first sold jet fighters to Israel in 1953 and had increasingly recognised Israel's strategic value against Nasser's Egypt that was supporting Algeria's National Liberation Front (NLF), expanding so far as to sell its advanced military hardware to the country. Then Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, surely perceived that a French-armed Israel could help maintain political stability in the Middle East and therefore also decided to release to Israel several Meteors, jet fighters, and artillery pieces. Yet, the actual delivery was delayed. It was during the 1958 Iraq revolution and the consequent uprising in Jordan that Britain truly recognised the importance of maintaining Israel's military capabilities. Responding to King Hussein's appeal for assistance in deterring a disturbance in Jordan, Britain asked permission from Israel for the Royal Air Force (RAF) to use the country's airfields and Israel consented to the request. Here, Israel demonstrated its ability to serve as a useful regional power, thereby maintaining the political stability. Consequently, Britain sold Israel Centurion tanks, which were top of Israel's wish list, jet fighters and anti-aircraft missiles. Indeed, since the 1958 turmoil, Britain started an actual withdrawal from the region.⁸ As of

⁸ Ritchie Owendale, *Britain, the United States and the transfer of power in the Middle East, 1945-1962* (London: Leicester University Press, 1996), 211. Owendale thinks that the events in 1958 were more decisive in terms of Britain's withdrawal from the region. See also: Smith, 'Centurions and Chieftains: Tank Sales and British Policy towards Israel in the Aftermath of the Six-Day War', *Contemporary British History*, Vol.28, No. 2 (2014), 220-221; Stephen Blackwell, *British military intervention and the struggle for Jordan:*

late 1950s to 1960s, the balance of power moved slightly in favour of Israel which worked for the leaders of Britain in terms of containment of Soviet influence.

Regarding Britain's preference towards the Arab-Israeli conflict, one should also take into account the ideology of the Labour Party, which was in power during the June 1967 War. The majority of the Labour Party regarded Israel as a progressive social-democracy, which deserved British support. June Edmonds stresses that, since the establishment of Israel, the Labour Party viewed the country as a natural supporter of their Party. The ideology, which was based on a sense of shared political purpose with Israel, emanated from three distinct, albeit interrelated streams of social democratic thought, the tradition of reformism and the historically close association between the Labour Party and Western Jews.⁹ During Wilson's premiership, the State of Israel was led by Mapai, a centre-left political party, and since 1968, Israeli Labour Party, which also gave the Labours a sense of unity. Indeed, as of 1967, two hundred Labour MPs were paying members of the Labour Friends of Israel (LFI). The National Executive Committee also contained many pro-Israeli members and continued to show its support for Israel.¹⁰ What is more, Prime Minister Harold Wilson himself was well known for his pro-Israeli stance. David Watkins, the Labour MP and the Director of the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding (CAABU) since September 1983, argued that 'Wilson, the most pro-Israeli Prime Minister ever, . . . took pleasure in

King Hussein, Nasser and the Middle East crisis, 1955-1958 (New York and London: Routledge, 2009), Chapter 10; Blackwell, 'Britain, the United States and the Syrian Crisis, 1957', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 11, No.3 (2000), 139-158.

⁹ June Edmonds, *The Left and Israel: Party-Policy Change and Internal Democracy* (London: Macmillan, 2000), 8.

¹⁰ Dusan J. Djonovich (ed.), *United Nations Resolutions Series II, Vol. VI 1966-67* (New York: Oceana, 1989), 8.

serving Israeli orange juice to visiting Arab leaders who did not take alcohol'.¹¹ In a similar vein, Richard Crossman, the Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons, wrote in his diary that Wilson was 'wholly pro-Israel'. He also claimed that Roy Jenkins, Home Secretary, and John Silkin, Chief Whip, were sympathetic towards the Israelis too, and he described himself, saying 'I'm pro-Israel'.¹²

Wilson's pro-Israeli orientation was, aside from the shared value between the Labour Party and the Israelis, emanated from his commitment to Atlanticism. David Reynolds portrays this by commenting that 'as party leader . . . he stood firmly in the Bevinite tradition',¹³ it was in the realm of the Anglo-American relationship where Wilson emphasised particular importance, at least by the end of 1967. Wilson was of the view that the strong Anglo-American cooperation could undermine the Soviet influence, the thinking of which shaped his general attitude towards foreign policy. But one might point out that Wilson was rather forced to maintain a close relationship with Washington. Avoiding the devaluation of Sterling constituted Wilson's most important and impending agendas by the end of 1967 and he was well aware of America's goodwill in maintaining the parity of Sterling/Dollar.¹⁴ John Young has argued that, ironically, 'this acted as a

¹¹ David Watkins, *The Exceptional Conflict: British Political Parties and the Arab-Israeli Confrontation* (London: CAABU, 1984), 35.

¹² Richard Crossman, *The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister*, Volume Two (London: Hamish Hamilton: and Jonathan Cape, 1976), 355-356.

¹³ David Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled: British Policy & World Power in the 20th Century* (Longman, 1991), 227.

¹⁴ One should also indicate that Britain's global role was not merely a matter of her own interests but also for the position of the United States. McCourt has argued that Britain was expected by others, particularly the United States, to be 'a power capable of playing an expensive role'. By 1964, America's opposition to British Imperialism had given way to a belief that it was in America's own interests for 'its junior ally' to maintain 'the last vestiges of a global military infrastructure'. In a similar vein, Ponting explains that the United States was strongly opposed to devaluation because the Pound was regarded as a first line of defence for the dollar, the position of which was

restraint on London's independence'.¹⁵ It was believed that Britain maintained global prestige thanks to owning a major currency and, according to Philip Darby, the conception of Britain as a world leading power was 'too deeply rooted in Britain's outlook and history' to be questioned easily.¹⁶ Wilson therefore tended to cooperate with Americans in his foreign policy and the Middle East was not exceptional.¹⁷ During Wilson's premiership, America's pro-Israeli policy had been strengthening by President Lyndon B. Johnson, whom the Israelis regarded as one of the most reliable friends since he was a Senator, as well as his Jewish and pro-Israeli advisers, such as McGeorge Bundy, National Security Advisor until 1966 and Special Consultant during the June 1967 War, Under Secretary William Bundy, Walt Rostow, National Security Advisor since 1966, and Ambassador to the UN Arthur Goldberg.¹⁸

being undermined by trade deficits. David M. McCourt, 'What was Britain's "East of Suez Role"? Reassessing the Withdrawal, 1964-1968', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 20 (2009), 459, 462; Clive Ponting, *Breach of Promise: Labour in Power 1964-1970* (Hamish Hamilton, 1989), 223-226.

¹⁵ John W. Young, *The Labour governments 1964-1970 volume 2: International policy* (Manchester University Press, 2003), 41.

¹⁶ Philip Darby, *British Defence Policy East of Suez, 1947-68 (R.I.I.A.)* (Oxford University Press, 1973), 330.

¹⁷ It should be noted that even though backbenchers strongly opposed to Wilson's vocal support for the United States in Vietnam, many of the Labour members felt well-disposed to Washington. Young contends that 'the legacy of the Attlee years, when the Atlantic alliance had been founded, and in part it reflected the moderate nature of Labour's socialism and the bipartisan approach to foreign policy in Britain since 1945'. Fielding also contends that the United States was influential on Labour right-of-centre revisionists, such as Healey, Jenkins and Gaitskell, who admired the country for its liberalism. Young, *The Labour governments 1964-1970*, 20; Steven Fielding, 'But westward, Look, the land is bright: Labour revisionists and the imaging of America, c. 1945-64', in Jonathan Hollowell, ed., *Twentieth Century Anglo-American Relations* (Macmillan, 2001), 87-89.

¹⁸ See Erika Tominaga, 'The Failure in the Search for Peace: America's 1968 Sale of F-4 Phantoms to Israel and its Policy towards Israel and Jordan', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2016), 303-327.

It should be also pointed out that the British public was very much pro-Israeli as of 1967. This was a natural phenomenon because, in the phrase of François Duchêne, ‘Jews are so much part of the fabric of European history and contemporary life that relations with Israel must, in some sense, be an extension of folk memories on both sides’. In this sense, the State of Israel could never be entirely foreign to people in Western Europe any more than those in America and Russia.¹⁹

Nevertheless, there existed the other important factor to be considered: the Arab reactions. In contrast to the Labour’s sympathy to Israel, its tradition of thought in late 1960s characterised Arabs as ‘backward and feudalistic’.²⁰ Yet, Wilson’s Cabinet considered that openly supporting Israel would incite the Arab party to seek more Soviet assistance, recalling the memory of the 1956 conspiracy between Britain, France and Israel which was still perceived negatively in the Arab world. Nasser indeed spelled out his radical brand of Arab nationalism by comparing the British arms sales to Israel as an act of Imperialism. The Cabinet therefore hoped to maintain the political stability without overtly and publicly supporting Israel.²¹ This resulted in Britain’s low-profile policy in the Middle East, but underneath its public neutrality, the Labour government, under Wilson’s leadership, was comfortable with other Western powers’ support towards Israel.²²

¹⁹ François Duchêne, ‘Israel in the Eyes of Europeans: A Speculative Essay’, in Ilan Greilsammer ed., *Europe and Israel: Troubled neighbours* (Walter de Gruyter: Berlin and New York, 1988), 11.

²⁰ Christopher Mayhew and Michael Adams, *Publish It Not: The Middle East Cover Up* (London: Islamic Propagation Centre International, 1975), 38.

²¹ Foreign Secretary George Brown rather saw the friendship with Israel as harmful and he was more interested in furthering friendship with the Arab states. See Young, *The Labour governments 1964-1970 volume 2*, 7.

²² See also Moshe Gat, ‘Britain and Israel Before and After the Six Day War, June 1967: From Support to Hostility’, *Contemporary British History*, Vol. 18, No. 1, (Spring 2004), 59.

2. The Outbreak of The War and Revealing the Wilson Government's Pro-Israeli Stance

On 22 May 1967, Nasser announced the closure of the Gulf of Aqaba and Strait of Tiran to Israeli shipping and all vessels carrying strategic materials to Israel. The Western countries regarded the Gulf as an international waterway. If the closure continued, Britain would have £20 millions deficit a month on the balance of payments. The closure would also give the Israelis *casus belli*. Immediately after Nasser's announcement, the Cabinet members consequently began to think how to end his action, and reopen the waterway. Aside from pragmatic reasons, the aforementioned political background also put the Cabinet in a position to challenge Nasser quite easily. Crossman recalled that the first Cabinet reaction to the closure was that 'we can't stand aside and let Israel be strangled by Nasser in the Strait of Tiran'.²³ There was a shared belief among the members that 'Nasser's prestige and regional ambitions had to be trimmed.'²⁴ The view of the Cabinet was also fully supported by Parliament, where the mood represented a 'completely bipartisan approach to the problem'.²⁵

In practice, the Cabinet considered a probability to establish an international naval task force that would secure Israeli access to the Gulf and the Straits. Foreign Secretary George Brown, despite his general pro-Arab stance, actively supported an Anglo-American initiative to reopen the waterway. Crossman wrote that it looked 'as if the whole of George Brown's pro-Nasser policy, on which he's been spending weeks and months,

²³ Crossman, *The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister*, 355.

²⁴ William B. Quandt, *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967*, 3rd edition (Washington D.C.: Brooking Institution Press and Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 24.

²⁵ Harold Wilson, *The Labour Government 1964-1970: A personal record* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson: and Michael Joseph, 1971), 397.

has collapsed overnight. Instead George and Harold [Wilson] have suddenly done a complete volte-face and are now wholly pro-Israel'.²⁶ George Brown's motivation was perhaps related to his commitment to Atlanticism: he claimed in the conversation with Wilson and Defence Secretary Denis Healey that 'we should not fail to support the US in their efforts or leave them their own.'²⁷ Yet, Brown was also of the view that 'but we should not wish this to be a solely Anglo-American enterprise'.²⁸ He feared that the initiative would create an Eastern bloc/Arab versus Western bloc/Israel line-up, thereby weakening the influence of the West in the Middle East. The other Cabinet members were more sensitive about a coalition that would remind the Arab states of the collusion of the partners during the Suez crisis. Indeed, they turned down American suggestions to utilise the 1950 Tripartite Declaration among the United States, Britain and France to deter Nasser's demarche.²⁹

Regardless of the Cabinet preference about the form of multi-national naval force to end Nasser's action, the Ministry of Defence was nevertheless

²⁶ Crossman, 355.

²⁷ Note of meeting between the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the Defence Secretary, 23 May, FCO17/490, TNA.

²⁸ Note of meeting between the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the Defence Secretary, 23 May, FCO17/490, TNA.

²⁹ 'Chronology of US-UK consultation on the Middle East, May15-June 6, 1967', undated, National Security Files (NSF), Files of Harold Saunders, Box 34, Lyndon B. Johnson Library (LBJL), Austin, TX. The Declaration was issued by the three nations expressing their opposition to the use of force or threat of force between any of the states in the area. It articulated that were the three governments to find any of the states in the region ready to violate armistice lines, they 'would consistently with their obligations as members of the United Nations, immediately take action, both within and outside the United Nations, to prevent such violation'. 'The Acting Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic and Consular Office', 20 May 1950, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) 1950, Volume V, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, document number 73. Available online: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments> (Accessed on 25 November 2015).

aware that 'such a force would be highly vulnerable in such confined waters so close to Egyptian batteries'. The Ministry believed that 'the Egyptian had no clear view of the action that should be taken if the force were attacked', and in this context, international coalition would lead to the potential for Britain's military involvement in the crisis.³⁰ While the Cabinet members certainly wished to end Nasser's action, they definitely needed to avoid the military involvement as Britain encountered balance of payment problems partially caused by overseas expenditures on defence. The backbenchers harshly accused the costly expenditure and the Cabinet could never afford to consider war as a viable option in the Middle East. The Cabinet consequently decided to avoid any coalitions that would 'incur the risks inherent in any commitment to the use of force to reopen the Straits'.³¹ When Kuwait forewarned Britain on 27 May that the country would embargo oil exports to the country if it took any steps against the interests of Arabs, Wilson and Brown even became reluctant to force the waterway open.³² Instead, Wilson showed interest in the French proposal of discussion between the US, Britain, France and USSR while Brown tried to pass an appropriate Security Council Resolution.³³

By 2 June, the Cabinet nevertheless realised that a war would probably be unavoidable. London learned that Washington was of the view that if Israel won 'after more than 10 years of pouring Soviet arms into the Middle East, the whole Soviet arms game will be profoundly degraded'.³⁴ Harold Wilson consequently hoped for an Israeli triumph if war broke out.³⁵ When

³⁰ Cabinet conclusions, 26 May 1967, CAB 130/323, The TNA.

³¹ Cabinet conclusions, 23 May 1967, CAB 128/42, TNA.

³² A. M. Palliser to A. Blackshaw, 28 May 1967, PREM13/1618, TNA.

³³ 'Middle East', written by Brown, 29 May 1967, CAB 128/130, TNA.

³⁴ Walt Rostow to Lyndon Johnson, 4 June 1967, NSF, Country File: Middle East Crisis, Box 104, LBJL.

³⁵ Dean Rusk to the Embassy in London, 4 June 1967, NFS, Country File: Middle East Crisis, Box 104, LBJL.

the war did break out, Wilson rather regarded a war dominated by Israel as an even opportunity to stabilise the Middle East, and told Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson that:

What I feel is that there is a good chance now that Israelis are pretty generous and magnanimous. They want to be settled there with everybody recognising their existence and the right to live, and obviously they want Aqaba. But I understand they are prepared now to settle the refugee problems once and for all...³⁶

From Wilson's point of view, once the Israelis could secure their borders, they would be ready for peace because he thought that it was Nasser who posed the risk, jeopardising Israel's right to exist. In his Memoirs, he argued that Israel had always suffered from 'a succession of incidents on Israel's borders, some from the UAR side, some from the Palestinian refugees in Jordan, and some of the most provocative from Syria'.³⁷ He never mentioned Israel's aggression towards its neighbours, such as its raid on Samu village in Jordan in November 1966, where it killed 96 people.³⁸ Consequently, the Cabinet decided not to place an embargo on arms sales to Israel as long as the Soviet Union continued to provide weapons to the Arab states.³⁹

³⁶ Telephone conversation between Prime Minister and Lester Pearson, 7 June 1967, PREM 13/1620, TNA.

³⁷ Harold Wilson, *The Labour Government 1964-1970: A personal record* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson; and Michael Joseph, 1971), 394.

³⁸ Clea Lutz Bunch (who is now Clea L. Hupp) argues that the attack severely damaged King Hussein's confidence in the Israelis, which eventually led to the June 1967 War. Bunch, 'Strike at Samu: Jordan, Israel, the United States, and the Origins of the Six Day War', *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (January 2008), 56-57.

³⁹ Cabinet conclusions, 6 June 1967, CAB 128/42, TNA.

Wilson's view was proved when Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol told an American official on 13 June 1967 that Israel had no territorial ambition.⁴⁰ On 23 June, British officials in Tel-Aviv also concluded that 'the Israeli objective is peace and their territorial claims are minimal, much less than we would have anticipated'.⁴¹ In this scenario, support for Israel was justifiable. Wilson's announcement on 9 June demonstrated this stance: he never condemned Israel or called for a prompt withdrawal, but instead, he insisted the necessity of recognising Israel's sovereign right to existence.⁴²

Britain's Actual Stance: A Low Profile Policy

On the surface, Britain was nevertheless trying to avoid publicly taking sides with the state of Israel. It rather sought to restore relationships with the Arab states because the Arab reaction brought severe economic pressure on Britain. In the midst of the War, Radio Cairo claimed that the United States and United Kingdom militarily supported Israel, providing aircrafts and assisting battlefield communications.⁴³ Although this was a 'big lie'—the two countries never militarily assisted Israel—, the memories of the Suez plot was still fresh in the minds of people in the Arab states and the big lie continued to be accepted as truth even after King Hussein confirmed that there was no support from the two Western countries.⁴⁴ Moshe Gat has argued that Britain's low profile policy made the Arab people

⁴⁰ Dear Rusk to the Department of States, 13 July 1967, NSF, Country Files: Middle East Crisis, Box 110, LBJL.

⁴¹ Dean, the Embassy in Washington to Foreign Office (FO), 23 June 1967, PREM/13/1622, TNA. For example, Israel said its interest in demilitarisation along the Syrian border rather than occupation. Editorial note, *FRUS* XIX, doc. 322.

⁴² 'Speaks of Middle Eastern situation', 9 June 1967, PREM 13/ 1620, TNA.

⁴³ The Embassy in Washington D.C. to FO, 9 June 1967, PREM 13/1620, TNA.

⁴⁴ The Embassy in Jeddah to FO, 15 June 1967, PREM 13/1621, TNA.

presume that the country was essentially pro-Israel and anti-Arab and this view was buttressed by Britain's arms transfer to Israel over the late 1950s to 1960s.⁴⁵ Besides, the Arab people were humiliated by the complete defeat and thus tried to represent Israel's triumph 'as the result of encouragement and at least moral support from the "imperialist powers"'.⁴⁶ The leaders of the Arab states subsequently demonstrated a harsh attitude towards Britain and the United States in order to protect their prestige in the Arab world.⁴⁷ For instance, Egyptian President Nasser publicly consolidated his anti-Western stance and refused to reopen the Gulf of Aqaba to the Western vessels, while covertly keeping the communication with the United States via King Hussein of Jordan.⁴⁸ The Arab oil producers also imposed an oil embargo on the West and processed substantial withdrawals from British bank accounts. Those Arab attacks on Britain certainly caused heavy damage to the balance of payments: the closure, as aforementioned, was costing Britain £20 million a month on the balance of payments; the persistence of the Arab oil embargo would result in the reduction of 28 per cent of oil supplies to Western Europe, which would bring a heavy burden on the British balance of payments, equivalent to £50 million; and Arab withdrawal from British bank accounts was a matter of credibility in finance.⁴⁹ Wilson later claimed that the incident eventually

⁴⁵ Gat, 'Britain and Israel Before and After the Six Day War, June 1967', 60-61; Gat, *Britain and the Conflict in the Middle East, 1964-1967: The coming of the Six Day War* (Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger, 2003), 239-242.

⁴⁶ The Embassy in Moscow to FO, 10 June 1967, PREM 13/1620, TNA.

⁴⁷ Although the moderate Arab states, such as Saudi Arabia, did not believe the 'big lie' and wished to remain a good relations with Britain and the United States, they feared that their moderate stand had caused 'embarrassment' in the Arab world.⁴⁷

⁴⁸ With regard to Nasser's tactic, see Fawaz Gerges, 'The 1967 Arab-Israeli War: Origins and Consequences', in Shlaim, Avi and Louis, Roger eds., *The transformation of Arab politics: Disentangling myth from reality*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 201-2.

⁴⁹ Cabinet conclusions, 15 June 1967, CAB 128/42/2, TNA.

led to the devaluation of the pound sterling in November 1967.⁵⁰ The Cabinet subsequently recognised that ‘we need to do all we can to improve Anglo-Arab relations to avoid further damage to British interests and in order to get the Canal open and the oil flowing’.⁵¹

Since late June onwards, it became more difficult for Britain to show its pro-Israeli stance as the Israelis revealed that they were reluctant to move towards peace. Firstly, even though the American as well as British officials in Tel-Aviv were going to reconcile a covert Israeli-Jordanian talk in early July, the Israelis refused to give Hussein any clear indications of their intentions regarding the future of the occupied territories in the West Bank.⁵² Secondly and more importantly, Israel publicly annexed the Arab part of Jerusalem on 30 June. This was opposed to what the Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban had assured George Brown: Eban claimed that Israel would ‘unify the city’ at ‘practical level’ ‘without annexing it’.⁵³ Israel’s declaration of the annexation eventually resulted in Hussein’s refusal to enter into negotiations with Israel. Under this condition, Hussein could not gain support from President Nasser. The British Ambassador to Jordan, Phillip Adams, opined that ‘it is the return of Jerusalem that they [the Jordanians] are after and that the West Bank is of secondary importance’,⁵⁴ and in this respect, it was the Israelis who ruined the negotiations. In short,

⁵⁰ Cairncross questions the causal link between the June 1967 War and the devaluation. See Alec Cairncross, ‘Devaluing the pound: the lessons of 1967’, *Economist*, 14 November 1992, Vol. 325 (7785), 21.

⁵¹ E.M. Rose to D. Allen, 14 June 1967, FCO 17/34, TNA. See also Cabinet Conclusions, 15 June 1967, CAB 128/42/2.

⁵² Until November 1966, King Hussein and his counterparts in Israel had clandestine meetings as regards security against the radical Arab aggressions. See: Douglas Little, ‘A Puppet in Search of a Puppeteer? The United States, King Jordan, 1953-70’, *International History Review*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (1995), pp. 512-544; and Moshe Zak, ‘Israel and Jordan: Strategically Bound’, *Israel Affairs*, Vol. 3, No.1 (1996), 39-60.

⁵³ Caradon, New York, to FO, 21 June 1967, FCO 17/251, TNA.

⁵⁴ Adams, Amman, to FO, 15 July 1967, PREM 13/ 1622, TNA.

Wilson's view, namely that once the Israelis could secure their borders, they would be ready for peace, was now being questioned.

The changing political situation in the Middle East shifted in claims in the House of Commons. On 31 May 1967, James Dickens, Labour MP, stressed the importance of supporting Israel, and this was justified as Israel had fought against 'the axis of Cairo and Moscow'. Duncan Sandys, Conservative MP, and former Defence Secretary, also stated that the strife in the Middle East stemmed from 'the struggle for power within the Arab world' and 'Russia's desire to secure a dominant influence in the Middle East'. And consequently, it was important for Britain to support Israel. Their statements seemed to be applauded while Labour MP Margaret McKay's campaign for Palestinian refugees was totally ignored.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, on 7 July, Douglas Alec-Home, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, recognised that 'there has been a general feeling in the House that the course of the recent momentous events in the Middle East should be reviewed by hon. Members'. Indeed Minister of State at the Foreign Office, George Thomson's remark that:

'we have been able to maintain our links with the majority of Arab Governments, and our differences with certain other Arab Governments, who have not maintained relations with us, have not been of our own making. We would like to have good relations with these countries. We wish them and their people well. We can sympathise with and try to understand their aspirations and desires for a better social order within their own countries'

⁵⁵ Vol. 747 Commons debates, titled 'Middle East', 31 May 1967, available online:

<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/>. (Accessed on 3 December 2015). Watkins recalled that she was subjected to 'a scurrilous campaign' when she criticised the Israeli expansionism that subordinated the Palestinians.⁵⁵ He claimed that 'by the time of the 1967 war, any who expressed Arab sympathies were attacked with unprecedented venom'. Watkins, *The Exceptional Conflict*, 35.

was largely supported by House. Francis Noel-Baker, Labour MP, J. Grimond, the Leader of Liberals, and Will Griffiths, Labour MP, went so far as to insist on the possibility of restoring friendship with Nasser.⁵⁶

Given the change in political situation as well as the atmosphere in House, the Cabinet therefore sought a similar strategy to that of the French president, Charles de Gaulle, in adopting a policy of non-alignment. This strategy prevented France from being identified as being on either side of the conflict. Indeed, France was never criticised as an Israeli supporter despite the fact that the Israelis won victory due to forces mostly armed by the French.⁵⁷

In practice, the Cabinet took a two-fold policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict. On the one hand, the Cabinet condemned Israel in order to appease the Arab states.⁵⁸ This resulted in George Brown's speech at the United Nations General Assembly, in which he accused Israel of the annexation of East Jerusalem, demanding its withdrawal from the occupied territories, as well as an immediate solution to the Palestinian refugee problem.⁵⁹ For the Secretary-General of Mapai (Israeli political party), Golda Meir, Brown's speech was equivalent to that of 'Judas'.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Vol. 749 Commons debates, titled 'Middle East', 9 July 1967.

⁵⁷ The United States certainly agreed to transfer offensive arms, including jet fighters, to Israel. But as of June 1967, the Americans had only completed tank sale to the Israelis.

⁵⁸ 'The Middle East situation', written by the Eastern Department of the Foreign Office, 15 June 1967, PREM 13/1621, TNA.

⁵⁹ While Britain called for an immediate solution to the Palestinian problem, it preferred to see the Palestinian claims in not nationalist but humanitarian terms, foreseeing the possibility of a collapse of the status quo. With regard to Brown's speech, see Appendices E 'Extract from George Brown's speech 21 June 1967 to the Fifth Emergency Session of the United Nations General Assembly', in Frank Brenchley, *Britain, the Six Day War and its aftermath* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 143.

⁶⁰ Smith, *Ending Empire in the Middle East*, 140.

On the other hand, the Cabinet did nothing to push the Israelis to withdraw from the occupied land. The Cabinet was, in fact, satisfied with the current balance of power in the Middle East, which was sustained by the American-Israeli coalition. Indeed, even though Britain tried to be congenial to the Arab states in public, Eban recognised that Britain ‘privately’ supported Israel’s impossibility of retreat.⁶¹ In a similar vein, the United States perceived that ‘the UK is the itchiest of all since the Canal’s continued closure is costing Wilson—and Britain—a great deal’, and thus understood the necessity of Britain’s ostensible pro-Arab stance.⁶² Britain only hoped not to be judged as being on the Israeli side. Cabinet members surely recognised Britain’s diminishing power, even though they had yet to decide on a withdrawal from the East of Suez at this stage. They therefore concluded that it was not Britain but the superpowers that would be able to force the related parties to sit down at the negotiation table.⁶³ This thinking, again, resulted in Britain’s low-profile policy during the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Conclusion

Three reasons could be provided to demonstrate why was the Wilson government so reluctant to arbitrate the Arab-Israeli conflict. The first reason emanated from Britain’s wish to contain the Soviet influence in the Middle East. The balance of power in favour of Israel was beneficial to Britain in terms of maintaining political stability. As a result of the June

⁶¹ Mission to the UN to the Department of State, 26 September 1967, *FRUS* XIX, doc. 449.

⁶² W. Rostow to Johnson, 12 October 1967, NSF, Files of Harold Saunders, Box 34, LBJL.

⁶³ Cabinet conclusions, 11 July 1967, CAB 128/42/2, TNA.

1967 War, Israel seemed to serve as a deterrent power, the role of which Britain used to act in 1950s. The power vacuum caused by Britain's declining influence in the region was now filled with Israel's power, enhanced with stronger military capabilities. Secondly, unlike Arab countries, Israel was regarded to be deserving of Western support. The Labour Party and the Israelis shared political values, which made the Cabinet members trust Israel's ability to maintain political stability as well as its generosity to return the occupied territories to move towards peace. Thirdly, even though it turned out that Israel had territorial ambition, Britain was no longer an influential power in the Middle East to assume the required leadership to mediate the conflict. It was true that peace was the best way to serve British interests. However, it was also true that 'the risks of accepting the *status quo* in the Middle East were reckoned to be smaller than the risks of upsetting it'.⁶⁴

In other words, peace was not necessary for Britain. Britain was satisfied with the *status quo* in the Middle East so long as the country's political and economic interests were preserved. For Britain, the most significant aims were keeping the Gulf of Aqaba open, securing regular and cheap oil supplies, maintaining a large share of the oil industry in the Middle East, and encouraging Arab investment in Britain. In this respect, an interim settlement was important and this stance reflected on its contribution to the conclusion of the UNSC Resolution 242. Yet, one should indicate that Britain in fact realised that the flimsy contents would rather prolong the conflict. The British prioritised its own short-term interests over reaching a settlement that would provide a prosperity and peace in the region. In this respect, if one assumes that Israel's invincibility and the clause of Resolution 242 made it even more difficult to achieve a lasting peace, Harold

⁶⁴ Michael Adams, 'Introduction', in *Publish it not*, page 2 of Introduction (page number is not written here and Foreword).

Wilson's Labour government's policy might have caused one of the reasons why a lasting peace agreement has not been achieved in the Levant.

Some scholars have tended to regard the Arab-Israeli conflict as a peculiar and unique regional conflict.⁶⁵ It is true that the Arab-Israeli conflict has been characterised by the establishment and expansion of Israel, the emergence and decline of Arab nationalism, the development of Islamism and a series of terrorist activities originally emanating from the dismal state of the Palestinian refugees, which indeed makes the conflict exceptional. The author nevertheless contends that the intrusion or indifference of the major powers certainly exacerbated and prolonged the stalemate.

⁶⁵ For example, see: O.A. Westad, 'The Cold War and the international history of the twentieth century,' in Westad and Melvyn P. Leffler (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 8; F. Halliday, 'The Middle East and the Great Powers', in A. Shlaim and Y. Sayigh (eds.), *The Cold War and the Middle East* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 16.

[Book Review]

Xiangmei Wang,
The Study of the Medieval England Rural Women
(Beijing: China Social Sciences Publishing House, 2013)

Lin Liu*

Since the 1980s, the study of woman's history has made great progress in China. According to the Chinese scholar Wenming Liu's statistics in 2003, between 1990 and 2001, there has been a total of 679 research papers and 27 books on the history of women published by Chinese scholars.(p.1) In recent years, with the impact of new historiography, there has been more attention devoted to women's history, and certain new characteristics are becoming clear. First, the research field has been expanded, ordinary women's lives are considered more and more by many scholars, especially young ones. Second, new methods are being introduced, social-gender history has replaced traditional ways and encourages perspectives. Dr. Xiangmei Wang's book *The Study of the Medieval England Rural Women* can be seen as the representative of this new trend.

In the Introduction, Wang points out how problems existed in this field in China with an interesting comparison : "generally, the study of English women's history was mainly confined to the upper class....., about the period, the research was mostly limited to the modern ages....., and about

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the topic, it normally concentrates on the feminist movement and employment problems.....” (p.2) From this point of view, Wang’s book can be seen as a response to these problems, her research period was defined to the middle ages and her subject to rural women, this is an useful compliment to Chinese current women’s history study. Professor Xu Hao affirmed the value of her book in the preface and said: "Wang’s book has made positive efforts to improve the women’s history study in China." (Preface: p. 6)

The main body of this book consists of five chapters. In the first one Wang examines the legal and political rights of rural women; The second focuses on their economic activities; The third mainly investigates the role of rural women in public life; In the fourth chapter Wang discusses the rural women's marriage and family; The last one describes women who are outside of the marriage. Setting the “women” in a wide and complicated social background and analyzing it from multiple perspectives is the primary feature of Wang’s book. So after Wang’s description the reader can easily get a general and vivid view of the social conditions of rural women in middle ages. In Wang’s general argument, medieval rural women were not totally passive although there were many kinds of limitations in their real lives, still “they played an important role in economic lives and also own certain legal rights. For most peasants’ families, there is more cooperation than oppression between men and women, and more harmony than violence between couples.”(p.31) Obviously Wang’s book repaints the traditional portrait of the medieval woman which describes them as the complete victim of masculine authority.

Another important feature of this book is that Wang emphasizes the otherness of the research object, both the overall and internal characteristics of medieval rural women are considered. This is based on Wang’s understanding of the women’ concept, "women, which is never a kind of undifferentiated or immobile concept, but contains diverse groups,

and the social and natural attributes of its connotation change constantly " (p. 22) From the perspective of class and gender, "rural women" in medieval England had some basic commonalities. They all belonged to the labouring class and participated directly in various economic activities, this made them different from the noble women. At the same time, women as a whole were distinguished from men, their attribute as "the second sex" is especially obvious in the medieval society, as Wang said: "For women, gender is the primary factor affecting their social status. Because no matter to which rank they belong... their gender makes them lose lots of opportunities to participate in public affairs." (p. 127)

The differences within the grouping of rural women are also thoroughly described by Wang, and she thinks the rank and the marriage are two primary factors which effects the rural woman's life. Because of her rank women as individuals encountered different economic conditions, social status and occupied different space. And to some extent, Wang shows, marriage also connected with women's freedom. Normally married women owned minimum rights although they got more protection and security, the women who is "not in the marriage relationship", such as the unmarried and the widow obviously enjoyed more independence. (p. 184)

Overview, multiple perspective and the emphasis of inner diversity are two important features of Wang's book, this also represents the new tendency of women's history research away from the traditional way, so the "women "presented in her book have new characteristics.

There are also some questions which are worth being further discussed in this book. Firstly, some issues put forward by Wang are not explored or explained enough. For example, in the Section 1 Chapter3 relating to public space and to the laws of rural women, the discussion of laws in public life is too simplified especially the common law, which is less than one page and its relationship with the village' public life is not mentioned at all. A similar

problem also exists in Chapter 4 regarding the relationships within the rural families; Secondly, the book lacks the diachronic investigation of the object. "Middle ages" is a complicated historical period which contains many stages, and in each stage the women's living conditions change. So it is necessary to define the time and be aware of the changes caused by time. Thirdly, in the epilogue Wang points out: "The situations of medieval England rural women were also affected significantly by regional factor" (p. 231), but this book rarely considers the influence of the regional differences.

Anyway, this is a valuable academic book, the author experiments with new method in the study of woman's history, some of her views can be seen as an important compliment to the past research, and also useful to the continuing study.

[Book Review]

Angus Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture:
'Habits of Heart & Mind'*
(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015)

Keisuke Masaki*

Angus Hawkins's *Victorian Political Culture* is a brilliant book, offering a broad picture of British politics in the nineteenth century. It has two significant features. First, it reveals that 'the enduring potency of partisan pasts, the moral purposes of politics, and the importance of the community, with implicit notions of status and hierarchy, were fundamental' to Victorian politics (p. 387). These three concepts – the past, morality, and community – were employed not only by the Tories, the Conservatives, the Whigs, and the Liberals, but also radicals and the Socialists.¹ On British radicalism, Hawkins argues that, 'Thomas Paine's arguments for "the rights of man" in the 1790s and the Philosophic Radicalism of the 1830s, based on Jeremy Bentham's Utilitarian philosophy, remained peripheral to the mainstream of patriotic political debate' (p. 7). On British Socialism, he claims that, 'It [British Socialism of the 1880s and 1890s] was also a call for moral reform,

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¹ In his previous book, *British Party Politics* (1998), Hawkins employed a different set of conceptions as consistent and fundamental to Victorian politics, which were the past and constitutionalism: see Angus Hawkins, *British Party Politics, 1852-1886* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 6-7.

rather than proletariat revolution’, and goes on to state that, ‘The patriotism espoused by the Socialist movement also drew on earlier radical traditions – a partisan past shaping a moral community of support’ (pp. 381-2). Victorian political culture, therefore, was shaped and underpinned by pragmatism and conservatism, rather than theoretical and ideological innovation, which was common in other European nations and in post-Revolutionary France in particular. By emphasising the values of the past, morality, and community, Hawkins challenges a dominant view in the existing literature that: ‘Victorian Britain is usually characterized as a Liberal age’ (p. 16).²

Second, Hawkins emphasises a shift of governmental frameworks in the process of democratisation in the nineteenth century: from a ‘mixed (form of) government’ to ‘parliamentary government’ and ‘party government’. In the long eighteenth century, between 1688 and 1832, the British polity was ‘mixed government’ characterised by the sovereignty of Parliament, or the monarchy-in-Parliament. Hawkins claims that:

In parliament ‘the estates of the realm’, King, Lords, and Commons, were brought together. By acting on each other in Westminster, they checked the usurpation of power by any one ‘estate’ and secured ‘balance’ between the parts of the constitution. (p. 34)

He also points out that: ‘In a convergence, rather than dispersal, of powers, parliament was the sovereign institution where the functions of executive, legislature, and judiciary merged’ (p. 35). In the process of the passage of the Reform Acts of 1832, ‘parliamentary government’ was

² In his reply to Simon Morgan’s review, Hawkins claims that this book attempts to ‘offer some modification to the view of Victorian politics as expressive of liberal modernity and processes such as secularisation’: see Simon J. Morgan’s review of this book in *Reviews in History* (2016) (<http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1943> [accessed: 27 April 2017]).

established, where the Commons possessed the power to make and unmake governments. After 1832, parliamentary parties became vital to the constitution. 'Their purpose was to save the executive from a corrupting reliance on the prerogative and to insulate debate in Westminster from electoral dictate, preserving the sovereignty of parliament' (p. 104). By the end of 1860s, two parties, Conservative and Liberal, came to dominate Parliament. Their alignment was cohesive, but fluid to a certain extent. They were mutable associations of like-minded opinion, and their affiliation was cemented by consultation and consent, not coercion. The Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884 as well as other statutory acts concerning the parliamentary election, such as the Bribery Act of 1854, the Ballot Act of 1872, the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883, and the Redistribution Act of 1885, prompted 'parliamentary government' to give way to 'party government'. In the late Victorian period, when three out of five male adults had the vote in Britain and Ireland, party politics became more sophisticated. The power of party leaders was enhanced, and effective party discipline replaced the independent discretion of MPs. Westminster and the constituencies were tightly connected. National issues, rather than local concerns, made the difference between winning and losing in electoral contests. Parliamentary candidates who hoped for a successful contest relied on full-time professional party agents and permanent party organisations in the constituencies. The electorate became increasingly party-oriented: 'the embryonic concept of the electoral mandate ... [was] the basis of the cabinet's authority to govern, a ministry deriving its commission from the electorate' (p. 302). 'National parties, enjoying mass popular membership and centralized bureaucracies, were assuming the power to make and unmake governments' (p. 320). In this process, the sovereignty of Parliament was eventually replaced by popular sovereignty.

Hawkins's argument is strong and convincing. It seems to me, however, that there are some points that he could have addressed in the book. First, while looking closely at parliamentary elections, he does not provide detailed analysis of party politics in municipal corporations in the Victorian era. Recently, historians have emphasised that municipal reform and parliamentary reform were closely connected in the early nineteenth century.³ In the aftermath of the passage of the Reform Acts of 1832 and the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, municipal contests were polarised along clear national party lines. Philip Salmon has identified 'the crucial link between the municipal and parliamentary voter registration process and its merger of constituency and council politics'.⁴ It is regrettable that Hawkins does not investigate the extent to which and the way in which Victorian political culture identified by him can be seen in local municipal politics in the nineteenth century. The second point is about when a two-party system was firmly established in British political culture. In this book, he argues that: 'For much of the period from 1832 to 1914 multiple parties were the norm in parliament and the constituencies'. He goes on to state that, 'between 1832 and 1914, it was only the period from 1859 to 1874 that conformed closely to such a simple binary two-party form' (p. 385). In his previous book, *British Party Politics, 1852-1886*, however, he has claimed that: 'Only occasionally since 1886 has British politics operated as a simple two-party system'.⁵ Probably, he has changed his opinion about the establishment of a two-party politics in Britain since the publication of the previous book in 1998. It might have been better to explain why and how he

³ Philip Salmon, "Reform Should Begin at Home": English Municipal and Parliamentary Reform, 1818-32', *Parliamentary History*, 24 (2005), 93-113.

⁴ *Idem*, *Electoral Reform at Work: Local Politics and National Parties, 1832-1841* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), chapter 7, esp. 210.

⁵ Hawkins, *British Party Politics*, 290.

has done so particularly to readers who are familiar with his analysis in *British Party Politics*.

These two criticisms, however, do not undermine the importance of *Victorian Political Culture*. As Anthony Howe points out, this book demonstrates that ‘political history matters’.⁶ According to Hawkins’s reply to the review done by Simon Morgan, the book aims to provide ‘a context for more specialised studies’.⁷ Frank O’Gorman, who has recently published a revised book on British politics in the long eighteenth century, shows a similar opinion.⁸ While emphasising the growing importance of cultural history, he argues that:

I remain convinced that the development of political history, interpreted in the widest and most flexible manner, remains perhaps the most valuable of all approaches to the history of the long eighteenth century. That century, to me at least, is best treated, best studied and best understood within the context of a firm scaffolding of political history in its social, cultural and economic contexts. Many themes in cultural history, crime, law and popular culture, together with our fascination for representation and identities, embrace a continuing preoccupation with how power was exercised, upheld, defended and negotiated. And where power goes, the historian of politics should be prepared to follow.⁹

These two recent books, one on the long eighteenth century and the other on the Victorian era, declare that political history matters to different historians in different fields. On the basis of significant insights offered by the two books, we can understand a modernising Britain much more fully.

⁶ Anthony Howe’s review of this book in *History*, 102:349 (2017), 152.

⁷ See Morgan’s review in *Reviews in History*.

⁸ Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (second edn., London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

⁹ *Ibid.*, xii.