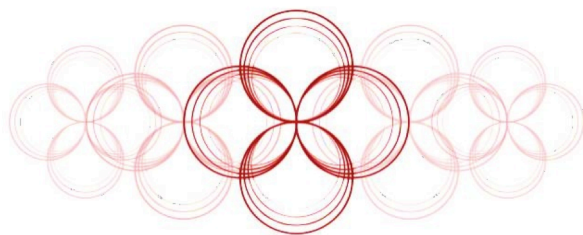


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# FORWARD

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 2017 Edition of the Journal of Anthropological Studies!

What you are currently reading is the first edition of the new Journal of Anthropological Studies, and the culmination of eight months of hard work by a group of very dedicated individuals. The 2017 edition of the Journal of Anthropological Studies is the first undergraduate publication to be printed by the UBC Department of Anthropology since 2012, and will certainly mark the return of the Journal for future years. The opportunity to showcase the best anthropology papers the undergraduate students of UBC have to offer is an honour we do not take lightly, and we are very grateful to all of those who submitted their papers for publication.

As the first undergraduate publication to be printed by the UBC Department of Anthropology in almost five years, the journey to the creation of this collection of articles was challenging, but well worth the effort. I would like to extend my deepest thanks and congratulations to the authors of the articles featured in this journal, for all the hard work they have put into this project. It would not have been possible to get this done without you, and you should feel very proud of what has been accomplished. I would also like to thank the UBC Anthropology Students' Association for all their support during this process, and the UBC Department of Anthropology for showing such a keen interest in the journal.

Finally, to the editors, I am deeply grateful for your assistance in making this dream a reality. Without you, the Journal of Anthropological Studies would not exist, and your work on this project will set a precedent for future editions of the Journal.

Happy Reading!

Sincerely,

Katherine Lay  
*Journal Coordinator, 2017* ❖

# THE KOREAN WAVE AS AN EXPRESSION OF SOUTH KOREAN SOFT POWER

*Written by Caitlin Stonham*

*Edited by Melanie Dunch*

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This paper will explore the Korean Wave in East and Southeast Asia, and its importance to South Korea in terms of enhancing the country's soft power in the region. After offering a definition of the two key concepts, *Korean Wave* and *soft power*, I will argue that the Korean Wave contributes to South Korea's soft power by: portraying an image of the modern, consumerist, urban Korea that calls stereotypical negative views of the country into question; rousing increased interest in Korea transnationally; and inspiring moments of critical cultural reflection amongst transnational viewers, which can act to destabilize their own national hegemonic discourses both internally and vis-à-vis an idealized Korean culture. I will highlight some of the limitations of achieving soft power through state-led exportation of popular culture products, but conclude that the Korean Wave has indeed played a significant role in South Korea's recent rise to regional cultural, political, and economic prominence.

## Defining the Korean Wave

The term *Korean Wave*, or *Hallyu*, refers to the "transnational dissemination and consumption of contemporary Korean [popular] culture" including, but not limited to, pop-music, serialized television dramas, films, dance, and fashion (Rhee and Otmazgin 2016:1). As a process of cultural flow, its starting point is hard to define, as different aspects of Korean popular culture reached different geographic spaces at different times. However, scholars have generally identified the Korean Wave as starting in the late 1990s or early 2000s; for example, Ainslie and Lim (2015:2) point to the 1997 Asian financial crisis as providing a prime opportunity for the firm establishment of South Korea's entertainment export industry, and Creighton (2009:12) argues that the airing of Korean television drama *Winter Sonata* in a prime-time slot on a Japanese network in 2004 marked the beginning of the "Korea Boom" in Japan.

Although arguably a global phenomenon, the Korean Wave is most commonly studied in a regional context, with scholars using the theory of "cultural proximity" to explain the popularity of Korean cultural products across Asia (Creighton 2009:20; Rhee and Otmazgin 2016:1; Lee 2015:17). This theory suggests that consumers are more likely to identify with, and therefore purchase or consume, transnational cultural content that bears some foundational similarity to local cultural norms. For example, Creighton (2006) illustrates how the historical social importance of singing in Korea facilitated

the spread of Japanese-style singing or Karaoke rooms into South Korea, albeit with cultural adaptations. Regardless of the strengths and weaknesses of the cultural proximity argument, the scope and depth of the impact of *Hallyu* on other countries in Asia is indisputably greater than its impact in Europe, Canada, or the United States, in part because the “first wave” of *Hallyu* across Asia occurred earlier and has had longer to become established (Ko et al 2014). For this reason, this paper will focus on the loosely defined geographic regions of East and Southeast Asia, which some scholars indeed demarcate through their common consumption of and engagement with *Hallyu* (Otmazgin 2016:1).

## **Soft Power in the South Korean Context**

Renowned American political scientist, Joseph Nye (2008:94), defines soft power as “the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment”. In contrast to hard power, which is based on actual, threatened, or perceived military and economic strength, soft power is drawn from “resources of culture, values and policies” (Nye 2008:94). Government attempts to nurture soft power abroad are often expressed in terms of winning “hearts and minds” - a phrase that gained traction with media and politicians in the United States during the Vietnam War (Hunt 1995).

The concept of soft power is significant in the context of South Korean diplomacy because, nestled between Japan, China, and Russia, South Korea is in a poor position to exercise hard power regionally. Not only are Japan, China, and Russia vastly superior to South Korea in terms of landmass and population size, they also have strong military and economic backgrounds, and a history of imperial aggression, “domination and interference” throughout Asia that continues to have negative ramifications across the region (Ainslie and Lim 2015:7). Additionally, in the aftermath of Japanese colonial occupation, South Korea suffered a long period of economic depression, from which it has been rapidly recovering in only very recent decades (Ainslie and Lim 2015:7). Soft power, therefore, has been far more accessible to South Korea as a means of scaling the political hierarchy than hard power.

## **The Korean Wave as Soft Power**

Initially, the two concepts of *soft power*, as something obtained, maintained, and exercised by the state, and *Hallyu*, as popular culture produced, transmitted, and consumed by individuals across state borders, seem unconnected. However, the two can be reconciled by the fact that, in the South Korean case, the popular entertainment industry was “aggressive[ly]” pursued and supported by the state as a means of increasing “commercial

profits, overseas interest and, of course, national prestige” through exportation (Ainslie and Lim 2015:2).

The Korean Wave can be seen as contributing to South Korea’s soft power in two ways. Firstly, it destabilizes stereotypical conceptions of South Korea as backward, undeveloped, and therefore lower in the regional and global hierarchy of nations. Secondly, it offers consumers a “self-reflexive moment”, allowing them to cross-culturally compare and critique their own national rhetoric surrounding issues as diverse as gender, multiculturalism and kinship (Rhee and Otmazgin 2016:3).

### *I. Destabilizing Negative Stereotypes*

Japan provides a particularly poignant case study when assessing the role of *Hallyu* in changing negative stereotypical perceptions of South Korea. For many Japanese, the period of Japanese occupation of the Korean peninsula is within living memory. This episode in Japanese history, coupled with the country’s position as a global economic powerhouse and regional cultural hegemon, informs a nationally held stereotypical view of South Korea as poorly economically developed, inferior, and backward (Creighton 2009:13). However, images of South Korea presented in television dramas like *Winter Sonata*, illustrating the bustling, cosmopolitan, modern consumer city of Seoul, negate this stereotype, projecting instead an image of Korea that is equally as modern as Tokyo (Creighton 2009:22).

Rhee and Otmazgin (2016:2) posit that *Hallyu* allows Japanese consumers an “opportunity to critically engage with historical issues revolving around Japan’s imperial past”. A key facet of this critical engagement is a reconceptualization of relations between ethnic Japanese and resident Koreans, the largest minority group in Japan (Creighton 2009:11). Historically, resident Koreans occupied a low position in the Japanese social hierarchy, and were often not afforded the same access to education and employment as ethnic Japanese. However, Creighton (2009:11) notes that, since the Korean Wave took hold of Japan in 2004, the resident Korean population has become far more visible and integrated, with ethnic Japanese now seeking out Korean eateries and shops that would previously have been limited to Korean neighbourhoods and patrons, taking Korean language courses, and buying Korean products. This can be attributed to the empathetic portrayal of resident Koreans and South Koreans in general in Korean Wave dramas and films, such as *Winter Sonata*, and the desire for Korean goods inspired by this cultural content.

At the state level, Creighton (2009:13) highlights how increased interest in Korea by Japanese consumers of *Hallyu* was paralleled by, or indeed spurred, the governmental designation of 2005 as a “Friendship Year” between Japan and South Korea. Despite many of the planned events for this year of friendship being abandoned, Creighton (2009:16) nevertheless argues

that the very conception of the events was a marked departure from, and improvement on, previous diplomatic relations between the two countries.

We can therefore see the Korean Wave as an instrument of South Korea's soft power in Japan, because it prompted both the people and government of Japan to reconsider South Korea as a modern, urban, consumer society on a par with Japan developmentally, with positive ramifications for the treatment of resident Koreans, cross-cultural interactions, and state diplomacy.

## *II. Encouraging Moments of Self-Reflection*

Rhee and Otmazgin (2016:3) suggest that transnational consumption of *Hallyu* creates a space for individuals to engage in self-reflexivity about the hegemonic discourses in their own national culture. They argue that *Hallyu* has the potential to “bypass [and disrupt] state-led domestic policies regarding nationalism, multiculturalism, and gender” by virtue of its ability to be disseminated and consumed via unofficial channels across official borders (Rhee and Otmazgin 2016:2). In the act of reflection and cultural critique, scholars have found that consumers frequently position Korean culture (actual or imagined) as superior to that of their home country. This affords South Korea a great deal of cultural and national prestige, two important aspects of soft power.

For example, in her study of the Korean Wave in Thailand, Ainslie (2015:96) shows that consumption of *Hallyu* products propelled South Korea into a space in the Thai imagination previously occupied by Europe and North America. South Korea became the country to emulate, the yardstick by which to measure Thai modernity. Through Korean dramas, Thai consumers create an imagined ideal of “Korean-ness” which features a unique, homogenous national identity, good morals, and strong work ethic (Ainslie 2015:103). These idealized features of Korean culture are contrasted with traits of Thai society deemed by viewers to be problematic or inferior (Ainslie 2015:105). In turn, this self-reflection on the nature of Thai society and identity vis-à-vis a romanticized “Korean-ness” allows consumers to “potentially challenge” “unsatisfactory” elements of their own culture, with the possibility of creating real political change on both personal and systemic levels (Ainslie 2015:111).

Similarly, Tambunan (2015:76) traces Indonesian audiences' reception of imported Korean dramas, arguing that viewership allows consumers to “negotiate with and even break through the hegemonic constraints of contemporary Indonesian society”. In particular, Korean dramas present forms of masculinity that are outside of and sometimes contradictory to traditional conservative Islamic notions of masculinity in Indonesia. Korean men are conceptualized as “pretty men” whose masculinity is defined via their “pretty” physical characteristics, such as stylized dress sense and smooth skin, compassionate and tender personalities, and muscled chests (Tambunan 2015:87). This is juxtaposed with Indonesian concepts of “hyper-



masculinity” or the man as father and provider. Tambunan (2015:92) suggests that, while viewers tend to question and reject the features of soft masculinity that are most at odds with their existing cultural conceptions of what it is to be an attractive male, continued viewership of Korean dramas in Indonesia at least allows for recognition of alternative forms of masculinity.

Both the Thai and Indonesian examples given here illustrate how the Korean Wave has the potential to promote the adoption of Korean values by international viewers or, in time, by recipient countries writ large. This adoption of values can occur against the wishes of the recipient state, because of the way that popular culture is transmitted outside of and across state boundaries, and can be seen to promote the agenda of the South Korean government as a form of soft power in so far as Korea’s entertainment industry is state-sponsored. Of course, there are problems with associating *Hallyu* with soft power in this way, such as the ability of audiences to construe Korean values in imported cultural products that bear little resemblance to actual life in South Korea.

### **Limitations of the Korean Wave as Soft Power**

Numerous scholars have identified the ability of *Hallyu* to inspire and provide space for critical cultural reflection and dialogue amongst consumers (Rhee and Otmazgin 2016:2). However, because of the way in which transnational cultural products are viewed, interpreted, and utilized in vastly different ways by different groups of consumers based in different geographic, cultural, and social milieus (Ainslie and Lim 2015:xiii; Rhee and Otmazgin 2016:2), this dialogue need not necessarily support the proliferation of Korea’s soft power. If individuals are seen as “active”, rather than passive, consumers, they surely have agency to interpret meaning that was unanticipated and unintended by the original Korean producers (Rhee and Otmazgin 2016:2).

Equally, the recipient state can act to re-inscribe an imported cultural product with its own agenda through processes of subtitling and censorship. For example, Indonesia’s Anti-Pornography Bill requires the removal of sexually suggestive content from imported entertainment products (Tambunan 2015:80), which could work to erase the possibility for Korean dramas to inspire conversation about sexual norms. In this way, transnational cultural product can be co-opted to convey the soft power of the recipient state.

### **Conclusion**

There are many ways in which we can see the Korean Wave in East and Southeast Asia as contributing to South Korea’s soft power, or the country’s ability to get others to comply with its agenda voluntarily, rather than through coercion or bribery. The consumption of *Hallyu* across Asia has led to an increased interest in and awareness of Korean culture. This has worked to

destabilize previously held negative stereotypes of South Korea, and encourage cross-cultural comparison that, in some cases, leads to a valuing of perceived Korean values over and above that of consumer's home country. These phenomena, in turn, have led to a repositioning of South Korea in the regional hierarchy of states. However, viewing the Korean Wave as a tool of South Korean soft power has limitations, because *Hallyu* always has the potential to be co-opted and reinterpreted by transnational consumers and recipient states.

Regardless of whether consumption of *Hallyu* promotes adoption of South Korean values transnationally, *Hallyu* has undoubtedly played a key role in the country's recent ascension to a position of regional cultural, political, and economic prominence. As well as influencing the country's soft power, the success of *Hallyu* has positively affected South Korea's hard power, as consumption of Korean-produced cultural products by an ever-increasing transnational market, as well as the associated tourist boom in South Korea, has contributed significantly to South Korea's economic development. Furthermore, the increasing global awareness of South Korea prompted by the ever-expanding reach of the Korean Wave beyond Asia promises to bring further wealth, cultural value, and political sway to the nation. ❖

## THE EMBODIMENT OF CONSTRUCTED MEMORY IN A LIVING HISTORY MUSEUM

*Written by Melanie Dunch*

*Edited by Tessa Grogan*

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According to many commentators, nostalgic visitors who seek to abandon the chaos and emptiness of their modern lives can visit a living history museum and travel into the past they have lost as they walk in a linear fashion through reconstructions and replicas of artifacts and buildings that are supposed to bring different time periods to life. Costumed Historical Interpreters such as myself embody *lieux de memoire* (Pierre 1989:7), as we memorialize lost historical moments and events through performance. Fort Edmonton Park has been criticized for portraying a settlers' narrative in a linear fashion, and has since attempted to include diverse narratives, and address more difficult historical topics in its telling of Edmonton's history. In 2014, Fort Edmonton Park signed an official agreement with the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations to fully consult these communities about how they are represented, and to showcase a more inclusive history. This decolonization of the museum through greater representation of Indigenous Peoples Interpreters since 2014, coupled with the use of first-person flexible narrative technique, has served to disrupt the linear or evolutionary history that many people expect. This essay will argue that this rupture in 'time' has loosened the grip of 'objective' history on the memory that makes up people's identities, and created a new space of 'first contact' between Indigenous Peoples Interpreters and the public which puts more responsibility on the visitors to refashion and evaluate their own identities.

The Fort Edmonton Park heritage site is one of many museums following the trajectory of increased memorialization of the past following World War Two (Hoelscher 2006:201) which often serves to validate the values of a nation-state, and to showcase the progress of groups of people into current identities and "modern" ways of existing. Pierre (1989) believes these methods that have emerged of remembering through memorialization and historiography have caused a rupture in "real memory" (Pierre 1989:8). Memory has been traded in for relentless reconstruction seeking objectivity of the past, but this process of memorialization that often manifests itself in museums and histories instead contains elements of a past that is lost, and separates the future and "modernity" over this past which serves merely as an explanation of the present (Pierre 1989:12).

The layout of Fort Edmonton Park illustrates this process, since it reveals a linear view of history leading up to the present. Visitors take the train into the past, and the first stop is the 1846 Fort. Afterwards, they can walk through 1885, 1905, and 1920s streets, finally ending up at the 1920s midway. Each section displays houses, buildings, artifacts and costumes that are seen

as representative of that “era” in history. The living history museum attempts to present “total history” (Anderson 1982:305) because it puts history into the hands of the layperson and shows the everyday aspects of history. Magelssen (2007) disputes this claim to authenticity through simulating the everyday in the first person, pointing out that these performances memorialize discrete elements of time and claim authority of knowledge of people’s lives in the past, but do not include all narratives and possibilities. In other words, the interpreters and performances become artifacts themselves, standing in for a memory that has been lost, yet claiming objectivity. Most living history museums have first-person interpreters to showcase an objective history, and third-person interpreters to explain the representations of history that have been selected. Providing a plurality of performances representing different people in the past has been one solution to these issues, but they still showcase interpreters as discrete objects of the past, which solidify identities in the present day based on an evolutionary historical framework. Although Fort Edmonton Park has always had Indigenous Peoples Interpreters in places like the Cree encampment beside the Fort, the linear framework leading to the idealized present has served to exclude Indigenous people in representations, shown most clearly in the fact that the Park starts at the Fort fur trade ‘era’ which was created after the arrival of settlers, and that there is less representation as one moves further in ‘time.’ Although acting out the ‘every person’ by interpreters makes history seem more ‘real,’ this has been another form of objectifying a history that solidifies a settler narrative and validity of these identities in Canadian society.

Through signing an agreement with the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and continuing to use first-person flexible narrative technique, Fort Edmonton has made a commitment to show a more inclusive version of history, predominantly by dismantling how ‘time’ is represented in the park. Historiography, or the history of history, has often resulted in determining which narratives and events are the most important or bringing previously excluded narratives to light, which manifests itself in the performances of the interpreters. For instance, I played the maid at the Rutherford house even though they do not have any record of their names or lives as individuals. This role was added recently after realizing that women in the lower classes have been excluded from what was previously considered objective history. In the same vein, double the representation has been added in each era for Indigenous Peoples Interpreters after signing the agreement. However, the agreement to put history into the hands of Indigenous communities has allowed more than simply adding more characters to the story. Whereas Costumed Historical Interpreters such as myself have been confined to their historical periods, Indigenous Peoples Interpreters at the park build family connections between eras that people can trace, showing visitors the continuity of Indigenous identities in the face of discrete pieces of time.

Part of the agreement was to renovate the park. These renovations will include a pre-fort section showing the fact that Canada has a much more complex history going back much further than the Fort or Fur trade “era” (Copley 2015). Sections of Fort Edmonton representing the life of Indigenous people in the past will be dispersed in a non-linear spatial fashion throughout the park, to show a worldview that is not dominated by a linear and cumulative view of the past. An Indigenous Peoples Interpreter spent 2013 researching and revamping programs about Indigenous history, which include histories for interpreters often omitted in linear narratives of progress into modern day society. For instance, the prominent role of Indigenous soldiers in World War 1 is showcased, which is unknown to many visitors. More programming centred around difficult subject matter such as residential schools and the reserve-pass system has been added, which changes the visitors’ experience from a nostalgic and self-fulfilling venture into the lost past into an experience that “challenges their interpretative abilities” (Bonnell 2007:67) regarding this shared past. Finally, the first-person flexible narratives disrupt the process of memorializing segments of time through interpretation. In first-person flexible, interpreters are allowed to spontaneously switch in and out of third person and first person depending on the visitors they are engaging with. Rather than watching a performance, or hearing its explanations, the visitors flow in and out of time and engage in discussions that often concern matters in the present. Rather than simply adding more characters or artifacts to the Park’s historical narrative, the signing of the agreement and use of first-person flexible also allows a way of dismantling the linear historical framework, which has served to perpetuate a settler’s narrative.

The rupture of the presentation of ‘time’ at Fort Edmonton Park has provided visitors with encounters that go against their expectations of historical narratives, and thus drives the reassessment of identities determined through a connection with the past. Identity is influenced by a sense of continuity of self, and the recognition of this continuity by others. One man perceived his personal connection to the past threatened by the changes at Fort Edmonton Park. Upon seeing an Indigenous Peoples Interpreter on 1905 street in the municipal section, this man yelled out “there weren’t any black people back then”. After the initial shock of this statement, one interpreter tried to explain to him that the interpreter was playing a real historical person named Alex Decoteau, the first Cree police officer in Canada. However, the visitor remained upset and stormed off. Many visitors only expect to see Indigenous Peoples Interpreters in the earlier eras, revealing people’s perceptions of these identities being based on a salvage paradigm that sees authentic identity as existing before contact had “inevitably” wiped people away, and does not recognize the “continuity” of these identities into the present day (Muntean et al 2015:360). Other people have asked me whether Fort Edmonton Park is just trying to be ‘politically correct,’ rather than questioning if the historical narrative was valid in the first place. Although

some visitors openly share disturbing comments about Indigenous people based on their notions of the past, most people want to learn but also become uncomfortable with the unexpected encounter of Indigenous interpreters who weave in and out of playing characters where visitors can suspend disbelief and do not need to formulate new views, and the present day which forces people into greater proximity with identity issues that they are not familiar with.

Peers (2007) describes these sites in terms of the anthropological concept of “contact zones” (xx) where people with different cultural views are pushed into closer proximity. For many visitors, this is the first direct exchange they have had with an Indigenous person (Peers 2007:145), or in other words, it is a place of first contact in a present-day context. The first-person flexible interpretation style changes time from a discrete element into a continuous feedback loop from past to present, and serves to change the nature of these first encounters. One interpreter guides people into the Fort and points out that tall watch towers were built to emulate ideas of civilization from Europe, but he mentions he does not condone this view of civilization which is a matter of perception, all whilst staying in the character of a translator involved in the fur trade. Although Indigenous Peoples Interpreters are equally committed to historical accuracy in their narratives as Costumed Historical Interpreters, they are also more conscious that the way they play characters is actually a way they “play themselves” (Peers 2007:xxiii) that concern identities in the present. The rupturing of time and use of first-person flexible technique create new encounters that are more “intimate” (Bonnell 2007:66), and cause people to reframe their own identities through a reframing of the past.

The dismantling of linear time forces the historical narratives themselves to transform, inevitably changing identities because of the indelible link of identity to ideas about the past. The Women’s Suffrage Movement is one of the main narratives portrayed at Fort Edmonton on 1905 street, manifesting itself in suffrage rallies where we yell out “votes for women” and ask people to sign their names on our petition. I feel myself transformed into an artifact as I march beside the streetcar tracks, my performance representing a discrete moment in a cumulative history ending with women being able to vote. Visitors, as always, bring their perceptions of the past that also have implications in the present, and use them to join in the collective reconstruction of history. Countless visitors jokingly tell us to “go back to the home”, reminding us pretty quickly of the ongoing importance of feminism in the present day. However, the suffrage movement has also been memorialized as something separate from the present day that caused the so-called ‘equality’ of the sexes through the vote, which is celebrated by visitors as they walk beside their corseted counterparts of the past yelling out “votes for women”. One day we were collecting signatures as usual for a petition, and I told a group of children that women “do not have the vote yet like men,” gesturing to the group of boys who would supposedly have the vote.

However, even ‘playing’ that these boys were older, I realized that one of the boys would not be able to vote because only white landowners had the right to vote in 1905. I hesitated slightly, but I did not mention this historical fact because I did not want to single out the boy who would not be categorized as a ‘white landowner’ in that moment. My colleague who works as an Indigenous Peoples Interpreter sensed these thought processes, and mentioned that she thought I should point this out, even if it means directly pointing out race. This opened up a discussion, and I realized the singular narrative that our suffrage marches represent have to be tempered with the ambiguity of a non-linear way of representing time. Rather than focusing on maternal feminism that guided these early movements, or interweaving these 1905 specific frameworks with the push for equality in the popular narrative of women’s suffrage in the present-day, I now make sure to use the first-person flexible narrative technique to mention that although some women were pushing for the vote, First Nations people did not have the vote until 1960. I feel myself change from an artifact, to a person living in multiple times all at once. I walk side by side with my Indigenous Peoples Interpreter colleagues during these marches, further acting on a rupture in a linear framework of history that reproduces artifacts and performances of itself and continues to leave Indigenous voices invisible. I have confronted many ‘difficult subjects’ before in interpretation by holding tea programs as a way to open discussions about the Chinese Head Tax and eugenics, but these programs are referred to as ‘sit and chat’ programs rather than ‘show and tell’ programs which use performances to represent real events in time. Instead I realize that the performances of main ‘difficult’ narratives have to be imbued with this sort of complexity, even if it means weaving in and out of time in a non-linear fashion. Rather than preserving memories in the artifacts of our performances, the ‘living’ element of our interpretation can also help us create new memories and formulate new identities in a process of “negotiation” (Brown 2004:253). The agreement made at Fort Edmonton Park to truly tell Indigenous Narratives as these communities deem fit, and the use of first-person flexible narratives have lessened Pierre’s (1989:7) rupture between history which memorializes that which is lost, and collective memory where people spontaneously construct the world (Brown 2004:251). These changes have entailed more than the simple addition of the Indigenous interpreters’ narratives in these discrete moments in the past as we bring historiography to life: they have contributed to dismantling the linear framework itself, and changing what people expect to see in certain time periods. Rather than our performances acting as artifacts that reveal what is lost and separate, they help us negotiate new identities as we form new memories in the present through representing the past.❖

# THE SUBLIME OTHER: CREATION, PERPETUATION, AND NEGOTIATION OF COLONIAL STEREOTYPES IN HAWAIIAN TOURISM

*Written by Sara Bremner  
Edited by Nicole Anderson*

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## Introduction

When one thinks of Honolulu or Waikiki, one inevitably pictures white-sand beaches, lush tropic forests and spectacular volcanos, and friendly, hospitable islanders sharing cultural displays at the evening luau. Before the tourist even steps off the plane they have a vision of Hawai'i and what they will find there, even if they have never been there before. This vision is a romantic dreamscape, crafted in the past and present and carefully curated by the tourism industry and popular culture. A product of past moral philosophy, empire, romanticism and globalisation, the question is: why does the core of this stereotypical Hawai'i persist in the collective imagination of the West? In answering this question, I will analyze how and why this ideal of Hawai'i was created and why it continues to hold appeal to modern individuals and institutions today. Using the resulting framework which props up the existing stereotype, I will then briefly touch on how native Hawai'ians have and had worked within the framework to construct their own identities through adaptation and resistance.

## Ideation and Appropriation

The history of these stereotypes of Hawai'ians and other Pacific Islanders dates back to the initial contacts with European Enlightenment era explorers. These men, eager to recover the unknown and revel in the romantic adventure of exploration, utilized the knowledge and philosophies of their homelands to interpret the different cultures and peoples with which they came in contact. In her discussion of Tahiti, Miriam Kahn describes how European explorers brought notions about indigeneity with them even prior to formal contact (2003). Enlightenment thinking and knowledge production was at the apex of fashion during the Age of Exploration. Philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau formulated theories about the impact of corrupt European civilization on the morality of humankind and argued "that man living in a state of nature could attain natural virtue" (Kahn 2003:310). To Europeans, Polynesian islanders lived in conditions they equated to a state of nature. This created the idea of what the native inhabitants of the islands were and should be, conceptually termed the "Noble Savage" (Kahn 2003:309). It equated island lifestyles and lack of Eurocentric hallmarks of civilization with moral virtue. This served to infantilize natives and justify the paternalistic



civilizing project of colonial imperialism. These notions shaped the imagined image of the Pacific and shaped European interactions and written accounts about this part of the world. While Kahn's paper specifically addresses the impact of these Enlightenment-era ideas on Tahiti, these ideological constructs shaped the European experience of the rest of Polynesia.

Jane C. Desmond, in her analysis of the Western conceptualization of Hawai'ians in particular, calls this categorization the stereotype of the "ideal native"; gracious and welcoming, feminine and beautiful, exotic yet not threateningly so (1999a:6). In its history with the United States, Hawai'i has occupied the middle region of racial otherness where it has had the dubious honor of being considered one of the "better" native races. This was justified in Western minds through scientific racism and the familiarity of Hawai'i's hierarchical social and political structure. In essence, they were considered simplistic and primitive, yet were seen as closer to the West on the scale of progress towards civilization (1999b:464). While this spared indigenous peoples like Hawai'ians the worst of the racialized slavery, dehumanization, and abuse inflicted on those with the darkest skin, it contributed to the paternalistic notion of the necessity of white stewardship. This justification of imperialism as a civilizing project upon which the responsibility for raising up the childlike native is rendered explicit in Rudyard Kipling's contemporaneous poem "The White Man's Burden: The United States and the Philippine Islands, 1889" (1929).

Between the overthrow of the constitutional Hawai'ian government by American interests in 1893 and the formal colonial annexation of 1898, the first organized hula tours of the United States began in Chicago during the World's Columbian Exhibition (Imada 2011:150). This catapulted hula onto the international stage at a critical time. Adria L. Imada argues that this form of racialized entertainment of the subjugated performing for the subjugator promoted the colonization of Hawai'i through the promotion of scientific racism, exotification, and commodification of the native body (2011:152). Concurrently, it had the effect of creating an image of Hawai'i that was non-threatening and attractive, calming racialized political anxieties over the annexation of the territory through the appeal of the feminine body. This was the beginning of the cultural spectacle, where culture is commodified and staged as an authentic experience available for purchase (Desmond 1999a:xiii-xvi). These tours would continue as the United States established control of Hawai'i and helped to establish its image in the colonial mind. According to Imada, these "hula circuits" established commodified Hawai'ian cultural concepts such as the *luau* and *aloha* in the American vernacular (2012:5).

Another element of Hawai'ian culture appropriated and utilized by colonizers since the 19<sup>th</sup> century is the highly contextual concept of *aloha*. Seen by native Hawai'ians as a core spiritual force that encompasses ties to land, family, and the self in love, veneration, and sympathy, U.S. imperialism

used the term to encompass an imperial fantasy which ascribed a “mutuality, intimacy, and hospitality” on the part of the native population towards themselves as honored guests (Imada 2012:8-9). Hawai’ians were seen as complicit and welcoming in their own colonization, offering themselves and their land freely to Americans as affable, compliant natives. This cast the forced military takeover of Hawai’i as an inevitable consequence of the native’s character, shifting responsibility, falsely attributing consent, and denying the existence of organized non-violent resistance to the military coup.

In short, the Western conceptualization of Hawai’i was almost exclusively created through European conceptualizations of civilization, racial difference, and interpretations of Hawai’ian culture. Entrenched in their own biases of racial superiority and their preconceptions of the moral virtue of different ways of life, Europeans curated their own first contact experiences with Polynesians, creating a distorted lens from which they would view all following interactions. Combined with feelings of entitlement and superiority rationalized by imperialism, Enlightenment philosophes, and 19<sup>th</sup> century poets they took what they desired, justifying their actions through appropriated and reinterpreted native cultural concepts they misconstrued as a twisted form of consent.

### **Reiteration and Perpetuation**

Although the above reasons account at least in part for the creation of these stereotypes, they do not explain their durability and longevity. Indeed, while many notions of scientific racism and imperial domination have become less overtly acceptable, they live on under the surface of romanticized images and narratives. These persist in large part due to their commodification for tourism. George H. Lewis notes that tourism began in Hawai’i almost immediately after its annexation as a territory at the turn of the century (1996:123-135). The dominant colonial myth of Hawai’i and its natives, who “existed only to please and gratify white outsiders”, seized upon the imaginations of mainlanders (132). This narrative acts as the base for the appropriation and modification of native Hawai’ian culture, which was used to market Hawai’i as a destination – and a colonial possession – to Americans. This imagery pervaded popular culture’s depictions of the islands. Through radio music shows such as *Hawai’i Calls*, stage shows such as hula circuits and Broadway musicals, and movies such as *Blue Hawai’i* the Western perception of Hawai’i was recreated and perpetuated (125-128).

Hawai’i today has come to rely on tourism as its primary industry. Economist Leroy O. Laney estimates that, even without considering standard economic multipliers, tourism accounts for approximately 25% of Hawai’i’s gross state domestic product (GDP) and 33.3% of jobs (2009:1-16). If modifiers are introduced this proportion of the GDP stemming from tourism jumps to 35% if applied to visitor-related expenditures alone. When applied

just to jobs in the leisure and hospitality industries, the number of jobs accounted for by tourism jumps to 44%. This is without accounting for the side industries indirectly supported by tourism. Hawai'i has traditionally been a specialised economy that lacks diversification of industries. Laney concludes that tourism today is the sector in which almost all other island industries rely. Faced with this economic dependence, there is additional pressure to please tourists and meet their expectations.

The fantasy of Hawai'i perpetuated in popular culture therefore must be marketed and brought to life once the tourist arrives in the Islands. There is recognition in the islands that Hawai'ian culture is what makes the island competitive as a tourist destination in a globalized world where tourists have many, often cheaper beach resort options to choose from. Laney stresses the importance of maintaining Hawai'i as a premier destination in his economic report recording the state of affairs after the global recession of 2008 (2009:1). This adds weight to Desmond's observations on the existence of an anxiety about maintaining Hawai'ianess as a marketable commodity (1999a:15-16). She notes that it is a conscious effort encoded into all aspects of the tourist experience, from the décor and uniforms of hospitality staff to the cultural experiences provided to guests as part of their stay. Many including Laney see this as a method of preserving Hawai'ian culture. However, there is an undeniable undercurrent of economic necessity that is distinct from the efforts to maintain the culture of Native Hawai'ians outside of the resort. In this interpretation of Hawai'ianess, material and intangible aspects of culture such as the hula, music, and art are removed from their traditional context and used as symbols that are representative of the whole (Desmond 1999a:17).

Performances and dinner shows staged by entities such as the Polynesian Cultural Center or the Kodak Hula Show epitomise this cultural commodification (Desmond 1999a:10-33 and Buck 1994:1-18). These shows are designed exclusively for tourists and feature simplified forms of chant and *hula* that obscure original Native Hawai'ian meanings and significance, rebranding them as products of paradise (Buck 1994:5). Dancers of Native Hawai'ian or mixed Polynesian backgrounds are used to meet the expectation of the presence of the welcoming, feminized, exotic "Hula Girl" stereotype. The native body is used as a symbol of difference, which assists in selling the essentialized vision as a culturally authentic ethnographic experience. This is aimed at evoking a sense of "edenic naturalism" and sublime otherness for tourists (Desmond 1999a:xiii-xxv).

Aside from the substantial dependence by tourism on colonial narratives there are other ideological reasons these stereotypes persist in the modern globalized world. A reoccurring theme in the study of America, past and present, is the collective cultural amnesia about the United States' status as an imperial, colonial power. Amy Kaplan contends that if asked, an American, would be unlikely to agree that their country is an Empire despite being aware of the country's overseas territories. Kaplan's essay, "Left Alone

with America”, attempts to delve into this phenomenon and understand why the idea of empire conflicts with American self-image (1993:3-21). She argues that the key conflict stems from the country’s core narrative of foundation in opposition to the British Empire. Through the revolutionary war and onward, the mythology of the American experience on which the nation’s self-identity has been built has been rooted in the ideals of self-determination, independence, and freedom from domination – even in the face of realities that denied the truth of that narrative. To accept evidence of America’s failures to live up to its ideals, whether through the history of slavery, occupation of indigenous lands, and imperial activities abroad, would violate this self-image and call into doubt the nation’s ideology as leader of the free world. This profound ability to avoid self-reflection is enabled by nationalist narratives of exceptionalism that tend to historiographically examine the United States in isolation from the rest of the world.

To that end, the maintenance of colonial narratives about Hawai’i uphold the façade that disguises the imperialism in America’s past and present. By maintaining the fiction of a mutually beneficial colonial relationship, the true beneficiaries can rationalize the continued occupation and legacy of oppression and inequity that continues in colonization’s wake. Tourist stage shows, marketing, and cultural spectacles service this need by reconstructing and reframing Hawai’i’s past in such a way that obscures the uncomfortable elements of Western domination and oppression (Buck 1994:2). This is in order to not confront the mainland visitor with a reality that conflicts with the image sold to them. This, arguably, could potentially jeopardize the industry upon which the island’s economy so heavily depends.

### **Resistance and Adaptation**

Narratives about Hawai’i are clearly tied to their colonial hegemonic origins. They are perpetuated in modern Hawai’i through economic dependence on the tourism industry and the ideological needs of Western tourists to deny America’s imperial past. Native Hawai’ians participate in and depend on this system as individuals whose agency is restricted by the framework in which they live. This concept of bifocality is defined by Niko Besnier as a “plurality of vision” that recognizes the individual agent’s constant engagement with, and response to, the demands of both the global and the local (2011:12-17). Hawai’ians hold complex identities and must respond to the demands of modernity in different ways. These include a negotiation of the complexities of living in the here-and-now while contemplating being observed from the far. How can we take a balanced view that does not privilege one sphere at the cost of the other? Can we do so without overemphasizing the individual at the expense of ignoring the limitations of operating in the global system? If we emphasize these restrictions, can we avoid depicting individuals as devoid of agency, constrained by the dominant framework? In order to

facilitate a more complete view it is important to consider Hawai'ian responses to the dominant narrative.

Just as tourism molds culture to suit its own needs, Native Hawai'ians reappropriate these reconstituted forms as symbolic of pre-contact culture's complexity (Buck 1994:4-5). It has become part of the growing attempt to regain native identity and history in the face of the colonial legacy. The difference between the two forms is the latter's preoccupation with memory, context, and meaning, and the shifting of audience from the tourist to the local. Imada notes that there are conflicting views on performers themselves within their own communities, with some native rights scholars arguing that performing for tourists is akin to cultural prostitution (2012:14-18). Others, like Imada, argue that *hula* as practiced by native women is multi-modal, meeting both the expectations as objects as imperial fetishes but as a method of producing contenting counter-narratives to this deployment as instruments of empire building and perpetuation. Even in the past these "dancers negotiated with colonialism and tourist commodification as self-aware agents, brokers, and political actors". Imada sees the implicit meaning and memory in *hula* and chant as fundamentally political, a "veiled language" rooted in historical narratives of native traditions and values. To perform as such can be viewed by performers as acts of identity-building and political resistance. As *hula* revived during the Hawai'ian Renaissance and Native Rights movements of the 1970s, *hālau* have served as schools of marginalized and once-suppressed culture and language. Participation in a *hālau* is a political statement of ethnic identity in opposition to domination (Buck 1994:6). This is where traditional and *haole* forms of *hula* are practiced and can instruct the participant in native histories, legends, and language.. Debates about tradition and the modern, authenticity and legitimacy, and the role of *hula* as both mediated culture and political activism take place within these communities as they work within the parallel worlds inherent to bifocality.

## Conclusion

Hawai'ian tourism's relationship with global hegemonic forces and Native Hawai'ian identity is a fascinating case study in the duality of life for many indigenous peoples today. The tourism industry, founded as it was in exploitive, racist colonial narratives and stereotypes, can be used by Native Hawai'ians today as an opportunity to empower themselves economically. Agency can be gained through exploitation of the expectations of tourists and through growing control over self-representation on the global stage. For example, a *hula* dancer performing at a show put on by the Polynesian Cultural Center can be seen in two opposing ways. In one view she is taking advantage of tourist expectations for increased personal economic agency and artistic fulfillment. In another she is an underpaid wage labourer exploited by the status quo in the continuation of colonial commodification of her

racialized body and cultural heritage. In the bifocal view she can be both; navigating her world and opportunities with the agency afforded to her as an indigenous person, carving out opportunities in a system of disenfranchisement, allowing her to make a living by embracing her cultural identity. The forces of modernity and globalization render moral certainty impossible, forcing marginalized individuals to define themselves in opposition and parallel to the realities of the hegemony. Is it possible to extract the colonial narratives from cultural tourism by handing over control of these industries to Native Hawaiians and allowing them to internally negotiate their own representation? Can cultural spectacles ever not be essentialized, symbolic proxies for entire groups of people? These questions, and others, are currently being negotiated today within indigenous groups and cultural institutions throughout the world. It is up to the future to show whether a less exploitive and stereotypical brand of cultural tourism can be constructed and whether or not the Western gaze can adjust its views to receive it. ❖

# NENETS FLEXIBLY ADAPTING TO A CHANGING SIBERIAN LANDSCAPE FOR OVER A CENTURY

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*Edited by Aliya Hosie*

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## Introduction

Year after year, the Nenets migrate alongside their great reindeer herds, trekking thousands of kilometers across Siberia's vast and chilly Yamal Peninsula. Despite a tumultuous changing landscape that has dissolved indigenous herder societies in other circumpolar regions, pastoralism in the Siberian arctic has endured. Of the 10,000 Nenets who currently live on the Yamal Peninsula, nearly half of them still practice nomadic herding (Forbes et al. 2009:22041). This distinctive herding lifestyle is widely recognized in "iconic imagery" within Russia as well as abroad (Forbes 2013:36).

Pastoralists often cultivate a deeply intimate relationship with their herds (Dwyer and Istomin 2008). The Nenets connection to their domesticated reindeer (*ty* in Nenets language) is no exception (Dwyer and Istomin 2008; Forbes 2013; Lublinskaya and Sherstinova 2006; Niglas 1997; Stammler 2010; Tuisku 2002). The reindeer are central to the Nenets' subsistence, lifestyle and worldview, holding "a special place in the life of these people" (Niglas 1999:8). For them, "the tundra and their society is the world" (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999:3). The migration of this united group is influenced by both ecological and non-ecological forces that permeate the landscape. Both the herders' decisions, actions, and the reindeers' behaviour guide the Nenets on their way across the peninsula (Dwyer and Istomin 2008:525).

Despite the ever-changing environment of the Yamal Peninsula, the flexibility of the Nenets nomadic reindeer herding has enabled them to continuously adapt their traditional lifestyle to accommodate new pressures. Involuntarily fostered as citizens of an imposed nation, a political ecology approach emphasizes that these pastoralists are vulnerable to the shocks of government policies and political processes altering their environmental surroundings. However, the adaptive capacity of the Nenets, viewed from a cultural ecology lens, plays an agentive role in the state's ultimate influence. Guided by these complementary theories of political and cultural ecology, the Nenets livelihood has continually exemplified flexibility and resilience for over a century: through the Soviet era, after the collapse of communism, and into an emerging era of natural resource development. Although oil and gas development pose new and unique threats, reflecting on the past may provide hope for the future.

## **Complementary Theoretical Approaches to Pastoralism**

As with other indigenous groups, pastoral societies' relation to the land faces a multitude of ecological and non-ecological threats. Fratkin (1997) suggests that sociopolitical and environmental pressures on pastoralists are greater than ever before, calling into question "the future of pastoralism" (237). Pastoral societies are not mutually exclusive entities, but are inherently bound to the world around them. Movement of each pastoral group is determined by a "unique constellation of ecological, political, economic, and affective factors" (Dyson-Hudson and Dyson-Hudson 1980:18; Nelson 2007). Existing literature on pastoralism has employed two principal strategies to grasp the multitude of effects on herding populations: political ecology and cultural ecology.

The approach of political ecology theorizes that environmental issues and changes are the products of political processes. Attention is placed on power and the unequal distribution of costs and benefits to groups under the political regime. As lands are increasingly arbitrarily divided and pastoral populations assigned a state citizenship, the government has become a significant influence on the lives of nomadic herders. Recent research has turned pastoral literature towards a political processes approach to critique hegemonic development policies that have resulted in a "decline in pastoral autonomy" (Dyson-Hudson and Dyson-Hudson 1980; Fratkin 1997:236; Golovnev and Osherenko 1999). The ideologies of the government and nomads clash, leading to conflict and contestation. Whilst state governments and resource industries seek dominance over the landscape and desire enclosure, pastoral nomadics conversely value mobility and self-sufficiency (Dyson-Hudson and Dyson-Hudson 1980; Fratkin 1997:239). According to Fratkin (1997), the twentieth century has been characterized by the dominance of the state over indigenous groups, disintegrating cultural sustainability and identity rather than trying to collaboratively incorporate them (239). Today, pastoralist economies are challenged by many government policies, including land fragmentation due to agriculture and development, privatization, forced movement, and loss of pasturelands (Dyson-Hudson and Dyson-Hudson 1980; Fratkin 1997; Galvin 2009).

However, this does not imply that pastoralist groups are doomed to disappear. Rather, pastoralists around the world have continually demonstrated a remarkable resilience and accommodation to stressors (Fratkin 1997; Galvin 2009; Nelson et al. 2007; Stammier 2013). A cultural ecology approach can be used to study how a culture adapts to social and physical environments to survive. Despite the potential vulnerabilities of pastoral societies, adapting behaviourally with the herd enables pastoral systems to accommodate the changing environment (Dyson Hudson and Dyson-Hudson 1980; Smith and Wandel 2006). Pastoralism and migration are characterized as a production system of continuous, unpredictable change



(Galvin 2009:187). Therefore, in this unstable existence, flexibility and high adaptability are constantly necessary (Galvin 2009:187; Stammler 2013). Their resilience to shifting socioeconomic and environmental conditions can be drawn from innovation or past experiences and knowledge — in other words, their social capital (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, Galvin 2008:382; Galvin 2009:187; 193; Neslon 2007). This behavioural cultural ecology approach seeks to determine what specific behaviours of either the animals or herders have enabled adaptability and persistence.

Both approaches of political ecology and cultural ecology can be applied to understand localized experiences, including those of the Nenets. Nomadic pastoralism is not a singular experience, but differs from region to region due to the varying ecological and non-ecological factors and responses. These globally unbalanced relations between hegemonic state rule and indigenous peoples are not exempt from the Yamal Peninsula. Compared to other indigenous groups in northern Russia, Forbes et al. (2009) claim that the Nenets have fared comparatively well. The Yamal-Nenets have been highly resilient to contemporary shocks, responding in ways that have allowed them to adapt without permanently damaging their environment (Forbes et al. 2009; Forbes 2013; Tuisku 2002). In the Nenets' worldview, "environmental 'change' is perceived as normal," an aspect of life that must continually be anticipated and addressed (Forbes 2013:44). Political changes are considered synonymous with natural changes (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999:3). It is a cause-effect system wherein the government's policies and ideologies may, if not incorporative of Nenets lifestyles, pose a challenge that the Nenets agency needs to overcome in order to adapt. The two approaches, political ecology and cultural ecology, although commonly viewed separately, can together holistically illustrate the recent history of Nenets pastoralism. During trying transition periods, the Nenets culture did not break, but adapted.

### **Adopting Nomadic Pastoralism**

Despite a nomadic reindeer herding oriented lifestyle being a characteristic of "traditional" Nenets culture, this is a relatively recent adoption. Reindeer herding was already practiced when the Nenets moved into the Yamal Peninsula over one thousand years ago, but local fishing and hunting were the primary means of subsistence (Niglas 1999:9). With the onset of Russian colonization in the 1600s, however, there was a shift towards "classical" large-scale reindeer herding subsistence (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999:13-15). This change in economic management was driven by period ecological and socioeconomic influences, including the cooling climate favourable for reindeer, the strengthening of northern state power, and new laws protecting private property (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999; Niglas 1999). In response, the Nenets increased the size of their herds and adopted a migrating lifestyle (Niglas 1999:10). Providing meat, hides, clothing, utensils,

and many other resources meant reindeer were important factors in the Nenets' ability to survive, taking precedence in priority over other cultural practices (Forbes 2013). For centuries, the Nenets remained unanchored to a single place, tending their herds of reindeer as they moved across the tundra. However, recent historical stimuli have called into question the continued viability of this way of life.

## Soviet Era

The Nenets felt the impact of the Soviet Union's "iron fist," but its force did not crush them. An unprecedented "big wave of collectivisation reached the North" between 1929-1930, directly targeting northern indigenous populations in an attempt to unify them with the communist south (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999; Niglas 1999:11). Having little influential power, the first production-cooperative state farms (*sovkhozes*) were established on the Yamal Peninsula, an organizing mechanism reallocating hunting and pasturelands for public use (Niglas 1999). These centrally planned state collectives regulated pastures, migration routes, provisions, veterinary services, and salary wages (Fernandez-Gimenez 2001).

Collectivization presented its fair share of hardships and adverse realities. In the 1950s, further programs of compulsory school education, sedentarization, shift labour, and uniform herd management were introduced by the Soviet Union government to the region (Forbes 2013:42; Liarskaya 2009). Many left the tundra to settle in ever-growing Russian dominated villages, including a majority of Nenet women and children who were forced away from nomadism (Forbes 2013; Krupnik 2000; Tuisku 2002). The destabilization of the Nenets' traditional cultural practices drove an increase in violent deaths, alcoholism, and social disorganization among the Nenets (Pika and Bogoyavlensky 1995:67). Meanwhile, Soviet propaganda portrayed reindeer pastoralism as "archaic" and "unhealthy" (Krupnik 2000:52). The two cultures appeared to be diametrically opposed.

However, the Nenets still found ways to accommodate the goals of this communist force while retaining some cultural autonomy. During the 1930s, there were a number of significant, well-remembered rebellions (*mandaladas*) organized by Nenets against the trying conditions of the communist Soviet Union regime (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999). Although these uprisings were broken-up, Forbes (2013) suggests that the Soviet influence on the Yamal was "comparably less pronounced" than amongst other northern indigenous groups who lost their adaptive capacity during the seizure of private property and sedentarization (41-42; Golovnev and Osherenko 1999). Soviet bureaucrats and the herders found ways to satisfy each other's ideological goals without complete assimilation. In the attempts at building socialism, Soviet bureaucrats were concurrently able to adhere to "Soviet policies on paper," whilst accommodating the Nenets needs and

traditional structures (Forbes 2013:41; Niglas 1999). A Soviet Union administrator pointed out this comparatively lenient informal contract to a Nenet herder, saying that “you pretend to work on our terms, and we pretend that we believe you” (2013:42). For instance, private ownership of animals by families was simultaneously permissible in Yamal, as long as they reached state-set sale quotas (Forbes 2013:41; Niglas 1999). In order to secretly exceed the state laws on the sizes of herds — for instance, 80 reindeer per herder in the 1970s — Nenets split-up their herds into smaller groups (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999). As one herder recounts “that’s the way to preserve [the herds]” (1999:98).

Traditional kinship structures were incorporated into the communist system in the form of productive brigades (Krupnik 2000; Niglas 1999). These administrative work teams managing the property on the collective farms resembled previous herding camp kin relations (Krupnik 2000:51). To manage the herds a large united, cooperative family is necessary (Niglas 1999). Thus, both the old and new organizations consisted of a head leader who oversaw a patrilineal group of extended relatives (Niglas 1999:14). These values appropriately coincided with Soviet ideals.

During Soviet times, the social arrangement, kinship ties, subsistence practices, housing, and clothing practices continued in the collective economy (Liarskaya 2009; Niglas 1999). The constant movement of the kin groups necessitated the same dwelling practices, movable tents called *chums*, as before the farms (Liarskaya 2009; Niglas 1999:16). Despite the Soviet’s attempts to dissociate the Nenets from this custom, functionality in these ease and portability of these tents ensured their continued use (Niglas 1999:16). The flexibility of both social systems to coincide and both be incorporated simultaneously in the Nenets District miraculously proved “quite successful;” it was one of the few regions of the Soviet Union’s collective farms that escaped severe poverty (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999; Niglas 1999:12; Tuisku 2002:147).

The Nenets adapted to this new management system by demonstrating that they could fulfil Soviet regime production quotas and commoditize reindeer, whilst still practicing their traditional social structures and migration practices. The state and the nomadic herders were able to both effectively incorporate their ideologies and interests during Soviet collectivization. Under institutional Soviet changes, the Nenets were able to retain some economic and social independence through herding, escaping avoiding total cultural destruction.

## Post-Soviet Era

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked the official collapse of state collective farms, and the start of indigenous revival. The Nenets took advantage of the immediate gap in state organization to reclaim their herding

migrations routes and cultural traditions that had been largely standardized during the Soviet era (Degteva and Nellemann 2013). Patrimonial grazing and hunting lands were returned to the Nenets, and the *sovkhoses* and reindeer were privatized (Pika and Bogoyavlensky 1995:69). However, rapid socio-economic fluctuations, an unstable market economy, spreading infrastructure, reductions in pasturelands, land use alterations, and climate change all new posed challenges (Forbes 2013:41).

Resilience in the new post-Soviet regime was facilitated by herder agency (Forbes 2013:41). The numbers of private reindeer herds were doubled, as they provided a better means for some Nenets groups to cope with the changes in Russia (Forbes 2013:42). The Nenets formed smaller private herds to more effectively use the land in this dynamic environment, thereby allowing greater flexibility in social organization and migration options (Degteva and Nellemann 2013; Forbes 2013). Despite the privatization, three reindeer-herding collective farms persisted, covering a vast portion of the peninsula (Niglas 1999:12). The largest, the Yar-Sale farm, had twenty-five nomadic brigades during the 1990s (12). Selling the meat and skins from these animals on the farm provided an income for the herders, and the brigade was obligated to supply them with food and veterinary resources (13).

With a crashing reindeer meat market, many of the Nenets forced into a sedentary village lifestyle returned to the tundra (Niglas 1999). A renewed emphasis on reindeer not as a state-controlled commodity, but as a means of personal subsistence “[boosted] herders’ endurance” (Krupnik 2000:52). By 1995, there were 7,000 Nenets on the peninsula, 4,500 of which still lived on the tundra instead of coastal villages (Pika and Bogoyavlensky 1995:62). Liarskaya (2009) observes that the nomadic way of life in the 1990s is fundamentally similar to the organization and customs practiced before the implementation of the collective farms. This continued nomadic lifestyle is largely a choice of free will, as indicated by a herder telling Niglas (1999) “but in the village I don’t have reindeer!” (9). While there is simultaneously a large, settled, sedentary Nenets population, Liarskaya (2009) suggests that the two lifestyles are mutually supportive “constitutive parts of a single culture” (40). Krupnik (2000) further suggests that this subsistence diversity and ability to switch between the two lifestyles is a cultural adaptation to the tundra’s resource instability (50).

Rather than being subject to the tumultuous economic downfall and disorganized policies of the fallen Soviet Union, the Nenets took agency in finding a subsistence lifestyle that could accommodate new adversities. The range and diversity of their reindeer management strategies and lifeways display quick flexibility to the dynamic environment of the Siberian arctic. Remarkably, the Nenets were reasserting their native reindeer economies.

## Oil and Gas Development Era

During this contemporary era of industrial intensification, government objectives have once again taken precedence over indigenous' socioeconomic needs and interests on national agendas. The large-scale, rapidly constructed industries threaten nomadic reindeer herding, and consequently the Nenets ethnic group as a whole (Pika and Bogoyavlensky 1995). The Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug is home to approximately 90% of Russia's gas production (Degteva and Nellemann 2013:1). Active exploration began in the 1960s, threatening herder wellbeing ever since (Degteva and Nellemann 2013; Tuisku 2002). Increasing hydrocarbon prices in 2004 re-energized development, heightening the urgency for indigenous representation and industrial restrictions (Degteva and Nellemann 2013:3). On the Yamal peninsula, industrial complexes, such as Bovanenkovo, are threatening and fragmenting pasturelands with their extensive infrastructure of gas fields, roads, pipelines, and quarries. Considering that the Nenets migration pasturelands encompass over 70% of the peninsula, there is continual competition for quantity and quality of terrain (Degteva and Nellemann 2013; Forbes 2013:36). At the Bovanenkovo industrial complex, Degteva and Nellemann (2013) attributed the loss of 18 traditional campsites, one sacred site, and blockage of half the migration routes to infrastructure. Although industrial infrastructures currently cover only 1-2% of the territory, they greatly reduce the adaptive flexibility of the herders by limiting the options available to them in the increasingly fragmented landscape (Degteva and Nellemann 2013:2). Forbes (2013) warns that even though the Nenets have been able to buffer shocks in the past, extreme events, such as oil and gas development, could cause permanently detrimental large-scale reindeer mortality (44).

Despite these threats, the Nenets have expressed a desire to coexist with natural resource development. Nonetheless, the Nenets are sceptical and fearful of the impacts of development on their way of the life and the environment (Stammler 2011:251; Tuisku 2002). In the past, industrial projects took little notice of the Nenets concerns and consideration until the 1980s (Pika and Bogoyavlensky 1995:71; Tuisku 2002). One herder told Tuisku (2002) in 1996 that developers never asked their opinions, that "we herders are not important...they will just take our land" (151). The two ideologies clash: the herders plan for future generations, whilst the company's plan for only a couple of decades (Tuisku 2002). In 1989, indigenous groups from the region formed the association Yamal of Our Descendants (Yamal Potomkram), aimed at opposing ecological destruction and spearheading self-governance (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999:104). However, it was not until the 1998 law on use of subsurface resources that representatives of the Nenets were required to be present in all industrial decision-making (Tuisku 2002:151). Public opinion has continued to push for more legislative support and industrial consideration of indigenous land and rights, but for now, "a

small minority in a remote area [is] subordinate” to prioritized state economic interests (Tuisku 2002:149). This may be vital for the Nenets’ ability to adapt to the current threats as the loss of control over their land and fragmentation is unprecedented on the Yamal peninsula. The current situation calls into question if the Nenets will be provided the resources and voice necessary to adapt to the current domineering state industrial policies if their sociocultural point of view continues to be ignored.

## **Conclusion**

It is nearly “impossible to think of the Nenets away from their reindeer herds;” their bond that has unceasingly persisted despite challenges posed by the environment and political processes (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999:16). These lasting traditions are a testament to the enduring capacity of pastoral systems in the modern era, but efforts to maintain them have been hard fought. Modern institutional constraints have continually posed a threat to the Nenets’ nomadic pastoral subsistence over the last hundred years. In the context of political ecology, outside state intervention has consistently jeopardized the lifestyle of the Nenets pastoral herds. From the standpoint of cultural ecology, however, their remarkable ability to readjust to changes in the ecological and non-ecological environment has ensured the ethnic group’s presence on the Yamal Peninsula tundra. The fragmentation of the tundra due to oil and gas development poses an institutional threat unprecedented from past eras. The long-term sustainability of the Nenets is currently at risk, but there is hope that they will find a means to adapt to and overcome this current crisis. ❖

# CHALLENGING TAXONOMIES: A THEMATIC SORT OF OBJECTS FROM TRENCH 1 AT DHRS-1

*Written by Sage Vanier  
Edited by Yoki Li and Lauren Fisher*

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## Introduction

### *Aims and Objectives*

In the words of Charles Borden, “the archaeologist digs in order to learn as much as possible about the culture and life of prehistoric times” (1955: 13). The aim of this paper is to offer an alternative method of sorting archaeological data in a way that draws attention to some of the most culturally and historically significant industries on the Northwest Coast: woodworking, hunting, and fishing. Sorting the data thematically rather than morphologically provides an alternative perspective on the analysis and interpretation of these data sets that can help reconstruct the history of the peoples who inhabited the site of čəsnaʔəm (DhRs-1). This new taxonomy allows for each of the three industries from Borden’s Trench 1 to be studied individually in regards to their frequencies and spatial distributions. The preliminary data collection and interpretation from this study demonstrates the ability of this type of taxonomic sort to produce meaningful patterns from the woodworking, hunting, and fishing assemblages. This broad scale, thematic analysis of artifacts aims to contribute to the research Charles Borden began, by helping to reconstruct and make accessible part of the history of the peoples who inhabited this site.<sup>1</sup>

### *The Variability of Taxonomies in Archaeology*

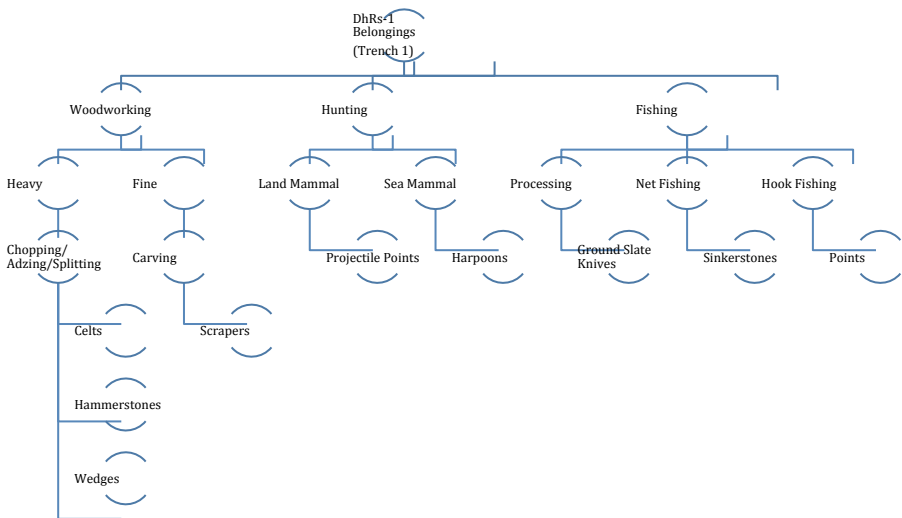
The subjectivity involved in creating an archaeological taxonomy led to over a decade of debate amongst archaeological theorists as they attempted to formulate a universal, objective methodology for classifying and sorting objects (Christensen and Read, 1977; Thomas, 1972). As Christensen and Read (1977) note however, this debate died down by the 1970’s with the introduction of numerical taxonomy. Numerical taxonomy provides archaeologists with a quantitative, rather than qualitative, sort that makes use of techniques such as statistical cluster analysis and cladistics, so as to add a higher degree of objectivity to archaeological sorting, yet it still has not been able to completely replace the traditional phenetic approach (Thomas, 1972).

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<sup>1</sup> See Roy, 2007 for an overview of the site of čəsnaʔəm and a detailed history of its exploration and excavation.

Even with the widespread adoption of numerical taxonomic methods, a degree of variability still exists in the patterns and interpretations produced through the researcher's choice of traits. This variability is more apparent in the traditional phenetic approach, as the typologies created are entirely subjective to the aims and biases of the researcher.

The variability involved in creating an archaeological taxonomy can be seen an opportunity. In this paper, I demonstrate the usefulness of approaching assemblage data from a new perspective, emphasizing the use and activities associated with the objects from the DhRs-1 artifact assemblage. This new taxonomy (Figure 1) is in no way aiming to usurp the existing methods of taxonomic sorting, but rather aims to complement the patterns that traditional methods present, in order to potentially discover different patterns in the data.



**Figure 1: Thematic object taxonomy for Trench 1, DhRs-1.**

The new thematic taxonomy presented in Figure 1 highlights the types of activities that can be inferred from the extant object typologies represented in Trench 1. Interpreting activities simply from tools does not provide an objective or full reconstruction of the history of the site or its people. The



limitations are apparent as some of the inferred activities are rather straightforward, such as harpoons implying that sea mammals were hunted at the, yet objects such as hammerstones and ground slate knives could be used for a wide array of tasks and activities. This falls beyond the scope of this study, however, and this thematic taxonomy endeavours merely to act as a jumping off point for formulating new types of questions to ask of the data.

## Methods

This study was conducted on artifacts excavated from Borden's 1949-50 excavation of Trench 1 at DhRs-1 (čəsnaʔəm). In order to determine which tools were ethnographically attested for the woodworking, sea and land mammal hunting, and fishing industries, lists of applicable tool types were compiled from the information and illustrations in Hilary Stewart's books *Cedar* (1984), *Indian Fishing* (1977), and *Stone, Bone, Antler and Shell* (1996). The Laboratory of Archaeology's (LOA) object catalogue database was used as a starting point for locating all of the artifacts recovered from Trench 1 that fit into these three industries. I also looked at the physical artifacts themselves, in order to verify that there were no database errors and that every applicable artifact was included.

I made use of Borden's original field note journals and catalogue from the LOA archives (LOA Archives, UBC [LOA] 1949-50: Field Notes [FN], Marpole (Brodie): 5.1/2/2; Profile Maps [PM], 5.1/4.01) to calculate elevations for objects and locate them on Borden's stratigraphic profile maps, on which Dr. Martindale, and two of my classmates identified and assigned layers and zones. Each object was attributed to a stratigraphic layer and an artificial level, so that both horizontal and vertical distributions were mapped out in order to determine the spatial patterning of each industry.

Unfortunately, due to the fact that this material was excavated over 60 years ago, not all of the objects have provenience data recorded and some appear not to come from Trench 1, but were recovered by civilians in earlier years and given to Borden during his excavation. There are also a few examples of artifacts mentioned in the LOA database that could not be physically located in the collection (Ma: 67a, for example). These objects that lack reliable provenience data were excluded from the stratigraphic analysis. However, they are still included in the database and I believe that they are useful in providing examples of the types of artifacts that existed at the site.

## Data and Analysis

In total, the overall assemblage of woodworking, sea and land mammal hunting, and fishing tools from Trench 1 is comprised of 108 objects. During the 1949-50 season, Charles Borden excavated seven 5' x 5' squares that he called Excavation Units (E.U.'s) (LOA 1949-50: FN: 5.1/2/2). These

E.U.'s form the basis of the vertical and horizontal provenience for each object. The stratigraphy of the site is broken into three zones: Zone 1 (disturbed layer), Zone 2 (village layer), and Zone 3 (terrace layer). This study attempts to display the preliminary spatial patterning of each object both horizontally, by E.U., and vertically, by Zone.

Zones	EU 1	EU 2	EU 3	EU 4	EU 5	EU 6	EU 7	Total
1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	4
2	0	0	0	0	2	6	3	11
3	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	5
<b>Total</b>	2	2	2	0	3	7	4	<b>20</b>

**Table 1: Distribution of woodworking tool types** *The Woodworking Industry in Trench 1*

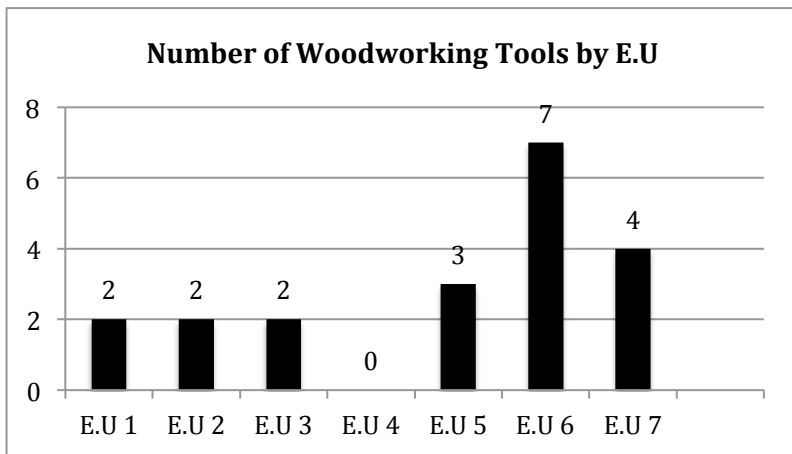
Woodworking on the Northwest Coast was a highly developed and specialized industry.

Wood was used to construct many different structures and objects such as plank houses, canoes, large and small-scale art, and containers (Matson and Coupland, 1994). The woodworking industry in Trench 1 is comprised of 27 objects from four different types: adze blades/celts, wedges, hammerstones, and scrapers. These objects account for 25% of the entire assemblage studied. As demonstrated in Figure 1, the occurrence of these types of artifacts attest to both heavy and fine woodworking activities at the site. However, only one scraper with visible use-wear patterns is extant, signalling the dominance of heavy woodworking tools and activities. These include celts, wedges, and hammerstones, which would be used for activities such as felling trees and splitting and adzing wood for planks, etc. (Stewart, 1984 & 1996). The importance of this industry is underscored by the prolific use of nephrite celts. All eight of the celts recovered from Borden's 1949-50 excavation were of nephrite, a non-local and difficult to shape stone.

	E.U 1	E.U 2	E.U 3	E.U 4	E.U 5	E.U 6	E.U 7	N/ A	Tot al
Adze blades/Celts	1	1	1	0	2	1	0	2	8
Wedges	0	1	1	0	0	4	2	4	12
Hammerstones	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	6
Scrapers	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1

**Table 2: Total number of woodworking tools in each zone and E.U**

As for the spatial patterning of woodworking tools, it is possible to determine the provenience and assign an E.U. to 20 of the 27 (74%) woodworking tools from the main assemblage. The data illustrates that a much higher concentration of woodworking tools were found in the later Excavation Units (5-7). No woodworking artifacts were recovered from E.U. 4. Two potential activity zones emerge, separated by E.U 4, each containing an even mix of woodworking tool typologies. As for vertical patterning, over half of the objects belong in Zone 2, the Village zone. It is important to note that four of the tools come from Zone 1, the disturbed topsoil layer, and therefore may not be in their original contexts. However, this makes up a small percentage of the overall tools, and therefore does not dramatically affect the overall patterning.



**Figure 2: Number of woodworking tools in each E.U**

The artifact typologies represented in the woodworking assemblage from Trench 1 show a dominance of heavy rather than fine woodworking tools that could be used for activities such as shaping or adzing wood and felling trees. There is little evidence for any detailing tools such as beaver's teeth or scrapers for undertaking more small-scale decorative woodworking. The predominance of nephrite celts indicates that this was an important industry at the site, due to the high material value of the stone. The spatial patterning of the woodworking tools shows two areas of use (or storage/deposition) of these tools that belong to the Village and Terrace zones.

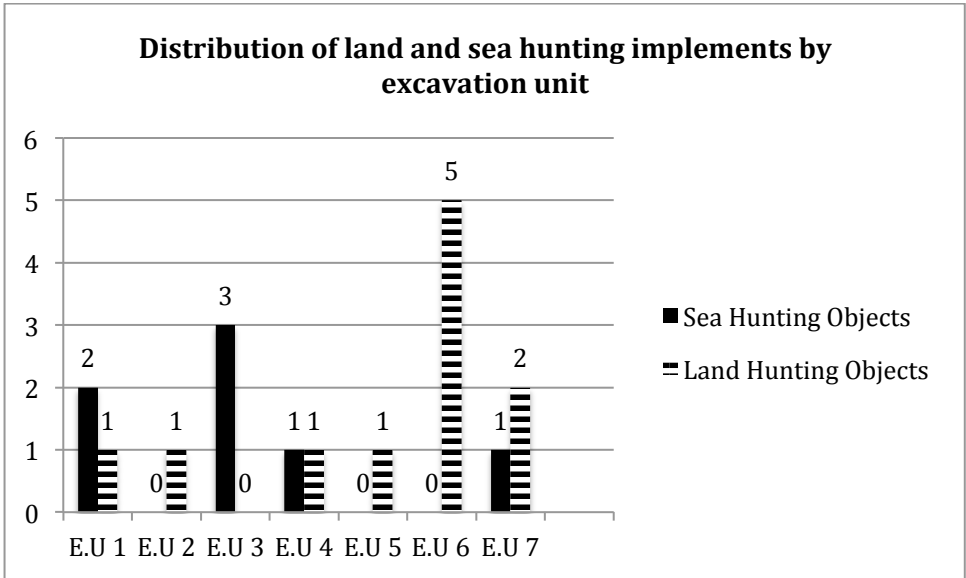
### *The Hunting Industry in Trench 1*

The hunting industry consists of 28 objects from two types: projectile points (n=16) and harpoons (n=12). It is possible to divide the hunting industry into two sub-categories of activity: land mammal hunting, represented by the projectile points, and sea mammal hunting, represented by the harpoons. This industry represents 26% of the overall assemblage. Of these 28 objects, only 18 (64%) could be attributed to an E.U. Additionally, half of the remaining artifacts belong to Zone 1, the disturbed topsoil, and therefore may not be in their original contexts. The next largest collection of hunting tools comes from Zone 3, in the lower Excavation Units. Only three hunting objects were found in Zone 2, the Village zone. These patterns potentially signify an activity zone in which hunting tools were more frequently kept outside of the habitation area, closer to the water. However, with the small amount of artifacts with reliable provenience data, and half of those coming from the disturbed top zone, it is difficult to empirically prove this.

<b>Zones</b>	<b>EU 1</b>	<b>EU 2</b>	<b>EU 3</b>	<b>EU 4</b>	<b>EU 5</b>	<b>EU 6</b>	<b>EU 7</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	0	0	2	1	0	5	1	9
<b>2</b>	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3
<b>3</b>	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	6
<b>Total</b>	3	1	3	2	1	5	3	<b>18</b>

**Table 2: Provenienced hunting tools in each zone and E.U.**

Interestingly, by subdividing the hunting tools into land (projectile points) and sea (harpoon) hunting, a potentially telling pattern emerges. All but one of the harpoons is found in the lower E.U.'s (1-4). These units are closer to the river, the main access point to the sea. Inversely, most of the projectile points come from higher up the slope, farther from the water and nearer to the village, coalescing mainly in E.U. 6. From this, it is possible to propose that two rather distinct activity zones existed within the hunting industry. These zones are not exclusive, but rather a broad trend.



**Figure 3: Distribution of hunting tools by sub-category**

With the high proportion of artifacts coming from the disturbed Zone 1, it is difficult to determine if any significant vertical patterning exists amongst hunting tools. Horizontally, however, it appears that land hunting and sea hunting tools were kept separately, indicating two potential activity zones.

#### *The Fishing Industry in Trench 1*

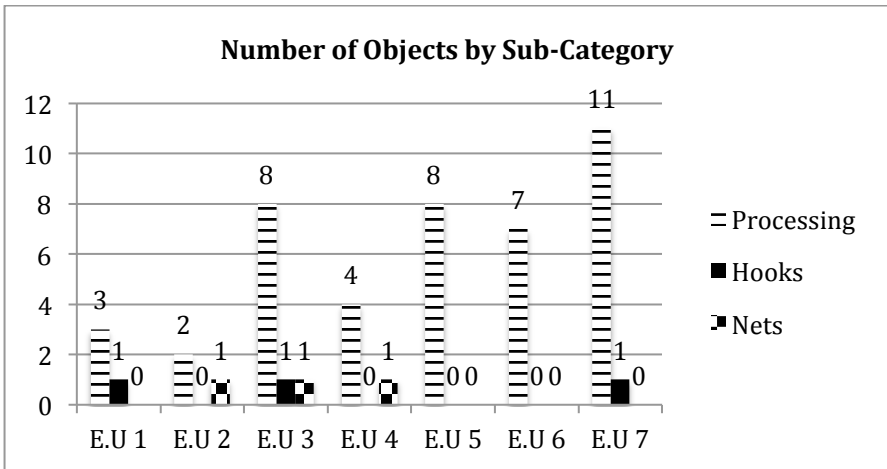
The 53 objects from the fishing industry dominate the overall assemblage (49%). These artifacts can be divided into three sub-categories of activity: fish processing (slate knives), net fishing (sinkerstones), and hook fishing (points). Ground slate knife fragments dominate the fishing assemblage. This high proportion of ground slate knives potentially indicates that large-scale fish processing was being practiced at Trench 1 (Matson and Coupland, 1994), although this has been challenged by experimental work (Hayden, 1989). Due to the scope of this project, only 43 of the 99+ slate knife fragments (Sky, 2016) are included in this analysis. Choosing to only incorporate 43 slate knife fragments is still empirically significant, as the other industries studied here only consist of 20 artifacts or less each.

Of the 53 total objects, 49 (92%) had reliable provenience data and could be placed in a stratigraphic layer. Since this assemblage of fishing tools is mainly comprised of ground slate knife fragments, the data is partially skewed. It is impossible to determine how many complete knives the fragments represent and so this study assumes that each knife fragment equates to one complete slate knife.

Zones	EU 1	EU 2	EU 3	EU 4	EU 5	EU 6	EU 7	Total
1	1	2	3	3	3	3	4	19
2	0	0	0	0	3	4	6	13
3	3	1	7	2	2	0	2	17
<b>Total</b>	4	3	10	5	8	7	12	<b>49</b>

**Table 3: Fishing tools by Zone and E.U. (above)**

A high proportion of the fishing tools were found in Zone 1, the disturbed layer, and are most likely not in their original contexts. In Zones 2 and 3, there is a nearly even distribution of tools. E.U.'s 3 and 7 contain the highest concentration of fishing tools from the assemblage. As with the hunting industry, a further subdivision of the assemblage into specific activities provides a more specific view of the distribution of fishing implements. It is evident from Figure 4 that there is evidence for fish processing, in the form of slate knives, in each E.U. However, the highest concentration of knives is located in the upper Excavation Units (5-7) and E.U. 3. This suggests that most of the processing occurred in the village itself. As for fishing with hooks, represented by bone points, and nets, represented by sinkerstones, not many examples exist with reliable provenience information. Figure 4 potentially demonstrates that these types of activities were confined to the lower elevations of the site, although not enough data exists to prove this.

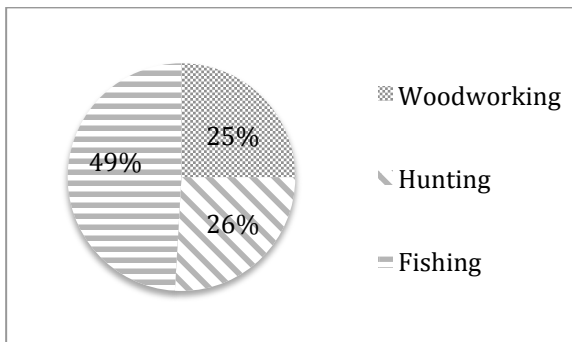


**Figure 4: Number of tools by sub-category in each E.U**

From the data collected, three sub-activities are discernable. There is limited evidence for the use of nets and hooks in the form of sinkerstones and bone points. The largest activity represented is that of fish processing, which may have been a large-scale affair. Vertically, the fishing industry is evenly represented through all three Zones. The horizontal distribution of artifacts shows that net and hook fishing activities seems confined to the lower Excavation Units, although not much data exists, and that evidence for fish processing seems to coalesce further up the slope, with the exception of E.U. 3.

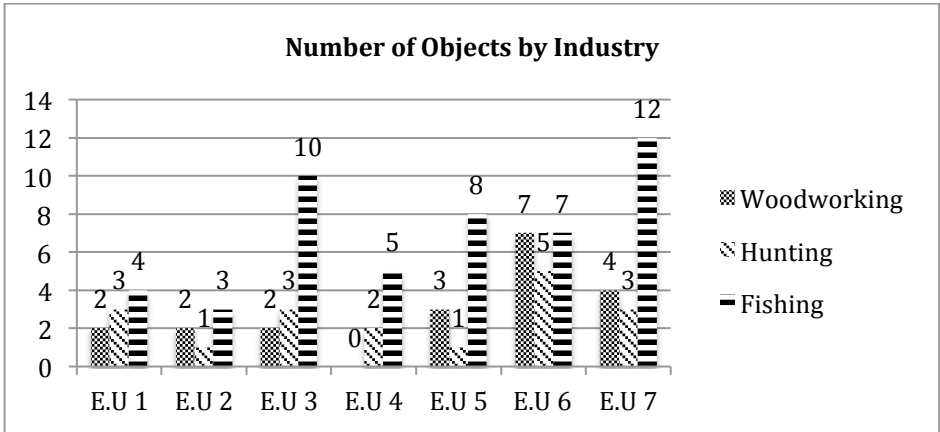
### *All Industries in Trench 1*

Matson and Coupland state that “all aboriginal people of the Northwest Coast relied on fishing, hunting, and gathering as a way of life with emphasis on fishing (1994: 24). A broad scale analysis of these patterns at Trench 1 suggests the statement is, to an extent true. At 49%, fishing tools make up nearly half of the objects recovered during the 1949-50 excavations. Although these statistics appear to demonstrate the dominance of the fishing industry at DhRs-1, the numbers are potentially misleading. Ground slate knife fragments make up 89% of the fishing assemblage, with only 10 objects representing net and hook fishing activities. This statistic would be more accurate if only complete ground slate knives were included in the assembly.



**Figure 5: Percentage make-up of the assemblage**

This comparison shows that a higher percentage of artifacts associated with these three industries occurs in the upper excavation units of the site, where the village habitation zone is hypothesized to be.



**Figure 6: Distribution of all industry artifacts by Excavation Unit**

The lower excavation units appear to yield fewer artifacts, with the exception of the high number of slate knife fragments found in E.U. 3. It is also clear that E.U.'s 6 and 7 are hot spots for each of the three industries. One potential hypothesis is that this spatial patterning could represent the inside and outside of a house in the village. E.U. 4 could mark the transition between the boundaries of the house where there is less of an accumulation of artifacts. Excavation Units 5-7 would represent the interior of a house where tools were stored for later use. However, further testing of this hypothesis would require a much more detailed examination of the stratigraphy and features excavated by Borden, so the data presented here is merely speculative.

Zones	EU 1	EU 2	EU 3	EU 4	EU 5	EU 6	EU 7	Total
<b>1</b>	2	3	5	4	3	9	6	32
<b>2</b>	0	0	0	0	6	10	11	27
<b>3</b>	7	3	10	3	3	0	2	28
<b>Total</b>	9	6	15	7	12	19	19	<b>87</b>

**Table 4: Total number of tools in all industries**

As for the vertical distribution of artifacts, it was possible to reconstruct the provenience data for 87 of 108 (80%) total objects from the assemblage. Yet again, a great number of artifacts come from the disturbed Zone 1, meaning they lack a reliable context. Zone 2 and Zone 3 have an even distribution of artifacts. In the Excavation Units located farther up the slope (4-7), in the area of the habitation zone, objects can be found below the Village



Zone, in Zone 3. In this Zone there is one woodworking tool, one hunting tool, and six fishing tools. These objects may be evidence of an earlier occupation layer, one that was superimposed by a successive phase of house or terrace construction, but again a more detailed analysis of the stratigraphy is needed to test this hypothesis.

## **Discussion**

Heavy-duty tool typologies dominate the woodworking assemblage, and the proliferation of nephrite celts, underscores the importance of this industry at the site. The even distribution of woodworking tools both vertically and horizontally throughout the E.U.'s, except for the complete lack in E.U. 4 demonstrates the ubiquity of this industry. As for hunting, the evidence demonstrates that the site's inhabitants hunted both land and sea mammals. The horizontal distribution of hunting tools contains evocative patterning that potentially demarcates separate activity zones within this industry. Finally, within the fishing industry, the large number of ground slate knives may suggest that large-scale fish processing was practiced in Trench 1 and at DhRs-1. Evidence for fishing with both nets and hooks survive in the form of stone and bone tool types. Similarly to the horizontal patterns present in the hunting industry, there appear to be specific zones for certain activities.

The analysis of the site as a whole also presents broader patterns. Fishing appears to be the most dominantly represented industry, with woodworking and hunting being nearly equal to each other. Excavation Units 6 and 7 are hotspots for artifacts, potentially indicating the presence of a house, with more artifacts stored and activities being performed inside. This hypothesis requires a much more substantive analysis. There is no indication that any industry became more or less prevalent throughout the history of the site. The vertical patterning proves that each of the three industries were present in all three Zones. The artifacts recovered from underneath the habitation area of Zone 3, could potentially be evidence for an earlier occupation phase or terrace construction project. Despite this evidence, a more detailed stratigraphical analysis is needed to test these hypotheses.

## **Conclusion**

This study demonstrates that a thematic, rather than a traditional morphological, taxonomic sort of archaeological materials can be successfully employed to highlight alternative datasets and patterns. The variability of taxonomic sorting, although sometimes viewed as a limitation, can offer a new perspective on site use patterns and activity zones. The implementation of this thematic taxonomy onto the material recovered from Trench 1 of Borden's 1949-50 excavations illustrates many preliminary patterns of activity at the

site. One of the most significant contributions of a thematic taxonomic sort is its ability to highlight spatial and typological patterns for each industry.

In order to gain more information on the questions asked by this study, it will be necessary for future research to continue adding onto this project. Additionally, a much more detailed study of the stratigraphy and features from Trench 1 and Borden's subsequent excavations must be undertaken. Adding more artifacts into the database and attributing each with an associated industry will lend greater statistical evidence to the spatial patterns presented here. The most telling patterns and results will appear when the methodology of this study is applied to larger areas of the site. This study could also benefit greatly from more substantial historical and ethnographic evidence to better attribute activities to tool types. In this way, archaeology can move beyond classifying objects and move towards understanding the peoples that created them. ❖

## Appendix



Figure 7: Nephrite celt (Ma: 1a)



Figure 8: Antler wedge (Ma: 317)



Figure 9: Sinkersstone (Ma: 20)



Figure 10: Scraper (Ma: 200)



**Figure 8: Hammerstone (Ma: 93)**

# THE GAY ISLAM: REINTERPRETATION, RECONCEPTUALIZATION, AND RECONCILIATION AMONGST CONFLICTING RELIGIOUS AND SEXUAL IDENTITIES

*Written by Mariam Aamir*

*Edited by Katherine Lay*

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Given the overwhelming opposition towards homosexuality in various Muslim countries (Yip 2005:56), the lived experiences of non-heterosexual Muslims entail a great deal of internal and societal conflict. Ostracized based on their queerness in the Muslim world and on their religious identification in queer spaces (Yip 2005:57), these individuals constantly engage in a reconciliation process between these two seemingly-conflicting identities. This paper presents an anthropological analysis into the means through which non-heterosexual Muslims maintain their religious and sexual identities simultaneously, rather than abandoning one for the other. Through reinterpreting, or “queering,” religious texts and calling for a reconceptualization of queerness that is not primarily based around Western ideologies, LGB (lesbian, gay, and bisexual) Muslims are constantly negotiating a unique relationship between these intersecting identities.

Before delving any further into the topic at hand, it is necessary that we establish an understanding of terms being used throughout this analysis. The ethnographic data presented in this paper focuses primarily on non-heterosexual Muslims living in diasporic contexts, i.e. away from their native homeland, who at the time of the research identified as both Muslim and non-heterosexual. Mostly qualitative data was obtained through online forums such as *Imaan* and *Safra*, where the security guaranteed through anonymity allowed the participants to engage in unfiltered disclosure (Siraj 2015:191). Although the analysis that follows takes extra care to represent diversity whenever possible, it is limited in its ability to do so as a result of the lacking nature of literature surrounding non-heterosexual Muslim identities. For instance, Dervla Shannahan criticizes pre-existing research on this topic to be Arab-centric, mostly conducted by non-queer males and having an over-representation of male homosexuality (Shannahan 2009:65). As a consequence, although the lump summing of varying queer identities into one is not ideal, this analysis sets the stage for future research on the topic that would ideally incorporate an intersectional approach to understanding queer experiences.

In order to fully understand how the reinterpretation, reconceptualization and reconciliation between Islam and homosexuality take place, it is imperative to consider the former’s position over the latter. Asifa Siraj states that in Islam, “[...] sexuality is understood to be a powerful force that is simultaneously pleasurable and dangerous” (Siraj 2015:187). Like any

other religion, Islam holds a powerful ability to regulate sexuality of its followers, through the establishment of dualistic categories of right vs. wrong, pure vs. impure (Siraj 2015:187). In considering the relationship between religion and sexuality, the Story of Lut is taken as an illustration of Islam's strong opposition to homosexuality (Yip 2005:53). However, the ambiguous nature of religious scripts and teachings allows people to interpret religious texts to serve their own belief systems (Siraj 2015:188). Levi Eidhamar presents six categories of non-heterosexual Muslims, differentiated on the basis of the degree to which they accommodate one identity with the other (Eidhamar 2014:254). Where on one end of the spectrum lay the 'extremely traditional' Muslims, who see homosexuality as sinful, the opposite end has the "extreme progressivists" who focus on the need to reimagine Islam (Eidhamar 2014:253-254), either through a reinterpretation of Quranic texts or through recognizing the need to adapt the religious to the social demands of the present day (Eidhamar 2014:254). The subsequent section focuses on the means through which this process takes place.

In his article 'Queering Religious Texts: An Exploration of British Non-heterosexual Christians' and Muslims' Strategy of Constructing Sexuality-affirming Hermeneutics,' Andrew Yip presents the ways in which Queer Muslims critique pre-existing interpretations of the Qur'an and the Sharia. The destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorra, traditionally viewed as a punishment for homosexuality, is reinterpreted as a penalty for inhospitality towards strangers in favour of kin, and for sexual violence towards men (Yip 2005:53). As Yip would call it, this "queering" of texts facilitates the reconciliation process between Islam and homosexuality.

Beyond this, various other reform-oriented interpretations also exist. For instance, rather than completely rejecting the view role of homosexuality in the destruction of the cities, Amreen Jamal views same-sex relations as only one of a number of indiscretions that played into the event (Jamal 2001:69). As far as the Qur'an is concerned, same-sex indiscretions are not one "of the most dangerous crimes" as is believed by certain traditional Muslims. It does not deserve the stigma which has become attached to it" (Jamal 2001:69). Jamal's perspective advocates for a rejection of the notion that homosexuality is one of the biggest sins of Islam, which would allow for the destigmatization of queer bodies to occur.

Looking past the critique of the Story of Lut, reinterpretation of Islamic teachings may be presented through the degree of importance paid to the hadith. For instance, the American convert and scholar Scott Siraj al-Haqq criticizes the hadith for being historically and culturally situated (Kugle 2003:32). Kugle holds that to blindly trust and follow the hadith, rather than the word of God as relayed in the Qur'an, would lead to an incorrect assumption that Islam opposes homosexuality (Kugle 2003:190-196). Citing various Qur'anic verses, Kugle illustrates the ways in which the text mentions non-heterosexual, without any added negative connotations (Siraj 2015:199). This

further the view that the view that Islam is an inherently homophobic religion is based upon man-made assumptions that are not present in the Qur'an itself. Taking a more positive approach, Shannahan suggests approaching the Qur'an in a way that allows gives queer individuals a space to express their authentic selves, while paying close attention to Allah's all-forgiving and all-loving nature (Shannahan 2009:70). A participant in Siraj's ethnographic work illustrates this idea: "I was always of the opinion that it was *haram* [forbidden] to be gay. But then I realized that how could Islam, a religion of peace and love and humanity, condemn a person for who they love" (Siraj 2015:195). It is through such a process of reinterpretation that non-heterosexual Muslims can be allowed the space to freely express their sexualities without the fear of prejudice and discrimination.

Moving forward, the reconceptualization of Queerness that non-heterosexual Muslims engage in serves to foster a space for these individuals, allowing them to have the diversity of their experiences recognized. The reconceptualization process is motivated by the need to challenge the widely-accepted belief in the Muslim world that non-heterosexuality is a 'western disease,' foreign to the fundamental values of Islam (Yip 2005:50). The subsequent analysis tackles this misconception that paints Islam and homosexuality as mutually exclusive through two means. First, I will establish the existence and societal tolerance of homosexuality pre-colonialism in Muslim societies and second, highlight the present-day manifestation and performance of queerness in a non-western Muslim context.

In the article 'Naming our sexualities: Secular constraints, Muslim freedoms,' Katherine Pratt Ewing challenges Western understandings of Muslim sexuality, which associate the Muslim as traditional/conservative and the West as tolerant of sexual diversity. Through a comparison into the expression of homosexual desire in pre- and post-colonial Pakistan, the author highlights the irony of the "Western secularist gaze that views Islamic discourse as barbaric and Pakistani society as oppressive and corrupt" (Ewing 2011:90). The irony lies in the fact that South Asians were criticized for their overt displays of sexuality in the arts and literature; however, this is now the very "sexual liberation" that formulates the main discourse of neocolonialist movements (Ewing 2011:91). Scott Kugle also elaborates on the imposition of colonial homophobia, in the retelling of the love affair between Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna and his servant, Ayaz (2002:30).

In her book review, 'Thinking Past Pride: Queer Arab Shame in Bareed Mista3jil,' Dina Georgis focuses on how Muslim communities cultivate their queer identities by responding to the cultural and religious context under which they are born (Georgis 2013:233). The author situates herself within the text, referring to her inability to never quite fit in with the Western performance of Queerness. She states "I recall my anxieties of not feeling queer enough. Awkward with the idea of perversion, with S/M and sex-positive culture, with my long hair, with my general racial self-consciousness, I could not walk or

talk queer” (Georgis 2013:233). Citing the work of Edward Said, Georgis argues that the imposition of Western ideologies surrounding the performance of queerness is imperialistic and urges that the manifestation and performance of queerness and Islam should be framed according to the geopolitical context under which they operate (Georgis 2013:234). For instance, the feeling of shame is an essential part of an Arab queer becoming, where “unlike the strategies of post-Stonewall pride politics, whose message was to overcome shame this community is inventing itself *through* and not *against* shame” (Georgis 2013:234-5). Through this illustration, the importance of demonstrating cultural relativism when considering queerness in non-western contexts is highlighted.

The goal of reconceptualization of queerness and Islam is ultimately to reach a stage where these religious and sexual identities are reconciled with one another, which can occur through a number of different ways. Firstly, this analysis demonstrates the almost paradoxical effect that accepting one’s non-heterosexuality has on moving Muslims closer to their religion. Secondly, the paper focuses on how the creation of an online support community offers queer Muslims a channel to reconcile their identities by sharing their experiences with others.

Focusing on the spiritual practices of Queer Muslims, the work of Sally Munt sheds light on the ‘gift of marginality,’ where the act of reconciliation of sexual identity with Islam brings people closer to the latter as they detach themselves from mainstream representations of Islam to cultivate their own understanding of religion, which creates a space for varying gender and sexual expression (Yip 2005:81). “By untangling religion from a deeply heteronormative perspective the progressive movement holds that ‘religion can itself become liberating for those who are vulnerable and oppressed, as it was in the beginning. It is with this in mind that LGBT Muslims are using Islam to accept, understand and even celebrate their existence as Muslim and homosexual” (Siraj 2015:189).

Whereas those who believe in a contradictory relationship between homosexuality and Islamic values experience a great deal of psychological stress caused by feelings of cognitive dissonance (Eidhamar 2014:257), others who accept their sexuality as part of Allah’s will are able to reconcile their multiple identities in a smoother way. The account of a participant in Yip’s work perfectly articulates the impact of this reconciliation process:

“It has been a long journey, and it still has its challenges. But I can tell you honestly that I now do not apologize for who I am – Muslim and lesbian. I know that Allah made me who I am. Everything about me is from him, made by him, including my sexuality” (Yip 2005:107-108).

This account demonstrates the contentment individuals feel if they reach a point where they are able to experience their religiosity and sexuality existing in harmony with one another. Addressing the contradictions between identities

and learning to incorporate the values of one into the other, allow queer Muslims to develop self-acceptance.

In relaying the important of online communities, that offer pillars of support to queer-identifying Muslims, Dervla Shannahan states that “forms of electronic communication move Islamic discourse beyond the classical language of texts into contemporary vernaculars and involve new actors, sites of production and consumption” (Shannahan 2009:69). The cyber community established on websites such as *Safra* and *Imaan* are platforms where people come together to share their experiences, without the fear of judgement or persecution they often experience in the real world. In doing so, not only do individuals feel more comfortable expressing their authentic selves, but are also able to work through varying internal conflicts with other people. For example, Shannahan relays the experiences of a lesbian woman who recounts the invaluable support she received when she joined an online community, “it was only when she came in to contact with other LGBT Asians, that she felt a synthesis between her cultural identity and her ‘gayness,’ something she’d always deemed as being western and completely incompatible with her heritage” (Shannahan 2009:69). These online communities adopt a liminal position between the private and the public sphere, allowing individuals to reconcile their religious identity with their sexual identity. Furthermore, involvement with an online community may also act as a coping strategy, whereby “...through an affiliation with gay affirmative support groups, gay and lesbian Muslims are able to nurture theological capital, which enables members to reinterpret Holy Scripture in a gay positive manner” (Siraj 2015:191).

An essential component of the process of reconciliation between the two identities is the momentum that Islamic progressive movements have gained over the last few years. For instance, the establishment of queer-friendly mosques around the world shows a commitment to recognizing the diversity within Islam (Siraj 2015:189). Beyond this, the creation of websites that inform its users on queer-friendly terminology for Muslims shows the birth of initiatives that are catered towards recognizing this minority group.

Throughout this paper, we have seen the various means through which non-heterosexual Muslims engage in a process of reconciliation between their religious and sexual identities. This is primarily done through the reinterpretation or “queering” of Islamic texts, making them gay-affirming and the reconceptualization of Queerness so that it is accommodating to varying intersections of race, religion, nationality, etcetera. Moving forward, a great deal of regard needs to be given to the uniqueness of non-heterosexual Muslim experiences so that these individuals are able to find support in online and in-person communities.❖



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**THE GAY ISLAM: REINTERPRETATION, RECONCEPTUALIZATION, AND RECONCILIATION AMONGST CONFLICTING RELIGIOUS AND SEXUAL IDENTITIES**  
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